



Council Meeting: September 20, 2011

SUBJECT: 2011-7552: Application to Initiate a General Plan Amendment to study a change in the Land Use Designation of a City-owned site located at 620 E. Maude Avenue (also known as the Armory site) from Industrial to Residential Medium Density to Very High Density Residential

REPORT IN BRIEF

A request has been made by MidPen Housing Corporation and Charities Housing Development Corporation to modify the General Plan designation for a City-owned 2.45-acre site, located at 620 E. Maude Avenue (see Attachment A, Vicinity Map). The site was recently occupied by the National Guard Armory, which also subleased the facility for a homeless shelter during the winter months. The requested General Plan Initiation will allow MidPen and Charities to transfer their current housing claims from the Onizuka Air Force Station site, which is not well suited for housing. The Armory site is centrally located and well suited for housing and other services. The requested General Plan Initiation is one of the necessary steps for transferring the housing claims held at the Onizuka Air Force Station by both MidPen and Charities. The City Council will also be considering an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) for the Armory site with both providers on September 20, 2011.

The housing claim at Onizuka for both MidPen and Charities is for a total of 96 units, which exceeds the maximum allowed at the Armory site based on the current General Plan designation. The current General Plan designation and Zoning would allow up to 72 dwelling units including the application of a 25% density bonus for affordable projects.

MidPen and Charities found it necessary to increase the number of units to qualify for state tax credit financing to make the project financially feasible (see Attachment C, Letter from Applicant). The total proposed number of dwellings is now 124 units (50 dwelling units per acre). A General Plan Designation of Industrial to Residential Very High is needed to accommodate the proposed 124 units and density.

Staff recommends that the City Council initiate a General Plan Amendment to study an increased residential density for the Armory site up to a Very High Density designation.

BACKGROUND

At the March 1, 2011 LRA meeting, staff was directed to initiate discussions with MidPen Housing Corporation and Charities Housing Development Corporation regarding the City's Armory site, located at 620 E. Maude Avenue, as a possible alternative site for affordable housing. Both affordable housing providers have determined that a joint project on the Armory site may work.

The applicants have submitted conceptual plans for a 124-unit project (see Attachment E). The plans are not up for consideration at this time but have been provided as background information. They include a conceptual site plan indicating the location of the each provider's project and perspective drawings of MidPen's project from Maude Avenue and Wolfe Road. Conceptually, the project would include at-grade parking and a podium level with up to three stories of residential above. The project would include ground floor units and community space on both Maude Avenue and Wolfe Road to enhance street level elevations. The plans are very conceptual at this point and will most likely change with finalization of the project and formal submittal for review.

The subject site is bounded by Fair Oaks Park to the northeast (across Fair Oaks Avenue), residential uses to the west and industrial/office and residential uses (under construction) to the south. The large property immediately adjacent to the south (637 E. Taylor) is currently under construction for 36 three-story townhouse units. Several parcels directly across the street on E Taylor are also in the process of transitioning to residential development.

EXISTING POLICY

Only the City Council is authorized to initiate proceedings to consider an amendment to the General Plan (SMC Section 19.92.020). The City Council must first review a General Plan Amendment Initiation request in order to determine if the request warrants further study. As noted above, the requested initiation is consistent with the action of the City Council on March 1, 2011.

The approval of an initiation request would allow a formal application to be submitted to further assess the merits of the proposed General Plan Amendment request. The approval of an initiation does not commit the City Council to approve the General Plan Amendment request, nor any specific project proposal. As part of the General Plan Amendment request, the applicant will also submit architectural plans for concurrent review.

The following are the key General Plan goals relating to this General Plan Amendment Initiation request:

Land Use and Transportation Element

Goal LT-3: Ensure ownership and rental housing options in terms of style, size and density that are appropriate and contribute positively to the surrounding area.

Housing and Community Revitalization Element

Goal HE-1: Adequate Housing - Foster the expansion of the housing supply to provide greater opportunities for current and future residents within limits imposed by environmental, social, fiscal and land use constraints.

GOAL HE-2 Enhanced Housing Conditions and Affordability – Maintain and enhance the conditions and affordability of existing housing in Sunnyvale.

DISCUSSION

The Armory site is a prime site for affordable housing because it is centrally located with better access and services, compared to the Onizuka site which is isolated and lacks convenient services for residents. In addition, residential uses located at the Onizuka site would be inconsistent with the Moffett Park Specific Plan. The Armory site is located within a block of parcels that are designated for residential development or redevelopment. The parcels to the west are designated Medium Density with R-3 Zoning and the remaining parcels on the block are all Industrial to Residential Medium Density. The zoning allows a maximum residential density per acre of 24 dwelling units and maximum of three stories. With available density bonuses for affordable housing developments, up to 30 units per acre is possible in the R-3 zoning district.

The project applicant is proposing residential density of 50 units per acre. The proposed project includes 68 low-income family apartment flats by MidPen and 56 low-income efficiency studio units by Charities for a total of 124 dwelling units. On-site parking will be provided at grade with a concrete podium above, which will include open courtyard areas and three levels of housing. The overall height of the project will be four stories (see Attachment E, Conceptual Plans). The applicants will refine the design to provide a better transition between the medium density three-story maximum height properties surrounding the site.

Density

Under the current land use designation and zoning, the maximum number of dwelling units at the site is 58 with an additional 14 units allowed under the

affordable housing density bonus for a total of 72 dwelling units. Refer to Attachment C General Plan Land Use Map and Attachment D Zoning Map. The following table indicates the number of allowed dwelling units based on General Plan Land Use Designation and Zoning for Medium, High and Very High Residential Densities.

Residential Density		
General Plan Designation	Density Range	
	Minimum Units Per Acre	Maximum Units Per Acre
Medium	14	27
High	27	45
Very High	45	65

As indicated in the table above, a General Plan Land Use Designation of Very High Density Residential would be needed to accommodate the proposed 50 dwelling units per acre for the project at the Armory site.

Building Height and Compatibility

The requested General Plan Land Use change would also accommodate the proposed height of the structure, which would be approximately 20 feet taller than development allowed on adjacent properties. The maximum height for Medium Density Residential is 35 feet and Very High Density Residential is limited to 55 feet. Staff notes that there is an existing 3-story apartment complex with a High Density Residential designation southeast of the subject site on Wolfe Road.

Staff has communicated concern regarding compatibility of a very high density project next to medium density developments. The applicant has been working on the massing of the proposal to minimize the building height to three stories at the perimeters of the site and focusing the four story elements to the center of the site. This will provide a transition area and more architectural interest. If the General Plan Initiation is approved by the City Council staff will continue to work with the applicant to further refine the design to ensure a smooth massing transition between the adjacent properties and the proposed project along with architecture for compatibility.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact for the task of preparing a General Plan Amendment study. The applicant will pay appropriate City fees for the study and associated architectural review. The City plans on retaining ownership of the subject site through a long-term ground lease with the project applicants. The City's Housing Mitigation Sub-Fund is intended to provide assistance for the development of affordable housing in the City. Staff anticipates allocating these funds for the project which the applicant will use to purchase the ground lease for the site. This would result in the transfer of Housing Mitigation Sub-Funds to the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This action is not considered a "project" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because initiation of a General Plan Amendment study has no potential to create a significant environmental impact (California Resources Code Section 21065). If a General Plan Amendment study is initiated, staff has determined additional environmental analysis will be necessary for this site.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's Web site. Nearby property owners and tenants are not notified until a study has been initiated. If a study is initiated, the applicant would be required to submit subsequent discretionary applications for a General Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Special Development Permit and applicable application fees. The subject applications would be subject to hearings by the Planning Commission and City Council. Staff would also conduct a public outreach meeting prior to public hearings.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Initiate the GPA study as requested for 620 E. Maude Avenue to study a change from Industrial to Residential Medium Density to Very High Density Residential.
2. Initiate the GPA study as requested for 620 E. Maude Avenue to study a change from Industrial to Residential Medium Density to Industrial to High Density Residential.

3. Do not initiate a GPA study and retain the subject property as Industrial to Residential Medium Density.

RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1 – Approve the request to initiate a GPA study to study changing the General Plan Land Use Designation to Industrial to Very High Density Residential for the site.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the request to initiate a General Plan Amendment study for 620 E. Maude Avenue to consider Very High Density Residential for the site to allow the affordable housing providers claims to be transferred from the Onizuka site to the Armory site. The study will allow analysis of the requested density increase as it relates to the surrounding area.

Reviewed by:

Hanson Hom, Director, Community Development
Prepared by: Shaunn Mendrin, Senior Planner
Reviewed by: Trudi Ryan, Planning Officer

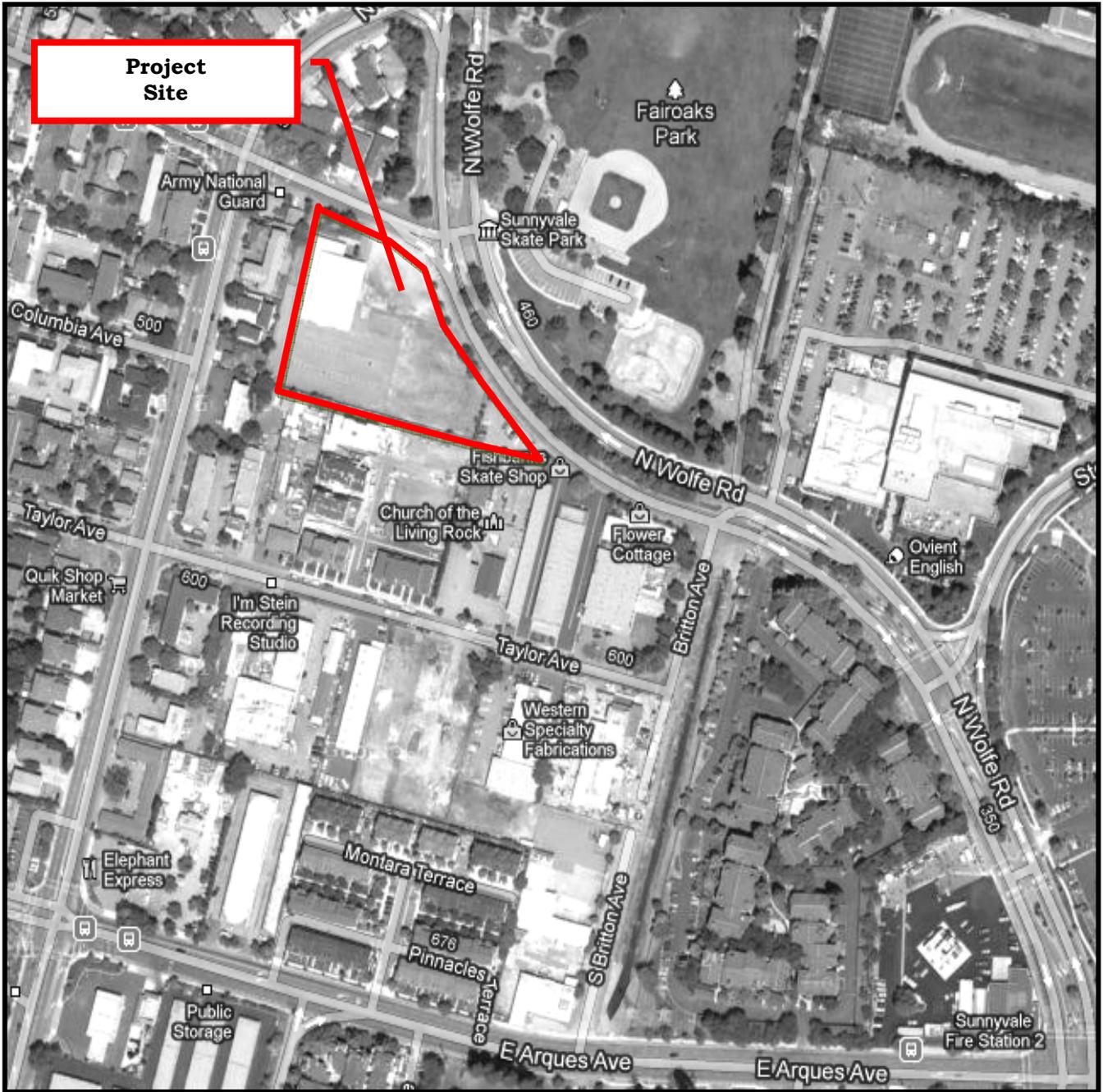
Approved by:

Gary M. Luebbers
City Manager

Attachments

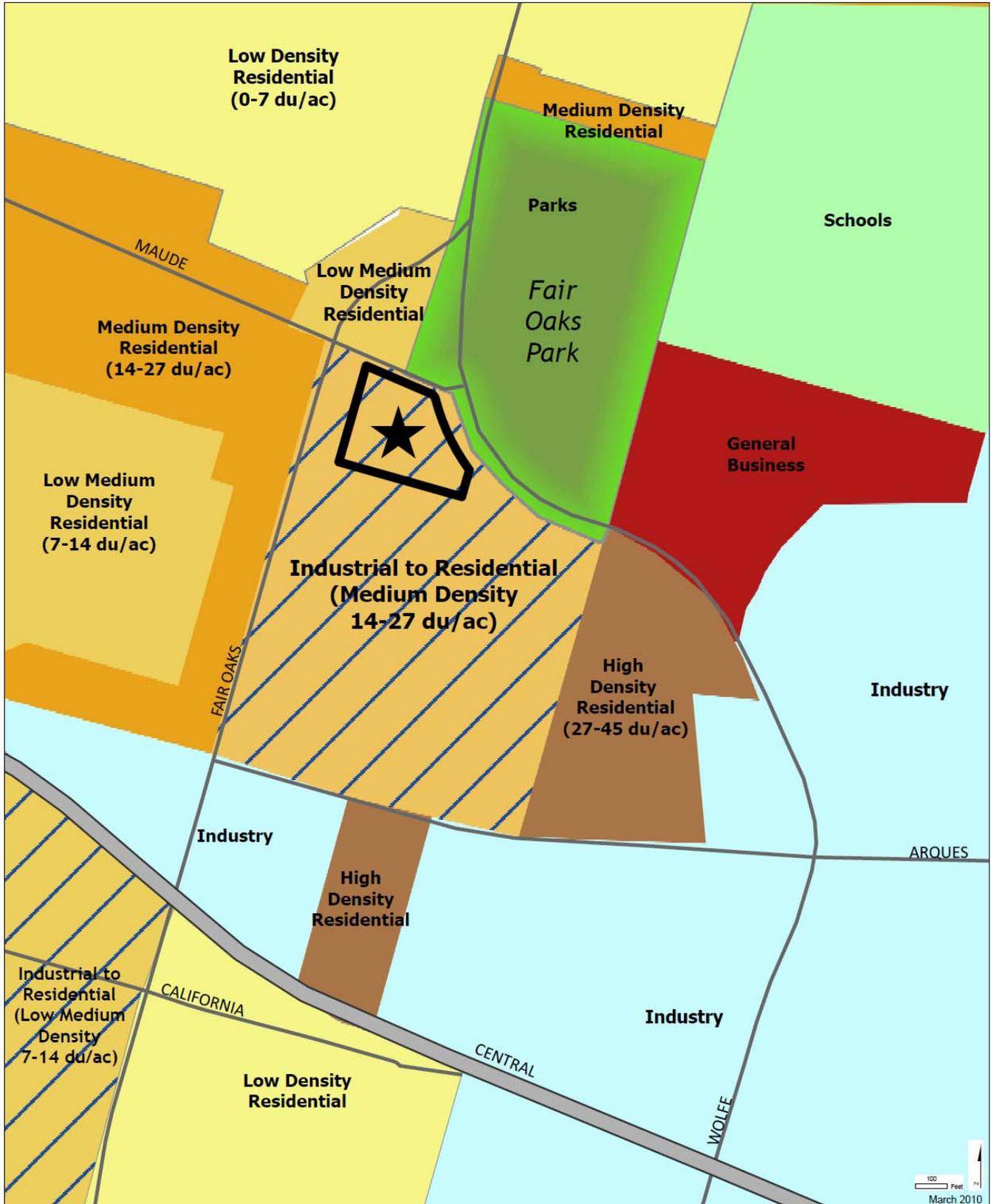
- A. Vicinity Map
- B. General Plan Land Use Map
- C. Zoning District Map
- D. Applicant's letter requesting initiation of a General Plan Amendment study.
- E. Conceptual Plans

Vicinity Map





City of Sunnyvale General Plan Land Use Designations - 620 E Maude Ave





City of Sunnyvale
 Zoning - 620 E Maude Ave



	620 E Maude (Armory)
Zoning Districts	
	R0 - Low Density Residential
	R2 - Low Medium Density Residential
	R3 - Medium Density Residential
	R4 - High Density Residential
	MS - Industrial and Service
	M3 - General Industrial
	C1 - Neighborhood Business
	C2 - Highway Business
	PF - Public Facilities
Combining Districts	
	PD - Planned Development
	POA - Places of Assembly
	ITRR3 - Industrial to Residential (Medium)

620 Maude/ Sunnyvale

Overall Site Concept

The site, currently occupied by a National Guard Armory building and an adjacent paved parking area, is bounded by East Maude and North Wolfe on the north and east and the yards of residential parcels and a church on the south and west. It is located directly across from Fair Oaks Park and within walking distance of transit, shopping, schools and employment.

The proposed development divides the site into two adjacent and abutting projects separated by a ground lease line. MidPen Housing will develop the western rectangular portion as low-income family apartments. Charities Housing will develop the triangular eastern portion as low income, efficiency studio apartments. The two projects have been planned collaboratively, but each will be developed, constructed and operated independently. While we anticipate that they will be entitled together, construction documentation and permitting will be two separate processes.

Overall Building Concept

Both projects consist of stacked flats surrounding podium level courtyards over an on grade concrete garage. Special care has been taken to ensure that the public frontage of each project's garage is lined with active uses. Each project has an independent circulation, stair, elevator and exiting system. While each project's garage is an independent structure, provision has been made to allow circulation through the two garages to allow residents of either project to use both the East Maude and the North Wolfe automobile entrances. The garage podiums are also planned to be the same height so that podium level landscape spaces while separate will be visually contiguous.

Family Apartment Project

The MidPen family project consists of 68 stacked flat apartments over an on-grade concrete garage containing 120 spaces. The parking ratio is 1:1 for the one-bedroom apartments and 2:1 for the two and three bedroom apartments. The garage is open and naturally ventilated along the west and south, abuts the Charities garage on the east and is faced with on-

grade apartments and the project entry lobby and offices along East Maude. The garage also contains a secure bicycle storage room and a refuse and recycling room fed by chutes adjacent to each floors elevator lobby. Primary access to the garage is via a two-way driveway off East Maude Street as well as through the Charities garage from North Wolfe Road.

At the podium level the project is shaped like a capital "I" with a four story portion in the center of the site stepping back at each building face to create large podium level courtyards to the east and west and terraces to the north and south. The building steps down at each corner to three stories.

The project's entry lobby and community facilities are clustered around the elevator core at the north end of the building. Lobby and offices front East Maude at street level on both sides of the garage entrance with a community room, computer room, common laundry and fitness rooms at the podium level opening onto a terrace overlooking the entrance as well as both the east and west courtyards.

In addition to perimeter raised bed planters tied into the project's storm water management system, the two primary courtyards are programmatically divided into distinct outdoor rooms. Each contains a common gathering space with bar-b-que and picnic tables, a children's play area with a play structure and a common garden area with raised bed planters.

The project's 68 apartments are a mix of 24-3 bedroom, 21-2 bedroom and 23-1 bedroom apartments. Each apartment has a private outdoor space, either deck or patio, with a minimum depth of 6 feet and a minimum area of 60 square feet. All apartments are adaptable. We anticipate the R-2 residential portion of the project to be Type V-A, fully sprinklered/ NFPA-13.

Efficiency Studio Apartment Project

The Charities Housing Efficiency Studio Apartment project is a double loaded "L" shaped building over an "L" shaped garage framing a podium level courtyard over an on-grade, street fronting, community

2

facility. A two-story lobby containing stair and elevator links the street level entrance lobby and community facilities with the apartments, the podium level courtyard and additional upper level community facilities. Each apartment has a six foot deep private outdoor open space (either deck or patio) as well as access to a variety of podium level and at grade open spaces. The project contains a total of 56 apartments. The proposed breakdown is 50 studio apartments, 5 one bedroom apartments and one two bedroom manager's apartment.

The garage contains parking for one car per apartment as well as a trash/recycling room (fed by trash chutes from above), maintenance spaces and a bicycle storage facility. Primary access to the garage is via a right in/ right out driveway (utilizing an existing curb cut) off Wolfe Road as well as through the Mid Pen garage from Maude Street.

The podium level courtyard is the village square for the project. Overlooking the park beyond, it would contain seating areas for individuals and groups, a bar-b-que, raised planters for common gardens as well as privacy buffers for adjacent private patios. There is space adjacent to the elevator and central stair for a laundry room on each of the two residential floors.

BUILDING DATA - 620 EAST MAUDE, SUNNYVALE

MidPen Housing						
Square Feet	Common/ Garage/ Utility Spaces	Residential	Circulation	Building Totals	Decks/ Patio	Exterior Spaces
Level 1 (on-grade)	40,063	4,631	1,024	45,718	250	16,908
Level 2	3,490	22,489	3,697	30,946	2,331	15,336
Level 3	98	26,424	4,083	30,605	2,331	0
Level 4	0	9,262	3,841	13,103	880	0
TOTAL	43,861	63,808	12,916	120,372	5,782	32,244

68 Family Units **Parking Per Unit Type** **113 Off-Street Parking Spaces Required**
 23 – 1 Bedroom (34%) 23 Spaces 113 Standard Spaces
 21 – 2 Bedroom (31%) 42 Spaces 1:1 Ratio for 1 Bedroom & 1:2 for 2-3 Bedrooms
 24 – 3 Bedroom (35%) 48 Spaces (3 Accessible incl. 1 Van provided)
 All Units Adaptable 113 Spaces

Charities Housing						
Square Feet	Common/ Garage/ Utility Spaces	Residential	Circulation	Bldg. Totals	Decks/ Patio	Exterior Spaces
Level 1 (on-grade)	25,732	0	1,457	27,189	0	15,766
Level 2	2,207	11,744	3,197	17,148	2,489	5,557
Level 3	1,371	12,610	3,197	17,178	2,262	0
TOTAL	29,310	24,364	7,861	81,616	4,761	21,343

56 Units **Parking Per Unit Type** **57 Off-Street Parking Spaces Required**
 50 – Studio (34%) 50 57 Standard Spaces
 5 – 1 Bedroom (31%) 5 Spaces 1:1 Ratio for 1 Bedroom & 1:2 for 2 Bedroom
 1 – 2 Bedroom (35%) 2 Spaces (2 Accessible incl. 1 Van provided)
 All Units Adaptable 57 Spaces



620 East Maude Avenue
Sunnyvale, California

Prepared for MidPen Housing and Charities Housing by Jon Worden/ Architects



620 East Maude Avenue
Sunnyvale, California

Prepared for MidPen Housing and Charities Housing by Jon Worden/ Architects



← CHAIRLIFT
PODIUM

EXISTING
TREES @
LEASING ENTRY
↓

← EAST MAJOR →

GARAGE
ENTRANCE.

LEASING
ENTRANCE

LOOKING WEST FROM N. WOLFE

← CHANNING



GARAGE ENTRANCE

LEASING ENTRANCE

EXISTING MIKEY NAME ENTRANCE

EAST MAUDE ELEVATION
LOOKING SOUTH

ATTACHMENT
Page 4 of 4

E