



Municipal Services Agency
Planning & Community Development Department
Design Review Program-Phase I

Notice of Upcoming Public Workshop

Background: Since the previous workshop in 2004, the Planning Department expanded the Planning Team to include Mintier and Associates. The primary role of our new planning consultant is to develop the implementation elements of the County's Design Review Program such as the design review process system and development standards. A Board of Supervisor's workshop regarding the recommended system is scheduled for January 25, 2006 at 2 pm.

Purpose of Workshop: To gather feedback on the proposed design review process prior to the January 25, 2006 workshop. The discussion shall focus on design review applicability, approval authority levels, composition of the Design Review Advisory committee and application requirements.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2006
Time: 6:00-8:00 pm
Location: Sacramento County Administration Building
700 H Street, 1st Floor, Hearing Room No.1
Sacramento, CA 95814

To learn more, contact Nedzlene Ferrario at (916) 874-6141 or email FerrarioN@SacCounty.net or visit www.saccounty.net/planning, click on Design Review Program.

Sacramento County Design Review Process Outline

The following outline will be used to develop the Sacramento County Design Review Process.

▪ **Projects Subject to Design Review**

Compliance with the Design Guidelines would be required for any commercial, industrial, mixed use, or public works project that is located in any one of the following zoning districts:

- Commercial Zones: BP, SC, LC, GC, AC, TC, C-O
- Industrial Zones: MP, M-1, M-2
- Special Zones: SPA

Projects subject to design review would fall into one of two categories of review:

- **Non-discretionary projects** (e.g., requires building permit only). Projects that are consistent with the applicable zoning district in planned use and development standards and propose new construction, exterior remodeling, or additions involving over 2,000 square feet, and
- **Discretionary projects.** Projects that would require one or more of the following entitlements or approvals:
 - Rezone
 - Tentative Subdivision Map
 - Conditional Use Permit
 - Variance
 - Exception
 - Development Plan Review
 - Special Development Permit
 - *Public Works project approval may also be subject to design review at Board of Supervisors discretion

▪ **Exemptions From Design Review**

Non-discretionary projects less than 2,000 square feet would not be subject to design review. These projects would, however, be encouraged to conform to the design guidelines.

▪ **Standards for Review**

In the case of projects that are located within the boundaries of an adopted corridor/district plan that includes the Design Guidelines, the project would be reviewed for conformance with the design provisions of the corridor/district plan. All other projects would be reviewed for conformance with the Design Guidelines.

▪ **Appropriate Authority**

Review of projects for design review conformance would be carried out by the *Design Review Administrator* or the *Design Review Advisory Committee* as follows:

- **Design Review Administrator (DRA).** The DRA would review non-discretionary projects and make determinations of conformance with the Design Guidelines.
 - The DRA would be a staff position in the Planning Department appointed by, and under the supervision of, the Planning Director.

- The DRA could delegate review authority to Planning Staff to review and make determinations of conformance with the Design Guidelines subject to his/her review and approval.
- The DRA would also chair the *Design Review Advisory Committee* as a non-voting member.
- **Design Review Advisory Committee (DRAC).** The DRAC would review *discretionary* projects and make recommendations of conformance with the Design Guidelines. The DRAC would also review non-discretionary design review referrals from the DRA or project applicant.
 - The DRAC would consist of four members, three of which would be appointed by the Planning Director. The fourth the member would be the DRA, who would also serve as a non-voting committee chair.
 - Individuals, not organizations or companies, would be appointed to the DRAC. The appointed DRAC members would have to have academic training and professional experience in architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, or city planning.
 - Appointed members would be retained under an annual consulting contract and serve at the pleasure of the Planning Director.
 - Appointed members would be compensated for their services, paid out on a monthly bases.

- **Fees**

Non-discretionary Project Review would be subject to a flat fee of \$100.00 - \$200.00
 Discretionary Project Review would be subject to a flat fee of \$3,000.00 - \$5,000.00

- **Application Requirements**

In addition to other project application requirements, the following information would specifically for design review:

1. Context analysis board
2. Preliminary concepts
3. Completed design review checklist

- **Process**

Non-discretionary Project Review Process (see attached flow chart)

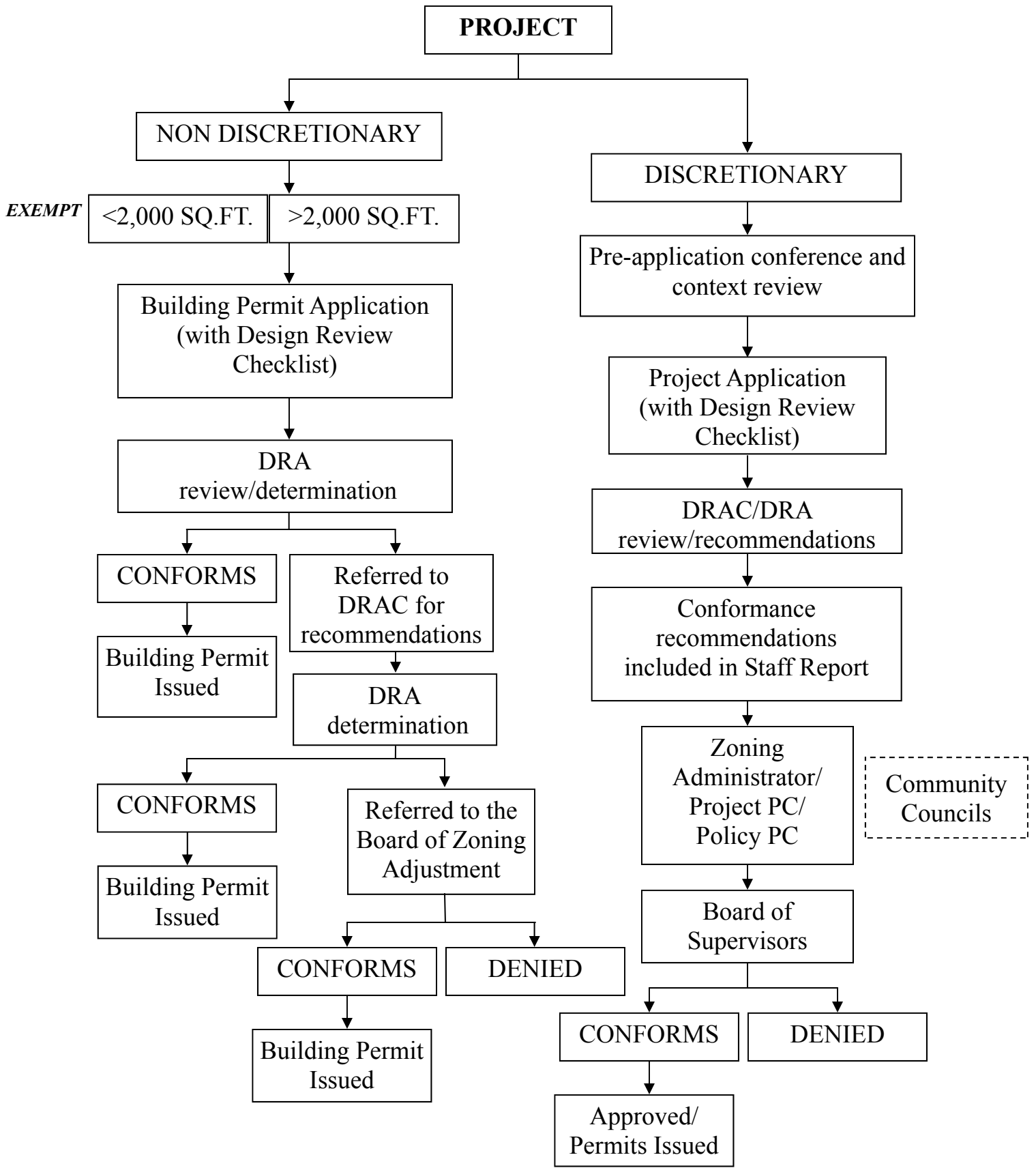
1. Building Permit application and Design Review Checklist would be filed with the Building Department;
2. Planning Department would receive the application and checklist and confirm the project is subject to non-discretionary design review;
3. Project would be reviewed by the DRA for conformance with the Design Guidelines;
4. The DRA would take one of the following three actions:
 - a. Determine the project conforms to the Design Guidelines;
 - i. The project would then be referred back to the Building Department for building permit issuance.
 - b. Refer the project to the DRAC for conformance recommendations with the Design Guidelines;
 - c. Determine the project does not conform. The project applicant could:
 - i. Redesign and resubmit the project; or
 - ii. Refer the DRA's determination to the DRAC for conformance recommendations.

5. Projects that are referred for additional review would be subject to the DRAC. The DRAC would take one of the following two actions:
 - a. Determine the project is in conformance with the Design Guidelines;
 - i. Conformance recommendations would be referred back to the DRA for determination.
 - b. Determine the project is not in conformance with the Design Guidelines;
 - i. Nonconformance recommendations would be referred back to the DRA for determination.
6. Projects that were referred to the DRAC for further review and recommendations would be reviewed by the DRA for conformance with the Design Guidelines.
7. The DRA would take one of the following two actions:
 - a. Determine the project is in conformance with the Design Guidelines;
 - i. The project would then be referred back to the Building Department for building permit issuance.
 - b. Determine the project is not in conformance with the Design Guidelines.
8. The applicant of a project that is found to not be in conformance with the Design Guidelines by the DRA could take one of the following two actions:
 - a. Redesign and resubmit the project; or
 - b. Appeal the DRAC recommendations and DRA conformance determinations to the Board of Zoning Adjustments.
9. The Board of Zoning Adjustments would take one of the following actions:
 - a. Determine the project is in conformance with the Design Guidelines;
 - i. Project would be referred back to the Building Department for building permit issuance.
 - b. Determine the project does not conform. The project applicant could:
 - i. Redesign and resubmit the project.

Discretionary Project Review Process (see attached flow chart)

1. Pre-application conference and context review would be held between County Planning Staff and the project applicant;
2. Design Review application would be submitted to the Planning Department for review and distribution to the DRAC;
3. The project would be reviewed by the DRA and DRAC for conformance with the Design Guidelines;
4. The DRA and DRAC would provide conformance recommendations that would be included in the project Staff Report to the review authority;
5. The review authority could use the DRAC and DRA determinations of conformance to apply conditions of approval to the project;

**Sacramento County Design Review
DRAFT Flow Chart**





Sacramento County Design Review Process

Focus Group Meeting

January 10, 2006



Agenda

- Introductions
- Objectives for Design Review Process
- Design Review Process Components
- Design Review Application Requirements
- Design Review Process Flowchart
- Next Steps



Objectives for Design Review Process

- Provide for concurrent application processing
- Minimize uncertainty
- Encourage better design
- Provide early feedback to project sponsors/applicants
- Provide for early community input
- Encourage pre-application communication



Design Review Process Components

- Projects subject to design review
- Exemptions from design review
- Standards for review
- Review authority
- Fees
- Application requirements
- Process
 - Non-discretionary projects
 - Discretionary projects



Projects Subject to Design Review

- Commercial, industrial, mixed use, or public works projects
- Located in any one of the following zoning districts:
 - Commercial Zones: BP, SC, LC, GC, AC, TC, C-O
 - Industrial Zones: MP, M-1, M-2
 - Special Zones: SPA



Projects Subject to Design Review

- **Non-discretionary projects**
 - Use consistent with applicable zoning district, new construction, exterior remodeling, or additions over 2,000 square feet
- **Discretionary projects**
 - Rezones
 - Tentative Subdivision Map
 - Conditional Use Permit
 - Variance
 - Exception
 - Development Plan Review
 - Special Development Permit
 - *Public Works project approval may also be subject to design review at Board of Supervisors discretion

Exemptions From Design Review

- Non-discretionary projects less than 2,000 square feet
 - interior tenant improvements
 - exterior paint
 - landscaping
 - signs
 - fencing
- Applicants encouraged to conform to the design guidelines.

Standards for Review

- Conformance with adopted corridor/district plan that includes design guidelines, or
- Conformance with Community Design Guidelines



Review Authority

- **Design Review Administrator (DRA).**
 - Review *non-discretionary* projects and make determinations of conformance with the Design Guidelines.
- **Design Review Advisory Committee (DRAC).**
 - Review *discretionary* projects and make recommendations of conformance with the Design Guidelines.
 - Review non-discretionary project design review referrals from the DRA or project applicant.

Design Review Administrator

- A staff position in the Planning Department
- Appointed by, and under the supervision of, the Planning Director
- The DRA could delegate review authority to Planning Staff subject to his/her review and approval
- The DRA would also chair the DRAC as a non-voting member.

Design Review Advisory Committee

- Consists of four members, three appointed by the Planning Director, the fourth would be the DRA
- Individuals, not organizations or companies, appointed
- Members would have academic training and professional experience in architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, or city planning
- Retained under an annual consulting contracts
- Serve at the pleasure of the Planning Director
- Compensated for their services, paid monthly

Fees

- Non-discretionary Project Review would be subject to a flat fee of \$100.00 - \$200.00
- Discretionary Project Review would be subject to a flat fee of \$3,000.00 - \$5,000.00

Application Requirements

- Context analysis board
- Preliminary design concepts
- Completed design review checklist

Checklist

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT SITE DESIGN

Commercial Design Objectives (1.1.1)

Assessment and non-commercial development should contribute to the implementation of community design principles and concepts for commercial, public and districts.

- 1.1.1.1 I have read and understood the commercial and mixed use Community Design Guidelines.

Building Design and Sitework (1.1.2)

Landscape and signage for every project should contribute to the implementation of landscape principles and concepts for commercial, public and districts.

- 1.1.2.1 Roadway, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle routes are implemented within the project and with surrounding neighborhood.
- 1.1.2.2 Landscaping and site work are completed prior to construction.
- 1.1.2.3 Signage is appropriate and consistent with the project.
- 1.1.2.4 Traffic calming, safety, and other project performance conditions (obtain for non-discretionary projects).

Building Network and Objectives (1.1.3)

Buildings of substantial commercial and mixed use should have setbacks that support neighborhood character and design objectives for the district.

- 1.1.3.1 All portions of building design are defined by building edges.
- 1.1.3.2 Building edges are defined and designed to be consistent with adjacent buildings.
- 1.1.3.3 The project is sited and designed to reinforce the pedestrian experience (obtain for non-discretionary projects).
- 1.1.3.4 Landscaping and site work are completed prior to construction.

Building Edges and Setbacks (1.1.4)

Building edges and setbacks should be planned and designed to be an integral part of the district's pedestrian system.

- 1.1.4.1 A minimum of 10% of unshaded sidewalk is provided along street frontages.

Other Objectives (1.1.5)

- 1.1.5.1 Display windows comprise at least 10% of the width of the building facade that faces the public street.
- 1.1.5.2 Windows and doors are clearly visible, of appropriate scale for non-discretionary projects.
- 1.1.5.3 Building edges are defined and designed to be consistent with adjacent buildings.
- 1.1.5.4 Corners and setbacks of buildings are consistent with the street (if applicable).
- 1.1.5.5 Buildings are not sited from sidewalks or existing public use (obtain for non-discretionary projects).

Parking Lots and Driveways (1.1.6)

Parking lots and driveways should be planned to reduce the number of cars per person into commercial areas, and designed to support pedestrian, safety, convenience and signage.

- 1.1.6.1 Parking lots and driveways provide for pedestrian connections to adjacent buildings and non-discretionary projects.
- 1.1.6.2 Parking lots have adequate signage.
- 1.1.6.3 The lot is not partially visible from the street.
- 1.1.6.4 The parking lot is not visible from the street (obtain for non-discretionary projects).

Landscaping (1.1.7)

Landscaping design should be a planning feature for every project that contributes to the community's health, safety and general appearance.

- 1.1.7.1 All areas adjacent to streets, sidewalks, driveways, and parking are landscaped.
- 1.1.7.2 Landscaping includes native quality, drought-tolerant, and low-maintenance plants.
- 1.1.7.3 Landscaping is consistent with the overall site and architectural design concept for the project (obtain for non-discretionary projects).
- 1.1.7.4 Landscaping and site work are completed prior to construction.
- 1.1.7.5 Landscaping is planned to reduce and reduce the amount of parking and parking spaces.
- 1.1.7.6 Landscaping is planned to reduce and reduce the amount of parking and parking spaces.
- 1.1.7.7 Landscaping is planned to reduce and reduce the amount of parking and parking spaces.
- 1.1.7.8 Landscaping is planned to reduce and reduce the amount of parking and parking spaces.

Integrating Transit (1.1.8)

New Commercial development and renovation of existing streets and buildings should be planned and designed to further access to transit.

Review Process Flow Chart

- Two Review Processes
 - Non-discretionary Review Process
 - Discretionary Review Process

Non-discretionary Process

Discretionary Process

Next Steps

- January 25, 2006: Board of Supervisors Workshop
- February – March: Public Outreach
- April – May: Public Hearing and Adoption of Zoning Code Amendments

SACRAMENTO COUNTY DESIGN GUIDELINES PROCESS

Summary of Focus Group Meeting January 10, 2006

Ted Holzem's Notes

1. I took notes on questions asked regarding the design review process as follows:
2. Shouldn't public works projects be subject to Design Review. The County should require all public works projects to be subject to design review unless specified by the Board of Supervisors.
3. Why is the Non-discretionary threshold set at 2,000 sq.ft.? Will small convenient stores be captured?
4. Would the Design Guidelines be the default for all areas outside a district or corridor?
5. Can district or corridor guidelines be more/less restrictive than the Community Design Guidelines?
6. Will the DRAC be paid?
7. Shouldn't non-discretionary projects be subject to community council or public review? Non-discretionary projects can be as poorly designed as discretionary and the public should get to way in on all development. Uncomfortable with the idea of County Staff and the DRAC negotiating design with a project applicant without community input/review.
8. All projects (non/and discretionary) should be publicly noticed.
9. The Discretionary Process needs to be revised to reflect the various appeal pieces that could/may occur, including who can appeal a project.
10. A statement should be included in the Checklist indicating how close a project is to a Transit Stop.
11. The Checklist should reference or use the diagrams in the design guidelines.
12. Where is the "How" of a project shown? When are project applicants required to show how their project meets the guidelines.
13. Need to address other agency requirements and design early in the process so that all parts/requirements are included in the beginning/planning stages of a project. For example, drainage systems, fire, others?
14. Need to show how the processes fit into the larger planning system.
15. Need to show the evolution of our thinking to get where we are.