

# P I C O R I V E R A



## C I T Y W I D E D E S I G N S T A N D A R D S A N D G U I D E L I N E S

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### WHY IS THE CITY CREATING NEW DESIGN STANDARDS?

The City is creating new design standards to:

- 1. Facilitate New Housing:** California is experiencing a shortage of housing, and in response, the State of California legislature has passed several laws in recent years focused on increasing the construction of additional housing units. Objective design standards facilitate the construction of new housing by streamlining the design review and entitlement process.
- 2. Set Clear Expectations:** Subjective design guidelines often include vague and unclear design criteria for the review of new development. As a result, project applicants, City staff, and decision makers must interpret ambiguous terminology (such as “attractively designed,” or “compatible with the design of the building”) resulting in inconsistent interpretations and longer review processes that, in turn, slows down the development of new multi-family housing and mixed-use developments.
- 3. Enable Quicker Processing Times:** Objective design standards allow applicants to know beforehand what requirements apply to a proposed project before they submit to the City, enabling more predictable outcomes for developers and a streamlined review process.

#### WHAT STATE LEGISLATION APPLIES TO THIS PROJECT?

The following State legislation applies to this project:

##### **Affordable Housing Streamlined Approval Process (SB 35, 2017)**

SB 35 creates an opt-in program for developers that allows a streamlined approval process for certain projects, which is referred to as ministerial processing. A ministerial process for development approval involves little or no personal judgement by the public official. Eligible developments must include a specified level of affordability. The process created by SB 35 relies on objective design standards.

##### **Housing Crisis Act (SB 330, 2019)**

SB 330 allows a housing developer to submit a preliminary application to “freeze” the fees and standards that apply to a project before a full application submittal is assembled. Local agencies cannot disapprove an eligible housing development project if the project is consistent with objective standards unless there is a significant health and safety impact.

## **WHERE WILL THESE DESIGN STANDARDS APPLY?**

Although State laws apply to housing projects with more than one residential unit, including mixed-use, the new design standards will apply to all residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use projects within the following zoning districts:

- R-E Single-Family Residential Estate Zone
- S-F Single-Family Residential Zone
- R-I Residential Infill Zone
- R-M Multiple-Family Residential Variable Density Zone
- P-A Professional and Administrative Zone
- C-N General Commercial Zone
- C-C Community Commercial Zone
- C-G General Commercial Zone
- C-M Commercial/Manufacturing Zone
- Mixed Use Overlay Zone
- I-L Limited Industrial Zone
- I-G General Industrial Zone
- PUD Planned Residential Unit Development Zone
- CPD Commercial Planned Development Zone
- IPD Industrial Planned Development Zone
- R-40 Overlay Zone

## **DO DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES REPLACE EXISTING ZONING?**

The design standards and guidelines created through this process will supplement Title 18 Zoning and not replace existing zoning or land use designations. Established development standards, such as density, floor area ratio (FAR), building height, and setbacks will not be affected by this process.

## **HOW DOES THIS PROJECT TIE INTO OTHER PICO RIVERA 2035 EFFORTS?**

In 2020, the City of Pico Rivera developed a community and economic recovery framework to proactively address major challenges introduced by COVID-19, the economic downturn, climate change, impacts from the Whittier Narrows Dam Safety Project, and multiple unfunded State and federal mandates. After further refinement, the framework evolved into what is now the Pico Rivera 2035: Community Revitalization Program (PR 2035), a modern-day renaissance designed to stimulate holistic, smart, equitable, and sustained long-term community development and economic growth. PR 2035 is an open invitation to explore, imagine, and help refine the future Pico Rivera. The Community Design Standards and Guidelines project will create a more efficient and predictable path for new development in the city. The design standards will help the city be consistent with State law aimed at addressing the housing shortage and the design guidelines will help shape the design of future residential, mixed-use, commercial and industrial development.

## **HOW CAN I PROVIDE INPUT AND HELP SHAPE THE PROCESS?**

Sign-up for project updates on the City's website: [pico-rivera.org/index.php/sign-up-for-updates/](https://pico-rivera.org/index.php/sign-up-for-updates/) to receive information about upcoming community workshop dates and draft materials.

For more information, please contact:

Estefany Franco, Planner and Project Manager with the City of Pico Rivera  
[DesignGuidelines@pico-rivera.org](mailto:DesignGuidelines@pico-rivera.org) or (562) 801-4026.

