

CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

January 21, 2026

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

5.1 Mixed-Use Residential Project at 490 East Middlefield Road

RECOMMENDATION

That the Environmental Planning Commission recommends the City Council:

Adopt a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Mountain View Approving a Planned Community Permit and Development Review Permit to Construct an Eight-Story, Mixed-Use Building with 460 Apartment Units, Utilizing State Density Bonus Law, and Approximately 9,371 Square Feet of Ground Floor Commercial, Replacing an Existing Office Building, a Heritage Tree Removal Permit to Remove 29 Heritage Trees on a 2.86-Acre Site Located at 490 East Middlefield Road (APN: 160-53-004); and Finding the Project to be Statutorily Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.66, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 1 to the EPC staff report).

BACKGROUND

Project Location: 490 East Middlefield Road (APN: 160-53-004), at the northwest corner of East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street (see Figure 1: Location Map)

Project Site Size: Approximately 2.86 acres (gross site area).

General Plan Designation: East Whisman Mixed-Use.

Zoning Designation: Mixed-Use Character Area (High Intensity) within P(41) East Whisman Precise Plan (EWPP).

Surrounding Land Uses:

- North: Four-story office building.
- East (across Ellis St.): Four-story office building.
- South (across E. Middlefield Rd.): One- to two-story office buildings.
- West: One-story office building.

Current Site Conditions: One two-story commercial office building (currently occupied).

Applicant/Owner: Jeffrey Stone of WTA Middlefield, LLC



Figure 1: Location Map

Project Overview

The applicant, Jeffrey Stone with WTA Middlefield, LLC, proposes a new mixed-use development that will redevelop the existing site, replacing an existing two-story commercial office building, with an eight-story, 460-unit apartment building, with approximately 9,371 square feet of ground floor retail and an at-grade podium parking garage. The proposed dwelling unit mix includes 230 studio units, 201 one-bedroom units, and 29 two-bedroom units. The project includes the removal of 29 Heritage trees as discussed later in this report.

The eight-story building totals approximately 391,775 square feet in size. The ground floor features four commercial spaces, covered retail courtyards, a residential lobby for the apartment units with a mail/package room and leasing offices, and utility rooms. Residential units are located on floors two through eight. Vehicle access to the site is available from Ellis Street and East Middlefield Road. Project parking is located in an at-grade, one-level parking garage.

The applicant submitted a Senate Bill 330 (SB 330) Preliminary Application on December 23, 2024, which was deemed complete on January 22, 2025, with the SB 330 vesting

provisions taking effect on that date. The formal application was submitted on February 11, 2025, and deemed complete on September 26, 2025.

Prior Meetings

Neighborhood Meeting

Staff recommends that applicants host a neighborhood or community meeting during the project review process to engage with the community and inform them about a proposed project. This meeting is not mandatory, but the project planner typically attends the meeting if it is held. The applicant declined to conduct a neighborhood meeting for this project.

Design Review Consultation

The project design was reviewed at a Design Review Consultation (DRC) meeting on September 3, 2025. The DRC recommended refinements to better align the project with the P(41) East Whisman Precise Plan (EWPP), with a focus on a more engaging, pedestrian-friendly streetscape, stronger ground-floor activation, and a clearer, more defined key corner.

The DRC encouraged additional landscaping and pedestrian amenities along the street edge and within the retail courtyards to soften hardscape and create a more inviting outdoor environment. They also recommended improvements to human-scale detailing and residential character, including enhanced articulation at the lower levels, warmer accent materials, solar shading elements, and additional upper-floor balconies to help break down overall building mass.

Following the DRC meeting, the applicant worked with staff to refine the design and incorporate several of these suggestions. These modifications include:

- Adjustments to paint colors and stucco textures to add warmth to the building and strengthen the building's residential expression.
- Additional landscaping to the retail courtyards and planter boxes at second-floor units for privacy and added greenscape to enhance prominence and pedestrian interaction.
- The addition of sliding doors at the second-floor amenity rooms to promote connectivity along Middlefield Road and strengthen the visual ties along the street and second-floor courtyards.
- Additional residential shading elements (i.e., full balconies and Juliet balconies

were added throughout the residential floors to enhance the residential character of the building and help break down the perceived massing.

AB 130/ SB 158 and Tribal Consultation Meeting

Assembly Bill (AB) 130 (2025), codified in relevant part at Public Resources Code (PRC) sec. 21080.66, was signed into law as a state “budget trailer bill,” and went into effect immediately on June 30, 2025. AB 130 established a new statutory CEQA exemption for infill housing projects meeting certain criteria. Subsequently, Senate Bill (SB) 158, a “clean up” bill to AB 130, was signed into law, which further clarified that projects that qualify for the AB 130 infill exemption must be approved or denied within 30 days of the later of (1) the conclusion of the applicable tribal consultation process, or (2) the date on which the housing development application is deemed consistent with applicable objective standards. (Gov. Code, § 65950(a)(7).)

The applicant informed staff that they would like to rely on the new AB 130 statutory exemption for this project through communication to City staff on August 19, 2025. Pursuant to the request, staff began the required AB 130 tribal consultation process on September 2, 2025.

As required by AB 130, the City mailed and emailed tribal consultation notification letters to tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission on September 2, 2025. Staff received two requests for tribal consultation from the Tamién Nation on September 9, 2025, and the Indian Canyon Band of Costanoan Ohlone People on September 18, 2025. In response to the requests, staff initiated tribal consultation with both tribes on September 18, 2025. City staff held a consultation meeting with the Tamién Nation tribal representatives on October 20, 2025, and the Indian Canyon Band on October 24, 2025, to share information about the project and receive input on potential project impacts to tribal cultural resources.

The AB 130 tribal consultation process concluded on November 2, 2025. The tribes reviewed the City’s standard conditions of approval to address potential project impacts on tribal cultural resources (see Attachment 1—Draft Project Resolution, Condition of Approval Nos. 69 through 80) and had no further comments.

ANALYSIS

General Plan

The site has a General Plan Land Use Designation of East Whisman Mixed-Use, which promotes a mix of land uses including “offices, neighborhood-serving commercial, multi-family residential, lodging, and small businesses in the core of the East Whisman

area”. The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan’s vision for land uses in the area and promotes the following General Plan policies:

- LUD 3.2: Mix of land uses. Encourage a mix of land uses, housing types, retail and public amenities, and public neighborhood open spaces accessible to the community.

The project includes a mix of rental units and neighborhood-commercial uses, providing amenities to serve residents and the broader community.

- LUD 6.1—Neighborhood character. Ensure that new development in or near residential neighborhoods is compatible with neighborhood character.

The project proposes an eight-story, mixed-use residential development that is consistent with the surrounding high-intensity designation of the area and within height allowances for residential uses east of North Whisman Road.

- LUD 6.3: Street presence. Encourage building facades and frontages that create a presence at the street and along interior pedestrian paseos or pathways.

The project proposes an eight-story mixed-use building with an active ground floor for residents and neighboring properties to help promote an active pedestrian environment in the area. The architecture utilizes materials that are compatible with the surrounding development in the area, and the ground floor provides a welcoming streetscape for pedestrians by providing a new detached sidewalk, landscaping, and street trees along the project frontages.

- LUD 19.1: Land use and transportation; and LUD 19.8: Residential development. Encourage greater land use intensity and transit-oriented developments within one-half-mile of light rail transit stations.

The project utilizes the EWPP Residential Bonus Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and the State Density Bonus Law to build greater intensity within one-half mile of the Middlefield VTA Light Rail Station.

- LUD 19.3: (East Whisman) Connectivity improvements. Support smaller blocks, bicycle and pedestrian improvements and connections throughout the area.

The project provides a three-foot spring easement along the western property line for future paseo improvements, connecting pedestrians and bicyclists

through the project site to the adjacent property to the north and to be developed in whole when the western neighboring parcel redevelops.

The City's Sixth-Cycle Housing Element 2023-2031 also includes goals and policies that the project meets, including:

- Policy 1.1: Ensure that adequate residential land is available to accommodate the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), with special focus on Precise Plan areas near transit, employment centers, and services.

The project is a mixed-use development that will provide units to help the City meet its RHNA requirement in multiple income categories.

- Policy 1.2: Encourage a mix of housing types at a range of densities that serve a diverse population, including rental and ownership units serving both young and mature families, singles, young professionals, single-parent households, seniors, and both first-time and move-up buyers, at a broad range of incomes through development policies and City-subsidized affordable housing.

The project will create a mix of housing units (from studios to two-bedroom units) for diverse populations, with 55 of the 460 units available to very-low-income (50% AMI) and low-income (80% AMI) households. As part of the EWPP Residential Bonus FAR community benefit contributions, an additional three (3) studio units available to households earning no more than 90% AMI and two one-bedroom units for households earning no more than 100% AMI will also be provided, for a total of 60 affordable units.

Zoning

The project site is located in the Mixed-Use Character Area and High-Intensity Subarea of the EWPP, where a broad range of uses are permitted, including residential, retail and services, entertainment, hotel and office/R&D uses. The project includes a request for a Development Agreement between the applicant and the City to utilize both the EWPP Residential Bonus FAR Program and State Density Bonus Law to develop additional floor area, thereby maximizing development and unit capacity. As required by the City Code, the Zoning Administrator will separately consider and make a recommendation to City Council on the proposed Development Agreement.

The project substantially complies with applicable EWPP development standards, with six waivers/reductions of development standards required to construct the project

under the State Density Bonus Law and discussed in detail later in this report. Table 1 below shows the project's compliance with applicable EWPP standards.

Table 1: Project Compliance with the P(41) East Whisman Precise Plan Development Standards

Standard	Requirement	Proposed
Maximum Building Height	Max. 95'	85'
Street Wall Height (avg.)	Max. 75'(average)	Middlefield Rd Frontage: Approx. 51'
		Ellis St Frontage: Approx. 36'-2"
Street Wall Location	Building facades within 20' of the planned inside edge of public sidewalk along East Middlefield Rd. and Ellis St.	Complies – within 20'
Upper Floor Step Backs	10' step back from lower floor building facades along public streets for floors above 75'	Middlefield Rd Frontage: 11'-9"
		Ellis St Frontage: 16'-4"
Min. Ground Level Wall Plate Height	Non-residential ground-level plate heights must be at least 15 feet above the primary frontage sidewalk grade	14' <i>Waiver Requested</i>
Floor Area Ratio	Residential: 1.00 Base FAR (max. without bonus FAR)	2.115 FAR
	Residential: 2.50 FAR (max with bonus FAR)	
	Non-Residential: 0.4 Base FAR (max. without bonus FAR)	.075 FAR
	Non-Residential: 1.00 FAR (max with bonus FAR)	
	Combined: 3.50 FAR ¹ (max.)	Combined: 3.148 FAR ²

¹ Residential and mixed-use projects permitted up to a maximum 3.50 FAR inclusive of Bonus FAR. In mixed-use projects, constituent uses shall not exceed their maximum FARs.

² Allowed per State Density Bonus law

Setbacks	From Public Streets: 5 feet (min.)		Varies: 12'-9" to 13'-11"
	Side & Rear Where No Streets Exist: 15 feet (min.)		51'
	Surface Parking: 20' from Avenues		Along E. Middlefield Rd: Approx. 28'-10"
			Along Ellis St: Approx. 55'-9"
Common Usable Open Area (min.)	Residential: 80 SF/unit Common Usable	Project Requirement: 36,800 SF	25,065 SF <i>Waiver Requested</i>
	Total Residential Open Area (Common + Private): 120 SF/Unit	Project Requirement: 55,200 SF	34,428 SF <i>Waiver Requested</i>
	Non-Residential: 100 SF/1,000 GSF	Project Requirement: 937 SF	1,282 SF
Private Open Area Dimensions	6 feet (min.)		Varies: 5' to 6' depth (upper-floor balconies) <i>Waiver Requested</i>
Vehicle Parking	Not applicable per CMC sec. 36.32.50(b)(1) ³		Residential: 465
			Commercial: 34
Bicycle Parking	Short-Term Standard	Project Requirement	Short-Term Stalls
	Commercial: 4 per 5,000 SF or 2 spaces	8	8
	Multi-Family: 1 stall per 10 units	46	46
	Long-Term Standard	Project Requirement	Long-Term Stalls
	Commercial: 1 per 5,000 SF or min. of 2 stalls	2	304 <i>Waiver Requested</i>

³ City Code Section 36.32.50(b)(1) and AB 2097 restrict the City from imposing/enforcing any minimum vehicle parking requirement on a residential, commercial, or other development, with the exception of hotels, motels, bed and breakfast inns or other transient lodging located within one-half mile of public transit (i.e., Middlefield VTA station). The project complies with all ADA and EV parking requirements.

	Multi-Family: 1 stall per unit	460	
Personal Storage	Min. 164 cubic feet per unit		166.5 cu. Ft. per unit
Bird Safe Glazing	No more than 10% of surface area of building exterior shall have untreated glass between ground and 60 feet above ground.		Will meet 2025 CBC, Section A5.107 Bird-friendly building design requirements per the Development Agreement
Residential Paseo	Minimum 6' wide, publicly accessible residential paseo		3' wide strip with a Public Access Easement for future paseo improvements. <i>Waiver Requested</i>

EWPP Bonus FAR Program

The applicant proposes to use the provisions of the EWPP Residential Bonus FAR Program to develop additional floor area beyond the established Residential Base FAR. Under Section 6.1.5 of the EWPP, projects may exceed the base FAR and utilize Bonus FAR when certain requirements are met.

Table 2 shows the required provisions for Residential Bonus FAR eligibility alongside the project's required and proposed residential FAR.

Table 2: EWPP Residential Bonus FAR Standards

Development Type	Base FAR	Maximum FAR w/Bonus	Proposed FAR
Residential	1.00	3.50 ⁴	3.148

The applicant proposes to design the building to maximize allowable residential floor area and unit yield by combining the EWPP's Residential Bonus FAR of up to 3.50 FAR with the provisions of State Density Bonus Law (SDBL) (Government Code Section 65915). The City and applicant have agreed that the base density for the project for

⁴ In mixed-use projects, the maximum 3.5 FAR is inclusive of non-residential FAR, of which the nonresidential FAR may not exceed 0.4 FAR (Base) or 1.0 FAR (if non-residential Bonus FAR is proposed).

purposes of SDBL is 361 units at a 2.41 FAR, reflecting the EWPP's base 1.0 FAR plus 1.41 FAR obtained through the EWPP Residential Bonus FAR framework.

Per the terms of the draft Development Agreement and the EWPP, the City and applicant have agreed via the Development Agreement that the base density for the project for purposes of SDBL is 361 units at a 2.41 FAR. In addition, the applicant has agreed to provide community benefits, including:

- Community Benefit Fees of approximately \$1,100,000 for 1.41 bonus FAR (175,476 square feet of bonus floor area at \$6.23 per square foot fee rate) per EWPP payable at certificate of occupancy;
- Five additional units (three studios and two one-bedroom units) above the minimum BMR requirement. This includes three (3) studio units at 90 percent area median income (AMI) and two (2) one-bedroom units at 100% AMI for ten to fifteen years;
- A commitment to construct the project in compliance with the mandatory measures of CALGreen and LEED Silver–equivalent standards, as well as all-electric building design except for that limited appliances or installations in the public areas may utilize natural gas, such as fire pits, cooking appliances for the ground floor commercial or retail uses, and for heating the public use pool and spas;
- \$1,200,000 for ground-floor retail tenant improvements to promote small and local business viability; and
- \$1,200,000 of funding to support acquisition or improvement of recreational facilities in the vicinity of the project.

Project Details

Site Plan

The project site plan is largely comprised of the proposed mixed-use building (Figure 2: Site Plan). Ground-floor commercial uses are proposed along the East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street frontages. Surface parking is available along the northern and western peripheries of the buildings, with the associated vehicular drive aisle providing access to/from East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street in the southwest and northeast corners of the site, respectively (Attachment 2 – Project Plans). Vehicular access to the ground-level garage parking is provided through a secured entry located near the northeast corner of the building (close to Ellis Street).

The primary residential building entry is located along East Middlefield Road, accessible via the residential lobby. Vehicular access is available through the garage, which is located closest to the Ellis Street driveway. Residents will have access to the approximately 24,065 square feet of common area, a courtyard on the second floor,

roof decks on floors four and seven, and interior amenity areas including communal workspaces, interior lounge areas, and fitness studios.

Along the public frontages, the project introduces new detached sidewalks with planter strips and street trees, new curb ramps, and repainted crosswalks to improve pedestrian comfort and establish a continuous streetscape canopy. New trees and landscaping are also provided along the project perimeter and within planter areas along the surface parking, helping to soften building and parking edges, provide shade, and visually buffer the north and west sides of the site.

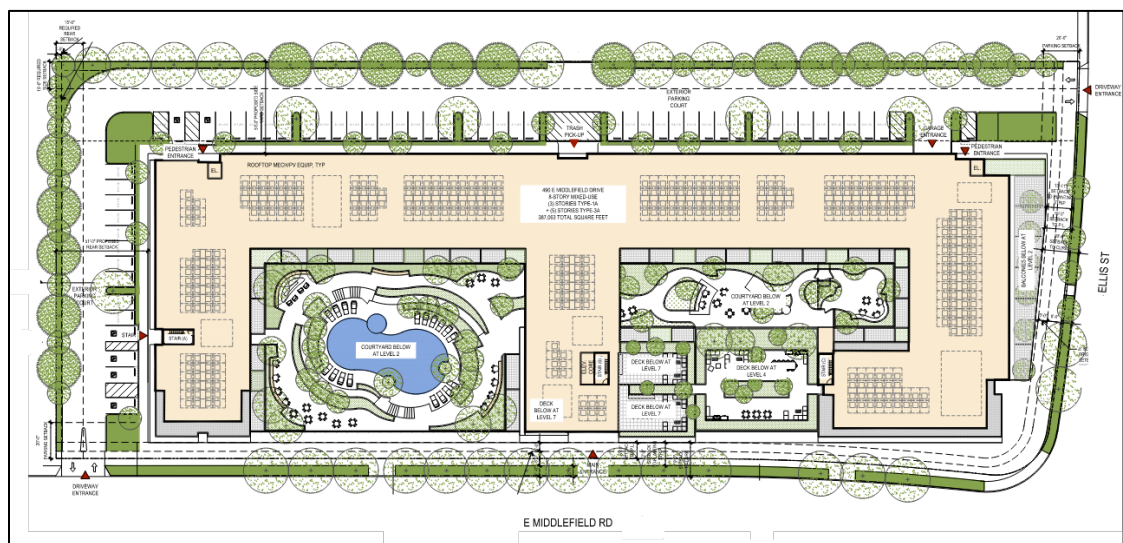


Figure 2: Site Plan

Project Design

The building has a contemporary design, organized around a large second-floor courtyard with additional roof decks on the fourth and seventh floors (Figure 3: Project Rendering). The building frames the East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street frontages, emphasizing the key corner with a stronger vertical expression, enhanced glazing, and active ground-floor uses to reinforce the EWPP's vision for a walkable and transit-supportive corridor. The key corner also includes a voluntarily proposed public art installation, with final design to be submitted, reviewed, and installed prior to final occupancy.

The building's massing is organized into a two-story base, a four-story "middle," and a differentiated top two floors, with a mix of smaller plane changes to articulate the building volume, particularly on public street elevations. Along East Middlefield Road, the second-floor courtyard creates a substantial massing break on the western half of

the elevation, while the fourth- and seventh-floor roof decks provide further vertical and horizontal articulation on the eastern portion. The commercial base along Ellis Street maintains a consistent storefront character similar to East Middlefield Road, with large, private decks for second-floor residential units that create an upper-floor step back and a more pedestrian-scale ground-floor elevation. Private balconies and Juliet balconies are provided abundantly throughout floors four through six for select residential units and are framed with metal railings to provide added depth and shading, adding to the residential character of the building.

Ground-floor frontages along East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street (the Active Priority Frontages) are programmed with the main residential lobby, multiple commercial suites, interspersed with covered inset “retail courtyards” that provide commercial outdoor amenity areas, and utility rooms.

The second-floor courtyard is designed as a central amenity hub for residents. Roof decks on the fourth and seventh floors provide additional outdoor gathering and dining areas while also providing massing relief and visual interest along the East Middlefield frontage. Trellises with climbing vines and planters are incorporated to further integrate greenery into the upper-level facades.

The materials palette consists primarily of integral-color plaster in light beige and warmer brown tones, complemented by dark bronze metal accents and aluminum storefront systems. The ground-floor commercial level also incorporates the dark bronze metal for signage bands and storefront framing, contrasted with lighter plaster at the upper portion of the base to reinforce a visually distinct podium level. Upper residential floors carry the lighter plaster through the middle stories, while the seventh and eighth floors introduce areas of darker wall plaster and modest step backs to reduce perceived height and bulk.



Figure 3: Project Rendering at East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street

Open Space and Landscaping

Open Space

The project proposes approximately 34,428 square feet of common usable and private open areas, including a large second-floor podium courtyard, upper-level roof decks on the fourth and seventh floors, and landscaped areas along the project perimeter. Landscaping is also integrated into the building frontage through ground-floor planters, integrated second-floor planters, trellises, and climbing vines at select columns, guardrails, and pedestrian courtyards. The podium courtyard functions as the central amenity hub for residents, featuring an outdoor pool, shaded lounge areas, a courtyard garden, seating and dining areas, and a small dog park, all set against a backdrop of new trees and a diverse palette of native and low-water-use landscaping. Private patios and balconies for individual units are also provided throughout the upper residential floors and contribute to the overall open area of the project.

New detached sidewalks with landscape strips and street trees are proposed along East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street, providing a continuous tree canopy along the ground-floor project frontages. Linear planter strips are incorporated to accommodate parking shade trees, low-planting, and groundcover within the internal drive aisle and limited surface parking areas along the north and west sides of the proposed building.

As indicated in Table 1 (above), the project does not meet the minimum EWPP requirements for common usable open area and total open area (common usable and private open area) and the applicant is requesting a waiver under State Density Bonus Law, as strict adherence to the landscape requirement would physically preclude development of the residential units at the density proposed. Despite the large building footprint and surface parking area, the applicant has explored opportunities to maximize open space within the building footprint and throughout the site, where possible. This includes incorporating DRC suggestions to increase private open space through the addition of balconies and decks, where feasible. The combination of podium courtyard, roof decks, enhanced street landscaping, new street trees, landscaped parking islands, and building-integrated greenery collectively provides a network of usable open spaces and additional planting that meets the intent of the EWPP.

Tree Preservation and Removal

The project site currently contains 112 trees (25 Heritage trees, 77 non-Heritage trees, five Heritage street trees and five non-Heritage street trees). The project proposes to remove a total of 107 trees, including 29 Heritage trees (four Heritage street trees) and 78 non-Heritage trees (including two street trees). The existing on-site tree inventory is

largely comprised of mature parking lot and shade trees, with larger trees located around the perimeter of the site and near the existing building. The most prevalent tree species include Bradford Callery Pear, Crape Myrtle, Pacific Madrone, Coast Redwood, Ash, Sycamore, Chinese Pistache, Deodar Cedar, Coast Live Oak, Liquidambar, and Tulip Trees (see Attachment 3 – Arborist Report).

The majority of the existing trees are in poor to fair condition, and many were planted in small, constrained growing spaces or in close proximity to the existing building, loading areas, and overhead utility lines. In particular, the Bradford Pear and Coast Redwood trees along the northern property line have declined over the years due to annual topping to keep these trees a safe distance from overhead PG&E power lines. The tree removals are necessary to accommodate the proposed mixed-use building, parking garage, new detached sidewalks, and frontage improvements along East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street. Five trees (four Tulip trees and one Coast Redwood) are proposed to be preserved in place along Ellis Street where they do not conflict with the proposed building footprint or required site and frontage improvements.

The applicant collaborated with the Planning Division, Public Works Department, and Urban Forestry Division to closely evaluate opportunities to preserve additional trees, including potential preservation through relocation or minor site adjustments. However, given the comprehensive redevelopment proposed on the site, including the large building footprint, surface and podium parking configuration, and frontage improvements along East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street, there are very limited locations where existing trees do not directly conflict with construction or long-term building operations. Tree preservation efforts focused on a small group of Tulip street trees and one on-site Coast Redwood that could be retained with appropriate tree protection measures during construction.

Tree Planting Plan

The existing site currently provides approximately 75,706 square feet of on-site tree canopy (35.6% of the site area). The project will plant approximately 173 replacement trees (for a total of 178 trees) onsite in areas surrounding the building footprint, parking area, within the upper-level courtyards and roof decks, and street trees along the right-of-way. As shown in Table 3 below, at full maturity, the site is anticipated to exceed the current canopy by approximately 9% (44.5% canopy coverage).

The proposed Heritage tree removals meet the City's required findings for removal and the project proposes an overall replacement ratio of nearly 6:1, which exceeds the typical 2:1 Heritage tree replacement ratio and will result in 115 additional trees provided by the project. The project proposes to replace 76% of the trees with California native species, including Western Redbud, Davis Gold Toyon, Engelmann Oak, and

Island Oak. Additionally, 100% of the shrubs and groundcover will be California native and drought tolerant.

Table 3: Tree Canopy Coverage

Canopy	Site Open Space Area	Site Coverage
Existing Canopy	75,706 SF	35.6%
New Canopy (Completion of Construction)	45,160 SF	20%
New Canopy (5-10 years)	45,160 SF	32.7%
New Canopy (Maturity)	45,160 SF	44.5%

State Density Bonus Law (SDBL) Request

State Density Bonus Law imposes a mandatory density bonus program (Gov. Code, § 65915 *et seq.*) that requires the City to permit the construction of additional residential units and, if requested by the applicant, provide reduced parking standards, regulatory incentives/concessions, and waivers of development standards to applicants that agree to build a certain percentage of affordable housing that meets the statutory criteria (Gov. Code, § 65915(b)(1)).

The EWPP limits new residential and mixed-use development in the Mixed-Use Character Area of the EWPP to a maximum 3.50 FAR, consistent with the applicable General Plan Land Use Designation, and with the provisions of Residential Bonus FAR requirements. The project has a base density of 361 units, corresponding to a residential FAR of approximately 2.41 FAR pursuant to the methodology in Section 36.48.75 of the City Code, with these base units being utilized for application of any applicable density bonus under State law. The applicant proposes that 55 of the 361 units (15.23% of the base density) be designated as below-market-rate (BMR) units for lower-income households at or below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), including 29 units (or 8%) at very low-income (50% AMI) which qualifies the project for a 27.5% density bonus under Government Code sec. 65915(f)(2). Additionally, the project is eligible for one concession or incentive (i.e., modifications to development standards or regulations that result in identifiable and actual cost reductions to provide for affordable housing costs) and unlimited waivers or reductions of any development standards that have the effect of physically precluding the construction of the development at the permitted density. As an added community benefit for provisions under the Residential Bonus FAR program, and included in the Development Agreement, the applicant is providing an additional five units composed of (three (3) studio units up to 90% AMI and two (2) one-bedroom units up to 100% AMI), for a total of 60 affordable units inclusive of the 55 BMR units. In total, the applicant is proposing 460 units (base density of 361 units and

99 density bonus units), one concession, and six waivers, as further described below and in the applicant's Density Bonus Request Letter.

Concession

The project qualifies for one concession/incentive under the State Density Bonus Law. Concessions are modifications to development standards or regulations that must result in identifiable and actual cost reductions for the delivery of the affordable units. The applicant is requesting one concession to allow the 55 BMR units to be delivered in a smaller average floor area "product type" than would otherwise be required under Section 36.40.10 (General Requirements) of the City Code and the Below-Market-Rate Housing Program Administrative Guidelines, while maintaining the same proportional bedroom mix as the market-rate units. According to the applicant, this concession will provide identifiable, financially sufficient, and actual cost reductions for the project, ensuring its financial viability at the proposed density and affordability levels.

Waivers

Under the State Density Bonus Law, the City is required to waive or reduce any development standard that has the effect of physically precluding the construction of a development at the density permitted. The applicant is requesting six waivers from the EWPP development standards, some of which are noted in Table 1: Project Compliance with the EWPP Development Standards. The applicant's waiver requests are summarized below and outlined in the density bonus letter submitted by the applicant (see Attachment 4 – Density Bonus Request Letter). The letter also includes details on how these standards, if applied to the project, would physically preclude the construction of the development at the proposed density.

The six waivers requested are:

1. Minimum six feet wide Paseo requirement per EWPP
2. Minimum private open area dimensions per EWPP
3. Minimum bicycle parking requirement per EWPP
4. Minimum common open space requirement (total and usable) per EWPP
5. Minimum ground floor height requirement per EWPP
6. Public Utility Easement (PUE) dedication along the whole project frontage per EWPP

Parking

Vehicular Parking

The majority of the proposed parking for the mixed-use building will be located in a single-level, at-grade podium parking garage. Although there is no minimum parking

requirement for the residential portion of the project in the EWPP, the applicant is voluntarily providing parking for both the residential and commercial components of the project. The podium parking garage will provide a total of 442 assigned residential spaces utilizing a stacker system, with additional standard and accessible stalls, and a dedicated moving-truck loading space. Additionally, surface parking is located along the north and west sides of the proposed building accommodating 20 spaces dedicated to the residential use, 34 commercial parking spaces, and three residential loading spaces, accessed from Ellis Street and East Middlefield Road.

Per Section 36.32.50 (Required number of parking spaces) of the City Code, the project will be subject to the requirement for providing electric vehicle equipment-installed parking spaces or parking spaces that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Bicycle Parking

The project provides a total of 304 long-term bicycle parking spaces on-site, which are provided in a secure room located within the residential garage, accessible to residents and commercial tenants via the residential lobby or garage entries. Additionally, the project proposes a total of 54 short-term bicycle spaces, which will be provided in visible locations near primary building entries along East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street, adjacent to sidewalks and public open space, to accommodate visitors and customers. These facilities will be designed and sited consistent with EWPP guidance for short-term bicycle parking, ensuring that bikes are convenient to park and do not obstruct pedestrian circulation.

Per the EWPP, the project is required to provide a total of 462 long-term stalls based on the residential unit count and commercial square footage. As noted in Table 1, the project will include 358 bicycle parking spaces. The applicant is requesting a SDBL waiver for reduced long-term bicycle parking provisions as providing the full EWPP bicycle requirement would displace building area needed for units and core building systems, which would have the effect of physically precluding the construction of the development at the permitted density.

Transportation

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan

The EWPP requires all new residential developments with at least 100 units to provide a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan that provides details on the implementation and reporting of TDM site design and operational measures, including maximum parking and car-share requirements, site design supportive of alternative travel modes (e.g., orienting building entrances toward sidewalks, transit stops, and

bicycle routes), bicycle parking, and membership in the Mountain View Transportation Management Association (TMA).

The project has provided a TDM plan (see Attachment 6 —Transportation Demand Management) that meets all EWPP requirements for residential EWPP TDM measures, except for minimum bicycle parking requirements for which the applicant has requested a waiver. The proposed TDM measures would result in a 14 percent peak-hour reduction from all trips for the site, which exceeds the 9 percent required reduction of the trips from employees of the site.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

The EWPP FEIR identified a significant impact to project-generated Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), largely due to the amount of new office planned for the area and existing conditions (i.e., relatively high VMT-generating office uses). However, the City Council adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations for the EWPP significant impact. Council has also adopted the City's VMT Policy, providing criteria and methodologies for determining significant transportation impacts of specific projects, consistent with state regulations.

The City's VMT Policy includes screening criteria for projects which are presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact and would not require further project-specific VMT analysis. This project complies with the screening criteria because the site is located within one-half mile of the Middlefield Light Rail Station, has an FAR greater than 0.75, and provides reduced parking supply (less than the City's maximum parking allowance); therefore, the project is determined to be consistent with the City's VMT Policy and have a less-than-significant VMT impact.

Multi-Modal Transportation Analysis and VTA Congestion Management Program

As part of the City's Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) policy, adopted in June 2020, Council endorsed requirements for local-level analysis of (non-CEQA) multi-modal transportation impacts (including bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicle movements), which are consistent with standards and policies set forth by the City and the Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) Congestion Management Program (CMP), referred to as a Multi-Modal Transportation Analysis (MTA). As an MTA was completed for the EWPP, the applicant provided a supplemental memo that builds upon the EWPP study and includes site-specific information. This memo also demonstrates compliance with

the Santa Clara County CMP and VTA Transportation Analysis Guidelines using data from the EWPP EIR and TDM Plan.

EWPP Streetscape Improvements

The EWPP identifies specific streetscape design standards for the project's on-site street and adjacent public street frontages. The street typology standards require an 8' wide detached sidewalk with 6' wide planter strip along East Middlefield Road and Ellis Street. The planter strip along both public streets will be a landscape strip with new and retained street trees planted, separating the public sidewalk from each roadway. Additionally, new curb ramps and repainted crosswalks will be provided. The project complies with the applicable streetscape standards.

Green Building

Subject to Mountain View Green Building Code (MVGBC), new multi-family developments with three or more units are required to be designed and constructed to meet mandatory CALGreen, Mountain View Green Building Code (MVGBC) requirements, and meet the intent of LEED® Gold certification.

As per the proposed Development Agreement, the Project will be designed and constructed to comply with CALGreen requirements, which satisfy the State's green building requirements. In addition, the project will be designed and constructed to LEED Silver equivalent standards and shall be required to maintain and submit the LEED scorecard for verification. Additionally, the applicant has agreed to construct the residential units to be all-electric, which means that the residential units will not include natural gas or propane plumbing, heating, cooking, or clothes drying appliances. The applicant will be permitted to install natural gas or propane gas for the use of certain appliances or installations in the public areas, including fire pits, cooking appliances for the ground floor commercial or retail uses, and pool and spa heaters.

Below-Market-Rate Housing

The proposed development involves the construction of 460 units (361 base units) as new rental units, including 55 Below Market Rate (BMR) units. Additionally, the

applicant is proposing to provide an additional 5 BMR units as a community benefit. This project is subject to compliance with all of the following:

- 1) Mountain View's Below Market Rate (BMR) Ordinance (City Code sec. 36.40.10); and
- 2) State Density Bonus Law (SDBL) - (California Government Code sec. 65915).

The applicant's proposal aligns with the affordable housing obligations under each of these policies, delivering units that exceed certain local requirements while fulfilling state mandates.

Percentage Requirement and Affordability Levels

All requirements of the above regulations must be met; however, these may be combined by adhering to the strictest of the requirements. The applicant proposes to provide 55 affordable units to comply with state and local regulations. The project will deliver 29 affordable units at very low-income levels (50% AMI), which qualifies the project for a 27.5% density bonus under SDBL. The project will also provide 26 units at 80% AMI. Together, these units satisfy the BMR and SDBL requirements outlined above.

1) Below Market Rate Ordinance

To satisfy the 15% inclusionary requirement, the project must provide at least 54.15 affordable units. Density bonus projects must round fractional units up to the next whole number, therefore the requirement increases to 55 units. By proposing 55 units, the project meets the applicable requirement.

The City's BMR Ordinance allows its requirements to apply in conjunction with the SDBL, provided that the affordable units meet the more stringent standards of either the BMR program or State law (City Code sec. 36.40.10(i)). In this case, the AMI thresholds set by the SDBL are lower, and, thus, more stringent, than those required by the City and are therefore deemed to meet the City's affordability standard.

Design (Proportionality) and Location

The City's BMR Ordinance (City Code sec. 36.40.10(f)) requires that affordable units be proportionally distributed based on the number of bedrooms and square footage relative to market-rate units. Additionally, the ordinance mandates that affordable units be reasonably dispersed throughout the project.

Table 4 below summarizes the applicant's proposed unit distribution relative to the ordinance requirements

Table 4 Unit size distribution

Unit size	Total Units	Required by Ordinance	Project Proposal
Studio	230	28	34
1 Bedroom	201	23	19
2 Bedrooms	29	4	2

As shown above, the project consists primarily of studio units, which account for approximately 61.8 percent of the total units, followed by one-bedroom units at approximately 34.6 percent and two-bedroom units at approximately 6.6 percent. The proposed BMR unit mix consists of approximately 50.0 percent studio units, 43.7 percent one-bedroom units, and 3.6 percent two-bedroom units.

While the proposed BMR distribution generally reflects the project's overall unit mix by bedroom count, the project does not strictly comply with the City's proportionality requirements when evaluated based on unit square footage, as discussed further below.

Based on the plan set submitted by the applicant, the development includes multiple unit types within each bedroom category, with varying square footage. Table 5 below provides a detailed breakdown of unit types by square footage and the proposed allocation of BMR units.

Table 5: Unit size by square feet

Unit Type	Square Feet	Total Units	Developer Proposed BMR Units	Required by BMR Ordinance
Studio A	409	208	34	25
Studio B	460	22	0	3
1 Bedroom A	614	187	19	22
1 Bedroom B	690	9	0	1
2 Bedroom A	818	23	2	3
2 Bedroom B	921	3	0	1
1 bedroom - Loft	596	5	0	
2 Bedroom- Loft	900	3	0	

As demonstrated above, the designated BMR units are limited to the smaller unit types within each bedroom category, resulting in a deviation from the City's BMR

objective proportionality standards. To address this the applicant is utilizing their one concession pursuant to SDBL to allow the 55 BMR units to be provided within smaller unit types. The use of this concession for the City's proportionality requirement shall not be considered an inconsistency with the BMR objective standard.

While the BMR units are concentrated within smaller unit types, they utilize the same unit plan designs as the market-rate units. Standard unit plans range from approximately 409 to 460 square feet for studio units, approximately 596 to 690 square feet for one-bedroom units, and approximately 818 to 921 square feet for two-bedroom units. The BMR units fall within these same size ranges and are comparable to the market-rate units in terms of layout, livability, and overall design.

In addition to the requirements mentioned above the BMR ordinance also requires the location of the BMR units to be dispersed across the development. According to the plan set submitted by the applicant the affordable units are reasonably dispersed throughout the development and therefore comply with the BMR location requirement.

2) State Density Bonus Law

To qualify for a density bonus under SDBL, a project must provide a prescribed percentage of inclusionary housing units. This percentage is a sliding scale, based upon the AMI levels that are provided.

The provision of 29 units at Very-Low-income levels (50% AMI) qualifies the applicant for a density bonus under SDBL.

Community Benefit- Additional BMR Units

In addition to the required BMR units and those required to qualify for a density bonus under SDBL, the applicant has offered to provide an additional five BMR dwelling units as a voluntary community benefit. These additional BMR units shall consist of three studio units (restricted to no more than 90% AMI) and two one-bedroom units (restricted to no more than 100% AMI). These additional BMR units shall be subject to a deed restriction for a minimum period of ten (10) years, which may be extended to fifteen (15) years if the City elects to pursue the rent guarantee option described in the Development Agreement. Staff's analysis is that the five extra BMR units, as proposed at 90% AMI (studio units) and 100% AMI (one-bedroom units) and subject to a limited-term affordability restriction of either 10 or 15 years, would provide some community benefit because they would be more affordable than market rate units. However, they

have a lower benefit than the BMR units because the BMR units achieve greater affordability and would be provided in perpetuity.

The additional five BMR units shall comply with all other applicable City BMR regulations, policies, and guidelines, including but not limited to requirements related to unit design, size, location, comparability, income qualification, amenity access, rent limits, monitoring, any applicable tenant relocation and administration.

Rent Guarantee Option

The proposed Development Agreement contemplates a future rent guarantee option, which would include the City's right to enter into a subsequent agreement with the applicant to guarantee rent for a portion of the project's dwelling units to enable the provision of a greater number of affordable housing units in the project. While the specific terms of such an arrangement have not yet been finalized, the Development Agreement would establish a framework under which the City and the applicant could implement this option, subject to further negotiation and execution of a standalone agreement.

The potential benefit of this option to the applicant is that the City as a rent guarantor could help the applicant secure more favorable financing terms which would enhance project feasibility. Similarly, the potential benefit of this option to the City is that middle-income rental units could be created at a sufficient discount to market rents, as well as a potential revenue stream for the City to fund more affordable housing efforts.

Current discussions regarding the structure of this option include the following considerations:

- The rent guarantee agreement would apply to no fewer than thirty (30) and no more than sixty (60) dwelling units within the project.
- The term of the master lease would be for a minimum of seven (7) years. The lease would include provisions allowing the City to return units to the applicant in defined tranches over time, with the number of units eligible to be returned at specified intervals (e.g., annually) tied to the total number of units remaining under the rent guarantee agreement at that time.
- The mix of unit types subject to the rent guarantee agreement would generally reflect the overall unit-type distribution of the building, consisting of

approximately fifty percent (50%) studio units, forty-four percent (44%) one-bedroom units, and six percent (6%) two-bedroom units.

- The City would not be involved in any day-to-day property management or administration of the units. Such activities would fully rest with the developer/property management, including but not limited to maintenance, application and lease up, tenant relations, and compliance monitoring.

The ultimate value and effectiveness of the rent guarantee option would depend on the final rent guarantee agreement terms, such as enforceability provisions, the AMI levels of the units relative to market rents, and the City's decision whether or not to exercise this option in the during the term of the agreement.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Assembly Bill (AB) 130 Overview

As described earlier in this report, on August 19, 2025, the applicant requested the City pursue an AB 130 statutory exemption (codified at PRC sec. 21080.66) for this project. Pursuant to this request, staff began the required AB 130 tribal consultation process on September 2, 2025. The tribal consultation process concluded on November 2, 2025.

Eligibility

The applicant submitted an AB 130 CEQA Exemption Site Eligibility Criteria Analysis (prepared by Reuben, Junius & Rose) demonstrating that the project meets all applicable criteria for the exemption under PRC sec. 21080.66. The City's CEQA consultant prepared a peer review of this analysis and the supporting technical documents (see Attachment 5 - AB 130 CEQA Exemption Peer Review Letter) and concurred that the project qualifies for the AB 130 exemption.

AB 130 provides a statutory exemption from CEQA for qualifying infill housing developments. The exemption applies to projects that: (1) are located on a site no larger than five acres; (2) are within an incorporated city or urbanized area; (3) are surrounded by developed urban uses (i.e., infill sites); (4) are consistent with the applicable General Plan designation(s), applicable General Plan policies, and applicable zoning standards; and (5) meet minimum density requirements as defined in this statute (minimum 15 units per acre).

The project site is approximately 2.86 acres, is located within an incorporated City, is fully surrounded by existing urban development, and proposes a high-density residential project that exceeds the minimum density threshold. The statute clarifies

that waivers and concessions requested under SDBL are not grounds for inconsistency with the General Plan or zoning; therefore, the project is considered consistent with the “applicable” land use designations and policies for purposes of PRC sec. 21080.66.

To qualify for the new exemption, a project may not require the demolition of a historic structure placed on a national, state, or local historic register prior to the date a preliminary application was submitted for the project per Government Code sec. 65941.1, and a project must also satisfy certain environmental criteria specified in Government Code sec. 65913.4(a)(6), which include requirements such as a qualifying project site may not include protected wetlands or water features, be in a special flood hazard area or regulatory floodway, or contain habitat for protected species identified as candidate, sensitive, or species of special status by state or federal agencies, fully protected species, or species protected by the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, the California Endangered Species Act, or the Native Plant Protection Act. As documented in more detail in the peer review checklist, the project site satisfies these environmental conditions.

The site is located within the Middlefield–Ellis–Whisman (MEW) Superfund Study Area and is impacted by regional groundwater and soil vapor contamination resulting from historic off-site industrial activities on adjacent properties. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) prepared for the project identified recognized environmental conditions (RECs) related to this regional plume and recommended additional investigation and regulatory coordination. Under AB 130, this condition does not preclude use of the exemption, provided that required investigation, remediation, and mitigation are completed before occupancy. As a condition of approval, the project is required to complete additional testing as recommended in the Phase I ESA, prepare a Preliminary Endangerment Assessment, and implement any recommended measures under the assessment’s mitigation plan approved by the applicable oversight agency (e.g., EPA, DTSC, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the City) to ensure that exposure of future occupants to hazardous materials is reduced to acceptable levels consistent with federal and state standards.

In addition, projects that qualify for and utilize the AB 130 exemption must also comply with certain project-level requirements in PRC sec. 21080.66(b)–(d), including:

- Tribal Cultural Resources: The project must comply with requirements identified per required tribal consultation and minimum requirements of PRC sec. 21080.66(b)(4)(b), unless there is mutual agreement between the California Native American tribe and project proponent to not include an identified measure.
- Environmental Assessment: As discussed above, the applicant has completed a Phase I ESA. Any additional investigation, remediation, or mitigation required by the

relevant regulatory agencies must be completed prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

- Air Quality: If any housing on the site is located within 500' of a freeway, it must comply with identified heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning system requirements, provide specified air intake/air filtration design and maintenance, and shall not have balconies facing the freeway. The project site is not within 500 feet of a freeway; therefore, this requirement does not apply.
- Labor Standards: If the building height of a proposed project exceeds 85 feet or the project is fully affordable, the project must comply with applicable labor standards per PRC sec. 21080.66(d). This project does not meet either of these qualifications and this requirement does not apply.

Based on the applicant's AB 130 eligibility checklist and supporting documentation and the independent peer review prepared by the City's CEQA consultant, staff concludes that the project meets all criteria for the AB 130 statutory exemption. All applicable requirements of PRC sec. 21080.66 have been incorporated as conditions of approval in Attachment 1 - Draft Project Resolution.

NEXT STEPS

Following the EPC public hearing, the Development Agreement will be considered by the Zoning Administrator at a public hearing, tentatively scheduled for February 11, 2026. Following both the EPC and Administrative Zoning hearings, the project and EPC/ZA recommendation will be considered by the City Council at a public hearing, tentatively scheduled for March 10, 2026.

CONCLUSION

This project is consistent with applicable development standards; achieves General Plan, Housing Element, and EWPP goals by increasing market-rate and affordable housing opportunities in the City; and helps the City meet its Regional Housing Needs

Allocation (RHNA) requirements. Staff recommends approval of the project subject to the conditions of approval.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend approval of the project with modified conditions of approval.
2. Recommend denial of the project based on specific findings required by State law.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The Environmental Planning Commission's agenda is advertised on Channel 26, and the agenda and this report appear on the City's website. All property owners and residents within a 750' radius were notified of this meeting, and public notice of the hearing was published in a newspaper of general circulation per City Code sec. 36.56.20 (Notice of hearing). An Administrative Zoning meeting will be held regarding the Development Agreement, tentatively scheduled for February 11, 2026, and a City Council meeting will be held regarding this project, tentatively scheduled for March 10, 2026, and property owners and interested parties will be notified.

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EPCStaff Report - Calibri (Rev. 09-25-14)

Attachments:

1. Draft Project Resolution
2. Project Plans
3. Arborist Report
4. Density Bonus Request Letter
5. AB 130 CEQA Exemption Peer Review Letter
6. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan
7. Community Benefit Contribution Letter