



DESIGN REVIEW BOARD TIER IV STAFF REPORT

August 2, 2017

MAYFAIR

DETAILS

Application Number: PL16-0168

Applicants: Adhi Nagraj, Bridge Housing
Kevin Brown, Holliday Development

Location: 11600 and 11690 San Pablo Avenue
and 1925 Kearney Street

APN: 502-062-029, -028 and -003

Zoning: Transit-Oriented Higher-Intensity
Mixed Use

General Plan: Transit-Oriented Higher-
Intensity Mixed Use

Request: Design Review Board consideration
of a new mixed-use development project to be
constructed within two buildings:

a. Five story north building is proposed
to include 67 affordable multiple family
dwelling units.

b. Six story south building is proposed to
include 156 multiple family dwelling units and
8,894 square feet of commercial space.

The project also includes 150 vehicle parking
spaces 348 bicycle parking spaces, 8,893
square feet of commercial square footage, and
23,631 square feet of open space.

CEQA: This project has been found to be
consistent with the Program Environmental
Impact Report prepared for the San Pablo
Avenue Specific Plan, pursuant to CEQA
Guidelines Sections 15168(c) and 15182.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The requested entitlement for the Design Review Board consists of a Tier IV Site Plan and Design Review, pursuant to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.

The proposed project includes two buildings with a combined total of 223 residential units, shared underground parking in a garage, along with public, common and private open space creating an interconnected campus.

Tier IV review is intended to allow high-quality new development projects that would not otherwise be allowed under a strict interpretation of the Specific Plan Tier II regulations but nevertheless comply with the intent of the Specific Plan and that help ensure the City's long-term financial sustainability.

The Planning Commission and Design Review Board both have authority under the Tier IV review process. The Planning Commission unanimously approved the project at their July 12, 2017 meeting. Discussion of the meeting is included in this staff report.

The Design Review Board is authorized to review and act upon the Design Component of a Tier IV Site Plan and Design Review application for consistency with the design goals of this Specific Plan. This review includes authority over the following elements only:

- Limitations regarding building height, form and massing;
- Limitations regarding view blockage of the key views listed in Section 2.05.02.03 Views;
- Building facades and articulation;
- Exterior building colors and materials;
- Landscaping, including use and design of open spaces;
- Relationship of the development to adjacent public rights-of-way;
- Signs

Based on the information in this report, which supports the required findings, staff recommend approval of the project.

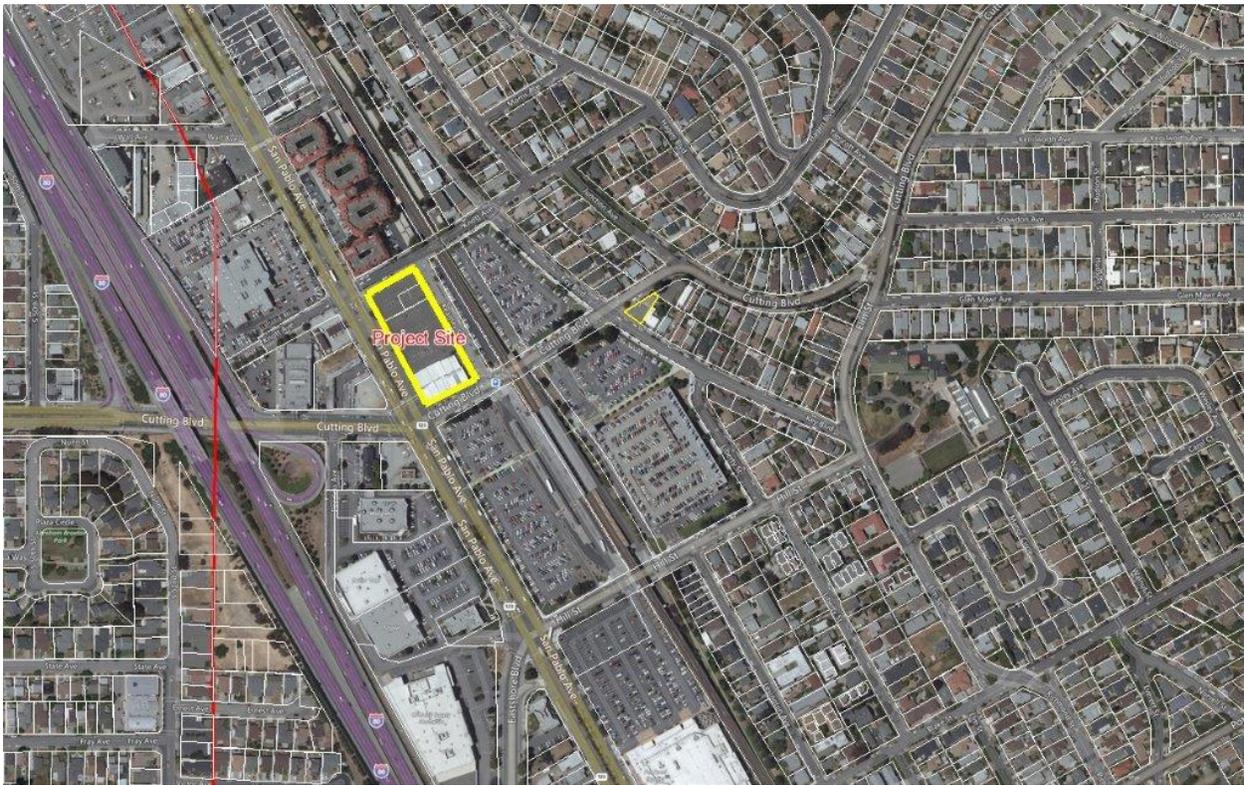
Background

Existing Conditions

Site Location and Layout

The approximately 1.57-acre (64,489-square-foot) level project site is located at 11600 and 11690 San Pablo Avenue and 1925 Kearny Street. (APNs 502-062-028, 502-062-029, and 502-062-003) The site is bounded by Knott Avenue to the north, Kearney Street to the east, Cutting Boulevard to the south, and San Pablo Avenue to the west. The project site is within the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area.

Vicinity Map



Public Right-of-Way and Surrounding Context

The project site is bounded by public right-of-way on all four sides. It has 383 feet of street frontage along San Pablo Avenue; 172 feet of street frontage along Knott Avenue; 170 feet of street frontage along Cutting Boulevard and 383 feet along Kearny Avenue. The street frontage on San Pablo Avenue and Kearny contain four curb cuts each. Parking is prohibited on three sides, with the exception of Knott Avenue, which allows for two hour parking.

Its immediate neighbor to the south and west, the El Cerrito del Norte BART station, is a regional transit hub for 10 local and regional bus lines, including AC Transit, Golden Gate Transit, Fairfield and Suisun Transit (FAST), Napa County VINE Transit, SolTrans (Solano County), and Western Contra Costa Transit

Authority (WestCAT). These transit lines provide service to Richmond, Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco, throughout Contra Costa County, and to other regional transit hubs in Marin and Solano Counties.

Existing/Previous Land Use

The project site was previously developed with a gas station and grocery store that have since been demolished. There are a total of approximately 123 striped parking spaces on the site; however, access to the site is currently prohibited and the site is vacant. The sparse vegetation on the site consists of street trees lining the sidewalks and patches of grass and shrubs around the perimeter and throughout the site.

Site photo



Adjacent Land Uses

North: Knott Avenue. (Across Knott Avenue are multi- family dwellings.)

East: Kearney Street. (El Cerrito del Norte Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station parking, the Ohlone Greenway and single-family residences)

South: Cutting Boulevard. (El Cerrito del Norte Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station)

West: San Pablo Avenue. (Across San Pablo Avenue sits a commercial center [Del Norte Marketplace].)

Analysis

Project Description

The proposed project includes two buildings with a combined total of 223 residential units, shared underground parking in a garage, along with public, common and private open space functioning as an interconnected campus.

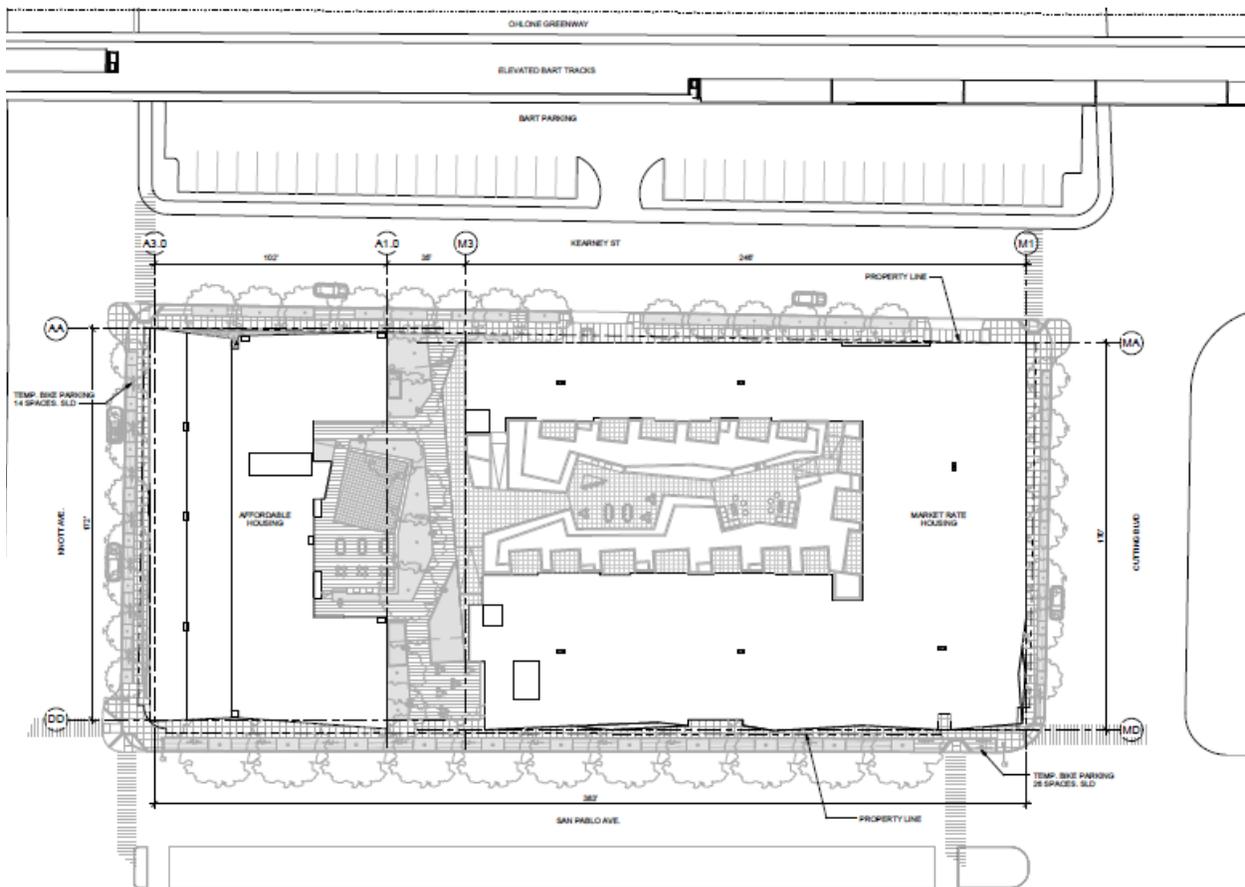
The five story north building proposed by Bridge Housing will provide 67 below market rate units with levels of affordability ranging from 30% to 60% of area median income. This building would contain 17 studios, 30 one bedrooms, 12 two bedrooms, and 8 three bedrooms. It will also include property management and service offices and amenity space for its residents.

The six story south building proposed by Holliday Development will provide 156 units of market-rate housing. The mix includes 25 studios, 107 one bedroom, and 24 two bedroom dwelling units. 8,893 square feet of commercial space is located along San Pablo Avenue and Cutting Boulevard.

Pedestrian access will primarily be through mews which connect the main lobby of both buildings. The north building will also be accessible from San Pablo Avenue and Knott Avenue. Some ground-floor apartments in the north building will also have direct street on Knott Avenue and Kearney Street. Additional access to the south building will be through three secure points from the parking garage and a ground-floor access door on Cutting Boulevard at the southern corner of the parking garage.

Vehicle parking for residents, commercial/retail owners, and employees will be located in an enclosed two-level parking garage under the south building; behind the San Pablo Avenue commercial uses. Vehicles will enter the site from Kearny Street. A total of 348 long-term bicycle parking spaces secured inside each building for residents and 46 commercial bicycle parking spaces are proposed to be located in front of retail frontages on San Pablo Avenue.

Site Plan



The project proposes three kinds of open space for a total of 23,631 square feet.

Public- The mews are a publicly-accessible, privately-maintained open space that bisects the project. Gates will open from dawn until dusk. It provides a mid-block connection/ pocket park for residents and the public that serves to connect San Pablo Avenue to Kearney Street and on to the Ohlone Greenway and the del Norte BART station/transit hub.

Common and Private – This space is broken down to courtyards in each building: the podium courtyard and common porch on the south building and the at-grade courtyard on the north building. Each courtyard has amenities and landscaping. Private balconies and patios are also included for many of the dwelling units.

Solid waste and recycling rooms are located in each building.

Compliance with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan

Chapter Two of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan establishes the land use regulations and development standards of the Specific Plan Area.

Some development standards apply throughout the Plan area. These include:

- Regulation by Street Type - which includes building placement, building form, and shadow analysis.
- Open Space Requirements - which include private, common and public types of open space.

Other development standards vary by transect zone. The development standards that are related to the transect zone include:

- Use-Types of land use permitted, conditionally permitted or prohibited.
- Building Height- the minimums and maximums heights allowed.
- Parking of vehicles - the minimum and maximum number of spaces allowed.
- Parking of bicycles- the minimum number of spaces allowed.

The tables below show the relevant Specific Plan standards. Standards below that are in **bold** show components of the project that do not comply with the Specific Plan standards. The Planning Commission has already approved the exceptions themselves, considering their impact versus the public benefits provided by the project. The Design Review Board purview is the project's design components specified in its purview, except where the Planning Commission has already given approval.

The project is bounded by four streets with three street types. This section of San Pablo Avenue is designated a Community Street. Cutting Boulevard is a Gateway Street and Kearny Street and Knott Avenue are both Neighborhood Streets.

Regulation by Street Type:
SPA Community Street

	<i>Required</i>	<i>Provided</i>
<i>Building Placement</i>		
<i>Sidewalk Amenity Zone</i>	6 ft. min	6 ft.
<i>Sidewalk Pedestrian Zone</i>	8 ft. min	8 ft.
<i>Sidewalk Activity Zone</i>	0 ft. min	0 ft.
<i>Ground Floor Front Setback</i>	Min: distance needed to accommodate required zones Max: 15 ft.	Varies, but no greater than 15 ft.
<i>Side Setback</i>	0 ft. min	10 ft. min on Cutting Blvd side, 20 ft. on Knott Avenue side
<i>Rear Setback</i>	See Shadows	Buildings cast shadows onto north and east Neighborhood Streets but not residential districts.
<i>Pedestrian Access</i>	Entries on front or side streets	Building entries for commercial spaces on San Pablo Avenue Entries for residential uses in mews
<i>Vehicular Access</i>	Max 20' 2-way driveways, Side access on corner lots	No driveway on San Pablo Avenue
<i>Building Form</i>		
<i>Upper Floor Setbacks</i>	See Shadows	N/A does not abut a residential neighborhood
<i>Ground Floor Ceiling Height</i>	14 ft. min clear	At least 14 ft. min (18 ft. 2 in top of podium) south bldg (19 ft. 2 in top of podium) north bldg
<i>Upper Floor Ceiling Height</i>	9 ft. min clear	At least 9 ft. min avg. (typ. 10 ft. 9 in floor to floor) north and south bldg
<i>Building Length</i>	200 ft. max	235 ft. south bldg 98 ft. north bldg
<i>Ground Floor Transparency</i>	Non-residential 75% min, Residential 40% min.	80% south bldg Commercial 61.2% north bldg Residential
<i>Upper Floor Transparency</i>	30% min	51% south bldg 51% north bldg
<i>Front Encroachments</i>	4 ft. max	4 ft max south bldg SPA 4 ft. max north bldg SPA
<i>Rear Encroachments</i>	4 ft. max	0 ft. south bldg Kearney 0 ft. north bldg Kearney
<i>Allowed Frontage Types</i>	Min: 50% Flex Max: 50% Forecourt Max: 100% Shop Front, Arcade	Shop Front (100%) south bldg Flex Front (100%) north bldg

<i>Gateway Street</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Provided</i>
<i>Building Placement</i>		
<i>Sidewalk Amenity Zone</i>	4 ft. min	4 ft. min
<i>Sidewalk Pedestrian Zone</i>	6 ft. min	6 ft.
<i>Sidewalk Activity Zone</i>	0 ft. min	0 ft.
<i>Ground Floor Front Setback</i>	Min: distance needed to accommodate required zones Max: 10 ft. for non-residential uses, 15 ft. for residential uses	12 ft. min
<i>Pedestrian Access</i>	Street fronting ground floor units and spaces to have individual entries along front or side streets	No street fronting ground floor dwelling units. It is the side of commercial space with entry on front.
<i>Vehicular Access</i>	Max 24 ft. 2-way driveways. Side access on corner lots	(0)
<i>Building Form</i>		
<i>Upper Floor Setbacks</i>	See Shadows	Buildings cast shadows onto north and east Neighborhood Streets but not residential districts.
<i>Ground Floor Ceiling Height</i>	14 ft. min clear	14 ft. min
<i>Upper Floor Ceiling Height</i>	9 ft. min clear	9 ft. min
<i>Building Length</i>	300 ft. max	166 ft
<i>Ground Floor Transparency</i>	Non-residential 50% min, Residential 30% min.	Non-Residential 60% Residential (garage) 22%
<i>Upper Floor Transparency</i>	25% min	33%
<i>Front Encroachments</i>	2 ft. max	0 ft. over Cutting
<i>Rear Encroachments</i>	4 ft. max	N/A, rear of bldg in mew
<i>Allowed Frontage Types</i>	Shop Front, Forecourt (NE side), Flex, Frontyard, or Ecofront	Shop Front and Other, exterior of garage

<i>Neighborhood Street</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Provided</i>
<i>Building Placement</i>		
<i>Sidewalk Amenity Zone</i>	5 ft. min	5 ft. Kearney Street- residential north bldg 5 ft. Knott Avenue residential (garage) south bldg 5 ft. Knott Avenue – residential north bldg
<i>Sidewalk Pedestrian Zone</i>	6 ft. min adjacent to commercial uses, 5 ft. min adjacent to residential uses	6 ft. Kearney Street- residential north bldg 6 ft. Knott Avenue residential (garage) south bldg 6 ft. Knott Avenue – residential north bldg
<i>Sidewalk Activity Zone</i>	0 ft. min	0 ft.
<i>Ground Floor Front Setback</i>	Min: distance needed to accommodate required zones Max: 10 ft. for non-residential uses, 15 ft. for residential uses	11 ft. min north bldg 11 ft. min south bldg
<i>Pedestrian Access</i>	Entries on front or side streets	Entries from Knott Avenue for north bldg Secondary entry from Kearney Street to elevator for South bldg
<i>Vehicular Access</i>	Max 20 ft. 2-way driveways. Side access on corner lots	(2) 24 ft. 4 in. driveways From Kearney Street
<i>Building Form</i>		
<i>Upper Floor Setbacks</i>	See Shadows	Buildings cast shadows onto north and east Neighborhood Streets but not residential districts.
<i>Ground Floor Ceiling Height</i>	14 ft. min clear	At least 14ft. min (18 ft. 2 in. top of podium) south bldg (19 ft. 2 in. top of podium) north bldg
<i>Upper Floor Ceiling Height</i>	9 ft. min clear	At least 9 ft. min avg. (typ. 10 ft. 9 in. floor to floor) north and south bldg
<i>Building Length</i>	200 ft. max	168 ft. north bldg- Knott Avenue 98 ft. north bldg – Kearney Street 246 ft. south bldg- Kearney

		Street
<i>Ground Floor Transparency</i>	Non-residential 50% min, Residential 30% min.	38.8% north bldg – Knott Avenue 31% north bldg- Kearney Street 30% south bldg – Kearney Street
<i>Upper Floor Transparency</i>	25% min	27% north bldg- Knott Avenue 25% north bldg - Kearney Street 32% south bldg – Kearney Street
<i>Front Encroachments</i>	4 ft. max	4 ft. north bldg – Knott Avenue 4 ft. north bldg – Kearney Street 0 ft. south bldg- Kearney Street
<i>Rear Encroachments</i>	4 ft. max	N/A
<i>Allowed Frontage Types</i>	Front Yard, Forecourt (NE side), Flex (commercial), Shop Front (commercial)	Flex and shop front north bldg – Knott Ave Front Yard north bldg- Kearney Street Other, exterior of garage south bldg – Kearney Street

<i>Open Space Requirements</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Provided</i>
<i>Private/Common Open Space</i>	80 sq. ft./unit min 223 x 80= 17,840 sq. ft.	North bldg 67 x 80= 6,107 sq. ft. South bldg 156 x 80=13,579 sq. ft. <u>19,686 sq. ft.</u>
<i>Public Open Space</i>	25 sq. ft./1,000 sq. ft. of building for buildings >25,000 sq. ft. 3,864 sq. ft. min	<u>3,945 sq. ft.</u>

<i>Transit-Oriented Higher-Intensity Mixed Use Zone</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Provided</i>
<i>Parking</i>		
<i>Auto Parking</i>	Up to 1 space/unit (For projects proposing 0-0.5, the Zoning Administrator may require a parking study and additional TDM measures)	.65 (145 spaces) for residential uses, 0.5 (5 spaces) for commercial uses for a total of 150

<i>Bicycle Parking</i>	Commercial: 1.5/3000 SF short term and 1/10,000 SF long term Min= 4.75 short term Residential: 1 short-term space/10 units Min 1.5 long-term spaces/unit 22.5 short term and 337.5 long term	<u>46 short term (commercial)</u> <u>348 long term (residential)</u>
<i>Building Height</i>		
<i>Maximum Height</i>	65 ft. max	North bldg 60 ft. 4 in. South bldg 74 ft. 3 in.
<i>Minimum Height</i>	3 stories residential, 2 stories commercial	5 residential stories

Design Review Process

Pursuant to Section 2.03.08.01.02.D.4 of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, The Design Review Board is authorized to review and act upon the Design Component of Tier IV applications. Generally, this review includes authority over the following elements:

- Limitations regarding building height, form and massing;
- Limitations regarding view blockage of the key views listed in Section 2.05.02.03 Views;
- Building facades and articulation;
- Exterior building colors and materials;
- Landscaping, including use and design of open spaces;
- Relationship of the development to adjacent public rights-of-way;
- Signs

As each Tier IV project will be different in terms of what components need to be considered under the Planning Commission purview, the Design Review Board purview for this project's design is also unique to this project.

In this application:

- Height/Shadows
- Building Length
- Driveway width
- To a limited extent, the first floor frontage type and transparency of the garage

have been approved in the Planning Commission action.

All other aspects of the elements listed above remain in the purview of the Board.

Project Renderings



View from corner of San Pablo Avenue and Cutting Boulevard



View from corner of Cutting Boulevard and Kearney Street



View from San Pablo Avenue and Knott Avenue



View from San Pablo Avenue looking into Mews

Planning Commission

At the July 12, 2017 meeting the Planning Commission unanimously approved their component of the project. They also asked staff to pass along a recommendation that the following design elements be considered by the Design Review Board:

1. Add openings into the garage area to allow natural light and air into the space.
2. Add visual interest to the northeast corner of the north building. This treatment should be visible at night as well as in the day.
3. Include elevations showing the sides of each building that face into the mews. On those elevations, ensure that the pedestrian entrances are pronounced and visually interesting, especially the north building.

The applicant has responded by addressing all three of the recommendations. These are discussed in detail, below.

Architecture

Both buildings are designed in a modern/contemporary style with predominately flat roofs.

North Building.

The color palette of the north building consists primarily of grey (MOONLIT ORCHID) and rust/red (RUBY RED) fiber cement panels, with a darker grey metal seam siding. A lighter grey composite panel (WINTER GREY) is also added as a highlight color and over/ under/around window openings on the Kearny Street and Mew's side elevations. Perforated metal railings are used at both balcony and patio levels to add texture and interest.

The ground floor now has semi-transparent glass and an "art glass" element along the San Pablo Avenue elevation that wraps the corner to Knott Avenue, in response to the Planning Commission's comments. As noted in the plans, the final art will be completed by a fine artist. Aluminum storefront windows are used throughout the ground floor. In addition, a recessed entry element has been added with tile highlights at the main pedestrian door, facing the mews. The entry includes a sign, blue/green tile and landscaping, also in keeping with feedback from the Planning Commission.

South Building.

The color scheme of south building consists primarily of medium grey (OCEAN GREY) and lighter grey (WINTER GREY) composite panels with vertical inset elements in rust/red (RUBY RED). There are also cream (CHAMPAGNE) color highlights in an irregular pattern- above and below many window openings. The elevations along the San Pablo Avenue and Cutting Boulevard not only have the long rust/red vertical elements, they also include a horizontal "weaving" of the floors, angling in and out to create visual interest. The lower surface visible of the upper floors is shown in an aquamarine color (AQUA MARINE), as is a horizontal element along the ground floor above the retail storefronts on San Pablo Avenue.

Along Cutting Boulevard, there a large 3-story cut-through portal opening from the second floor common open space. The applicant states, *"This large relief in the façade ensures a visual connection on the southside of the building and allows those enjoying the amenity space a view onto Cutting Boulevard and San Pablo Avenue while providing eyes-on-the-street for pedestrians. This façade also faces onto major circulation routes into and out of the BART station. The strategy for this elevation was to respond*

to the high circulation at the street level by activating it with both public (corner café or similar use) and private uses (2nd story building amenity within portal expression)."

Along the façade on Kearney Street, the overall colors transition to less of the medium grey color and more of the aquamarine, along with a patterned screen design in the red/rust color. Again, the applicant offers this perspective, *"it exposes the inner circulation and residential movement of the project through a 6-story lantern-like façade. Openings vary in size to offer evolving perspectives as people move past (either on foot or on BART). At night, the gridded lattice will glow, providing a dynamic experience for BART passengers leaving and entering the station, while also providing ample light and eyes on Kearney Street. This design strikes a balance between noise reduction for residents and a visual gateway for BART riders."* The applicant will work with a fine artist to finalize this screen, however, it will keep the elements described in this report when complete. This elevation also uses board formed concrete to complete the aesthetic design.

Ground floor elevations are visually strong with aluminum framed glass storefront and board form concrete along much of the San Pablo Avenue façade, wrapping around to the Cutting Boulevard side as well. Conceptual signage is shown in front of different businesses. They are both individual metal letters suspended from the horizontal aquamarine element that would be visible from the street as well as blade signs for pedestrians. There is also a wood grain composite panel treatment that wraps around the ground floor into the mew, with a sign and glazing. A large "MAYFAIR" sign is proposed for the mew's side of the building which will be visible from BART trains. The applicant also proposes a wall sign next to the pedestrian entry on this same side. Finally, in response to suggestions made by the Planning Commission, the applicant added screened openings along the Cutting Boulevard side to allow air and natural light into the garage area.

The campus is tied together using similar architecture, a complementary color scheme and signage, metal fencing and a robust landscape plan.

Landscape

In keeping with the Specific Plan, the project proposes to have street trees on every side. Species include: Brisbane Box, Chinese Flame, Water Gum and Gingko Biloba. Also along the outside of the project, traditional planters will include seven types of perennials, including huckleberry and Indian Mallow.

In the public open space mews area, a line of Red Oaks will transverse the mid-block connection. This area will also have both traditional and flow through- storm water treatment planters, six public art pieces, as well as feature paving, outdoor seating and pedestrian lighting. It will be open to the public from dawn to dusk and there are gates at both ends of the mews to secure it during night time hours.

On both sides of the mews, there are internal courtyards created by the two "U"-shaped buildings that face towards the shared public open space area. The north building's common open space is at grade level and is separated by a gate and by an 18 inch seat wall from the public area. It includes a playground, outdoor seating and an outdoor kitchen. It also contains feature paving and both types of planters that are found in the public area.

The south building's common open space is on the top of the podium as well as on a separate deck labeled the common porch, located on the same level. Two rows of landscaping are proposed in the area that include both 20 inch and 40 inch planters. Proposed trees include Mexican Fan Palms, Windmill Palms and Australian Tree Ferns. The planters contain perennials including the Western Sword Fern, Irises, Daisies and Fuscia. This space contains outdoor seating, an outdoor kitchen and two fire

tables. The common porch proposes to have a large outdoor fire table, outdoor seating and an outdoor countertop and sink. The floor will be concrete pavers.

Art in Public Places

The project is required to comply with Chapter 13.50: Art in Public Places of the El Cerrito Municipal Code. Provision of public art onsite has been included as part of the project submittal. The public art will be located in three areas within the project: the screen wall façade facing Kearney Street; along the public open space mews and the art glass located on the northeast side of the north building. All public art elements will be designed and installed by fine artists.

Complete Streets Plan

The project will be required to make a fair-share contribution toward the improvements contained in the Complete Streets chapter of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. These improvements will be constructed by the City as funds become available. For the uptown area near the El Cerrito del Norte BART station, the improvements include bicycle facilities (lanes or sharrows) along San Pablo Avenue north of Potrero Avenue; complete crosswalks at Knott Avenue, Cutting Boulevard and Hill Street, increased sidewalk widths throughout uptown area; ensuring a continuous and unobstructed pathway; converting Cutting Boulevard and Hill Street east of San Pablo Avenue from one-way to two-way; and creating a midblock connection and crossing at BART station. The applicant will be completing the frontage requirements consistent with the Complete Streets Plan.

View Consideration

Due to the location of the project and its proximity to the El Cerrito del Norte BART station as well as the proposed height of the two buildings, staff requested a view shed analysis to determine if there was an impact on any of the view sheds identified in the Specific Plan. As illustrated on page G0.10 of the plan set, the view from the BART platform is intact.

Public Notice and Comment

The required public notice for the project was published in the East Bay Times, mailed to owners of property within 300 feet of the project site and posted on the site on July 12, 2017.

Staff received no comments.

Environmental Review

A Program Environmental Impact Report (program EIR) was certified for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan in 2014. This type of environmental documentation is authorized by section 15168 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for use in documenting the environmental impacts of specific plans, and other planning "programs." As explained in the CEQA Guidelines, a program EIR is useful in evaluating the potential environmental impacts of a project that involves a series of interrelated actions that can reasonably be characterized as a single project. Subsequent activities that fall within the scope of the program may not be subject to further environmental review if the environmental effects of the subsequent activity have been adequately addressed in the program EIR. CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(c)(4) recommends using a written checklist or similar device to confirm whether the environmental effects of a subsequent activity were adequately covered in a program EIR.

An Initial Study Checklist has been prepared for this project (Attachment 3). The responses contained in the checklist confirm that the project is considered within the scope of the evaluation completed for the program EIR. No new impacts were identified and no new mitigation measures are required.

Several conditions of approval have been included in the draft resolution to ensure that key mitigation measures of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Program EIR are implemented with regard to this project. The inclusion of these conditions ensures that the project will not have environmental effects which have not previously been addressed in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan EIR.

Intent of the Specific Plan

The intent of the Transit-Oriented Higher-Intensity Mixed Use Transect Zone in the San Pablo Specific Plan is to:

Provide a vibrant, walkable, transit oriented higher intensity area within a 1/2 mile BART walkshed that allows a wide variety of uses including retail, commercial, residential and public uses in the distinctive Downtown and Uptown areas. Encourage multifamily residential uses to provide a variety of housing types, including units with 3 or more bedrooms, to meet the diverse needs of residents.

This project exemplifies the intent of the Specific Plan. It will be a gateway project for the Uptown area of the city, adding 223 market rate and affordable housing units, a 8,893 square feet commercial area and 3,945 square feet of public open space mews to a vacant parcel abutting the El Cerrito del Norte BART station.

General Plan Compliance

The project is consistent with and will implement the following policies of the El Cerrito General Plan:

LU1.5: Suitable Housing. Promote suitably located housing and services for all age groups within the city. Within the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan area, allow ground floor residential development and increased land use intensity close to existing transit infrastructure to promote residential infill development and catalyze mode shift.

The project will provide 223 new housing units on San Pablo Avenue, with close proximity to public transportation and commercial uses including 62 units of affordable housing.

LU2.1: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area. Promote retail, office, and mixed uses within the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area to provide more tax revenues to the city.

In accordance with the goals of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, the proposed project will add housing units and commercial uses to San Pablo Avenue which will promote a balanced mixture of land uses in the corridor. The new residents of the project and the new businesses along San Pablo Avenue will provide more tax revenue.

LU4.1: Mixture of Uses. Encourage a mix of uses that promotes such community values as convenience, economic vitality, fiscal stability, public safety, a healthy environment, and a pleasant quality of life.

The proposed project will greatly enhance the mixture of uses along San Pablo Avenue. The design of the project will provide the residents with a vibrant, convenient, safe and healthy environment with easy access to businesses, public transit and the Ohlone Greenway.

LU6.2: Circulation Alternatives. To the extent possible, encourage alternatives to the use of private automobiles. Encourage a full range of transportation options – driving, transit, walking and biking – without allowing any one to preclude the others. On San Pablo Avenue, in many constrained right-of-ways, it is not possible to provide optimum facilities for all user groups and in the event that trade-offs are necessary, transit users and pedestrians are the highest priority.

The location of the project provides convenient access to frequent public transit along San Pablo Avenue as well as the El Cerrito del Norte BART station and ten bus transit agencies. It also connects the adjacent Ohlone Greenway to the new project and further to San Pablo Avenue.

CD1.9: Building Design. A variety of attractive images will be achieved by encouraging a variety of building styles and designs, within a unifying context of consistent “pedestrian” scale along streets and compatibility among neighboring land uses.

The proposed project provides a campus with vibrant ground floor uses, a public open space designed as a mews that will connect pedestrians with San Pablo Avenue, Kearney Street and an abutting public transit hub.

CD2.1: Street Frontages. Encourage street frontages that are safe, by allowing for surveillance of the street by people inside buildings and elsewhere, and are interesting for pedestrians. Require buildings in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan area to be directly abutting sidewalks, with window openings, entries and high levels of transparency along the pedestrian frontage.

The project is adding vibrant street frontages to San Pablo Avenue and Knott Avenue that include extensive store fronts, outdoor seating and contain ample window openings, decks, and doors along all surrounding rights of way. These windows and decks will allow surveillance of the street from the units within the project.

CD2.3: Streetscape Improvements. Maintain an active program of street tree planting and improved roadway landscaping through both public and private means. Design guidelines shall describe appropriate types of trees for commercial areas – to enhance the shopping experience rather than detract from it.

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan implemented standards and requirements for public right-of-way improvements. The project is consistent with the standards and will enhance the adjacent public rights of way in compliance with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.

CD3.2: Usable Open Space. Require the provision of usable open space in the form of ground-floor patios, upper-floor decks, and balconies, as well as common recreational facilities and amenities.

The project features public open space in the form of a mews that offers a mid-block crossing and pocket park with amenities and extensive landscaping. It also offers patios and decks on various facades, both at the ground level and above.

CD3.3: Site Landscaping. Improve the appearance of the community by requiring aesthetically designed screening and landscaping on public and private sites. Ensure that public landscaping includes entry areas, street medians, parks, and schools. Require landscaping for all private sites, yard spaces, parking lots, plazas, courtyards, and recreational areas.

The project has provided landscaping in conformance with the standards in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. Landscaping will be provided to soften the building frontages, enliven the

mews and robust plantings are included in all the common open spaces. It is also provided as a buffer between the project and adjacent properties.

The proposed building is articulated in compliance with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. The building includes an interesting building form.

T2.1: Land Use Patterns. Recognize the link between land use and transportation. Promote land use and development patterns that encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use. Emphasize high-density and mixed land use patterns that promote transit and pedestrian travel. Where feasible, emphasize the following land use measures:

1. Promote conveniently located neighborhood complexes that provide housing and commercial services near employment centers and within transit corridors.
2. Promote land use patterns that maximize trip-linking opportunities by assembling uses that allow people to take care of a variety of daily needs.
3. Encourage pedestrian-oriented land use and urban design that can have a demonstrable effect on transportation choices.
4. Direct growth to occur along transit corridors.
5. Encourage retail, commercial, and office uses in ground floor space in combination with upper-floor housing along San Pablo Avenue.

The project will provide 223 new residences, including 67 affordable housing units and 8,893 square feet of commercial space in close proximity to public transportation and existing local businesses. This project maximizes trip linking opportunities by creating a mid-block connection on San Pablo Avenue, connecting pedestrians of the Avenue to Kearney Street and immediately adjacent to the del Norte BART station and transit hub.

T2.2: Project Design. Projects should be designed to include features that encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use.

The project will have building entries directly onto San Pablo Avenue that provide convenient access to the adjacent bus stop.

H2.2: Encourage the construction of transit-oriented developments (TODs) that seek to maximize opportunities for the use of public transit and transportation corridors through high-density residential and mixed-use projects along those corridors in accordance with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and the City's Incentives Program (Chapter 19.23 of the El Cerrito Zoning Ordinance.)

The project provides high-density housing along a transit corridor consistent with the Transit-Oriented Higher-Intensity Mixed Use Transect Zone in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.

H2.3: Continue to enforce the sections of the Zoning Ordinance that increase density, reduce parking requirements, and establish design and development standards to create inviting, mixed-use neighborhoods around transit, and enforce the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan reduced parking requirements and eliminated maximum density in the plan area. This project will enhance the mix of uses in the corridor adjacent to

public transit. The project complies fully with the standards of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.

H2.13: Assist and cooperate with non-profit, private and public entities to maximize opportunities to develop affordable housing, including extremely low-income housing.

The project is a partnership between Holliday Development, a private developer, and BRIDGE Housing, a non-profit developer of affordable housing. The project will provide 67 new units of affordable housing to be constructed and managed by BRIDGE Housing.

H.5.4: Encourage the location of multifamily housing near transit centers where living and/or working environments are within walkable distances in order to reduce auto trips to work, roadway expansion and air pollution.

The project is located adjacent to the El Cerrito del Norte BART station transit hub and the location will provide residents with a variety of transportation options for commute trips and other trips.

Required Findings

Pursuant to Section 2.03.08.01.02.D.4 of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, in acting to approve or conditionally approve an application for the Design Component of a Tier IV Site Plan and Design Review, the Design Review Board shall make the following findings:

- a. That the project complies with all applicable Specific Plan design standards; and

As discussed in this report, the project complies with all standards of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.

- b. That the project implements applicable goals and policies of the El Cerrito General Plan.

The proposed project will implement the following goals of the El Cerrito General Plan: LU1.5: Suitable Housing, LU2.1: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area, LU4.1: Mixture of Uses, LU6.2: Circulation Alternatives, CD1.9: Building Design, CD2.1: Street Frontages, CD2.3: Streetscape Improvements, CD3.2: Usable Open Space, CD3.3: Site Landscaping, T2.1: Land Use Patterns, T2.2: Project Design, Policies H2.2, H2.3, and H2.13 of Housing Element Goal H2: New Housing Development, and Policy H5.4 of Housing Element Goal H5: Energy Conservation and Sustainable Development.

Staff Recommendation

Based on the information contained in this report, staff recommends approval of Planning Application No. PL16-0168, as conditioned by the draft resolution in Attachment 1.

Proposed Motion

Move adoption of Design Review Resolution DRB 17-03 granting Tier IV Site Plan and Design Review of a new mixed-use development project to be constructed within two buildings:

- a. Five story north building is proposed to include 67 affordable multiple family dwelling units.
- b. Six story south building is proposed to include 156 multiple family dwelling units and 8,893 square feet of commercial space.

The project also includes 150 vehicle parking spaces 348 bicycle parking spaces, and 23,631 square feet of open space located at 11600, 11690 and 1925 Kearney Street.

Appeal Period

Within ten (10) working days after the date of the decision, the Design Review Board action may be appealed to the Planning Commission.

Attachments

1. Draft resolution
2. Project Plans , dated July 27, 2017
3. Initial Study Checklist and appendices