

General Project Description  
23 May 2017 (*revised*)

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***Atria – A Mixed-Income Transit Oriented Housing Community***

*Atria* is a highly amenitized 108 unit Mixed-Income project proposed by St. Anton Communities, a privately owned housing developer, builder and manager. St. Anton proposes that 20% of the 108 units be set aside for “Very Low Income” residents, those who make less than 50% of the Area’s Median Income. The remainder of the project’s residences will be market rate, and they will be indistinguishable from the income-restricted units.

**LOCATION**

The 2.13<sup>+/-</sup> acre site is an assemblage of residential properties located on the south side of East El Camino Real and just east of Poplar Avenue. The primary 1.82-acre parcel is located at 1008 E. El Camino Real and is in the C-2/Highway Commercial zone (ECR overlay). The site was approved for closure as a former trailer park on January 5, 2016 by the Sunnyvale City Council.

The additional 0.26-acre parcel is located at 1316 Poplar Avenue, is zoned R1/ECR and is an existing residential duplex. The applicant purchased this secondary parcel to provide sufficient emergency vehicle access based on guidance from the Sunnyvale Fire Department. Immediately adjacent to the duplex is an access easement that the applicant controls, which provides emergency access to the podium apartments as requested by the Sunnyvale Fire Department.

East El Camino Real is to the north of the assemblage, along with retail shopping across the street, a dental office, single family and multifamily residences to the west, a shopping center to the east and single family and multifamily residences to the south. The property is located in an urbanized area where public services are sufficient and available. There is a VTA bus stop on the site and the project is walking distance to

Peterson Park, Peterson Middle School and the El Camino Plaza, which includes a grocery store. Multiple employment centers are also within close proximity.

## DESIGN

Atria has a diverse set of housing types, unit mixes and a commercial component. Architectural elements such as smooth stucco, stone veneer and wood trellises are incorporated in the Spanish mission-style design. The primary building, which fronts East El Camino Real, is a Type VA wood framed structure built over a Type I podium with a subterranean garage. The building exteriors include varying fenestration accented with extensive trim painting schemes.

The applicant spent significant time and resources to design Atria to seamlessly blend with the surrounding residential and commercial uses. The Southern section of the primary building is between 67' to 84' from the closest neighboring residential property boundaries and between 113' to 122' from the actual physical building. In addition, to minimize any potential visual conflicts, the primary building transitions between 3, 4 and 5 stories from the southwest corner to the southeast corner.

In addition, there is a separate set of detached rental housing units named "Poplar Flats," which front Poplar Avenue. The Flats are connected through a shared walkway and parking area and were intentionally designed with lower heights, with a two story front section that steps back to three stories to seamlessly blend with the existing surrounding lower density multifamily housing. The Flats have private, separated tuck-under parking and the units are accessible from Poplar Avenue, the grade level and subterranean parking garage and through walkways throughout the project site.

To activate the street frontage, an outdoor "Wellness Plaza" fronts along East El Camino Real. This area joins the street with park-style benches, lighting, landscaping and a bike rack to form a lively gathering space along the streetscape. Permeable materials (decorative pavers and pervious concrete) will be installed throughout this area as an efficient means to manage stormwater. The "Wellness Plaza" connects the community to

the Go Pro Bike Lounge, Fitness Center, Lobby and Tech Center, creating a mixture of highly active uses along the ground floor of the building.

### UNITS AND PARKING

Although the final unit mix may change through the design process, of the 108 apartment homes, there are approximately 10 studios, 53 one-bedrooms and 45 two-bedrooms. The square footages for the studios are 608 square feet, one-bedrooms are 772-775 square feet, the two-bedrooms are 1,060-1,406 square feet.

Indoor and outdoor amenities include an oversized swimming pool and spa, roof deck with kitchen and movie theatre, clubroom, gaming center, multiple barbecue areas, entertainment terrace, indoor/outdoor fitness center, pet spa, bike lounge and outdoor dining and lounge area. Residents will be able to relax after a long bike ride, meet their neighbors, participate in educational demonstrations and tinker with their bike at the Go Pro Bike Lounge. The lounge is equipped with a repair station, a bike tool vending machine, easy access bike storage and seating areas, thus enhancing the experience of a socially active lifestyle.

Atria provides a total of 200 parking spaces, of which 189 spaces are located inside the two-level parking garage (at grade and subterranean), seven spaces are in private garages under the Poplar Flats and four spaces are along the main entry drive adjacent to the main leasing office and Wellness Plaza. Of the 200 total parking spaces, 33 spaces are tandems that are designated for some two-bedroom units. Sunnyvale's code (Title 19) allows the use of tandem spaces when a development satisfies specific requirements related to sustainability and Transit Oriented Development. Atria satisfies the prerequisites for tandem allowance through providing abundant bicycle storage (115+ spaces) in multiple locations, including an expansive storage area in the parking garage and within the Go Pro Bike Lounge. In addition, the project achieves 110 green points, which is far more than the City's required 80 points.

## CIRCULATION

Pedestrian designated walkways allow for multiple paths of travel between the buildings and onsite amenities. A gated pedestrian entry at the Poplar Flats off of Poplar Avenue provides additional access to residents travelling to and from the west. Vehicles can drive through the parking garage to access both points of ingress/egress, the main driveway at East El Camino Real and the secondary driveway at Poplar Avenue. Emergency Vehicle Access (EVA) is provided at both points and pursuant to Sunnyvale Fire's requirements, a hammerhead turnaround is at the main driveway. An additional EVA is provided off of Poplar Avenue, thus giving an aerial ladder truck direct ladder access to the second floor podium deck.

The Local Bus Route 22 has a stop located directly at the front of the site, currently providing regular service with 15-minute headways. The Rapid 522 Bus Line also runs along El Camino Real with stops at S. Wolfe Rd and Halford Ave at 0.3 miles and 0.4 miles from the property, respectively. In addition, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) proposes upgrading the existing Rapid 522 line with a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line.

## DEVIATIONS

To incentivize the inclusion of income-restricted housing in market rate projects, state density bonus law entitles applicants to incentives and waivers to jurisdictions' design standards and guidelines. In addition, Sunnyvale also has a "Special Housing Development" program enabling affordable housing projects to receive deviations from design guidelines in order to make the projects feasible. If Atria was applying the state density bonus law, it would need to provide 11% of its units at the 50% AMI level. However, the applicant is providing 20% of Atria's units at the 50% AMI level, thus providing 9% more than would be required for the incentive program.

To make Atria feasible, four deviations are necessary; a minor reduction in required parking (1 space), building height, distance between buildings and the lot coverage area.

Based on the unit count, a total of 201 spaces are required per the City's Multifamily parking standards and 162 spaces if the Special Housing Development permit process is used for affordable housing projects. Atria provides 200 spaces and a Parking Management Plan has been provided through a Special Development Permit. In addition to reduced parking, Atria will incorporate other best practice elements from the TDM program including affordable housing, adjacency to high frequency bus stops, on-site bicycle repair facilities and Class III long-term bicycle parking. The City's TDM Toolkit states, "The presence of Below Market Rate (BMR) housing as part of a residential development has demonstrated positive effects on the use of TDM strategies and lower travel demand. In particular, affordable housing that is located near transit performs particularly well in terms of transportation demand management."

The "Poplar Flats" were deliberately designed at a lower density to respect the character and scale of the existing community. The building is two stories along Poplar Avenue and steps up to three stories at the back two-thirds. The top of roof at the third level measures 37'-8" above grade. This measurement is below the maximum height of 55' allowed within the C-2/ECR zone but since it is within 75' of an adjacent single-family residence, the height limit is reduced to 30'. Trees will line the property boundary to screen the view from the south residences.

The south-facing windows at the second and third floors are designed to eliminate any potential visual intrusion of the neighboring properties to the south. Additionally there are certain sloped roof gables that exceed the maximum 60' height limit on the main building (55' + 5' green bonus). The tower elements featured at the front of the main building reach the height of 67' 4". These are architectural features intended to create visual interest and complement the Mission Style design of the project. The habitable space of the building does not go beyond the allowable height limit of 60'. The citywide design guidelines states, "Only consider deviations to height limitations in the Zoning Code for a building when the deviation is for a pitched roof or other element that is consistent with the architectural character of the building." While the sloped roof gables could be omitted, it would be of great detriment to the building's design aesthetic.

A minimum distance of 32 feet from another building on the same lot is required for a 5-story building. The main building is located 20 feet from the Poplar Flats building. As such, the applicant requests a deviation, as a modification to the layout would result in a loss of parking and units. To soften the massing, the top two floors at the southwest corner of the main building and adjacent to the Poplar Flats building have been removed. The area separating the two buildings is located in the interior of the project and would not be visible from the public right of way.

Lastly, the lot coverage is calculated at 39.4%, which exceeds the lot coverage allowable maximum for the C-2 Zoning District (35%). However, Atria is below the lot coverage maximum when using the Coty's comparable R-4 zoning district standards (40%).