

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_

Resolution of the Council of the City of Palo Alto Amending the  
Land Use and Design Element of the City of Palo Alto  
Comprehensive Plan to Reflect Policies and Programs adopted in  
the 2023-2031 Housing Element and Related Updates to the  
Zoning Code.

RECITALS

- A. On May 8, 2023, the City Council adopted the City of Palo Alto 2023-2031 Housing Element (“Housing Element”) pursuant to Government Code Section 65585.
- B. Program 1.1A of the Housing Element provides for amendments to the zoning ordinance that are necessary to accommodate the City’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation (“RHNA”) on the inventory of housing opportunity sites provided in Appendix D to the Housing Element.
- C. Program 1.1B of the Housing Element provides for additional amendments to the zoning ordinance for ROLM and GM zoned properties that exceed those required under Program 1.1A.
- D. On December XX, 2023, the City Council adopted an ordinance amending Title 18 (Zoning) of the Palo Alto Municipal Code to implement Programs 1.1A and 1.1B of the Housing Element.
- E. The updates contemplated in Programs 1.1A and 1.1B of the Housing Element also require related changes to the Land Use and Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- F. In order to maintain consistency with the between the Land Use and Design and Housing Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, and between the Comprehensive Plan and the Palo Alto Municipal Code, the City Council desires to amend the Land Use and Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Council of the City of Palo Alto RESOLVES as follows:

SECTION 1. The City Council finds that the public interest, health, safety and welfare of Palo Alto and the surrounding region would be furthered by Text Amendments to the Land Use and Community Design Element.

**SECTION 2.** The proposed Land Use and Community Design Text Amendments are consistent with the following goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan:

Policy L-1.1: Maintain and prioritize Palo Alto's varied residential neighborhoods while sustaining the vitality of its commercial areas and public facilities.	The proposed amendments will align with the programs and policies of the Housing Element, which promote the production of much-needed housing in strategic locations throughout the City.
Policy L-1.3: Infill development in the urban service area should be compatible with its surroundings and the overall scale and character of the city to ensure a compact, efficient development pattern.	The proposed amendments will allow for the production of housing in accordance with the Housing Element, which envisions urban infill development throughout the City.
Policy L-1.4: Commit to creating an inventory of below market rate housing for purchase and rental. Work with neighbors, neighborhood associations, property owners and developers to identify barriers to infill development of below market rate and more affordable market rate housing and to remove these barriers, as appropriate. Work with these same stakeholders to identify sites and facilitate opportunities for below market rate housing and housing that is affordable.	The proposed amendments implement the Housing Element, including provision that promote the production of below market rate housing.
Policy L-1.5: Regulate land uses in Palo Alto according to the land use definitions in this Element and Map L-6	The proposed amendments ensure compliance with this policy and modify the land use definitions to align with past, current, and future uses of housing opportunity sites in the City.
Policy L-1.6: Encourage land uses that address the needs of the community and manage change and development to benefit the community.	The proposed amendments encourage the production of housing, which is a local, regional, and statewide need.
Policy L-2.3: As a key component of a diverse, inclusive community, allow and encourage a mix of housing types and sizes, integrated into neighborhoods and designed for greater affordability, particularly smaller housing types, such as studios, co-housing, cottages, clustered housing, accessory dwelling units and senior housing	The proposed amendments align with the Housing Element, which encourages the development of all types of housing.

Policy L-2.6: Create opportunities for new mixed-use development consisting of housing and retail.	The proposed amendments facilitate the production of housing in commercial land use designations.
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**SECTION 3.** The City Council hereby amends Single-Family Residential land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined and deletions ~~struck through~~):

**Single-Family Residential:** This designation applies to residential neighborhoods primarily characterized by detached single-family homes, typically with one dwelling unit on each lot. Private and public schools and churches are conditional uses requiring permits. Accessory dwelling units or duplexes are allowed subject to certain size limitations and other development standards and duplexes may be allowed in select, limited areas where they would be compatible with neighborhood character and do not create traffic and parking problems. Multiple-Family uses may be permitted on Housing Element opportunity sites. The net density in single family areas will range from 1 to 7 units per acre, but rises to a maximum of 14 units per acre on parcels where second units or duplexes occur, except on Housing Element opportunity sites, for which higher density standards may be specified in the Zoning Ordinance. Population densities will range from 1 to 30 persons per acre.

**SECTION 4.** The City Council hereby amends Multiple-Family Residential land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined):

**Multiple-Family Residential:** The permitted number of housing units will vary by area, depending on existing land use, proximity to major streets and public transit, distance to shopping and environmental problems. Net densities will range from 8 to 40 units and 8 to 90 persons per acre, except on Housing Element opportunity sites, for which higher density standards may be specified in the Zoning Ordinance. Density should be on the lower end of the scale next to single-family residential areas. Densities higher than what is permitted may be allowed where measurable community benefits will be derived, services and facilities are available, and the net effect will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Population densities will range up to 2.25 persons per unit by 2030.

**SECTION 5.** The City Council hereby amends Neighborhood Commercial land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined):

**Neighborhood Commercial:** Includes shopping centers with offstreet parking or a cluster of street-front stores that serve the immediate neighborhood. Examples include Charleston Center, Edgewood Center and Midtown. Typical uses include supermarkets, bakeries, drugstores, variety stores, barber shops, restaurants, self-service laundries, dry cleaners and hardware stores. In locations along El Camino Real and Alma Street, residential and mixed use projects may also locate in this category. Non-residential FARs will range up to 0.4. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's encouragement of housing near transit centers, higher density multi-family housing may be allowed in specific locations, generally within one-half mile of high quality transit.

**SECTION 6.** The City Council hereby amends Regional/Community Commercial land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined):

**Regional/Community Commercial:** Larger shopping centers and districts that have a wider variety of goods and services than the neighborhood shopping areas. They rely on larger trade areas and include such uses as department stores, bookstores, furniture stores, toy stores, apparel shops, restaurants, theaters and nonretail services such as offices and banks. Examples include Stanford Shopping Center, Town and Country Village and University Avenue/Downtown. Non-retail uses such as medical and dental offices may also locate in this designation; software development may also locate Downtown. In some locations, residential and mixed use projects may also locate in this category. Non-residential FARs range from 0.35 to 2.0. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's encouragement of housing near transit centers, higher density multi-family housing may be allowed in specific locations, generally within one-half mile of high quality transit.

**SECTION 7.** The City Council hereby amends Service Commercial land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined):

**Service Commercial:** Facilities providing citywide and regional services and relying on customers arriving by car. These uses do not necessarily benefit from being in high volume pedestrian areas such as shopping centers or Downtown. Typical uses include auto services and dealerships, motels, lumberyards, appliance stores and restaurants, including fast service types. In almost all cases, these uses require good automobile and service access so that customers can safely load and unload without impeding traffic. In some locations, residential and mixed-use projects may be appropriate in this land use category. Examples of Service Commercial areas include San Antonio Road, El Camino Real and Embarcadero Road northeast

of the Bayshore Freeway. Nonresidential FARs will range up to 0.4. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's encouragement of housing near transit centers, higher density multi-family housing may be allowed in specific locations, generally within one-half mile of high quality transit.

**SECTION 8.** The City Council hereby amends Service Commercial land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined):

**Service Commercial:** Facilities providing citywide and regional services and relying on customers arriving by car. These uses do not necessarily benefit from being in high volume pedestrian areas such as shopping centers or Downtown. Typical uses include auto services and dealerships, motels, lumberyards, appliance stores and restaurants, including fast service types. In almost all cases, these uses require good automobile and service access so that customers can safely load and unload without impeding traffic. In some locations, residential and mixed-use projects may be appropriate in this land use category. Examples of Service Commercial areas include San Antonio Road, El Camino Real and Embarcadero Road northeast of the Bayshore Freeway. Nonresidential FARs will range up to 0.4. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's encouragement of housing near transit centers, higher density multi-family housing may be allowed in specific locations, generally within one-half mile of high quality transit.

**SECTION 9.** The City Council hereby amends Mixed Use land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined):

**Mixed Use:** The Mixed Use designation is intended to promote pedestrian-oriented places that layer compatible land uses, public amenities and utilities together at various scales and intensities. The designation allows for multiple functions within the same building or adjacent to one another in the same general vicinity to foster a mix of uses that encourages people to live, work, play and shop in close proximity. Most typically, mixed-use developments have retail on the ground floor and residences above. This category includes Live/Work, Retail/Office, Residential/Retail and Residential/Office development. FARs will range up to 1.15, although development located along transit corridors or near multi-modal centers will range up to 2.0 FAR with up to 3.0 FAR possible where higher FAR would be an incentive to meet community goals such as providing affordable housing. The FAR above 1.15 must be used for residential purposes. Up to 100% of FAR may be used for residential purposes in a Planned Community zone. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's encouragement of housing near

transit centers, higher density multi-family housing may be allowed in specific locations, generally within one-half mile of high quality transit.

**SECTION 10.** The City Council hereby amends Research/Office Park land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined):

**Research/Office Park:** Office, research and manufacturing establishments whose operations are buffered from adjacent residential uses. Stanford Research Park is an example. Other uses that may be included are educational institutions and child care facilities. Compatible commercial service uses such as banks and restaurants and residential or mixed-uses that would benefit from the proximity to employment centers, will also be allowed. Additional uses, including retail services, commercial recreation, churches and private clubs may also be located in Research/Office Park areas, but only if they are found to be compatible with the surrounding area through the conditional use permit process. In some locations, residential and mixed-use projects may also locate in this category. Maximum allowable FAR ranges from 0.3 to 0.5, depending on site conditions. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, multi-family housing may be allowed in specific locations. On Housing Element opportunity sites, FAR will typically range from 1.25 to 2.5, as specified in the Zoning Ordinance. Higher FARs may be feasible within one-half mile of high quality transit, as specified in the Zoning Ordinance.

**SECTION 11.** The City Council hereby amends Light Industrial land use description in the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Community Design Element to read as follows (additions underlined):

**Light Industrial:** Wholesale and storage warehouses and the manufacturing, processing, repairing and packaging of goods. Emission of fumes, noise, smoke, or other pollutants is strictly controlled. Examples include portions of the area south of Oregon Avenue between El Camino Real and Alma Street that historically have included these land uses, and the San Antonio Road industrial area. Compatible residential and mixed use projects may also be located in this category. FAR will range up to 0.5. On Housing Element opportunity sites, FAR will typically range from 1.5 to 2.5, as specified in the Zoning Ordinance. Higher FARs may be feasible within one-half mile of high quality transit. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's encouragement of housing near transit centers, higher density multi-family housing may be allowed in specific locations, generally within one-half mile of high quality transit.

SECTION 12. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City prepared an Addendum to the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), analyzing the potential environmental impacts of the 2023-2031 Housing Element. On May 8, 2023, the City Council adopted Resolution 10107, finding that the Addendum and the 2017 EIR adequately analyzed the environmental impacts of the Housing Element, including Programs 1.1A and 1.1B of the Housing Element, which this resolution implements.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM

\_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant City Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

APPROVED

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

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Director of Planning and  
Development Services

### Exhibit A: Existing and Proposed Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations

