



## Architectural Review Board

### 2022-2023 Workplan Overview

Date approved by ARB: 5/5/2022

**Staff Liaison:** Jodie Gerhardt, AICP, Manager of Current Planning  
**Lead Department:** Planning and Development Services (PDS)

#### About the Commission

The Architectural Review Board is composed of five members, at least three of whom are architects, landscape architects, building designers or other design professionals. Terms are for three years and commence on December 15. See Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) Sections 2.16 and 2.21. Residency is not required. For the ARB webpage, go to [bit.ly/paloaltoARB](http://bit.ly/paloaltoARB).

#### Current Commissioners

- Osma Thompson (Chair)
- David Hirsch (Vice Chair)
- Peter Baltay
- Yingxi Chen
- Kendra Rosenberg

#### Mission Statement

The Architectural Review Board reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Director on design and related issues for certain new construction, and changes and additions to commercial, industrial and multiple family projects, as described in the Municipal Code. The Board's goals and purposes are to:

- Promote orderly and harmonious development of the City
- Enhance the desirability of residence or investment in the City
- Encourage the attainment of the most desirable use of land and improvements
- Enhance the desirability of living conditions upon the immediate site or in adjacent areas
- Promote visual environments which are of high aesthetic quality and variety and which, at the same time, are considerate of each other
- To implement and enforce the city's ordinances pertaining to architecture and design

#### Prior Year Accomplishments

With a few exceptions, all items on the 2021-2022 ARB work plan were addressed by the Board. This includes considering and making recommendations on many Planning applicants, the full Board and AdHoc Committee working with staff on Objective Design Standards, and finalizing the 2020 ARB Awards that had been postponed due to the pandemic.



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**Lead Department:** Planning and Development Services (PDS)

**PURPOSE STATEMENT:** The Architectural Review Board reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Director on design and related issues for certain new construction, and changes and additions to commercial, industrial and multiple family projects, as described in the Municipal Code.

**PROJECT/GOAL 1 :** Review Planning applications for conformance with ARB Findings and Objective Standards

BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
This is the Board's main mission and serves to ensure the City develops high quality projects	On-Going	Planning staff prepare staff reports, packets and presentations. They ensure paper plan sets and material boards are ready for ARB review. Other departments, such as, City Attorney, Urban Forestry, Transportation, etc., may be required from time to time. Consultants, including CEQA consultants, may also be required.		Yes
<b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>		<b>LOWER PRIORITY</b>		<b>COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE</b>
Projects that include new housing units that will help with City reach its regional housing needs allocation (RHNA)		New office projects that will exacerbate the City's jobs/housing imbalance		N/A

<b>PROJECT/GOAL 2:</b> Discuss specific Comprehensive Plan Goals, Policies, Programs or Design Guidelines the ARB would like to further explore/implement				
<b>BENEFICIAL IMPACTS</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>RESOURCES NEEDED</b>	<b>MEASURE OF SUCCESS</b>	<b>STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED</b>
This project would enhance implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan	On-going	Planning staff to help research policies and programs	Increased adherence to Comprehensive Plan policies	No
<b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>		<b>LOWER PRIORITY</b>		<b>COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE</b>
Parklet Design Guidelines, California Avenue Closure Guidelines, University Avenue Housing Study, El Camino Real Design Guidelines, South El Camino Real Design Guidelines		Sign Code, Fence Code, Downtown Urban Design Guidelines		No
<b>PROJECT/GOAL 3:</b> Finalize review of the Objective Standards project, that was approved by the ARB on April 1, 2021, as directed by City Council				
<b>BENEFICIAL IMPACTS</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>RESOURCES NEEDED</b>	<b>MEASURE OF SUCCESS</b>	<b>STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED</b>
Without this project, the City has limited development standards to ensure high quality housing development projects.	Review Council's November 2021 motion and finish Spring/Summer 2022	Planning staff and consultant prepare staff reports, packets and presentations. Staff/Consultant hold community meetings with residents. City attorney is also engaged as needed.	Council approval	Yes
<b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>		<b>LOWER PRIORITY</b>		<b>COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE</b>
The sooner the City can define objective standards, the better the program will serve our community and ensure high quality projects		After approval of this phase, the Board wishes to refine the objective standards based on research from projects as they go through the objective standards ministerial process. (Additional consultant funding maybe needed)		Council remanded this project to staff and the ARB on November 2021

<b>PROJECT/GOAL 4:</b> Hold ARB Awards ceremony for 2015 to 2020 award winners (Awards were postponed due to the pandemic) Next Awards in 2025.				
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
Highlights excellent work, which provides an example and encourages other to excel	Awards Ceremony in Spring of 2022	Planning and administrative staff to coordinate the event	Good examples that others can use to move quickly forward in the process	Yes
<b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>		<b>LOWER PRIORITY</b>		<b>COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE</b>
Schedule event date, contact winners, other event details		N/A		N/A
<b>PROJECT/GOAL 5:</b> Update By-laws as needed to be in conformance with Council's new Handbook				
BENEFICIAL IMPACTS	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	STATE MANDATED / LOCAL LAW / COUNCIL-APPROVED
Will ensure all guiding documents are consistent with each other	Spring/Summer 2022	Planning staff to finalize suggested changes	Consistent guideline documents	No
<b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>		<b>LOWER PRIORITY</b>		<b>COUNCIL-DIRECTED POLICY UPDATE</b>
Ensuring the election of the Chair and Vice Chair, and ARB terms, are aligned with the Council's Handbook		N/A		N/A