

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

6:00 PM - Thursday, April 03, 2025

*Community Meeting Chambers, Los Altos City Hall 1
North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, CA*

PARTICIPATION: Members of the public may participate by being present at the Los Altos Community Meeting Chambers at Los Altos City Hall located at 1 N. San Antonio Rd, Los Altos, CA during the meeting. Public comment is accepted in person at the physical meeting location, or via email to PCPublicComment@losaltosca.gov.

REMOTE MEETING OBSERVATION: Members of the public may view the meeting via the link below, but will not be permitted to provide public comment via Zoom or telephone. Public comment will be taken in-person, and members of the public may provide written public comment by following the instructions below.

<https://tinyurl.com/ycxs8jrb>

Telephone: 1-253-215-8782 / Webinar ID: 893 0684 8660 / Passcode: 242017

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS: Verbal comments can be made in-person at the public hearing or submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Written comments can be mailed or delivered in person to the Development Services Department or emailed to PCPublicComment@losaltosca.gov.

Correspondence must be received by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting to ensure distribution prior to the meeting. Comments provided after 2:00 p.m. will be distributed the following day and included with public comment in the Planning Commission packet.

AGENDA

ESTABLISH QUORUM

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Members of the audience may bring to the Commission's attention any item that is not on the agenda. The Commission Chair will announce the time speakers will be granted before comments begin. Please be advised that, by law, the Planning Commission is unable to discuss or take action on issues presented during the Public Comment Period. According to State Law (also known as "The Brown Act") items must first be noted on the agenda before any discussion or action.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

CONSENT CALENDAR

These items will be considered by one motion unless any member of the Commission or audience wishes to remove an item for discussion. Any item removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion will be handled at the discretion of the Chair.

1. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Approval of the DRAFT minutes of the Joint Planning Commission/Historical Commission meeting of February 6, 2025.

2. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Approval of the DRAFT minutes of the Special Planning Commission meeting of February 27, 2025.

PUBLIC HEARING**3. Proposed Zoning Amendments**

Consideration of the following Amendments and find the proposed zone change and amendments are exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15183 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines since the zone change and amendments are consistent with the adopted General Plan:

1. An Ordinance of the Los Altos City Council of the City of Los Altos Amending Chapter 14.50 of the Los Altos Municipal Code; and
2. An Ordinance of the Los Altos City Council of the City of Los Altos Repealing in its Entirety the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan of the Los Altos Municipal Code; and
3. An Ordinance of the Los Altos City Council of the City of Los Altos Amending Chapter 14.88 of the Los Altos Municipal Code and Rezoning Certain Parcels Located along San Antonio Road and El Camino Real in the City of Los Altos to Commercial Thoroughfare (CT) Zoning District.

SPECIAL ITEM**4. Special Presentation**

Presentation on State Housing Laws.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS****ADJOURNMENT****SPECIAL NOTICES TO PUBLIC**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and California Law, it is the policy of the City of Los Altos to offer its programs, services and meetings in a manner that is readily accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability and require information or materials in an appropriate alternative format; or if you require any other accommodation, please contact department staff. Advance notification within this guideline will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility.

Agendas, Staff Reports and some associated documents for the Planning Commission items may be viewed on the Internet at <http://losaltosca.gov/meetings>.

Decisions of the Planning Commission are final unless appealed by filing an appeal with the City Clerk within 14 calendar days of the decision. No building permits shall be issued during this 14-day period.



**CITY OF LOS ALTOS
JOINT PLANNING AND HISTORIC
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025
6:00 p.m.
1 N. San Antonio Rd. ~ Los Altos, CA**

*Joe Beninato, Chair
Richard Roche, Vice Chair
Mehrudd Jon Ahi, Commissioner
Kate Disney, Commissioner
Susan Mensinger, Commissioner
Eric Steinle, Commissioner*

Item 1.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Joe Beninato, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ESTABLISH QUORUM: All Planning Commissioners were present and in person during the meeting with the exception of Commissioner Mensinger who was absent.

All Historical Commissioners were present and in person during the meeting with the exception of Commissioner Maguire-Negus who was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There was no public comment.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Planning Commission Minutes

Approve the minutes of the Regular Planning Commission meeting of December 5, 2024.

Motion by Disney and Second by Ahi to approve the consent calendar. **Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.**

PUBLIC HEARING

2. H24-0003 and DR24-0002 - Natalie Tan for SSA Landscape Architects - 13 South San Antonio Road

Request for a Historical Alteration Permit (H24-0003) and Design Review (DR24-0002) for a new library courtyard. The project is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) and Section 15303 (New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. *Project Planner: Sean Gallegos*

Sean Gallegos, Senior Planner, presented the project.

Natalie Tan and Steve Sutherland, applicant, presented and made themselves available for questions.

Commissioners asked staff and the applicant questions.

Chair Beninato opened the public comment period.

Maddy McBirney, Jon Baer, Roberta Phillips, Freddie Wheeler, Alice Mansell, Richard Feldman, Maria Bautista, Nicole Richards, and Teresa Morris from the public spoke. The applicant spoke.

Chair Beninato closed the public comment period.

The Historic Commission discussed the Historical Alteration Permit.

Motion by Commissioner Adams and Second by Commissioner Atkinson to adopt a Resolution approving a Historical Alteration Permit (H24-0003) for a new library courtyard at 13 South San Antonio Road per the recommended findings and conditions of approval; and find the project is categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) and Section 15303 (New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures). **Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.**

The Planning Commission discussed the Design Review Permit.

Motion by Chair Beninato and Second by Commissioner Steinle to adopt a Resolution approving a Design Review Permit (D24-0002) for a new library courtyard at 13 South San Antonio Road per the recommended findings and conditions of approval with an added condition of approval for the applicant to work with Development Services staff to refine the fence materials for the patio; and find the project is categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) and Section 15303 (New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures). **Motion carried 5-1 by roll call vote with Commissioner Disney in dissent.**

DISCUSSION

3. Planning Commission Work Plan

The Planning Commission and staff discussed the work plan.

Chair Beninato opened the public comment period.

Jim Wing from the public spoke.

Chair Beninato closed the public comment period.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS - None.

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - Commissioner Ahi will report on previously approved Downtown projects.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

City of Los Altos
Joint Planning Commission and Historic Commission Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2025
Page 3 of 3

Stephanie Williams
Development Services Deputy Director

The Planning Commission Meeting recording may be viewed via the following external website: <https://www.youtube.com/@CityofLosAltosCA>. The City of Los Altos does not own or operate YouTube. The video referenced on these minutes were live at the time the minutes were published.



**CITY OF LOS ALTOS
SPECIAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025
5:00 p.m.
1 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos, CA**

*Joe Beninato, Chair
Richard Roche, Vice Chair
Mehruddon Jon Ahi, Commissioner
Kate Disney, Commissioner
Susan Mensinger, Commissioner
Eric Steinle, Commissioner*

Item 2.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Joe Beninato, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ESTABLISH QUORUM: All Planning Commissioners were present and in person during the meeting with the exception of Commissioner Disney who was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Alice Mansell from the public spoke.

DISCUSSION

1. Study Session - Discuss Rezoning Options of Sherwood Triangle Area

Discuss rezoning options of Sherwood Triangle Area as directed by the Los Altos City Council.

Nick Zornes, Assistant City Manager, presented the project.

Commissioners asked staff questions.

Chair Beninato opened the public comment period.

There were no public speakers.

Chair Beninato closed the public comment period.

The Planning Commission discussed the project.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS - None

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Stephanie Williams
Development Services Deputy Director

The Planning Commission Meeting recording may be viewed via the following external website: <https://www.youtube.com/@CityofLosAltosCA>. The City of Los Altos does not own or operate YouTube. The video referenced on these minutes were live at the time the minutes were published.



Agenda Report
Planning Commission
Meeting Date: April 3, 2025
Prepared By: Nick Zornes

Subject: Rezoning of Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan Area

COUNCIL PRIORITY AREA

- ☐ Business Communities
- ☐ Circulation Safety and Efficiency
- ☐ Environmental Sustainability
- ☒ Housing
- ☐ Neighborhood Safety Infrastructure
- ☒ General Government

RECOMMENDATION

Consider the draft ordinances and provide recommendation to the Los Altos City Council for the adoption of the proposed ordinances which include:

1. An Ordinance of the Los Altos City Council of the City of Los Altos Amending Chapter 14.50 of the Los Altos Municipal Code; and
2. An Ordinance of the Los Altos City Council of the City of Los Altos Repealing in its Entirety the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan of the Los Altos Municipal Code; and
3. An Ordinance of the Los Altos City Council of the City of Los Altos Amending Chapter 14.88 of the Los Altos Municipal Code and Rezoning Certain Parcels Located along San Antonio Road and El Camino Real in the City of Los Altos to Commercial Thoroughfare (CT) Zoning District; and

Find that the proposed zone change and amendments are exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15183 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines since the zone change and amendments are consistent with the adopted General Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

Not Applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed zone change and amendments are exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15183 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines since the zone change and amendments are consistent with the adopted General Plan.

BACKGROUND

On January 28, 2025, the Los Altos City Council considered a Private Zone Text Amendment as required pursuant to Chapter 14.01 of the Los Altos Municipal Code. The Private Zone Text Amendment was for the consideration of allowing Residential Uses on the ground floor of the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) zoning district.

The City Council received a presentation from staff, accepted public testimony and discussed the request of the Private Zone Text Amendment. The City Council was informed that a rezoning of the parcel in question only would not be allowed as it is considered “spot zoning”. Additionally, the request would not be eligible for a Variance, as Variances are deemed unconstitutional when granted for Use in the State of California. The City Council was further informed that the Private Zone Text Amendment as requested would apply to all CN zoned properties within the city. The City Council clarified that they do not desire to have ground floor residential allowed throughout the City on all properties zoned CN. After further discussion the City Council directed staff to take this item to the Los Altos Planning Commission for consideration and discussion of what the Sherwood Triangle Area could be rezoned to which would allow for ground floor residential, and to further consider the validity and necessity of the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan.

On February 27, 2025, the Los Altos Planning Commission held a Study Session open to the public to discuss the direction of the City Council and the specific request made for the Private Zone Text Amendment. The Planning Commission received a presentation from staff, accepted public testimony and discussed the request of the Private Zone Text Amendment. As part of the Planning Commission discussion regarding the proposed Rezoning of the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan, the commission discussed blending the setback requirements of the existing (CN) Zone with the setback requirements of the (CT) Zone. Additionally, the Planning Commission discussed the validity of the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan.

The Ordinances contained within this Agenda Item reflect the discussion of the Planning Commission from its February 27, 2025 Study Session.

ANALYSIS

There are currently forty-two (42) parcels within the Sherwood Triangle Area and are identified in Attachment 2, of which thirty-nine (39) are zoned Commercial Neighborhood (CN) and three (3) are zoned Office Administrative (OA). Additionally, all forty-two (42) parcels are designated Thoroughfare Commercial (TC) in the Los Altos General Plan – Land Use Element.

Existing Zoning Standards

Development Standard	CN Zoning	CT Zoning
Density	No Maximum	No Maximum
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	No Maximum	No Maximum
Front Setback	0 feet	20 feet
Side Setback	0 feet	10 feet (interior side) 15 feet (exterior side)
Rear Setback	20 feet	25 feet
Height Limit	45 feet/4 stories (Mixed Use) 30 feet/3 stories (Commercial)	55 feet/5 stories (Residential) 60 feet/5 stories (Mixed Use) 45 feet/4 stories (Commercial)

Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan

The Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan commonly referred to as the “Sherwood Triangle” Area was originally adopted on March 2, 1999, with a minor amendment on February 12, 2008. The Specific Plan as it remains today is largely a vision document as it was written with subjective criteria and is mostly unenforceable. The Specific Plan deviates to the underlying zoning for nearly all Development Standards.

Zoning Designation Inconsistency

The City of Los Altos General Plan Land Use Element establishes the allowed Land Uses for each category. The Zoning Code mirrors the City's Land Use Element to help enable consistency between the two documents. The parcels located in the Sherwood Triangle Area currently have inconsistent Zoning Designations as all forty-two (42) parcels have a Land Use Designation of Thoroughfare Commercial (TC) per the Land Use Element. The correct Zoning Designation should be Commercial Thoroughfare (CT) for parcels with the Land Use Designation of Thoroughfare Commercial (TC).

DISCUSSION

Based on the existing Land Use Designation as established in the Land Use Element it is recommended that the Sherwood Triangle Area be rezoned to Commercial Thoroughfare (CT). This rezoning would create consistency between the Zoning and Land Use Designations which is required by California Planning & Zoning Law.

It is important to note that as apart of the rezoning that is being discussed the City is precluded by the Senate Bill 330 (SB 330), also known as the "Housing Crisis Act", from reducing the density or intensity of a Zoning or Land Use designation. Since the City currently does not have a limit on density this means that it must remain as it is today. As can be seen in the Analysis Section of this Agenda Report there are differences in the setbacks and height limits between the CN and CT zoning districts.

The following are recommended modifications for the CT zoning district:

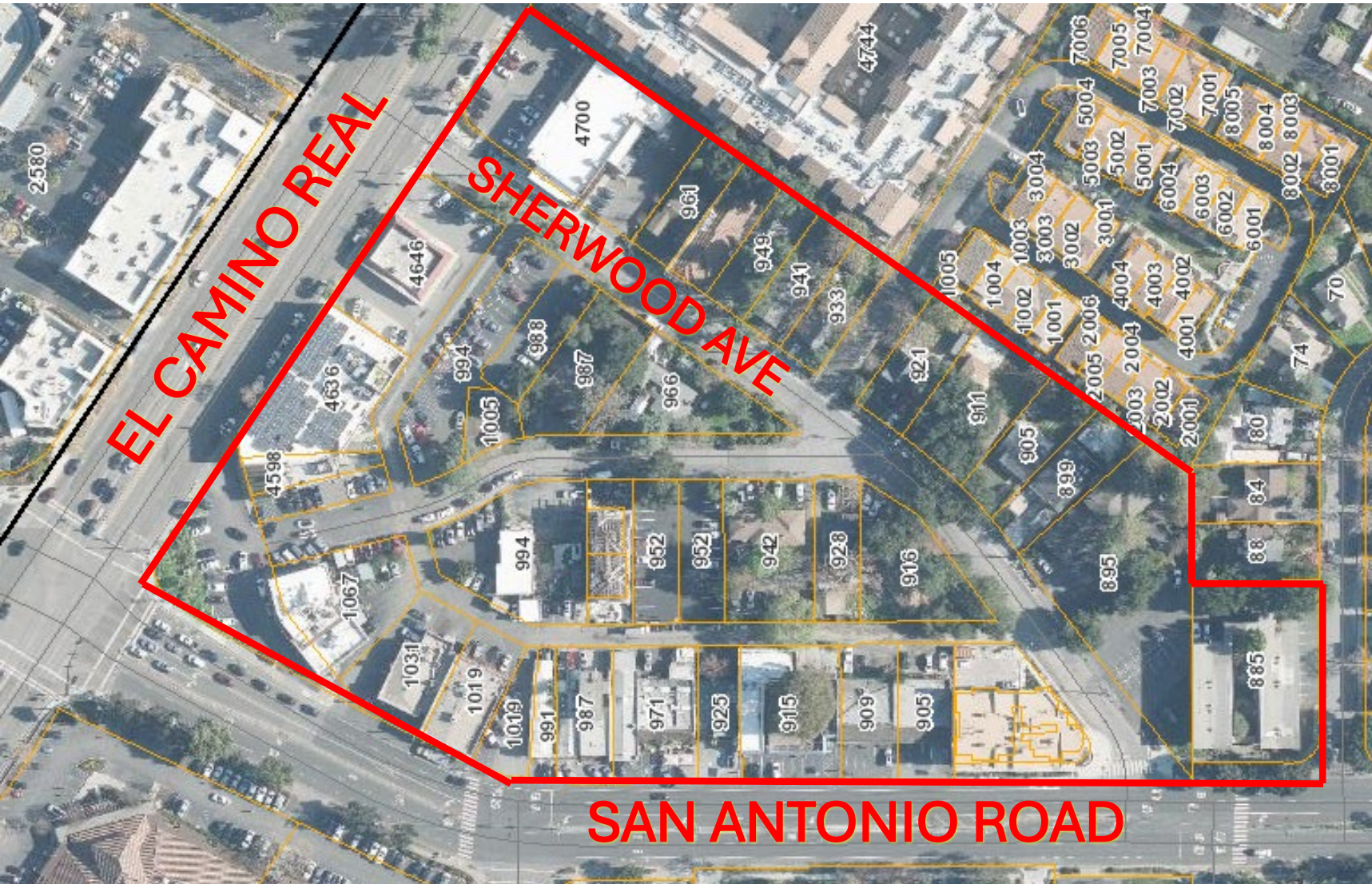
	EXISTING	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Development Standard	CN Zoning	CT Zoning	CT Zoning
Density	No Maximum	No Maximum	No Maximum
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	No Maximum	No Maximum	No Maximum
Front Setback	0 feet	20 feet	10 feet
Side Setback	0 feet	10 feet (interior side) 15 feet (exterior side)	5 feet (interior side) 10 feet (exterior side)
Rear Setback	20 feet	25 feet	20 feet
Height Limit	45 feet/4 stories (Mixed Use) 30 feet/3 stories (Commercial)	55 feet/5 stories (Residential) 60 feet/5 stories (Mixed Use) 45 feet/4 stories (Commercial)	55 feet/5 stories (Residential) 60 feet/5 stories (Mixed Use) 45 feet/4 stories (Commercial)

The table provided above is proposed as a method of blending together the existing Development Standards that exist in the CN and CT zoning districts. This allows the parcels located in the Sherwood Triangle Area (currently zoned CN) to continue to benefit from smaller setbacks as are available today, while taking on the increased height allowances in the CT Zoning District. Effectively the CT Zoning District would reduce the setbacks required by 5-10 feet depending on the specific setback.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **Rezoning Area Map**
2. **List of Parcels**
3. **City Council Agenda Report (1-28-2025)**
4. **City Council Agenda Attachment (1-28-2025)**

5. **Draft Ordinance – Amending Chapter 14.50**
6. **Draft Ordinance – Amending Chapter 14.50 (Appendix A)**
7. **Draft Ordinance – Repealing Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan**
8. **Draft Ordinance – Amending Chapter 14.88**
9. **Draft Ordinance – Amending Chapter 14.88 (Exhibit A)**



APN	ADDRESS	EXISTING ZONING DESIGNATION	EXISTING LAND USE DESIGNATION
17001065	961 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001064	949 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001063	949 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001062	941 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001061	933 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001059	921 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001058	911 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001057	905 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001056	899 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001055	895 SHERWOOD AVE	OA	TC
17001077	885 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	OA	TC
16716022	900 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	OA	TC
17001108	889 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001023	905 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001024	909 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001025	915 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001026	925 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001027	971 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001028	987 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001029	991 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001030	1019 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001031	1019 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001032	1031 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001033	1067 SAN ANTONIO ROAD	CN	TC
17001095	NO ADDRESS	CN	TC
17001035	NO ADDRESS	CN	TC
17001036	4598 EL CAMINO REAL	CN	TC
17001087	4636 EL CAMINO REAL	CN	TC
17001088	4646 EL CAMINO REAL	CN	TC
17001086	994 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC

17001042	988 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001043	987 ACACIA AVE	CN	TC
17001044	966 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001045	1005 ACACIA AVE	CN	TC
17001053	916 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001052	928 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001051	942 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001050	952 SHERWOOD AVE	CN	TC
17001111	962 ACACIA AVE	CN	TC
17001112	962 ACACIA AVE	CN	TC
17001113	962 ACACIA AVE	CN	TC
17001047	997 ACACIA AVE	CN	TC



City Council Agenda Report

Meeting Date: January 28, 2025

Prepared By: Nick Zornes

Approved By: Gabe Engeland

Subject: Private Zone Text Amendment Request

COUNCIL PRIORITY AREA

- ☐ Business Communities
- ☐ Circulation Safety and Efficiency
- ☐ Environmental Sustainability
- ☒ Housing
- ☐ Neighborhood Safety Infrastructure
- ☒ General Government

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize or Reject Private Zone Text Amendment Request

FISCAL IMPACT

Not Applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This action involves only feasibility or planning study for possible future action and as such is statutorily exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15262 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Not Applicable.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Section 14.01.080(B) of the Los Altos Municipal Code, Amendments to Land Use Documents are allowed of any person who can demonstrate ownership interest in real property located within the City of Los Altos. An interested party shall make their request in writing to the Zoning Administrator. The written request shall be reviewed by the Zoning Administrator and analyzed for initial potential impacts associated with the request. Once reviewed, the Zoning Administrator will present the amendment request to the City Council for authorization or denial to submit a formal application for further consideration.

ANALYSIS

The Zone Text Amendment Request was received in late 2024 by one of the owners of 962 Acacia Ave, Los Altos, CA, 94022. The request would necessitate modification to Section 14.40.030 of

the Los Altos Municipal Code which contains provisions for Permitted Uses in the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) District.

Section 14.40.030 – Permitted uses (CN).

The following uses shall be permitted in the CN District:

- A. Office-administrative services located above the ground floor;
- B. Office-administrative services uses located on the ground floor on Sherwood Avenue within the Sherwood Gateway specific plan area, and in existing commercial buildings constructed before February 22, 2013, on Grant Road between Newcastle Drive and Farndon Avenue within the Woodland Plaza area, provided that any site with over five thousand (5,000) square feet of existing retail or restaurant space on the ground floor shall retain an equal or greater amount of its existing retail and/or restaurant space on the ground floor;
- C. Parking spaces and loading areas;
- D. Recycling facilities: (i) small collection facilities, and (ii) reverse vending machines, as provided for in Chapter 14.68 of this title;
- E. Restaurants, excluding drive-through services;
- F. Retail and personal service establishments;
- G. Medical and dental offices that are less than five thousand (5,000) gross square feet;
- H. Mixed use development(s) which shall consist of residential uses and a minimum floor area ratio of twenty (20) percent nonresidential uses or a maximum thirty-three (33) percent nonresidential uses; and
- I. Uses which are determined by the zoning administrator to be of the same general character.

The above-listed Permitted Uses of the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) District does not provide allowance for a 100% residential housing development as an allowed use. Based on the private zone text amendment requested this would effectively change the permitted uses within the district which would necessitate modification of the adopted chapter contained within the Zoning Code.

DISCUSSION

The existing Zoning regulations applicable to the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) District were last modified in late 2023 as part of the Housing Element implementation process. At that time the City Council did not include the allowance for a 100% residential housing development instead allowing mixed use development(s) to consist of residential uses and a minimum floor area ratio of twenty (20) percent nonresidential uses in the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) District. The adopted provision would not allow the desired conversion of existing nonresidential square footage at 962 Acacia Avenue to residential square footage.

The legal mechanism to allow for such a modification of allowed uses in the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) would be initiation of a Zone Text Amendment which applies to all parcels located within the zoning district. The specific modification(s) to Chapter 14.40 of the Los Altos Municipal Code and any other conflicting land use documents would be determined through the formal review process if authorized by the City Council.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Letter of Request Received**

Attn: City of Los Altos

I am writing to make a request regarding my property at 962 Acacia Ave. Just to remind you a bit about the property, it's a brand new building that we got our Certificate of Occupancy for on June 1, 2023.

The building includes two 2-story condominiums that take up the 2nd and 3rd floors and are each about 2000 square feet. On the first floor, we were told we needed to build a retail space, so that's what we did. It's a 600 sf commercial space facing Acacia Ave and has one designated parking space and one handicapped parking space.

The whole building became available to rent in June of last year, and we easily rented out the 2 residential units, but have gotten no inquiries on the commercial unit. We've listed it on loopnet, had several realtors try to rent it for us, and done personal door knocking and phone calling and haven't been able to get it rented. It's not in a place that gets any kind of foot traffic, it's hard to find, and doesn't have great parking, so we haven't gotten a single inquiry.

Because of this I have several concerns. First and most obviously, I don't think it's safe or good for the neighborhood to have an empty unit there. I think in general it's always better to have spaces filled, just to lower vandalism and crime in an area. I'm sure all the neighbors would agree that they'd rather not have that unit empty. Second, I'd rather not be the owner of a completely vacant unit, and based on my experience so far I'm not sure if I will be able to rent it.

So, as I think of my alternatives, since I haven't been able to rent it as a commercial space, I'm thinking we should convert the space to residential. Residential has proven to rent easily in that area. And the 3 points I listed above for why it's not a good commercial unit actually are great benefits for a residential unit. And, I know Los Altos is looking for more affordable options for people to rent in the community. Even at market rates, because this would be a smaller unit, this would be a space that would be much more affordable to rent for anyone who works and wants to live in Los Altos. So, I think this would really help. And to make it even more attractive, we do have a commercial storage space attached behind this unit, that we could add into the reconstruction so we could make the unit an 800 sf unit. It's going to cost us a bit to remodel this area, but I think it could be a really good thing for everyone involved.

To make this happen, we are willing to remap the property since the current condo plan shows a commercial use on the ground floor, if the City is willing to allow for a residential use.

Additionally, based on what I understand about the zoning of the area, I believe that in section 14.40.030 of the zoning code, we would need to do a zoning modification. This would be a private party request (which I am requesting now) to do a zone text amendment to allow for a residential unit on the ground floor of my building. One way to do this is to maybe do a site specific zone amendment for my building only because the Commercial unit is not realistic for commercial viability. That way you don't need to worry about changing the code for all CN zones and all the implications of that. Another option might be to just write into the code an option to convert to residential any commercial space in the CN zones that are less than 1000sf.

You know much more about this than I do, so I'm of course open to any ideas or suggestions you may have.

My question is, would you like to consider allowing us to do this remodel, and what would you need from us to make it work the best for the Los Altos community? Please let me know your thoughts.

Warmly,
Moneeka

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-__**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS
AMENDING CHAPTER 14.50 OF THE LOS ALTOS MUNICIPAL CODE**

WHEREAS, the City Council is empowered pursuant to Article XI, Section 7 of the California Constitution to make and enforce within the City all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances, and regulations not in conflict with general laws; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, and **DATE TO BE INSERTED**; and

WHEREAS, the amendments was processed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Government Code and the Los Altos Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15183 of the State Guidelines implementing the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Los Altos does hereby ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 14.50 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE. Chapter 14.50 of the Los Altos Municipal Code is hereby amended as set forth in Appendix A to this Ordinance, underline indicating addition, strikethrough indicating deletion.

SECTION 2. CONSTITUTIONALITY; AMBIGUITIES. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof. Any ambiguities in the Los Altos Municipal Code created by this Ordinance shall be resolved by the Development Services Director, in their reasonable discretion, after consulting the City Attorney.

SECTION 3. PUBLICATION. This Ordinance shall be published as provided in Government Code Section 36933.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall be effective upon the commencement of the thirty-first day following the adoption hereof.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Ordinance was duly and properly introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Altos held on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, and was thereafter, at a regular meeting held on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, passed, and adopted by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Pete Dailey, MAYOR

Attest:

Melissa Thurman, MMC, CITY CLERK

APPENDIX A
CHAPTER 14.50

Chapter 14.50 CT COMMERCIAL THOROUGHFARE DISTRICT*

Sections:

14.50.010 CT District.

The regulations, general provisions, and exceptions set forth in this chapter and in Chapter 14.66 of this title shall apply in the CT District.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

14.50.020 Specific purposes (CT).

Specific purposes for CT Districts are as follows:

- A. To encourage a variety of residential developments, including affordable housing development;
- B. To promote the economic and commercial success of Los Altos;
- C. To encourage aggregation of parcels;
- D. To buffer the impacts of commercial and multi-family land uses on neighboring residential properties;
- E. To emphasize a healthy proportion of retail uses as opposed to office and service uses; and
- F. To allow for mixed uses of commercial and residential

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017)

14.50.030 Permitted uses (CT).

The following uses shall be permitted in the CT District:

- A. Professional and office-administrative services;
- B. Restaurants, excluding drive-through facilities;
- C. Retail and personal services;
- D. Residential only development(s);
- E. Mixed use development(s);
- F. Single room occupancy (SRO) housing;
- G. Emergency shelters; and
- H. Uses which are determined by the zoning administrator to be of the same general character.

(Ord. 05-280 § 8 (part); Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2015-406, § 2, 2-10-2015; Ord. No. 2015-408, § 2, 6-9-2015; Ord. No. 2023-503, § 3(App. C), 11-28-2023)

14.50.040 Conditional uses (CT).

Upon the granting of a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 14.80 of this title, the following uses shall be permitted in the CT District:

- A. Animal clinics, hospitals, and kennels;
- B. Business, professional, and trade schools;
- C. Commercial recreation;
- D. Day care centers;
- E. Hotels and motels;
- F. Medical and dental clinics;
- G. Mortuaries;
- H. Pet shops;
- I. Printing shops;
- J. Upholstery shops; and
- K. Uses which are determined by the planning commission to be of the same general character.

(Ord. 05-280 § 8 (part); Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2015-406, §§ 3, 4, 2-10-2015; Ord. No. 2015-409, § 2, 6-9-2015; Ord. No. 2023-503, § 3(App. C), 11-28-2023)

14.50.050 Limited conditional uses (CT).

Upon the granting of a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 14.80 of this title, the following uses shall be permitted except on parcels within fifty (50) feet of an R District:

- A. Automotive display or salesrooms, servicing and repair;
- B. Cabinet and carpenter shops;
- C. Drive-through facilities, including car washes;
- D. Service stations provided the site has at least one hundred (100) feet of frontage on a street with a minimum site area of twenty thousand (20,000) square feet;
- E. Sheet metal shops;
- F. Sign painting shops; and
- G. Theaters and auditoriums.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 10-348, § 6, 4-13-2010)

14.50.060 Required conditions (CT).

The following conditions shall be required of all uses in the CT District:

- A. All businesses, services, and processes shall be conducted within a completely enclosed structure, except for recycling facilities, parking and loading areas, outdoor dining areas, nurseries, the sale of gasoline and oil at service stations, bus depots, or as permitted under the terms of a permit issued pursuant to Chapter 14.80 of this title.
- B. No use shall be permitted and no process, equipment, or materials shall be employed which are found by the commission to be objectionable by reason of odor, dust, noise, vibration, illumination, glare, unsightliness, or electrical disturbances which are manifested beyond the premises in which the permitted use is located.
- C. No property owner, business owner, or tenant shall permit or allow activities, which violate the requirements of this chapter, including the following general criteria:
 - 1. General screening standard. Every development shall provide sufficient screening to reasonably protect the privacy, safety, and environment of neighboring residential properties and shield them from adverse external effects of that development.

Walls up to twelve (12) feet in height shall be required for the purpose of attenuating noise, odor, air pollution, artificial light, mitigation for grade differential between properties, and providing privacy and safety.
 - 2. Access and screening of refuse collection. Every development will be required to provide suitable space on-site for solid waste separation, collection, storage, and pick up and shall site these in locations that facilitate access, collection, and minimize any negative impact on persons occupying the development site, neighboring properties, or public rights-of-way.
 - 3. Lighting. Lighting within any lot that unnecessarily illuminates any other lot or substantially interferes with the use or enjoyment of such other lot is prohibited. Lighting shall be designed to minimize the glare and intensity of external illumination, and to respect the privacy of neighbors by avoiding direct and reflected illumination onto adjacent properties.
 - 4. Air pollution. Any use that emits any "air contaminant" as defined by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District shall comply with applicable state standards concerning air pollution.
 - 5. Maintenance of common areas, improvements, and facilities. Maintenance of all common areas, improvements, or facilities required by this chapter or any permit issued in accordance with its provisions shall be required except those areas, improvements, or facilities with respect to which an offer of dedication to the public has been accepted by the appropriate public authority.
 - 6. Odors. No use may generate any odor that reasonably may be found objectionable as determined by an appropriate agency such as the Santa Clara County health department and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District beyond the boundary occupied by the enterprise generating the odor. All mechanical, venting, and/or exhausting equipment that generates odors shall be located away from residential properties.
 - 7. Noise. No person shall operate, or cause to be operated, any source of sound at any location within the city or allow the creation of any noise on property owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by such person, which causes the noise level, when measured on any other property, either incorporated or unincorporated, to exceed standards as set forth in Chapter 6.16 of the Los Altos Municipal Code. All mechanical, venting, and/or exhausting equipment that generates noise shall be located away from residential properties. Exterior heating, venting, and air-conditioning facilities shall be muffled.

In order to attenuate noise associated with commercial development, walls up to twelve (12) feet in height shall be required at a commercial or residential interface.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017)

14.50.070 Site area (CT).

The minimum site area shall be twenty thousand (20,000) square feet. The minimum site frontage shall be seventy-five (75) feet.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

14.50.080 Residential density (CT).

No residential density shall be applicable within the Commercial Thoroughfare Zoning District.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2023-503, § 3(App. C), 11-28-2023)

14.50.090 Front yard (CT).

The minimum front yard depth shall be ~~twenty ten~~ (2010) feet, with a minimum of fifty (50) percent of which shall be landscaped.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2023-503, § 3(App. C), 11-28-2023)

14.50.100 Side yards (CT).

- A. The minimum interior side yard depth shall be ~~ten five~~ (105) feet, with a minimum of fifty (50) percent of which shall be landscaped.
- B. The minimum exterior side yard depth shall be ~~fifteen ten~~ (1510) feet, with a minimum of fifty (50) percent of which shall be landscaped.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017; Ord. No. 2023-503, § 3(App. C), 11-28-2023)

14.50.110 Rear yard (CT).

The minimum rear yard depth shall be twenty ~~five~~ (2520) feet, with a minimum of fifty (50) percent of which shall be landscaped.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 10-351, § 1, 5-25-2010; Ord. No. 2023-503, § 3(App. C), 11-28-2023)

14.50.120 Off-street parking (CT).

As provided in Chapter 14.74 of this title.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

14.50.130 Off-street loading (CT).

As provided in Chapter 14.74 of this title.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

14.50.140 Height of structures (CT).

- A. Residential only development(s) building height shall be a maximum of fifty-five (55) feet and five stories.
- B. Mixed use development(s) building height shall be a maximum of sixty (60) feet and five stories.
- C. Non-residential use only development(s) building height shall be a maximum of forty-five (45) feet and four stories.

(Ord. 08-323 § 1: Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 10-351, § 2, 5-25-2010; Ord. No. 2023-503, § 3(App. C), 11-28-2023)

14.50.150 Open space (CT).

All multiple-family residential projects, including mixed-use projects with multiple-family dwelling units, except duplexes, shall provide permanently maintained outdoor open space, subject to the following requirements:

- A. Although not required for each dwelling unit, an average of fifty (50) square feet of private open space shall be provided for the total number of dwelling units within a project.
- B. Any private open space provided shall be at the same level and immediately accessible from the unit it serves. The provision of private open space shall not reduce the common open space requirements of this section.
- C. Depending on the number of dwelling units in a multiple-family project, common open space shall be provided to meet the following criteria:
 - 1. Two to ten (10) units: a minimum of eight hundred (800) square feet of common open space shall be provided.
 - 2. Eleven (11) to twenty-five (25) units: a minimum of one thousand six hundred (1,600) square feet of common open space shall be provided.
 - 3. Twenty-six (26) to fifty (50) units: a minimum of two thousand four hundred (2,400) square feet of common open space shall be provided.
 - 4. Fifty-one (51) or more units: a minimum of three thousand two hundred (3,200) square feet of common open space shall be provided.
- D. Common open space areas:
 - 1. Shall be designed to be easily accessible and shall be available for passive and active outdoor recreational purposes for the enjoyment of all residents of the project;
 - 2. Shall be provided as continuous, usable site elements of sufficient size to be usable by residents that may be within the rear yard setback;

(Supp. No. 43, Update 2)

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3. Shall not include driveways, public or private streets, or utility easements where the ground surface cannot be used appropriately for open space.
 4. Common open space areas shall be surfaced with any practical combination of landscaping, paving, decking, concrete, or other serviceable material with no more than fifty (50) percent of the area at grade level covered with a non-permeable surface.
- E. Required common open space shall be controlled and permanently maintained by the owner of the property or by a homeowners' association. Provisions for control and maintenance shall be included in any property covenants of common interest developments.

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017)

Editor's note(s)—Ord. No. 2017-436 § 1, adopted October 10, 2017, enacted new provisions set out as §§ 14.50.150, 14.50.160, and 14.50.180, and subsequently renumbered former §§ 14.50.150 through 14.50.180 as 14.50.170 and 14.50.190 through 14.50.210. Historical notation to the former sections have been retained for reference purposes.

14.50.160 Rooftop uses (CT).

Rooftop activities or uses are permitted within the perimeter walls of a structure that meet all setback standards provided also that any such activities or uses are accessory to the principal use or uses of the development, and provided further, activities shall comply with the following performance standards:

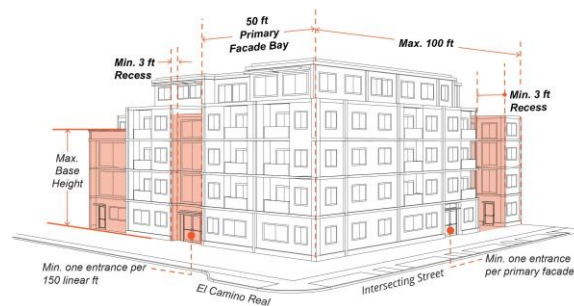
- A. No use shall be established or activity conducted that violates the noise standards and limits identified in Chapter 6.16, Noise Control, of the Municipal Code.
- B. No activity shall be conducted which causes ground vibrations perceptible at the property line.
- C. No lighting or illuminated device shall be operated so as to create glare which creates a hazard or nuisance on other properties.
- D. No use or activity shall be conducted without first obtaining any required permit from the county air pollution control district. Uses shall be conducted to prevent dust or other airborne material from crossing property lines.
- E. Solid wastes shall be handled and stored so as to prevent nuisances, health and fire hazards, and to facilitate recycling. Suitable containers shall be provided to prevent blowing or scattering of trash and screened by an enclosure. Suitable concealed space and containers shall be provided at the roof top to encourage the appropriate sorting and collection of discarded materials.
- F. No use may generate any odor that reasonably may be found objectionable as determined by an appropriate agency such as the Santa Clara County Health Department and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District beyond the boundary occupied by the enterprise generating the odor. All mechanical, venting, and/or exhausting equipment that generates odors shall be located away from residential properties.
- G. The use of conventional energy sources for space heating and cooling, water heating, and illumination shall be minimized by means of proper design and orientation, including provision and protection of solar exposure.
- H. These performance standards are general requirements and shall not be construed to prevent the council, boards or commission with review authority or staff from imposing, as part of project approval, specific conditions which may be more restrictive, in order to meet the intent of these regulations.

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017)

Editor's note(s)—See Editor's Note § 14.50.150.

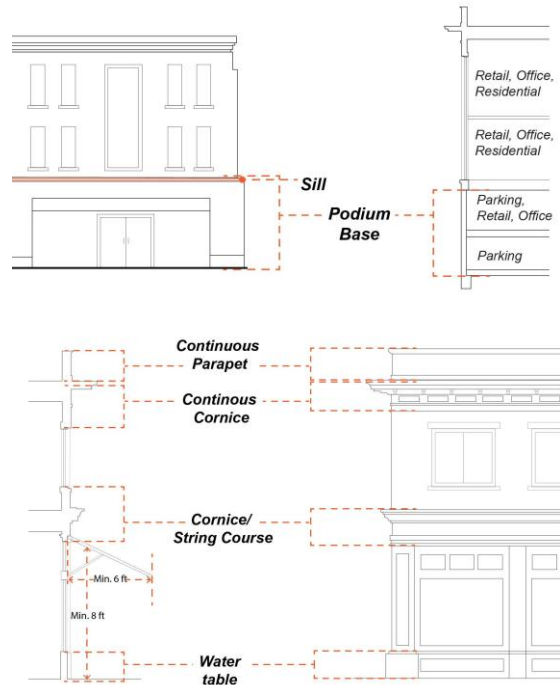
14.50.170 Design control (CT).

- A. Building Placement. A minimum seventy-five (75) percent of ground-floor building frontages facing El Camino Real must be built at the minimum setback line. This standard applies to the building frontage only (exclusive of side setbacks).
- B. Building Massing and Articulation.
 1. Upper-story Step-backs.
 - a. Front: Minimum ten (10) feet from ground floor façade for stories above forty-five (45) feet in height.
 - b. Street Side: Minimum ten (10) feet from ground floor façade for stories above forty-five (45) feet in height.
 2. Vertical Articulation.
 - a. When a building façade exceeds one hundred (100) feet in length along a right-of-way, it must be separated into primary façade bays no greater than fifty (50) feet and secondary façade bays defined by a recess a minimum three feet deep and ten (10) feet wide.
 - b. A minimum one entrance shall be provided per one hundred fifty (150) linear feet along El Camino Real and per primary façade bay along all other rights-of-way.
 - c. The eave/roof of a secondary façade bay shall be no higher than the corresponding elements of the primary façade bay.



3. Horizontal Articulation. New façades and façade modifications along a street or civic space shall be designed to visually express a base, middle, and top.
 - a. One or more of the following patterns shall be used to define the base:
 - i. Watertable: Base material extends from grade to between eight and fifty-four (54) inches above grade.
 - ii. Podium: The base material encompasses the lowest story (or stories) of the building, with or without mezzanine(s), and terminates in a sill, string course, or cornice at its upper bound (multi-story buildings only).
 - iii. Watertable and Cornice/String Course: A watertable using the base material is combined with a cornice or string course at the lowest story's upper bound, including any mezzanine (multi-story buildings only).

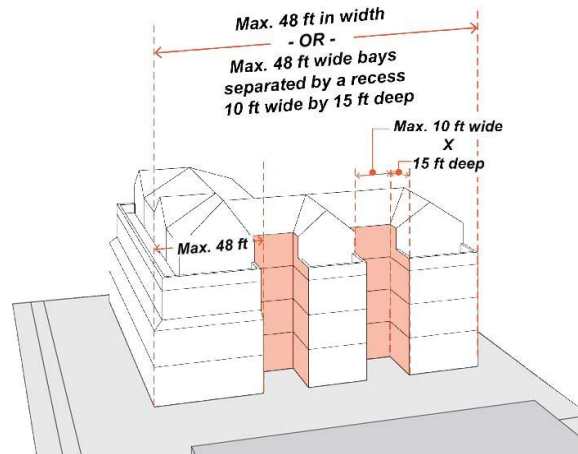
- b. The top of each building mass/bay shall be defined by elements spanning the full length of the façade of the mass/bay. Such elements may include a cornice, eave and/or gable(s), or other elements listed under Section 17.50.170.B.6. These elements shall be consistent with the overall architectural style of the building mass/bay.



4. Adjacencies.

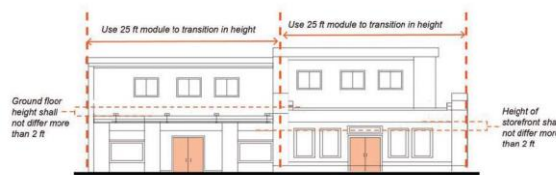
a. Façades Adjacent to an R-1 District.

- i. Building façade planes abutting an R-1 district may not exceed forty-eight (48) feet in width.
- ii. When a building façade abutting an R-1 district exceeds forty-eight (48) feet in width, it must be separated into façade bays no greater than forty-eight (48) feet by a recess ten (10) feet wide and fifteen (15) feet deep.
- iii. Balconies, roof decks and other habitable outdoor space are not allowed on upper-story façades abutting R-1 zones.
- iv. Sliding glass doors, French doors, and floor-to-ceiling windows are not allowed on upper-story façades abutting R-1 zones.



b. Storefront Façades Adjacent to Storefront Façades.

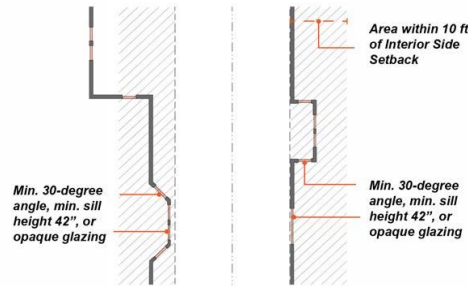
- i. The height of a storefront shall not differ from the height of any adjacent storefront by more than two feet.
- ii. The height of ground story shall not differ from height of any adjacent ground story by more than two feet.
- iii. Storefronts may transition in height using a module of twenty-five (25) feet in length along a right-of-way.



- c. Compatibility with Adjacent Shorter Buildings with Height Difference of One Story or More. When adjacent to an existing shorter building with a height difference of one story or more, a proposed building must utilize two or more of the following strategies:
 - i. Incorporate the uppermost floor into the roof form.
 - ii. Break the mass of the building into smaller modules through changes in wall plane, setbacks, and/or height.
 - iii. Match window heights and/or proportions.
 - iv. Relate roof cornices and moldings at floor lines.

5. Privacy and Line of Sight.

- a. Primary living spaces and balconies located along a side setback shall orient principal windows and balconies toward the front and rear of the building.
- b. Where windows are within ten (10) feet of and oriented toward an interior side setback, glazing shall either be a minimum thirty (30) degree angle measured perpendicular to the adjacent side setback line, have minimum sill height of forty-two (42) inches, or be opaque.
- c. The maximum sill height for an ingress/egress window is forty-four (44) inches from finished floor.



6. Roofline and Roof Design.

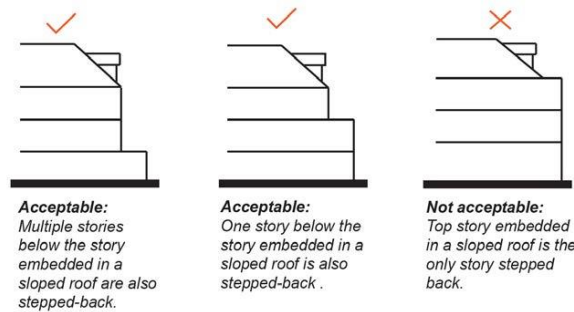
a. Roof designs shall be limited to:

- i. Hipped.
- ii. Gable.
- iii. Shed.
- iv. Dormer.
- v. Parapet.

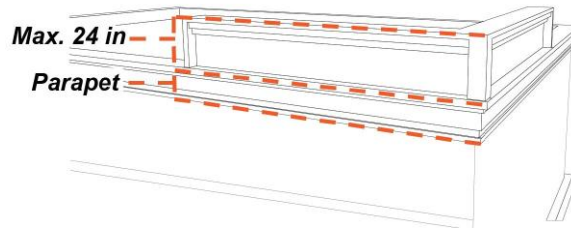
- (a) When used on the first or second floor, a parapet longer than twenty-five (25) feet in length must include at least one but not more than two of the following design elements to break up the length of the parapet:

- (1) Steps.
- (2) Curves.
- (3) Angled surfaces.

- (b) The length of a parapet segment on the third floor and above may not exceed twenty-five (25) feet.



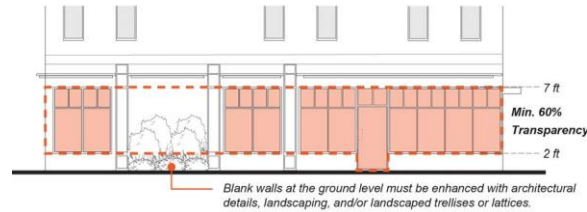
- b. When the top story is stepped back and embedded in a sloped roof form, the floor below must (and other floors may) be stepped back to meet the slope of the top story.
- c. Building façades facing an R-1 district must have a hipped or gable roof and may incorporate dormers.
- d. Roofline/parapet at corners shall not exceed roofline/parapet of adjacent wallplanes by more than twenty-four (24) inches.



C. Building Design.

1. Façade Design.

- a. Building façades shall be arranged in an orderly composition of bays, defined by vertically aligned openings alternating horizontally with solid walls or columns. The pattern shall be visually expressed through the spacing of openings, recesses, eaves, inset panels, cornices, overhangs, trellises, exposed rafters, columns, or bay windows.
 - b. The pattern may be shared between the ground floor and upper stories provided the ground floor exhibits enhanced detail or modulation.
 - c. Residential façades shall incorporate at least one element that signals habitation, such as bay windows, or balconies.
 - d. Non-glazed wall areas (blank walls) must be enhanced with architectural details, landscaping, and/or landscaped trellises or lattices.
2. Ground Level Transparency. A minimum sixty (60) percent of commercial ground floor street-facing façades between two and seven feet in height shall be transparent window surface. Opaque, reflective, or dark tinted glass is not allowed.



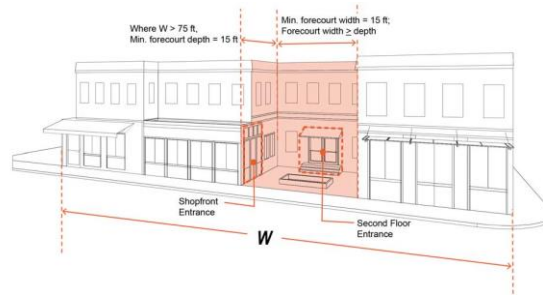
3. Pedestrian-Scaled Entrances.

- a. Buildings more than seventy (70) feet in length along a right-of-way must incorporate at least one forecourt frontage on the right-of-way-facing façade. Required forecourts must also comply with the standards of Section 14.50.170.C.3.b.v. below.
- b. Each street-facing building façade must incorporate at one of the following entry features. See Section 14.66.275 (Entrance Type Standards) for design standards applicable to each entrance type listed.
 - i. Stoop.
 - ii. Shopfront.
 - (a) Shopfronts more than twenty-five (25) feet in width must incorporate variations in bulkhead, awnings, materials and/or color to visually articulate the shopfront into modules not to exceed twenty-five (25) continuous feet.
 - iii. Gallery.

iv. Arcade.

v. Forecourt.

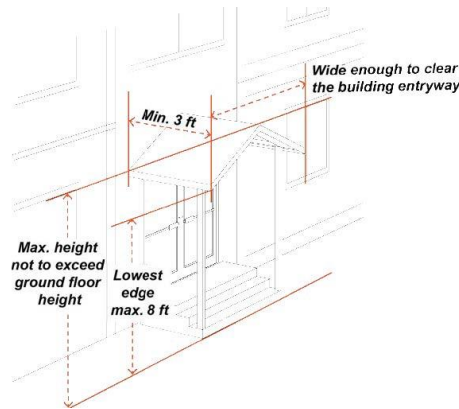
- (a) Forecourts must feature at least one entry to a shop and/or second floor use.
- (b) The size of the forecourt must be appropriate relative to the size of the building. The maximum ratio of building height to forecourt is 2:1 (height < 2 x width).
- (c) Forecourt must be minimum fifteen (15) feet in width.
- (d) Forecourt must be enclosed on at least three sides by buildings.
- (e) Forecourt must remain open to the sky (arbors and trellises are allowed).



vi. Terrace.

- c. Primary Entrance Location(s). Locate primary entrance on the front right-of-way.
- d. Individual Entries. Ground floor residential units facing a street must provide individual entries along the street frontage.
- e. Corner Entrances. Chamfered corners must incorporate a building entrance. Any required entrances may be provided on the corner of the building assuming one of the intersecting sides is a primary frontage.
- f. Street-facing Entries to Upper Floors. Street-facing entries to upper floors shall be equal in quality and detail to storefronts. This standard may be satisfied through two or more of the following:
 - i. Dedicated awning, canopy, or other roof element.
 - ii. Stairs with a single color applied to treads and a contrasting color or pattern applied to risers.
 - iii. Dedicated light fixture(s).
 - iv. Decorative street address numbers or tiles.
 - v. Plaque signs for upper-floor business tenants.
- g. Entry Protection. Primary street-facing entrances shall be protected by a recess in the building frontage at least three feet deep or by a projection extending outward at least three feet measured horizontally from the entrance, and wide enough to clear the building entryway on both sides.
 - i. Protection may be coterminous with an accent element.
 - ii. Protection may take the form of an extended eave, overhang, awning, door canopy, gallery, arcade frontage, or other element that provides shade and shelter from the elements.

- iii. The lowest edge of a projecting awning or door canopy shall have a vertical clearance of no more than eight feet.
- iv. Recessed entries shall differentiate pavement within the recess through the use of a dedicated paving material or pattern.

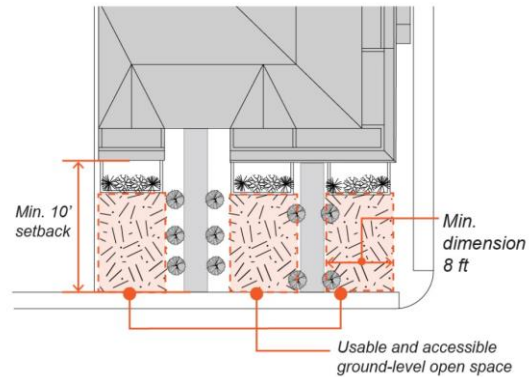


- h. Accent elements demarcating building frontage, entrance, and common open space areas shall not exceed the height of the ground floor story. Roof elements are excepted.
4. Ground Floor Floor-to-Ceiling Height.
- a. Minimum twenty-four (24) inches taller than typical upper floor floor-to-ceiling height where ground floor is non-residential.
 - b. Minimum twelve (12) inches taller than typical upper floor floor-to-ceiling where ground floor is residential.



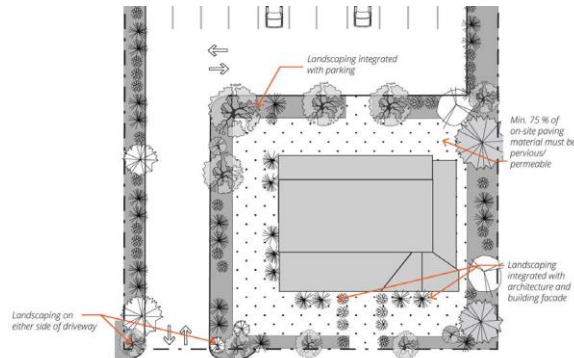
5. Interior Courtyard. Interior courtyards must be:
- a. Partially visible from the street and linked to the street by a clear accessible path of travel.
 - b. Enclosed on at least two sides by buildings.
 - c. Open to the sky (arbors and trellises are allowed).
 - d. A minimum width of twenty (20) feet and a minimum area of four hundred (400) square feet.
6. Paseos. Paseos must be:
- a. A minimum width of ten (10) feet for through-block paseos.
 - b. A minimum width of four feet for entries to courtyards or individual single businesses.
- D. Window Design. Vinyl windows are prohibited on façades visible from a right-of-way.
- E. Building Materials.
- 1. Primary shall mean fifty (50) percent or more of a façade surface area excluding transparent surfaces. Permitted primary cladding materials are limited to:

-
- a. Stucco (minimum two-coat stucco; synthetic stucco or EIFS not allowed).
 - b. Siding (lap, vertical, panelized, or shingle).
 - i. All siding shall be wood, composite wood, or cement fiberboard.
 - ii. Wood siding shall be painted or stained.
 - iii. Vinyl and aluminum siding are not permitted.
 - c. Stone.
 - d. Brick.
 - e. Concrete (board-form only).
2. Secondary shall mean less than fifty (50) percent of a façade surface area excluding transparent surfaces. Permitted secondary cladding materials are limited to:
- a. Stucco (minimum two-coat stucco; synthetic stucco not allowed, EIFS not allowed).
 - b. Siding (lap, vertical, panelized, or shingle).
 - i. All siding shall be wood, composite wood, or cement fiberboard.
 - ii. Wood siding shall be painted or stained.
 - iii. Vinyl and aluminum siding are not permitted.
 - c. Stone (building base only).
 - d. Brick (building base only).
 - e. Tile.
 - f. Metal (matte finish or Cor-ten).
 - i. Ribbed metal, titanium, and mirrored finishes are not permitted.
 - g. Concrete Masonry Units (watertable and building base only, and not allowed on any façade facing a right-of-way or a single-family zone).
 - h. Concrete (building base only, board-form only, cast concrete not permitted).
3. On attached elements, such as bay windows, orioles, and balconies.
- F. Ground Level Open Space. Where any required front, rear, or side yard setback is ten (10) feet or greater, on-site ground-level open space shall be provided within the setback.
- 1. The ground level open space shall be usable and accessible.
 - 2. The minimum dimension for ground level open space shall be eight feet.



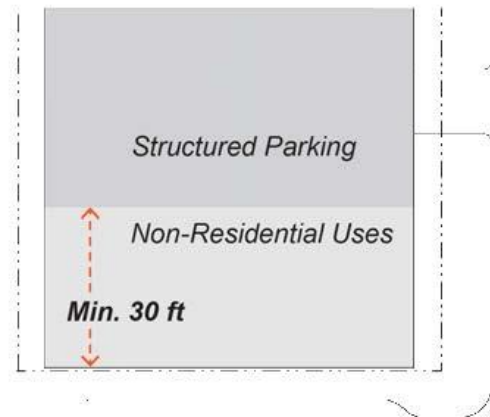
G. Landscaping and Paving.

1. Landscaping must be placed on each side of a driveway at grade or in raised planters.
2. Landscape elements shall be integrated with the building architecture, parking, and streetscape. Recommended patterns shall include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Planters for flowers and shrubs within street frontage.
 - b. Landscape buffers between parking spaces and building façades.
 - c. Landscaping within and/or on walls adjacent to courtyards, open spaces, and setbacks.
3. See Sections 14.66.180 (Maintenance of Landscaped Areas) and 14.70.070 (Landscaped Strips) for additional landscaping standards.

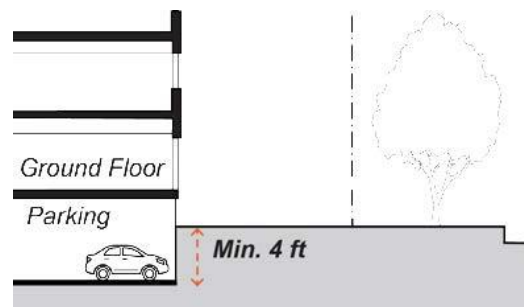


H. Parking Design and Access.

1. Where structured parking is provided, the parking area must be either:
 - a. "Lined" with ground-floor non-residential uses at least thirty (30) feet deep as measured from the front façade; or



- b. Designed such that the floor elevation is a minimum four vertical feet below the elevation of the adjacent sidewalk.



2. Visible structured parking must be screened from view from the right-of-way by at least one of the following features:
 - a. Regular punched openings designed to resemble windows of habitable spaces.
 - b. Trellis/living wall.
 - c. Custom textured or decorative screening.
3. Entrances to Parking Facilities.
 - a. A maximum of two curb cuts for one-way traffic and one curb cut for two-way traffic may be permitted per street frontage per lot.
 - b. Controlled entrances to parking facilities (gates, doors, etc.) shall be located a minimum ten (10) feet from the back of sidewalk.
 - c. Entrances to parking facilities along a street frontage shall be separated by a minimum of sixty (60) feet.
 - d. Where possible, curb cuts serving adjacent parking facilities shall be shared.
- I. Site Circulation and Access.
 1. New development on abutting lots shall be designed to allow cross-access for internal pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation systems.
 2. Bicycle racks shall be provided:
 - a. In or within fifty (50) feet of every parking area; and

- b. Within twenty (20) feet of at least one building entrance.
 - J. Service Areas and Screening.
 - 1. Service areas must be located at the rear of lot.
 - 2. Service areas must be enclosed in enclosures that are architecturally consistent with primary building in terms of materials, colors, and style.
 - K. Additional Design Standards. See Section 14.66.280 for additional design standards applicable to all residential mixed-use development in the CT District.
- (Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017; Ord. No. 2021-478, § 1, 9-14-2021)

Editor's note(s)—See Editor's Note § 14.50.150.

14.50.180 Off-street loading for residential (CT).

In order to accommodate the delivery or shipping of goods at a multiple-family residential project, on-site loading/unloading space shall be provided:

- A. There shall be at least one loading/unloading space provided, which shall have minimum dimensions of at least ten (10) feet by twenty-five (25) feet, with fourteen (14) feet of vertical clearance;
- B. Loading and unloading spaces shall be located and designed so that the vehicles intended to use them can maneuver safely and conveniently to and from a public right-of-way without interfering with the orderly movement of traffic and pedestrians on any public way and complete the loading and unloading operations without obstructing or interfering with any parking space or parking lot aisle;
- C. No area allocated to loading and unloading facilities may be used to satisfy the area requirements for off-street parking, nor shall any portion of any off-street parking area be used to satisfy the area requirements for loading and unloading facilities;
- D. A loading/unloading space may be located in the front yard setback, but shall comply with other required setbacks;
- F. All loading spaces shall be designed and maintained so that vehicles do not back in from, or onto, a public street;
- G. Loading spaces shall be striped indicating the loading spaces and identifying the spaces for "loading only." The striping shall be permanently maintained by the property owner/tenant in a clear and visible manner at all times; and
- H. Adequate signage shall be provided that directs delivery vehicles to the loading space.

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017)

Editor's note(s)—See Editor's Note § 14.50.150.

14.50.190 Signs (CT).

As provided in Chapter 14.68 of this code.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part); Ord. No. 2015-414, § 12, 9-8-2015; Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017)

Editor's note(s)—See Editor's Note § 14.50.150.

14.50.200 Fences (CT).

As provided in Chapter 14.72 of this title.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017)

Editor's note(s)—See Editor's Note § 14.50.150.

14.50.210 Nonconforming use regulations (CT).

As provided in Chapter 14.66 of this title.

(Ord. 04-259 § 1 (part))

(Ord. No. 2017-436, § 1, 10-10-2017)

Editor's note(s)—See Editor's Note § 14.50.150.

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-__

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS
REPEALING IN ITS ENTIRETY THE SHERWOOD GATEWAY SPECIFIC PLAN OF
THE LOS ALTOS MUNICIPAL CODE**

WHEREAS, the City Council is empowered pursuant to Article XI, Section 7 of the California Constitution to make and enforce within the City all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances, and regulations not in conflict with general laws; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, and **DATE TO BE INSERTED**; and

WHEREAS, the amendments was processed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Government Code and the Los Altos Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the City Council repeals in its entirety the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan; and

WHEREAS, Upon repeal of the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan all effected parcels shall return to the underlying zoning districts as identified on the adopted City of Los Altos Zoning Map; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15183 of the State Guidelines implementing the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Los Altos does hereby ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. CONSTITUTIONALITY; AMBIGUITIES. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof. Any ambiguities in the Los Altos Municipal Code created by this Ordinance shall be resolved by the Development Services Director, in their reasonable discretion, after consulting the City Attorney.

SECTION 2. PUBLICATION. This Ordinance shall be published as provided in Government Code Section 36933.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall be effective upon the commencement of the thirty-first day following the adoption hereof.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Ordinance was duly and properly introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Altos held on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, and was thereafter, at a regular meeting held on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, passed, and adopted by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

Pete Dailey, MAYOR

Attest:

Melissa Thurman, MMC, CITY CLERK

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-__

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS
AMENDING CHAPTER 14.88 OF THE LOS ALTOS MUNICIPAL CODE AND
REZONING CERTAIN PARCELS LOCATED ALONG SAN ANTONIO ROAD AND EL
CAMINO REAL IN THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS TO COMMERCIAL
THOROUGHFARE (CT) ZONING DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, the City Council is empowered pursuant to Article XI, Section 7 of the California Constitution to make and enforce within the City all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances, and regulations not in conflict with general laws; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, and **DATE TO BE INSERTED**; and

WHEREAS, the amendments was processed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Government Code and the Los Altos Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to amend the zoning designation of certain properties located near San Antonio Road and El Camino Real as reflected on Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, upon amendment of the zoning designation of all parcels of land reflected on Exhibit A, the zoning designation of those parcels shall become Commercial Thoroughfare (CT); and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15183 of the State Guidelines implementing the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Los Altos does hereby ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 14.88 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE. Chapter 14.88 of the Los Altos Municipal Code is hereby amended as set forth in Exhibit A to this Ordinance, the table reflects the site Assessor Parcel Number (APN) and amended Zoning Designation.

SECTION 2. CONSTITUTIONALITY; AMBIGUITIES. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof. Any ambiguities in the Los Altos Municipal Code created by this Ordinance shall be resolved by the Development Services Director, in their reasonable discretion, after consulting the City Attorney.

SECTION 3. PUBLICATION. This Ordinance shall be published as provided in Government Code Section 36933.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall be effective upon the commencement of the thirty-first day following the adoption hereof.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Ordinance was duly and properly introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Altos held on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, and was thereafter, at a regular meeting held on **DATE TO BE INSERTED**, passed, and adopted by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Pete Dailey, MAYOR

Attest:

Melissa Thurman, MMC, CITY CLERK

EXHIBIT A

APN	EXISTING ZONING DESIGNATION	EXISTING LAND USE DESIGNATION
17001065	CT	TC
17001064	CT	TC
17001063	CT	TC
17001062	CT	TC
17001061	CT	TC
17001059	CT	TC
17001058	CT	TC
17001057	CT	TC
17001056	CT	TC
17001055	CT	TC
17001077	CT	TC
16716022	CT	TC
17001108	CT	TC
17001023	CT	TC
17001024	CT	TC
17001025	CT	TC
17001026	CT	TC
17001027	CT	TC
17001028	CT	TC
17001029	CT	TC
17001030	CT	TC
17001031	CT	TC
17001032	CT	TC
17001033	CT	TC
17001095	CT	TC
17001035	CT	TC
17001036	CT	TC
17001087	CT	TC
17001088	CT	TC
17001086	CT	TC
17001042	CT	TC
17001043	CT	TC

17001044	CT	TC
17001045	CT	TC
17001053	CT	TC
17001052	CT	TC
17001051	CT	TC
17001050	CT	TC
17001111	CT	TC
17001112	CT	TC
17001113	CT	TC
17001047	CT	TC

March 30, 2025

To:

Nick Zornes

Members of the City of Los Altos Planning Commission:

Joe Beninato, Chair

Richard Roche, Vice Chair

Mehruss Jon Ahi

Eric Steinle

Susan Mensinger

Kate Disney

Jonathan D. Weinberg

Stephanie Williams

Los Altos City Hall

1 North San Antonio Road

Los Altos, CA 94022

Subject: Sherwood Avenue Homes: Residential Zoning Designation

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

We are writing to you as the homeowners along the east side of Sherwood Avenue. We are supportive of the city's current effort to repeal the Sherwood Gateway plan and align zoning to the city and our needs. Thank you for your diligence and efforts.

In particular, we would like to share more information about six parcels: the homes at 899, 905, 911, 921, 933, and 941 Sherwood Avenue. We want to bring to your attention that these parcels, which make up the majority of the east side of Sherwood, are actively used today as single-family homes. We invite you to come visit these homes to understand how they are used today.

These parcels are contiguous and have been used consistently as residences even prior to the adoption of the Sherwood Gateway Plan. Although we support repealing the Sherwood Gateway Plan, we have critical objections to a blanket Commercial Thoroughfare designation. One of the challenges we face is that the Sherwood Gateway Plan and CN zoning actively discouraged improvements or updates, including expansion of the existing homes and exterior improvements.

We respectfully request to have the current usage of these parcels and our homes consistent with appropriate zoning, such as R1, and enable expansion and improvements for these homes, which have been held stagnant for over 25 years. Our request is to make the current use of the homes and respective zoning clear and consistent: update these parcels to be R1 and enable future expansion and improvements to our homes.

This would:

- **Recognize Use of Parcels as Homes:** The homes ranging from 899 to 941 Sherwood have been used consistently as residences, serving as homes and as much-needed space for families in Los Altos. Their use as residences predates the adoption of the Sherwood Gateway Plan and the homes have retained their residential use since implementation of the plan, despite the major obstacles to improvement. This demonstrates a strong and persistent residential character that contradicts the current commercial zoning and would also contradict future CT zoning.
- **Preserve Existing Housing Stock:** Residential zoning would formally acknowledge and protect the existing single-family homes, ensuring their continued contribution to the City's housing stock. These homes have been here since before the incorporation of Los Altos as a city in 1952.
- **Align Updates with Contiguous Residential Character:** The homes are directly contiguous with townhome residential development and with one another. This existing residential nature was solidified by the 2013 townhome residential development behind these parcels, fundamentally altering the contiguous land use pattern to be residential. There is a major disconnect between having zoning that is the same for these homes and families as there is for BevMo! on El Camino.
- **Reduce Troubling Inconsistencies:** The gap between the actual usage of these as homes and commercial zoning has resulted in confusion and inconsistency in what is allowed to be added or altered in our homes. These parcels maintain a legal nonconforming status, indicating their historical and continued residential use. The legal nonconforming status has effectively left these families in development limbo for over 26 years. We are actively asking for the city to make this right and to not repeat the same error of the Sherwood Gateway Plan.
- **Revitalize Stagnant Improvement:** The current CN zoning severely restricts our ability to make exterior improvements and add any livable square footage, thus discouraging any development. We have extreme concerns that the CT zoning would do the same. This limitation to make even modest improvements negatively impacts the residential neighborhood character.
- **Support Small Homes in Need of Expansion:** The primary structures average 938 sq. ft., despite each owner's desire to expand. Numerous previous owners have failed to have permits approved and faced major obstacles, forcing them to sell or rent at low occupancy once their families grew. There is also significant contradiction in allowing these homeowners to pursue ADUs, which we gladly support, yet not allowing them to add to their main structures.
- **Facilitate Modest Improvements and ADU Development:** R1 zoning would enable homeowners to explore the development of additional space in their homes to make space for larger families.

- **Recognize Realities of Best Use and Ownership Structure:** The current ownership pattern is fragmented. The best and most valuable use of the parcels is residential single-family homes (with ADUs) as confirmed by property appraisers.
- **Make the Best of Limited Lot Sizes:** These parcels are smaller than the typical ¼ acre/10k sq. ft. Los Altos lot and are narrow. This makes higher density improvements unpalatable to developers who would need to pay exorbitant amounts to acquire every contiguous parcel.
- **Support Residential Zoning Due to Unviability of CT Zoning:** Our view is that the lots are not practically viable for commercial development. The existing land configuration, residential adjacency, and parcel sizes render them unsuitable for effective commercial use. This impracticality is exacerbated by the fact that significant property aggregation, crucial for viable development, is highly unlikely due to the diverse and fragmented ownership patterns.
- **Increase Property Tax Revenue:** Freeing up restrictions for owners to improve their lots will provide the City of Los Altos and Santa Clara County additional tax revenue.

Given the contiguous residential character, the consistent and persistent residential usage, the troubling inconsistencies faced with commercial zoning, and the practical unviability of commercial development on these lots, we respectfully urge the city to rezone these parcels to R1 and assure our ability to improve and expand our homes. We ask you to put our homes and families at the heart of your decision making.

We appreciate your consideration of this matter and welcome the opportunity to discuss it further.

Sincerely,

Thomas DiRocco and Carolina DiRocco, 921 Sherwood Avenue

Udom Dwivedi and Shalvi Dwivedi, 941 Sherwood Avenue

David Tabuchi and Nancy Tabuchi, 911 Sherwood Avenue

Scott Fujimoto, 905 Sherwood Avenue

RE: April 3 Item 3, Proposed Zoning Amendments

Dear Chairman Beninato and Commissioners,

Item 3 on your agenda is addressing genuine problems. We should not be requiring small projects like 962 Acacia to build ground floor retail in areas where it doesn't work. Also, the homeowners on the east side of Sherwood Avenue are legitimately concerned their existing single family homes are non-conforming, making the owners unable to remodel or expand them.

Staff has worked hard to come up with a solution. Unfortunately, the proposed solution, moving the Sherwood Triangle to CT zoning and lowering the setbacks for CT, misses the mark.

First of all, CT zoning has a minimum lot size of 20,000 feet, or just under half an acre. Only one of the Sherwood triangle parcels is that big. Most are much smaller; several are only .11 acre, the size of 962 Acacia, which brought up this controversy. While some adjoining parcels have the same ownership, at least as of 2020 several tiny parcels did not have the same ownership as their neighboring parcels. CN has zero setbacks, so owners can still build on these little parcels. The effect of the proposed change to CT would be to give those parcels five foot setbacks, chopping ten linear feet out of the buildable area, which makes an enormous difference on a little lot. This would be taking considerable value away from those owners.

Secondly, while the Planning Commission worked hard on the new objective standards for CT, as did our consultants, these standards express the city's objectives for four, five and six (with density bonus) story buildings on El Camino, the biggest buildings in our City. The standards are concerned with bulky buildings with long street fronts. They are not well suited to projects on a quarter of an acre or less.

When the CN standards were adopted last year, Council concluded our Housing Element called for mixed use zoning in CN, and therefore adopted mixed use zoning in CN. But if Council can change CT zoning, they can change CN zoning instead. A better solution to this issue would be changing CN zoning to allow all-residential projects.

Some might object that residents of the area near the Rancho San Antonio shopping center were vociferous in their opposition to allowing all-residential at Rancho. But our mixed use requirement in CN does not help those residents: any project at Rancho would almost certainly use the State Density Bonus Law, and therefore could easily waive the mixed use requirement. The mixed use requirement therefore constrains only the projects we *don't* want to constrain, the small projects that don't use the density bonus and whose locations don't support ground floor retail.

Another solution would be to invent a new zone. That would solve the problem for the Sherwood Triangle, but it would cost a lot, in money and in staff time that could better be used doing something more productive. Furthermore, it would delay a fair resolution for the owners of 962 Acacia and the east side of Sherwood.

Instead of moving the Sherwood Triangle parcels to CT, tell Council to leave the parcels in CN and allow all-residential in CN.

Sincerely,

Anne Paulson