

2015 Blake Street Applicant Statement December 20, 2018

Overview and Project Introduction

Rhoades Planning Group is pleased to present this proposal for a new multifamily residential infill development project located at 2015 Blake Street. The project will build on the character of the neighborhood which includes multi-family residential uses on Blake Street with commercial properties including the Alta Bates Summit Medical Center on Milvia Street and Dwight Way. The seven-story project will include a below-grade parking garage, high-quality residential apartment units on each floor, and significant amenities and open space including a rooftop outdoor terrace. The project will retain and restore the two Victorian homes located at 2012 and 2020 Dwight way. In addition the single story building located at 2001 Blake Street will be upgraded and will remain part of the project, continuing the current medical office use. Retaining the two Victorian homes on Dwight Way and the single story medical office building on Blake Street creates significant transitional buffers between the street frontage and the larger main building. These generous setbacks allow for publically accessible plazas on both Dwight Way and Blake Street. In addition there will be approximately 11,500 square feet of landscaped area.



Figure 1: Conceptual Rendering

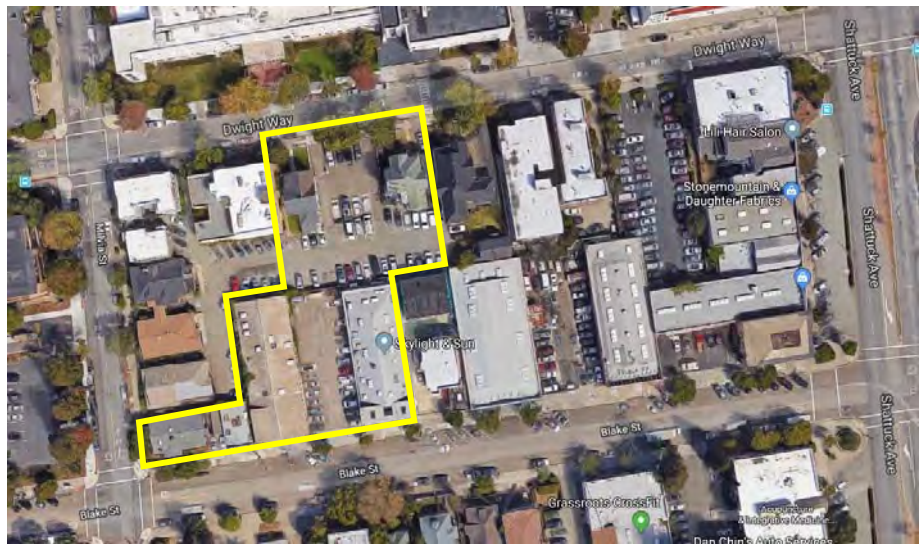


Figure 2: Parcel Boundaries

The project site is designated as High Density Residential in the City's General Plan, and fulfills the goals of the High Density Residential designation, which is characterized by larger multi-family developments located near transit and other population centers. The site is zoned Multi-Family Residential (R-4) which seeks to encourage high-density buildings to make housing available for people who want to live closer to downtown while still maintaining sufficient open space, light and air.

Additionally, the project site is just over a ½ mile (12-minute walk) from the Downtown Berkeley BART station, and is adjacent to a number of AC Transit bus lines, as well as City of Berkeley bicycle routes.

Therefore, the project contributes to Berkeley's Climate Action Plan goals of providing housing in locations close to goods and services, and oriented to use of public- and active-transportation, serving to reduce the City's overall per capita carbon footprint.



Figure 3: Project Schematic

Project Description

The site currently contains two residential structures, one single story structure that is being used as medical offices, and two commercial structures occupied by a skylight business. The project proposes to maintain and restore the two residential structures and medical office structure within the project area. However, the proposed commercial buildings have fallen into disrepair and would be demolished as a part of this project. All of the existing structures are over forty years old and therefore the historic resource firm, Architecture + History performed an historic resource evaluation for the entire site. The historic resource consultant determined that the two commercial structures are not historically significant.

The two residential structures are currently occupied by tenants and are subject to rent control. The Victorian building at 2012 Dwight Way has four dwelling units and the Victorian at 2020 Dwight Way has three dwelling units. Parking for the residents of these two buildings will be located in the underground parking garage for the main building. Although parking for the new main building will be unbundled and residents will be charged a fee for a parking space, the residents at 2012 Dwight Way and 2020 Dwight Way will not be charged a fee for a parking space and parking will be provided per the terms of their leases. Parking for the existing medical office building will also be per the terms of the tenant's leases.

The proposed new main building is designed around the existing residential buildings as well as the medical office building to protect existing tenants as well as to restore three structures that will remain on site. The project proposes a seven-story residential building that includes, two sections of open space, generous setbacks and undergrounding of utilities at both Dwight Way and Blake Street, and rooftop amenities. In addition, the current mix of diagonal and parallel parking spaces on Blake Street will be converted to all diagonal parking, including in front of the property to the east, which will create a more attractive streetscape. The total floor area of the proposed project is 103,958 square feet.

The project would include 128 one-bedroom and 27 two-bedroom apartments dispersed evenly on all above-grade levels for a total of 155 units. 20,817 square feet of shared open space is provided by two ground level courtyards, and a rooftop terrace. Car and bicycle parking will be provided in a garage accessible by Blake Street.

The project provides 104 parking spaces configured into puzzle lifts in a below-grade garage that is accessible via Blake Street at the west side of the site. This satisfies the R-4 zoning parking requirement of one parking stall per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. Residential parking spaces will be unbundled from the apartments, meaning that residents may choose whether or not to rent a parking space. 80 bicycle parking spaces are also provided in the parking garage where none are required. There will also be six bicycle parking spaces on site at street level as well as 6 bicycle parking spaces on the sidewalk.

Housing Affordability/Density Bonus Statement

The proposed project is entitled to a density bonus pursuant to California Government Code Section 65915(b). The proposed project will provide 10 dwelling units on-site, out of 84 base project units and 155 total project units, that are affordable to households earning not more than 50% Area Median Income, which entitles the project to a 35% housing density bonus (11%, or 10 units of its 84 base project units, at 50% AMI per GC Sec. 65915(f)(2). The project is entitlement to two incentives/concessions per Government Code Section 65915(d)(2)(B). The project is requesting one concession to exceed lot coverage.

Because Berkeley's R-4 zoning district does not include a housing density standard, the project uses the floor areas of the its base project envelope to calculate the floor area for the density bonus, and then divides that space by the average dwelling unit size of the base project units. The proposed project's base project, density bonus, and total residential floor areas are shown in the table below:

Base Net Residential FA floors 1-3/Dwelling Units	Net Residential FA floors 4-6 with Use Permit/Dwelling Units	Density Bonus Net Residential FA/Dwelling Units	Total Allowable GFA/Dwelling Units	Total GFA/Dwelling Units Proposed
37,725/67.6	35,604 sf/63.8	13,852/24.8 units	104,270 sf/157 units	103,486 sf/155 units

This project is also subject to the City of Berkeley's inclusionary housing requirement under Berkeley Municipal Code Section 23C.12.030 that requires the project to provide at least 20% of the total number of dwelling units as inclusionary units with the option of paying an in-lieu fee instead of providing the units on-site per Berkeley Municipal Code Section 22.20.065. This project proposes to provide 11% of the base project units, 10 units, on site at 50% of Area Median Income and pay \$3,986,010 as an in-lieu fee to go to Berkeley's affordable housing trust fund.

In addition to the Density Bonus, the project is applying for a Use Permit to exceed the 35-foot height limit in the R-4 district to add additional units adjacent to transit. See Use Permits requested below. The project is also requesting the waivers and modification and incentive and concession discussed below to accommodate the units and floor area for the density bonus portion of the project.

Use Permits Requested

1. 23D.40.030 (UPPH) – To develop multi-family housing subject to R-4 standards.
2. 23D.40.070.C (UPPH) – To develop main building exceeding 35 ft and 3 stories.
3. 23C.08.050.C (UPPH) – To demolish non-residential existing structures over 40-years old.
4. 23D.04.020.C (AUP)—Rooftop Equipment.

Waivers/Modifications Requested to Accommodate Density Bonus

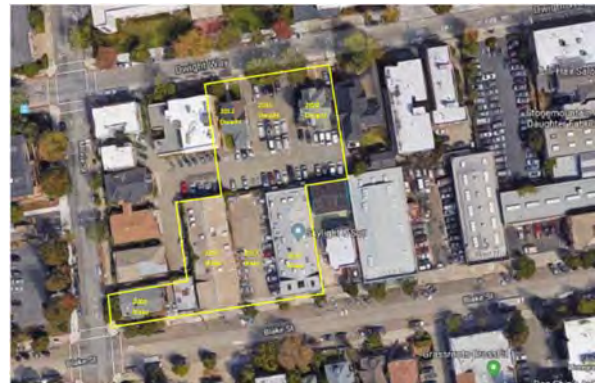
1. **Height**—Increase to 80 feet and seven stories to accommodate density bonus where 3 stories and 35 feet are allowed in the base project (6 stories and 65 feet allowed with Use Permit).
2. **Open Space**—Allow for a total project open space of 20,817 sf where 31,000 sf is required.

Incentives/Concessions Requested to Accommodate Density Bonus

3. **Lot Coverage**—Allow for lot coverage of 49.2%, where a maximum of 45% is allowed, in order to preserve the single story medical office building at 2001 Blake Street. The rental income from 2001 Blake Street improves the project's feasibility and helps to underwrite the costs of the affordable units in the project.

Project Setting

The project site is located on the middle of the block on the north side of Blake Street, and the south side of Dwight Way just off of Shattuck Avenue, between Shattuck Avenue and Milvia Street. The site is comprised of seven lots that together have a lot area of 41,747 square feet. The site currently contains two commercial buildings: 2015 Blake supports 6,483 square feet of commercial space, currently used by Timberline Geodesics for the fabrication of dome homes and the 6,283-square foot building at 2019 Blake Street is currently occupied by Skylight and Sun Inc. for the manufacturing and distribution of skylights. A surface parking lot is in between the two existing buildings.



Existing Site Data					
Address	Parcel	Lot Size (Assessor)	Zoning	Existing Use	Ex. Bldg. Area
2001 Blake St.(also 2011 Blake St.)	55-1822-14	4130	R-4	Single story building with medical office use, shed, one story building	1360
2015 Blake St.	55-1822-13-4	6483	R-4	2 story building. Pre-fab homes 'Timberline Geodesics'	6483 (est.)
2015 Blake St. (Parking)	55-1822-13-3	6483	R-4	Parking Lot	-
2019 Blake St.	55-1822-13-2	6483	R-4	1 story building, 'Skylight and Sun Inc' Skylight manufacturer and distributor	6283 (est.)
2012 Dwight Way (A-D)	55-1822-21	5186	R-4	2 story building, Residence	1887
2016 Dwight Way (1-6)	55-1822-22	5575	R-4	Parking lot	6330
2020 Dwight Way (A-C)	55-1822-23	6482	R-4	2 story building, Residence	2050

The site also contains two residential structures and one single story medical office building. 2001 Blake Street is a one-story medical office building. 2012 Dwight Way and 2020 Dwight Way are both two-story residential buildings with a parking lot in between the two structures. 2012 Dwight Way has four dwelling units and 2020 Dwight Way has three dwelling units. The dwelling units at both 2012 Dwight Way and 2020 Dwight Way are currently occupied and are subject to rent control. The project proponent will follow all procedures required by Berkeley Municipal Code Section 13.76 as well as all Berkeley Rent Board Guidelines relating to the rights of existing tenants.

The site is zoned R-4, Multi-Family Residential. The site is located ½ mile from the Downtown Berkeley BART station (an 11 minute walk), and 0.8 miles from the Ashby BART station, and is proximate to numerous frequently-running bus lines.

Blake Street is a wide street which, on this block just off of Shattuck Avenue, supports a diversity of uses and building intensities. Across Blake Street, south of the project site, is a three-story residential building adjacent to several single family homes on either side of the building. Directly east of the site are several single-story structures along the center of the Milvia Street block. The northwest corner of the block contains a two-story residential building with a three-story commercial building to the east of it along Dwight Way which contains offices with medical uses. Across Dwight Way to the north, the Alta Bates campus encompasses most of the block. Abutting the northeastern property line are three-story residential buildings.

The proposed project represents an improvement for the neighborhood over the existing dilapidated commercial buildings and surface level parking lots. The project will have generous setbacks with publically accessible plaza areas on both Blake Street and Dwight Way. The large setbacks and preservation of three of the existing structures on the site help to create a lower-scale buffer with attractive landscaping and new street trees on both Blake Street and Dwight Way.

Surrounding Uses and Zoning		
Direction	Use	Zoning
North	Alta Bates Medical Complex	R-3
East	Commercial and Mixed Use	C-SA
South	Small Multi-Family and Single Family Residential	R-4
West	Small Multi-Family Residential	R-4

Structure History

There are seven existing structures on the site all constructed more than 40 years ago. A Historic Resource Evaluation prepared by Architecture + History, LLC is attached as part of this



application package. The DPR forms evaluate the existing buildings against the criteria employed to determine eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and as City of Berkeley Landmarks and Structures of Merit. The report indicates that the existing buildings are not individually eligible for designation on either the National Registry of California Registry.

CEQA

This project is expected to be exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15183.3: Streamlining for Infill Projects. The traffic impact analysis, which is part of this submittal, provides that the traffic impacts generated from the project will be less than significant per the CEQA guidelines. The site's proximity to transit and the project's unbundled parking will contribute to fewer future residents owning vehicles.

Development Standards

The project is a seven-story residential building containing residential apartment units, open-space for residents, and vehicle and bicycle parking. The project details and development standards are provided in the table below.

Standard (BMC Section 23E.52)		Existing	Proposed Total	Permitted/Required
Lot Area (sq. ft.) – Total		41,747	Parcel 1: 7,250 Parcel 2 : 34,497	NA
Residential Floor Area		Approx 3,000 sf	103,958	NA
Gross Floor Area (sq. ft.) – Total		Approx 19,238	103,958	NA
Floor Area Ratio		N/A	N/A	N/A
Dwelling Units	Affordable	0	10 units @ 50% AMI per SDBL & in-lieu fee of \$3,986,010	20% of total project units or in-lieu fee per BMC Section 22.20.065
	Total	7	155 + 7 existing	NA
Building Height	Average (ft.)	35'	75'	23D.40.070(C) – 35ft max, up to 65' allowed with use permit.
	Stories	1-3	7	23D.40.070(C) – 3 story max, up to 6 allowed with use permit.
Yards	Front (ground floor only)	0'-20'	11'-12'-1"	15'
	Side (west and east property line)	0'-6'	4'-22'-9"	4'-15'
	Rear (north property line)	0'-53'	4'-12'	15'-21'
Usable Open Space – Ground floor: two courtyards; 7 th floor deck and lounge (sq. ft.)			20,817	200 sq. ft. per dwelling unit for a total requirement of 31,000 ft of open space
Usable Open Space – Total (sq. ft.)		NA	20,817	200sf/unit = 31,000 sf
Parking	Residential	?	103	1/1000gsf = 103
	Total	?	103	103
	Bicycle	0	80 in bike room & 12 at street level	N/A

Architectural/Building Amenity Program

The proposed project's architecture relies on simple façade articulation to embellish the project's unique Z-shaped building form. The building elevations are subdivided into smaller fields of bold color to give an impression of smaller buildings while using simple modern detailing to contrast with the adjacent Victorians and craftsman bungalow. The project's exterior materials include durable smooth stucco in a

Unit Mix and Size		
Unit Type	Number	Average Square Footage
One-Bedroom	128	558 s.f.
Two-Bedroom	27	558 s.f.

light color that sets off the sienna-toned horizontal siding and crimson painted cement paneling. Each building façade, east and west, north and south, is anchored by a vertical form clad in corrugated siding to add depth of subtle texture and shadow as the sun passes. The three existing structures that will remain on the site will undergo a restoration process. This may include foundation replacement, restoration of period details as well as new painting and roofing (where needed). The team is also exploring options to remove the non-period additions of 2012 Dwight and/or 2020 Dwight to further restore the structures and increase open space available to all residents.

In addition to locating new housing within 0.5 mile to Downtown Berkeley BART and increasing density of a walkable and bikeable City, 2015 Blake will incorporate green best practices in all facets of the project. The project will include a wide range of green features: fly-ash concrete, minimization of water-hungry grass/turf, use of engineered wood products for long spans, durable exterior materials, low emissivity insulation, WaterSense toilets, resident and irrigation sub-meters and zero-VOC paints.

The landscape concept for the site knits together the buildings through connected garden spaces. The plant palette and design respects the existing craftsman and Victorian structures while introducing additional species appropriate for today's climate. Raised biofiltration planters are included along the northern perimeter of the proposed building to collect a portion of the rainwater from the structure's roof. Additional at-grade biofiltration planters are located near the houses to collect and treat surface run-off from the adjacent paved areas.

Improvements to the pedestrian environment along Dwight Way and Blake Street are seen in the proposed replacement and addition of street trees to current City of Berkeley standards and the formalizing of the diagonal parking along Blake Street, allowing for additional sidewalk and planting space. The addition of plaza spaces at the entry of the apartment building and the Victorians allows for both residents and the community to sit and enjoy the new garden spaces.

Policy Analysis

The site is designated by the City of Berkeley's General Plan as High Density Residential. The proposed project fulfills the following policies of the General Plan:

- *Policy LU-3 Infill Development: Encourage infill development that is architecturally and environmentally sensitive, embodies principles of sustainable planning and construction, and is compatible with neighboring land uses and architectural design and scale. (Also see Urban Design and Preservation Policies UD-16 through UD-24.)*

This is a true infill development project, which will redevelop two underutilized commercial buildings and several parking lots to create a vibrant residential address with an attractive pedestrian atmosphere. The project is environmentally sensitive in its provision of housing opportunities in proximity to services and public transportation.

South Shattuck Strategic Plan

The project site is also included within the far northwestern corner of the 1998 South Shattuck Strategic Plan as part of Target Area 4, which includes all of the residential properties adjacent to the Shattuck and Adeline commercial corridors.

The strategies for residential blight abatement seek to address the issue of currently blighted properties through enforcement and to prevent the development of future blight conditions.

The first urban design strategy for Target Area 1 cited in the Plan is to enhance pedestrian orientation through upgraded and expanded streetscape improvements (p. 25). The project at 2015 Blake Street will improve the pedestrian experience significantly. First, the project replaces dilapidated storage warehouses and surface parking lots with a building with architectural character and quality materials. Additionally, new landscaping, street trees, and publicly accessible courtyards on Dwight Way and Blake Street will create an attractive and welcoming streetscape with gathering areas.

Required Use Permit Findings

Findings to Authorize Approval of Use Permits – Section 23B.32.040. This section authorizes the approval of Use Permits upon finding that the establishment, maintenance or operation of the use, or construction of a building, will not be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort or general welfare of persons residing or working in the area or neighborhood or be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements of the adjacent properties, the surrounding area or neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City. Approval of a Use Permit also requires making the findings of the District.

Response: The construction, establishment, maintenance, and operation of the proposed project will not be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort, or general welfare of the neighborhood or the City as a whole. The proposed project replaces underused commercial buildings in disrepair to provide infill housing close to transit. As such, the project aligns with the City's Climate Action Plan and the goals expressed in SB 375, the State of California law that aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting transit-oriented housing and commercial developments. New residents from the project will shop and use services in the South Shattuck neighborhood, supporting the economic vitality of existing local businesses. Improvements to the pedestrian environment along Dwight Way and Blake Street are seen in the proposed replacement and addition of street trees to current City of Berkeley standards and the formalizing of the diagonal parking along Blake Street, allowing for additional sidewalk and planting space. The addition of plaza spaces at the entry of the apartment building and the Victorians allows for both residents and the community to sit and enjoy the new garden spaces.

23C.08.050.D. A Use Permit or an AUP for demolition of a non-residential building or structure may be approved only if the Board or Zoning Officer finds that the demolition will not be materially detrimental to the commercial needs and public interest of any affected neighborhood or the City, and one of the following findings that the demolition:

1. Is required to allow a proposed new building or other proposed new Use;
 - a. The two existing commercial structures along Blake Street are located in the proposed project area for the project. The existing structures are in disrepair and at the end of their usable life. Demolition of these two structures is required to allow for the development the proposed residential project. The demolition will not be materially detrimental to the commercial needs and public interest of the neighborhood.
2. Will remove a building which is unusable for activities which are compatible with the purposes of the District in which it is located or which is infeasible to modify for such uses;

Please see 1a. above.

3. Will remove a structure which represents an unabatable attractive nuisance to the public; or
Please see 1a. above

4. Is required for the furtherance of specific plans or projects sponsored by the City or other local district or authority. In such cases, it shall be demonstrated that it is infeasible to obtain prior or concurrent approval for the new construction or new use which is contemplated by such specific plans or projects and that adhering to such a requirement would threaten the viability of the plan or project. (Ord. 6478-NS § 4 (part), 1999)

Please see 1a. above

Neighborhood Meeting & Community Outreach

A neighborhood meeting was held on Monday December 17, 2018 at the Community Meeting Room at the Berkeley Central Branch Library at 6:00PM. Invitations were sent to all property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project site. Although the meeting invitations were mailed in time to provide notification of the meeting date, the mail was delayed in reaching the addressees and only a few people attended the neighborhood meeting. Please see Neighborhood Pre-Application Contact document in this submittal. Given that residents and property owners were not notified in time for the meeting, another community meeting will be scheduled and a new notice will be mailed.

Project Team

Applicant/Project Sponsor

Laconia Development
1981 North Broadway, Suite 415
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Entitlement Consultant/Contact

Rhodes Planning Group
Mark Rhodes
46 Shattuck Square, Suite 11
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Architect

Lowney Architecture
Oakland, CA

4. Anti-Discriminatory House Statement

1. Does the applicant or sponsor, including the applicant or sponsor's parent company, subsidiary, or any other business or entity with an ownership share of at least 30% of the applicant's company, engage in the business of developing real estate, owning properties, or leasing or selling individual dwelling units in states or jurisdictions outside of California?
Yes
2. If the answer to (1) is yes, which?
Washington State, Hawaii
3. If the answer to (1) is yes, does the applicant or sponsor, as defined in (1), have policies in individual states that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression in the sale, lease, or financing of any dwelling units enforced on every property in the state or states where the applicant or sponsor has an ownership or financial interest?
Laconia always hires 3rd party property management companies who practice equal housing opportunity policies.
4. If the answer to (1) is yes, does the applicant or sponsor, as defined in (1), have a national policy that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the sale, lease, or financing of any dwelling units enforced on every property in the United States where the applicant or sponsor has an ownership or financial interest in property?
Please see answer to (3)
5. If the answer to (3) or (4) is yes, please provide a copy of that policy or policies as part of this application.
Please see the link below to the equal housing policies for Greystar, the property management company we plan to work with at 2015 Blake.

<https://www.greystar.com/fair-housing-statement>