

# Design Review Program Improvements

Discussion & Talking Points for Testimony



# Today's Objectives

- Determine talking points for PLUZ testimony
  - 2 minutes!!
  - Pick top 2-3 issues to address
- Is there consensus on key provisions?
- If not:
  - advise Council on what considerations to take into account



# Background: Design Review Program

- Launched in 1994
- Program Purpose
  - Better design outcomes
  - Flexibility for development standards
  - Communication
- Two phases
  - Early Design Guidance
  - Recommendation
- Types
  - Full
  - Administrative
  - Streamlined



# DR Improvement Project Goals

- Cultivate program's purpose of **encouraging better design**
- Improve overall **function of program**
  - Efficiency, consistency, and predictability of project reviews
  - Improving dialogue amongst stakeholders
  - Making program more transparent and accessible to public and applicants
- **Focus resources** on projects most likely to influence n'hood character
- **Reduce project costs & time**



# Key Provisions

1. Thresholds
2. Affordable Housing
3. Board Composition
4. Outreach & Engagement
5. Review Tracks
6. Meeting Caps



# THRESHOLDS

## EXISTING

**Thresholds for DR type based on unit count and type**

## PROPOSED

**Thresholds based on overall size (sq. ft.)**

**Only projects  $\geq 10,000$  sf.**

## COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- Supportive of new thresholds and change of metric
- Consider implementing other measures to improve design quality for smaller projects, such as updating development standards



# AFFORDABLE HOUSING

## EXISTING

**Affordable housing projects  
with public funding use same  
thresholds**

## PROPOSED

**Affordable housing projects  
undergo Admin DR;  
or opt in to Hybrid/Full**

## COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- Supportive of process that could help speed up permitting
- Include projects that include performance units as part of MHA requirements



# BOARD COMPOSITION

## EXISTING

**5 Board members;  
1 Get Engaged member overall**

## PROPOSED

**Allow 1+ GE members on  
each Board**

## STAFF COMMENTS (new proposal)

- Support expanding Get Engaged membership to include at least one additional spot on each Board





# OUTREACH

## EXISTING

**No outreach required by applicant; SDCI performs noticing**

## PROPOSED

**Applicant required to use 3 types of outreach in advance of EDG application**

## COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- General support for concept; concerns re: implementation, cost,
- Necessary piece to make hybrid process work
- Support for multiple types of outreach
- Include education about Design Review Process
- Provide resources to community groups on how to provide input to SDCI



# PROCESS – DR MEETING CAP

## EXISTING

**No cap on meetings**

## PROPOSED

**Full DR: 2 EDG; 1 Rec  
Hybrid: 2**

**Projects with departures or  
Council action not eligible**

## COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- Mixed responses – how to balance design outcomes with efficient and predictable process



# DESIGN REVIEW TRACKS

## EXISTING

- 1. Full**
- 2. Admin**
- 3. Streamlined**

## PROPOSED

- 1. Full**
- 2. Hybrid**
- 3. Administrative**

## COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- Support for removing Streamlined and adding Hybrid
- Mixed responses on details of process, esp. which meeting for hybrid should be with DRB



# Proposed Thresholds for DR Track

<b>Project Size</b>	<b>Site Characteristic</b>	<b>DR Track</b>
<b>10,000-20,000 sf</b>	Not complex	Admin
<b>10,000-20,000 sf</b>	Complex	Hybrid
<b>&gt;20,000 sf</b>	Not complex	Hybrid
<b>&gt;20,000 sf</b>	Complex	Full

**PROPOSED  
COMPLEX SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Site Characteristics</b> <i>(If <u>any</u> characteristic is present, project would be considered complex)</i>
Context	Lot is abutting or across an alley from a lot in a single-family zone
	Lot is in a zone with a maximum height limit 20 feet or greater than is allowed on an abutting lot or a lot across an alley
Scale	Lot is 43,000 square feet in area or greater
	Lot has any street lot line greater than 200 feet in length
Special Features	Development proposal includes a Type IV or V Council Land Use Decision <sup>5</sup>
	Lot contains a designated landmark structure
	Lot contains a character structure in the Pike/Pine Overlay District



# MEETING PILOT PROGRAM

- Intent: study effectiveness of alternate option
  - 25 applicants allowed to opt. in
  - Elect to have EDG by DRB, Rec by SDCI

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION (new proposal)

- SPC offer metrics to inform evaluation of program
  - Consider time, cost, design outcomes, communication, allocation of resources



# SPC Testimony

1. Thresholds
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