



**STAFF REPORT
HOLLISTER PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING DATE: February 26, 2026
REPORT # Community Development-2026-12**

AGENDA ITEM: REVIEW OF PROPOSED PHASE 3 ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT LANGUAGE OF CITY OF HOLLISTER ZONING ORDINANCE (ZOA 2025-4)

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Rod Powell, Assistant City Manager
STAFF CONTACT: Erica Fraser, AICP, Consultant Senior Planner

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Review the proposed draft Zoning Ordinance amendment language and provide staff with comments.

CEQA: The proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments are exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: This is the fourth and final Study Session for Phase 3 of the revisions to the permitting sections of the Zoning Ordinance.

The following new and revised Chapters are proposed. Those marked with an (*) will be reviewed tonight.

- Chapter 17.02, Title, Purpose and Authority*
- Chapter 17.03, Zoning Districts and Zoning Map*
- Chapter 17.72, Authority and Development Permit Decisions
- Chapter 17.74, Permit Procedures
- Chapter 17.76, Environmental Review
- Chapter 17.78, Appeals
- Chapter 17.80, General Plan Amendments
- Chapter 17.82, Specific Plans
- Chapter 17.84, Zoning Ordinance Amendments
- Chapter 17.86, Prezoning/Annexation
- Chapter 17.88, Development Agreements
- Chapter 17.90, Planned Developments
- Chapter 17.92, Density Bonus
- Chapter 17.94, Site & Architectural Review
- Chapter 17.96, Conditional Use Permits
- Chapter 17.98, Sign Permit*
- Chapter 17.100, Temporary Use Permits
- Chapter 17.102, Variances*
- Chapter 17.104, Ministerial Review*
- Chapter 17.110, Reasonable Accommodations*
- Chapter 17.112, Nonconforming Uses and Structures*
- Chapter 17.118, Enforcement*

In addition to the above Chapters, the Planning Commission will also review a proposed amendment to remove Lot Line Adjustments from the Zoning Ordinance and relocate to the Subdivision Ordinance.

ANALYSIS: The Chapters to be reviewed during this Study Session are discussed in detail below. Please note that some Chapter or section references are blank at this time and will be completed once the Planning Commission's review of Phase 3 is complete.

Section 16.44.080, Lot Line Adjustments

Lot Line Adjustments are reviewed by the City Engineering Division pursuant to the Subdivision Map Act. Applicants file directly with the Engineering Division for Lot Line Adjustments.

Currently, the Municipal Code discusses Lot Line Adjustments in Section 17.24.230 and states that the Community Development Director reviews and approves Lot Line Adjustments. This is inconsistent with current practices.

For clarity, staff are recommending that Section be removed from the Zoning Ordinance and placed in the Subdivision ordinance (Title 16) along with parcel maps. Staff have also amended the Section to be consistent with the current review process.

The draft Section is included as Attachment 1.

Chapter 17.98, Sign Permits

This Chapter is a new Chapter. The existing Zoning Ordinance does not include an easy-to-understand discussion of what permit is required for each type of sign. Permitting procedures *and* regulations for signs are all included in Chapter 17.20 *Signs* of the Zoning Ordinance.

The following signs require a permit:

- *Temporary Banners.* Typically approved over the counter, or in no greater than five (5) days in rare circumstance that may require additional review. Requires approval of a Temporary Banner Permit.
- *Downtown A-Frame Signs.* An A-Frame/Portable Sign Permit is required for A-Frame signs in the Downtown Mixed-Use Zoning District (see Section 17.20.110(C)(3)). These permits are typically reviewed within five (5) days.
- *Wall/Awning/Hanging/Pedestrian Signs.* These signs require review and approval of an Administrative Sign Permit. These applications tend to require additional review time due to complexity or number of signs. These applications are typically reviewed within 14 days.
- *Creative Signs.* Creative Signs (see Section 17.20.040(H)(4)) require a Creative

Sign Permit and are reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission during a public hearing.

- *Master Sign Plan.* A Master Sign Plan is required for all centers with two or more tenants. Master Sign Plans are reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission during a public hearing.
- *Monument Signs.* Monument signs are currently reviewed by the Planning Commission (all monument signs regardless of height). In an effort to speed up the processing time for applicants requesting low monument sign. Staff are proposing to amend how the City currently processes monument signs as follows:
 - *Monument Sign Less than Six Feet.* Staff are proposing to now review these signs at staff level. Due to the low height, these signs are unlikely to create significant impacts and staff recommend that the review level be dropped to the Community Development Director which will reduce total review time by one to two months.
 - *Monument Signs Taller than Six Feet.* Staff recommend that monument signs over six feet in height continue to be reviewed by the Planning Commission as these signs can have significant visual impacts.

The draft Chapter is included as Attachment 2.

Chapter 17.102, Variances

Variances are a permit which seeks to ensure that a property owner, whose property is different from the properties in the surrounding area, is able to develop their property similar to developed properties in the surrounding area. For properties where the size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, would create a unique hardship for the property owner the property owner can request a Variance. A Variance can only be granted in accordance with Government Code Section 65906.

Variances are only granted for structures and cannot be granted for a use.

No significant changes are proposed to the regulations for Variances. The current Section can be found in 17.24.210. The existing regulations have been modified for clarity and consistency with Government Code Section 65906. The Planning Commission is charged with reviewing Variances.

The draft Chapter is included as Attachment 3.

Chapter 17.110, Reasonable Accommodation

The City is required to provide reasonable accommodation for eligible individuals. These accommodations are required by Federal and State fair housing laws. A reasonable accommodation is a modification to the required development standards, land use, or

building regulations to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to housing.

The City does not currently have a Reasonable Accommodation Ordinance. Staff are proposing a new Chapter in the Zoning Ordinance to address these types of requests.

The Community Development Director will review requests for reasonable accommodation and will approve or deny a complete request within 30 days of the date of application (if the request is incomplete, the 30-day period starts again upon resubmittal).

The draft Chapter is included as Attachment 4.

Chapter 17.118, Enforcement

Enforcement is currently covered in Sections 17.24.310 through 17.24.380 of the Zoning Ordinance. These sections are now included in Chapter 17.118. Enforcement, and in 17.74, Permit Procedures, (regulations related to permit revocation).

No significant changes are proposed to enforcement regulations.

The draft Chapter is included as Attachment 5.

Chapter 17.104, Ministerial Review

The City is required to provide ministerial review for specific projects identified by the state, as well as certain sites identified in the Housing Element. Additionally, the City's 6th Cycle Housing Element, Policy Action H1-4, requires the City to adopt regulations for ministerial review along with the Housing Element. Ministerial review is a staff-level review for consistency with adopted, objective standards. No subjectivity is involved with the determination to approve or deny a ministerial project, and ministerial projects are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15268 of the CEQA Guidelines.

The following projects require ministerial review pursuant to state law:

- Supportive services including emergency shelters and low barrier navigation centers.
- SB4 (for 100% affordable projects on land owned by a religious institution).
- AB 2011 (for 100% affordable residential developments on commercial land which meets the requirements of this Bill).
- AB 2162 (supportive housing in multifamily and mixed-use zoning districts restricted to low-income households).
- SB 35/SB 423 (infill projects with at least 50% of the units dedicated to low income

and prevailing wage).

- SB 684 (small lot, infill residential development (or subdivisions) of 10 or fewer dwelling units).
- Government Code Section 65583.2 (all residential projects which restrict 20% of the units to low income and are non-vacant sites identified as a housing opportunity site in the Housing Element and vacant sites which have been included as an opportunity site for at least two (2) Housing Elements).

Staff are proposing to include regulations for ministerial reviews in the Zoning Ordinance as required as an Action Policy in the Housing Element and pursuant to State Law. The proposed Chapter has been written to comply with state law requirements.

The draft Chapter is included as Attachment 6.

Chapter 17.02, Title, Purpose and Authority

This Chapter includes sections from the existing Chapter 17.02 as well as several sections within Chapter 17.24, Administration and Enforcement so that similar topics can be grouped together. No significant changes are proposed.

The draft Chapter is included as Attachment 7.

Chapter 17.03, Zoning Districts and Zoning Map

This new Chapter has been removed from the existing Chapter 17.02 so that the sections in 17.02 are directly related to one another.

This Chapter has also been modified to reflect the changes within the updated 2040 General Plan as well as the 6th Cycle Housing Element. The existing zoning designations have been modified to reflect the land use designations within the general plan as well as modifications to the allowed density for several categories.

The draft Chapter is included as Attachment 8.

CEQA: The proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments are exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

CONCLUSION: Staff request feedback on the draft chapters included in this staff report. The Planning Commission is invited to ask questions and provide comments during the Study Session. Staff will then take the feedback received during the Study Session and incorporate it into future drafts as necessary.

NEXT STEPS: Following tonight's meeting, staff will incorporate any comments or requests into the final chapters. Staff will then add all appropriate section references to

the Chapters and make final edits. Any minor modifications required as part of the updated Housing Element (recently revised and submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development) will also be incorporated as required.

The permitting Chapters are also required to be adopted as part of Housing Element goals. Staff will then bring back the permitting chapters to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation to the City Council during a public hearing in March, when the Planning Commission will also review the Housing Element and General Plan.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL OR COMMISSION ACTION: None

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Section 16.44.080, Lot Line Adjustments
2. Chapter 17.98, Sign Permit
3. Chapter 17.102, Variances
4. Chapter 17.110, Reasonable Accommodation
5. Chapter 17.118, Enforcement
6. Chapter 17.104, Ministerial Review
7. Chapter 17.02, Title, Purpose and Authority
8. Chapter 17.03, Zoning Districts and Zoning Map