

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-497

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS
CREATING CHAPTER 14.63 OF THE LOS ALTOS MUNICIPAL CODE TO
IMPLEMENT PROGRAM 4.C, PROGRAM 4.D, PROGRAM 4.E AND PROGRAM 4.F
OF THE SIXTH CYCLE HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE**

WHEREAS, the City Council is empowered pursuant to Article XI, Section 7 of the California Constitution to make and enforce within the City all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws; and

WHEREAS, on January 24, 2023, the City Council approved the City's Sixth Cycle Housing Element Update; and

WHEREAS, Program 4.C of the Housing Element Update calls for the allowing Low Barrier Navigation Centers consistent with AB 101; and

WHEREAS, Program 4.C of the Housing Element Update expressly allows Low Barrier Navigation Centers in CD/R3, CN, CD, CRS, CT, and CRS-OAD Districts within the City of Los Altos; and

WHEREAS, Program 4.D of the Housing Element Update calls for the allowing of Transitional and Supportive Housing consistent with State law; and

WHEREAS, Program 4.D of the Housing Element Update expressly allows Transitional and Supportive Housing in R3-4.5, R3-5, R3-3, R3-1.8, R3-1, CD-R3, and CT Districts within the City of Los Altos; and

WHEREAS, Program 4.E of the Housing Element Update calls for the allowing Employee/Farmworker Housing consistent with State law; and

WHEREAS, Program 4.E of the Housing Element Update allows employee housing for seven (7) or more within zones that also allow for Agricultural Uses are by-right uses; and

WHEREAS, Program 4.E of the Housing Element Update allows employee housing providing accommodations for six (6) or fewer employees shall be deemed a single-family dwelling and allowed in all residential zones within the City of Los Altos; and

WHEREAS, Program 4.F of the Housing Element Update calls for the Los Altos Municipal Code to allow for Reasonable Accommodations for disabled persons' consistent with Federal Fair Housing Act, and California Fair Employment and Housing Act; and

WHEREAS, having committed itself to implement Housing Element Update in its entirety, the City Council now desires to adopt this Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines implementing the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Los Altos does hereby ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 14.63 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE. Chapter 14.63 of the Los Altos Municipal Code are hereby added as set forth in Appendix A to this Ordinance, underline indicating addition.

SECTION 2. CONSTITUTIONALITY; AMBIGUITIES. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof. Any ambiguities in the Los Altos Municipal Code created by this Ordinance shall be resolved by the Director of Development Services, in their reasonable discretion, after consulting the City Attorney.

SECTION 3. PUBLICATION. This Ordinance shall be published as provided in Government Code Section 36933.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall be effective upon the commencement of the thirty-first day following the adoption hereof.

The foregoing Ordinance was duly and properly introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Altos held on August 22, 2023, and was thereafter, at a regular meeting held on September 12, 2023, passed and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Dailey, Fligor, Lee Eng, Meadows and Weinberg


NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:


Sally Meadows, MAYOR

Attest:


Melissa Thurman, MMC, CITY CLERK

CHAPTER 14.63 – SPECIALIZED HOUSING REGULATIONS

Article 1. Supportive and Transitional Housing

Section 14.63.010 – Purpose

The purpose of this Section is to establish provisions for the review of supportive and transitional housing. The established provisions of this chapter shall allow for all proposed supportive and transitional housing to be a use by right in zones where multifamily and mixed uses are permitted, including nonresidential zones permitting multifamily uses.

Section 14.63.020 – Definitions

“Supportive housing” shall mean a housing development project as defined in Government Code section 65582(g), as may be amended or renumbered from time to time, as being housing with no limit on length of stay, that is occupied by the target population, and that is linked to an on-site or off-site service that assists the supportive housing resident in retaining the housing, improving his or her health status, and maximizing his or her ability to live and, when possible, work in the community. Supportive housing is a residential use and is subject to only those restrictions that apply to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone. “Target population” means persons with low incomes who have one or more disabilities as described in section 65582(i) of the Government Code.

“Transitional housing” shall mean a housing development project as defined in Government Code section 65582(j), as may be amended or renumbered from time to time, as being building(s) configured as a rental housing development, but operated under program requirements that require the termination of assistance and recirculating of the assisted unit to another eligible program recipient at a predetermined future point in time that shall be no less than six (6) months from the beginning of the assistance. Transitional housing is a residential use and is subject to only those restrictions that apply to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone.

Section 14.63.030 – Allowed Zoning

The districts established by this section shall allow supportive and transitional housing and are designated as follows:

Multiple-Family District (R3-4.5)
Multiple-Family District (R3-5)
Multiple-Family District (R3-3)
Multiple-Family District (R3.1.8)
Multiple-Family District (R3-1)
Commercial Downtown/Multiple-Family District (CD/R3)
Commercial Thoroughfare District (CT)

Section 14.63.040 – Development Standards

Development Standards shall be the same for supportive and transitional housing as they are for any residential housing development located within the zoning district. Additional standards specific for supportive and transitional housing developments are as follows:

- A. Units within the development are subject to a recorded affordability restriction for fifty-five (55) years.
- B. One hundred percent (100%) of the units, excluding managers' units, within the development are dedicated to lower income households and are receiving public funding to ensure affordability of the housing to lower income residents. For purposes of this paragraph, "lower income households" has the same meaning as defined in section 50079.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- C. At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the units in the development or 12 units, whichever is greater, are restricted to residents in supportive housing who meet the criteria of the target population. If the development consists of fewer than 12 units, then one hundred percent (100%) of the units, excluding managers' units, in the development shall be restricted to residents in supportive housing.
- D. The developer provides the planning agency with the information required by Section 65652 of the Government Code.
- E. Nonresidential floor area shall be used for onsite supportive services in the following amounts:
 - 1. For a development with twenty (20) or fewer total units, at least 90 square feet shall be provided for onsite supportive services.
 - 2. For a development with more than twenty (20) units, at least three percent (3%) of the total nonresidential floor area shall be provided for onsite supportive services that are limited to tenant use, including, but not limited to, community rooms, case management offices, computer rooms, and community kitchens.
- F. The developer replaces any dwelling units on the site of the supportive housing development in the manner provided in paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 65915 of the Government Code.
- G. Units within the development, excluding managers' units, include at least one bathroom and a kitchen or other cooking facilities, including, at minimum, a stovetop, a sink, and a refrigerator.
- H. Parking.
 - 1. Parking stall requirement shall be one-half (0.5) per unit and one (1) for each onsite management/staff.
 - 2. No Parking shall be required within one half mile of a public transit stop.

Section 14.63.050 – Application Review

- 1. The Development Services Department shall notify the project applicant whether the application is complete within thirty (30) days of receipt of an application.
- 2. After the application is deemed complete, the Development Services Department shall complete its review of the application within sixty (60) days for projects of fifty (50) or

fewer units and one hundred and twenty (120) days for projects of fifty-one (51) and greater.

Article 2. Low-Barrier Navigation Center

Section 14.63.060 – Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to establish development standards for low-barrier navigation centers and to ensure this use is constructed and operated in a manner that is consistent with the requirements and allowances of state law, specifically Article 12 of Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Planning and Zoning Law commencing with Government Code Section 65660.

Section 14.63.070 – Definitions

“Low-barrier navigation center” means a housing-first, low-barrier, service-enriched shelter focused on moving people into permanent housing that provides temporary living facilities while case managers connect individuals experiencing homelessness to income, public benefits, health services, shelter, and housing. “Low barrier” means best practices to reduce barriers to entry, and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. The presence of partners if it is not a population-specific site, such as for survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault, women, or youth.
2. Pets.
3. The storage of possessions.
4. Privacy, such as partitions around beds in a dormitory setting or in larger rooms containing more than two beds, or private rooms.

Section 14.63.080 – Applicability & Review

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all low-barrier navigation center projects.

The permit shall be a ministerial action without discretionary review or a hearing. The city will notify a developer whether the developer’s application is complete within 30 days, pursuant to Government Code section 65943. Action shall be taken within 60 days of a complete application being filed.

Section 14.63.090 – Permit Required

A planning permit is required prior to the establishment of any low-barrier navigation center project meeting the following criteria:

1. It offers services to connect people to permanent housing through a services plan that identifies services staffing.
2. It is linked to a coordinated entry system, so that staff in the interim facility or staff who co-locate in the facility may conduct assessments and provide services to connect people to permanent housing. “Coordinated entry system” means a centralized or coordinated assessment system developed pursuant to Section 576.400(d) or Section 578.7(a)(8), as applicable, of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as those sections read on January

- 1, 2020, and any related requirements, designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and referrals.
3. It complies with Chapter 6.5 (commencing with Section 8255) of Division 8 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
4. It has a system for entering information regarding client stays, client demographics, client income, and exit destination through the local Homeless Management Information System as defined by Section 578.3 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

14.63.100 – Allowed Zoning

The districts established by this Section shall allow low-barrier navigation centers and are designated as follows:

Commercial Downtown/Multiple-Family District (CD/R3)
Commercial Neighborhood District (CN)
Commercial Downtown District (CD)
Commercial Retail Sales District (CRS)
Commercial Thoroughfare District (CT)
Commercial Retail Sales/Office District (CRS/OAD)

14.63.110 – Development Standards

All low-barrier navigation center development shall meet the following requirements:

- A. Connected Services. It offers services to connect people to permanent housing through a services plan that identifies services staffing.
- B. Coordinated Entry System. It is linked to a coordinated entry system, so that staff in the interim facility or staff who co-locate in the facility may conduct assessments and provide services to connect people to permanent housing. “Coordinated entry system” means a centralized or coordinated assessment system developed pursuant to Section 576.400(d) or Section 578.7(a)(8), as applicable, of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as those sections read on January 1, 2020, and any related requirements, designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and referrals.
- C. Code Compliant. It complies with Chapter 6.5 (commencing with Section 8255) of Division 8 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- D. Homeless Management Information System. It has a system for entering information regarding client stays, client demographics, client income, and exit destination through the local Homeless Management Information System, as defined by Section 578.3 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Article 3. Reasonable Accommodation

Section 14.63.120 – Purpose

The purpose of reasonable accommodations is to provide provisions in accordance with federal and state fair housing laws (42 USC § 3600 et seq. and Government Code §§ 65008 and 12900 et seq., together referred to as “Fair Housing Laws”) for persons with disabilities seeking fair access

to housing in the application of the city's zoning laws. The term "disability" as used in this article shall have the same meaning as the term's "disability", "handicapped", or similar terms, as defined in the Fair Housing Laws, as may be amended from time to time. The purpose of this article is to establish the procedure by which a request for a reasonable accommodation shall be made and processed.

Section 14.63.130 – Applicability

- A. A request for reasonable accommodation may be made by any individual with a disability, his or her representative, or a developer or provider of housing for individuals with disabilities, when the application of a land use, zoning or building regulation, policy, practice, or procedure acts as a barrier to housing opportunities.
- B. A request for reasonable accommodation may include a modification or exception to the rules, standards, development, and use of housing-related facilities that would eliminate regulatory barriers and provide a person with a disability equal opportunity for the housing of their choice.
- C. A request for reasonable accommodation in regulations, policies, practices, and procedures may be filed at any time that the accommodation may be necessary to ensure equal access to housing. Reasonable accommodation does not affect the obligations of an individual or a developer of housing for an individual with disabilities to comply with other applicable regulations not necessary to achieve the purposes set forth in paragraph (B).
- D. If a request for reasonable accommodation is granted, the request shall be granted to an individual and shall not run with the land unless it is determined that (1) the modification is physically integrated into the residential structure and cannot easily be removed or altered to comply with applicable city or state codes, or (2) the accommodation is to be used by another individual with a disability.

Section 14.63.140 – Request for Reasonable Accommodation

- A. Application for a request for reasonable accommodation shall be made in writing on a form provided by the Development Services Department. The form shall be signed by the property owner or authorized agent. The application shall state the circumstances and conditions relied upon as grounds for the application and shall be accompanied by adequate plans and all other materials as specified by the Development Services Director. The application shall include the zoning, land use and/or building code provision, regulation, policy or practice from which modification or exception for reasonable accommodation is being requested, including an explanation of how application of the existing zoning, land use or building code provision, regulation, policy or practice would preclude the provision of reasonable accommodation, along with documentation that demonstrates the reason that the requested accommodation may be necessary for the individual(s) with the disability to use and enjoy the dwelling.
- B. If any information provided is identified by an applicant as confidential then the city shall endeavor to withhold that information from copying and inspection by members of the public, to the extent reasonably determined by the city to be authorized or required by applicable law, including Government Code sections 7926.000 to 7926.500 and 7927.705, and Section 1 of Article 1 of the California Constitution.

Section 14.63.150 – Review Authority and Procedure

- A. Within 60 days of receipt of a completed application, the Development Services Director, or designee, shall issue a written determination to approve, conditionally approve, or deny a request for reasonable accommodation, and the modification or revocation thereof in compliance with this chapter. The request shall be processed independently of any other required development permits. However, approval of reasonable accommodation may be conditioned upon approval of other related permits.
- B. The filing of an application for request for reasonable accommodation shall not require public notice.
- C. If necessary to reach a determination on the request for reasonable accommodation, the Development Services Director, or designee, may request further information from the applicant consistent with Fair Housing Laws, specifying in detail the information that is required.
- D. The decision on a request for reasonable accommodation shall be final and not appealable.

Section 14.63.160 – Findings

- A. The written decision to grant or deny a request for reasonable accommodation will be consistent with the Fair Housing Laws and shall be based on consideration of the following factors:
 - 1. The housing which is the subject of the request for reasonable accommodation will be occupied by an individual, or individuals, with a disability protected under Fair Housing Laws;
 - 2. The requested accommodation is necessary to make specific housing available and/or accessible to an individual with a disability protected under the Fair Housing Laws;
 - 3. The requested accommodation would not impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the City; and
 - 4. The requested accommodation would not require a fundamental alteration in the nature of the city's land use and zoning and building regulations, policies, practices, and procedures.
- B. In granting a request for reasonable accommodation, the Development Services Director, or designee may impose any conditions of approval deemed reasonably necessary to ensure that the reasonable accommodation would comply with the findings required above.

Article 4. Qualified Employee Housing

Section 14.63.180 – Purpose

The Employee Housing Act allows for flexibility in housing types for employee housing, including conventional and nonconventional structures, such as: living quarters, boardinghouse, tent, bunkhouse, mobilehome, manufactured home, recreational vehicle, and travel trailers. The laws and regulations governing these structures depend on the housing type; however, all qualified employee housing must comply with: the Employee Housing Act (Health and Safety Code Section 17000 et seq.) and the Employee Housing Regulations (California Code of Regulations Title 25, Division 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter 3—Employee Housing), which outline specific requirements

for the construction of housing, maintenance of grounds, buildings, sleeping space and facilities, sanitation and heating; and the provisions of this section.

Section 14.63.190 – Definitions

“Qualified employee housing” means employee housing defined in Health & Safety Code section 17008, even if the housing accommodations or property are not located in a rural area, as defined by Health & Safety Code section 50101. Any housing development project approved pursuant to Health & Safety Code section 17021.8 is also “qualified employee housing,” and shall be a permitted use notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this code.

Section 14.63.200 – Review Authority and Procedure

- A. Qualified employee housing for seven (7) or more employees shall be considered an agricultural use and shall not require any discretionary approval not required of other agricultural activity in the same zone, provided that:
 1. The qualified employee housing should not consist of more than thirty-six (36) beds in a group quarters or twelve (12) units or spaces designed for use by a single family or household.
 2. All temporary or permanent structures that contain qualified employee housing shall meet the setback, lot coverage, height, and other development standards applicable to the zone in which it is located.
 3. Parking shall be provided in accordance with chapters 14.74 and 14.75 of this code, unless the applicant provides substantial evidence demonstrating that the actual parking need is lower, subject to the approval of the Development Services Director.
 4. Qualified employee housing shall comply, as applicable, with the following: (1) Employee Housing Act (California Health and Safety Code Sections 17000—17062); (2) Mobilehome Parks Act (California Health and Safety Code Sections 18200—18700); and Special Occupancy Parks Act (California Health and Safety Code Sections 18860—18874), as may be amended from time to time.
 5. Qualified employee housing shall be reviewed and approved subject to the same requirements as other agricultural uses within the same zone.
 6. If an existing agriculture use does not have any required permit, a permit for both the agricultural use and qualified employee housing must be obtained.
 - a. The property owner shall obtain and maintain any required permit to operate pursuant to Health & Safety Code section 17030 et seq.
 7. The property owner shall: (1) complete and submit to the Development Services Director a verification form no later than thirty (30) days after receiving a permit to operate from HCD; (2) a verification form shall be submitted to the Development Services Director annually to ensure compliance with this Chapter 14.63; and (3) the verification form shall include: information regarding the agricultural use, housing type, number of dwelling units or beds, number of occupants, occupants’ employment information, and proof that a permit to operate has been obtained and maintained.

8. Qualified employee housing – seven or more employees shall be removed or converted to another permitted use at such time as the agricultural activity to which it relates ceases operation for more than twelve (12) consecutive months.
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- B. Qualified employee housing providing accommodations for six (6) or fewer employees, pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 17021.5, shall be deemed a single-family dwelling and is allowed in residential zones. Qualified employee housing for six (6) or fewer employees is subject to all municipal codes, regulations, and other standards generally applicable to other residential dwellings of the same type in the same zone.