EPC Questions – March 17, 2021

Item 5.1 – R3 Zoning Update

1. In staff report Map 1, there seem to be a significant amount of R3 parcels/units across the city. I hope to understand how much "weight" R3 has on the city's overall housing stock. Does staff have a percentage number for the area of R3 vs total area of all residential zoning districts? Is there a table that summarizes the number of housing units zoned for each of the residential zoning districts and each of the precise plan areas?

   Below is some data regarding the number of units and acreages within each of the City's residential zones.

Zone	Units	Pct	Acres	Pct
R1	7886	20%	1762	37%
R2	1939	5%	248	5%
R3	16323	41%	1024	22%
P (R3 Reference)	2922	7%	158	3%
Other P	8262	21%	1412	30%
RMH	1116	3%	112	2%
Other (incl. R4, CRA)	915	2%	33	1%

2. What's the anticipated impact of the proposed update of R3 on the city's RHNA target?

   Increased densities resulting from the R3 work will overall be favorable to the City as we update our Housing Element to meet our RHNA obligations. We are just beginning the Housing Element update process and will have more information on this to share at a later date.

3. What does the consultant's feasibility analysis entail? For what reasons are the existing R3 standards failing market feasibility test? The obvious reasons I can think of include increased land value and construction costs. Any other reasons?

   High land value and construction costs challenge market feasibility in the R3 zone. But the feasibility analysis also found that the current R3 density and FAR standards do not allow enough units for market feasibility. In addition, parking, open space, and lot coverage requirements are too high, the maximum height allowed is too low, and open space fees contribute to lower yields and higher costs for each unit. The market feasibility used two key metrics: return on cost, and developer profit.

4. Was a similar market feasibility analysis done on the recent precise plans in order for the city to come up with the housing unit numbers that were presumably market-feasible for those areas at the time those plans were put together?

   Yes, feasibility analyses were completed for the El Camino, East Whisman, and North Bayshore Precise Plan work. Each area has different contexts and challenges, but long-term the hope is that we will see new residential in these areas.

5. Is staff aware of any R3 best practices from other cities, in addition to what the consultants recommended?

   Each City has their own unique contexts, residential housing stock, and development opportunities and constraints, so it is difficult to extend a 'best practice' approach to Mountain View based on other cities. However, the proposed draft approach incorporates best practices through the unique lens of Mountain View's existing R3 district and using a fresh approach through form-based codes. Form-based codes are considered by many in the planning and development fields to be 'best practices'.

6. Definitions, pictures of all the different R3 building types suggested would be helpful to see

   Attached is additional information regarding these building types.

7. Figure 1 - what do cottage court and pocket neighborhood mean?

   Please see attached poster.

8. The images on pages 16-19 are very helpful. I could identify where the pictures from Page 16 - Higdon/R3a, Devonshire, 17- R3b. Can staff easily identify where R3c and R3d pictures are from? I'd like to go walk nearby for a sense of scale.

   The R3C images are from 100 and 200 Sierra Vista Avenue blocks. R3D images are from 100 block Del Medio and the 2500 block of California.

9. Surveys and Community Meetings:

a. I have been told by participants that the survey and the community meetings included both MV residents and non-residents. Please provide a break out of resident vs non-resident overall for the surveys and the meetings and if possible by question.

We didn't request that information of the attendees. The City focused on outreach to Mountain View residents by sending over 37,000 postcards to R3 property owners and tenants.

b. Of the MV residents, did the participants include people from all neighborhoods and other demographics?

We didn't request that information of the attendees.

c. Of the non-residents, was there any demographic more strongly represented than others?

We didn't request demographic information of the attendees.

10. The 4 subzones list a comment about "bonus" on each. What is this? The state Density Bonus?

Yes. It's intended to try and direct the bonus into an expectation that developers and neighbors alike can have about potential height when State Bonus is involved.

11. The description of the 4 subzones are pretty open:

We're not clear on what is meant by 'open' but each proposed zone has several key development standards, including a maximum height coordinated with the building types and their physical outcome.

a. Is R3a the closest to the current R3?

In terms of height, yes. In terms of building types, no, because R3-A proposes Small and Medium-footprint buildings while the current R3 ranges from Medium to Large-footprint buildings.

b. Do a through d roughly correspond to the Small, Medium, Large and Extra Large in the Initial Finding?

In terms of lot sizes yes but the A-D now represent lot size, height, and overall physical character.

c. The difference in the description between R3b and R3c is not apparent to me. Please expand?

R3-C has smaller setbacks (more lot coverage) than R3-B and more intense building types than R3-B as well as 5 potential stories through density bonus instead of 4.

d. R3d looks it would potentially exceed R4 and significantly exceeds the feasibility findings in the Initial Findings. It seems well beyond the scope defined by Council. Why does staff believe this should be included as a component of "R3" rather than just recommending using R4?

R3-D is intended to provide the 5+ story type of development and is shown at 6 to also accommodate 5 stories over 1 ground floor as the base height/scenario for implementation purposes. The current R4 standards aren't proposed where R3-D is proposed because they don't direct physical form into the types of predictable physical outcomes that the proposed standards would deliver.

12. Are the subzones maps showing where the different subzones could be used as examples or is staff saying that the R3 zoning in each area would be switched proactively by the City in all of these areas to the Subzone described?

The proposed maps are showing the proposed location of new R3 subzones as replacement zoning that would be initiated by the City.

13. Some of the subzone areas highlighted don't seem obvious to me. For example, on the R4D map: corner of Middlefield and Easy Street, Shoreline at Montecito, Spots along Villa and Miramonte? The pattern along California Street has small R3a, R3C and R3D all mixed together. Can staff explain more how the potential areas have been evaluated so far?

The mix of proposed zones reflects the wide variety of existing mixed physical character. Our approach is summarized below:

- Globally, updating R3 zoning to unlock key constraints to new development (e.g., parking, density controls) and add building type structure
- Maintaining the existing zoning envelope to respect lower-intensity context (R3-A)
- Intensifying the zoning envelope to leverage development potential while respecting adjacent lower-intensity context (R3-B, R3-C)
- Intensifying the zoning envelope to maximize development potential in areas without lower-intensity context and with transit/access/amenities/potential (R3-D)

14. Setbacks and step backs were discussed extensively and incorporated into the El Camino Precise Plan. This was done to address transitions into lower height neighborhoods. Could we use those definitions/requirements rather than create something new?

Yes, we propose to use those techniques in the zoning standards and that will be informed by our analysis of the wide variety of adjacencies throughout the R3 zone.

15. Council and community feedback seems to support the idea of green streetscapes which would suggest some more depth on frontages to allow for wider sidewalks and more trees. Please comment on why staff feels that reducing the setbacks on R3c and R3d proposals still support that objective.

    Each of the proposed R3 subzones includes frontage types which provide options for how the ground floor of new buildings relates / attaches to the streetscape. A portion of the setback area is fitted with a variety of frontage types based on the zone's intended physical character. Each frontage type (e.g., Porch, Stoop, Terrace) will be regulated for the basic elements that make the type, leaving architectural style open.

16. Is the basis for applying the State Density Bonus units per acre? FAR? A combination? Something else? I would like to be clear on how it might be applied since staff mentions very high units per acre in some cases.

    Units per acre and FAR information will be provided for each Building Type in each of the zone's where it's proposed. The City will be further studying how both density and FAR will be interpreted through Density Bonus.

17. is it possible to see an overlay map of the R3 areas requiring seismic retrofit? Priority is suggested on page 5 from the Council study session, but I'm not sure if Planning has those maps readily available. Softstories came up several years back -- so perhaps that's existing information?

    Staff will be following up on this request.

18. San Carlos and Santa Barbara are two communities that I think have thoughtfully tackled the adjacencies of their R3 equivalent with ownership condos near their downtowns with fairly recent construction. Does the planning staff have any tips for what keywords or phrases that I should be looking for in their zoning code in particular to see what has enabled them to preserve neighborhood character while building more densely?

    Staff would recommend, if EPC members are interested, that these codes be 'browsed' or scanned, as each community may use different terms and concepts, and an exact term in these other communities may not be a completely seamless match with Mountain View.

19. Can you address whether displacement policy can or should be written into Zoning ordinances, or if the mechanism for tenant protections through a displacement policy works in tandem with zoning. I just want to confirm that as we move forward with the potential R3 Zoning changes that any city-wide displacement policy would cover the R3 zone as well.

    Staff will be bringing forward additional information regarding displacement policies at a later date. The Housing Division is leading this effort but closely coordinating with Planning staff. Any new displacement policy will cover the R3 zone.

20. Did community involvement involve visiting the sites/zones in question? Would there be a chance to do so? Or if logistics prevents large groups of outdoor gathering, is it possible for Opticos to recommend a list of local streets/places that one could experience walking down/in with building types of the suggested size with the suggested setbacks?

    Staff will be following up on this request with Opticos.

21. Will there be more opportunity for community involvement?

    Yes. Staff anticipated additional opportunities when the Design Handbook phase of the project is underway, and of course when the EPC and City Council consider the final recommended R3 code.

22. Will Opticos' involvement extend beyond assessment and recommendations, to also assist the city to develop the potential form-based code, design standards/design guidelines using easy-to decipher diagrams?

    Yes.

23. I understand this is a complicated process with many factors to consider, and the city needed to prioritize the focus of the consultant's assessment, but given that we are considering form-based coding, was Opticos tasked to assess and make recommendations through the lens of the public realm, not just market feasibility?

    Yes, staff and Opticos will be considering how the new R3 code interacts with or supports the public realm.

Building Types: House-Scale (1 of 2)

House-Scale Buildings. Buildings that are the size of a house, typically ranging in footprint from as small as 25 feet up to 80 feet overall.

Duplex Stacked

A small-to-medium-sized, detached, House-Scale Building with small-to-medium setbacks and a rear setback. The building consists of two stacked units, both facing the street and within a single building massing. The type has the appearance of a medium-to-large, single-unit house and is scaled to fit within lower-intensity neighborhoods.

Zones:

R3-A

Cottage Court

A group of up to nine small, detached, House-Scale Buildings arranged to define a shared court open to and visible from the street. The shared court is common open space and takes the place of a private rear setback, thus becoming an important community-enhancing element. The type is scaled to fit within low-to-moderate-intensity neighborhoods and in non-residential contexts.

Zones:

R3-A

Pocket Neighborhood

A group of 5 to 10 detached, House-Scale Buildings each containing one to four units, arranged to define a shared open space. The shared open space is common open space and takes the place of a private rear setback, trees become an important community-enhancing element. The type is scaled to fit within low-to-moderate intensity neighborhoods.

Zones:

R3-A

Building Types: House-Scale (2 of 2)

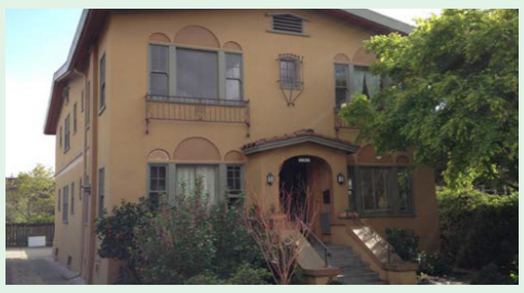
House-Scale Buildings. Buildings that are the size of a house, typically ranging in footprint from as small as 25 feet up to 80 feet overall.

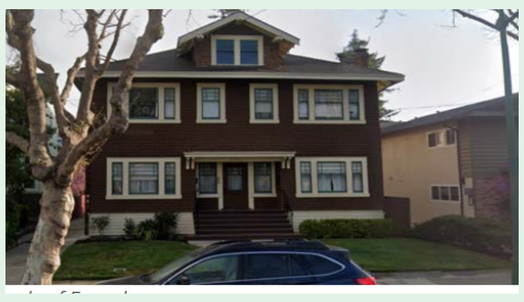
Fourplex

A small-to-medium-sized, detached, House-Scale Building that consists of 3 to 4 side-by-side and/or stacked units, typically with one shared entry or individual entries along the front. The type has the appearance of a medium-sized, single-unit house and is scaled to fit within low- to moderate-intensity neighborhoods.

Zones:

R3-A





Neighborhood Townhouse

A small-sized, typically attached, House-Scale Building (up to four units side-by-side) with a rear setback. Each Neighborhood Townhouse consists of one unit. As allowed by the zone, the type may also be detached with minimal separations between buildings. The type is typically located within low-to-moderate-intensity neighborhoods.

Zones:

R3-A

R3-B

Neighborhood Courtyard

A detached, House-Scale Building that consists of up to 16 multiple attached and/or stacked units, accessed from a shared courtyard. The shared court is common open space and takes the place of a rear setback. The type is typically integrated as a small portion of lower-intensity neighborhoods or more consistently into moderate-intensity neighborhoods.

Zones:

R3-B

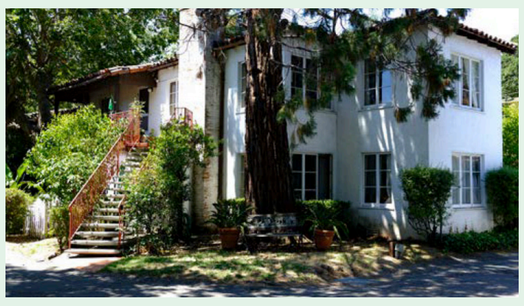
Multiplex

A medium-to-large-sized, detached, House-Scale Building that consists of 5 to 18 side-by-side and/or stacked units, typically with one shared entry. The type is scaled to fit within moderate-intensity neighborhoods.

Zones:

R3-B

R3-C



Mountain View R3 Standards

Mountain View, CA

R3 Update: Building Types

March 17, 2021

OPTICOS

Building Types: Block-Scale (1 of 1)

Block-Scale Buildings. Buildings that are individually as large as most or all of a block or, when arranged together along a street, appear as long as most or all of a block.

Core Townhouse

A large-sized, typically attached, Block-Scale Building (10 to 16 units) with a rear setback. Each Core Townhouse consists of up to two stacked units. As allowed by the zone, the type may also be detached with minimal separations between buildings. The type is typically located within high-intensity neighborhoods or on, or near, a neighborhood main street.

Zones:

R3-C

Core Courtyard

A detached or attached, Block-Scale Building that consists of up to 50 attached and/or stacked units, accessed from one or more shared courtyards. The shared court is common open space. The type is typically integrated into moderate-to-high-intensity neighborhoods and on main streets with a non-residential ground floor along the adjacent street.

Zones:

R3-C

R3-D

Mid-Rise Building

A medium- to large-sized structure, 4 to 8 stories tall, built on a large lot that incorporates structured parking. It can be used to provide a vertical mix of uses with ground-floor commercial, service, or retail uses and upper-floor commercial, service, or residential uses; or may be a single-use building, typically service or residential, where ground floor retail is not appropriate. This type is a primary component of an urban downtown.

Zones:

R3-D

Mountain View R3 Standards

Mountain View, CA

R3 Update: Building Types

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OPTICOS