



Architectural Review Board 2023-2024 Workplan

Staff Liaison: Claire Raybould, AICP, Senior Planner

Lead Department: Current Planning, Planning and Development Services Division

About the Board

The Architectural Review Board is composed of five members, at least three of whom are architects, landscape architects, building designers or other design professionals. Terms are for three years. See Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) Chapter 2.21. Residency is not required. For the ARB webpage go to bit.ly/paloaltoARB.

Current Boardmembers

- Peter Baltay (Chair)
- Kendra Rosenberg (Vice Chair)
- Osma Thompson
- Yingxi Chen
- David Hirsch

Mission Statement

The Architectural Review Board reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Director on the building design, site planning, landscape planning, massing and facades, material selection, lighting, signage and other related issues for most major new construction including additions and renovations that alter the exterior building face. The type of buildings reviewed include commercial, industrial, and multiple-family residential. In addition, the ARB is a resource as knowledgeable observers of many varied urban environments, to assist Palo Alto as it develops area plans to accommodate additional housing.

The ARB Scope of Review is fully noted in Title 18 of the Municipal Code, Chapter 18.76 under Section 18.76.020 as well as in Chapter 18.77 under Section 18.77.073.

Prior Year Accomplishments

- See attached Summary

PROJECT/GOAL 1:	Review Planning applications for conformance with ARB Findings and Objective Standards			
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
This is the Board's main mission and serves to ensure the City develops high quality projects	On-Going	Planning staff prepare staff reports, packets and presentations. They ensure paper plan sets and material boards are ready for ARB review. Other departments, such as, City Attorney, Urban Forestry, Transportation, etc., may be required from time to time. Consultants, including CEQA consultants, may also be required.	Issuance of recommendations on projects and high-quality architecture throughout the City.	Yes
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that include new housing units that will help with City reach its regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) 				N/A

PROJECT/GOAL 2:	Assist the City as it considers modifications to the Objective Standards in Chapter 18.24; Provide feedback based on research from projects as they go through the objective standards ministerial processes. Suggest ways to better address different housing typology.			
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
Streamline the objective standard review process and ensure that projects using the streamlined review process/objective standards conform to the City's Comprehensive Plan, Goals and Policies, including its high-quality design standards	Provide high level modifications to objective standards to Council by the end of 2024; If directed by Council, work with staff to propose specific code language for Council adopted by the end of FY 2025	Additional staff at Planning so that the quality and completeness of the work is maintained.	Council Approval	No
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
In order of priority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modifications to address objective standards based on review of several projects using the standards Modifications to address townhome projects based on the feedback from the ARB Ad Hoc Committee on townhomes 				No

PROJECT/GOAL 3:	Discuss specific Coordinated Area Plans that the ARB would recommend exploring/implement; If the City Council directs the preparation of those plans to staff, provide comments on those Coordinated Area Plans			
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
This project would enhance implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan	On-going	Planning staff to help research policies and programs; coordination with long range planning section staff.	Increased adherence to Comprehensive Plan policies	Yes
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated Area Plan for San Antonio Downtown Housing Plan 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encina Avenue 		No

PROJECT/GOAL 4:	Provide feedback to staff and Council on the creation of new guidelines, ordinances, and/or streetscape, including but not limited to upcoming bird safe glazing and dark sky lighting regulations, parklets design, and University Avenue Streetscape.			
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
The ARB has unique feedback to provide as a stakeholder as they have interest in approving the aesthetic environment of the City while also understanding constraints that architects/developers may come across when implementing standards being considered	Anticipated to return to the Board in spring/summer 2024	Staff time	Council Approval	Yes
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
				No

PROJECT/GOAL 5:	Improve Coordination between the Architectural Review Board and other boards, commissions and Council.			
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved coordination between boards/commissions and council to get feedback from colleagues on other boardMore coordinated feedback from the City for developers	On-going	Staff time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff provide summary reports from PTC, ARB, and HRB meetings promptly following each meetingTake direct feedback from the ARB on reviewed projects up for Council approval. The ARB can appoint a member to represent the board directly to the Council	No
HIGH PRIORITY		LOWER PRIORITY		COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE
				No