

Agenda Item # 3.1

For Zoning Administrator Special Meeting of September 23, 2020

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

TO: ANDY GUSTAVSON, ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
FROM: ANDREW TRIPPEL, INTERIM SUPERVISING PLANNER
SUBJECT: STAFF MEMO – 1 SANTA ROSA AVENUE – MINOR DESIGN REVIEW

This Staff Memo seeks to facilitate Zoning Administrator review by summarizing project information provided by the applicant, documenting the project's Planning review history, evaluating the proposed use of land, and analyzing the project's consistency with the General Plan, Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, the City's Design Guidelines, and compliance with regulations contained in the Zoning Code and other City Codes, including the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. This memo also provides summaries of Design Review Board concept review comments and comments received from the public.

Project Description

The 1 Santa Rosa Avenue project is proposed for a 0.50-acre site located in Downtown Santa Rosa, south of Courthouse Square. The site is bounded by 3rd Street to the north, Santa Rosa Avenue on the east, the Transit Mall/2nd Street Area to the south, and the 5-story Museum on the Square commercial building. The project site is located within General Plan's Downtown Core area, the Courthouse Square Sub-Area of the 2007 Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, and the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Priority Development Area designated by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments.

The proposed project would consist of demolition of an existing, vacant one-to three-story commercial building and construction of an approximately 105,990 square-foot, 7-story, mixed-use building comprised of ground-floor commercial space and 120 market-rate and affordable multi-family housing units (studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units) with ground floor amenity spaces, an outdoor courtyard, and a rooftop deck in Downtown Santa Rosa. The building's multi-story main lobby entrance would face Courthouse Square, ground floor residential spaces with raised stoops would front Santa Rosa Ave., and a café would be located at the corner of 2nd Street and Santa Rosa Avenue with a walk-up service window fronting the Transit Mall. As proposed, the project would implement the Inclusionary Housing requirement for Downtown residential development in that at least four percent of the total number of new dwelling units would be provided as affordable to low income households, or at least three percent of the total number of new dwelling units as affordable to very low income households [\[§ 21-02.050\(B\)\(1\)\]](#). The project is conditioned to require that a 55-year Affordability Agreement be executed with City Housing.

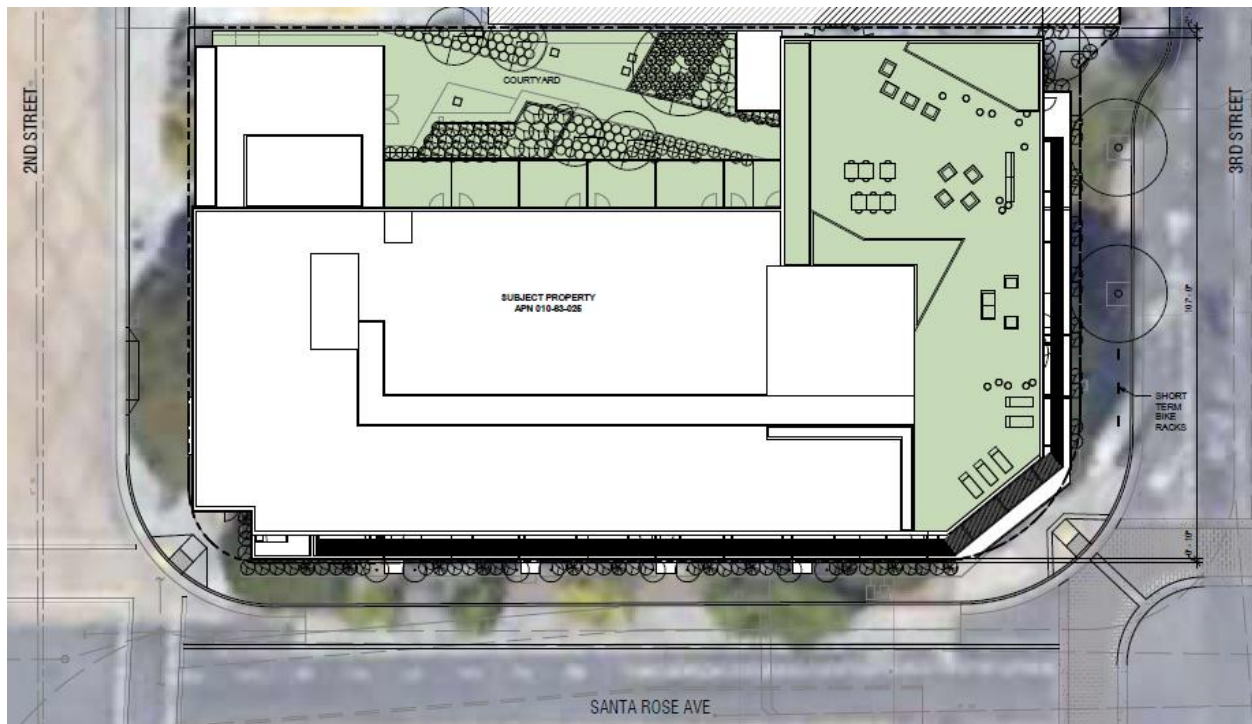
Resident vehicle parking needs would be supported by 90 reserved parking spaces located in City Parking Garage 12 at 555 First St., and resident and visitor bicycle parking/storage would

be supported with 84 indoor long-term bicycle parking spaces and three short-term outdoor bicycle parking spaces located adjacent to the building's primary entrance. The building would be surrounded on three sides by sidewalks with pedestrian-scale design elements and landscaping.

Public improvements would include new pedestrian sidewalks with curb ramps, installation of bollards at the intersection of 3rd Street and Santa Rosa Avenue, installation of trees adjacent to the street along the 3rd Street frontage and between the sidewalk and building along the Santa Rosa Avenue frontage. A service curb cut would be installed on the Transit Mall frontage. Santa Rosa Avenue frontage parking spaces would be designated for commercial deliveries during the hours of 6:00 – 11:00 AM, and a 20-minute pedestrian drop-off, pick-up area would be designated as well.

Construction would commence in August 2021 and conclude in November 2022. For more detailed information about this proposed project, see Appendix 3 – Design Narrative, and Appendix 4 – Project Plan Set.

Image 1: Proposed Site Plan



Source: Project Plan Set dated received by the City on September 14, 2020.

Land Use

The project site and surrounding parcels, except for Courthouse Square, are zoned Downtown Commercial (CD) and the General Plan Land Use is Retail and Business Services. The project site is developed with a one- to three-story commercial office building that is currently vacant. Since its redevelopment in the 1970s, the building has been occupied by financial services institutions that provided ground-floor retail banking and drive-thru services. However, in recent years, the building has been vacant, and its unsecured exterior areas has attracted loiterers.

Abutting the site's western parcel boundary is the five-story Museum on the Square commercial building that was redeveloped in the mid-2000s. The City's Transit Mall/2nd Street public transit area adjoins the project site on its southern parcel boundary. The Transit Mall serves as a major transfer point for Santa Rosa's CityBus service, with a majority of bus routes beginning and ending there, as well as Sonoma County Transit, Golden Gate Transit, and Mendocino Transit Authority. The project site is bounded on the north by 3rd Street, beyond which is located Courthouse Square, and on the east by Santa Rosa Avenue. Surrounding development consists of commercial or mixed-use buildings.

Image 2: Aerial view of land use context (from 3rd Street/Santa Rosa Ave. intersection)



Source: Project Plan Set dated received by the City on September 14, 2020.

Project History

May 21, 2020	Required Concept Design Review was conducted by the Design Review Board
June 15, 2020	Required Pre-application Neighborhood Meeting was held
July 8, 2020	Minor Design Review application was submitted
July 17, 2020	Notice of Application was distributed by mail
July 17, 2020	Notice of Incomplete Application was issued
July 28, 2020	Project application was deemed complete
September 12-13	Notice of Public Hearing was distributed by mail, onsite signage was posted, and advertised in the Press Democrat

ANALYSIS

In addition to being consistent with the project site's General Plan Land Use designation, new land uses and structures are required to comply with allowable land use permit and approval requirements, development standards and conditions of approval, and shall be consistent with applicable City Design Guidelines as applied through the design review process, or through the approval of a Conditional Use Permit or Minor Conditional Use Permit ([Zoning Code Section 20-21.020](#)).

Due to its location within a Priority Development Area, the project is subject to the City's Resilient City Development Measures, intended to address housing needs and economic development within the City following the Tubbs and Nuns fires of October 2017, as contained in Chapter 20-16 of the Zoning Code. In accordance with Section 20-16.060, *Residential Component of a Mixed-use Project* is a permitted use in CD zoning districts; therefore, all proposed land uses for this mixed-use project are permitted by right.

Design Review is required for new construction and, pursuant to Section 20-16.070, Design Review approval for new development is delegated to the Zoning Administrator through the Minor Design Review process. Additionally, Concept Design Review by the Design Review Board and a Pre-application Neighborhood Meeting are required. As indicated in the Project History section, both were completed prior to application submittal. Applicable Design Guidelines are those contained in Section 2 – Core Area.

The project is subject to Commercial district development standards ([§ 20-23.040](#)), CD zoning district standards ([§ 20-23.060](#)), and regulations contained in the Station Area combining district, which is intended to enhance and reinforce distinctive characteristics within the Downtown Specific Plan area and create comfortable walking environments ([§20-28.060](#)).

General Plan

The project site's General Plan Land Use designation is *Retail and Business Services*. Although this land use designation generally only allows retail and service enterprises, offices, and restaurants, Land Use and Livability Policy LUL-E-6 allows residential or mixed-use development in the *Retail and Business Services* designations. In accordance with General Plan Policy LUL-E-6, the proposed *Mixed-use* was determined to be an allowed use in the site's current *Retail and Business Services* General Plan Land Use designation.

Other key General Plan Goals and Policies advanced by this project include:

LAND USE AND LIVABILITY	
LUL-A	Goal – Foster a compact rather than a scattered development pattern in order to reduce travel, energy, land, and materials consumption while promoting greenhouse gas emission reductions citywide.
LUL-A-1	As part of plan implementation – including development review, capital improvements programming, and preparation of detailed area plans – foster close land use/transportation relationships to promote use of alternative transportation modes and discourage travel by automobile.
LUL-E	Goal – Promote livable neighborhoods by requiring compliance with green building programs to ensure that new construction meets high standards of energy efficiency and sustainable material use. Ensure that everyday shopping, park and recreation facilities, and schools are within easy walking distance of most residents.

LUL-E-2	As part of planning and development review activities, ensure that projects, subdivisions, and neighborhoods are designed to foster livability. Diversity and Choice. Neighborhoods should provide choices for residents with different values. Different housing types and locations within the city accommodate a diverse range of needs.
LUL-E-6	See introductory paragraph this section.
LUL-F	Goal – Maintain a diversity of neighborhoods and varied housing stock to satisfy a wide range of needs.
LUL-F-1	Do not allow development at less than the minimum density prescribed by each residential land use classification.
LUL-F-3	Maintain a balance of various housing types in each neighborhood and ensure that new development does not result in undue concentration of a single housing type in any one neighborhood.
LUL-L	Goal - Ensure land uses that promote use of transit.
URBAN DESIGN	
UD-B	Goal – Preserve and strengthen downtown as a vital and attractive place.
UD-B-2	Encourage, promote, and assist in the development of housing units within downtown for a mix of income levels and housing types, including integrating housing into existing buildings as mixed-use.
HOUSING	
H-A	Goal – Meet the housing needs of all Santa Rosa residents.
H-A-5	Improve community acceptance of higher-density housing through community-based outreach, recognition of existing livable neighborhoods, and assurance of well-designed, high-density projects.
H-G	Goal – Develop energy-efficient residential units and rehabilitate existing units to reduce energy consumption.
H-G-1	Maximize energy efficiency in residential areas. Utilize the following techniques: Implement CALGreen Tier 1 standards.
H-G-2	Require, as allowed by CALGreen Tier 1 standards, energy efficiency through site planning and building design by assisting residential developers in identifying energy conservation and efficiency measures appropriate to the Santa Rosa area.
H-G-3	Promote energy efficiency in the provision and use of water in all residential developments.

Other Applicable Plans – Downtown Station Area Specific Plan

The project site is located within the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan's Courthouse Square Sub-area. The Downtown Plan defines the development framework that supports a lively City center and implements the City's vision of a connected, multi-modal Downtown area, with a mix of housing, shopping, and jobs in a compact area, that preserves the City's history, character, and natural benefits of the existing environment while allowing for change. It seeks to enhance Downtown's distinct identity and character, encourage a diverse mix of uses, incorporate transit-oriented development, and create additional pedestrian-friendly connections.

The Plan's Courthouse Square Sub-area is envisioned to be developed into a vibrant mixed-use area with new housing added to the existing office and retail uses. Appropriate high-density housing is encouraged to increase activity at night, provide more street life, and improve safety. Ground floor retail and ground floor activity generating uses would promote a pedestrian friendly environment. Key Downtown Plan Land Use Goals and Policies advanced by this project include ensuring that land uses promote use of transit (SP-LU-1), encourage variety in new housing development (SP-LU-2), and provide a variety of housing types and densities in the Specific Plan Area (SP-LU-2.1).

Downtown Plan policies and regulations are codified in the Zoning Code's Downtown Commercial (CD) zoning district and -Station Area (-SA) combining district, as well as the Section 2 – Core Area of the City's Design Guidelines. Therefore, the proposed project was reviewed for compliance with current Zoning Code regulations and consistency with current Core Area design guidelines.

Zoning

Planning Staff reviewed the project for compliance with use and development standards contained in the CD District Development Standards, CD zoning district standards, and -SA combining district standards. Planning staff concluded that the project complies with all required use and development standards as described below.

Commercial District Development Standards	
Residential Density	No maximum density. The proposed project would achieve a density of 240 units/acre.
Setbacks	Front and Corner Side setbacks are not allowed, and the project complies with the requirement. No Side-Interior or Rear setbacks are required if project is not adjacent to a residential use. The project proposes a Side-Interior setback of 1-5 feet.
Lot Coverage	A maximum 100% lot coverage is allowed, and the project achieves \pm 71% lot coverage.
Height Limit	The maximum height limit is 10 stories and seven stories is proposed.
CD zoning district standards	
Location of Allowable Land Uses	This section requires that ground floors of non-residential structures be limited to pedestrian uses. The project proposes residential use for the majority of the ground floor square footage. Ground floor residential units along Santa Rosa Avenue have exterior entrances, and the building's primary residential entrance fronts Courthouse Square. A secondary residential entrance is off the Transit Mall, and the ground floor commercial use includes a Santa Rosa Avenue entryway and a Transit Mall service window. The multitude of access points from the pedestrian right-of-way combined with the project's primarily residential use ensure a high level of pedestrian activity on the projects street frontages, an increase in visual interest of the street, and conspicuous expression of the nature of the use.
Building Placement	Although not required for residential buildings, the building is placed at the back of the public sidewalk along the majority of its public frontages.
Architectural	Visual continuity and pedestrian activity are encouraged by creating a

Treatment	human-scale environment along the pedestrian right-of-way through the use of landscape planters, street trees and other trees adjacent to the sidewalk, clear, untinted windows at ground level, off-set wall lines, and wall-mounted exterior lighting. Project data demonstrates that A minimum of 50 percent of the building frontage width above the first story is differentiated by recessed windows, balconies, offset planes, or other architectural details providing dimensional relief.
Pedestrian Access	The building's primary pedestrian access points are recessed as required.
Height Limit	The proposed 7-story building is within the 10-story maximum height. As such, it doesn't overwhelm existing structures, and its scale seeks to reflect and build upon existing building heights and masses throughout the Downtown core.
-SA combining district standards	
Urban Center Street Type for 3rd Street and Santa Rosa Avenue	The project is within the building height allowable range of 2-10 stories.
	A mix of Residential and Activity Generating ground floor uses is allowed, and the project proposes both types of ground floor uses.
	The building is placed at the property line for at least 80% of the project frontages, except that along 3 rd Street the building is set back ± 2-3 feet to allow additional space for pedestrian facilities and street trees.
	All building entries face street frontages. A reduction in the required minimum 12-foot floor to ceiling height [§ 20-28.060(E)(1)(c)] to the dimension shown on Attachment 4 – Project Plan Set has been approved by the Director – Planning and Economic Development pursuant to the authority granted in Section 21-02.110 Affordable housing incentives after first finding that the proposed exterior design would support a visual interpretation of an overall ground floor height of 12-feet.
	Section 20-28.060(E)(1)(e) requires that properties facing <i>directly</i> into Courthouse Square shall incorporate ground floor uses. Planning staff's evaluation of the historic development pattern at the time that the Downtown Plan was crafted concludes that requirement is applicable to those properties along the East, West, and North sides of the square. The dimensional and use characteristics of 3 rd Street along Courthouse Square's South boundary prevent the project from interacting with Courthouse Square in the same manner as those buildings facing directly into the Square.

Parking

Zoning Code [Section 20-36.040 Number of parking spaces required](#), Table 3-4, requires one reserved parking space per unit for projects within the Courthouse Square sub-area. Therefore, the minimum parking requirement for this project would be 120 spaces. Due to site constraints resulting from the project's multiple street frontages and Transit Mall operational constraints, development of on-site parking was not feasible. To encourage alternative methods of providing required parking in the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan boundary, [Section 20-36.050\(C\)\(4\)\(e\)](#) allows "Projects that are unable to provide the total number of required on-site

parking spaces may consider paying for the use of shared spaces within other parking facilities, in-lieu of applying for a parking reduction or variance.” Responding to the project’s site constraints, unique project characteristics, and the flexibility incorporated into Downtown parking regulations, the project proposes a 25% parking reduction and reservation of 90 resident parking spaces in City Garage 12 at 555 1st Street.

The project’s parking demand and parking supply in City Garage 12 were analyzed in the Parking Demand Analysis for the One Santa Rosa Avenue Project memo dated June 26, 2020, prepared by Fehr & Peers (see Attachment 5). The study found that parking demand, when reduced by 15% as a result of the project’s proximity to rail and bus transit, would be slightly less than 120 spaces on a daily basis. The 15% reduction was a conservative estimate based upon the *ITE Parking Generation Manual, 5th Edition*, published in 2019. The study notes that the ITE Manual recommends an 18% reduction for projects located within one-half mile of rail transit; however, the ITE Manual presents no data on reduction factors for projects located immediately adjacent to major transit hubs. The current Zoning Code allows for a minor adjustment parking reduction of up to 25% “when a parking reduction up to 25 percent is needed to approve a Zoning Clearance or a Design Review Application” [§ 20-36.050(C)(1)(a)]. The review authority must first find that the proposed use would generate parking demand different from Table 3-4 and that the number of spaces approved would be sufficient for the safe, convenient, and efficient operation of the use.

The study also found that during the one-year time period from March 2019 to March 2020, the highest observed one-hour occupancy in City Garage 12 was 58 percent, or 399 spaces occupied (out of 688 spaces). Based upon its review of project characteristics including (1) its Downtown location, (2) its adjacency to a major transit facility with multiple local and regional transit service providers, and (3) its proximity to a 688-space public parking facility demonstrating $\pm 40\%$ vacancy, Planning staff concludes that the project would generate parking demand different from Table 3-4 and that 90 reserved parking spaces in Garage 12, when combined with additionally available one-time parking and reserved space options at Garage 12 would be sufficient for the safe, convenient, and efficient operation of the use.

The analysis concluded that parking demand can be satisfied by reserving spaces in City Garage 12 and that Garage 12 has enough capacity to accommodate the project’s residential and commercial parking demand with room to spare, even at peak maximum occupancy. The project is conditioned to require the developer to enter into agreement with the City to provide at least 90 reserved spaces in City Garage 12. The agreement must be approved by City Council prior to issuance of a project building permit for new construction, and the project must comply with Downtown Station Area Specific Plan and Zoning Code parking requirements in effect at the time that a building permit is issued.

Because the project does not include any on-site parking areas, site access was reviewed in a required Traffic Technical Operational Memorandum dated August 20, 2020, also prepared by Fehr & Peers (see Attachment 6). The following conclusions were reported:

- Both crosswalks, as well as the sidewalk system, would adequately serve movement between the City Garage 12 access point and the access points for the building.
- On-street parking spaces will be required to facilitate move-in/move-out and passenger pickup/drop-off activities as the project will not provide an off-street loading dock for these activities nor will it provide on-site parking.
- To accommodate passenger pick-up/drop-off activity associated with the project (as well as for other users of the Second Street Transit Mall and other nearby businesses and commercial activities), on-street parking spaces along the Santa Rosa Avenue frontage

of the project site should be converted to passenger loading zones.

- To accommodate move-in/move-out activity, as well as to promote efficient delivery activities for goods for the future residents of site (and current/future businesses in the area), parking space along southbound Santa Rosa Avenue between Third Street and the Second Street Transit Mall should be converted to commercial loading zone.

Project conditions contained in the Engineering Development Services Exhibit “A” implement the memorandum’s recommendations for providing commercial and passenger loading zones.

Image 3: Proximity of Garage 12 to project site. Project site is at existing building in lower front corner with Garage 12 in the upper rear portion of image.



Source: Google Street Views, March 2019, image retrieved on September 16, 2020.

Design Guidelines

Evaluation of the project’s consistency with Section 2 – Core Area Design Guidelines is the topic of required Concept Design Review, analyzed by Planning staff during Planning review, and decided by the review authority during Minor Design Review. Concept Design Review was provided by the Design Review Board (DRB) on May 21, 2020, and comments provided by the Design Review Board are recorded in the meeting minutes (Attachment 7 – Concept Design Review meeting minutes). Project information submitted as part of the project application incorporates DRB comments, and Planning staff requests for revisions are additionally incorporated into Attachment 3- Design Narrative and Attachment 4 – Project Plan Set presented for review at the Minor Design Review public hearing.

Design Summary

The design intent of proposed 7-story, 120-unit mixed-use building seeks to create a strong presence on a site located between Courthouse Square, the Transit Mall, with frontages on three Downtown streets, by locating the building’s most stylistic elements at the prominent 3rd Street/Santa Rosa Avenue intersection. The architecture is complementary to the adjacent buildings in form and mass, but it punctuates the corner with a multi-story lobby entrance as part

of a chamfered corner that extends to the roof. The building's form creates an exterior façade with a definitive base, middle and top utilizing banding on the second floor and a stepped back top floor that also introduces new material and color. Exterior façade materials include a combination of panelized cladding, stucco and storefront glazing.

The five-story rear portion of the building on 2nd Street maximizes natural light penetration into the building's courtyard and diversifies the project's massing. The project design is attentive to the pedestrian-level experience at the sidewalk level. All of the ground floor units fronting on Santa Rosa Avenue have stoops with recessed unit entries that encourage residents to access multiple points in the building and along Santa Rosa Avenue, in addition to the main lobby at the corner. Additionally, a ground floor café anchors the corner at 2nd Street/Santa Rosa Avenue to provide a focal point for this end of the building and to connect the commercial space to the Transit Mall.

The project's landscaping and community spaces support its residential use, respond to surrounding street-level and upper-level environments, and provide multiple opportunities for residents to experience active and more tranquil common areas. The ground floor courtyard would be heavily landscaped with seating areas for residents to enjoy. Studio units at the courtyard will also have their own private patios. Residents would traverse the courtyard as they walk from their cars parked in the nearby garage and enter the building. Off the courtyard, indoor amenity space would open into the courtyard and would also support 84 long-term bicycle parking spaces. The primary outdoor gathering place in the building would be a rooftop deck that overlooks Courthouse Square. Screening of rooftop-mounted mechanical equipment would benefit all persons who interact with upper-level views of the proposed project. A green roof and bioretention planter on the fifth-floor roof in the rear of the building enhance upper level views and contribute to the project's sustainability goals. The building will include energy efficient MEP systems and appliances. All landscaping will be climate appropriate. The building will meet the City's Green Building Standards.

Image 4: Proposed project design (from Courthouse Square)



Source: Project Plan Set dated received by the City on September 14, 2020.

At the street-level, street trees and other at-grade landscaping reflect the design team's interpretation of the best use of the public right-of-way. Principal street trees are planted in

trench tree wells adjacent to the building face in order to maximize visual interest to the block for pedestrians and other passers-by, as well as residents. By lining the building facades with deep and long planting wells in trench form, and with the total amount and density of planting, the design team proposes that the likelihood of long-term plant and tree health and growth would be substantially increased, as compared with the alternative of placing trees close to the curb where access issues would require that they be in individual, stand-alone wells.

Given the location, length and height of the building's facades, the design team feels that the shade-giving role of street trees is of much less importance in this location, as the building itself provides significant shade. Trees would provide texture, variety, and general visual interest, and they are intended to soften and humanize the streetscape. The varied colors and textures of the plants and trees running the length of Santa Rosa Avenue would provide a substantial contrast to the harder edges that are the fronts of all the surrounding and nearby commercial buildings. By designing a colonnade of street trees, including the pairing of trimmed trees at each entryway, the project seeks to provide a domestic warmth to the residential entries on the street, and signal a fundamental change from a purely commercial zone to a mixed-use one.

Images 5-6: Rooftop outdoor space and rear elevation



Source: Project Plan Set dated received by the City on September 14, 2020.

Consistency Analysis

Key findings from Planning staff's Design Guidelines consistency analysis under Section 2 – Core Area Design Goals and Guidelines are presented below.

2.1 – Downtown Area Density, Buffering, Historic Compatibility, Rooftops, Courthouse Square	
Goals 2.1.1 thru 2.1.4	The project encourages dense development in the Downtown area. As a mixed-use residential project in Downtown, the project would promote synergy between uses and pedestrian activity that extends beyond the typical 9 to 5 workday and decrease the need for commuting. Additionally, the project would contribute residential development to an overwhelmingly commercial core resulting in greater diversification of Downtown land use. As a residential use, it provides for employee lifestyle options that can reduce commuting. The project would incorporate highly visible civic art into the multi-story entryway.
Goals 2.1.5 thru 2.1.12	The proposed project faces Courthouse Square from across 3 rd Street, and the applicant has demonstrated how its architectural design is organized in consideration of its relationship to the Square. Through implementation of a tripartite horizontal division of the façade (base, middle, crown), the proposed design reflects notable historic buildings such as the Rosenberg Building, while the use of modern materials and scaled-back architectural details firmly locates the building in contemporary design. Planning finds that the proposed development reflects the development intensity of the Courthouse Square core

	<p>area in building scale, articulation, and mass.</p> <p>The project is unique in that it would introduce ground floor residential units to the Square viewshed and diversify the type and level of activity occurring around the Square. This supports the Downtown Plan's vision of introducing housing to existing office and retail uses. Although gateway sites are defined throughout the City, no gateway sites or terminated vistas in the Downtown area are identified in the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan or Zoning Code. However, the proposed project responds to the project's context in its design proposal.</p>
2.2 – Public Streets Character, Pedestrians, Art, and Lighting,	
2.2.1 thru 2.2.10	<p>The proposed project includes standard street trees, public benches, and bike racks on 3rd Street, as well as benches on the 2nd Street Transit Mall. Street trees are not provided along the Second Street Transit Mall, as they would interfere with the bus service. The Santa Rosa Avenue frontage would have street trees immediately adjacent to the building, building-mounted pedestrian-scale lighting, and a clear walkway. A walk-up service area is planned for the commercial space's Transit Mall frontage. A wide sidewalk with street trees on 3rd St. would provide ample opportunity for pedestrians to distance from street. Bollards are proposed for the 3rd/Santa Rosa Ave. intersection, and curb-site parking on Santa Rosa Avenue is retained.</p> <p>The project design would provide 90% glazing at the café and the main building entry, with 25% glazing in the residences. Planning staff notes that the ground floor uses are residential uses and the glazing and untinted windows are appropriate for proposed ground floor uses.</p> <p>The project proposes Equitone Natura, described as having a smooth, felted wool appearance and a sense of texture, on the first two stories of the building. Wood-like accents panels on Second Street would create visual warmth and variety on the façade. At the café and main building entrance, the space between the back of the sidewalk and the building would be embellished with concrete pavers. Planning staff recommends extending the use of differentiated paving materials to residential front stoop areas.</p> <p>Residential use would locate persons in proximate to employment opportunities and social gathering places. It provides easy access to the Transit Mall and SMART train and reduces the convenience of automobile ownership in an urban environment by locating parking in a nearby parking garage. Public sidewalks are functional and designs encourage movement to and from places.</p>
2.3 – Buildings Spatial Rhythm, Entrances, Parking, Scale, Green Building Design	
Goals 2.3.1 thru 2.3.13	<p>Project setbacks reflect the 0-foot setbacks of existing buildings along Santa Rosa Avenue and Third Street. The building elevations clearly express the uses within with prominent front elevations across 3rd Street from Courthouse Square with a two-story glazed opening revealing the public lobby of the building. Front stoops on Santa Rosa Avenue highlight individually-accessed residences within; and across all upper elevations, the regular rhythmic pattern of pairs of large and small windows offer a pattern of living and bedroom areas of a residential building, with the parapet and set-back at the 7th floor further indicating the</p>

<p>Goals 2.3.1 thru 2.3.13</p>	<p>residential use. At the corner of 2nd Street and Santa Rosa Avenue, a public café invites the public into the building and supports street-level activity. Planning staff observes that the residential doorways and associated frontages form individual bays and create meaningful subdivisions in the building's facades on both street frontages. Planning staff notes that the individual residences create multiple tenancies at street level and, with access taken from the public sidewalk, they serve to support pedestrian activity. The three-tier horizontal scale of the building reflects similar design elements of nearby buildings surrounding Courthouse Square. The rhythm and similarity of openings honors existing historic architecture, while details and materials clearly identify this building as new construction. The applicant has demonstrated that a minimum of 50 percent of the building frontage width above the first story is differentiated by recessed windows, balconies, offset planes, or other architectural details that provide dimensional relief.</p> <p>The design employs several strategies to create human scale. At the ground level, entry doors are recessed enough to create interest, but not so much that they attract nuisance behaviors. The top residential floor features a wrapping full depth balcony which provides these units with a livable outdoor space and crowns the façade with a differentiated mass. The façade features windows and doors that relate directly to the human scale and calibrate the upper façade which features windows of similar size and shape.</p> <p>The proposed project's design would provide much-needed housing in the core area by maximizing the number of units. The proposed project seeks to address not only the unfulfilled demand for housing, but also for a long-term solution in a location where empty storefronts would be an eyesore. When the demand for ground floor retail or commercial space in this location outstrips the need for housing, the construction system used on the lower floors, concrete post and slab, would allow the ground and second floor to be renovated without affecting the residential units above.</p> <p>Planning recognizes that the project steps back at the top of the 6th level rather than the 3rd or 5th levels as recommended by Downtown Plan development guidelines. Consistency with Design Guidelines does not require compliance with all Design Guidelines.</p>
<p>2.5 & 2.6 – Plazas, Open Space, Street Furnishings Palette</p>	
<p>Goals 2.5.1 thru 2.6.10</p>	<p>Other than sidewalks, the project is not required to provide public open space for pedestrians. The project is unique in its location between two significant Downtown public spaces, and the Santa Rosa Avenue pedestrian walkway primarily serves to connect movement between these spaces and areas beyond.</p> <p>Planning staff feels that this project as proposed supports a vibrant Downtown street life in design and by introducing 120 new residential units to the Downtown area that will support business and employment goals.</p> <p>Three benches would be relocated along Second Street. These benches were at the curb and are proposed to move near the building wall, clearing the sidewalk for pedestrians. Ample seating and public gathering opportunities are offered at and around Courthouse Square. Bollards, short-term bicycle parking facilities, and waste receptacles are proposed consistent with design guidelines.</p>

Design Review Board Concept Review Comments

Design Review Board comments are provided in Attachment 7 and summarized below.

- Add more architectural detail or implement push/pull of fenestration or massing for variation on the facades and to echo surrounding buildings;
- Consider changing unit mix for variation of the façade;
- Consider Juliette balconies to create private space or larger living room windows;
- Consider rolling screen material;
- Consider electric bike charging stations;
- Consider bolder/warmer colors;
- Consider flexibility on ground floor and possibly 2nd floor to allow for mixed-use or 2-story units.
- Enliven the corner of Santa Rosa Ave and 3rd St to stand proud;
- Activate the lobby with something that can be seen from a distance. Create more human scale at the first 2 floors;
- Consider a bodega market on the north side of the building; and
- Consider 8-10 foot sidewalk as per surrounding area, in lieu of 6' 3", which is not big enough for a Downtown sidewalk. Consider multiple entries for the different street-facing facades.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and qualifies for exemption from review under CEQA Guidelines Section 15182 (Projects Pursuant to a Specific Plan), Section 15183 (Projects Consistent with a General Plan), and a Class 32 exemption under Section 15332.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15182 applies to projects located within a transit priority area as defined by Public Resources Code PRC § 21099, the project is consistent with a specific plan for which an environmental impact report was certified, and where the project is consistent with the general use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area in a Sustainable Communities Strategy. The project is exempt under Section 15182 in that the project is located immediately adjacent to the Santa Rosa Transit Mall, which is a major transit stop with bus routes offering 15-minute headways; on October 9, 2007, the City Council, concurrent with the adoption of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (Specific Plan), certified the Specific Plan EIR (SCH 2006072104), and the density, design, and infrastructure plan under the proposed project is consistent with the adopted Specific Plan; and the proposed project is consistent with the general use designations, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area in the Plan Bay Area 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) prepared by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) for the San Francisco Bay Area Region.

CEQA Guidelines section 15162 provides that no additional review is required where an EIR is certified or a negative declaration has been adopted for a project and there are no substantial changes to the project or changed circumstances which will result in new or more severe environmental impacts and there is no new information showing the project will have significant effects not discussed in the negative declaration.

The proposed land use and density are consistent with the policies contained in the Specific Plan and that were codified in the current General Plan Land Use designation and Zoning District for the site.; there have been no changes in circumstances resulting in new or more severe impacts; and there is no new information indicating that the project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous negative declaration. Therefore, the proposed Project qualifies for the exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15182, and California Public Resources Code 21155.4, and no further environmental review is required.

The Project qualifies for a Class 32 exemption under California Government Code Section 15332 (In-fill Development Projects) of the State CEQA Guidelines in that the Project is consistent with Santa Rosa General Plan 2035, the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, and the current City of Santa Rosa Zoning Code; the Project is located within City of Santa Rosa jurisdiction, on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses; the Project site has been previously developed and has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species; the Project will not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and The Project site is located in a developed area where it can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. City staff has reviewed the plans and conditions the project appropriately.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments were received in response to the Notice of Concept Review, during the Concept Review public meeting, at the Neighborhood Meeting, and in response to the notice of application. Comments were generally supportive of Downtown development and a seven-story building. Concerns about the proposed project include:

- **Proposed ground floor uses.** Generally, the public would like to see commercial-oriented ground floor uses along both facades.
- **Architectural details.** Many commenters suggested that the project design lacks architectural details, and they expressed opposition to the proposed project colors.
- **Off-site parking.** Concerns were expressed about displacement of commercial uses currently using Garage 12 as a primary parking resource.

ISSUES

There are no unresolved issue remaining with this project.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Zoning Administrator, by resolution, approve Minor Design Review of 1 Santa Rosa Avenue, a 7-story, mixed-use building comprised of ground-floor commercial space and 120 market-rate and affordable multi-family housing units located at 1 Santa Rosa Avenue.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Disclosure Form
- Attachment 2 Location Map
- Attachment 3 Design Narrative with addendum dated received September 14, 2020
- Attachment 4 Project Plan Set with revisions dated received September 14, 2020 and with additional information dated received September 17, 2020, incorporated
- Attachment 5 Parking Demand Analysis prepared by Fehr & Peers dated received July 8, 2020
- Attachment 6 Traffic Technical Operational Memorandum prepared by Fehr & Peers dated received August 20, 2020
- Attachment 7 Design Review Board Regular Meeting Minutes dated May 21, 2020
- Attachment 8 Public comments thru 09/22/2020 at 4:00 PM
- Resolution
- Exhibit "A"

CONTACT

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