



**City of Santa Barbara**  
Planning Division

**Memorandum**

**DATE:** October 9, 2014

**TO:** Architectural Board of Review

**FROM:** Kathleen Kennedy, Associate Planner

**SUBJECT:** 604 E. Cota Street AUD Project (MST2014-00220)

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**Project Description**

The proposed project consists of the demolition of all existing buildings (one 1,682 sq. ft. commercial building and four single-family residential units) and the construction of a new, 20,221 square foot (net), 3-story mixed-use project. The proposed project would consist of 1,996 sq. ft. of commercial space and 29 residential units. There would be 16 studio units, 10 one-bedroom units, and 3 two-bedroom units. A total of 37 parking spaces and 32 bike parking spaces would be provided. The maximum height of the building would be 41.5 feet.

**Average Unit-Size Density (AUD) Incentive Program**

The AUD Incentive Program is an important General Plan initiative intended to support needed residential development, particularly rental units, in the community. The AUD program encourages housing by allowing increased densities based on unit size; the smaller the average unit size for the project, the greater the density allowed. Additionally, development standard incentives related to parking, setbacks, building height, distance between buildings, and open space are provided to help make the construction of additional residential units possible.

The project site is located in the C-M (Commercial Manufacturing) Zone, has a General Plan land use designation of Commercial Industrial/ Medium High Residential (15-27 dwelling units/acre), and is located in the Priority Housing Overlay area.

The Priority Housing Overlay applies to lots with a General Plan land use designation of High Density Residential and lots zoned C-M (regardless of the General Plan land use designation). The Priority Housing Overlay allows residential densities ranging from 37 to 63 dwelling units per acre, with the maximum average unit size varying from 970 square feet to 811 square feet of floor area, depending upon the number of units per acre being developed. The higher density allowed in the Priority Housing Overlay is only applicable to rental housing, employer-sponsored housing, or limited-equity housing cooperative projects.

The proposed project consists of rental housing and has a residential density of 61 dwelling units per acre, which allows a maximum average unit size of 827 square feet. The proposal, with a maximum average unit size of only 605 square feet, is well below that allowed. The proposed units range from 472 square feet to 983 square feet (net).

The proposed project is consistent with the development standards allowed in the AUD Incentive Program as discussed below.

*Setbacks.* The proposed project provides the required 5 foot front setback. Where portions of the structure intrude into this setback (approximately 102 square feet total), compensating areas are provided.

*Outdoor Living Space.* The proposed project meets the minimum outdoor living space requirement for the residential units by providing slightly more than the required 15% of the net lot area. The outdoor living spaces are provided in various places on-grade, a small portion on the second floor, and the majority is provided by a roof deck on the third floor.

*Parking.* The proposed project provides the required parking of one vehicle parking space per unit, one bicycle space per unit (covered and secured), and no guest parking spaces.

The proposed project provides the required 8 vehicular parking spaces (1 per 250 sq. ft.) for the commercial component and the required 2 bicycle spaces (1 per 7 commercial vehicle parking spaces).

*Number of stories.* The C-M Zone has a height limit of four stories and 45 feet. The proposed project complies at three stories with a maximum height of 41.5 feet.

### **Land Development Team Staff Review**

The original proposal was reviewed by the Land Development Team Staff as part of the Pre-Application Review Team (PRT) review in June of this year. Staff provided comments on the proposal and identified information required to complete environmental review. Staff has continued to review the plans as they have developed over the past several months. Additional information is still required regarding stormwater management, archaeology, and accessibility.

### **Environmental Review**

Environmental review has not been completed for the proposed project because the required Phase I Archaeology Report has not yet been submitted for review. However, at this time, it is expected that the project would qualify for the CEQA Guidelines §15183 Exemption (Projects Consistent with General Plan).

### **Design Review**

The project was reviewed by the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) on two previous occasions and received generally positive comments. The plans have been revised to address the comments received, including a reduction in the overall height of the building and proximity of building mass to Salsipuedes Street.

*Haley-Milpas Design Manual.* The project site is located within the urban design district areas discussed in the Haley-Milpas Design Manual. The 600 block of east Cota Street is identified as part of the Industrial Design District likely due to the various mixes of industrial buildings at this corner and along this street. The primary focus of the guidelines is intended to encourage compatible mixed-use development. The guidelines do not suggest a specific architectural style be followed in this part of the design district. However, it is located directly adjacent to, but not located in the Hispanic/Pueblo Urban Design District.; Staff recommends that the ABR focus on compatibility, with adjacent buildings and with the neighborhood in general, and whether or not the project meets the required project compatibility criteria per SBMC §22.68.045.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Project Design and Final approvals by the ABR are required; however, as stated above, additional information is required before the application is ready for Project Design Approval.

According to SBMC §22.68.050, the ABR may refer projects to the Planning Commission for comments if the ABR determines that a project is proposed for a site which is highly visible to the public. The referral is solely for the purpose of obtaining comments from the Planning Commission for use by the ABR in its deliberations.

Based on the current proposal, its compliance with all applicable AUD development standards, and the generally positive comments received regarding the project thus far, Staff does not recommend that the ABR refer this project to the Planning Commission for comments.

The ABR is also allowed to require story poles if deemed necessary as part of the review. In this case, Staff does not recommend that the ABR require story poles due to the site constraints at this location. If some form of visual aid is deemed necessary, there are alternatives to story poles, as described in the "Visual Aid Submittal Packet" handout. These include Photo Simulations, Three-Dimensional Massing Models, Perspective Drawings, Rendered Streetscape Elevations and/or Comparative Building Studies.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (805) 564-5470, ext. 4560 or by e-mail at [kkennedy@santabarbaraca.gov](mailto:kkennedy@santabarbaraca.gov).

cc: Planning Commission