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MKG & ArchiLOGIX Mixed Use Development at 528 B Street- Design Concept Narrative

MKG & ArchiLOGIX mixed use development promotes superior design through thoughtful, integrated design that is also consistent with the Design Guidelines and overall intent of policies set forth for the adjacent neighborhood and districts. The site is unique for location within multiple policy districts: the St. Rose Historic District as well as the Courthouse Square Sub-Area and Entryway Street Type within the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan.

The 528 “B” Street mixed use development proposes demolishing the existing, non-historical, 1-story structure to make way for a 5-story, 36,650 sf mixed-use building. The proposed 5-story mixed use building is an appropriate scale and height consistent with the intense use of the downtown core and the existing adjacent 5-story City-owned parking garage at 521 7th Street. The development is consistent with goals of the Entryway Street Type as described in the 2007 Downtown Station Area Specific Plan: *to mediate between the small scale residential (St Rose Historic Preservation District) and the large scale development (encouraged in the Courthouse Square Sub-Area) and to create a pleasantly landscaped, walkable street, using window systems that engage the public and at the same time create a pleasant interior work environment.*

Sustainability goals, connectivity to vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian networks:

The proposed infill development actualizes sustainability goals through the building design and site features maximize water conservation, energy efficiency, exterior and interior structural and finish materials that respect environmental stewardship. Generally, infill developments further sustainability goals as they require less water and energy use due to the smaller lot size and reduced square footage and meet long-term climate goals to achieve improved quality of life through reduced driving miles.

The development team proposes a creative solution to parking for the 528 “B” Street development, where all onsite parking will be accommodated in City-owned downtown parking garage #1 that is immediately next to the project site. Residents and employees of the ground floor office development will have parking passes for the City-owned garage and by not providing on-site parking office user’s and apartment residents along with visitors will be less dependent on the automobile and will be encouraged to walk, bike, and use alternative modes of transportation in the downtown.

The Downtown Station Area Specific Plan promotes Transit-Oriented Development goals encouraging *mixed-use development with ground floor activating uses be developed on key streets throughout the plan area to facilitate pedestrian connectivity in proximity of transit opportunities.* The project activities

because the site is less than a ½ mile away from the SMART station and an easy walk to multiple transit options including multiple Santa Rosa City bus stations in either direction on “B” Street from the site. In addition to proximity to transit options, 528 “B” St. is a ¼ mile away from the reunified Courthouse Square where multiple cultural and sponsored events take place and residents and employees at 528 “B” Street will be able to walk to many downtown amenities: restaurants, bars, breweries, theaters, gyms, shopping and retail locations.

Thoughtful, integrated architecture that respects the existing historical neighborhood and furthers the goals of intensified development at the downtown core:

The Cultural Heritage Board policy warns while new infill development can be contemporary, it should not seek to mimic or exactly match existing buildings in the St. Rose District, as historic reproductions tend to confuse observers, now and especially in future years. The architectural stylistic intent of the proposed building is contemporary, a thoughtful juxtaposition between the historic neighborhood and modern, denser construction at the core: The concept behind the building form and massing is to utilize the first level as a functional and visual base using substantial materials like split-face concrete block and steel sash windows and header beams. The base supports the lighter looking upper floor. The 2nd through 5th floor exterior materials uses a panelized composite building material that is smooth in finish, articulated using horizontal and vertical reveals. Combined with the type and location of windows the appearance of the upper floors is light and open in its feel yet diverse in its massing.

The exterior accentuated base and upper levels are a deliberate attempt to explain the uses - an identifiable and meaningful expression of the building’s mixed-use functions.

Integration of plant and tree materials with site conditions is very deliberate to create an effective and welcoming transition where the at-grade outdoor spaces respond to two site planning and building placement goals set forth for the historical neighborhood and the Courthouse Square sub-area. The public realm /sidewalks reinforce the walkable streetscape and identify the entry to the first-floor office space. Another design goal was to create a semi-private paseo-type exterior space used by the office users and the paseo serves as a connection to the City parking garage and the private residential lobby.

The plant palette in the paseo softens the wall surfaces of the building and the fence to the north that screens our neighbor’s exterior open space. Similarly, the landscape palette at the street is low in height as a foreground to the office windows. The landscape material and green screen at the base of the vertical split-face concrete block stairwell is taller and robust and anchors the southwest corner of the building

Attention to Placemaking/Livability

The approach to the building and landscape architectural concepts is to convey the balance between mass and transparency without compromising the sensitive character and connectivity of and between human spaces. The Station Area Specific Plan Entryway street type is intended to create or reinforce focal points or nodes of activity to animate the existing conditions and enhance development of exterior and interior spaces. The site is a pointed location adjacent to multiple varied interests: the Sonoma County History and Modern Art museum, BREW coffee shop, the existing 5-story City parking garage #1, as well as proximity to the Santa Rosa Plaza, downtown restaurants, retail and Courthouse Square. The 528 B Street mixed use development offers opportunity for more eyes and feet on an entry gateway into downtown Santa Rosa.