

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION – 660 UNIVERSITY AVE, PALO ALTO

The proposed project at 660 University Avenue is a mixed-use 4-story building with two levels of below-grade parking. Proposed uses include 9,115 square feet of office space on the ground floor, 65 residential units and parking. Three parcels will be combined and two existing office buildings on the site will be demolished in order for this project to proceed. A large existing oak tree on the adjacent site will be preserved and the design/construction team will work closely with the project arborist to ensure the health of the tree. The team for this project successfully designed & constructed a similar project at 250 Bryant in Mountain View (3 stories with two levels of below grade parking) around an existing oak tree and has experience with this type of installation. The residential and office entrances are located on University Avenue with recessed alcoves designed to welcome tenants & visitors with rich warm materials. The vehicular entrance is located on Middlefield Road. Separate elevators are also provided for office and residential uses. We are estimating that the approximate start date for construction will be 10/01/2023, and the approximate end date for construction will be 09/01/2015.

On sheet A0.1 of this submittal package (Project Information), detailed information is provided regarding Land Use, FAR, Unit Counts, Building Area, Density, Parking counts, Site Coverage, Open Space, Building Height and Setbacks, which is also summarized below for reference.

### **Context & Height**

The project is designed to be a high-quality addition to Palo Alto. Features include changes in plane, the expression of varied heights in the building volumes, color variation, recessed windows and projecting balconies with glass railings. In addition to the private balconies, a terrace for residents is proposed at the roof, to provide common open space. The building responds to the context of the neighboring single-family use lot through setbacks along the common property line. The projecting canopies and cornices above the first floor will provide a comfortable pedestrian experience at the street level. A rich landscape is proposed at the ground floor on all 4 sides of the project, including an outdoor deck set beneath the existing oak tree. The project sponsor has also spoken with our neighbor at 524 Middlefield Road several times to understand potential concerns. The proposed project has incorporated changes to our shared fence and to the building location, and we believe the neighbor is satisfied with the current proposal.

The project front yard (Middlefield Rd) has a special 24 ft. setback that is required per the current zoning map. In order to deliver the needed housing to Palo Alto as proposed in this project, the design seeks to instead propose a 10 ft. setback similar to the setback provided by the existing office building onsite that is scheduled for removal as a part of this scope. Sheet A1.1-B has been incorporated into the current drawing set, showing the typical setbacks measured on an aerial overlay of the neighborhood. Currently no other buildings in the vicinity appear to comply with the 24 ft. setback proposed. In addition, the street side yard (University Ave.) requires a 16 ft. setback or 0-20' on arterial roadways where a 6 ft setback is currently proposed and similarly the street rear yard (Byron St) proposes a 10 ft setback where 16 ft is required. The interior side yard requires a 10 ft setback and 25.5' min (building has additional insets) is proposed, in order to accommodate the existing oak tree as well as comply with the required daylight plan adjacent to the single family residence at 534 Middlefield Rd. as shown in 3/A3.3 in the drawing set.

**Open Space – 35% min. required**

The proposed design exceeds open space requirements providing 9,171 SF (41%) ground level open space as well as 4,320 SF of private (residential) balcony area, 1,465 SF of private (residential) terrace area on the fourth floor (subdivided for the 3 units adjacent) and 4,855 SF of common use (residential) terrace area on the roof. In total, ~10,640 SF of private balcony & private/common terrace area is provided where only 9,750 SF is required. The private balconies are a min. of 60 SF each and the rooftop terrace will provide a variety of different ‘neighborhoods’ to allow for diverse gathering spaces from smaller quiet pockets to larger group areas including lounge, dining & bbq uses. The layout allows the roof terrace to be separated from the interior lot line by the penthouse & HVAC enclosures so that the primary views & sight lines from the terrace are out toward the streets (University primarily and also Byron / Middlefield) and not towards the single family residence. Seating areas are set away from the perimeter guardrail, allowing the primary circulation to be on the outside of the flexible terrace space, connecting between both egress stairs & the central elevator access.

**FAR – 0.5:1 max, min. 11 units – max 20 units / acre**

The proposed office FAR is .4 & the proposed residential FAR is 1.94 (65 units for ~.5 acres where 10 are allowed) for a combined proposed FAR of 2.36, which in addition to the proposed units includes stairs, elevators, MEP rooms, a leasing office & residential lounge to support the residential units, as well as roof top penthouse space to support the residential rooftop terrace. The project seeks to exceed the allowable FAR in order to provide much needed housing within the downtown community.

**Jobs/Housing Ratio**

The existing combined office area (to be removed) on the subject parcels is 9,216 SF, of which 9,115 SF (~100 SF decrease) is proposed to be replaced within the current project. In addition, the project seeks to provide 65 new housing units (combination of studios, 1-BRs & 2-BRs) to the community.

**Parking**

With the proposed project being less than a mile from the University Ave. Caltrain station, the project has proposed a robust TDM plan to allow for a parking reduction of 20% overall. In addition, the residential parking is proposed primarily of independent mechanical stackers with pits (2 vehicles per stall) in order to limit the below grade scope to two levels and minimize the amount of below grade excavation and potential dewatering that may be required.

### Affordability

The project sponsor is also including the housing affordability component for this project, and was planning to distribute the 20% inclusionary requirement across four income levels. After hearing Council’s feedback to redistribute workforce housing units to the lower tiers, the project sponsor redistributed 4 units to moderate and low income. Here would be the breakdown of the 14 affordable units (20% of total unit count):

	<b>Income Level</b>	Unit A	Unit B	Unit C	Unit D	Unit E	Total
Below Market Rate Units	Very – low income	1	2	1			4
	Low Income	1	3				4
	Moderate Income	2	2			1	5
Workforce Housing	Above Moderate Income						
		<b>Total</b>					13 units
Unit Typology	Unit A – C, & F/F-1 = studio units from 387 sf – 477 sf with 1 micro unit G of 287 SF, Unit D & A-1/B-1/C-1/F-2/M = 1 bedroom units of 452 sf - 551 sf, Unit E = 2 bedroom units of 755 sf						

### Unit Design

A large variety of different unit plans will be provided ranging from 287 SF to 755 SF with all but one (manager’s unit) provided with at least one private balcony of at least 60 SF, with three units at the fourth floor (2 studios + 1 1BR) provided with larger private terraces of at least 435 SF. Each unit will include a full size ADA compliant bathroom & kitchen with a full size stacking or side-by-side washer/dryer. Approximately 28% of the units will be 1BR & 2BR, with the remainder provided as studios.

### RM-20 Zoning compliance

The proposed project requests City Council consideration of the following adjustments under a PC application, to approve 65 new units to the RM-20 district:

1. Increased height: The max building height allowed for RM-20 is 30’. The proposed project seeks to provide a 4-story building with max. 46.5’ height to top of roof (terrace), similar in scale to The Hamilton within the same block (between on Hamilton between Byron & Middlefield) as well as Lytton Gardens (opposite block across University).
2. Increased FAR: .5 to 2.34 as noted above, including increased density of 65 units from 10/.5 acre allowed.
3. Reduced parking: 110 stalls are required (37 for the office +73 for the residential including 71 assigned + 2 unassigned ADA). The proposed project seeks to provide a minimum of 88 stalls utilizing a 20% TDM reduction.
4. Open Space: Allowance for a rooftop terrace as common open space for the residential tenants, including the supporting elevator overrun & code required exit stairs for access.