

Special Joint Study Session of the City Council and Planning Commission

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 5:00 PM

South Coast Air Quality Management District/Room CC-8
21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765

How to Observe the Meeting From Home:

The public can observe the meeting by calling +1 (914) 614-3221, Access Code: 153-338-116 OR visit: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2289880741768496731>.

How to Submit Public Comment:

The public may provide public comment by attending the meeting in person, by sending an email, or by logging into the teleconference. Please send email public comments to the City Clerk at cityclerk@DiamondBarCA.gov by 3:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting and indicate in the Subject Line "FOR PUBLIC COMMENT." Written comments will be distributed to the Council Members and Commissioners, noted for the record at the meeting and posted on the City's official agenda webpage as soon as reasonably practicable (found here: <http://diamondbarca.iqm2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx>).

The public may log into the meeting through this link:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2289880741768496731>. Members of the public will be called upon one at a time during the Public Comment portion of the agenda. Speakers are limited to five minutes per agenda item, unless the Mayor determines otherwise.

American Disability Act Accommodations:

Pursuant to the Executive Order, and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in the Council Meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office (909) 839-7010 within 72 hours of the meeting. City Council video recordings with transcription will be available upon request the day following the Council Meeting.

THIS MEETING IS BEING AUDIO RECORDED AND BY PARTICIPATING VIA TELECONFERENCE, YOU ARE GIVING YOUR PERMISSION TO BE RECORDED. THIS MEETING WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR LIVE VIEWING AT <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2289880741768496731>.

CITY OF DIAMOND BAR
SPECIAL JOINT STUDY SESSION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
AND PLANNING COMMISSION

October 08, 2024

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** 5:00 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

City Council: Andrew Chou, Ruth M. Low, Steve Tye, Mayor Pro Tem Chia Yu Teng, Mayor Stan Liu

Commissioners: Naila Barlas, William Rawlings, Raymond Wolfe, Vice Chair Mahendra Garg, Chair Ruben Torres

3. **STUDY SESSION:**

3.1 CITYWIDE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS.

Recommended Actions:

Receive the staff and consultant presentations; receive public comments; and provide direction as necessary and appropriate.

4. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Written materials distributed to the City Council within 72 hours of the City Council meeting are available for public inspection immediately upon distribution in the City Clerk's Office at 21810 Copley Dr., Diamond Bar, California, during normal business hours.



Agenda #: 3.1
Meeting Date: October 8, 2024

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION REPORT

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive the staff and consultant presentations; receive public comments; and provide direction as necessary and appropriate.

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this joint study session is to introduce the City Council and Planning Commission to the Objective Design Standards (ODS) project that staff and the consultant team kicked off in July. The purpose of this evening's discussion is twofold:

1. To provide the Council and Commission a brief overview of the effort, explain the process the team will undertake to develop the ODS, and the work that the project team is currently engaged in; and
2. To invite feedback and direction to help guide the preparation of the draft ODS.

BACKGROUND:

Recent State housing legislation, including Senate Bill 35 and Senate Bill 330, established mandates for cities and counties to streamline the review process for multiple-dwelling housing, including mixed-use developments. Consequently, local agencies are now required to limit their review of qualifying housing projects to objective standards. ODS will apply to new multifamily housing developments that contain two or more residential units, and to mixed-use projects with at least two-thirds of the square footage designated for residential use. ODS will not apply to single-family housing in single-family zones, or to nonresidential projects.

The legislation defines "objective standards" as standards that involve no personal or subjective judgment by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion.

In addition, Program H-8 of Diamond Bar's certified 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element commits the City to update the Development Code (Title 22 of the Diamond Bar City Code) to include objective standards as part of its broader obligation to

minimize constraints on housing supply and affordability.

Presently, Diamond Bar applies a combination of objective and subjective standards to analyze housing projects through its implementation of the Development Code and the Citywide Design Guidelines. To bring Diamond Bar into compliance with State law, as well as implement its Housing Element programs, the City must proceed with the formulation of *solely* objective standards to govern the design of the aforementioned residential and mixed-use project types. The standards will then be utilized by staff and the Planning Commission as the basis to approve or deny such projects. The absence of ODS would compel the City to limit its review of these project types to only the most basic development standards currently in place, such as setbacks, height and parking requirements; architectural style and form-based criteria such as bulk, mass, scale and neighborhood compatibility would be beyond the City's authority to regulate design, and can no longer be the basis for denying a project until a comprehensive ODS ordinance is adopted.

CONSULTANT TEAM

For this effort, the City retained Torti Gallas + Partners (TG+P) under an amendment to the Consultant Services Agreement for the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP). Neal Payton will serve as principal-in-charge and project manager for the Citywide ODS project, while continuing to serve in those roles for the TCSP. TG+P already drafted detailed objective design standards for the Town Center planning area, which will be a key component of the forthcoming Specific Plan document. As a result, TG+P will be able to adapt many of the architectural design criteria from the Specific Plan so that they can be applied to all multifamily and mixed-use zoning designations Citywide.

Project Approach

TG+P's proposal is guided by the following set of objectives:

Objective 1: Maintain—and in some cases, elevate—architectural variety, integrity, and quality.

Objective 2: Create human-scaled development that contributes to pedestrian-oriented streets and boulevards.

Objective 3: Establish architectural standards for larger buildings to mitigate overall mass and ensure visual interest from all public vantage points.

Objective 4: Animate building edges on the ground floor to create an inviting public realm and pedestrian-friendly environment.

Objective 5: Orient building façades to frame the streets and other public spaces.

Objective 6: Provide graceful transitions between larger-scale format of multifamily structures and smaller scale single family housing.

Objective 7: Provide standards such that new buildings can sit comfortably adjacent to

existing buildings of varied historical styles.

Scope of Work

Five main tasks comprise the scope of work for the ODS project, which are summarized below.

Task 1: Project Coordination and Management. This task includes identification of the primary issues to be addressed as part of the project, including initial meetings, data collection, and establishing communication channels. It also includes ongoing collaboration with the City staff throughout the project.

Staff held a kickoff meeting and toured the City with TG+P on July 24, 2024. The project team is currently reviewing background documents, such as existing design standards and guidelines, as well as ODS from other cities as the basis for expressing desired qualitative outcomes through the application of objective standards.

Task 2: Preparation of Objective Design Standards. This is the core task where different types of multifamily and mixed-use buildings are defined along with their design elements. It includes:

- Researching existing architectural styles in the City.
- Identifying stakeholder groups and conducting meetings to gather feedback.
- Defining various building types, frontages, and style options.
- Creating a user-friendly document showcasing these design options.

Tonight's joint meeting fulfills Task 2.1.B, where TG+P will discuss preliminary findings and observations. This meeting is an opportunity to obtain any feedback and direction from the Planning Commission and City Council.


Task 3: CEQA Documentation. The Scope of Work provides for the preparation of an Addendum to the General Plan EIR. Preparation of an Addendum to the EIR assumes that the ODS would not result in new or substantially more severe impacts beyond those that were evaluated in the EIR for the City General Plan 2040.

Task 4: Development Code Amendments. TG+P will prepare the Development Code amendments in applicable Planning Commission resolution and City Council ordinance formats for public hearings. More broadly, this task provides for early engagement with the Planning Commission and City Council to present and discuss the draft ODS so that the final product presented at the public hearings accurately reflects the feedback and direction provided by these bodies.

Task 5: Final Zoning Code Amendments. Should the City Council direct staff to make final revisions to the Development Code amendments following the public hearings, TG+P will respond to that direction and prepare a final version of the ordinance for second reading to reflect final City Council action.

DISCUSSION:

To better convey what objective design standards are, it is helpful to identify subjective standards currently used and how they would need to be rewritten so that they meet the legal definition of “objective.” The following table illustrates how subjective policies and guidelines the City currently applies to multifamily projects can be rewritten as objective standards.

	Subjective City Design Guidelines	Objective Design Standards (Example)
Architecture	Form, proportion and scale should relate to the use of the structure as a single-family residence. The scale of structures should be within a human scale so as not to overwhelm or dominate their surroundings. Second story rooms may be tucked into roof planes to maintain low profiles. Clipping the roofs at the sides and corners of buildings can be used to lower apparent height [Citywide Design Guidelines, Multiple Family Residential Design (A)(2) - pg. 41]	<p>Massing - Where applicable, the third floor of the building must be set back a minimum of three feet from the first or first and second floor footprint.</p> <p>Cantilevers - The upper floors shall not overhang or cantilever more than four feet over any of the lower floors.</p> <p>Corner buildings shall provide a rounded or angled façade at the corner with a different material application and window arrangement from the rest of the building façade.</p> 
Common Open Space	Common open space should be provided in large, meaningful areas and not fragmented or consist of "left over" land. Without sufficient area, common open space cannot serve the purpose for which it is intended [Citywide Design Guidelines, Multiple Family Residential Design (B)(2) - pg. 43]	Common open space shall be located and arranged to allow visibility into the space from pedestrian walkways on the interior of the site.
Windows	Wall openings for doors and windows should be punched in, or cut into the wall in a way that the wall thickness is apparent , and in the case of openings in thin walls, enhanced through the application of exterior trim. Such building-out of openings should be behind the building face, although framing the opening from the outside to enhance depth is acceptable [Citywide Design Guidelines, Multiple Family Residential Design (B)(2) - pg. 43]	<p>Windows shall be recessed at least two inches from the face of the exterior wall.</p> <p>When utilized, functional and decorative shutters shall be at least one-half the width of the window (for paired shutters), or a matching width (for a single shutter).</p> <p>Architectural window detailing, such as sills, trim, and/or awnings shall be</p>

	Residential Design (A)(5) - pg. 41]	provided.
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The project team would like to invite the City Council, Planning Commission and the public to comment on desirable design precedents, important design features to focus on, and provide direction on any of the topics covered. To facilitate this discussion, a few questions to consider include:

1. When visiting other cities or through travels, were there any multifamily or mixed-use projects that you liked, and would like to see in Diamond Bar? What made these projects memorable?
2. There are five proposed architectural styles being considered for the draft ODS: Main Street Commercial, Craftsman, Mediterranean/Spanish Mission, Art Deco, California Contemporary. Do you have any concerns about the appropriateness of these styles for Diamond Bar?
3. Are there any specific areas of concern or topics that staff should address during this process?

NEXT STEPS:

After receiving feedback at this meeting, the project team will begin work on Task 2: preparation for the drafting of the ODS. After the CEQA process (Task 3) and Code amendments are drafted, there will be another opportunity for the City Council and Planning Commission to discuss the draft ODS so that the final product presented at the public hearings accurately reflects the feedback and direction provided.

Prepared by:

Mayuko Nakajima

Mayuko Nakajima, Senior Planner 10/8/2024

Reviewed by:

Grace Lee

Grace Lee, Planning Manager

9/30/2024

Greg Gubman

Greg Gubman, Community Development Director

9/30/2024

Attachments:

1. 3.1.a Photos and illustrations showing intended outcomes of Objective Design Standards



Citywide Objective Design Standards

Study Session – October 8, 2024



**TORTI
GALLAS +
PARTNERS**

Building Type Standards



Row House



Flex / Loft



Small Multi-Family Dwelling



Courtyard Building



Residential Block



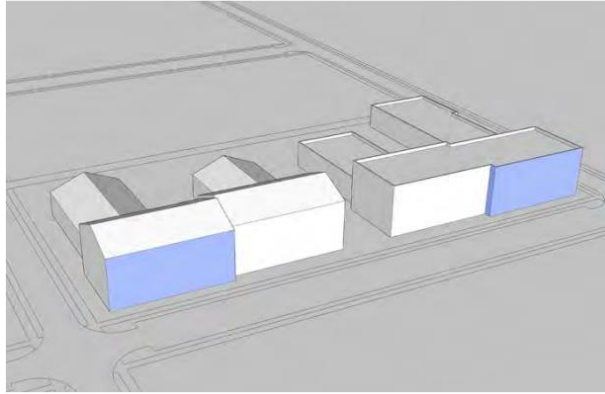
Mixed-Use Block



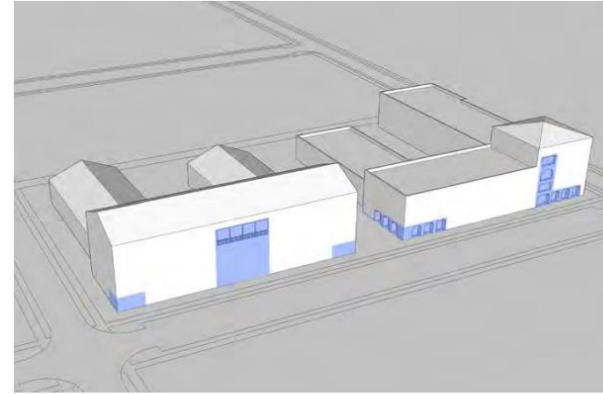
Small Mixed-Use Building

Building Articulation and Massing Standards

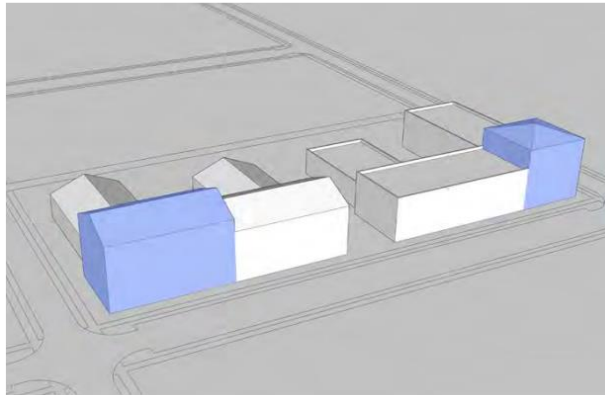
Horizontal Articulation



Architectural Recessions



Vertical Articulation



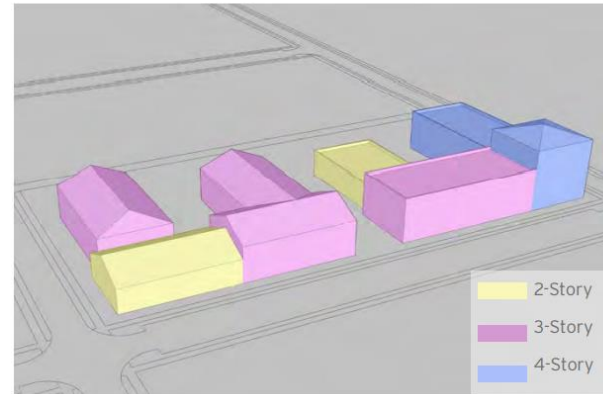
Façade Differentiation



Architectural Projections



Height Averaging



Frontage Types



Stoop



Fence and Hedge



Front Porch



Forecourt



Raised Commercial Terrace



Shop Front



Industrial Shop

Architectural Standards



Roof Forms, and Heights



Materials and Texture



Entrances



Shopfronts



Balconies



Bay Windows



Canopies and Awnings



Parkways / Planting Strips

Architectural Styles



Main Street Commercial



Craftsman



California Contemporary



Mediterranean / Spanish Mission



Art Deco