



## STAFF REPORT SAN CLEMENTE PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: September 2, 2015

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**PLANNER:** Christopher Wright, Associate Planner *CW*

**SUBJECT:** **Interim Mixed Use 3.2 Design Guidelines:** a request for Planning Commission direction on draft interim Mixed Use 3.2 Design Guidelines.

### **BACKGROUND**

At its August 10<sup>th</sup> Study Session, the Planning Commission took straw votes that directed staff to draft interim design guidelines for the Mixed Use 3.2 zone. If adopted by the City Council, the design guidelines would be used to review projects until the City's Design Guidelines are updated. An update to the City Design Guidelines is identified as an implementation measure of the General Plan. The update would fold these interim guidelines in the Design Guidelines.

Staff requests the Planning Commission to provide direction on the attached design guidelines by taking a straw vote. Following this meeting, staff will make revisions and present design guidelines at the next public hearing on September 16<sup>th</sup> for the Planning Commission to act upon.

### **DISCUSSION**

At the August 10<sup>th</sup> Study Session, the Planning Commission directed staff to draft design guidelines that encourage: 1) a variation of setbacks along the alley, 2) a transition of building mass and scale from the Mixed Use 3.2 zone to the residential zone across the alley, 3) roof ridgelines oriented perpendicular to El Camino Real, and 4) landscaping adjacent to the alley. Based on this direction, staff drafted design guidelines provided as Attachment 1.

There are existing design guidelines that encourage articulation and a variation of setbacks and roof design. These design guidelines are provided for reference as Attachment 2.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**STAFF RECOMMENDS THAT** the Planning Commission take a straw vote to provide direction on the attached draft design guidelines.

### **Attachments**

1. Draft interim Mixed Use 3.2 design guidelines
2. Existing general design guidelines related to mass, scale, and height

# ATTACHMENT 1

## DRAFT INTERIM MU3.2 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR STRAW VOTE AT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING ON 9/2/2015

### Interim Design Guidelines for Mixed Use 3.2 Zone Recommended for Inclusion in Update of City Design Guidelines

Urban Design Element Implementation measure No. 13 of the Centennial General Plan calls for an update the City Design Guidelines. Until an update is complete, projects within the Mixed Use 3.2 zone should be reviewed for consistency with the following guidelines and the City Design Guidelines. When the City Design Guidelines are updated, the following design guidelines should be considered for inclusion and/or other guidelines that similarly encourage: 1) a variation of setbacks along the alley, 2) a transition of building mass and scale from the Mixed Use 3.2 zone to the residential zone across the alley, 3) roof alignment and upper floor offsets that maintain freeway ocean views, and 4) landscaping adjacent to the alley. These interim guidelines are as follows:

#### *Building mass and scale*

- Provide varied setbacks along the alley to break up building mass and add architectural interest, depth, and shading to the rear facing facade.
- Step the mass and height of buildings to follow the natural topography of rear facing slopes down to a scale and mass that provides a compatible transition with the adjacent residential zone located across the alley.
- Minimize obstructions of freeway ocean views by aligning roof ridgelines to be mostly perpendicular to S. El Camino Real.
- Provide massing offsets on upper building levels that preserve views of the ocean from the freeway.

#### *Landscaping*

- Incorporate landscape area between the building and alley with sufficient space for planting that softens the appearance of buildings.

At the August 10, 2015 Study Session, the Planning Commission took a straw vote in support of adding design guidelines that encourage varied setbacks along the alley. The following design guidelines address building mass and form. The guidelines below are used to evaluate a building's massing and articulation along the alley.

**b. Building Form and Massing**

- Articulate new building forms and elevations to create interesting roof lines, and strong patterns of shade and shadow.
- Reduce the perceived height and bulk of large structures by dividing the building mass into smaller components.

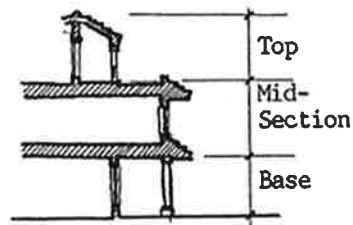


**Building Mass Divided into Smaller Parts**

Suggested methods of reducing the apparent height and bulk of larger buildings are illustrated. Although these methods are encouraged, other approaches that achieve the same objectives are acceptable.

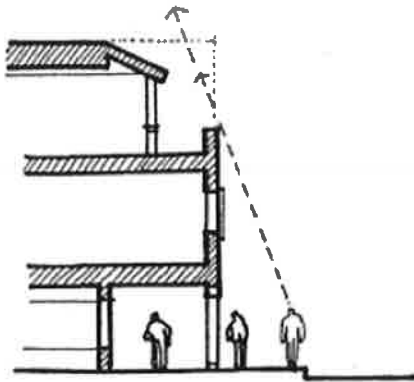


**Building Mass Divided into Smaller Parts, with Third Story Stepped Back**



**Third Story Step Back**

- "Scale down" the street-facing facades of buildings more than two stories high in order to reduce apparent height. Achieve this by stepping back the third story at least 10 feet from the street-facing property be, or 5 feet from the building face, whichever stepback greater.



- Avoid long and unrelieved wall planes. As a general principle, relieve building surfaces with recesses that provide strong shadow and visual interest.
- Recesses may be used to define courtyards, entries or other outdoor spaces along the perimeter of a building.
- Projections may be used to emphasize important architectural elements such as entrances, bays, stair towers, balconies, and verandas.

- Architectural elements may be incorporated to break down the expansive mass of walls. Recessed balconies, porches, and loggias create a sense of depth in the building wall, contrasting surfaces exposed in sun with those in shadow.



- Varied roof heights are encouraged.
- Changes in roof orientation should be accompanied by plan offsets. Similarly, abrupt changes in adjacent heights require plan offsets to distinguish building forms.



Encouraged



Discouraged