

DRAFT

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

For the Unincorporated Communities of West Alameda County



TASK FORCE MEETING

July 27, 2010



Kahn
Mortimer
Associates

PLANNING • ARCHITECTURE

DYETT & BHATIA
Urban and Regional Planners

Tonight's Meeting

- *Existing County Procedures*
- *Options and Alternatives for Administering Design Review*
- *Next Steps*

Key Components of Design Review Process

- ✓ Objectives—Desired outcomes
- ✓ Applicability—Types or categories of projects that require design review
- ✓ Design standards
- ✓ Design guidelines
- Responsibility—Parties involved in process and their respective roles and responsibilities
- Process and procedures—When does design review occur? How are decisions made?

Design Review Responsibilities

- **Who are the authorities involved in design review?**
 - *Staff*
 - *Planning Commission*
 - *Board of Zoning Adjustments*
 - *Other?*
- **Assignment of responsibility by project type or category**
 - *Alterations and additions—single family, multi-family, mixed-use*
 - *New single-family homes*
 - *Land divisions—parcel maps, tentative maps*
 - *New multi-family and mixed use projects*
- **Role of respective authorities**
 - *Review and recommend*
 - *Decisions*
 - *Appeals*

Design Review Process and Procedures

- Application and review
- Interdepartmental and procedural coordination
- Public notice and review
- Decision-making
- Enforcement

Current Procedures

- *Overview*
- *Issues*
- *Discussion*

Current Procedures

■ *Public Notice*

- Sign posted on-site visible to passersby
- Mailed notice to owners and residents within 500 feet or 1,000 feet at Planning Director's discretion

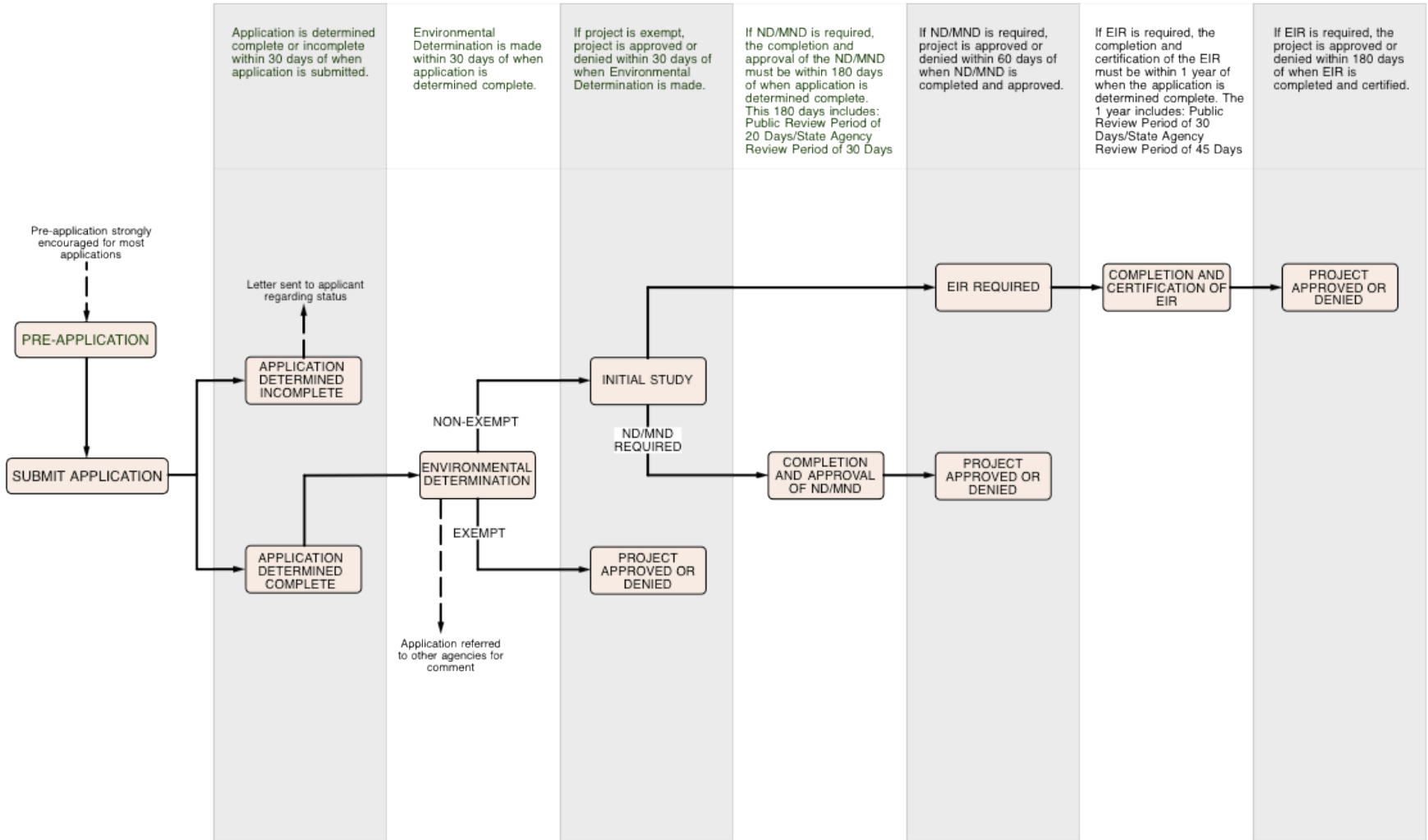
■ *Responsibility*

- Director conducts site development review, approves plans in consultation with county surveyor, building official, public works, other interested public agencies

■ *Application Requirements*

- Preparation by licensed civil engineer, land surveyor, architect, landscape architect or registered building designer
- Contents:
 - *Lot dimensions in distance*
 - *Location, size, height, and use of existing and proposed buildings*
 - *Dimensions of yards and open spaces between buildings;*
 - *Fences and walls—their location, height and materials;*
 - *Parking and circulation—location, number, dimensions, ingress and egress, internal circulation, design, and improvements;*
 - *Street dedications and improvements—existing, and proposed, if any;*
 - *Other data Director requires to make the required findings.*

APPLICATION PROCESS



Application is determined complete or incomplete within 30 days of when application is submitted.

Environmental Determination is made within 30 days of when application is determined complete.

If project is exempt, project is approved or denied within 30 days of when Environmental Determination is made.

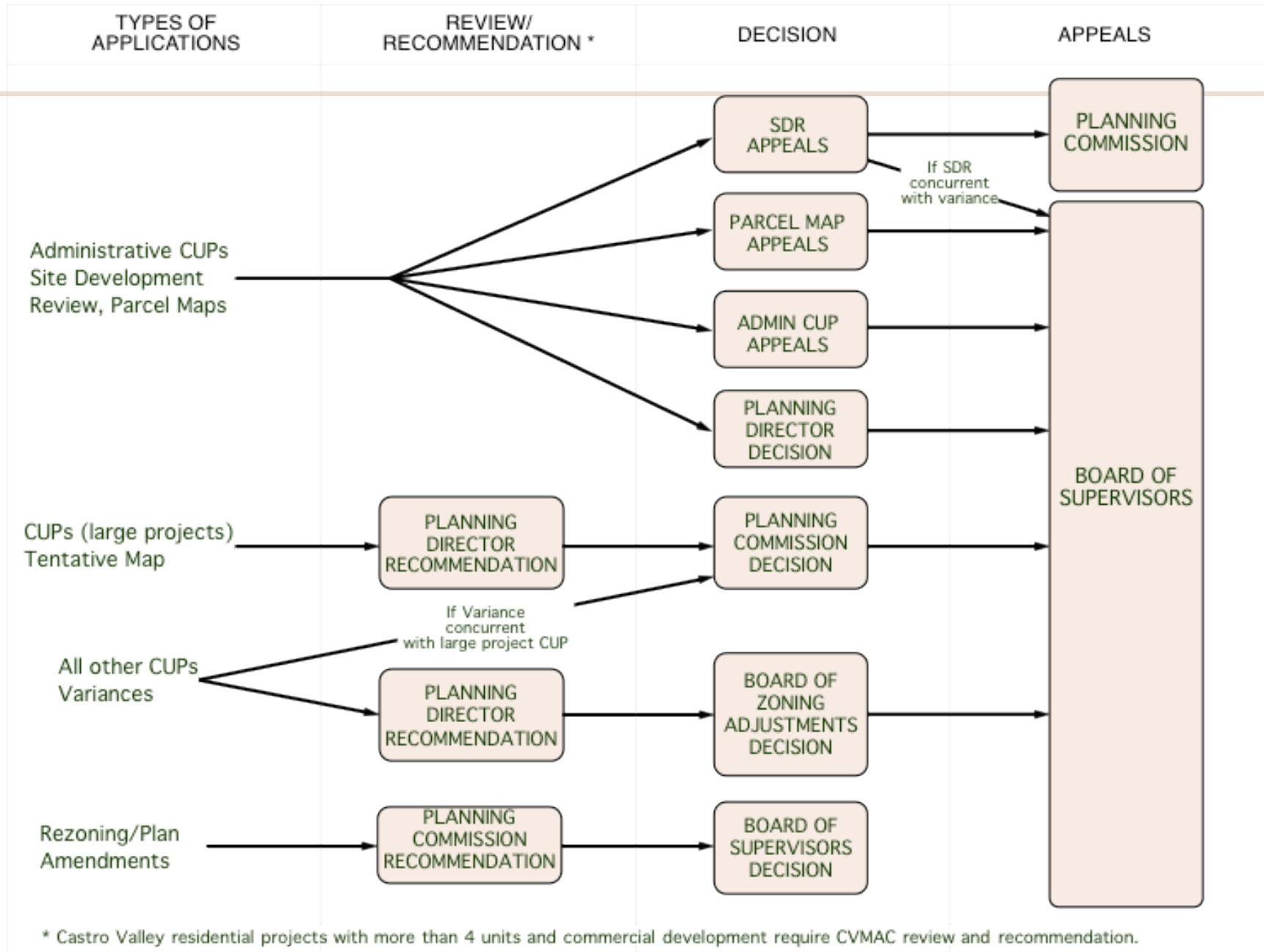
If ND/MND is required, the completion and approval of the ND/MND must be within 180 days of when application is determined complete. This 180 days includes: Public Review Period of 20 Days/State Agency Review Period of 30 Days

If ND/MND is required, project is approved or denied within 60 days of when ND/MND is completed and approved.

If EIR is required, the completion and certification of the EIR must be within 1 year of when the application is determined complete. The 1 year includes: Public Review Period of 30 Days/State Agency Review Period of 45 Days

If EIR is required, the project is approved or denied within 180 days of when EIR is completed and certified.

APPROVAL PROCESS



* Castro Valley residential projects with more than 4 units and commercial development require CVMAC review and recommendation.

Proposed Multi-Track Design Review Process

- *Exempt—Staff-level compliance review*
 - Construction not requiring building permit
 - Interior alterations
 - New construction on a lot with design review approval and determination of compliance with approved plans
 - Alterations, additions, or construction subject to review by the Alameda County Parks, Recreation, and Historical Commission or other body
 - Exempt signs and awnings
 - Required landscaping under 2,500 sf required with alteration of existing structure
 - Any project consistent with previous design review approval, ADA compliant or per other government requirements
 - Anything else Director deems to have a negligible visible effect

Proposed Multi-Track Design Review Process

■ *Track 1—Staff-level ministerial checklist review*

- Minor additions/alterations not exceeding 1,000 square feet (500 in A District), or 10 percent increase in floor area, whichever is less.
- Remodel of exterior commercial façade.
- New accessory structure that does not exceed 400 square feet
- Single-family detached residential structure on a single lot, detached accessory unit on a lot with an existing single family detached structure, or attached duplex structure not exceeding 5,000 sf
- Modification of more than 2,500 square feet of landscaped area or any reduction in landscaped area of mixed-use or multi-family residential projects.
- Signs, awnings, and fences not eligible for exemption

Proposed Multi-Track Design Review Process

- *Track 2—Review by Director or in-house architectural consultant*
 - Any Track 1 project more than 50% taller or with FAR more than 50% greater than average of residential structures on abutting parcels
 - Any residential or mixed-use project that exceeds Track 1 thresholds or “fails” checklist review
 - Any Track 1 project that requires administrative CUP or parcel map



Proposed Multi-Track Design Review Process

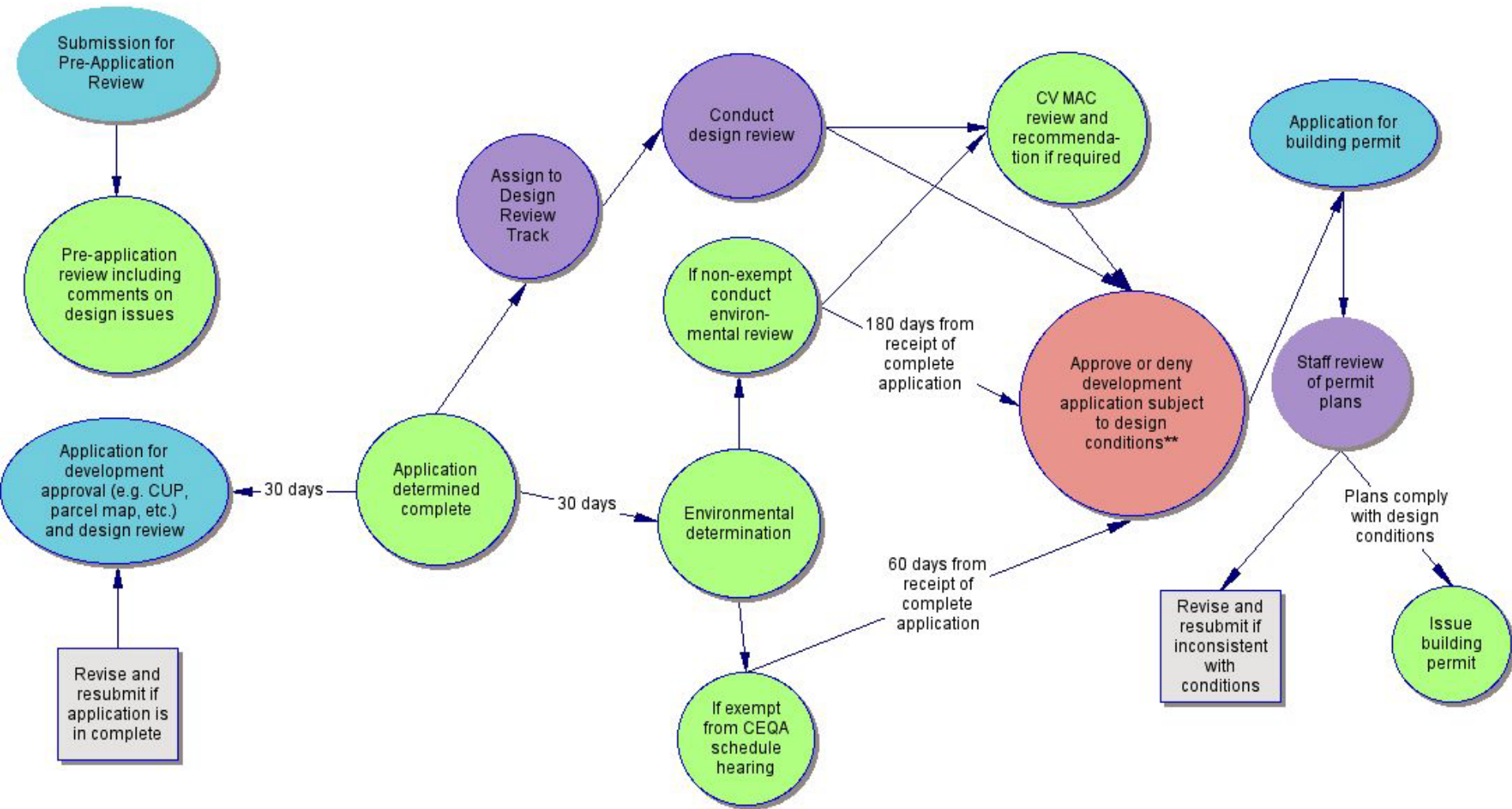
- *Track 3—Review by Planning Commission or other body to be determined*
 - Any residential or mixed-use project that exceeds Track 2 thresholds
 - All tentative maps (except for condominium conversions with no physical alterations)
 - Any project that requires a use permit or variance for construction and exceeds Track 2 thresholds
 - All other applications subject to design review.



Design Review Checklist

- Ministerial review of single-family detached structures on existing lots
- Projects must meet all zoning standards
- Points awarded for projects that exceed minimum standards
- Projects must achieve minimum points in each category and total score of at least 230 points for approval through checklist review process

PROPOSED DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS FOR TRACK 2 AND 3 APPLICATIONS



Options and Alternatives

- **Pre-Application Review**
 - *Preliminary review by advisory and/or decision-making bodies*
- **Issues**
 - *Additional cost to applicant and County*
 - *Public reluctance to devote time to review prior to “real” application*
 - *Comments not binding on applicant or County*
 - *Process available only for larger, more controversial, or more visible projects*

Options and Alternatives

- **Process Informed by Design Professionals**
 - *Create new positions requiring design expertise*
 - *Staff consultant with design expertise*
 - *Planning Commission/BZA design review sub-committee*
 - *Amend ordinance to require some Commission/BZA members to have design expertise*
- **Issues**
 - *Cost to County and/or applicant*
 - *Recruiting Commission and BZA members with requisite experience*
 - *No requirement for Commission or BZA members to live in unincorporated communities*

Options and Alternatives

■ Enforcement

- *Reviewing proposed plans for compliance with standards and guidelines*
- *Procedures for reviewing changes required or authorized on appeal*
- *Ensuring that projects are constructed in compliance with design approval*
- *Establishing systems for recording and tracking conditions of approval*

■ Issues

- *Cost to County and/or applicant for additional plan check and inspection services*
- *Balancing design objectives with other County goals (e.g. fire safety, housing affordability, etc.) and political considerations*

Next Steps

Public Review

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