



## CITY OF LOS ALTOS STORY POLES POLICY

### Purpose

In accordance with City Council direction on March 24, 2015, all commercial, multiple-family and mixed-use development projects receiving subject to greater Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council review must have story poles erected as part of the application process. The purpose of this policy is to help show the development's height, massing and profile in the context of the actual environment and to help provide a visual notice of a project.

### Procedure

1. For projects that require story poles, the applicant's architect or engineer must prepare a Story Pole Plan to indicate the locations where the poles will be installed.
2. A Story Pole Plan shall be approved by the Community Development Director prior to the placement of the poles on the site. Once approved, the applicant shall inform the Community Development Director when the placement of the story poles is complete and submit photographs showing the installation in context.
3. The story poles shall be installed prior to the public noticing of the project and shall be kept in place until the project has been acted upon and the appeal period has ended. If the project is appealed, the story poles shall remain until final action is taken. If final consideration of the project is substantially delayed, or the project is substantially modified, the Community Development Director may require the removal or the modification of the story poles.

### Plan Requirements

1. The Story Pole Plan must be at an appropriate scale and include: a) a site plan showing the location of any existing structure, the outline of any proposed structures and the location of the story poles; b) elevation views of the story poles; and c) any materials, means of installation and structural requirements.
2. The story poles shall be of sufficient number and location to adequately demonstrate the height, mass, and bulk of the project. At a minimum, story poles shall be placed at all outside building corners of the building wall (excluding eaves) and along the main rooflines (ridges, hips and valleys) of the proposed structure(s) or addition. Architectural elements such as towers, spires, elevator and mechanical penthouses, cupolas, mechanical equipment screening and similar elements that are visible from the streetscape must be represented by the story poles.

3. A licensed surveyor or civil engineer shall submit written verification that the location and height the poles and netting accurately represents the height, profile and location of the proposed structure(s) or addition.
4. The Community Development Director may waive or amend the requirements of the Story Pole Plan at the Director's discretion.

### **Materials and Methods**

1. Story poles shall be constructed of lumber, metal poles, or other sturdy building material acceptable to the Community Development Director. Such materials shall be designed to withstand the wind and weather. At least two-foot wide orange woven plastic fencing (or netting) must be used to represent the rooflines of the proposed structure(s) or addition. One of the story poles on each elevation must be clearly marked and labeled in five-foot increments measured from the proposed finished grade and consistent with the approved Story Pole Plan.
2. All story poles shall be placed, braced and supported to ensure the health, safety and general welfare of the public. Applicants shall sign an agreement that holds the City harmless for any liability associated with the construction of, or damage caused by the story poles. If at any time, the City determines the story poles to be unsafe, they shall be repaired and reset immediately by the applicant or, at the City's discretion, removed. Depending on the scope of the poles, building permits and inspections may be required at the discretion of the Community Development Director.

### **Exceptions**

1. The Community Development Director may grant exceptions to the Story Pole Policy due to: a) a public health and/or safety concern, or b) that such an installation would impair the use of existing structure(s) or the site to the extent it would not be able to be occupied and the existing business and/or residential use would be infeasible. Some form of poles and netting and/or on-site physical representation of the project may be required, even if an exception is granted.
2. The Story Pole Plan may be limited in scope at the discretion of the Community Development Director. In such cases such as where there are multiple detached structures proposed and where identifying the locations of key structures would suffice, the story poles may be limited to the outline(s) of key structures and/or showing a structure(s) greatest height and mass.
3. In granting an exception, the Community Development Director may require additional digital imagery simulations, computer modeling, built to-scale models or other visual techniques in-lieu of the story pole requirements.