

The background of the slide is a light blue map of Los Gatos, California. The map shows a grid of streets and highways, with a darker blue vertical bar on the right side. The title text is centered over the map.

Objective Standards for Development in Los Gatos

INTRODUCTION

California State Legislation requires that local governments approve qualified housing projects based on Objective Standards. The Town of Los Gatos will host a community meeting on February 22, 2022, to discuss issues related to site and building design for applicable housing projects. The issues discussed in this meeting will be used to generate potential objective standard solutions that will be drafted to enhance the community character of Los Gatos.

This presentation is an introduction to the Los Gatos community regarding Objective Standards development in Los Gatos. It includes a brief overview of the state legislative requirements, the purpose of objective standards, and examples of how objective standards may be implemented.



PURPOSE OF OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

PURPOSE OF OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

Establish objective criteria as a tool for the streamlined and ministerial review process

- Comply with recent State housing legislation
- Achieve intent of the Town's planning documents and enhance community character
- Provide objective criteria for the review of multi-family residential and mixed-use development projects
- Provide certainty to developers
- Respond to demand for multi-family housing

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Projects that are eligible for streamlined review processes include:

- Multi-family housing projects (minimum of 2 units)
- Mixed-use projects (including residential uses)



Multi-family development (meeting affordability requirements)

Source: M-Group



Mixed-use project (includes residential)

Source: <https://elp-inc.com/newark-approves-16th-avenue-mixed-use-building-through-redevelopment-plan/>

SB 167 Housing Accountability Act

Local government may not deny, reduce density, or make infeasible housing projects *consistent with objective design standards*

SB 35

Requires approval of qualified housing projects based on *objective regulatory standards*

SB 330 Housing Crisis Act

Prohibits imposing or enforcing new design standards established on or after January 1, 2020, that *are not objective*

Goal: Increase development of housing by streamlining the review process

Assembly Bill 68 and 881

- Reduces barriers to building accessory dwelling units
- Requires accessory dwelling units to be ministerially reviewed by staff within 60 days of receiving the application

Senate Bill 35

- SB 35 streamlines project approval for affordable housing projects in jurisdictions that are not meeting their RHNA numbers
- Key characteristics of projects subject to streamlining must:
 - Include affordable housing
 - Include 2+ residential units
 - Be located on a parcel that is zoned for residential uses
 - Not be located in a designated hazard area
 - Be consistent with Objective Design Standards

A light blue background featuring a faint, stylized map of a city grid with streets and blocks.

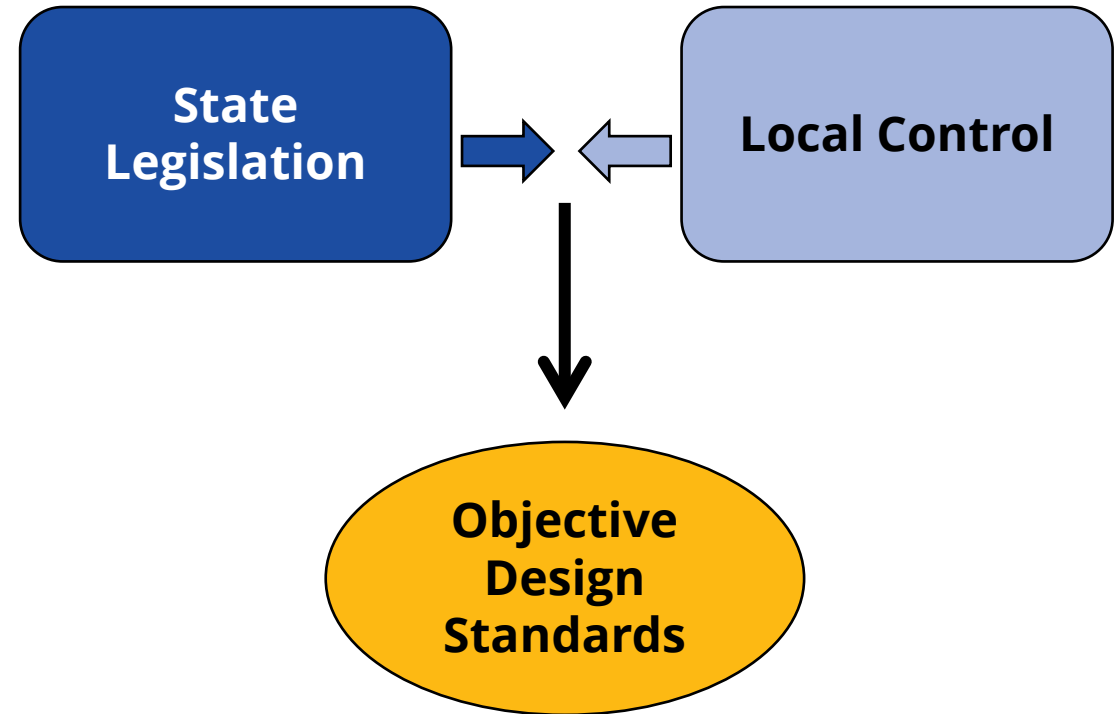
WHAT ARE OBJECTIVE STANDARDS?

“standards that involve **no personal or subjective judgement** by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official prior to submittal.”

(California Government Code, Section 65913.4)

OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

- Objective standards are a powerful toolkit that allow communities to respond to State housing laws that are reducing local control over development
- Provide an opportunity to ensure that the appearance of new development is compatible with the Town's vision



DISCRETIONARY VS. MINISTERIAL REVIEW

DISCRETIONARY REVIEW

- Project undergoes design review
- Qualitative judgement and review by Town staff and reviewing bodies
- Reviewing bodies determine the project's compliance with **design guidelines**

MINISTERIAL REVIEW

- Streamlined review by Town staff
- Removes personal or subjective judgement
- Consistency with **objective design standards** is primary tool for project review

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Design Guidelines

- Used for discretionary approval in a public hearing process
- Recommendations that are subject to interpretation

Objective Standards

- Regulatory tool for streamlined review
- Measurable, quantifiable, easily defined, and enforceable requirements

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Design Guideline

“Minimize the visual mass and bulk of the structures.”



SUBJECTIVE



OBJECTIVE

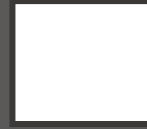
Town of Los Gatos

Affordable Housing Overlay Zone Design Guidelines

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Objective Standard

“Provide a mix of one- and two-story masses or set the second floor back from the first-floor walls by a minimum of 5 feet for at least 50 percent of the façade of the structure.”



SUBJECTIVE



OBJECTIVE

Town of Los Gatos

Affordable Housing Overlay Zone Design Standards

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

“Pedestrian links **should** be provided between buildings, common open spaces, and parking areas.”



SUBJECTIVE



OBJECTIVE

*Town of Los Gatos
North 40 Specific Plan*

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Potential Objective Standard to Address Subjective Guidance

All structures, entries, facilities, amenities, and parking areas **shall** be internally connected with pedestrian pathways.



Internally connected pedestrian paths

Source: <https://www.elevatetosequoia.com/apartments/ca/antioch/cross-pointe-apartment-homes/>



SUBJECTIVE



OBJECTIVE

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

“Promote well defined architectural styles through the use of building massing, setbacks, façade articulation, fenestration, varied parapets, and other human-scaled architectural features.”

Town of Los Gatos General Plan Update Process



Architectural features

Source: <https://www.apartments.com/the-bowery-at-southside-fort-worth-tx/0yrv312/>



SUBJECTIVE



OBJECTIVE

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Potential Objective Standard to Address Subjective Guidance

Articulate all building facades facing a street or public open space for at least 80 percent of the façade length. Façade articulation can be achieved with the following:

- Material changes across the facade
- Bays with a minimum depth of 2 feet
- A plane change of at least 2 feet
- A change in window patterns

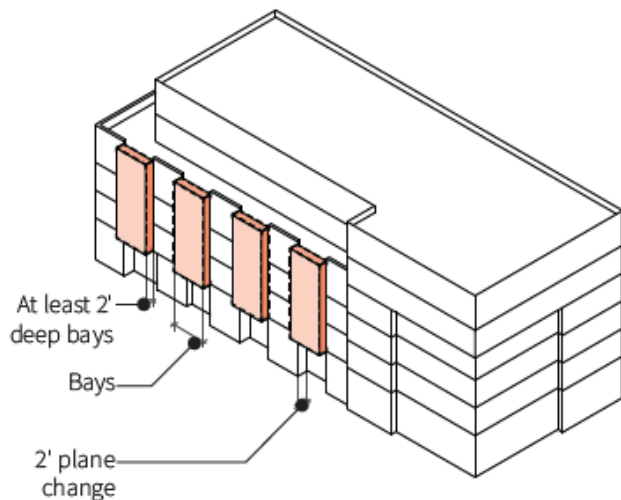


Fig. 3.24 Façade articulation using bays.

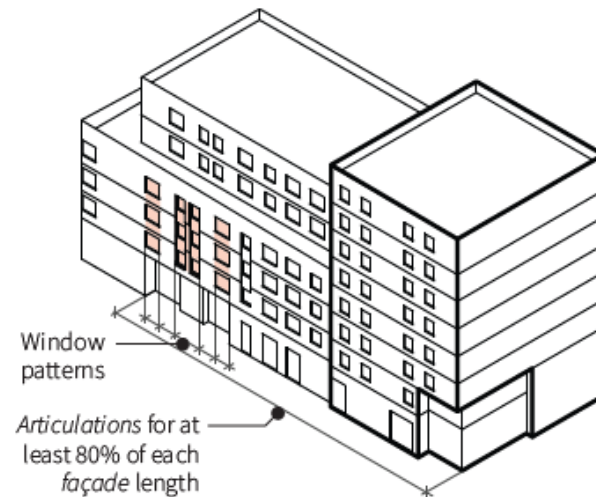


Fig. 3.25 Height articulation using corner elements and window patterns.



SUBJECTIVE

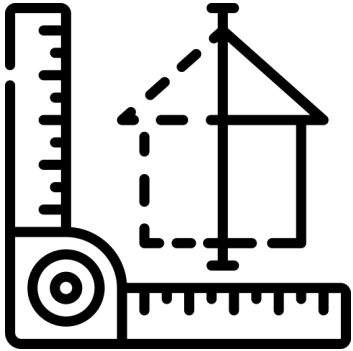


OBJECTIVE

Façade articulation

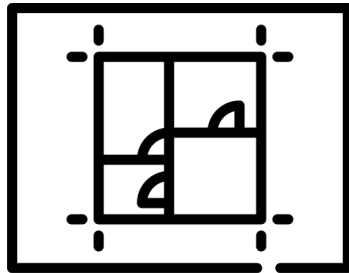
Source: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/69148/637520903552430000>

TOOLS FOR OBJECTIVE STANDARDS



Counts and Measurements

Height
Distances
Setbacks



1:100

Ratios

Roof Pitch
Step Back Ratio



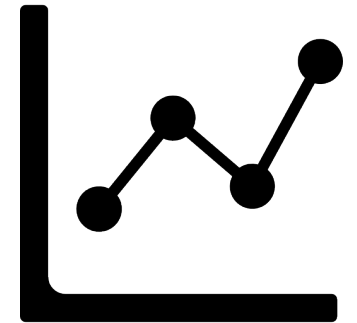
Checklists

Checklist of required architectural features



Scorecards

Minimum total of combined scores for eligible design treatment



Performance Measures and Benchmarks

Minimum amount of open space provided

The background of the slide is a light blue map of Los Gatos, California. It shows a network of streets, including major thoroughfares like Highway 87 and Highway 101, and a grid of residential streets. The map is rendered in a simplified, line-art style. A solid dark blue horizontal band runs across the middle of the slide, containing the title text in white.

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