



## City Council Supplemental Report

CITY OF  
**PALO  
ALTO**

**From: Ed Shikada, City Manager**

**Meeting Date: February 24, 2025**

**Item Number: 10**

Report #:2502-4185

### TITLE

Approval of the 2025 City Council Priority Objectives, as well as Committee Objectives and Workplans - Supplemental Information on Attachment B 'Objectives Not Recommended'

### REPORT UPDATE

Attachment B: Objectives Not Recommended provides a list of objectives that been suggested in various venues, but for a variety of reasons, were not included in the proposed 2025 City Council Priority Objectives. Below is the list of objectives not recommended (as outlined in Attachment B), with an added brief bullet point explanation for the reason the objective is not recommended.

## Economic Development and Retail Vibrancy

**a) Develop and present preliminary options for activating vacant storefronts:** *Explore regulatory strategy and low friction/barrier permitting for temporary popup stores. (11)*

- This work is already underway for pop-up businesses that fall into the same use category. Popups requiring a change of use raise significant building code and potential safety concerns that require additional staff resources to address.

**b) Facilitate the establishment of sustainable business organization in the Cal Ave, DT, and Midtown districts. (1)**

- Staff will continue to meet with businesses to engage on key projects and investments, however at this time there is not support from the business community to engage in establishing new or more robust organizations.

**c) Council Consideration and Adoption of Parking Permit Policies and Program Updates:** *Improve Customer Experience, Align with Environmental and Transportation Goals, and Recover Costs. (26)*

- This item is an open referral with the Finance Committee and included in the Committee workplan and is already underway. The next schedule discussion will be part of the FY 2026

budget process. Proposed parking program amendments and relevant changes to Title 10 will be presented to PTC on March 26, 2025.

**d) Comprehensively Update the City's Zoning Code including policies that support Economic Development Strategies.** *Reformat for improved readability, update definitions, use categories, development standards and permitting processes. (12)*

- Staff capacity to advance this with the other priority objectives is not feasible given prioritization of Housing Element programs. In addition, significant investment in consultant services would be required.

## Climate Action and Adaptation & Natural Environment Protection (CA)

**e) Evaluate the integration of biogas into the gas utility business model and share results with Council and other policymakers.**

- While not a component of the Sustainability & Climate Action Plan, biogas could support the City's climate goals; however, rising utility rates raise questions about its feasibility. Staff could explore this strategy but would need direction on its desirability at this time.

## Implementing Housing Strategies for Social & Economic Balance

**f) Initiate study that identifies options and feasibility of regulations to limit short-term rentals Citywide consistent with Housing Element Programs 4.2D&E.**

- An Ordinance Adoption is not required by Housing Element until July 1, 2027. This objective is not recommended for approval in 2025 due to limited staff capacity to manage the effort required. Instead, this will be a recommended priority in 2026.

**g) Enforcement policy recommendations related to Ghost Houses:** *Survey existing enforcement mechanisms and Ghost House (extended vacancy) data collection in other jurisdictions and return to Council by end of 2024, consistent with Council direction from November 27, 2023.*

- This objective is not recommended for approval due to limited staff capacity to manage the effort required given prioritization of Housing Element programs.

**h) Amend the zoning code to ensure residential uses in commercially zoned areas receive the same protections as those in exclusively residential zones.** *The City Council on November 13, 2023 supported this request from the Palo Alto Redwoods Homeowners Association.*

- This objective is not recommended for approval due to limited staff capacity to manage the effort required given prioritization of Housing Element programs.

**i) Amend the City's Comprehensive Plan Safety Element to align with State law.** *Update will include modifications related to hazards, public safety, emergency response, and climate action to reflect State requirements that have come into effect since 2018.*

- This project is currently underway and will be reflected in the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) workplan for 2025.

**j) Evaluate and make policy recommendation to Council regarding a partnership with the California Community Housing Agency (CalCHA).** *CalCHA issues governmental bonds for the purpose of financing projects that provide, preserve and support affordable local housing for low-income, moderate-income and middle-income families and individuals.*

- This objective is not recommended for approval due to limited staff capacity to manage the effort required given prioritization of Housing Element programs.

**k) Present options to Council for increasing housing in the California Avenue corridor.** *Consistent with Council direction from August 14, 2023.*

- This objective is not recommended for approval due to limited staff capacity to manage the effort required given prioritization of Housing Element programs.

**l) Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan or similar for California Avenue.**

- This objective is not recommended for approval due to limited staff capacity to manage the effort required given prioritization of Housing Element programs.

**m) Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan or similar for El Camino Real.**

- This objective is not recommended for approval due to limited staff capacity to manage the effort required given prioritization of Housing Element programs.

**n) Present options to the City Council that identify and evaluate sources and methods to raise significant funding to support new affordable housing production and preservation.** (42)

- This objective is not recommended for approval due to limited staff capacity to manage the effort required given prioritization of Housing Element programs.

## Public Safety, Wellness & Belonging

**o) Complete next steps for Palo Alto Airport Long Range Planning work.** *Develop new alternatives considering Council's September 2024 Study Session input, conduct community engagement, and return to Council for review and action.*

- Based on Council feedback at the Airport study session and to meet constraints to not expand its footprint, staff are reconsidering planning alternatives while also working to make near-term progress on leaded fuel and noise issues. The Airport long range plan will therefore pause while this work proceeds.

**p) Support Caltrain's Corridor Safety and Security Initiatives.** (74)

- Caltrain has begun installing safety fencing along the rail corridor. City staff will support these efforts but are not positioned to lead these investments, and no City Council action is required.

### APPROVED BY:

Ed Shikada, City Manager