

Menlo Park Commercial Zoning Update: Working Group Meeting 1



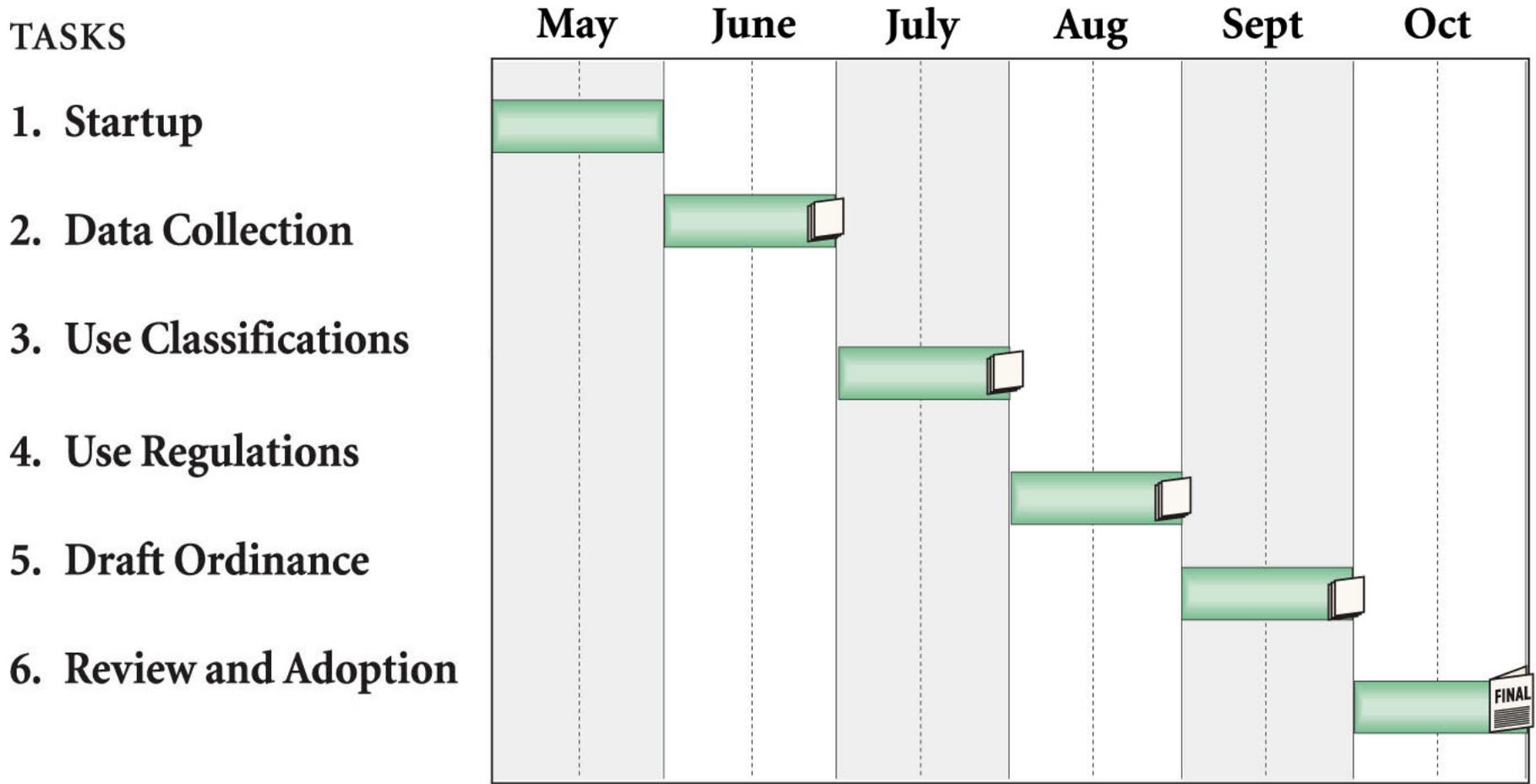
Meeting Objectives

- Provide Project Overview
- Review Working Group Role and Schedule
- Discuss Findings from Code User Interviews and Community Workshop
- Review and Comment on Findings from Peer Community Evaluation
- Identify Next Steps

Commercial Zoning Update Objectives

- Revise zoning regulations to create a new and logical structure that reflects an evolving economy and provides a basis for a streamlined administrative process;
- Ensure that commercial and industrial use regulations reflect the City's goals;
- Craft a permitting process that balances discretion and certainty to achieve the City's commercial development objectives;
- Reduce the time and costs of permit review and approval by simplifying the process.

Project Timeline



Overview of Current Zoning

- 11 commercial and 2 industrial zoning districts without clear purpose statements.
- Confusing system of “use lists” without complete definitions or ability to deal with new uses in a changing economy.
- No “by-right” uses in significant proportion of commercial and industrial land in districts.
- Most conditional uses require Planning Commission action.
- No development standards for specific commercial and industrial uses.

Existing Commercial Regulations

Chapter 16.36

C-1-C ADMINISTRATIVE, PROFESSIONAL AND RESEARCH DISTRICT, RESTRICTIVE

Sections:

- 16.36.010 Permitted uses.
- 16.36.020 Conditional uses.
- 16.36.030 Development regulations.

16.36.010 Permitted uses. There are no permitted uses in the C-1-C district.

16.36.020 Conditional uses. Conditional uses allowed in the C-1-C district, subject to obtaining a use permit, are as follows:

- (1) Professional, administrative, and executive offices;
- (2) Research and development facilities;
- (3) Convalescent homes;
- (4) Public utilities in accordance with Chapter 16.76;
- (5) Special uses in accordance with Chapter 16.78.

Commercial Zones

<i>Zone</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Acres</i>
C-1	132.5	C-2-B	3.3
C-1-A	7.1	C-2-S	3.5
C-1-B	2.7	C-3	33.7
C-1-C	121.0	C-4	10.8
C-2	8.6	C-4 (ECR)	68.0
C-2-A	1.5	Total	392.7

Industrial Zones

<i>Zone</i>	<i>Acres</i>
M-1	5.1
M-2	574.9
Total	580.0

Overlay Zones and Special Designations

<i>District</i>	<i>Acres</i>
PD	11.6
(X)	165.3
Total	245.0

CZOU Components/Products

- Land use classifications. Establish use classifications that define regulated uses to reflect current economic conditions and special characteristics of Menlo Park commercial and industrial businesses.
- Use regulations. Update use regulations for each commercial and industrial district to reflect City and community goals.
- Zoning district. Rationalize and consolidate districts.
- Annotated outline. Revise basic structure of commercial regulations.

SAMPLE USE REGULATION TABLE

P = Permitted A = Administrative Use Permit C = Commission Use Permit --- Not Permitted	C-1 Administrative and Professional Districts	C- 2 Neighborhood Commercial Districts	C-3 Central Commercial District	C-4 General Commercial Districts	Additional Regulations
Commercial Uses					
Retail Stores	---	P	P	P	
Eating and Drinking Establishments <i>(Restaurants, Cafes, Bars)</i>	C	P	P	P	
Medical and Dental Offices	---	C	---	P	See Section XX-XXXX.
Other Offices	P	C	---	P	
Personal Services <i>(hair salons, shoe repair, laundromats, etc.)</i>		P	C	C	
Business Services <i>(printing, etc.)</i>	P	---	---	---	
Hotels/Motels	---	---	---	P	See Section XX-XXXX.
Residential units above retail or office uses	---	C	C	P	
Auto Sales	---	---	---	P	
Auto Servicing and Repair, Gas Stations	---	C	---	P	

The CZOU Does Not Include

- A General Plan Update.
- Specific Planning for Any Commercial Corridor.
- Revisions to development or performance standards.
- Revisions to City's Environmental Review (CEQA) process.
- Update to housing policies.

Role of Working Group

- Review progress of the Commercial Zoning Ordinance Update;
- Provide feedback on project products;
- Provide guidance to the City Council on future work.

Working Group Guidelines

- Share perspectives respectfully;
- Listen to perspectives openly;
- Be concise and stay on topic;
- Focus on the message;
- Speak one at a time.

Work To-Date

Input from stakeholders and community

- Code-user interviews (May 15)
- Community workshop (May 24)

Data collection:

- Evaluation of peer cities' regulations
- Technical zoning issues identified by staff
- Review of typical land use cases

Findings from Code-User Interviews

- Clear objectives for commercial areas essential to providing clear direction.
- Current discretionary processes (e.g. conditional use permits) take too long, are too subjective and political, and are out of sync with business needs.
- Provide greater certainty by increasing permitted uses subject to specific limits and standards.
- Eliminate discretionary review for tenant improvements that meet specific zoning standards.
- Increase the number of decisions that can be made at the staff level.

General Plan Policies

- *Goal I-B: To strengthen Downtown as a vital and competitive shopping area while encouraging the preservation and enhancement of Downtown's historic atmosphere and character.*
- *Goal I-C: To encourage creativity in development of the El Camino Real Corridor.*
- *Goal I-D: To encourage the rehabilitation and continued use of viable and appropriate neighborhood commercial uses or collections of stores servicing surrounding residential neighborhoods.*
- *Goal I-E: To promote the development and retention of commercial uses which provide significant revenue to the City and/or goods or services needed by the community and which have low environmental and traffic impacts.*
- *Goal I-F: To promote the retention, development, and expansion of industrial uses which provide significant revenue to the City, are well designed, and have low environmental and traffic impacts.*

Findings from Code-User Interviews

- Parking drives development decisions.
- High parking ratios and low height limits constrain commercial development.
- Requirements and procedures outside of zoning ordinance often impact the permit process:
 - Environmental review procedures - traffic study needed for almost every project.
 - Fire district standards for hazardous materials.
- Look to nearby cities for good examples.

Findings from Code-User Interviews

Neighborhood concerns:

- Neighbors need to be kept informed about new development.
- Concern about chemical use near residential neighborhoods.
- Establish specific standards and thresholds to protect neighborhoods.



Community Workshop Questions

- What uses do you like and want to see more of in Menlo Park?
- What types of uses should be permitted in each set of zoning districts?
- What types of uses should be permitted subject to limitations or special review?
- What is the most important change the City can make to get what you want and prevent what you don't want?

Findings from Community Workshop

The most desirable land use types included:

- Pedestrian-oriented districts,
- Cultural, dining, and entertainment uses,
- Revenue-generating businesses (e.g., auto dealers).



Findings from Community Workshop

Which uses should be in which zoning districts?

- Retail in Neighborhood, Central, and General commercial but some limitations in Administrative and Professional
- Eating and drinking establishments in most locations
- General office uses outright in Administrative and Professional, medical offices outright in some locations with restrictions in other locations.
- Enclosed manufacturing, office, R&D, warehousing and distribution, and accessory retail by right in General Industrial.

Peer Cities Zoning Survey

- Ten cities, all but one in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.
- Three cities with comparable populations, the others two to four times larger.
- Median land area 12.15 square miles compared with 10.1 in Menlo Park.

Findings From Peer Cities Review

- Menlo Park has more commercial and industrial districts than the peer cities.
- Menlo Park's regulations are generally more restrictive, with fewer permitted uses in a typical district and more discretionary review.
- Though the ordinances vary, and many are old, the more modern ones divide uses into broad categories rather than "use lists."
- Menlo Park regulates a small number of individual land uses compared to peer cities. Peer cities make more use of land use distinctions and limitations.

Input from Working Group

- Do you agree with the big issues that the Code-Users and Community Workshop listed?
- Which issues identified in the review of peer communities do you think are most important for Menlo Park?
- Are there other issues that the zoning update needs to address to accomplish the Council objectives?

Next Steps

- Meeting 2 (7/13): Review Issues and Options paper and draft land use classifications
- Meeting 3 (8/17): Review preliminary use regulations
- Meeting 4 (8/31): Review Public Review Draft of Zoning Ordinance Update

Menlo Park Commercial Zoning

