

Berkeley Plaza

2065 Kittredge St., Berkeley, CA 94704

APPLICATION STATEMENT

Revised Date: 5/24/2022

Berkeley Plaza is a proposed eight-story mixed-use project located at 2065 Kittredge St. The design goal was to create a well-articulated and sculpted building which creates a unique statement in the area and provides much-needed student housing in the Downtown area. The approximately 225,563 sf, eight-story project will be 87'0" in height to the top of the roof. The site area is 33,582 sf. All units will be rental. The project will provide 5% of the base project as very low income units, qualifying for a 20% density bonus under state law (described below). The project consists of 188 dwelling units in eight stories with a mix of studios, one bedroom, two bedroom, three bedroom, and live/work units, ranging in size from 385 sf to 1,374 sf. There are 43 parking spaces provided in an underground parking level.

The architectural design of Berkeley Plaza is a contemporary blend of styles that will fit well into the context of the mixed historical streetscape surrounding the site. The project is designed to complement the scale and materiality of the neighboring historic Shattuck Hotel and the rest of the neighborhood. The design incorporates a traditional brick base with Mission style accent detailing and a more modern architectural mass above, referencing both the historic and the cutting-edge modern character of the City of Berkeley. At the ground level, the project will feature a pedestrian friendly streetscape and a landscaped plaza, creating an appealing lower level experience for residents and passing neighbors.

The overall landscape and hardscape design minimizes long-term maintenance impacts in an effort to create a more Bay-friendly and environmentally-responsible project. The ground level amenities and the roof-top deck will create excellent occupant locations for gathering spots and healthy outdoor living.



The proposed Project is a less-intensive version of the project analyzed in the certified EIR for the 2211 Harold Way project (aka, the Residences at Berkeley Plaza). The administrative record for that project is available here:

https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Planning_and_Development/Zoning_Adjustment_Board/2211_Harold.aspx

The Final EIR is located here:

https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_PHN/2015-03-30_Final%20EIR%20and%20RTC_2211%20Harold.pdf. The Draft EIR for that project can be accessed through the following links:

- https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_ZAB/Draft%20EIR_part1_2211%20Harold%20Way.pdf
- https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_ZAB/Draft%20EIR_part2_2211%20Harold%20Way.pdf
- https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_ZAB/Draft%20EIR_Appendix_part1.pdf
- https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_ZAB/Draft%20EIR_Appendix_part2.pdf
- https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_ZAB/Draft%20EIR_Appendix_part3.pdf
- https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_ZAB/Draft%20EIR_Appendix_part4%20.pdf

Part 3 of the Draft EIR is a 205-page historic resources technical report prepared by Architectural Resources Group for Rincon and discusses impacts re demolition, design and construction as well as a discussion of that project's compliance with the Secretary of Interior Standards. Additional historic documentation includes a report prepared by Bridget Maley of architecture+planning (available here: https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_ZAB/2012-02-27_APP_Historic%20Rpt_2211%20Harold.pdf),

Housing Affordability/Density Bonus Statement

Berkeley Plaza is proposed as an all-rental project and would comply with the City's Housing Mitigation Fee Ordinance by restricting rental rates according to the California State Density Bonus law. Berkeley Plaza will include Very Low Income Units in order to qualify for density bonus units, as well as one incentive/concession and waivers (for height, rooftop projections, setbacks, landscape coverage, and open space) under the State Density Bonus Law (Government Code section 65915). The applicant would pay the resulting affordable housing impact fees reduced by virtue of the provision of the very low-income units. As noted above, the proposed level of affordability is at 5 percent of the base project (164 units) at very low-income levels. The number of very low income units would be 9 units and these units would be reasonably dispersed throughout the building. The affordable units would be of comparable size, and would contain, on average, the same number of bedrooms, and have comparable appearance, materials and finish quality as the market rate units in the project. These units would also have access to the same common areas and amenities as the market rate units. The 20 percent density bonus would allow for up to 33 additional units, but only 24 of those bonus units are included in the project for a final total of 188 units.

Waivers and Modifications Requested to Accommodate Density Bonus

By virtue of the project's qualification for a density bonus, it qualifies for the waiver/reduction of any development standard that, if applied, would physically preclude the construction of the project with bonus units and the concession/incentive. (Gov. Code sect. 65915(e)(1).) The applicant will provide support to confirm that the following waivers/reductions are necessary so as not to physically preclude construction of the project as proposed.

- **Waiver to exceed the height limit – Proposed at 87'-0", where 60 ft/75 ft with use permit is the limit.** The 87'-0" proposed is measured to top of roof and does not include the additional 5 feet parapet allowed by right. Complying with the standard would require the building to reduce the number of floors and eliminate residential units. This would physically preclude the construction of the Project as proposed, including the number of residential units allowed under the State Density Bonus Law.
- **Waiver to construct rooftop projections, such as mechanical appurtenances or architectural elements which exceed the maximum height limit for the district.** Accommodating mechanical appurtenances without exceeding the maximum height limit requires a reduction in residential area. This would physically preclude the construction of the Project as proposed, including the number of residential units allowed under the State Density Bonus Law.
- **Waiver for minor encroachments above the sidewalks along Harold Way – encroachment up to 30" for a length of 110 feet and up to 12" for a length of 40 feet.** The encroachments allow for additional residential density to be captured in the Project. Without this above-ground encroachment, residential density would be reduced and would physically preclude the construction of the Project as proposed. We understand a separate application is required for the encroachment request to be granted. The development team will pursue these approvals at a later date.
- **Waiver to reduce the 15' minimum front setbacks above 75'.** The constrained site physically prohibits the inclusion of this amount of setback. Inclusion of this additional setback would require reducing the building mass and residential density. Inclusion of this setback would physically preclude the construction of the Project as proposed, including the number of residential units that are allowed under the State Density Bonus Law.
- **Waiver to increase the 5' maximum front setbacks between 0' to 20'.** The increase setback between 0 and 20' in height allows for the inclusion of outdoor spaces on both Allston Way and Kittredge Street that are counted as usable open space and are open to the public.
- **Waiver to reduce the minimum landscape coverage of usable open space from 40% of the provided usable open space to 30% of the provided usable open space.** Reducing the minimum landscape coverage of the usable open space allows for more public plaza and seating areas that offer an amenity to both the residents of the site and the public.
- **Waiver to reduce the required parking spaces for the commercial spaces from 5 required spaces to 0 provided spaces.** Reducing the parking requirement for commercial spaces allows for more spaces dedicated to residential use.
- **Concession for reduction in useable open space and the percentage of associated landscaped area.** The Project qualifies for one concession and proposes to use it to reduce the amount of useable open space from 15,040 SF down to 13,548 SF, a 10% reduction. This concession will result in identifiable cost savings.

The cost per SF of for construction of the outdoor open space, including providing the necessary landscape, furniture and fixtures is estimated to be in the range of \$80/SF. Granting this concession provides approximately \$120,000 of cost savings, allowing for additional density to be captured and

to help provide for affordable housing costs.

Moreover, given the physical constraints of the site, inclusion of this additional outdoor space in full conformity with the City's requirements would require a reduction in building mass which will result in a residential density reduction. Due to the geometry of the site, this additional open space would need to be provided as an elevated terrace in place of what is currently proposed as residential units. In other words, were the open space requirement not reduced, it would result in the physical preclusion of the project as proposed (with the units added by virtue of the density bonus). As such, this reduction can also be justified as a density bonus waiver of development standards.

Berkeley Downtown Design Guidelines

Architectural design and detailing is provided in the architectural package consistent with the downtown design guidelines. Items considered:

- Proposed massing that incorporates elements to break up the façade planes and create visual play of light and shadow.
- Clear delineations between the ground and upper levels to form a visual base of an appropriate pedestrian scale.
- Change in material/plane at the top residential level to provide a defined building cap and a visual termination.
- Architectural features including canopies, recessed entries and accent materials are implemented to create visual interest at the base of the building.
- Durable materials proposed along the sidewalks.
- Accessible open space available to the public is provided along Kittredge Street and Allston Way to activate the sidewalks and provide a strong connection to the ground level commercial and amenities.
- Residential unit layouts and building configuration with open views toward the proposed courtyard and public streets.
- Service and refuse located along the service alley, hidden from view.
- Storefronts provided at the ground level to maintain transparency and maximize visibility for the interior.
- Arcades and building overhangs utilized where the building sets back at the ground level to maintain continuity of the street wall.
- Proposed colors and finishes harmonious with the prevalent earth-tone colors of downtown Berkeley.
- Publicly accessible street level entries provided on all public streets.
- Parking provided below grade hidden from view to maintain the pedestrian character of downtown.

Additionally, considerations were made for multiple significant design guidelines as identified in reviews of previous submissions.

- **Design Guideline #1 for Frontages, Setbacks, and Heights.**
The majority of the units along Harold Way have been converted to live/work units with the commercial component fronting the street and accessible directly from the sidewalks. Larger windows to provide transparency and activate the sidewalks are now part of the façade design Along Harold Way.

A courtyard fronting Kittredge Street and open to the public provides ample open space for the residents and public to enjoy. The courtyard location is chosen carefully to allow natural daylight to enter year-round. The main residential lobby, leasing office and ground level amenities are oriented toward the courtyard with the main residential entrance accessible directly from the courtyard. The ground level amenity fronting Allston Way is now proposed as an open to the public amenity with outdoor seating facing Allston. The architectural detailing around the outdoor seating along Allston & Harold is now designed to hold the edge of the street and provide street wall continuity.

A Waiver to increase the 5' frontage setbacks between 0' to 20' above sidewalks is requested at the following locations:

- 6'-1" along Harold Way at the NW corner outside of the commercial space to allow for seating/landscape. Planters are provided at that location right along the property edge.
 - 19'-1" along Alston Way frontage to accommodate outdoor seating outside of the commercial space.
 - 8'-8" along Kittredge at the SE corner near the parking entrance to improve visibility coming out of the parking deck. The building projects back out to the edge of the property 12' above the sidewalks at this location (overhang). Only the ground level is set-back from the property edge.
- **Design Guidelines #1 and #7 for Storefronts and Entrances**
Design revisions and program adjustments have been made to address the design requirements for Public Serving Frontages. Please refer to previous response for more detail.
 - **Design Guideline #10 for Frontages, Setbacks, and Heights.**
The proposed project includes massing projections between levels 3 and 7 for a large percentage of the footprint fronting public streets. This projection provides a defined project base and a visual setback between levels 7 & 8 to help break up the building scale. The horizontal delineation between levels 7 & 8 compliments the scale and massing of the Shattuck Hotel.
- An enlarged South elevation (Kittredge) is provided to better illustrate the scale and massing relationship between the proposed building and the Shattuck Hotel.
- **Design Guidelines #6 and #7 for Open Spaces**
Ground level open space along Kittredge Street and Allston way is designed to encourage public access and connectivity between ground level amenities and the sidewalks. The courtyard along Kittredge is located along the Southern edge of the building to maximize natural daylight.