



# CITY OF MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

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*The City of Morro Bay provides essential public services and infrastructure to maintain a safe, clean, and healthy place for residents and visitors to live, work and play.*

**Regular Meeting - Tuesday, March 18, 2025  
Veteran's Memorial Building – 6:00 P.M.  
209 Surf Street, Morro Bay, CA**

Chairperson – Eric Meyer

Vice-Chairperson Joseph Ingraffia  
Commissioner Mary Witkowski

Commissioner Asia King  
Commissioner Tony de Fazio

**Public Participation:**

*Remote public participation is allowed in the following ways:*

- *Community members may attend the meeting in person at the Morro Bay Veterans Hall*
- *Members of the public may watch the meeting and speak during the general Public Comment or on a specific agenda item by logging in to the Zoom webinar using the information provided below. Please use the “raise hand” feature to indicate your desire to provide public comment.*

*Please click the link below to join the webinar:*

➤ <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82722747698?pwd=aWZpTzcwTHlRTk9xaTlmWVNWRWFUQT09>

*Password: 135692*

➤ *Or Telephone Attendee: 1 (408) 638-0968 or 1 (669) 900 6833 or 1 (346) 248 7799; Webinar ID: 827 2274 7698; Password: 135692; Press \* 9 to “Raise Hand” for Public Comment*

- *Alternatively, members of the public may watch the meeting either on cable Channel 20 or as streamed on the [City's website](#).*
- *Community members are encouraged to submit agenda correspondence in advance of the meeting via email to the Planning Commission at [planningcommission@morrobayca.gov](mailto:planningcommission@morrobayca.gov) prior to the meeting. Agenda correspondence received by 10 a.m. on the meeting day will be posted on the City's website by 12:00 PM.*

ESTABLISH QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER

MOMENT OF SILENCE/PLEDGE OF ALLEGEANCE

PLANNING COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the audience wishing to address the Planning Commission on City business matters not on the agenda may do so at this time. For those desiring to speak on items on the agenda, but unable to stay for the item, may also address the Planning Commission at this time.

PRESENTATIONS

A. CONSENT CALENDAR

**A-1** Approval of the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting of February 18, 2025.  
**Staff Recommendation:** Approve minutes as submitted.

**A-2** Approval of the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting of March 4, 2025.  
**Staff Recommendation:** Approve minutes as submitted.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS

C. NEW BUSINESS

**C-1** Public Forum – Downtown Design District Subcommittee Recommendations

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

E. PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

F. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR COMMENTS

G. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn to the next regular Planning Commission meeting at the Vets Hall 209 Surf St, on April 01, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING PROCEDURES**

This Agenda is subject to amendment up to 72 hours prior to the date and time set for the meeting. Please refer to the Agenda posted at the Community Development Department, 955 Shasta Avenue, for any revisions, or call the Department at 805-772-6264 for further information.

Written testimony is encouraged so it can be distributed in the Agenda packet to the Commission. Material submitted by the public for Commission review prior to a scheduled hearing should be received by the Planning Division at the Community Development Department, 955 Shasta Avenue, no later than 5:00 P.M. the Tuesday (eight days) prior to the scheduled public hearing. Written testimony provided after the Agenda packet is published will be distributed to the Commission but there may not be enough time to fully consider the information. Mail should be directed to the Community Development Department, Planning Division.

This Agenda may be found on the Internet at: [www.morrobayca.gov/planningcommission/](http://www.morrobayca.gov/planningcommission/) or you can subscribe to Notify Me for email notification when the Agenda is posted on the City's website. To subscribe, go to [www.morrobayca.gov/notifyme](http://www.morrobayca.gov/notifyme) and follow the instructions.

The Brown Act forbids the Commission from taking action or discussing any item not appearing on the agenda, including those items raised at Public Comment. In response to Public Comment, the Commission is limited to:

1. Responding to statements made or questions posed by members of the public; or
2. Requesting staff to report back on a matter at a subsequent meeting; or
3. Directing staff to place the item on a future agenda. (Government Code Section 54954.2(a))

Commission meetings are conducted under the authority of the Chair who may modify the procedures outlined below. The Chair will announce each item. Thereafter, the hearing will be conducted as follows:

1. The Planning Division staff will present the staff report and recommendation on the proposal being heard and respond to questions from Commissioners.
2. The Chair will open the public hearing by first asking the project applicant/agent to present any points necessary for the Commission, as well as the public, to fully understand the proposal.
3. The Chair will then ask other interested persons to present testimony either in support of or in opposition to the proposal.
4. Finally, the Chair may invite the applicant/agent to respond to the public testimony. Thereafter, the Chair will close the public testimony portion of the hearing and limit further discussion to the Commission and staff prior to the Commission taking action on a decision.

## **APPEALS**

If you are dissatisfied with an approval or denial of a project, you have the right to appeal this decision to the City Council up to 10 calendar days after the date of action. Pursuant to Government Code §65009, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Commission, at, or prior to, the public hearing. The appeal form is available at the Community Development Department and on the City's website. If legitimate coastal resource issues related to our Local Coastal Program are raised in the appeal, there is no fee if the subject property is located with the Coastal Appeal Area. If the property is located outside the Coastal Appeal Area, the fee is a \$336 flat fee. If a fee is required, the appeal will not be considered complete if the fee is not paid. If the City decides in the appellant's favor then the fee will be refunded.

City Council decisions may also be appealed to the California Coastal Commission pursuant to the Coastal Act Section 30603 for those projects that are in their appeals jurisdiction. Exhaustion of appeals at the City is required prior to appealing the matter to the California Coastal Commission. The appeal to the City Council must be made to the City and the appeal to the California Coastal Commission must be made directly to the California Coastal Commission Office. These regulations provide the California Coastal Commission 10 working days following the expiration of the City appeal period to appeal the decision. This means that no construction permit shall be issued until both the City and Coastal Commission appeal period have expired without an appeal being filed. The Coastal Commission's Santa Cruz Office at (831) 427-4863 may be contacted for further information on appeal procedures.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Community Development Department at (805) 772-6264. Notification 24 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

AGENDA ITEM: A-1

DATE: 3/18/2025

ACTION: DRAFT

ACTION MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 18, 2025  
VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL – 6:00 PM

PRESENT:	Eric Meyer Joe Ingraffia Asia King Mary Witkowski Tony de Fazio	Chairperson Vice-Chairperson Commissioner Commissioner Commissioner
STAFF:	Airlin Singewald Kim Fowler	Community Development Director Planning Manager

ESTABLISH QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER

MOMENT OF SILENCE / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=30>

PLANNING COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=74>

None given.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=96>

None given.

Chairperson Meyer closed Public Comment Period.

<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=112>

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Password: 135692

*Or Telephone Attendee: (408) 638-0968 or (669) 900 6833 or (346) 248 7799; Webinar ID: 827 2274 7698; Password: 135692; Press \* 9 to “Raise Hand” for Public Comment*

## PRESENTATIONS

### A. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A-1** Approval of minutes from the Special Planning Commission meeting of October 29, 2024.  
**Staff Recommendation:** Approve minutes as submitted.
- A-2** Approval of minutes from the Planning Commission meeting of November 19, 2024.  
**Staff Recommendation:** Approve minutes as submitted.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairperson Ingraffia moved to approve minutes. Commissioner King seconded, and the motion passes 3-2, with King, Ingraffia, Meyer voting yes, and Witkowski and de Fazio abstaining.

### B. PUBLIC HEARING

- B-1** **Case No.:** CDP24-027, CUP24-03  
**Site Location:** 460 Errol Street, Morro Bay, CA  
**Project Description:** Conditional Use Permit (CUP24-03) and Coastal Development Permit (CDP24-027) for an RV Park with eight (8) RV stalls, (9) parking stalls, perimeter landscaping and fencing on a vacant 16,532 square foot (s.f.) parcel. This project is located in the Visitor Serving Commercial zoning district and is outside of the coastal appeals jurisdiction.  
**CEQA Determination:** Exempt under Section 15332, Class 32 In-fill Development Projects.  
**Staff Recommendation:** Conditionally Approve  
**Staff Contact:** Kim Fowler, Planning Manager (805) 772-6577

Kim Fowler, Planning Manager, presented the staff report.

Commissioners presented questions to staff.

Staff answered questions from the Commissioners.

Onan Champi, Morro Bay, agent of the project, spoke about the project being presented.

Commissioners presented questions and concerns to Mr. Champi.

Mr. Champi addressed the concerns the commissioners had, including assuring the RV park was not a for-profit park, but a private family-owned park.

Chairperson Meyer opened the Public Comment period.

<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=4040>

Betty Winholtz, Morro Bay, voiced her concern about the potential future of the RV park being sold and used for commercial use, and how it would affect the homes nearby.

Caroline Lewis, Morro Bay, commented on the concerns of big vehicles coming down Errol Street with it being a dead end, the state of the street due to past flooding, and noise concerns.

Linda Winters, Morro Bay, commented on the name of the park, thought it was going to be a public park, and congratulated the family on their project.

Leah Hernandez, on Zoom, supports the project, she's a family member and is proud of the project and thanked the commission for their time.

Chairperson Meyer closed the Public Comment Period.

<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=4558>

Commissioners presented questions and comments to staff.

Staff answered questions to the commissioners, including a written draft of revised conditions that were addressed by the commissioners.

Commissioners provided comments.

**MOTION:** Commissioner King moved to approve staff recommendation, with the modifications discussed herein, subject to the attached findings and conditions of approval, with PC Resolution 01-25. Commissioner Witkowski seconded, and the motion passes 5-0, with King, Witkowski, de Fazio, Ingraffia and Meyer voting yes.

C. NEW BUSINESS

<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=7750>

Director Singewald mentioned that next Tuesday, City Council would be considering the extension of the 45-day urgency ordinance prohibiting the consideration of Battery Energy Storage facilities applications, if approved the total time frame would be 2 years, until January 2027.

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS  
None

E. PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS  
<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=7782>

Director Singewald stated that the next meeting would be March 4<sup>th</sup>, and there would be two items on the agenda. One being a development permit at 541 Atascadero Rd, for a multi-family dwelling unit, and a presentation from the city manager about the City Council's city-wide goals and discussion on the Planning Commission's priorities and how they align with city goals.

The March 18th meeting will be reserved for the Downtown Design District public forum. A reminder that the Downtown Design District subcommittee of the City Council has been looking at recommendations to potentially increase the economic development in the downtown area while preserving the character of downtown.

F. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR COMMENTS  
<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=7848>

Director Singewald shared the stats of building permits from 2024, there were 528 building permits issued. It was the largest number of permits in a year, since we started using our current permit tracking system, 6 years ago.

Including 35 dwelling units – 15, Single-Family Homes, 19 ADUs and 1 Multi-Family Unit.

Commissioner Witkowski asked if staff had data on which type of permit area had the highest year-over-year growth.

Director Singewald said he didn't but could email the data to the commissioners.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m. to the next regular Planning Commission meeting at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 209 Surf Street, on March 4, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM: A-2

DATE: 3/18/2025

ACTION: DRAFT

ACTION MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 4, 2025  
VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL – 6:00 PM

PRESENT:	Eric Meyer Joe Ingraffia Asia King Mary Witkowski Tony de Fazio	Chairperson Vice-Chairperson Commissioner Commissioner Commissioner
STAFF:	Airlin Singewald Susana Toner	Community Development Director Assistant Planner

ESTABLISH QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER

MOMENT OF SILENCE / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

<https://youtu.be/fEYal1CbJng?t=22>

PLANNING COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

<https://youtu.be/yJ5CrXAVvAs?t=74>

None given.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

<https://youtu.be/fEYal1CbJng?t=99>

Jeff Eckles, Morro Bay City Council Member, Councilman thanked the Commissioners for serving Morro Bay. He mentioned that he would like to foster a culture of 'Yes'. A mindset that welcomes projects and businesses while maintaining the integrity of our process, not approving projects blindly, but working with the applicants without sacrificing quality or standards.

Chairperson Meyer closed Public Comment Period.

<https://youtu.be/fEYal1CbJng?t=243>

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  - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82722747698?pwd=aWZpTzcxTHlRTk9xaTlmWVNWRFUQT09>  
Password: 135692

Or Telephone Attendee: (408) 638-0968 or (669) 900 6833 or (346) 248 7799; Webinar ID: 827 2274 7698; Password: 135692; Press \* 9 to “Raise Hand” for Public Comment

PRESENTATIONS

A. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A-1** Approval of minutes from the Planning Commission meeting of February 4, 2025.  
**Staff Recommendation:** Approve minutes as submitted.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Witkowski moved to approve minutes. Vice-Chairperson Ingraffia seconded, and the motion passes 5-0, with Witkowski, Ingraffia, Meyer, King and de Fazio voting yes.

B. PUBLIC HEARING

- B-1** **Case No:** Conditional Use Permit (CUP21-09), Coastal Development Permit (CDP21-029)  
**Site Location:** 541 Atascadero Road, Morro Bay, CA  
**Proposal:** Request for Planning Commission approval of four (4) multi-unit residential housing units with attached garages. The property is located in the Residential High-Density zoning district and is not within the California Coastal Commission appeals jurisdiction.  
**CEQA:** Addendum under Section 15164(e), to assess the proposed project's consistency with the General Plan EIR and identify reasons for the City's conclusion that changes associated with the proposed project and its environmental effects do not meet the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent or supplemental environmental document.

**Staff Recommendation:** Recommendation to Planning Commission for approval with attached conditions.

**Staff Contact:** Kim Fowler, Planning Manager (805) 772-6577

Susana Toner, Assistant Planner, presented the staff report, and noted the correction needed on the agenda item, permit number should be DR25-004, not CUP21-019.

Commissioners presented questions to staff.

Staff answered questions from the Commissioners.

Preston Jones, Agent, spoke about the project wanting to provide housing, and decided on a smaller project as opposed to maxing out the density like the project down the street.

Commissioners presented questions to Mr. Jones.

Mr. Jones addressed their questions.

Chairperson Meyer opened the Public Comment period.

<https://youtu.be/fEYal1Cbjpg?t=1647>

Betty Winholtz, Morro Bay, addressed concerns the potential residents may experience such as noise, storage issues, low-income requirements.

Staff answered Ms. Winholtz's question about low-income size requirements.

Jeff Eckles, Morro Bay City Council Member, Councilman commented the project is an example of 'affordable by design', and is pleased to see such a project, since there is a need in our community.

Chairperson Meyer closed the Public Comment Period.

<https://youtu.be/fEYal1Cbjpg?t=1853>

Commissioners presented questions and comments to staff.

Staff answered questions to the commissioners.

Mr. Jones addressed the commissioners' question about storage concerns, and landscaping.

Commissioners provided comments.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairperson Ingraffia moved to approve staff recommendation, with the conditions discussed regarding the setback and storage. Commissioner King seconded, and the motion passes 5-0, with Ingraffia, King, Witkowski, de Fazio, and Meyer voting yes.

C. NEW BUSINESS

**C-1** City Council Goals and Objectives Update, and Receipt of Planning Commission Input for the Upcoming Goals and Objectives Setting Process.

**Staff Recommendation:** Receive staff update on the City Goals and Objectives and provide input regarding new goals and actions items for the City Council to consider ahead of their review of the City Goal Setting Workshop scheduled for March 25, 2025.

**Staff Contact:** Yvonne Kimball, City Manager, 805-772-6206,  
[ykimball@morrbayca.gov](mailto:ykimball@morrbayca.gov)

Yvonne Kimball, City Manager, presented the City Council Goals.

Commissioners presented questions to the City Manager.

City Manager addressed the commissioners' questions.

Chairperson Meyer opened the Public Comment period  
<https://youtu.be/fEYal1Cbjpg?t=4507>

Betty Winholtz, Morro Bay, would like to see the Design District Review, Community Benefits, and parking discussed. She would like to see a warming station for the homeless happen now.

Chairperson Meyer closed the Public Comment Period.  
<https://youtu.be/fEYal1Cbjpg?t=4615>

Commissioners provided further questions too staff.

Staff addressed their questions.

**C-2** Community Development Department Priorities Report.

**Staff Recommendation:** Receive and file.

**Staff Contact:** Airlin Singewald, Community Development Director, 805-722-6291, [asingewald@morrobayca.gov](mailto:asingewald@morrobayca.gov)

Director Singewald presented the Community Development Department Priorities report.

Commissioners presented questions to the Director.

Director Singewald answered their questions.

Chairperson Meyer opened the Public Comment Period  
<https://youtu.be/fEYal1Cbjpg?t=6747>

Betty Winholtz, Morro Bay, wanted to clarify her last comment on the warming station, it is important to her but safe parking, that is what SLO is adopting, and Santa Barbara has. She also asked for clarification on the CBDG grant managed by the county, K. Fowler's position and is excited about the vacation rental ordinance coming back.

Commissioners presented questions to the Director.

Director Singewald addressed their questions.

Chairperson Meyer closed the Public Comment Period.

<https://youtu.be/fEYal1Cbng?t=6943>

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

E. PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

F. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR COMMENTS

None

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m. to the next regular Planning Commission meeting at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 209 Surf Street, on March 18, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.



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## Staff Report

**TO:** Members of the Planning Commission

**FROM:** Airlin Singewald, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:** Downtown Design District Public Forum

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### **I. RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Receive a presentation from the Downtown Design District Subcommittee and conduct a public forum for community input on the Subcommittee's recommendations.

### **II. BACKGROUND**

In November 2022, the City Council adopted a draft Zoning Ordinance that included an increase in downtown building height from 30 feet to 37 feet with the goal of increasing economic development and housing production downtown. However, following feedback from the Coastal Commission on a variety of issues, the Planning Commission reconsidered and forwarded a new recommendation to the Council to keep building height limits downtown to 30 feet. The City Council agreed with the Planning Commission and the City's new Zoning Regulations, which went into effect in March 2024 following Coastal Commission approval, maintains the 30-foot height limit for new buildings downtown.

The Downtown Design District (DDD) Subcommittee formed on February 14, 2023, as a result of discussions around increasing the height limit in the downtown area. While taller buildings in the downtown would allow for more housing and economic vitality, it would also create the potential for new development to block views of the bay, impact historic and character defining buildings, and impact parking in the downtown. The goal of the DDD Subcommittee was to come up with recommendations that could increase housing and economic vitality in the downtown area in a manner that protects coastal views and historic structures. The DDD Subcommittee also explored the topics of process improvement and traditional economic development as tools to support housing and economic vitality in the downtown area.

DDD Subcommittee

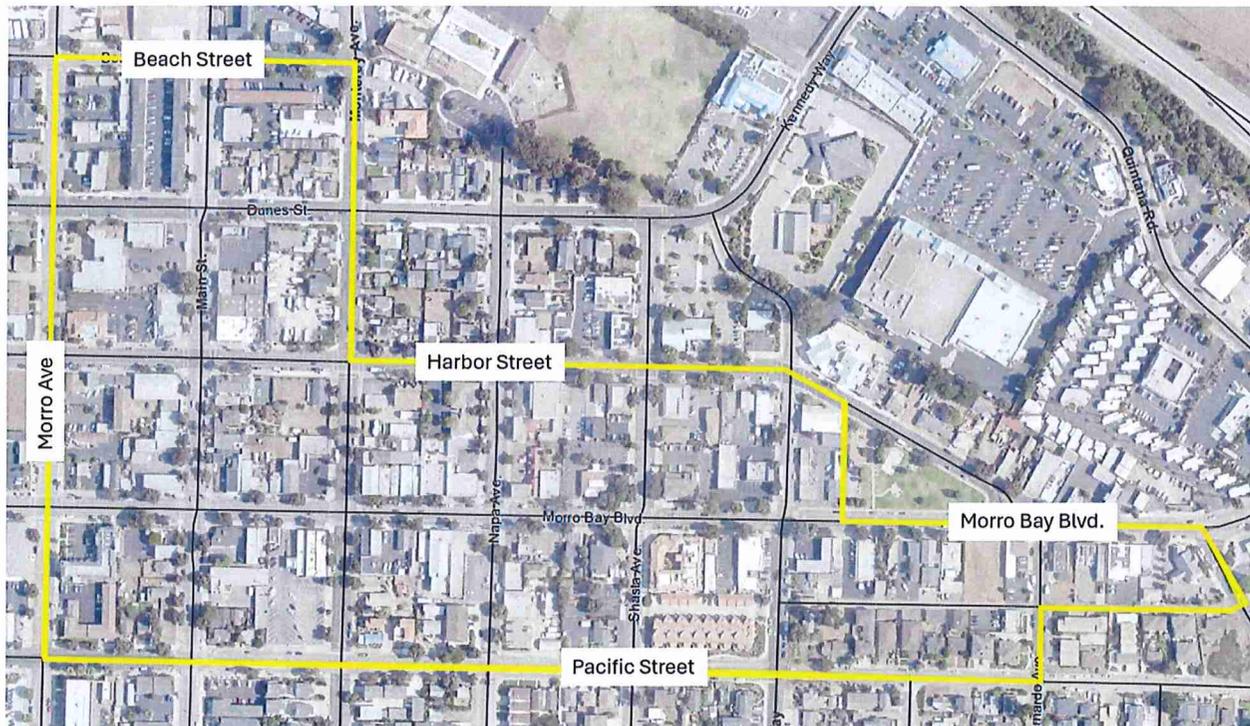
The DDD Subcommittee consists of Councilmembers Landrum and Edwards. Advisors to the Subcommittee include former Planning Commissioner Bill Roschen, Planning Commissioner Joseph Ingrassia, Jeff Eckles (CEO of the SLO Housing Trust Fund), Paul Boisclair (owner of the Siren), Betty Winholtz (resident), and Carrie Raya (owner of Buttercup Bakery).

Downtown Area Boundaries

The Downtown Area is not defined in the City’s Zoning Code or Plan Morro Bay. The Downtown Waterfront Strategic Plan includes a map of the downtown area. This map generally describes downtown as the area from the blufftop to Kern Avenue and Beach Street to Pacific Street, and down to Marina Street west of Morro Avenue. The DDD Subcommittee discussed a smaller area, that excluded the area west of Morro Avenue, the civic center, City Park, and the block between Morro Street and Marina Street. One of the Subcommittee’s recommendations is to finalize the area boundaries.



*Downtown Waterfront Strategic Plan - Downtown Boundary*



Alternative Downtown Boundary

### DDD Subcommittee Process

On September 26, 2023, staff presented the City Council with the following framework for the effort:

- Outcomes
  - Development of DDD guidelines
  - Creation of possible incentives that may include affordable housing, economic development, and improved pedestrian experience
- Meeting Structure and Schedule
  - 6 main meetings
  - Two public meetings

Subcommittee meetings occurred on the following dates:

- 10/18/2023: Introductory/Organizational Meetings
- 11/2/2023: Downtown Community Forum
- 11/8/2023: Historical Resources (Guest Speaker, Glenn Silloway)
- 12/20/2023: Form Based Codes (Guest Speakers, Ken Bernstein and Nore Winter)
- 1/18/2023: Economic Development
- 2/21/2024: Housing (Guest Speaker: Scott Collins)

- 3/20/2024: Implementation Opportunities
- 5/1/2024: Overview of Issues and Next Steps
- 8/29/2024: Final DDD Subcommittee Recommendations
- 2/3/2025: DDD Public Forum Logistics

On July 16, 2024, the Community Development Department presented the City Council with a status report and list of short-term and long-term recommendations prepared by Michael Codron, who served as the interim Community Development Director and facilitated the DDD meetings in February through May 2024.

The City Council directed Community Development to meet one more time with the Subcommittee to finalize their recommendations and to present these recommendations at a public forum.

The DDD Subcommittee convened a final meeting on August 29, 2024, and developed the attached recommendations (Attachment 1).

Staff met with the DDD Subcommittee (Councilmembers Landrum and Edwards) on February 3, 2025, to plan the logistics for the final public forum. The Subcommittee decided:

- The public forum would be held at a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting on March 18, 2025.
- The format will include an introduction from Councilmembers Landrum and Edwards, a staff presentation on the DDD Subcommittee recommendations, and then public comments.
- At the beginning of public comment, the six DDD advisors would be invited to speak for 5 minutes about their experience, observations, and thoughts around the DDD topics.
- The meeting would conclude with potential

#### DDD Subcommittee Recommendation

The DDD Subcommittee's recommendation is Attachment 1 of this staff report.

The recommendations are grouped under long-term and short-term actions.

The long-term action is to prepare a form-based code that encourages affordable-by-design housing, while protecting coastal views, addressing parking needs, and preserving historic and locally important architecture. Form based codes are more prescriptive than traditional zoning. They focus more on the bulk, massing, and appearance of buildings; and less on land use, density,

and district-wide zoning standards. This would be an opportunity for the City to define the massing of individual buildings to strategically preserve views and the scale of downtown.

The preparation of a form-based code is a future long range planning initiative that would need to be programmed into the Community Development Department’s budget and workload.

The DDD Subcommittee recommended an incremental approach that could start with an initial investigative process that considers:

1. Deciding on the boundaries of the downtown area.
2. Looking at examples used in similar jurisdictions.
3. Working with the development community and other stakeholders on a pilot program that first focuses on a conceptual design of one block in the downtown.
4. The City’s most recent parking studies to better understand parking implications.

This initial investigative process could start without hiring a consultant. However, it would still impact the Community Development Department’s bandwidth to work on other Council-directed priority projects.

The DDD also recommended short-term actions that could be completed without the allocation of significant new resources.

The following table summarizes each of these short-term actions and current efforts towards each action.

Short-term Action	Current Efforts
Use the City’s density bonus ordinance to allow for zoning concessions (e.g., height increases) for projects that include the requisite number of affordable housing units.	This is currently a tool available in the City’s zoning code. A developer could currently request zoning concessions to exceed the height limit in the downtown, if the required affordable housing is provided.
Work with non-profit and for-profit developers to identify appropriate sites within the downtown area for housing.	The City regularly meets with developers to help guide development projects to comply with the City’s General Plan and Zoning Code.
Work with the Historical Society of Morro Bay to provide a preliminary survey of character defining buildings.	The City has committed to preparing an initial framework for a Historic Preservation Ordinance and will engage the Historical Society in this effort.
Identify key visual resources and viewing areas.	Plan Morro Bay identifies key visual resources and viewing areas.

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Track and publish permit timeframes.	The Department uses its permit tracking software to track permit timeframes. This allows the Department to provide potential developers with realistic expectations regarding permit timeframes.
Direct economic development efforts to Downtown, including streetscape improvements.	The Department is working with the Chamber of Commerce on economic development efforts.

**NEXT STEPS / CONCLUSION**

This report concludes the DDD Subcommittee’s work plan as defined by Council on September 26, 2023. The product of this work effort is the recommendations memo in Attachment 1.

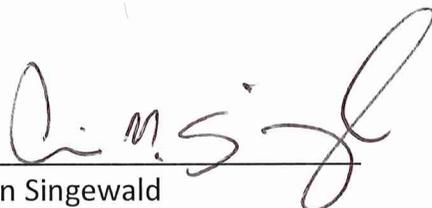
Implementing these recommendations is a future work effort subject to budget and staff resource availability.

The Department will present the Planning Commission’s recommendations for future work efforts to the City Council during the City’s goal setting and budget process.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Downtown Design District Subcommittee Final Recommendations

Approved:



Airlin Singewald  
Community Development Director



## CITY OF MORRO BAY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

955 Shasta Avenue  
Morro Bay, CA 93442

### Memorandum

**To:** DDD Subcommittee (Council Members Landrum and Edwards)  
**From:** Airlin Singewald, Community Development Director  
**Date:** September 6, 2024  
**Subject:** Summarization of the Downtown Design District Ad Hoc Subcommittee's Recommendation and Considerations

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#### Introduction

On August 29, 2024, the Downtown Design District (DDD) Ad Hoc Subcommittee convened with advisors and City staff to consider recommendations for short and long-term actions to allow additional housing and revitalization of the downtown while preserving community character, history, and views of the bay.

#### Long-Term Actions

As a long-term action, the DDD Ad Hoc Subcommittee recommended the development of a Form Based Code (FBC) for the downtown to consider:

1. Encouraging affordable by design housing. This means smaller housing units that will sell or rent for lower prices due to their size.
2. Protecting public views of the bay. A FBC could achieve this goal by strategically prescribing second and third story setbacks parcel-by-parcel to protect views of the bay from key viewing areas.
3. Parking impacts of intensified development in downtown.
4. Promoting multi-modal transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, and transit) options.
5. Preserving historic and locally important architecture. A FBC could identify existing structures to preserve due to their historic and/or character defining qualities.
6. Streamlining compliant development. A FBC will increase certainty (reducing time and cost) for developers by prescribing the massing and design of new and expanded structures.

The DDD Ad Hoc Subcommittee recommended initiating the above FBC work effort through an investigative process that considers:

1. Deciding on the boundaries of the downtown area.
2. Looking at examples used in similar jurisdictions.
3. Working with the development community and other stakeholders on a pilot program that first focuses on a conceptual design of one block in the downtown.
4. The City's most recent parking studies to better understand parking implications.

The DDD Ad Hoc Subcommittee also recommended the preparation of a Historic Preservation Ordinance. This work effort is currently included on the City's goal list and as an implementation program in the City's General Plan.

### Short-Term Actions

The Ad Hoc Subcommittee also recommended the following short-term actions to promote housing and revitalization of downtown in a manner that preserves character, history, and views.

- Use the City's density bonus ordinance to allow for zoning concessions (e.g., height increases) for projects that include the requisite number of affordable housing units.
- Work with non-profit and for-profit developers to identify appropriate sites within the downtown area for housing.
- Work with the Historical Society of Morro Bay to provide a preliminary survey of character defining buildings.
- Identify key visual resources and viewing areas.
- Track and publish permit timeframes.
- Direct economic development efforts to Downtown, including streetscape improvements.

### Next Steps

The DDD Ad Hoc Subcommittee will hold a public forum to share their recommendations and gather community feedback. City staff will be present to offer technical information and background, while Subcommittee members will act as moderators of the discussion. Advisors to the Subcommittee may be asked to present their considerations at the public forum and facilitate the discussion. Director Singewald and City Manager Kimball will meet soon with Councilmembers Landrum and Edwards to draft an agenda and outline procedures.