

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023 - 1****RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY RECOMMENDING THAT THE PORTOLA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL ADOPT THE INITIAL STUDY-- MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND THE MITIGATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING PLAN FOR THE HOUSING AND SAFETY ELEMENTS UPDATE AND CONFORMING GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND), which is attached hereto and incorporated by this reference, was prepared for the Portola Valley Housing and Safety Elements Update and Conforming General Plan and Zoning Code Amendments, collectively the "Project"; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to CEQA, a Notice of Intent ("NOI") to Adopt the IS-MND was prepared and provided to interested agencies, and to all members of the public who had previously requested notification; and posted at Portola Valley Town Hall notifying all interested parties of the availability and 30-day public review period commencing on October 31, 2022 and ending on November 29, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, copies of the IS-MND were made available online, to members of the public who had previously requested notification, and by appointment at Portola Valley Town Hall in the Planning and Building Department; and

**WHEREAS**, opportunities for verbal comments on the IS-MND were provided during a November 16, 2022 Planning Commission hearing; and

**WHEREAS**, the IS-MND identified potentially significant impacts to the environment, including specific impacts to Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Geology/Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources, which can and will be avoided or mitigated to less than significant levels through adoption and implementation of the included mitigation measures; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 15, 2023, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing to review the Response to Comments memorandum addressing the verbal comments made by Members of the Portola Valley Planning Commission and public on November 16, 2022, the adequacy of the IS/MND and the recommended text changes to the IS-MND. The updated version of the Response to Comments memorandum is included in the February 15, 2023 Staff Report.

**WHEREAS**, on February 15, 2023, the Planning Commission also heard a presentation from Fire Marshal Bullard and had extensive discussion on a Colleagues Memorandum from Commissioners Targ and Brothers regarding the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration-- Proposed Project Design Features to Maintain

and Enhance Environmental Quality, Safety and Community Quality of Life which was included as Attachment 6 to the February 15, 2023 Staff Report (“Targ/Brothers Colleagues Memo”) ; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission at a regular meeting on February 15, 2023 recommended approval of the IS-MND and updated Response to Comments.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission of the Town of Portola Valley hereby recommends the Town Council adopt the IS-MND, the Updated Response to Comments and Text Changes, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP), prepared for the Portola Valley Housing and Safety Elements Update and Conforming General Plan and Zoning Code Amendments Project based on the following findings:

1. The IS-MND, which is attached as Exhibit A, has been completed in accordance with the requirements of the CEQA statutes, and the CEQA Guidelines.
2. The IS-MND was prepared, published, circulated, and reviewed in accordance with the requirements of CEQA and the Town’s CEQA Guidelines, and constitutes an adequate, accurate, objective, and complete analysis addressing all issues relevant to the approval of the proposed Project.
3. The Planning Commission has reviewed and considered the information contained within the IS-MND together with any comments received during the public review process and it reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Town.
4. The IS-MND identifies all potentially significant adverse environmental impacts and feasible mitigation measures or standard conditions of approval that would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level. All of the mitigation measures identified in the IS-MND will be implemented, if applicable, once the Project is adopted. The Planning Commission finds that on the basis of the whole record before it, there is no substantial evidence that the Project, as mitigated in the IS-MND, will have a significant impact on the environment.
5. During the preparation of the Initial Study Checklist, it was determined that the Project would have no impact or have less-than-significant impact on the following environment factors: Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Energy, Hydrology/Water Quality, Land Use/Planning, Mineral Resources, Parks and Recreation, Population/Housing, Public Services, Transportation, Utilities/Service Systems, Wildfire, and Mandatory Findings of Significance. It was determined that the Project would have a potentially significant impact on one or more of the following environmental factors: Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Geology/Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions,

Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources. Consistent with CEQA Statutes and CEQA Guidelines, the IS-MND contains a full and complete explanation as to how the potentially significant impact on these environmental factors are reduced to less-than-significant impact level by the incorporation of the required mitigation measures.

6. The administrative record is located in the Office of the Town Clerk who is designated as the location and custodian of the documents and other material constituting the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based.
7. The above recitals are true and correct and material to this Resolution.
8. In making these findings, the Planning Commission relied upon and hereby incorporates by reference all correspondence, staff reports, and other written and oral testimony presented to it.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Town Council adopt the project design features listed in the Targ/Brothers Colleagues Memo, excluding the financial terms, through the mechanism of Council's choosing. The list of recommended project design features is set forth in Exhibit A.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Town Council further consider adopting the key approaches for Fire Safety presented by Fire Marshal Bullard in his February 15, 2023 presentation to the Planning Commission and included here as Exhibit B.

Passed and Adopted at the regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Town of Portola Valley on February 15, 2023.

By: Anne Kopf-Sill  
Anne Kopf-Sill, Chair

ATTEST:

Laura Russell  
Laura Russell, Planning and Building Director

## ATTACHMENT

### Proposed Project Design Features

Subject	Project Design Feature	Basis
<b>Local CEQA Guidelines and Thresholds</b> <i>(Mitigation Measure)</i>	Within [TIME] months of the adoption of the Housing Element, Council shall direct the updating, within [TIME] months of such direction, of the Town CEQA Guidelines with a focus on public engagement and establish local thresholds of significance concerning: Aesthetics; Parks and Recreation; Public Services; and Wildfires.	<p>Each municipality is required to establish CEQA Guidelines per 14 CCR Section 15022. Public agencies, including, municipalities are further encouraged to establish local significance thresholds. 14 CCR Section 15064.7(b). These thresholds should not be inconsistent with CEQA Guidance Appendix G.</p> <p>The proposed measure would help clarify and standardize analysis and decision-making in the environmental review process. Development of Guidelines and significance thresholds would further help ensure that project-level environmental assessments address and evaluate impacts and develop mitigation measures with the benefit of public engagement.</p>
<b>General Plan, Zoning, Design Review</b> <i>(Mitigation Measure)</i>	Within [TIME] months from adoption of the Housing Element, Council shall establish a review group, with support of Staff, for the purpose of (1) further ensuring consistency and fidelity to Town General Plan and ethos of development in harmony with the natural environment; and (2) establishing for approval by the Town Council objective design criteria consistent with Town design guidelines.	<p>Review of the General Plan and zoning following adoption of the Housing Element should be conducted to help ensure fidelity to Town ethos and to ensure consistency within the General Plan and between the General Plan and zoning code.</p> <p>Objective standards can promote maintenance of community design and character, while adhering to state requirements that streamline development of affordable housing and associated projects. They clarify local requirements, increasing regulatory certainty; and they respond to local conditions. Objective criteria must also be considered in the implementation of a number of recent housing statutes, including, but not limited to:</p> <p><u>SB 167 (Housing Accountability Act)</u>. Prohibition on denial, reduction of density, or making infeasible housing projects consistent with objective design standards.</p> <p><u>SB 35 (Streamlined Affordable Housing)</u>. Require approval of qualified housing projects based on objective standards.</p> <p><u>SB 9 (California Home Act)</u>. Requiring approval of lot splits for applications meeting objective criteria.</p>
<b>Housing Inventory</b>	Within [TIME] months of the adoption of the Housing Element, Council shall establish a workgroup, with	The draft Housing Element (August 2022) provides for commencement of the Ford Park site planning process in January 2024 with "Request for Proposals" to affordable housing developers by September 2024.

<i>(Housing Element Program)</i>	support of Staff, to: (1) evaluate and propose "Sunrise" opportunity sites to Council within [TIME] months of adoption of the Housing Element; and (2) initiate planning efforts for future housing cycles.	<p>Members of the Planning Commission have observed that tension exist between the General Plan and associated planning documents, on the one hand, and the development of the Dorothy Ford Park, including removal of two 400 year old oak trees, on the other. Similar issues and community sentiment have been expressed with respect to the Glenn Oaks property. Therefore, the recommendation was made to evaluate alternative development options.</p> <p>Additionally, potential housing sites have been suggested proximate to Portola Road and other locations. Members of the Ad Hoc Housing Element Committee observed that development complexities, in light of time constraints, make these sites appropriate for consideration in the anticipated, next Housing cycle. However, they are likely not available for inclusion for development in the current housing cycle.</p> <p>Forming a housing inventory evaluation workgroup holds the potential of reducing policy and land use tensions if alternative sites can be timely identified. It is also anticipated that initiating workgroup evaluation, at the earliest possible time, would allow for thoughtful, least impactful planning for the present and future housing cycles.</p>
<b>Safety</b> <i>(Mitigation Measure)</i>	Upon the approval of the Housing Element, Council shall establish a workgroup or direct an existing committee, with assistance from staff and support from an outside fire safety consultant, to assess and make recommendations to Council, regarding the effectiveness of, and need for modification of, evacuation routes and plans, and building codes. Final recommendations shall be provided to Council within [TIME] of the adoption of applicable fire maps and General Plan Safety Element. Recommendations shall take into consideration projected	Applicable fire maps and the General Plan Safety Element have not yet been finalized or adopted. Coordinating evacuation routes, the Safety Element, and fire maps with housing element will further protect and maintain public safety and property in light of projected growth.

	population growth and shall incorporate current best practices.	
<b>Encourage Community and Civic Engagement</b> <i>(Housing Element Program)</i>	Within [TIME] months of adoption of the Housing Element Council shall direct the Emergency Preparedness Committee and such other committee(s) as may be desired to encourage coordination of civic organizations (e.g., HOAs, religious organizations) to identify approaches and implement housing production, and risk reduction, and resiliency measures that may be taken independent of, or in coordination with Town activities.	Civic organizations have shown an ability to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in Town and to plan for their local community's safety and welfare. They are also likely to play a significant role in the creation of future housing opportunities, either in the review of development plans or as a project sponsor.
Services and Infrastructure <i>(Housing Element Program)</i>	Work with service providers to identify, analyze, and plan for services and infrastructure needs based on anticipated increased population and housing to maintain the current quality of service.	The draft Housing Element identifies that "[the infrastructure and level of public services in the Town is geared to a small, dispersed population." (page 4). The IS/MND identifies, among other things, no significant impacts to: public services, parks and recreation, safety, and utility service systems.
Finance <i>(Housing Element Program)</i>	[Intentionally Deleted]	