

# LOS GATOS OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

## SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING #5

December 14, 2021

### FOCUS TOPICS

This document organizes the issues identified in the "Objective Standards Subcommittee Meeting 5 Focus Topics" file. Those issues stem from Town planning documents and are organized below by sub-topic for discussion at the third subcommittee meeting, December 14, 2021. The issues that provide background for the discussion are provided below and organized according to the Façade Design and Articulation sub-topic. Within this sub-topic, M-Group has grouped the issues into similar, finer grained categories to facilitate consideration by subcommittee members. There are 13 issues that come from the GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral that have been identified next to each issue.

#### 1. FAÇADE DESIGN AND ARTICULATION (187 Issues in COMMITTEE REVIEW tab)

##### Neighborhood Compatibility

1. Require new structures within historic districts to be designed to blend within the existing neighborhood. *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral (Similar to issue numbers 162, 163, 174, 194, 199, 289, 389, 437, and 439 in spreadsheet)*
2. "Maintain a single-family character along public streets, and compatibility between new multiplex housing and the Town's existing single family neighborhoods." *Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines (Similar to issue number 37 in spreadsheet)*
3. "Sloped roofs are strongly encouraged for all structures, and should include the use of varied pitched roof styles, gables or dormers." *Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines (Similar to issue numbers 43 and 52 in spreadsheet)*
4. Provide front facade articulation similar to those predominant in the neighborhood *Residential Design Guidelines*
5. Minimize privacy intrusions on adjacent residences *Residential Design Guidelines (Same as issue numbers 347, 348, 517, and 518 in spreadsheet)*
6. Break facade segments into modules that reflect those common along nearby commercial building frontages. For facades along streets that are closely related to nearby residences, break larger building elements into modules that are sympathetic to the smaller scale of those houses. *Commercial Design Guidelines*

7. Maintain a sense of place unique to the Town of Los Gatos within a broad range of architectural diversity *Commercial Design Guidelines (Same as issue numbers 442 and 470 in spreadsheet)*
8. The contrast between manmade buildings and the environment shall be minimized. A buildings color and materials shall complement and blend with the predominant colors and values of the surrounding natural environment. *Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines*

### **Pedestrian-Scale Design**

1. Encourage buildings and sites within all Community Place Districts to integrate design features that create a pedestrian and neighborhood-friendly environment, including siting buildings close to the sidewalks, providing space for small plazas, and including public art. *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral*
2. "Promote community design which is human-scaled, comfortable, safe, and conducive to pedestrian use." *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral*
3. Provide pedestrian arcades and/or other one story architectural elements to reduce the visual height of tall walls. *Commercial Design Guidelines*

### **Façade Design Strategies**

1. "Promote well defined architectural styles through the use of building massing, setbacks, façade articulation, fenestration, varied parapets, and other human-scaled architectural features." *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral*
2. "Require multi-story buildings to incorporate step backs on upper floors to create a more human-scale and comfortable pedestrian environment." *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral*
3. "Encourage all new and remodeled structures use at a minimum one of the following architectural design elements to enhance the uniqueness of the structure: molding; ornamentation; corbels; cornices; or colonnades." *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral*
4. Require new development to be oriented to the public realm. New development shall complement and actively engage the public realm through such features as building orientation setbacks, facade articulations, window glazing, and location of parking. *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral*
5. Drainpipes, parapets, ledges, and other easily climbable and accessible architectural features should not be located near windows, corridors, and balconies. If such placement is not avoidable, these features shall face parking lots, public spaces, and streets and be placed in such a manner in which the public view of the feature is unobstructed. *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral*

6. "Break up the façade of horizontal buildings into smaller components by utilizing vertical adjacent building masses." [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines \(same as issue numbers 343 and 358 in spreadsheet\)](#)
7. "Architectural features (e.g., bay windows, chimneys, canopies, cornices, awnings) are encouraged." [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines](#)
8. "A minimum of 50% of all two-story houses should have a minimum 3-foot horizontal offset in plan." [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines](#)
9. "Exterior wall planes should be varied in depth and/or direction. Desirable massing includes: variation in the wall plane; variation in wall height; roofs containing different forms and located at different levels." [North 40 Specific Plan](#)
10. "Eliminate box-like forms with large, unvaried roofs by using a variety of building forms and roof shapes with clusters of units, variations in height, setback, and roof shape." "Make the building visually and architecturally pleasing by varying the height, color, setback, materials, texture, landscaping, trim, roof shapes, and ridge orientation for all elevations." [North 40 Specific Plan](#)
11. "Provide buildings with a well-defined base, middle, and top to reduce the apparent building height and bulk." [North 40 Specific Plan](#)
12. Design with architectural integrity on all sides of the structure. [Residential Design Guidelines \(Same as issue numbers 200, 287, and 548 in spreadsheet\)](#)
13. Maintain a strong street presence on both streetfacing facades of corner lots [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
14. Design features, proportions and details shall be consistent with the architectural style selected. [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
15. Avoid bay windows and other features that compete with the entry as the home's focal point. [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
16. Provide visual relief for two story walls Provide visual relief for two story walls Some techniques include: [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
  - Belly bands
  - Pop outs and bay windows
  - Material and color changes
  - Chimneys
  - Wide overhangs with projecting brackets
  - Juliet balconies

- Window boxes and pot shelves
  - Landscaped trellises and lattices
17. Houses on corner lots should consider using porches that wrap around from the front to the side elevation, as shown below. This can assist in reducing the visual height of taller side walls, and in enlivening the side street frontage. *Residential Design Guidelines*
  18. Use traditional detailing *Residential Design Guidelines*
  19. The existing built forms, components and materials should be reinforced. Heights and proportions of additions and alterations should be consistent with and continue the original architectural style and design. *Residential Design Guidelines (Same as issue numbers 257, 258, and 3 in spreadsheet)*
  20. For longer railings, intermediate posts with caps and bases should be used to break the railing into smaller increments. *Residential Design Guidelines*
  21. Rich architectural fabric with interesting details *Residential Design Guidelines*
  22. Provide a number of facade layers (e.g., front of columns or pilasters, wall plane, window frame, and window glass). *Commercial Design Guidelines*
  23. Maintain continuity of design, materials, color, form and architectural detail for all elevations of a building that are visible from public areas or adjacent residences. *Commercial Design Guidelines*
  24. Orient buildings to avoid blank walls and service areas which are visible. *Commercial Design Guidelines*
  25. When blank walls are unavoidable, add pilasters, trellises, and/or lattices along with landscaping to make the facades more attractive. *Commercial Design Guidelines*
  26. Avoid walls that appear to be tacked onto the main structure in favor of walls that integrate the service walls into the overall design of the building complex. *Commercial Design Guidelines*
  27. Where screen walls are prominently visible, provide additional detail appropriate to the design of the main structure (e.g., wall caps similar to those on a primary structure) *Commercial Design Guidelines*
  28. Treat commercial street-facing facades which exceed fifty feet in length as though they were constructed on individual parcels no wider than fifty feet. *Commercial Design Guidelines*
  29. Provide horizontal wall plane changes along street frontages and areas easily viewed from adjacent properties. Wall plane changes should have some portions

that are at least two feet to provide building articulation. [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)

30. Provide architectural elements, detailing and ornament to add richness and variety to building facades [Commercial Design Guidelines \(Same as issue numbers 374 and 431 in spreadsheet\)](#)
31. Maintain retail and visual continuity [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
32. Characteristics of traditional Main Street Contemporary architecture include the following: [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
  - Shaped parapets or projecting cornices at street wall tops
  - Large display windows framed by high quality materials
  - Projecting columns and pilasters
  - Column/pilaster bases and bulkheads below display windows
  - Projecting belt courses and other moldings
  - Decorative details
33. Provide architectural details to enhance the visual interest of facades. Elements that are encouraged include the following: [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
  - Projecting cornices with decorative moldings and/ or brackets
  - Shaped parapets
  - Planter boxes
  - Projecting molding
  - Inset medallions
  - Bay windows
  - Moldings around windows
  - Pilaster and column capitals
34. Size and height of all detail elements shall be sympathetic to the major elements of adjacent structures [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
35. Avoid blank walls over ten (10) feet long on primary frontages, and from the first fifty (50) feet from Santa Cruz Avenue or Main Street. Break up larger blank walls with pilasters and landscaping. [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
36. Protected elements include cladding, transoms, parapets, splash panels, display and other windows, entrance vestibules if any, historic tile work, and other detailing. [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)

37. Historic detailing such as patterned brickwork, cornices, ceramic tile, pentroofs, decorative splash panels, molded or bas relief ornament, columns and pilasters should be retained or, if necessary, replicated in kind. New construction may use detailing to create compatible scale. [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
38. One story building heights are encouraged in this area (C2-B Subdistrict). Structures taller than one story in height should have design elements that strongly emphasize the first floor. Elements might include: [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
- Awnings
  - Planters
  - Projecting signs
  - Divided light windows
  - Small scale materials (e.g., brick, board and batten wood)
39. Projects located on corner parcels at signalized intersections should incorporate major design features on the intersection corner [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
40. Large structures should be visually broken up into smaller components through changes in massing, form and texture. [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
41. Design, form, materials, and color. The design, form, roof pitch, materials, and color of a new accessory dwelling unit shall be compatible with the primary dwelling and the neighborhood. Entrances serving the accessory dwelling unit shall not be constructed on any elevation facing a public street. Accessory dwelling units shall retain the residential appearance of the property. [Town Code – Chapter 29 Zoning Regulations Sec. 29.10.320](#)

### **Façade Projections**

1. Encourage the placement of usable balconies on upper story residential units. [GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral \(Same as issue number 36 in spreadsheet\)](#)
2. "Projecting roof eaves of at least 18" are strongly encouraged." [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines](#)
3. Gable dormers, single or an aggregate of multiple dormers, should rarely exceed 50 percent of the width of the roof. Shed dormers can be wider [Residential Design Guidelines \(Similar to issue numbers 229 and 230 in spreadsheet\)](#)
4. Select columns that are traditional to the architectural style of the house. Take care in selecting columns with an appropriate width to height ratio for the style. Except for a very few styles, the columns should have appropriate caps and bases with proportions typical of the style [Residential Design Guidelines](#)

5. Avoid balconies that project more than 3 feet from the face of the building unless they are typical of the architectural style. *Residential Design Guidelines*
6. Brackets at roof overhangs, balconies and bay windows should be designed to extend to fascia/balcony edge/projecting bay front or slightly beyond. Avoid stub brackets that do not appear substantial enough to support the element above. *Residential Design Guidelines (Same as issue number 266 in spreadsheet)*
7. As a general rule, balconies and decks that are more than two feet above grade should try to maintain a distance of ten feet from side property lines and twenty feet from rear property lines when the adjacent use is single family residential. *Residential Design Guidelines*
8. Avoid “awning architecture” where large awnings dominate the building frontages. *Commercial Design Guidelines (Same as issue number 365 in spreadsheet)*
9. Place awnings and canopies at elevations that relate to the height of pedestrians and provide a sense of shelter. Use awning appropriate to the building style. *Commercial Design Guidelines (Similar to issue number 404 in spreadsheet)*
10. Pilasters and columns along with wall beams and cornices which are in front of the building wall and display windows should be used to provide a layering and hierarchy of structure. Storefront widths should be similar to those of other adjacent stores. This is of special importance for buildings with street frontages which are wider than the norm along a street front. *Commercial Design Guidelines*
11. In general, pilasters and columns should occur at intervals of no more than approximately ten (10) feet. *Commercial Design Guidelines*
12. Relate awning placement to the major architectural elements of the facade. *Commercial Design Guidelines*
  - Avoid covering any transom windows or architectural elements such as belt courses, decorative trim and similar features
  - Use separate awnings over individual storefront bays defined by the columns or pilasters rather than placing a continuous awning across the building frontage
  - Patterned and stiped awnings are discouraged. If patterned awnings are proposed, the burden will be on the applicant to demonstrate that the colors and pattern are appropriate for the design and color of the building
  - Operable awnings are encouraged when appropriate for the style of the building.

13. Limit the size of decks and balconies to six feet in depth in areas where privacy is a concern. This will limit their use to passive activities. [\*Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines\*](#)
14. Exterior structural supports and undersides of floors and decks not enclosed by walls are prohibited unless it is proven that no alternative type of construction is feasible and that fire safety and aesthetic considerations have been adequately addressed (also see Chapter III section D.2). [\*Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines\*](#)

### **Building Materials**

1. Exterior building materials in the Downtown District should be consistent with those used on surrounding buildings. [\*GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral\*](#)
2. Use quality materials and workmanship [\*Residential Design Guidelines \(Same as issue numbers 248 and 315 in spreadsheet\)\*](#)
3. Materials and design details shall be suitable to the neighborhood and consistently used on all sides of the house and any accessory structures. [\*Residential Design Guidelines \(Same as issue numbers 172, 249, 320, and 479 in spreadsheet\)\*](#)
4. Materials should be used to reduce the consumption of nonrenewable resources and improve air quality. [\*Residential Design Guidelines\*](#)
5. Use wood trim similar to the house windows [\*Residential Design Guidelines\*](#)
6. Make materials and color changes at inside corners rather than outside corners to avoid a pasted on look. [\*Residential Design Guidelines\*](#)
7. Match wall materials to that of the building. [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
8. Use a mix of materials that have a smaller scale (e.g., stone, brick, wood siding, shingles). Avoid concrete block and metal siding or panels. [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
9. Use bulkhead materials that are consistent with the building's materials and traditional to Mainstreet-style storefronts (e.g., stucco, tile, stone, wood panels.) The decorative treatment of bulkheads is encouraged (e.g., wood moldings over a wood base panel, decorative tile patterns. [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
10. The historic siding should be maintained on all sides of the historic buildings, and it should be matched in repair or rehabilitation or for additions. Preferred materials for siding on new construction are stucco or brick, but a single material on all elevations of the buildings. When cleaning is necessary for brick or other masonry, the gentlest means possible should be used. Sandblasting will not be permitted



because it accelerates deterioration of the building by allowing water to intrude.

*Commercial Design Guidelines*

11. The original materials shall be matched as closely as possible when rehabilitating a structure. Modern materials such as plastics or aluminum are generally not allowed.

*Commercial Design Guidelines*

12. Brick or stone that is currently unpainted shall not be painted over. Colors should be appropriate to the style and period of the building. The Town may require the use of a color consultant, hired by the Town, to review color scheme proposals.

*Commercial Design Guidelines*

13. Historic tile work or mosaic in entrance vestibules should be maintained. Sidewalks should meet Town standards. *Commercial Design Guidelines*

14. White trim color is well represented along Los Gatos Boulevard. Consider its use to increase the street's sense of place. *Commercial Design Guidelines*

15. Exposed metal surfaces shall be painted to compliment adjacent materials, be anodized a dark color, or have the ability to develop a patina (e.g., copper). *Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines*

16. Contrasting color accents shall be kept to a minimum *Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines*

17. A variety of materials, textures, and architectural details compatible with the design theme of the house should be used to add interest and to mitigate the visual impact of large wall areas. Natural materials such as wood and stone will help soften the appearance of stucco and blend it with the natural setting. *Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines*

## **Entrances**

1. Support corner fronting entrances on Los Gatos Boulevard with additional architectural elements (i.e., tower, spire, clock, turret) that are allowed to exceed the allowable height by no more than 12 feet. *GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral*
2. "Ensure that all buildings have well designed and visible entries." *Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines (Same as issue numbers 45, 57, 66, 232, 239, and 472 in spreadsheet)*
3. "Orient unit entries to streets and common open spaces rather than parking courtyards to the maximum extent possible." *Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines (Same as issue numbers 166 and 233 in spreadsheet)*
4. "Distinctive projecting or recessed entries shall be provided for each living unit." *Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines*
5. Wood doors are encouraged *Residential Design Guidelines*

6. Design home entries with sensitivity to the architectural style [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
7. Design entries with sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
8. Avoid large and formal entries unless that is the norm for nearby houses. It is often best to start the design consideration with an entry type (e.g., projecting or under eave porch) that is similar to nearby homes. [Residential Design Guidelines \(Same as issue numbers 235 and 236 in spreadsheet\)](#)
9. Entry columns, railing, steps, and lights are just a few elements that can be used to add individuality to a house [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
10. Provide a high quality entry to the Los Gatos Downtown [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
11. Orient building entries to North Santa Cruz Avenue [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)
12. Provide vestibules at building entries [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)

## **Fenestration**

1. Support extensive glazing, streamlined architectural lines and features, and shed style roof lines to evoke a 21st Century Los Gatos in the Winchester Boulevard District. [GPAC Chair/Vice Chair Referral](#)
2. "Enhance views and make spaces feel larger by maximizing the number of windows." [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines](#)
3. "Larger and more contemporary display windows are also acceptable, but should have some solid base at least 12 inches high between the bottom of the window and the paving below." [North 40 Specific Plan](#)
4. Arrange windows in patterns and groupings consistent with the architectural style and surrounding neighborhood [Residential Design Guidelines \(Same as issue number 242 in spreadsheet\)](#)
5. Limit the number of different window types and proportions to enhance the visual unity of the house design. [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
6. For second floor additions to existing homes, match the windows on the original first floor. [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
7. Match window materials to the architectural style and to the surrounding neighborhood [Residential Design Guidelines](#)
8. Design the windows with attention to matching the traditional details of the architectural style [Residential Design Guidelines](#)

9. Projecting window sills and heads are strongly encouraged unless the architectural style would not normally have those features. [\*Residential Design Guidelines\*](#)
10. Treat openings in walls as though they were constructed of the traditional material for the style. For example, be sure to provide substantial wall space above arches in stucco and stone walls. [\*Residential Design Guidelines\*](#)
11. The introduction of window and door openings not characteristic in proportion, scale, or style with the original architecture is strongly discouraged (e.g., sliding windows or doors in a structure characterized by double hung windows and swinging doors). [\*Residential Design Guidelines\*](#)
12. Windows should be placed to minimize views into the living spaces and yard spaces near neighboring homes [\*Residential Design Guidelines\*](#)
13. Maintain a high degree of transparency at all window areas [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
14. Inset windows as much as possible from wall faces to provide some visual depth to facades. Where interior uses make this difficult, provide exterior trim around windows to achieve facade depth. [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
15. Utilize solid building forms with punched window openings [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
16. Provide interesting storefronts with prominent display windows. [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
17. Traditional storefronts with bulkheads below the windows and glass on both the street front and the sides of vestibules are desirable. However, larger and more contemporary display windows are also acceptable, but should have some solid base at least 12 inches high between the bottom of the window and the paving below. [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
18. Window box planters below display windows are encouraged to add color and visual interest. [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
19. Maintain transparent storefronts and public right of-way walls [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
20. Display window proportions should generally reflect traditional storefront windows with proportions that are horizontal or approximately square. Strong vertical window proportions should be avoided. [\*Commercial Design Guidelines\*](#)
21. For new construction and additions, windows should be compatible with their surroundings in proportions, size, type, subdivisions, and materials. Transom

windows above display windows should be maintained and/or restored. They are encouraged in new construction. [Commercial Design Guidelines](#)

22. The size and number of windows on the side of the house that would likely be exposed to a fire approaching from the downhill side should be minimized. [Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines](#)
23. The use of large windows and glass doors should be kept to the minimum to reduce the daytime glare and nighttime lighting emanating from large glazed areas, and to increase heating and cooling efficiency. Of particular concern is glare that impacts neighboring properties and is visible from the valley floor (also see Chapter V section I.). [Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines](#)
24. Mirror-like window tinting is prohibited. [Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines](#)

## Garages

1. "Recess garages from unit fronts along streets. Recesses from the building face of 18 feet or more are desirable to minimize the prominence of the garages and to allow guest parking on driveway aprons." [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines \(Same as issue numbers 70 and 215 in spreadsheet\)](#)
2. "Front-facing garages should be recessed a minimum of 12 inches from the front facade of the living space. [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines](#)
3. "Carports and garages separated from the townhouse units should be substantial in appearance, and should match the residential units in terms of roof pitches, materials and construction." [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines \(Same as issue numbers 71 and 220 in spreadsheet\)](#)
4. "Avoid garages facing public streets." [Los Gatos AHOZ Design Guidelines](#)
5. "Garage doors should feature windows, recesses, and moldings to help blend the garages with the character of the unit." [North 40 Specific Plan \(Same as issue number 221 in spreadsheet\)](#)
6. Avoid designs that allow the garage to dominate the street facade. [Residential Design Guidelines \(Same as issue numbers 217 and 218 in spreadsheet\)](#)
7. Consider adding trellises with landscaping over garage doors to soften their visual appearance. [Residential Design Guidelines](#)