

# PLATFORM

architecture / planning / research

Dec 2nd, 2019

**Via Email**

To:

City of Los Altos Planning Dept, ATTN Steve Golden

**Re: Responses to PC 11.7.19 meeting comments**

Dear Steve:

We are attaching the following comments issued after our PC hearing on Nov 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019, with responses on how the design team has addressed the comment by the Planning Commissioners.

**1. A Fourth-floor floor plan needs to be developed.**

We have provided a fully updated 4<sup>th</sup> floor plan (Page A-4) which shows the layouts of all the Penthouse units and have updated the drawing set to reflect these more developed plans.

**2. Detailing of the window trim treatments on the third and fourth floor windows needs to be developed.**

We have added to the detail in all the building elevations to include accents in the stucco wall including (1) Articulated lintel and cornice in stucco wall, (2) score lines in stucco.

**3. Explore shortening or screening windows on the back of the building to address privacy and light splay concerns.**

We have reduced the amount of glazing on the Foothill façade from 28 windows to 24 windows and have reduced the head height in all cases from 9' to 8' (addressing the ceiling light visibility issue). Please refer to drawing A-6.

**4. Staff to revise language of condition No. 19 of the resolution.**

We believe this refers to the connection of the Garage to the adjacent property and is not a design consideration but rather relates to the language of the ultimate resolution / conditions of approval.

**5. Explore other planting opportunities using species with non-invasive roots in street landscape wells.**

The Landscape Plans have been revised to reflect this comment, see Landscape Plan L1.01

**6. Delete edge seating at the upper level outdoor decks.**

The Plans have been revised to reflect this comment, see Landscape Roofdeck Plan L1.02

**7. Change glass railings on the fourth level or make opaque.**

The Plans/Elevations have been revised to reflect this comment. No more tempered glass rail is proposed in the project anywhere.

**8. Use tighter or graduated spacing on railings of the at the ground level along First Street.**

We have removed the option for the more sparsely spaced fence at the Entry Terraces.

**9. Explore using 8.5-foot wide parking spaces, strongly encourage this to be supported as a waiver if it results in more parking.**

We have revised the garage layout to use an 8.5' spacing and this may result in additional spaces pending final coordination of garage structural and MEP drawings.

**10. Introduce expansion joints or use different color combinations on the exterior stucco walls to alleviate or break up the larger fields of stucco on the building.**

We have introduced score joints in the stucco and also used two tones of stucco to accentuate the recessed portions of the stucco wall.

**11. Reconsider the size and arrangement of the 28 windows of the upper floor at the back of the building – alternative treatments to be explored can include – recessing the windows into the wall or adjusting their orientation so the face to the side, lowering the head height or raising the sill height, or developing some alternate interior control elements.**

See note 3, we have addressed this comment.

**12. Explore alternative landscaping to create an attractive streetscape at the south end of the project.**

Landscape plans have been updated to reflect this comment.

**13. Evaluate the addition of electric parking spaces, the more the better.**

The project has been revised to propose 12 parking spaces be wired for EV charging.

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Platform GP

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## DENSITY BONUS REPORT

PER CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65915 ET SEQ. ("DENSITY BONUS LAW")

### CALCULATION

- Lot Size: 0.35 acres (15,217 S.F.)
- Per General Plan, no maximum density is specified for CD/R3 zoning
- Per Los Altos Municipal Code Required Affordable Housing (15%) = 26 units x 15% BMR = 3.9 BMR units (3 Moderate + 1 Low Income units)
- 15% combined moderate and low income qualifies for 1 incentive (at least 10% moderate income)
- Per Los Altos Municipal Code Section 14.28.040§C 1.(d)ii Table DB 6, and per Section 14.28.040§(F)(1) height increase incentive.

### PROVIDED

- Total BMR: 4 Below-Market-Rate units (3 Moderate + 1 Low Income units)  
Per City, a "majority" of affordable units shall be "Moderate", therefore 3 units provided at "Moderate" level and 1 unit provided at "Low" level.

### REQUESTED INCENTIVE

- HEIGHT of condo building by 11 feet (35 feet allowed + 11 foot increase = 46 feet)  
Per Los Altos Municipal Code Section 14.28.040§G2(A)  
Increased height allows for more units which then reduces the actual per square foot cost to deliver the product to market.
- PARKING REDUCTION: Per California Government Code Section 65915(p)(2) & per Los Altos Municipal Code Section 14.28.040§F1(D) "For any development eligible for a density bonus... the city shall not impose a parking requirement, inclusive of handicapped and guest parking, of a development, that exceeds the following requirements... i. For zero to one bedroom, one onsite parking space. ii. For two to three bedrooms, two onsite parking spaces."

## REQUESTED WAIVERS

- Reduction of typical parking space width requirement to 8'-6" to allow additional parking, beyond the amount required under SDBL
- Reduction in the required 60% soft surfaces in the front and rear yard setbacks

The first foot of the front yard setback cannot be soft surface as it has been dedicated as additional width for the city sidewalk. In order to soften the pedestrian experience, additional landscaping with benches are integrated into the wall along the sidewalk which is set back from the sidewalk. Color is added to the streetscape experience with vines that are supported by the wall/fence at the dooryards.

In addition to the sidewalk dedication, there are several factors that add significantly to the amount of hardscape required outside the building footprint:

1. Garage Driveway/ Trash access required along the front setback.
2. Pedestrian Access including ADA access requirements at the Main Entry to the building. This area also serves as Guest waiting area, Residents waiting area while they get picked up, and area for loading and unloading purposes.
3. SCCFD requirements outside of our building footprint.
4. Utility access along public ROW.

Due to these reasons, 60% softscape is challenging and does not allow the applicant to deal with the list of other design constraints, therefore a request for a waiver on this requirement has been added to the State Density Bonus Letter. Our current landscape plans show about 25% softscape within the front and rear setbacks.

Please also note that in addition to front and rear yard plantings, street trees with planter beds are to be added to the public ROW at the expense of the developer and additional softscape surface has also been provided on the roof deck.

- *Waiver standards 14.28.040§H(3).*

*Denial of requested waiver. The reviewing authority may deny a request for a waiver under this section if it finds the waiver would:*

- a. Waive or reduce a development standard that would not have the effect of physically precluding the construction of a development meeting the criteria of this section at the densities or with the incentives permitted under this section;*  
*or*

- b. *Have a specific, adverse impact upon health, safety, or the physical environment, and for which there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact; or*
- c. *Have an adverse impact on any real property that is listed in the California Register of Historical Resources; or*
- d. *Be contrary to state or federal law.*

**PROJECT DATA**

**Address:** 450 1<sup>st</sup> St., Los Altos, CA 94022  
**Site Area:** 15,217 s.f. (0.35 acre)  
**Existing Dwelling Units:** 0  
**General Plan Designation:** Downtown Commercial  
**Zoning Designation:** Commercial Downtown / Multiple-Family (CD/R3)  
**Current Use:** Commercial Office

**Entitlements Requested:** Vesting Tentative Tract Map, State Density Bonus  
**Proposed Program:** 26 condominiums (74.3 DU/AC)  
**Affordable Housing:** 4 Below Market Rate Units (3 Moderate, 1 Low)  
**Construction Type:** 2 levels of below grade parking garage of Type I concrete  
 4 levels of Type III above grade  
**Proposed Height:** Max. 46-ft height to top of roof deck

RESPONSE TO STAFF QUESTIONS  
 COST IMPLICATIONS IN TERMS OF DOLLARS

Cost Savings gaining 3 units with the additional building height (waiver):  
 Assuming costs are fixed at approximately \$1.3M per unit, the additional 3 market rate units help subsidize the loss resulting from the 4 Below Market Rate Units.

The BMR's sell anywhere from \$256,201 for a 1 Bedroom Low Income Unit to \$553,351 for a 2 Bedroom Moderate Income unit.

UNIT #	BEDROOMS	AREA (S.F.)	OUTDOOR AREA GROSS	BMR	MARKET RATE
1	2	1321	400		1
2	1	715	154	1	
3	2	1162	392		1
4	2	1131	406	1	
5	2	1077	320		1
6	2	1257	400		1
7	2	1311	310		1
8	2	1249	104		1
9	2	1469	104		1
10	1	709	68		1
11	2	1162	93	1	
12	2	1131	93	1	
13	2	1090	68		1
14	2	1283	104		1
15	2	1476	104		1
16	2	1249	104		1
17	2	1469	104		1
18	1	709	68		1
19	2	1162	93		1
20	2	1131	93		1
21	2	1090	68		1
22	2	1283	104		1
23	2	1476	104		1
24	2	2148	396		1
25	2	1362	201		1
26	3	2506	341		1

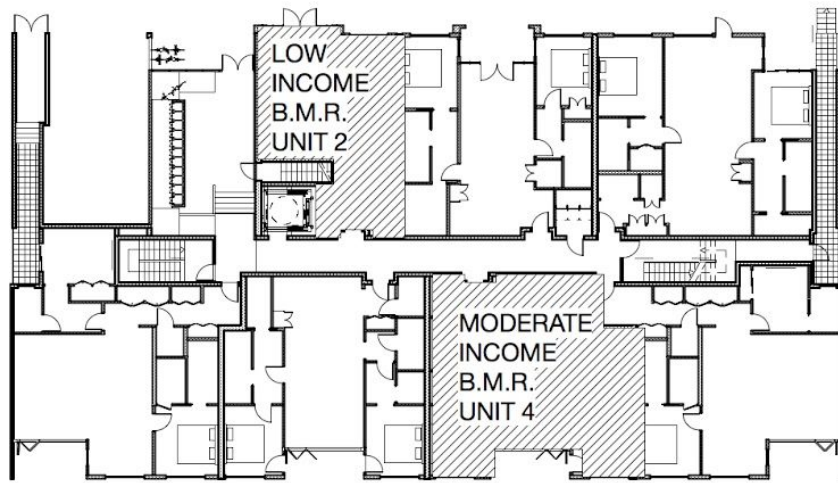
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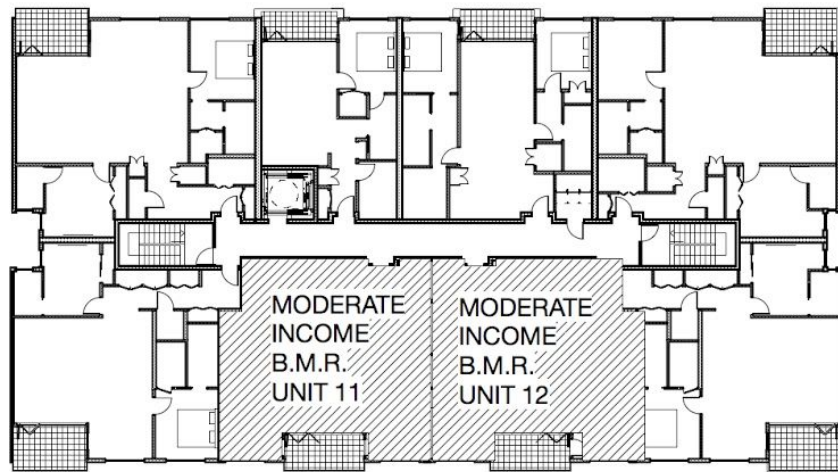
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BMR	MKT
4	22

TOTAL UNITS = 26	
TOTAL 1 BEDROOM = 3 = 11.5%	% OF BMR 25%
TOTAL 2 BEDROOM = 22 = 84.5%	% OF BMR 75%
TOTAL 3 BEDROOM = 1 = 4%	0



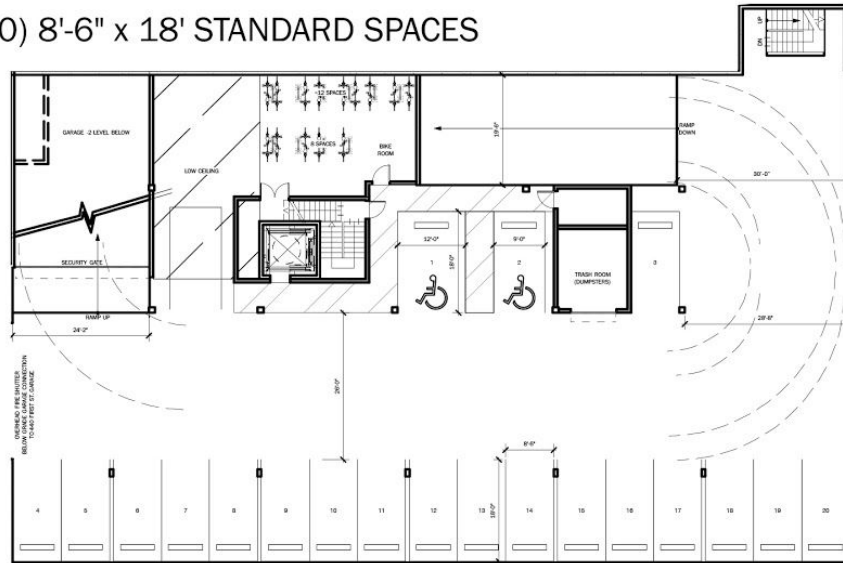
LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2

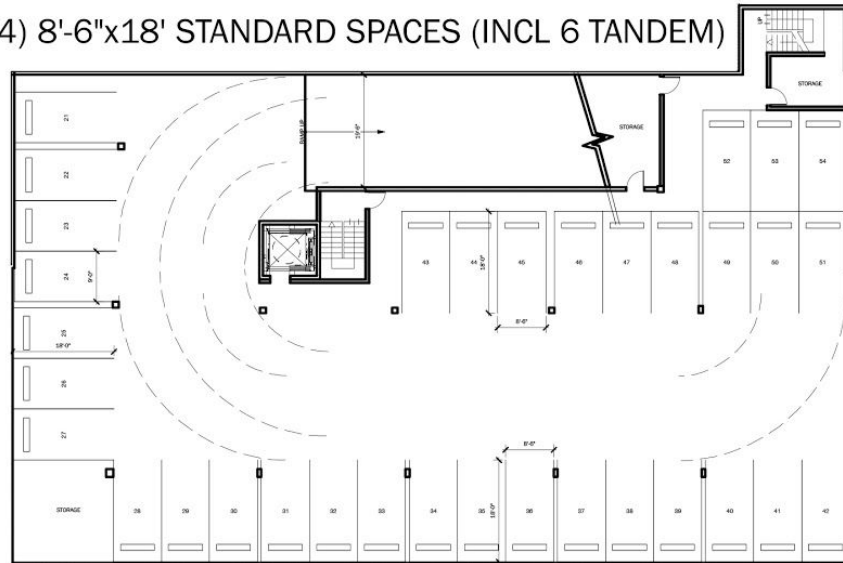
# SUBTERRANEAN LEVEL 1 PARKING GARAGE

(20) 8'-6" x 18' STANDARD SPACES



# SUBTERRANEAN LEVEL 2 PARKING GARAGE

(34) 8'-6"x18' STANDARD SPACES (INCL 6 TANDEM)



14.28.040 §G2(A)					
PARKING REQUIREMENT ALTERATION STANDARD					
	QTY	UNIT TYPE	SPACES REQ. W/O SDBL	SPACES REQ. W/ SDBL	
1 BEDROOM	3		1.5	1	
2 BEDROOM	22		2	2	
3 BEDROOM	1		2	2	
GUEST 1 PER 4 UNITS			6.5	0	
TOTAL			57	49	PROPOSED 54