



MEMORANDUM

Date: April 19, 2022

To: Alameda County Objective Standards Working Group

From: M-Group

Subject: **PRELIMINARY OBJECTIVE STANDARDS**

The consultant team has developed Preliminary Objective Standards for review with the Working Group at Meeting #2 on Thursday, April 28th.

The Preliminary Objective Standards are based primarily on subjective design guidance contained in Alameda County planning documents. They were also developed in response to issues discussed during Working Group Meeting #1, which are summarized in Section B, below.

The consultant team, in consultation with County staff, determined that some design and development issues are presently addressed by existing County standards and have therefore not been pursued. As an example, development on slopes is addressed by hillside development standards in Chapter 2, of the Alameda County's 2014 document *Residential Design Standards and Guidelines*, particularly pages 2-17 through 2-20.

A. DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION

The following documents are attached to this memo for Working Group members to review or consult in advance of Working Group Meeting #2.

- **Preliminary Objective Standards**

This document contains the Preliminary Objective Standards that will be the primary focus of discussion at Meeting #2. **If one's time is limited, this is the document to focus on in advance of the meeting.** They are organized by design topics and include a reference indicating the source(s) for the standard. Where the source is shown to be derived from an Issue Number, it is referring to the Issues for Preliminary Objective Standards file described in the following bullet.

- **Issues for Preliminary Objective Standards**

This file is very similar to a spreadsheet that was made available prior to Meeting #1 but has been augmented with additional information. **This document is background material for those wishing to dig deeper into the sourcing of a particular draft Objective Standard.** The first tab of this document, "Background



(Subjective)” provides the subjective design guidance contained in Alameda County planning documents. Other informational resources in this file can be found at the tabs “Zoning District Standards” and “2014 Residential Standards.”

B. ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY WORKING GROUP

A summary of the key issues that Working Group members identified during the discussion at Working Group Meeting #1 are listed below. For reference, the standard number(s) is provided for the Preliminary Objective Standard that has been drafted to address that issue.

1. Privacy between adjacent buildings with different heights
[Objective Standard Numbers: A.3.2., B.4.4., B.4.5]
2. Design vehicular access to reduce traffic conflicts on the street
[Objective Standard Numbers: A.2.1., A.2.2.]
3. Prohibit gates that preclude pedestrian access and community connections
[Objective Standard Numbers: A.3.7., A.3.8.]
4. Incorporate greater landscaping in front setback and parking areas
[Objective Standard Numbers: A.3.1., A.3.3.]
5. Provide landscape buffers adjacent to incompatible development
[Objective Standard Number: A.3.2.]
6. Limit site coverage of buildings and provide open space
[Objective Standard Numbers: A.4.2., A.4.6.]
7. Break up large parking areas into multiple smaller parking lots
[Objective Standard Number: A.5.3.]
8. Provide transitions between buildings with different height or massing
(NOTE: These types of transitions are addressed in *Residential Standards and Guidelines for the Unincorporated Communities of West Alameda County*. Standards exist in two places: Multi-family Standards, pages 2-64 to 2-66, and, Residential Mixed-Use Standards, pages 4-16 to 4-18]
9. Reducing the appearance of mass, bulk, and “box-like” buildings
[Objective Standard Number: B.2.1.]
10. Require different architectural design options for façade articulation along buildings
[Objective Standard Numbers: B.4.3.]



C. MATERIALS FROM MEETING #1

Materials for Meeting #1, held on January 26th, 2022, can be found in a folder at this [link](#).
Materials in that folder include:

- **Introductory Presentation.** This is a useful resource if you want to refresh your understanding of objective standards and some of the recent legislation requiring objective standards.
- **Glossary of Terms and Definitions.** This file includes a few definitions that may be useful to revisit.
- **Preliminary Issues.** This is the document that distills many of the subjective design guidelines existing in County planning documents. The organization of these design and development issues framed the discussion in Working Group Meeting #1.

D. NEXT STEPS

Following Working Group Meeting #2, the consultant team will coordinate with County staff to develop a draft version of the Objective Standards for review as an item for discussion at each of the Municipal Advisory Committees during upcoming meetings.