



MEMORANDUM

Date: November 1, 2019	
To: Katie Herlihy, AICP Community Development Director	Organization: City of Capitola
From: RRM Design Group	Title: Design Review Team
Project Name: Capitola Mall Design Peer Review	Project Number: 1783-01-UR19
Topic: Capitola Mall Conceptual Review	

Dear Katie,

We have reviewed the proposed Capitola Mall project design for compliance with the City of Capitola's Zoning Code (CZC), specifically Section 17.120.070. For greater policy context, we have also reviewed the City General Plan (GP) as it relates to the Capitola Mall property.

Project documents reviewed are dated August 26, 2019 and include Sheet Index Sheet A-01, Existing Site Plan Sheet A-02, Demolition Plan Sheet A-03, Overall Site Plan Ground Level Sheet A-04, Overall Site Plan Upper Level Sheet A-05, Building A Sheet A-06, Building A Ground Level Sheet A-07, Building A Level 04 Sheet A-08, Building Elevations Sheet A-09, Building Elevations Sheet A-10, Building Elevations Sheet A-11, Building A Materials and Finishes Sheet A-12, Building A Materials and Finishes Sheet A-13, Building A Materials and Finishes Sheet A-14, Building A Materials and Finishes Sheet A-15, Building B Ground Level Sheet A-16, Building B Upper Level Sheet A-17, Building B Roof Plan Sheet A-18, Building B Elevations Sheet A-19, Building B Elevations Sheet A-20, Building B Elevations Sheet A-21, Building B Elevations Sheet A-22, Building B Materials and Finishes Sheet A-23, Building B Materials and Finishes Sheet A-24, Building B Materials and Finishes Sheet A-25, Building C Ground Level Sheet A-26, Building C Elevations Sheet A-27, Building C Materials and Finishes Sheet A-28, Building D Ground Floor Sheet A-29, Building D Elevations Sheet A-30, Building D Materials and Finishes Sheet A-31, Building D Materials and Finishes Sheet A-32, Building E, F, G, H Ground Level Sheet A-33, Building E & F Elevations Sheet A-34, Building G & H Elevations Sheet A-35, Residential Unit Plans Sheet A-36, Residential Unit Plans Sheet A-37, Building Sections Sheet A-38, Materials and Finishes Sheet A-39, Overall Site Plan Sheet L-40, Entry Sheet L-41, Entry Sheet L-42, The Estuary Sheet L-43, The Estuary Sheet L-44, The Tides Sheet L-45, The Tides Sheet L-46,

Outdoor Living Building A Sheet L-47, Outdoor Living Building A-Courtyard C Sheet L-48, Outdoor Living Building B Sheet L-49, Transit Station Sheet L-50, Plant Schedule Sheet L-51, Preliminary Erosion Control Plan Sheet C-52, Preliminary Grading Plan Sheet C-53, Preliminary Cut and Fill Plan Sheet C-54, Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan Sheet C-55, 41st Avenue Median Plan Sheet C-56, Vesting Tentative Map Option One Sheet T-57, Vesting Tentative Map Existing Boundary Sheet T-58, Vesting Tentative Map Proposed Boundary Sheet T-59, Vesting Tentative Map Existing Conditions Sheet T-60, and Vesting Tentative Map Proposed Site Plan Sheet T-61. Additional project materials reviewed for reference include Application Cover Letter, Application Narrative, and Master Sign Program.

Neighborhood Character and Patterns

According to the City of Capitola Zoning Map, the project site is zoned Regional Commercial (C-R). The project site currently contains portions of the Capitola Mall and is located adjacent to 41st Avenue, Capitola Road, and Clares Street. The area immediately surrounding the project site is characterized by a variety of land uses, including Regional Commercial (C-R) to the north, Community Commercial (C-C) to the south, Regional Commercial (C-R) to the east, and Regional Commercial (C-R), Multi-Family Residential High Density (RM-H) and Multi-Family Residential Low Density (RM-L) to the west.



Project Location

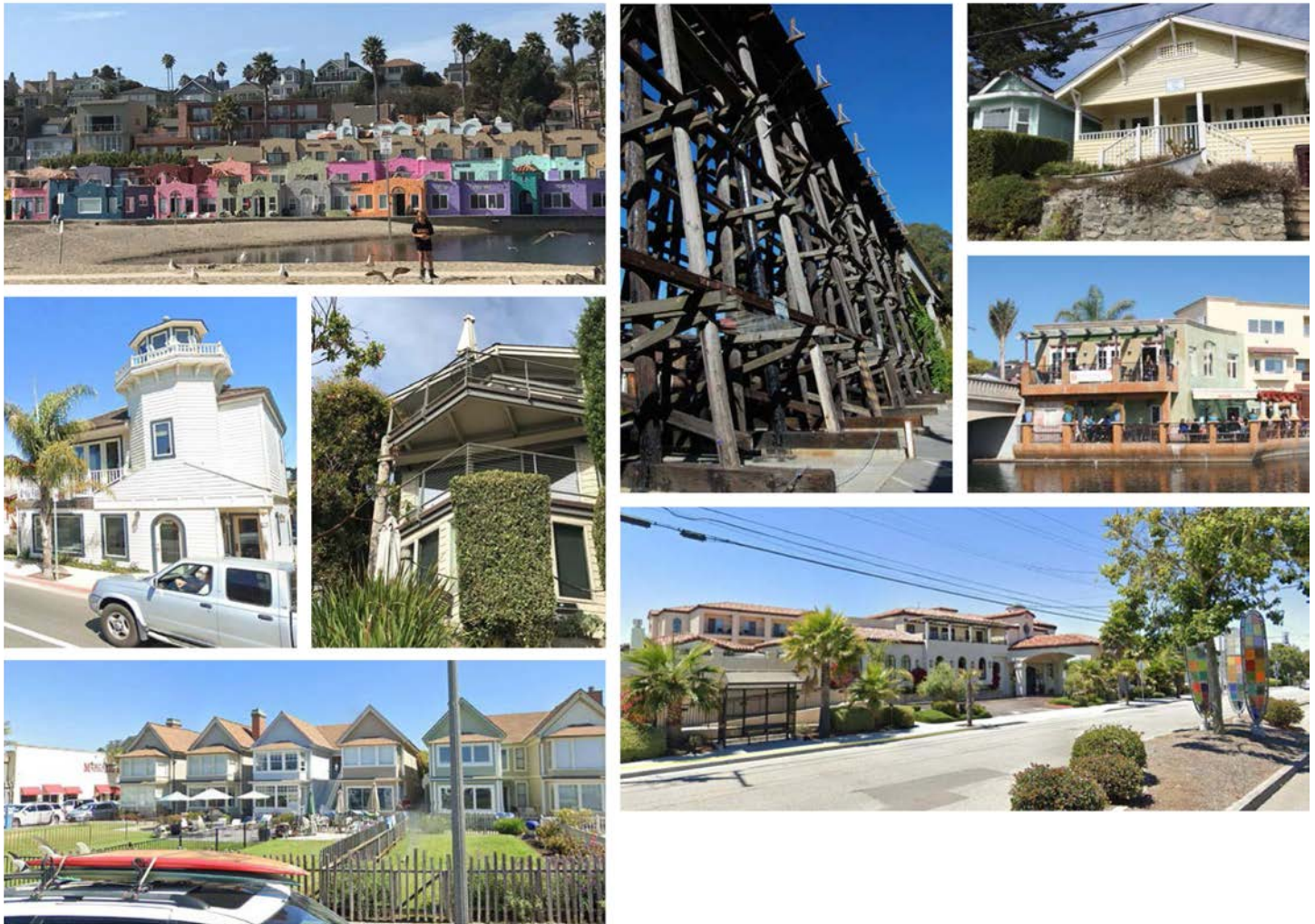
Project Design Review

The project proposal comprises 31.44 acres and includes the development of 339,131 square feet of commercial/retail space and 637 residential units. Parking for the project is proposed in two new parking structures as well as existing surface parking lots which collectively includes 2,614 parking spaces for the commercial/retail spaces and 1,098 parking spaces for the residential units. The project proposes a number of separate architectural styles in varying configurations that most closely resemble “Main Street”, “Agrarian”, and “Contemporary” and will be referred to as such going forward within this review.

Community Character

The idea of community character in and of itself can often times be difficult to describe and adequately captured within an individual project design. Rather than having only one reference point or element to refer to that is emblematic of the character of a place, it is more often than not a series or collection of elements – the natural environment, a sequence of buildings at varying heights, public spaces, juxtaposed materials and colors, landscape placement and selection, among others – that collectively create the setting for the creation of a distinctive sense of place.

Examples of Existing Community Character within Capitola.



As indicated in the City's General Plan, one of the primary guiding principles for the City is Community Identity. Community Identity highlights the desire of the Capitola community to ensure new development enhances the small-town feel and coastal village charm while also ensuring that all areas of the City possess a unique, memorable, and high-quality identity (GP-2). Moreover, CZC Section 17.120.070.A takes this further, identifying that a development's site plan, height, massing, architectural style, materials, and landscaping all collectively contribute to the unique coastal village character and distinctive sense of place.

In reviewing the provided conceptual plan set for the Capitola Town Square project, it is clear the applicant has begun to weave in a variety of elements throughout the project site plan, building architecture, as well as the public realm and landscape design to create the community's desired unique, high-quality identity while also fostering the village character and distinctive sense of place that is Capitola. However, as further discussed in greater detail within this conceptual review below, there are a number of opportunities for the applicant to individually address that would collectively begin to create a project that more closely exudes the unique coastal village character and distinctive sense of place that is Capitola.

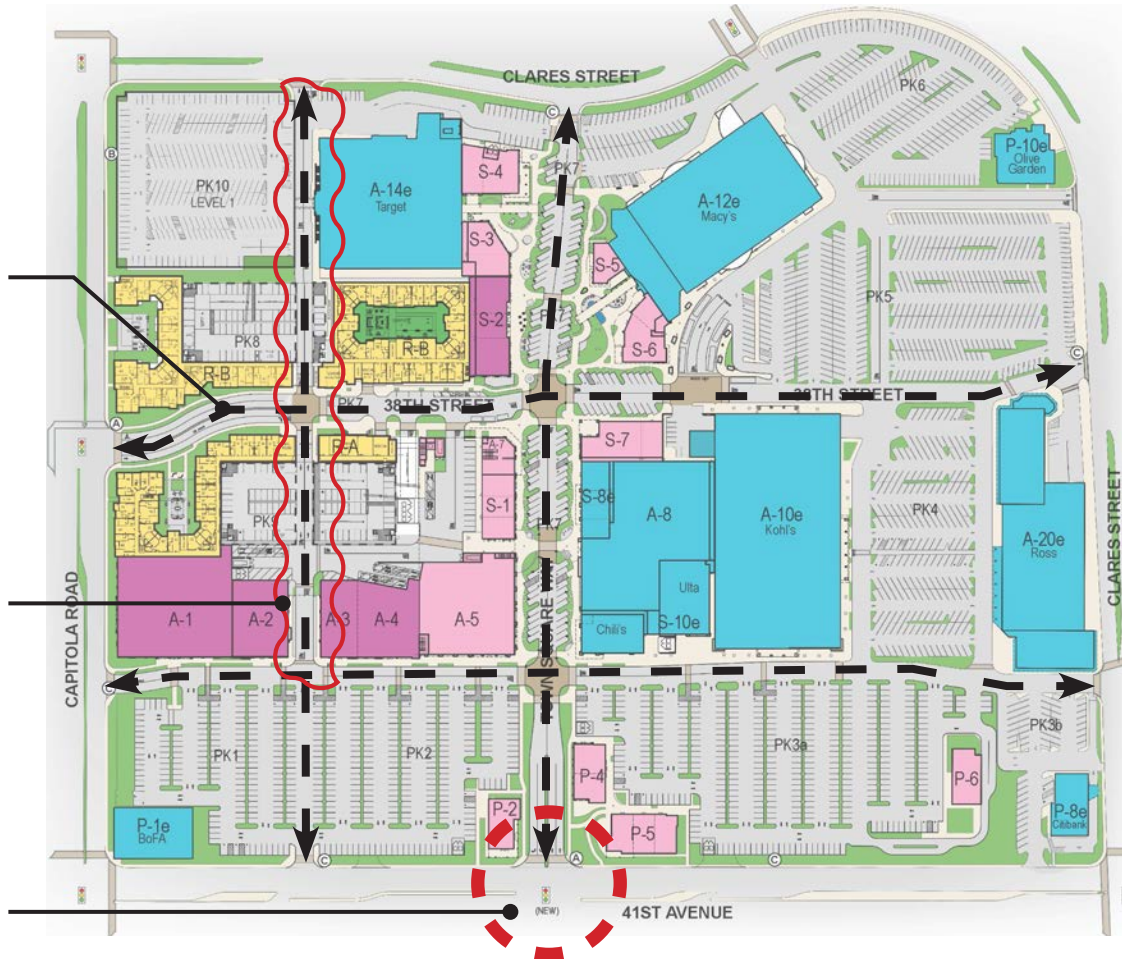
Site Planning

The current site planning configuration at the Capitola Mall site is one in which the primary mall buildings are centrally located on the property with surface parking located

at the periphery. Under existing conditions, access to these parking areas is provided at a number of signalized and unsignalized points along Clares Street, Capitola Road, and 41st Avenue. This current configuration limits the ability of pedestrian and vehicular movements to efficiently pass through the site. As part of the proposed project, the applicant has appropriately introduced new streets - 38th Avenue, 40th Avenue, and Town Square Way - as well as reconfigured secondary access points along Clares Street, Capitola Road, and 41st Avenue to enhance access for both pedestrians and vehicles through the site. However, in reviewing the conceptual plan set, we have initial

Site Plan

- Refine primary street configuration to accommodate bicycle access, considering surrounding City bicycle network.
- 38th Ave. alignment jogs multiple times. Consider refinement of layout to provide more direct connection through project and to Clares St.
- Narrow and tunnel-like street. Lacks pedestrian access and amenities to feel like a true street. Enhance street design to provide more inviting pedestrian experience and integration within street network.
- Town Square Way appears to conflict with existing building at east side of 41st Ave. Clarify design intent and location.



concerns with the proposed alignments of these new streets as it relates to the surrounding context of the project site (CZC 17.120.070.L). For example, it appears the Town Square Way alignment with 41st Avenue conflicts with existing properties/buildings at the east side of 41st Avenue, while the 38th Avenue alignment could provide a more direct connection to the Capitola Town Square and ultimately provide enhanced north/south access through the site. Moreover, in considering the secondary access points within the project, the applicant has proposed creating a more direct route to the existing Target traveling east to west from 41st Avenue to Clares Street. This alignment is proposed to traverse surface parking, loading areas, parking structures, and cross 38th Avenue and is anticipated to create a tunnel-like affect that appears to lack adequate pedestrian access. It is recommended that the applicant look for opportunities to enhance this direct street route to Target in order to enhance pedestrian access and create a more inviting, integrated experience within this portion of the project. In addition, it appears the primary street alignments are not proposed to accommodate

bicycle users. Going forward, the applicant should refine the proposed street configuration to accommodate bicycle facilities through the site, considering the existing surrounding bicycle network within the vicinity of the project (CZC 17.120.070.L).

In considering the introduction of new streets within the project, the emergence of block lengths, or the distance between one street and the next, was reviewed to determine appropriateness of pedestrian access and walkability. In other areas of the City that exhibit a more walkable environment, such as the Village, typical block lengths range from 250- and 350-feet. Alternatively, areas that are more automobile centric, such as in the immediate vicinity of the project site, typical block lengths range from 350-feet to 750-feet in length. As currently proposed, block lengths along a number of the primary streets appear to range from 600- to 700-feet in distance and lack more pedestrian-friendly lengths that would facilitate greater pedestrian activity. Going forward, the applicant should evaluate other areas within the City for cross-comparison and design direction of block lengths in order to create a more walkable, pedestrian environment while also looking for opportunities to better connect the blocks on-site to the surrounding context of the project site.

Block Lengths - Walkable Environment

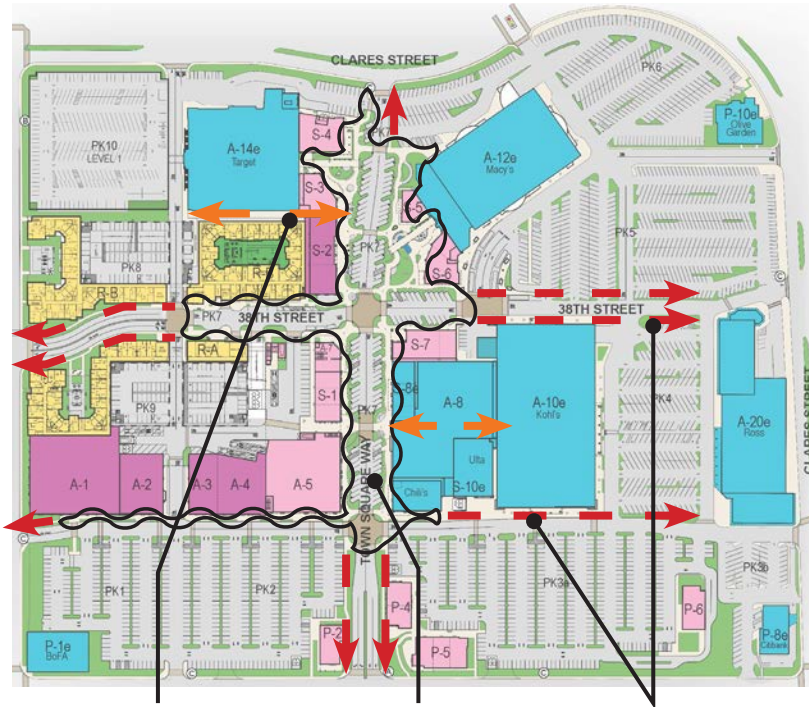


Block Lengths - Autocentric Environment



Layout of the project provides pedestrian emphasis along 38th Avenue and Town Square Way, with some emphasis also provided along 40th Avenue. This focus is represented through the inclusion of wider sidewalks and more generous pedestrian amenities. While the more centrally located areas along these primary streets are anticipated to provide for adequate pedestrian connectivity, the applicant should look for opportunities to further enhance pedestrian connections to the rest of the mall site as well as to the project site periphery. Moreover, applicant should clarify variations in width of sidewalks along 38th Avenue, Town Square Way, and 40th Avenue, such as shown on Sheet L-44, and should look for opportunities to ensure consistent design treatment and design is utilized going forward. New pedestrian connections have also been appropriately proposed adjacent to the existing Target and Macys buildings as well as mid-block paseos providing access to the primary streets from parking areas. However, the applicant should pursue additional opportunities to further enhance the pedestrian connectivity within the project site. For example, the long alley at the east side of Target

Site Plan



Paseos create opportunities for enhanced pedestrian connectivity as well as outdoor dining and seating options.

Introduce additional paseos to enhance on-site pedestrian network.

Primary pedestrian emphasis.

Expand pedestrian emphasis to better connect with rest of malls tie and project periphery.

presents an opportunity to introduce an additional pedestrian paseo within the project, while the mall buildings to remain adjacent to and including Kohls, could be better integrated into the overall project concept through the introduction of additional pedestrian access points or enhanced pedestrian amenities and landscaping.

The applicant has appropriately oriented buildings within the project towards the adjacent streets in which they are located. This is further exhibited through the placement of primary building entrances that are oriented towards and are visible from adjacent streets (CZC 17.120.070.E). Orientation of primary building entries towards adjacent streets, rather than on the side or back of a building, supports an active public realm by creating enhanced visibility and activity on the street while also creating a more inviting and interesting pedestrian environment (CZC 17.120.070.E). However, in reviewing the site plan as a whole, it appears that the three proposed pad buildings located adjacent to 41st Avenue and Town Square Way lack adequate orientation of primary building entrances and connection with the larger Capitola Town Square project. To further enhance the presence of these buildings along these primary streets and to



Termination of primary pedestrian area.

Pad buildings at project entry on 41st Avenue lack adequate connection to rest of project.

Primary building entries lack orientation towards adjacent public streets to support active public realm.



Building entries oriented toward the street create enhanced visibility and activity on the street.

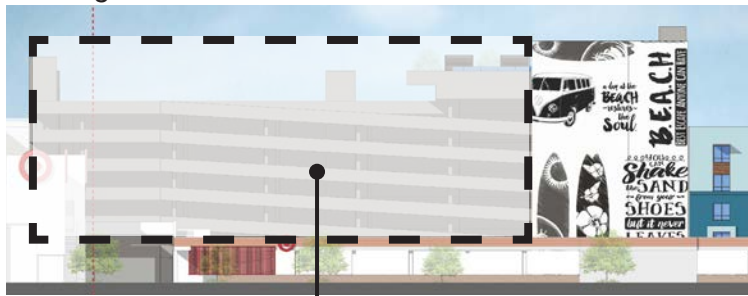
Site Plan

facilitate a more active, interconnected pedestrian environment, the applicant should look for opportunities to better connect these buildings to the adjacent streets while also further fostering the proposed pedestrian environment located elsewhere on Town Square Way.

Considering solar access within the public realm is an important component of projects where taller building heights are proposed. It is anticipated that portions of Town Square Way, or the “main street” of the project, will have limited solar access due to the adjacency to and height of the residential buildings. It is recommended that the applicant look for opportunities to enhance or increase solar access year around within the public realm of the project, particularly along Town Square Way due to its orientation and adjacency to taller buildings within the project.

Proposed parking for the project is to be accommodated through a combination of both new parking structures as well as reconfigured surface parking lots. Of note, the new parking structures are proposed to accommodate both commercial/retail customers as well as the adjacent residential units. To minimize potential visual impacts, the applicant has appropriately wrapped the new parking structures in residential and commercial/retail space and begun to include some level of large graphics/murals (CZC 17.120.070.L). However, we have concerns with the visual qualities of the proposed parking structure west of 38th Avenue, shown on Sheet A-20, as portions are anticipated to be highly visible. Given the planned height and scale of this structure, the applicant should look for opportunities to minimize this parking structure appearance through the integration of additional building elements/materials, murals/screens, landscaping, and/or other design interventions. As shown on the provided landscape sheets, new landscaping areas at the project periphery are anticipated to minimize the visual impact of the large surface parking areas continued forward within the project (CZC 17.120.070.L). In considering proposed on-street parking configurations along Town Square Way and 38th Avenue, the applicant has proposed both parallel and diagonal parking configurations; no on-street parking is proposed along 40th Avenue. While not inappropriate, applicant should consider providing a more balanced mix of diagonal and parallel parking spaces along these main streets through the project, particularly when considering the usability of Town Square Way as a community event space and in areas where sidewalk dimensions could be increased to create a more enjoyable pedestrian environment.

Building B Elevations



Large, unscreened parking structure anticipated to be very visible along Capitola Road and Clares Street.



One example of option for screening large parking structure.

Site Plan



Loading, deliveries, and trash service for the project are proposed in a number of locations throughout the project site. Conceptually, the applicant has appropriately located these critical operational elements of the project internal to or behind buildings so as to minimize their appearance within the public realm (CZC 17.120.070.S). However, we have initial concerns with the placement and location of loading, delivery, and trash enclosures at the ground level below residential building R-A, east of 38th Avenue. It is anticipated that these activities will create ongoing noise, odors, emissions, and other operational activities that could be of concern to future residents and site patrons. Applicant should clarify how these potential concerns will be addressed to ensure they are not an issue for future residents and site patrons.

Acknowledging that the Capitola Mall site is much larger than the currently proposed project and that portions of the existing mall are to remain into the foreseeable future, it is recommended that the applicant look for opportunities to provide indications or leave direction for the ultimate, long-term build-out of the mall property so that once complete, it appears as a collective, unified vision. The applicant has begun to address this concern within the current site plan configuration, such as providing a secondary entry at the existing Target building while flanking it with new commercial/retail spaces or including sidewalks on one side of the street along portions of 40th Avenue. However, additional attention could be given to the areas north of Town Square Way and east of 40th Avenue as part of the proposed project. This could include continuing of sidewalks, creating a more street-like environment, introducing streetscape elements, providing pedestrian paseos, and/or other design interventions.

Site Plan



Provide indications or leave direction within the Capitola Town Square project design to inform or hint at the ultimate, long-term built out of the mall property so that once complete, it appears as a collective, unified vision.

Architecture

The City of Capitola as a whole, and the Village in particular, has an eclectic mix of architectural styles and detailing that have evolved organically over the years and that contribute to the unique coastal village character. Section 17.120.070.I of the Zoning Code articulates that buildings should have an architectural style(s) that is compatible with the surrounding building and natural environment, is an authentic implementation of established architectural styles, and reflect Capitola's unique coastal village character. As previously discussed above, the styles portrayed in the conceptual plan set include characteristics of "Main Street", "Agrarian", and "Contemporary" styles. In reviewing the styles associated with the commercial/retail portion of the project, the applicant has appropriately created the appearance of a number of different structures through massing and height variation, articulation and detailing, and color/material application (CZC 17.120.070.I). Of note, the proposed theater portion feels distinct and unique from other proposed buildings within the project and the applicant should continue to refine



Examples of some of the variety of architectural styles found within the City today.

the commercial/retail portion of project, including the theater building, with stylistic appropriate elements to further enhance the chosen architectural styles and to more closely exemplify the overall character of Capitola. Separately, the residential portion of the project most closely resembles a “Contemporary” architectural style. While not inappropriate, the residential portions lacks the stylistic variety portrayed within the commercial/retail portion of the project as well as a level of applied design elements that would further enhance the unique coastal village character of the community. Going forward, the applicant should look for opportunities to further enhance the architectural style of the residential portion of the project by providing enhanced articulation/detailing, greater variation in material/color application, and/or introducing additional architectural styles that reflect the unique coastal village character.

Building A Perspective



Elevation B-3A (north)

Theater design appears distinct and unique and should be continued to be refined with stylistic appropriate elements to exemplify Capitola character.



Appropriate integration of materials/colors to provide appearance of individuality in commercial/retail spaces. Continue to refine through integration of additional stylistic appropriate element to create greater identity of individual of commercial/retail spaces.

Elevation B-1A (west)



Subtle changes in articulation, detailing, roofline, material/color application enhance individual building appearances.



Style continues for greater than 700-feet without significant changes in architectural design.

Enhance architectural style of residential portion through enhanced articulation/detailing, variation in color/material application, and/or introducing additional architectural styles that reflect the coastal village character.



Example of development where varying styles have been appropriately integrated to minimize appearance of one large building.

The Town Square project includes a variety of desirable massing elements, including variation in wall planes, variation in wall heights, and roofs located at different levels (CZC 17.120.070.H). In considering the commercial/retail portion of the project, applicant should pursue opportunities to expand the appearance of two-story massing elements, such as shown on Sheet A-31, to better complement the mass and scale found elsewhere in the project design while also maintaining a human scaled design. Moreover, applicant should integrate meaningful wall plane variations within the project design, rather than furred out elements. Separately, the residential portion of the project lacks an appropriate level of variation in wall planes, wall heights, and roofs located at

Building D Perspective



Expand appearance of two-story buildings at commercial/retail spaces to provide greater transitioning of adjacent building heights.



Example of single-story commercial/retail spaces with two-story appearance.

Elevation A-4 (South)



Residential portion of project lacking adequate pedestrian-scaled elements. Introduce additional, appropriately scaled two- and three-story elements to break down monumental mass of buildings.

different levels to adequately correspond to the human scale, appearing more monumental in scale. While the applicant has begun to break down the residential buildings through introduction of one- and two-story elements, additional refinements are needed to better address the human scale within the building design. As currently proposed, portions of the project which contain a residential component mixed with

commercial/retail space, appear as two separate projects – a residential building above and a commercial/retail building below – lacking adequate cohesion and connection to the ground plane. Applicant should look for opportunities to continue upper story building wall planes down to the ground level so as to enhance the massing of the project. Massing relief has been provided in a number of locations within the project along the primary streets, such as along 40th Avenue with the recessed vehicular drive and common open space areas. This aides in minimizing the overall bulk and scale of the project when viewed from the street level. However, other areas of the site lack adequate relief in proposed building elevations, leading to the appearance of long, monotonous wall planes. Applicant should pursue opportunities to integrate similar massing relief in areas of the project where wall planes continue for long stretches without significant relief or offset, such as along 38th Avenue.

Building A Perspective



Project appears as two separate projects - residential above and commercial/retail below. Look for opportunities to continue residential building to ground plane to better integrate overall project design.

Examples of upper story massing carried to ground plane.



CZC 17.120.070.B highlights the importance of ensuring new projects are designed to respect and complement adjacent properties. In reviewing the surrounding context of the project site along Capitola Road, we have concerns with the neighborhood compatibility of the residential portions of the proposed project. Both the height, massing, and intensity of this portion of the project is out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood context. In reviewing the conceptual elevations fronting Capitola Road, the design lacks adequate height, massing, setbacks, and/or other design interventions that would create the appearance of greater neighborhood compatibility along Capitola Road. Going forward, the applicant should refine the design of the project along Capitola



Existing context along 41st Avenue and Capitola Road.

Elevation A-4 (South)



Project frontage along Capitola Road lacks adequate height, massing, setbacks, and other design interventions to create provide sense of neighborhood compatibility.

Road. Going forward, the applicant should refine the design of the project along Capitola Road to better reflect and complement the adjacent properties through additional height refinement, massing variation, building and story setbacks, and/or other design interventions (CZC 17.120.070.B).

Building articulation adds to the visual interest of a project, its distinctiveness, and its human scale (CZC 17.120.070.J). To provide articulation within the project, the applicant has introduced a variety of elements including trim, louvers, brackets, roof types, varying doors and windows, among other elements within the conceptual design. As the applicant continues to refine the overall articulation and detailing of the individual buildings within the project, the applicant should look for opportunities to use articulation/detailing to create greater individuality and uniqueness within the overall project design as well as at the individual residential unit and commercial/retail space scale. For example, rather than using the same window type for the whole residential portion of the project, adding in additional window types would further enhance the individual residential unit and overall project design. Likewise, where simple roofline detailing is proposed at the commercial/retail spaces more articulated parapet detailing could be integrated.

Intersection corners present opportunities to create strong and informative elements within a development and in a building design. As currently proposed, while the applicant has begun to introduce some level of material/color changes and height variation within the building designs at intersection corners, additional design enhancements, such as increased height or material/color change, should be pursued so as to create a stronger identity and informative element within the overall project framework and building designs.



Example of enhanced building design at intersection corner at Riverview Drive and Stockton Avenue. The Capitola light house is an iconic building in the central village. Increased height, articulation, and distinctive design creates a strong and informative element in the overall development framework.

In reviewing the residential orientation of the project, a number of individual units have their private open space located at ground level along 38th Avenue and Capitola Road. Placement of units at ground level provides a certain level of activity along the street, however at the same time it creates limited privacy opportunities and generally lacks a desirable street presence. Going forward, the applicant should integrate strategies to address privacy concerns for the residential units at ground level while also looking for opportunities to create greater street presence along these primary streets of the project. Greater street presence could be achieved through integration of front doors/stoops on the street, relocation of gym and other common area amenities to the ground level, and/or other design interventions.

Building B Perspective



Residential units proposed at ground level lack street presence and adequate sense of privacy. Bedrooms located close to or on 38th Avenue and Capitola Road.



Stoop at unit entry provides delineation of public and private space and enhances public realm.

More so than other architectural characteristics within a project design, colors and materials provide the opportunity to truly foster the unique coastal village character and distinctive sense of place that is Capitola. As shown on Sheet A-39, the applicant has provided a comprehensive list of proposed colors and materials to be integrated within the overall project design. In general, this compilation of colors and materials is anticipated to be high quality, durable, enhances building articulation, and is generally compatible with the surrounding development (CZC 17.120.070.K). That said, we have concerns with a number of the selected colors for the project as they appear to be bright and overly applied or the combination of separate colors on a given building appears inconsistent with one another. Going forward, the applicant should ensure selected colors are appropriate to the chosen architectural style in which they are applied and are used in conjunction with other, complementary colors and materials in a cohesive manner. While the applicant has begun to apply colors and materials to the commercial/retail portion that creates individuality within the design, the applicant should look for opportunities to integrate additional materials/colors within the residential portion of the project, particularly along 38th Avenue, in order to create greater individuality and uniqueness within the residential building designs; rather than appearing as one large building as currently shown. Lastly, as the applicant refines the project materials palette, additional materials that are emblematic of a coastal character should be integrated, such as shingles and/or other materials.



Examples of colors/materials used to create individuality within a single building design. Note alignment of residential wall planes with ground floor commercial/retail, while individuality of commercial/retail spaces is maintained.

A number of what would otherwise be large blank wall planes within the project have been minimized through the use of applied wall plane graphics and/or murals. While not inappropriate, the wall plane graphics and murals shown lack a strong connection to Capitola and present an opportunity to foster the community's desired unique coastal village character and distinctive sense of place. To provide a greater connection to place and to further minimize large blank wall planes, the applicant should introduce authentic art that reinforces the local character and sense of place within the project. Additional building design enhancements could also aid in minimizing blank wall plane spaces in order to ensure large graphics, murals, art, etc. are not overly applied.

Building A Perspective



Graphics/murals shown throughout project aide in minimizing blank wall space however lack connection to place and appear overly applied. Consider integration of timeless design features that further enhance overall design while not dating the project design into the future.



Example of large mural that minimizes blank wall space and portrays coastal characteristics.

Floor Plans/Livability

Capitola as a whole has a strong connection to the outdoors, whether to the Pacific Ocean or the adjacent Santa Cruz Mountains, connection to the outdoors is an inherent part of the community. In considering the proposed residential unit floor plans, we have concern with a number of the layouts shown on Sheet A-36 and A-37, as many lack adequate layouts and windows to provide natural daylighting and connection to the outdoors. Going forward, the applicant should look for opportunities to revise proposed residential unit floor plans in a manner that provides greater opportunities for interior natural daylighting as well as connection to the outdoors. In addition, from the provided plan set, it is unclear the proposed proportions of public and private open space breakdown within the residential portion of the project. Applicant should provide additional information on common and private open spaces proposed as well as articulate planned common open space amenities that accommodate different age groups (e.g. families, seniors, young professionals, etc.) who may inhabit these residential units in the future.



Minimal natural daylighting and connection to outdoors within primary living area.

Bedrooms without windows, lack connection to outdoors and natural daylighting of interior spaces.



Floor Plan Excerpts

Public Realm/Landscape Architecture

The public realm and the associated landscape design is a critical project component of expanding upon the City's existing coastal village character and distinctive sense of place (CZC 17.120.070.M & .O). In addressing the landscape design for the project, the applicant has appropriately begun to break out the individual areas into themes that are focused around topics related to the coast. This includes areas named 'The Estuary' and 'The Tides', which not only help to inform the story of the project but also aide in locating the project in and of place. Within portions of these themed areas, the applicant has proposed integrating a boardwalk concept – or pier on land– and while this is a step in the right direction, the applicant should expand upon these larger area concepts to further integrate coastal theming opportunities within the project public realm and landscape design (CZC 17.120.070.M). This could be portrayed through landscape plantings, natural materials, paving patterns/materials, water features, playground equipment, stage area, among other elements. At the same time, the conceptual landscape plan also identifies a number of other elements to be included within the public realm and common open space areas. These include but are not limited to seating, pedestrian lighting, signage, and trash cans. To create a certain level of consistency within the overall project design, the applicant should look for opportunities to create a cohesiveness through the public realm design, with similar elements continued in the different, individual areas of the project to inform future residents and visitors that they are within the Capitola Town Square (CZC 17.120.070.O).

The Tides Area Site Plan



Boardwalk concept strong connection to place. Further expand upon individual public realm concepts to enhance coastal character and sense of place.



Examples of coastal themed elements that could be integrated into the public realm and open space areas.

The conceptual name of the project itself evokes a certain visual character in one's mind as it relates to the public realm and open space areas - Capitola Town Square. In reviewing the provided conceptual plan set, while a larger central plaza type space has been included at the northwest corner of the Town Square Way and 38th Street intersection that is anticipated to support pedestrian activity and an active public realm, a true town square has not been proposed as part of the project (CZC 17.120.070.O).

Going forward, applicant should clarify intended vision of town square concept within project design and look for opportunities to expand this concept as a potential primary element in fostering the unique coastal village character and distinctive sense of place desired by the community. This could include expanding upon the currently proposed large central plaza space to provide additional open landscape space and informal gathering spaces.

Example of town square concept in Arcata, CA.



Example of town square concept in Paso Robles, CA.

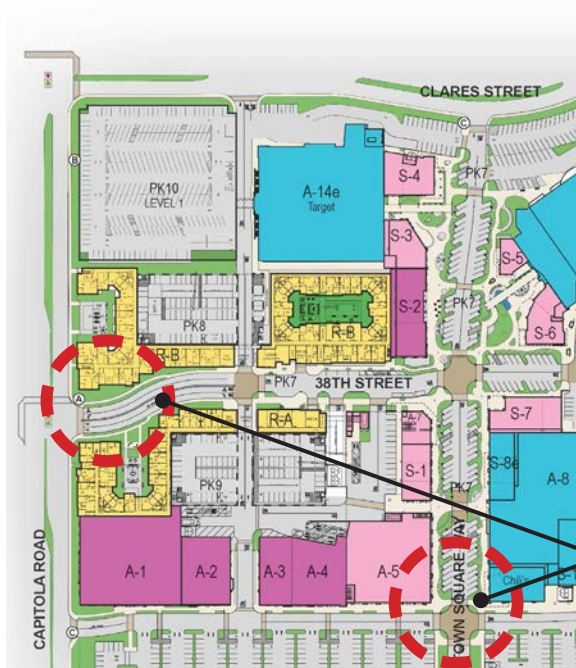


A number of public realm open space concepts have been proposed as part of the conceptual project design. This includes a dog run, playground area, informal lawn spaces, movie space, and temporary closures of portions of Town Square Way west of 38th Street for events such as a weekly farmers market. In reviewing the layout and configuration of these public realm open space concepts, it appears a number are inadequately sized to accommodate the intended activities. For example, the dog run is estimated to be about 20-feet by 40-feet and inadequate to allow for adequate dog exercise. Going forward, the applicant should ensure these proposed public realm spaces are appropriately sized and located so as to accommodate the intended activities while also considering the appropriateness of their location within the overall project concept (CZC 17.120.070.O). To further expand upon the public open space concepts proposed, the applicant should look for opportunities to integrate additional public realm open space concepts that accommodate both future residents and visitors (CZC 17.120.070.O). For example, an enhanced exercise path around the periphery or within the property could create public realm open spaces that are more active focused, rather than the currently non-active focus as shown.

As discussed above as part of the building architecture, intersections present an opportunity to both enhance and inform a building design but also to introduce enhancements within the public realm. The applicant has begun to build upon this concept at the intersection of 38th Avenue and Town Square Way with the introduction of plaza space, landscaping, bulb outs, and pedestrian amenities. However, other

primary street intersection locations where the project interfaces with the surrounding roadway network appears to be lacking and leave much to be desired within the public realm design of the project (CZC 17.120.070.O). For example, the 38th Avenue and Capitola Road intersection presents an opportunity to introduce additional plaza space with pedestrian amenities such as seating, decorative paving, wayfinding signage, and accent plantings at this primary project intersection.

Site Plan



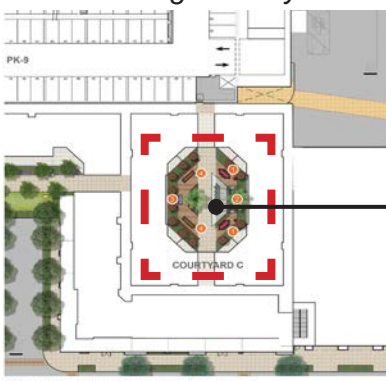
Example of plaza space integrated at intersection corner with pedestrian amenities. Corner of Stockton Avenue and Monterey Avenue in the Village.



Integrate additional plaza spaces at intersection corners to highlight location within project design. Plazas could include seating, decorative paving, wayfinding signage, and accent plantings.

Solar access for both public and private open space areas is important to the enjoyment of these spaces. At the same time, areas of shade within both public and private open space areas provide a respite from the elements. In reviewing the private, common open space areas for the residential portion of the project, a number of these spaces have been placed and oriented that it is likely they will get little to no sun access during the course of a winter/summer day. The applicant should explore opportunities to enhance solar access into these common open space areas for future residents, such as varying building heights, relocating to the building edge, and/or continuing to the ground plane as shown elsewhere. In looking at shade opportunities within the public open space and public realm areas, there appears to be adequate shading opportunities associated with outdoor seating and dining areas that will have more direct sun access. Applicant should look for opportunities to integrate additional trees within the public open space and public realm areas to create greater shade opportunities and enjoyment of these spaces.

Outdoor Living - Courtyard C



Internal private common spaces at podium level anticipated to receive little to no sunlight. Enhance solar access through varying building heights, relocating to building edge, or continuing to ground plane at building edge.

To foster the unique coastal character and sense of place, public art has become a recognizable element across Capitola, particularly within public spaces. Public realm areas within the project create new opportunities to expand the arts and to further foster the sense of place of the proposed development. While the applicant has indicated that art pieces will be integrated within two locations in the public realm (Sheet L-45), the applicant should pursue additional opportunities to further integrate public art within the public realm as an additional layer of coastal theming and creating a distinctive sense of place (CZC 17.120.070.A).



Examples of public art that exudes a coastal character and fosters a distinctive sense of place.



The project site contains a number of mature trees that helps to create shade and enhance the appearance of an established development. In reviewing the conceptual plan set, no information has been provided regarding whether or not any existing trees will be maintained or relocated within the project. Applicant should clarify if any existing trees are to remain or be relocated on-site going forward to allow for adequate staff review (CZC 17.120.070.M).

In moving forward towards a formal project submittal, the applicant should review and revise the proposed Planting Plan as necessary to ensure the proposed plantings are appropriate for the Capitola climate, can accommodate seasonal inundation if located within vegetated swales, minimize messy litter and fruit drop, contains species that can tolerate dense shade conditions where they will exist on-site, and includes their WUCOLS designations (CZC 17.120.070.M).

Civil Engineering

Limited information is provided within the August 29, 2019 dated plan set as it relates to new roads/access points proposed within the project site and their connection to the existing, surrounding City context. Applicant should clarify widths/alignments of surrounding streets versus transitions onto the project site to ensure adequate alignment as well as right-of-way widths, as there appears to be opportunities for refinement. Moreover, dimensions of on-site streets appear to be undersized in some locations, such as 28-feet on Town Square Way adjacent to diagonal parking, and the applicant should verify that intended design is adequate to accommodate efficient traffic movement within the project. Applicant should also consider opportunities to integrate secondary vehicular entry points within the project site to eliminate potential traffic pinch points at primary entries. For example, an additional secondary entry point may be appropriate on 41st Avenue north of Town Square Way.

The applicant has appropriately provided preliminary grading concepts for the project, as shown on Sheets C-53 and C-54. However, we have concerns with the proposed project grading concept as portions of the project site appear to be too steep for the intended use. For example, proposed surface parking lots shown at greater than 5% grade. Going forward, applicant should refine grading concept to ensure intended future use can be appropriately accommodated while minimizing potentially unnecessary grade changes across the site.

Our understanding of the current drainage conditions on-site today is that there is minimal to no capturing, treating, and infiltrating of stormwater on the project site, as the existing development predates the current California mandated stormwater requirements. Sheet C-55 conceptually details proposed on-site drainage conditions for the proposed project, which portrays the flow patterns and directions of the project. Sheet C-55 also details conceptual methods in which the anticipated stormwater will be captured and infiltrated on-site, such as to permeable landscape areas and underground retention areas, as well as drainage to the surrounding streets at Clares Street, Capitola Road, and 41st Avenue. While not inappropriate, we have concerns with the current drainage design as it creates high volumes of sheet water flow and it is unclear how stormwater will transition to larger retention basins and underground storage chambers proposed on-site (CZC 17.120.070.N). In addition, applicant should clarify and/or provide further documentation as to the need for including infiltration wells on-site, as it appears underground storage chambers will allow adequate infiltration as long as soil conditions allow (CZC 17.120.070.N).

Applicant has appropriately relocated METRO transit center to the north of the proposed Town Square Way. This adjacency to the primary commercial and residential areas within the project is anticipated to maintain ease of access by current and future transit users. However, we have concerns with the alignment and layout as it relates to ease of bus access and use by transit riders as well as pedestrian amenities provided within the adjacent Transit Station plaza. Applicant should work with METRO to ensure current alignment is adequate for bus access and transit rider use while also looking for opportunities to enhance the Transit Station plaza through additional seating, landscaping, bicycle racks and lockers, and/or other pedestrian amenities.

General Comments

Given the conceptual stage in which this project was reviewed, minimal information was provided regarding the sustainability aspects of the project. Going forward, the applicant should clarify any intended project features related to sustainability, such as on-site energy generation, passive solar design, enhanced energy efficiencies, water conservation measures, and/or other green building techniques to allow for adequate staff review (CZC 17.120.070.D).

Applicant has identified a preliminary exterior building lighting fixture as part of the conceptual plan set packet, as noted on Sheet A-39. Additional exterior building light fixtures can be seen on a number of the individual plan set sheets, however they are not identified or called out. As noted in the CZC, exterior lighting should be considered an integral part of a project design, with light fixtures being designed, located, and positioned in order to minimize illumination of the sky and adjacent properties (CZC 17.120.070.Q). As part of the next submittal, applicant should clearly identify type and location of proposed site and building light fixtures for the project while also ensuring selected fixtures minimize illumination of the sky and nearby properties.

Additional Information Needed

The following project information is needed to ensure adequate staff review going forward:

1. Perspective View at Street Level on 38th Avenue at Capitola Road
2. Elevations that portray surrounding both on- and off-site context, if not shown
3. Shadow Study

Design Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to better respond to the proposed “Main Street”, “Agrarian”, and “Contemporary” architectural styles and to enhance the overall project design.

Community Character

1. Pursue opportunities to further integrate a variety of individual elements within the project design that collectively would begin to more closely exude the unique coastal village character and distinctive sense of place that is Capitola (CZC 17.120.070.A).

Site Planning

2. Review alignments of new streets proposed as they relate to the surrounding context of the project site (CZC 17.120.070.L). For example, it appears the Town Square Way alignment with 41st Avenue conflicts with existing properties/building at east side of 41st Avenue, while the 38th Avenue alignment could provide a more direct connection to the Capitola Town Square and ultimately provide enhanced north/south access through the site.
3. Enhance internal east-west street route, or tunnel, that provides direct access to Target in order to enhance pedestrian access and to create a more inviting, integrated experience within the overall project (CZC 17.120.070.L).
4. Refine proposed street configuration to accommodate bicycle facilities through the site, considering the existing, surrounding bicycle network within the vicinity of the project site (CZC 17.120.070.L).
5. Evaluate block lengths in other areas of the City for cross-comparison and design direction for the project site. Integrate appropriate block lengths that create a walkable, pedestrian environment while also looking for opportunities to better connect the blocks on-site to the surrounding context.
6. Pursue opportunities to enhance pedestrian connections to the remaining portions of the existing mall and to the project site periphery.
7. Clarify variations in sidewalk width along 38th Avenue, Town Square Way, and 40th Avenue, such as shown on Sheet L-44, and should look for opportunities to ensure consistent sidewalk treatment and design is utilized going forward.
8. Integrate additional pedestrian connections within the project site. For example, the long alley at the east side of Target presents an opportunity for an additional pedestrian paseo, while the mall buildings to remain adjacent to and including Kohls, could be better integrated into the overall project concept through additional pedestrian access points and enhanced pedestrian amenities and landscaping.
9. Orient entries of pad buildings at 41st Avenue and Town Square Way towards the adjacent street while also looking for opportunities to expand the pedestrian environment to better connect with the larger Town Square project.

10. Enhance or increase solar access year around along Town Square Way and other areas of the project site where solar access will be limited due to the streets orientation and adjacency to taller buildings within the project.
11. Minimize appearance of parking structure west of 38th Avenue through integration of additional building elements/materials, murals/screens, landscaping, and/or other design interventions, as portions are anticipated to be highly visible.
12. Look for opportunities to provide a more balanced mix of diagonal and parallel parking spaces along the main project streets, particularly in considering the usability of portions of Town Square Way as a community event space and in areas where sidewalk dimensions could be increased (CZC 17.120.070.L).
13. Clarify how concerns with noise, odors, emissions, and other operational activities will be addressed within the project to ensure they are not an issues for future residents and site patrons (CZC 17.120.070.S).
14. Provide additional indication or leave direction for the ultimate, long-term build-out of the mall property so that once complete, it appears as a collective, unified vision. Attention should be given to the areas north of Town Square Way and east of 40th Avenue and could include continuation of sidewalks, creating more street-like environments, introducing streetscape elements, providing pedestrian paseos, and/or other design interventions.

Architecture

15. Expand appearance of two-story massing elements within the commercial/retail portion of the project to better complement the mass and scale found elsewhere within the project design while also maintain a human scaled design (CZC 17.120.070.H).
16. Integrate meaningful wall plane variation within the project, rather than furred out elements as shown.
17. Provide additional refinements to the massing and scale of the residential portion of the project in order to better address the human scale within the building design. This could include introduction of additional and/or refinement of one-, two-, and three-story elements within the project design.
18. Integrate similar massing relief to that shown along 40th Avenue at the vehicular drive/residential common open space in areas of the project where wall planes continue for long stretches without significant relief or offset, such as 38th Avenue.
19. Look for opportunities to continue upper story wall planes down to ground level so as to enhance the massing of the project and minimize the appearance of two separate projects – residential above and commercial/retail below.
20. Refine design of the project along Capitola Road to better reflect and complement the adjacent properties through additional height refinement, massing variation, building and story setbacks, and/or other design interventions.
21. Expand articulation/detailing to create greater individuality and uniqueness within the overall project design as well as at the individual residential unit and commercial/retail space scale. For example, rather than using the same window type for the residential portion, add in an additional window design type. Likewise, where simple roofline is proposed at commercial/retail space, provide more articulated parapet design.
22. Create a stronger identity and informative elements within buildings at intersection corners through increase height or material/color change, among other design interventions.

23. Integrate strategies within the project design that address privacy concerns for the residential units at ground level while also looking for opportunities to create greater street presence along these primary streets of the project. This could be achieved through integration of front doors/stoops on the street, relocation of gym and other common area amenities to the ground level, and/or other design interventions.
24. Ensure selected colors are appropriate to the chosen architectural style in which they are applied and are used in conjunction with other, complementary colors and materials in a cohesive manner (CZC 17.120.070.K).
25. Integrate additional materials/colors within the residential portion of the project, particularly along 38th Avenue, in order to create greater individuality and uniqueness within the residential building designs; rather than the appearance of one large building as currently shown (CZC 17.120.070.K).
26. Integrate additional materials that are emblematic of coastal character, such as shingles (CZC 17.120.070.K).
27. Introduce authentic wall plane graphics and art murals that reinforce the local character and sense of place within the project design. Additional building design enhancements could also aide in minimizing blank wall plane space in order to ensure large graphics, murals, art, etc. are not overly applied.

Floor Plans/Livability

28. Revise floor plans that lack adequate layouts and windows to provide natural daylighting and connection to the outdoors.
29. Provide breakdown of public and private open space proposed within residential portion of the project.
30. Provide additional information on common and private open spaces proposed within the residential portion of the project as well as articulate planned common open space amenities that accommodate different age groups (e.g. families, seniors, young professionals, etc.) who may inhabit these residential units in the future.

Public Realm/Landscape Architecture

31. Expand upon the themed public realm/landscape areas to further integrate coastal theming opportunities within the project (CZC 17.120.070.M). This could be portrayed through landscape plantings, natural materials, paving patterns/materials, water features, playground equipment, stage area, among other elements.
32. Pursue opportunities to create a cohesiveness through the public realm design, with similar elements continued into different individual areas of the project to inform future residents and visitors that they are within the Capitola Town Square (CZC 17.120.070.O).
33. Clarify intended vision of the town square project within the project design and look for opportunities to expand this concept as a potential primary focal element in fostering the unique coastal village character and distinctive sense of place desired by the community (CZC 17.120.070.O).
34. Ensure public realm spaces are appropriately sized and located to accommodate the intended activities while also considering the appropriateness of their location within the overall project concept (CZC 17.120.070.O). For example, the dog run is estimated to be 20-feet by 40-feet and inadequate to allow for adequate dog exercising.

35. Expand upon public open space concepts that accommodate both residents and visitors to the project (CZC 17.120.070.O). For example, more active spaces, such as an exercise path at the project periphery could expand upon the currently non-active focus of the public realm spaces.
36. Enhance primary street intersection locations within the project, such as 38th Avenue and Capitola Road, with additional plaza spaces with pedestrian amenities such as seating, decorative paving, wayfinding signage, and accent plantings (CZC 17.120.070.O).
37. Explore opportunities to enhance solar access to the private, common open space areas within the residential portion of the project that are internal to the buildings and anticipated to receive limited to no year around sun exposure. This could be achieved by varying building heights, relocating common open space to building edge, and/or continuing common open space to ground plane.
38. Integrate additional trees within the public open space and public realm areas to create greater shade opportunities and enjoyment of these spaces.
39. Pursue integration of additional public art within the public realm of the project as an additional layer of coastal theming and creating a distinctive sense of place (CZC 17.120.070.A).
40. Clarify if any existing trees are to remain or be relocated on-site going forward to allow for adequate staff review (CZC 17.120.070.M). It should be noted that mature trees help create immediate shade and the appearance of an established development.
41. Review and revise proposed Planting Plan for project to ensure the plantings to be used are appropriate to the Capitola climate, can accommodate seasonal inundation if located within vegetated swales, minimizes messy litter and fruit drop, contains species that can tolerate dense shade conditions where they will exist on-site, and includes their WUCOLS designations (CZC 17.120.070.M).

Civil Engineering

42. Clarify road widths/alignments of surrounding streets versus transitions onto the project site to ensure adequate alignment as well as right-of-way widths.
43. Verify design of on-site streets is adequate to accommodate efficient traffic movement within the project, as they appear to be undersized in some locations. For example, 28-feet along Town Square Way appears undersized adjacent to diagonal parking.
44. Look for opportunities to integrate secondary vehicular entry points within the project site to eliminate potential traffic pinch points at primary entries. For example, an additional secondary entry point may be appropriate along 41st Avenue north of Town Square Way.
45. Refine grading plan concept to ensure intended future use can be appropriately accommodated while minimizing potentially unnecessary grade changes across the site. For example, proposed surface parking lots shown at greater than 5% grade.
46. Clarify proposed drainage design for project. Proposed design creates high volumes of sheet water flow and it is unclear how stormwater will transition to larger retention basins and underground storage chambers proposed on-site (CZC 17.120.070.N).

47. Clarify or provide further documentation as to the need for including infiltration wells on-site, as it appears underground storage chambers will allow adequate infiltration as long as soil conditions allow (CZC 17.120.070.N).
48. Work with METRO to ensure current transit center alignment is adequate for bus access and transit rider use while also looking for opportunities to enhance Transit Station plaza through additional seating, landscaping, bicycle racks and lockers, and/or other pedestrian amenities.

General Comments

49. Clarify any intended project features related to sustainability, such as on-site energy generation, passive solar design, enhanced energy efficiencies, water conservation measures, and/or other green building techniques (CZC 17.120.070.D).
50. Identify type and location of proposed site and building light fixtures for the project while also ensuring selected fixtures minimizes illumination of the sky and nearby properties as part of the next submittal (CZC 17.120.070.Q).

Overall, we feel the applicant has proposed a conceptual project that is appropriate to the Capitola Mall location. However, as addressed above, we have a number of concerns regarding community character, site planning, architectural style specifics, massing and height adjacencies, and materials/colors, among others, that will have to be adequately addressed by the applicant to ensure a project that appropriately addresses the existing site context while also being consistent with community's desire for new development projects to exemplify the City's unique coastal village character and distinctive sense of place. We look forward to the project's design progression.

Sincerely,

RRM DESIGN GROUP