



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Date: 8/22/2023
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Locations: Teleconference and
 City Council Chambers
 751 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

Special Session

A. Call To Order

Mayor Wolosin called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ACTION: Motion and second (Wolosin/ Doerr), to add an emergency item for the use of Assembly Bill 2449 (AB 2449) to the agenda, passed unanimously.

Use of AB 2449 Emergency Circumstances

ACTION: Motion and second (Doerr/ Nash), to approve the remote participation under AB 2449 Emergency Circumstances for Vice Mayor Taylor, passed unanimously.

B. Roll Call

Present: Combs, Doerr, Nash, Taylor (remote – AB 2449 Emergency Circumstances), Wolosin
Absent: None
Staff: City Manager Justin I. C. Murphy, Assistant City Manager Stephen Stolte, City Attorney Nira F. Doherty, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk Judi A. Herren

C. Special Business

C1. Review and provide feedback on potential Zoning Ordinance, Specific Plan, and conforming General Plan amendments associated with the adopted 2023-2031 Housing Element (Staff Report #CC-186-23)

Principal Planner Tom Smith made the presentation (Attachment).

- Julianne Hanson spoke in support of affordable housing, particularly for teachers and low-income households.
- Joseph Grasc spoke in support of affordable housing and increased diversity in the city.
- Jenny Michele provided comments on housing issues, including zoning for climate resilient buildings, eliminate R-1 housing policies and extend the El Camino Real/Downtown zoning to other locations in the City.
- Olivia Grimes spoke in support of the housing element and increased affordable housing density, particularly increasing the affordable housing overlay to 150 dwelling units per acre and promoting mixed-income developments.
- Jacqui Cebrian spoke in support of additional affordable housing.
- Brian Kissel spoke in support of a height increase to the Sharon Heights Shopping Center parcel

for affordable housing and additional housing development.

- G. Joy Kosobayashi spoke in support of staff recommendations.
- Patti Fry spoke on the number of units developed in projects like Middle Plaza and Springline, on concerns regarding preservation of neighborhood-serving retail and commercial uses and the amount of office development, and on the quality of life for current and future residents related to parking.
- Brittani Baxter spoke in support of affordable housing, increased density bonuses and height requirements.
- Ofelia Bayo spoke in support of affordable housing and increased density on the west side of Menlo Park.
- Lynne Bramlett spoke in support of affordable housing, increased diversity, quiet zones, limiting absent-owners for new unit ownership, and requested review of the open space element.
- Karen Grove spoke in support of increased density of the affordable housing overlay (AHO) and height increase at the Sharon Heights Shopping Center.
- Adina Levin spoke in support of increased density of the AHO and mixed-use developments.
- Joan Skurnick requested clarification on the Sunset Magazine site and a proposed development project.

The City Council took a recess at 7:22 p.m.

The City Council reconvened at 7:29 p.m.

The City Council received clarification on the Sunset Magazine site at 80 Willow Rd., Assembly Bills (AB) 1763 and 2334, El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan subdistricts, unlimited density for sites within ½-mile of major transit stops, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) map, floor area ratios (FAR) and large unit requirements, 100% affordable developments, R-3 zoning, Specific Plan height and maximum stories, district zoning, open space element and open space regulations, the applicability of the AHO, and upzoning and downzoning considerations.

The City Council discussed where the AHO would apply and how the AHO could apply to mixed-income developments and requested to see examples when reviewing the zoning ordinances, interest in lowering rents as part of future revisions to the below market rate (BMR) housing guidelines, use an existing nine-story residential building on Valparaiso Avenue as a data point/reference, incentivizing community serving retail, parking minimums/maximums in Downtown, height maximums, downzoning in District 1, avoiding large market-rate units, and incentivizing “for sale” units.

The City Council directed staff to review and provide information on outdoor/shade covering standards of new market rate and affordable housing developments, proceed with establishing a minimum density of 20 du/ac, increasing densities, and removing the residential cap in the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan area, proportionally increase densities and associated development regulations in the ECR/D SE and NE-R subdistricts, consider height increases and density increases above 30 units per acre (du/ac) for the Sharon Heights Shopping Center parcel, allow mixed income and affordable housing in Downtown, and to proceed with the proposal for a new step-up FAR to incentivize the production of units for large families and ownership units.

The City Council took a recess at 9:36 p.m.

The City Council reconvened at 9:45 p.m.

The City Council received clarification on bonus level density, incentives or overlay for retained retail and increased community serving retail, and 30 du/ac across the city.

The City Council discussed environmental impact review (EIR) requirements, exploring higher heights at the Sharon Heights Shopping Center parcel, Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) numbers, and eliminating parking requirements for commercial.

The City Council directed staff to consolidate certain commercial districts under the C-2-B district regulations, change the maximum AHO bonus for 100-percent affordable projects from 100 du/ac to 150 du/ac, provide examples for heights of 60 and 80 feet for the Sharon Heights Shopping Center, exploring increased density and height in commercial districts without triggering an EIR, incentives or overlay for retaining retail and increased community serving retail, and removing 10,000 square foot minimum lot size to achieve 30 du/ac on R-3 lots around downtown.

D. Adjournment

Mayor Wolosin adjourned the meeting at 10:50 p.m.

Assistant to the City Manager/ City Clerk Judi A. Herren

These minutes were approved at the City Council meeting of September 12, 2023.

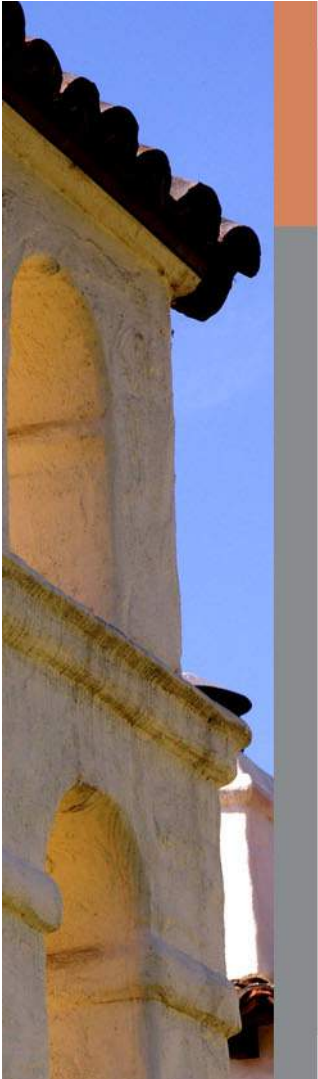


HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

Study Session on Zoning Ordinance, Specific Plan, and General
Plan Amendments



PROJECT BACKGROUND



HOUSING ELEMENT ADOPTION

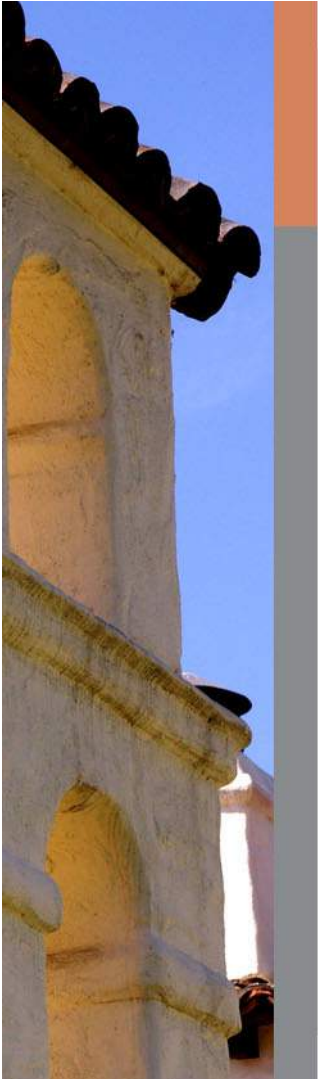
- Housing Element adopted on January 31, 2023
 - Plan for city’s housing needs from 2023 to 2031
 - Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is 2,946 units
 - 1,490 affordable units

- Housing Element programs commit City to implement zoning changes by January 31, 2024



MAJOR LAND USE STRATEGIES

- Five key zoning strategies in Housing Element
 - Allow undeveloped sites from previous Housing Element “by-right” development for projects with 20% or more affordable units
 - Increase densities in El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan area and remove residential cap
 - Increase density bonuses in the affordable housing overlay (AHO) and expand sites that could utilize the AHO
 - Rezone commercial sites to allow mixed-use development
 - Remove 10,000 s.f. minimum lot size to achieve 30 du/ac on R-3 lots around downtown



MEETING PURPOSE

- Share updates since December 2022 zoning study session
- Receive feedback on proposed zoning changes necessary to implement Housing Element programs
- No actions will be taken this evening

The background of the slide is a photograph of a street scene. On the left, there are teal-colored panels with a subtle pattern. A large, horizontal orange banner with the text "SPECIFIC PLAN" is overlaid on the center of the image. The photograph shows a sidewalk with outdoor seating, including wicker chairs and tables. In the background, there are buildings with signs, including one that says "harvest" and another that says "TABAC". There are also some plants and flowers in the foreground.

SPECIFIC PLAN

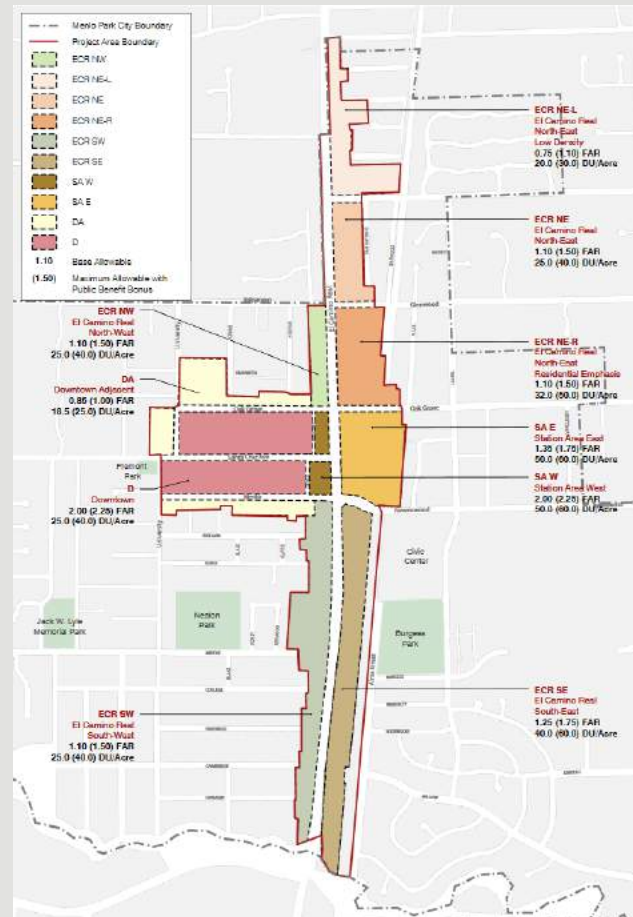


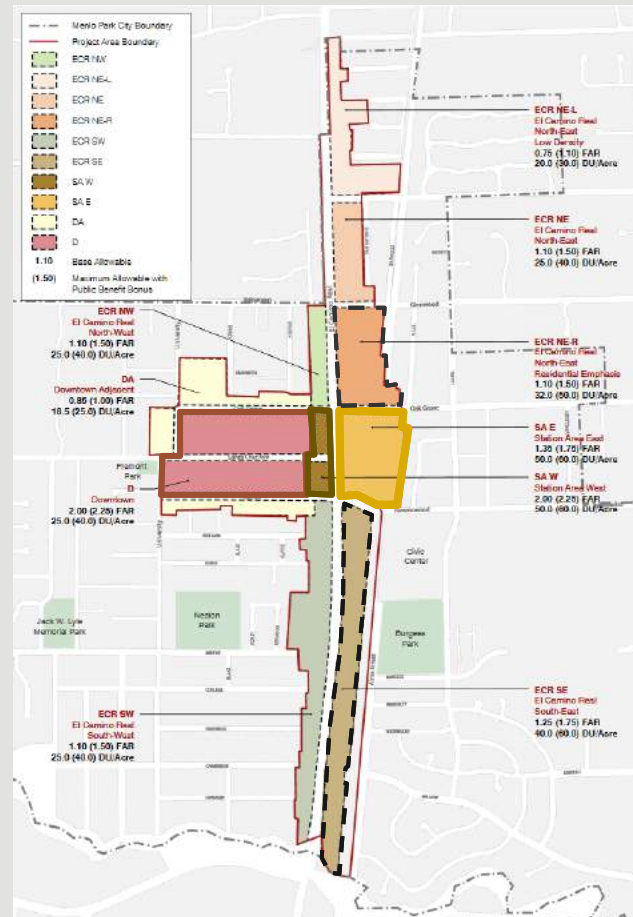
SPECIFIC PLAN RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

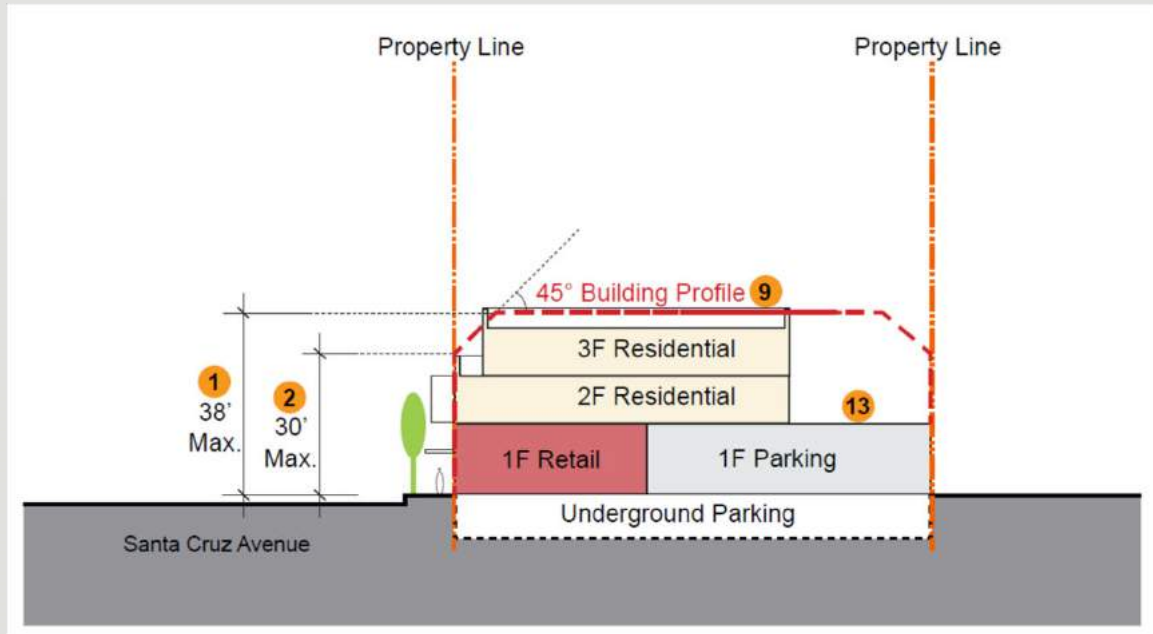
Specific Plan Existing and Proposed Subdistrict Residential Densities (in du/ac)

Subdistrict	Existing Base Density	12/22 Proposed Base Density	Base Density Increase Option	Existing Bonus Density	12/22 Proposed Bonus Density	Bonus Density Increase Option
Downtown (D)	25	40	60	40	60	100
Downtown Adjacent (DA)	18.5	30	40	25	50	50
El Camino Real North-East (ECR NE)	25	30	40	40	50	50
El Camino Real North-East Low Density (ECR NE-L)	20	30	40	30	40	50
El Camino Real North-West (ECR NW)	25	30	40	40	50	50
Station Area East (SA E)	50	50	60	60	80	100
Station Area West (SA W)	50	50	60	60	80	100
El Camino Real South-West (ECR SW)	25	30	40	40	50	50

Note: Density, FAR, and height would remain as-is for the ECR SE and ECR NE-R subdistricts.









DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Select Existing and Proposed Development Standards for Downtown Subdistrict at Base Level

Development Standard	Existing	12/22 Proposed	Density Increase Option
Maximum Base Residential Density	25 du/ac	40 du/ac max.	60 du/ac max.
Maximum Commercial FAR	N/A	2.00	2.00
Maximum Total FAR	2.00	2.00	2.75
Step-Up FAR	N/A	2.40	3.15
Maximum Building Height	38 ft	50-54 ft	60-64 ft
Maximum Facade Height	30 ft	40 ft	40 ft
45-Degree Building Profile Sides	Public	Public	Public

*Step up FAR would be available to developments that provide between 50 percent and 65 percent of the overall building FAR toward residential uses and one of the following options: a) a minimum 50 percent of units with two or more bedrooms including 5 percent of units with three or more bedrooms, or b) all for-sale units.

**The maximum height for buildings with a residential density of 20 to 40 du/ac would be 50 feet and scale up to 81 feet for density over 80 du/ac.



SPECIFIC PLAN HEIGHTS

Approximate Maximum Building Stories in Specific Plan Subdistricts				
Subdistrict	Existing Specific Plan Base/Bonus	12/22 Proposed Base/Bonus	8/23 Density Increase Option Base/Bonus	100% Affordable via AB 1763 (3 Extra Stories within ½ Mile of Transit)
Downtown (D)	3	4(5)	5(7)	8(10)
Downtown Adjacent (DA)	3	3(4)	4	7
El Camino Real North-East (ECR NE)	3(4)	3(4)	4	7
El Camino Real North-East Low Density (ECR NE-L)	3	3(4)	4	7
El Camino Real North-East Residential Emphasis (ECR NE-R)	3(4)	3(4)	3(4)	6(7)
El Camino Real North-West (ECR NW)	3	3(4)	4	7
Station Area East (SA E)	5 (4 Alma)	5(6) (4 Alma)	5(7) (4 Alma)	8(10) (7 Alma)
Station Area West (SA W)	4	5(6)	5(7)	8(10)
El Camino Real South-East (ECR SE)	5	5	5	8
El Camino Real South-West (ECR SW)	3	3(4)	4	7



OTHER SPECIFIC PLAN CHANGES

- The limit of 680 residential units in the Specific Plan area would be removed
- A minimum density of 20 du/ac would be established to set a basic floor for residential development
- Minimum parking requirements may be reduced or removed
 - AB 2097 generally prohibits minimum parking requirements within ½-mile of transit stops

The background of the slide is a photograph of a commercial street scene. In the foreground, there are green plants with red flowers. A black metal railing runs across the middle ground. In the background, a street with buildings and trees is visible. A sign for 'harvest' is hanging from a building, and a red sign for 'TABAC' is also visible. Outdoor seating with red chairs is on the sidewalk.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS



COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

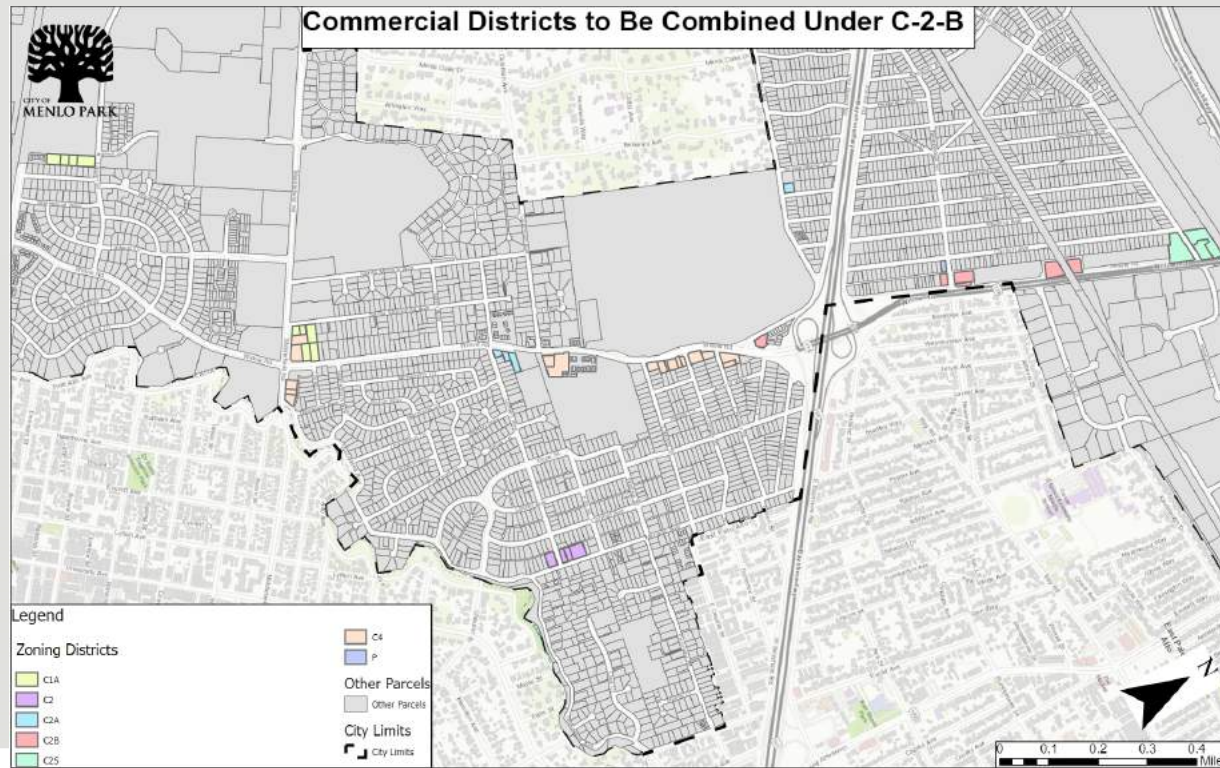
Table 2: Commercial Districts to Be Combined Under C-2-B Regulations

District	Max. Coverage	FAR	Height
Administrative and Professional (C-1-A)	40%	40%	35 feet
Neighborhood Shopping (C-2)*	50%	40%	30 feet
Neighborhood Shopping, Restrictive (C-2-A)	50%	40%	One story
Neighborhood Mixed Use, Restrictive (C-2-B)	60%	40 to 50% comm.; up to 90% res.; 100% total max.	30 to 40 feet
Neighborhood Commercial, Special (C-2-S)	Per individual development	50%	Per individual development
General Commercial (C-4)	No max.	40%	30 feet
Parking (P)**	0%	0%	None

*All C-2 parcels would be rezoned C-2-B, with the exception of the Sharon Heights Shopping Center parcel, which would be granted additional FAR for residential uses, as shown in Table 3.

**The P district currently only allows parking lots and consists of three parcels citywide. Because of the small size of the parcels, their proximity to sites to be rezoned to allow residential mixed-use developments, and their location near existing residential neighborhoods, the P district presents additional opportunities to build new housing and neighborhood commercial uses instead of prioritizing vehicle-only uses.

- Maximum building coverage would be 60%
- Generally, the FAR for multiple dwelling units would increase on an even gradient up to 0.90 for 30 du/ac
- The FAR for mixed use developments would not exceed 1.00
- Height of structures shall not exceed 30 feet, except for a mixed use structure, which shall not exceed 40 feet





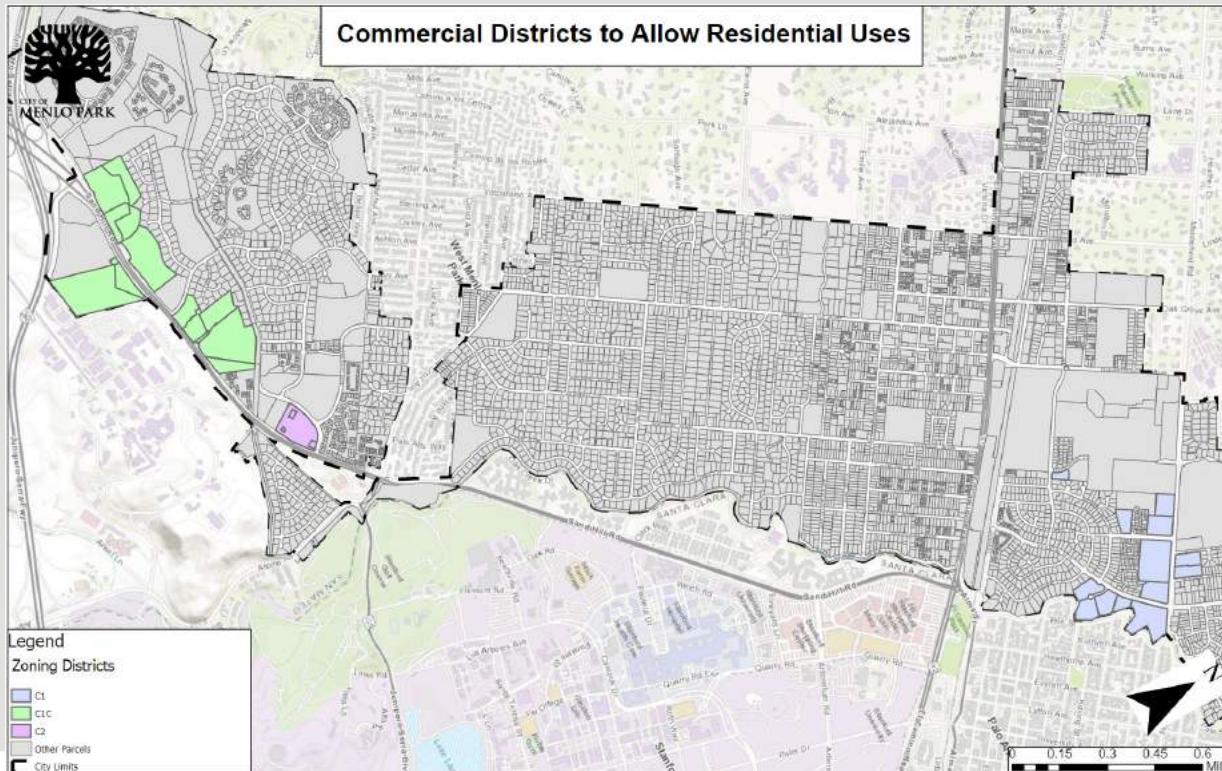
COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

Table 3: Commercial Districts to Allow Residential Uses

District	Max. Coverage	FAR	Height
Administrative and Professional, Restrictive (C-1)	40%	30% comm.; up to 90% res.; 100% total max	35 feet
Administrative, Professional and Research, Restrictive (C-1-C)	20%	25% comm.; up to 90% res.; 100% total max.	35 feet
Neighborhood Shopping (C-2)*	50%	40%; up to 90% res.; 100% total max.	30 feet

*The additional residential FAR would apply to the Sharon Heights Shopping Center parcel only. All other existing C-2 parcels would be rezoned C-2-B.

- Maximum building coverage remain as-is
- Generally, the existing FAR for commercial uses would remain
- FAR for multiple dwelling units would increase on an even gradient up to 0.90 for 30 du/ac
- The FAR for mixed use developments would not exceed 1.00
- Height of structures would not be modified from existing zoning districts





AFFORDABLE HOUSING OVERLAY

- Designed to encourage development of affordable units for low, very low, and extremely low income households
- Would be expanded to include all 6th Cycle RHNA housing opportunity sites and R-3 around downtown, in addition to the Specific Plan area
- Would be modified to work in combination with the state density bonus law on a site to achieve densities of up to 100 du/ac

Table 4: Example AHO Application to C-1 Zoned Parcel with 80 Percent State Density Bonus

Acres	Max Density	Max Base Units	AHO Density Bonus	AHO Bonus Units	Base Units + AHO Bonus Units	80% State Density Bonus Units	Total Units	Total Density
(A)	(B)	A*B=(C)	B*.86=(D)	A*D=(E)	C+E=(F)	F*.80=(G)	F+G=(H)	H/A=(I)
1.0	30 du/ac	30 units	26 du/ac	26 units	56 units	45 units	101 units	101 du/ac



AFFORDABLE HOUSING OVERLAY

- Planning Commission recommended increasing AHO bonus to permit densities up to 150 du/ac for 100-percent affordable projects

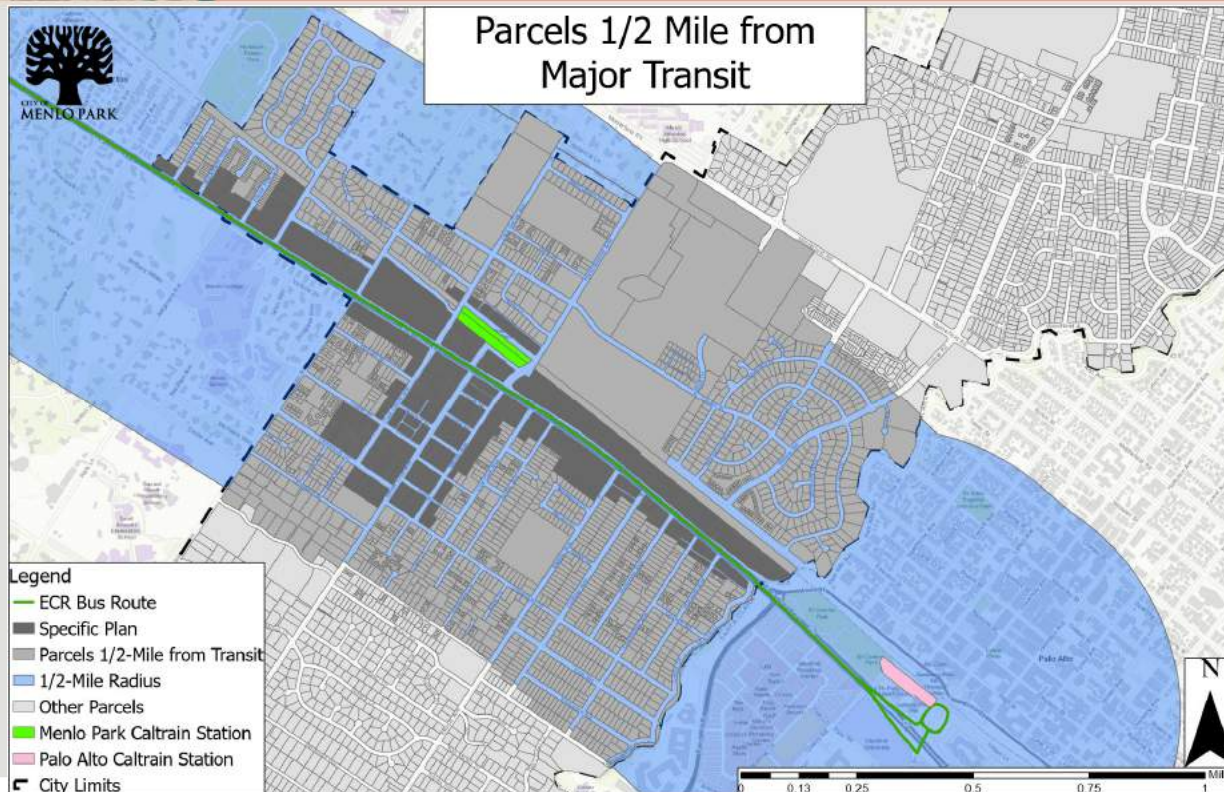
Attachment E: Example of 175% AHO Bonus for C-1 Zoned Parcel with 80% State Density Bonus: 100% Affordable Units at Low Income Level

Acres	Max Density	Max Base Units	AHO Density Bonus	AHO Bonus Units	Base Units + AHO Bonus Units	80% State Density Bonus Units	Total Affordable Units	Total Market Rate Units	Total Units	Total Density
(A)	(B)	A*B= (C)	B*1.75= (D)	A*D= (E)	C+E= (F)	F*.80= (G)			F+G= (H)	H/A= (I)
1	30 du/ac	30 units	53 du/ac	53 units	83 units	67 units	150 units	0 units	150 units	150 du/ac



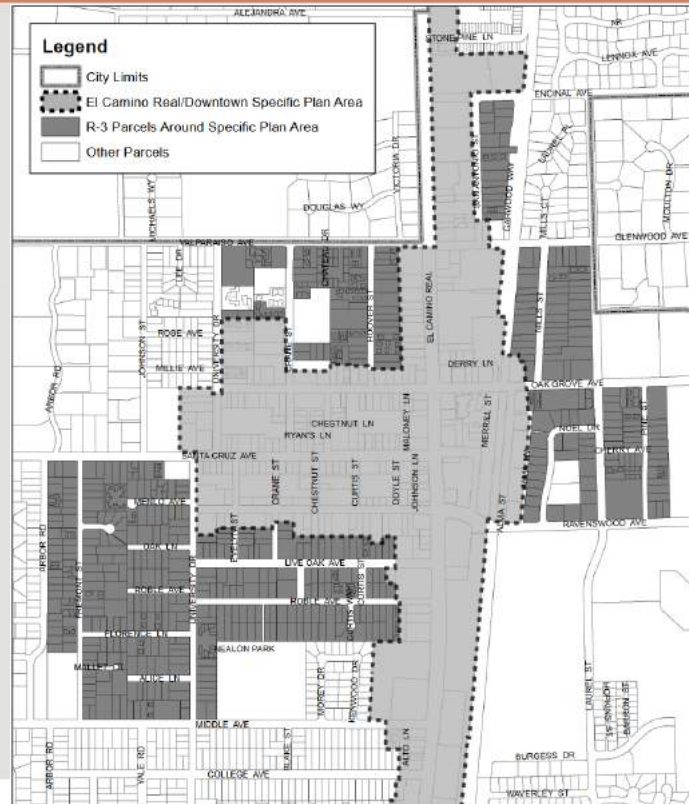
OTHER ZONING ORDINANCE CHANGES

- AB 1763 would allow 100% affordable housing projects within ½-mile of a major transit stop:
 - Unlimited density
 - Additional three stories or 33 feet height
- All R-3 properties around downtown would be allowed density up to 30 du/ac
 - All other R-3 properties over two acres would be allowed 20 du/ac
- Child day care homes would be allowed by-right in residential areas





R-3 PARCELS AROUND DOWNTOWN





NEXT STEPS FOR ZONING

- Staff will use feedback from study session to further develop proposed modifications to Zoning Ordinance and Specific Plan
- Detailed ordinances will be drafted for review in late fall/early winter 2023
- Actions necessary to amend General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Specific Plan would be adopted by January 2024



THANK YOU