



1814 Franklin St., Suite 400  
Oakland, CA 94612  
510.272.2910

January 16, 2025

Chris Turner, Senior Planner  
Planning Division  
City of Menlo Park  
701 Laurel Street  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

**Re: 155 Jefferson Drive (PRE2025-00001) – Project Description Letter**

Dear Mr. Turner:

On behalf of BRP 155 Jefferson Tenant LLC (the “Applicant”), we are pleased to provide this Project Description Letter consistent with the requirements for formal development applications that follow an SB 330 Preliminary Application for the Applicant’s housing development project at 155 Jefferson Drive (APN 055-242-100) (the “Property”) in the City of Menlo Park (the “City”), which consists of a new 199-unit multifamily apartment building that will include 29 affordable units (PRE2025-00001) (the “Project”).

***Purpose of the Proposal***

The purpose of the Project is to replace an outdated existing single-story office building with high-quality multi-family housing in the form of an eight-story residential building that will include 199 new homes, including 29 homes reserved for low- and very-low income families. This is consistent with the City’s own goal to achieve residential development at the Property, as articulated in the Sites Inventory for the 2023-2031 Housing Element.<sup>1</sup>

***Scope of Work***

The Project proposes to remove the existing single-story concrete building (32,528 square feet) and surface parking lot and construct a new eight-story building with 199 multi-family residential units and 200 parking spaces. The building will total 284,550 gross square feet.

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<sup>1</sup> See [City of Menlo Park 2023-2031 Housing Element](#), Sites Inventory (page 7-1-2) (re APN 055-242-100, to be developed in consolidation with surrounding parcels).

The first three levels of the proposed multi-family residential building would be Type I construction with five levels of Type III construction above. The multi-family residential building's roof would include screened mechanical units. The proposed height of the multi-family residential building would be 85 feet above grade, measured from an average grade of 9.75 feet to the top of roof structure. The proposed building ground floor would be set back for storefront uses between 6 feet to 21.5 feet. Ground floor with other uses would be set back between 12 feet and 35 feet.

The Project will also include a garage accessible via a 24-foot-wide driveway from the Drive Aisle/Hammerhead. The building's loading space would be located on the Drive Aisle/Hammerhead. The 3-story parking garage will be accompanied by double-height amenity and residential units. The garage will consist of 200 total parking spaces, including 78 mechanical parking spaces and 122 traditional parking spaces. One trash staging/loading space is proposed along the Drive Aisle/Hammerhead. Electrical vehicle chargers would be provided in compliance with Menlo Park Municipal Code Section 16.72.010 and Chapter 12.18 (California Green Building Standards Code Amendments). In addition, the Project would provide 300 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 30 short-term bicycle parking spaces.

### ***Architectural Style, Materials, Colors, and Construction Methods***

The Project enhances the Jefferson Drive streetscape through contemporary and distinct architecture with massing consistent with the zoning design standards. The design elevates the pedestrian experience through active frontages, façade modulation, material transitions, and transparency at a human scale. Datum lines, material and color changes, and articulated projections and recesses further define the building's character.

The architecture both contrasts and complements neighboring developments through refined materials such as natural metal finishes, ceramic tile, storefront with spandrel glazing, cementitious paneling, and stucco. The contrast between warm natural tones and white massing creates depth and visual interest while incorporating accent colors throughout. Durable, high-quality finishes and consistent material treatment across the elevations create a timeless, unified aesthetic that strengthens the immediate urban character. Further information can be found in the Plan Set for the Project elevation and architectural renderings on sheets A6.0 – A6.2 and A7.0 - A7.3. The color and materials board can be found within the plan set on sheet A8.0.



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### ***Basis for Site Layout***

The approximately 1.38 gross acre Property is comprised of a single parcel located at 155 Jefferson Drive in Menlo Park (APN 055-242-100). The site is Parcel “A” as shown on that certain parcel map being a combination of “Lot 5 Bohannon Industrial Park Unit No. 4 and Lot 11, Bohannon Industrial Park Unit No. 5”, which was filed in the Office of the Recorder of the County of San Mateo, State of California on May 4, 1971, in Book 12 of Maps Page(s) 34. The Property is situated along Jefferson Drive. The Property is currently developed with one office/ life science building and surface parking lot. There are no existing residential uses on the site.

This Property layout and orientation allow the Project to meet its program goals. The Project orientation and building floorplate configuration allows for maximum density while addressing the required standards for Fire and Life Safety, Building Code, vehicular ingress/egress and zoning controls. Along the west, the Project incorporates the City’s vision for a publicly accessible, privately maintained paseo on the ground floor that is contiguous with the adjacent existing western property’s paseo. The strategy to limit the circulation of vehicles around the northern edge of the property allows for the building footprint to utilize more of the site area for parking and density. The project layout maximizes double-loaded corridors with residential units, gaining efficiencies within the residential floorplate and allowed construction typology.

The multi-family building will also include approximately 18,450 square feet of open space through a combination of publicly accessible open space, private open space, and common open space. This includes an elevated podium courtyard area with lounge/outdoor seating areas, spa amenity, and landscaping areas. The Project will include approximately 8,190 square feet of total amenity spaces consisting of the ground floor lobby and leasing area, clubhouse, and fitness center.

### ***Existing and Proposed Uses***

The Property has a land-use designation of Mixed Use Residential (MUR) and is located in the zoning district classified as Residential Mixed Use (R-MU) and a Bonus (B) Overlay. It is currently developed with a 1-story concrete building (32,528 square feet) and surface parking lot. The existing structures will be demolished and replaced with 199 multi-family residential units and 200 parking spaces. The Project will include 29 total affordable units, including 20 very low income and 9 low income units. As discussed above, the Project also



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incorporates substantial open space in the form of the ground-level paseo and elevated courtyard space, as well as accompanying amenity spaces.

***Outreach to Neighboring Properties***

As recommended by the City of Menlo Park Public Notification Requirements, the Applicant will discuss Project plans with immediate neighbors, including those neighbors to the sides, rear, and across the street from the Property.

***State Density Bonus Benefits:***

The applicant has identified the need for 1 concession, 10 waivers, and reserves the right to make other waiver requests if needed at a later time. The density bonus, concession, and waivers are described below In **Exhibit A.**

We look forward to further discussions with the City and community as the Project continues through the development and environmental review phases. In the meantime, please let us know of any questions or comments.

## Exhibit A: State Density Bonus - Concessions and Waivers

DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS				
REGULATION	EXISTING/REQUIRED		PROPOSED PROJECT	COMPLIANCE
	BASE LEVEL	BONUS LEVEL		
FAR & DENSITY				
Maximum Residential Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	60% to 90%	>90% to 225%	± 337%	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
Density	20 du/ac to 30 du/ac	>30 du/ac to 100 du/ac	± 144 du/ac	DENSITY BONUS APPLIED

DESIGN STANDARDS				
STANDARD	EXISTING/REQUIRED		PROPOSED PROJECT	COMPLIANCE
	BASE LEVEL	BONUS LEVEL		
NOTE: As per the City of Menlo Park General Plan Circulation Element Figure 2: Street Classifications, Jefferson Dr is categorized as a Mixed Use Collector Street				
RELATIONSHIP TO THE STREET				
Frontage Landscaping	Min. 40% (50% of which shall provide on-site infiltration of stormwater runoff)	Min. 25% (50% of which should provide on-site infiltration of stormwater runoff)	Frontage Landscaping area will not infiltrate stormwater.	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
	NOTE: Setback areas adjacent to active ground floor uses, including lobbies, retail, and eating and drinking establishments are excepted.			

BUILDING MASS AND SCALE				
Minimum Stepback	N/A	10 ft for a minimum of 75% of the building face along public street(s)	± 127 ft out of ± 202 ft steps back 10 ft, which is ± 63% of the building façade along Jefferson Dr.	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
Major Building Modulations	Min. one (1) recess of 15 ft wide by 10 ft deep per 200 ft of façade length from the ground level to the top of the building's base height		Along Jefferson Dr, one recess of 127 ft out of 202 ft of facade length is provided. The recess depth is 4 ft from Level 1 to Level 4. The recess depth is 10 ft from Level 4 to Roof Level. Along the elevation facing the Paseo, one recess of 32 ft wide by 10 ft deep is provided from Level 4 to Roof Level.	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
Minor Building Modulations	Min. recess of 5 ft wide by 5 ft deep per 50 ft of façade length		Along Jefferson Dr, balcony projections of 2 ft depth and 9'-6" to 10'-1" width are spaced less than 50 ft apart and provided from Level 3 to Level 8 / Roof Level. Along the elevation facing the Paseo, balcony projections of 2 ft depth and 10'-1" to 11'-1" width are spaced less than 50 ft apart and provided from Level 3 to Level 8 / Roof Level. One recess of 16'-11" width by 4 ft depth is provided from Level 3 to Roof Level. One recess of 4 ft width by 9 ft depth is provided from Level 3 to Level 8.	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
	NOTE: Building projections spaced no more than 50 feet apart with a minimum of 3-foot depth and 5-foot width may satisfy this requirement in lieu of a recess.			

GROUND FLOOR EXTERIOR				
Building Entrances	One (1) entrance every 100 ft of building length along a public street or paseo. Min. of one is required along each length.	One (1) entrance every 100 ft of building length along a public street or paseo. Min. of one is required along each length.	One (1) entrance is provided along the South façade of 126'-8" length (facing Jefferson Dr). One (1) entrance is provided along the West façade of 191'-6" length (facing the Paseo)	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED

## Exhibit A: State Density Bonus - Concessions and Waivers

Ground Floor Transparency	Min. 30% for residential uses	Min. 30% for residential uses	1,695 sf out of ± 3,518 sf of ground floor facade along Jefferson Dr has transparent glazing, which is 48%. ± 114 sf out of ± 3,351 sf of ground floor facade facing the Paseo has transparent glazing, which is 3%	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
OPEN SPACE				
Private Open Space	Min. 80 sf per unit = 15,920 sf required		5,345 sf	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
Common Open Space	1.25 sf for each 1 sf of private open space not provided = 13,219 sf required		6,052 sf	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
BUILDING DESIGN				
Rooflines	Rooflines adjacent to street-facing facades shall vary, including a four (4) foot minimum height modulation.		Max. 3'-6" variation	DENSITY BONUS WAIVER REQUESTED
GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE BUILDING				
Green Building Requirement	New construction 100,001 sf and above should be designed to meet LEED Gold BD+C		Project will comply with CALGreen Mandatory Measures	DENSITY BONUS CONCESSION REQUESTED