



SAN JOSE FOR ALL:

DEEP DIVE INTO THE SJ DESIGN
STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

THURSDAY | MAY 11, 2023 | 12-1P | VIA ZOOM



RUCHIRA GAUR
VAN METER WILLIAMS POLLACK



TIMOTHY ROOD
CITY OF SAN JOSE



CARLA VIOLET
URBAN PLANNING PARTNERS

sv@home

VAN METER WILLIAMS POLLACK

SILICON VALLEY **sv@home**
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
MONTH MAY 2023 #BuildingCommunity

The theme for this year's Affordable Housing Month is Building Community, reinforcing our relationships with the people, neighborhoods, and local partners committed to making housing justice a reality. At SV@Home we recognize that every supporter of Affordable Housing Month plays a critical role in shaping our communities so that they are diverse, affordable, equitable, and accessible for all. This year's theme emphasizes the need for all of us to deepen our commitment to this work and lay the building blocks of a future that we can only construct together.

Visit bit.ly/AHM2023 for more information



Ruchira Gaur

Associate, Senior Urban
Designer, VMWP



Timothy Rood

Former Planning Division
Manager, City of San Jose
Community Development
Director, Hercules



Carla Violet

Senior Associate,
Urban Planning Partners

Today's Program

1. *Background/Context*
 - a. Process
 - b. Grant Scope and Funding
 - c. Update and Combine Multiple Documents
 - d. State Law Compliance
 - e. What are Objective Design Standards?
2. *Process and Approach*
 - a. Stakeholder and Community Engagement
 - b. Key Considerations/Issues
3. *Standards and Guidelines Document*
 - a. Values and Guiding Principles
 - b. Document Structure
 - c. Design Principles
 - d. Development Prototypes
4. *Implications for Affordable Housing in San Jose*
5. *Questions/Discussion*

San Jose Design Guidelines Update Process 2017-2021

City Council Priority #19

Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan Requirement:

CD-4.1 Maintain and update design guidelines adopted by the City and abide by them in the development of projects.

Guidelines were outdated: 1990-1997

Create consistency and predictability for applicants and public

Respond to contemporary best practices and newer development types and create higher quality architecture and public realm

Initial Funding from Knight Foundation Grants for City Designer position and Downtown Guidelines and Standards

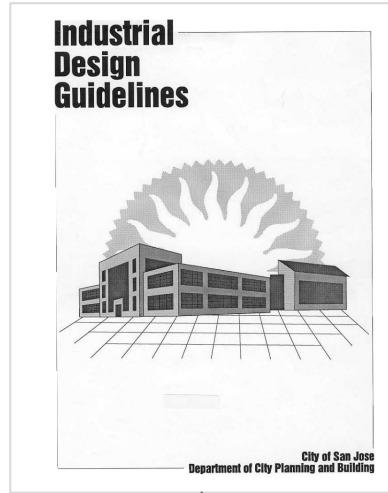
Additional funding from MTC PDA Staffing Grant for Citywide Standards and Guidelines



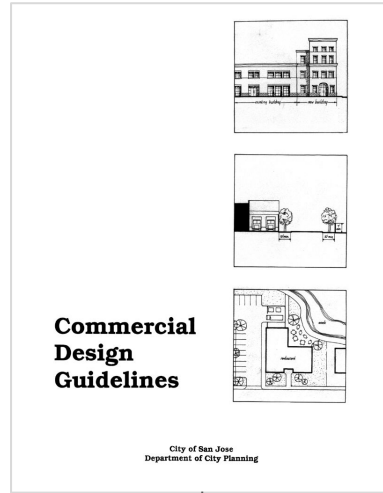
Citywide Standards and Guidelines Scope and Funding

- *Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Grant awarded in 2018*
 - Consultant Team: Urban Planning Partners and Van Meter Williams Pollack (VMWP)
 - Update City of San Jose Residential and Commercial Design Guidelines
 - Evolved to include Industrial Design Guidelines

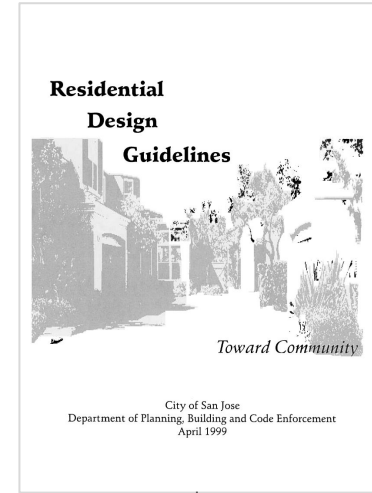
Update and Combine Multiple City Documents



1992



1990



1997

San Jose Citywide Design Standards and Guidelines

State Law Compliance

- *“Affordable Housing Streamlined Approval” - Senate Bill 35 (2017)*
 - **Goal:** Address housing shortage by increasing housing supply
 - Requires streamlined (ministerial) approval for eligible housing projects
 - Eligible housing projects must meet all objective standards at the time of SB-35 application submittal
- *“Housing Crisis Act of 2019” - Senate Bill 330*
 - **Goal:** Increase certainty in development process, speed review of new housing projects, preserve existing affordable housing, and prevent zoning actions that reduce availability of housing
 - A city may not reduce density or deny a project consistent with objective standards
- *Both laws require housing development projects be reviewed against objective design standards.*

What are Objective Design Standards?

- *Design standards are "objective" if they are measurable, verifiable, and knowable to all parties prior to project submittal. A planning review process based on objective design standards involves no personal or subjective judgment by a public official.*

Design Guidelines	Design Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Subjective● Recommendations, may not be enforceable or have “teeth”● Open to interpretation, difficult to measure or verify● Use words such as “should” or “may”● Adopted by resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Objective● Requirements, enforceable as regulations● Measurable and verifiable● Use language such as “shall,” “must,” or “is required to”● Adopted by ordinance

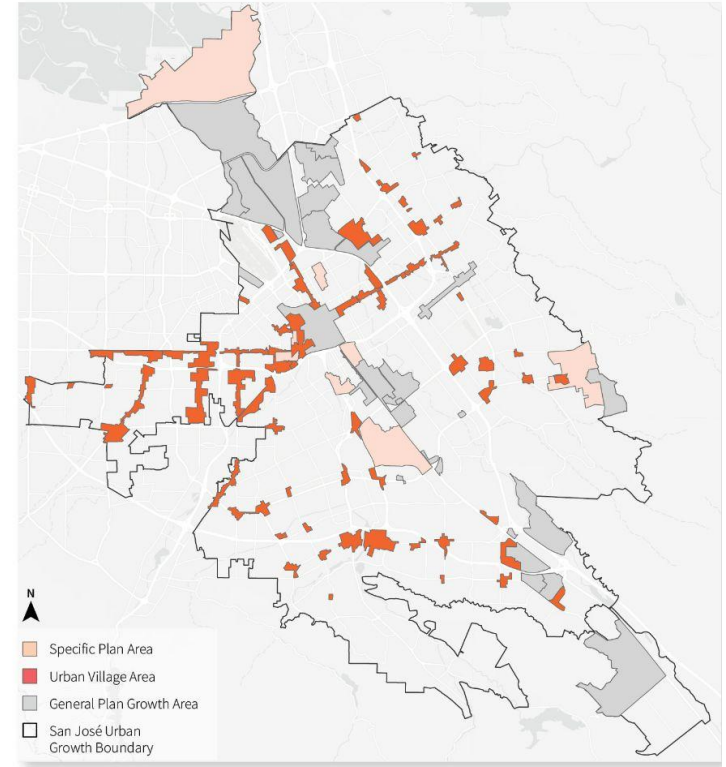
Stakeholder and Community Engagement

- **Workshop 1: Listening Session**, October 15, 2019
- **Workshop 2: Draft Document**, July 21 & 28, 2020
- **Historic Landmark Commission Study Sessions**:
July 15 & Aug 5, 2020
- **Planning Commission Study Sessions**:
July 22 & Aug 12, 2020
- **Developers & Designers Focus Group Meeting**:
July 24, 2020
- Individual Zoom meetings with **community organizations and architects**, June-Dec 2020



Key Considerations/Issues

- *80 Urban Villages designated but not all of them approved*
- *City's experience with common development types*
- *A document that works for all General Plan Growth Areas that do not have a Specific Plan*
- *A document that is flexible enough to apply to the entire City*



Map showing Design Standards and Guidelines Applicability

Values and Guiding Principles

Health and Active Design

Create safe and healthy environments that sustain San José's residents, businesses, and natural resources.

Guiding Principle 1: Design for Sustainability

Lead with *sustainable* building and site designs to support San José's *resilience* and resource stewardship, now and in the future.

Guiding Principle 2: Support Connectivity

Design safe, functional, and comfortable multimodal connections between activities that are accessible and easy to navigate by walking, bicycling, and public transit.

Guiding Principle 3: Implement Active Design

Incorporate active design strategies that make walking and bicycling enjoyable and safe for San José residents and visitors.

Well-Designed Development

Thoughtfully design places that create a pleasant experience for their users, relate to their surroundings, and create a positive long-term aesthetic impact.

Guiding Principle 1: Provide Quality Design

Create high-quality architecture and public spaces that create a pleasing experience for pedestrians and users.

Guiding Principle 2: Analyze Context

Build projects that respond to San José's existing neighborhoods in design and scale.

Identity and Culture

Celebrate and emphasize San José's diversity of neighborhood characters and cultures.

Guiding Principle 1: Strengthen Community Character

Design places that reflect San José's existing residents and businesses and contribute to the physical, economic, social, and cultural character.

Guiding Principle 2: Design Equitable Places

Make spaces that recognize and support residents' and workers' activities across age, ability, culture, race, gender, and income.

Document Structure

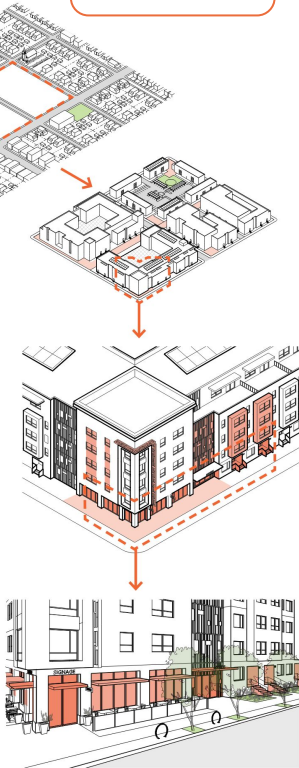
Introduction
(Chapter 1)

Site
(Chapter 2)

Building
(Chapter 3)

Pedestrian Level
(Chapter 4)

Specific Dev. Types
(Chapter 5)



Guiding Principle
Ties the topic to stated community values

Objective
Summarizes the intent of the guideline

Rationale
Describes the principle and its importance

Guidelines
Desired best practices

Standards
Quantifiable, required rules

3.3 BUILDING ELEMENTS

3.3.2 Roofs and Parapets

ANALYZE CONTEXT, PROVIDE QUALITY DESIGN, AND DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Design roofs to be compatible with surroundings and add character to buildings.

Rationale

Roof forms and materials greatly impact the appearance and character of buildings and neighborhoods.

Articulated roof forms create an interesting skyline and can emphasize certain elements of the building missing using combinations of different roof forms including but not limited to flat, gables, pitched roofs, and other design strategies such as variations in roof and parapet heights.

Flat roofs allow for a contemporary design and provide space for a variety of uses including community spaces, low maintenance green roofs, green stormwater infrastructure, renewable energy generation, and mechanical equipment required for the building.

Standards

51. Break the continuity of pitched roofs and roofs with horizontal eaves more than 150 feet in length using gables, building projections, or other building articulation (see Fig. 3.3.2).

52. Do not provide pitched roofs for over 50 percent of any building roof length. Forcing the public realm for buildings greater than four stories (see Fig. 3.3.2).

53. For buildings with five stories or greater:

- Provide flat roofs for at least 90 percent of roof area. Up to 10 percent may be a combination of other roof forms.
- When provided, sloped roofs must be less than 25 percent of roof length. Forcing the public realm on any facade or up to 25 feet for facades of length 100 feet or less (see Fig. 3.3.2).
- Do not provide railings at roofs for more than 25 percent of the roof length. Forcing the public realm unless the railing is set back more than five feet from the building facade or designed to be 80 percent solid so as to act as a screen for mechanical equipment. Exceptions may be made in the case of railings located at occupied roof decks.

Guidelines

54. Parapets and other screening elements at the roof level must screen rooftop equipment from public view.

55. Design articulated roof forms for new developments and building extensions with elements such as parapets, parapet caps, and cornices to create strong edges and reinforce messaging and building facade articulation.

56. Group vents, exhausts, and other roof penetrations so that they do not create visual clutter.

57. To reduce the heat island effect and energy loads, use LID strategies such as "cool roofs" with non-reflective and low-intensity (light and dull color) materials and finishes.

58. Enclose or screen all large rooftop equipment, storage areas, and exterior maintenance system equipment from public view using enclosures, parapets, arbors, landscaping, or other architectural features with materials and detailing similar to the rest of the building (see Fig. 3.3.2 and 3.3.3).

59. When roof decks are added as a common open space or recreational facility, all mechanical equipment and service rooms should be screened from the common space.

Related Subsections

3.3.2.1 Façade, Proportion, and Scale

3.3.3 Façade Design and Articulation

General Plan Reference

CD-1, CD-4, IN-6, MS-2

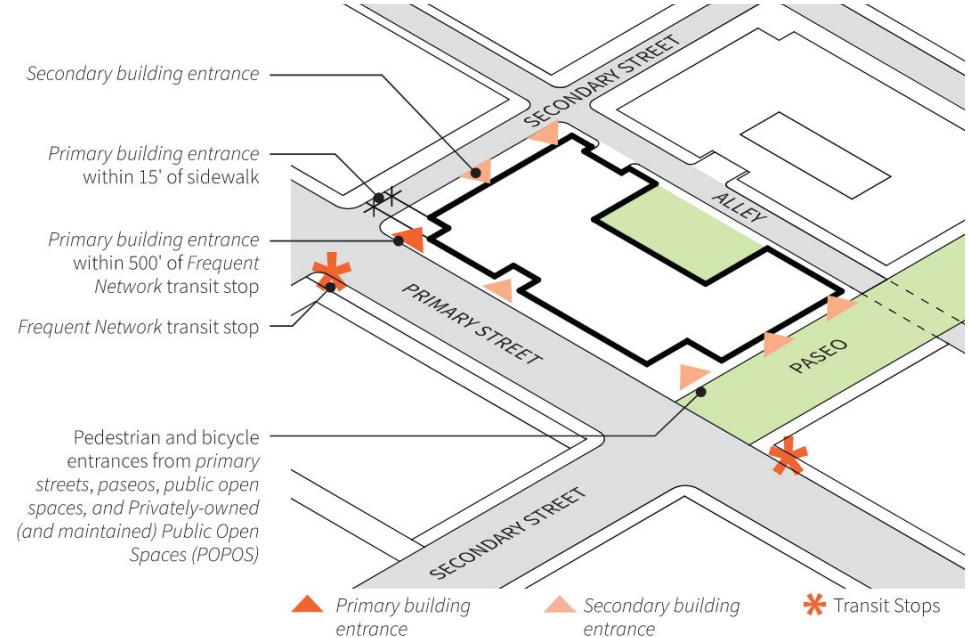
Fig. 3.3.2 Articulated roof forms are screening elements that create a unique character for new developments.

Fig. 3.3.3 A flat roof can be used for a combination of renewable energy systems such as photovoltaic solar panels and low maintenance landscaping.

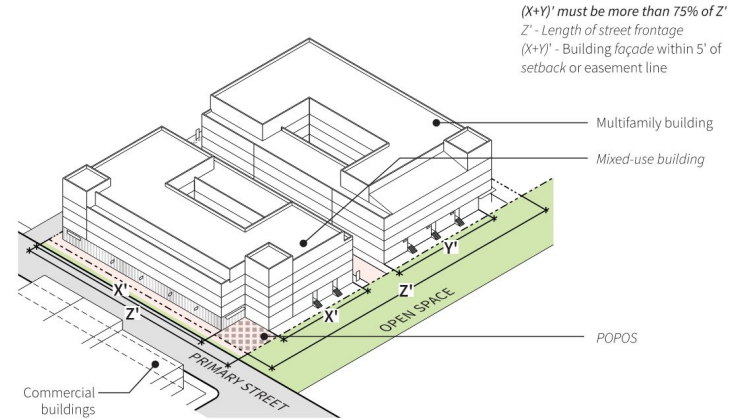
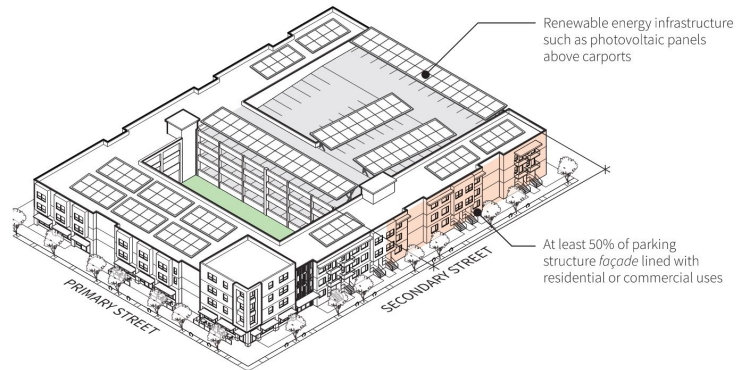
“The guidelines are very well-thought out, well-organized and well-presented for ease of use and are an aesthetic experience for the user.”

Gita Dev, Co-Chair Sustainable Land Use Committee Sierra Club Loma Prieta

Key Design Principles - Site Planning and Organization



Key Design Principles - Concealed Parking



Key Design Principles - Active Frontages & Transparency



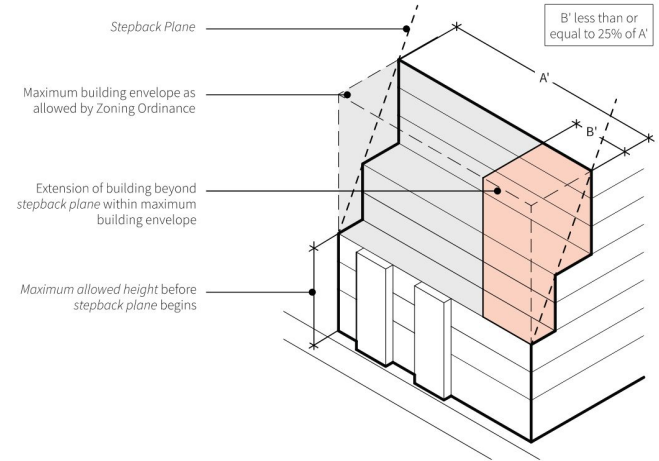
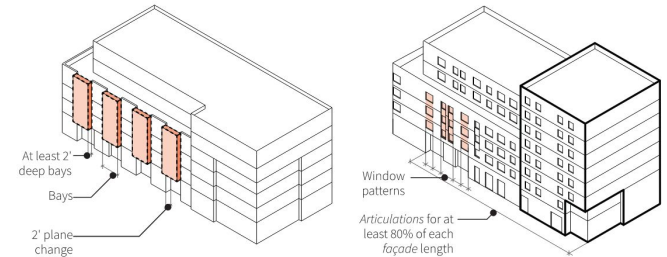
Key Design Principles - Building Massing & Articulation



Rhythmic pattern of bays and windows

Horizontal venting integrated with *façade* design

Plane change



Key Design Principles - Sustainability and Resilience towards Climate Change

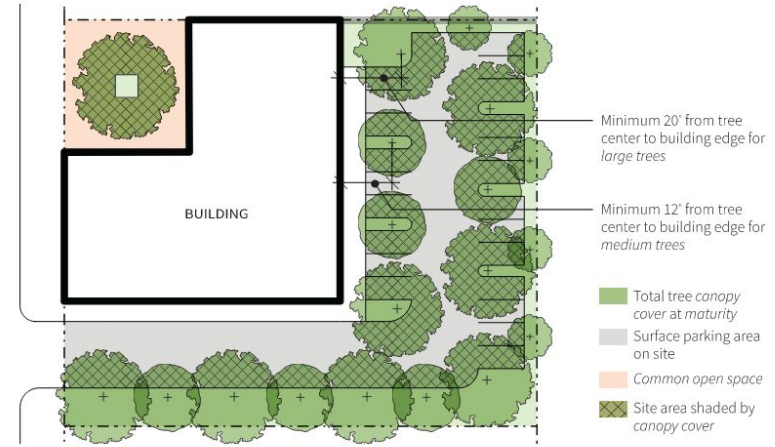
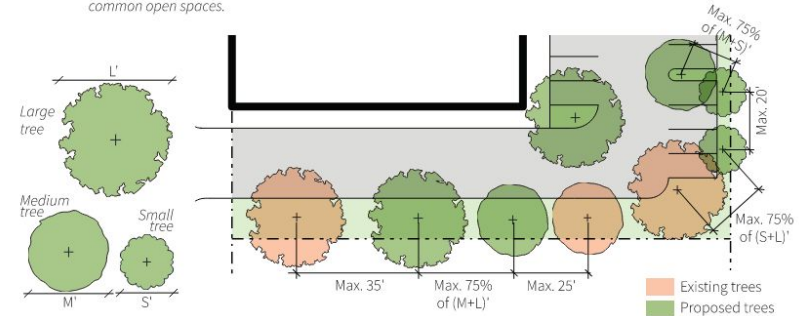
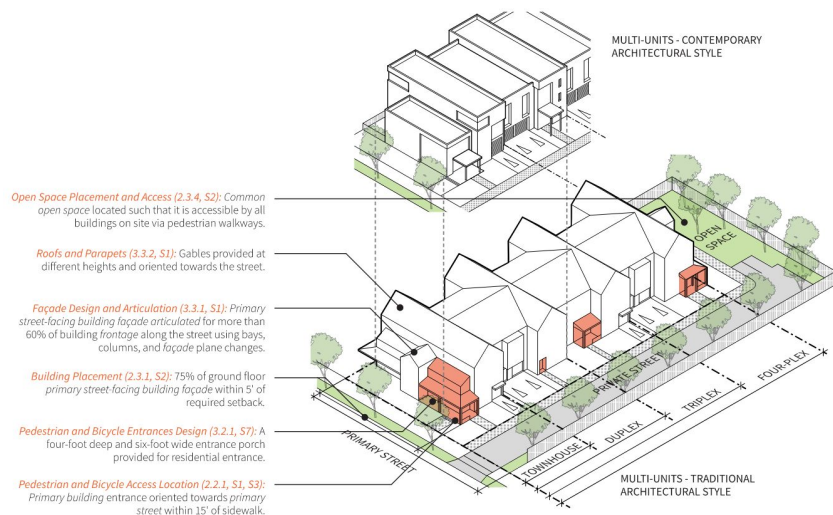


Fig. 2.37 Select trees to create a canopy cover that shades a minimum of 50 percent of all on-site parking areas and common open spaces.



Development Prototypes



Urban Village Mixed-Use

East Santa Clara Urban Village

Replaces existing office building

Required to provide office (not just retail) per Urban Village policies

6 stories, 82,000 sq ft total

7,200 sq ft retail on ground floor

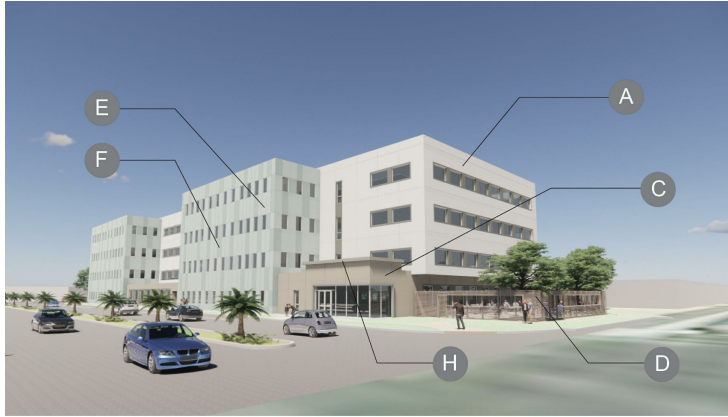
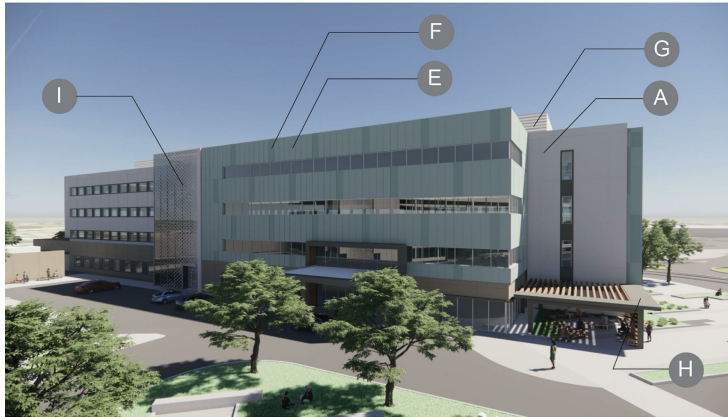
7,000 sq ft office on 1st and 2nd floors

50 residential units on floors 2-6

One level underground parking



Medical Office, Evergreen Urban Village



Warehouse/Distribution

2105 Lundy



Implications for Affordable Housing

Same standards apply to all types of housing, BUT...

Affordable projects eligible for some waivers and concessions per state law, most commonly:

- *Parking*
- *Private and common open space*
- *Setbacks and stepbacks*
- *Height*



2600 Union

Maracor Development with A0 Architects, currently under review



Residencias Arianna

ROYGBIV Development with Anderson Architects, currently under review

Questions?

1. *Great to hear about how these standards apply to Affordable Housing, but how do these also apply to other building types?*
2. *Now that these standards have been in place for over a year, what are some lessons learned from recent applications?*