



CITY OF  
**PALO  
ALTO**

## **Planning & Transportation Commission Staff Report**

**From: Planning and Development Services Director  
Lead Department: Planning and Development Services**

**Meeting Date: February 28, 2024  
Report #: 2402-2687**

### **TITLE**

Action: Creation of a Retail Study Ad Hoc Committee

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) establish a Retail Study Ad Hoc Committee of three Commissioners. The PTC chair is asking for volunteers to serve on the Retail Study Ad Hoc committee.

The Committee's primary goal, prior to June 2024, is to ensure the problem statement, tasks, and the end-product (policy recommendations to City Council to support zoning ordinance changes) can be finalized in time for a June 2024 Council report. The Committee tasks will include assisting staff with presentations to the full Commission, to ensure meeting efficiency toward achieving meaningful retail study recommendations to present to the City Council.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND**

Given the timeline for the work, and the PTC's feedback to staff and the consultant on January 31, 2024, staff advised the Chair to reach out to three commissioners to see if they would be willing to serve on a Retail Study Ad Hoc committee. Staff had originally targeted the February 28, 2024 Commission meeting for the consultant presentation and beginning discussions regarding recommendations to City Council. The March Commission meetings are now targeted for discussion on recommendations.

This project scope is to support policy recommendations to City Council regarding existing Title 18 ordinances addressing retail services in Palo Alto. These are recommendations to draft code amendments and not the specific or actual amendments, which will be presented later to the PTC, following presentation of the policy recommendations to the City Council.

Staff anticipates the Ad Hoc committee will hold two or three meetings to help staff debrief several Commissioners who can help staff work through presentations and direction for progress through the PTC review process.

This is also an opportunity for an Ad Hoc committee to ensure alignment with the Council Ad Hoc retail development efforts; there is a potential for the committee to continue past the immediate goal of the June 2024 recommendations regarding changes to Title 18 that are within the scope of the consultant work. Staff and the consultant introduced the project to the PTC October 25, 2023, including the scope of work.

The October 2023 staff report<sup>[1]</sup> and video<sup>[2]</sup> are viewable via the links in the footnotes below. Meeting minutes from October 25, 2023<sup>[3]</sup> were emailed to the commissioners for review and approval on February 28, 2024. Staff and the consultant presented the results of interviews on January 31, 2024, during a meeting that was challenging to all present, due to nearby protests. The staff report<sup>[4]</sup> and video<sup>[5]</sup> are viewable via the links in the footnotes below. The PTC had considered a draft ordinance to replace an interim ordinance on August 31, 2022 but as the study was not published, recommended Council extend the interim ordinance. The August 31, 2022 PTC staff report<sup>[6]</sup> and minutes<sup>[7]</sup> are viewable via links in the footnotes below. Council extended the interim ordinance until June 2024.

**AUTHOR/TITLE:**

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<sup>[1]</sup> October 25, 2023 staff report link: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/agendasminutes-reports/agendas-minutes/planning-and-transportation-commission/2023/ptc-10.25-retail-study.pdf>

<sup>[2]</sup> October 25, 2023 video of PTC meeting: <https://midpenmedia.org/planning-and-transportation-commission-2-10252023/>

<sup>[3]</sup> PTC meeting minutes: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/agendas-minutes-reports/agendasminutes/planning-and-transportation-commission/2023/ptc-10.25.23-verbatim-minutes.pdf>

<sup>[4]</sup> January 31, 2024 PTC report link: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/planning-and-transportation-commission/2024/ptc-1.31-peer-cities.pdf>

<sup>[5]</sup> January 31, 2024 PTC meeting video link: <https://midpenmedia.org/planning-and-transportation-commission-2-1312024/>

<sup>[6]</sup> August 31, 2022 staff report link: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/planning-and-transportation-commission/2022/ptc-08.31.2022-cup.pdf>

<sup>[7]</sup> August 31, 2022 PTC meeting minutes link: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/2/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/planning-and-transportation-commission/2022/ptc-8.31.2022-draft-verbatim-minutes-bgh-revisions.pdf>