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**PLANNING DIVISION**  
**DIRECTOR'S POLICY STATEMENT 25-01**

**DATE:** January 6, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Measure SP Implementation

**Policy Statement**

On November 5, 2024, the residents of South Pasadena approved Measure SP. Stated generally, Measure SP repealed the 45-foot building height cap that was approved by voters in 1983. The City Council, in accordance with procedures listed in the South Pasadena Municipal Code (SPMC), now has the authority to set building heights in the City's various zoning districts as deemed appropriate to support the underlying density. The SPMC requires a public process to make such changes to Municipal Code development standards.

**Policy Clarification and Relationship to Director's Interpretation Procedures**

"The Director shall have the responsibility and authority to interpret the meaning and applicability of all the provisions and requirements of [South Pasadena's] Zoning Code" (SPMC §36.110.020). In instances where a conflict exists between provisions of the zoning code, a Director's Policy may be issued, following the procedures set forth in SPMC §36.110.040, including distribution to the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Board, Cultural Heritage Commission, City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, and affected Department Staff. A Director's Interpretation is appealable to the Planning Commission (SPMC 36.610.040(A)).

In this instance, there is no internal conflict within the South Pasadena Municipal Code. Therefore, a Director's Interpretation is not warranted. However, in light of the community interest in understanding the implications of the approved ballot measure and the next steps to implement it, this policy statement is offered for clarification of the current standing, as follows:

**The existing building heights of each zoning district shall remain in effect until such time that the City Council updates SPMC Chapter 36 (Zoning Code). The City continues to comply with State laws that allow bonus height for projects that include on-site affordable housing, which may exceed the underlying zoning provisions.**

**Consistency with the General Plan**

This Policy Statement is consistent with the following General Plan policies and Housing Element Goals Programs:

General Plan Policies

- P3.6 Increase the number of affordable units to stabilize rents and prices.
- P3.7 Provide high quality housing for current and future residents with a diverse range of income levels.

P5.8 Support the reduction of governmental and regulatory constraints, and advocate for the production of affordable housing.

Housing Element

Goal 2.0: Encourage and Assist in the Provision of Affordable Housing

Program 2.b Affordable Housing Production

**Distribution**

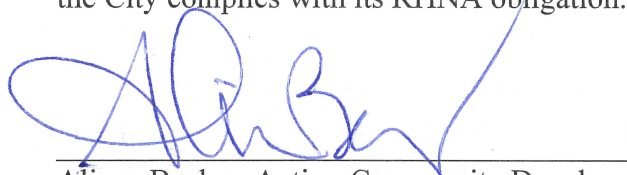
This Policy Statement will be posted on the Planning Division website.

**Next Steps: Community Outreach**

Following voter approval of Measure SP, the Community Development Department has commenced the process of analyzing appropriate building heights for various zones, with support from consultants with expertise, to propose recommendations to the City Council. The City must adopt building heights that can accommodate a zone's base density. The City's certified Housing Element has identified areas that would be appropriate to accommodate planned growth based on the Regional Housing Needs Allocation obligation (RHNA).

Community members have opportunities to take part in this process, with listening sessions scheduled for January 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. Walking workshops have also been calendared for February 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, at times and places to be announced.

Once staff has gathered input from the community and has had an opportunity to reconcile public comments with other land use analysis, public hearings will be scheduled before the Planning Commission and City Council. Staff anticipates scheduling those hearings by summer 2025. Further refinements will also be proposed to the City's Housing Element to reflect zoning changes. Any changes will ensure that the City complies with its RHNA obligation.



Alison Becker, Acting Community Development Director

1/6/25  
Date