

## Overview

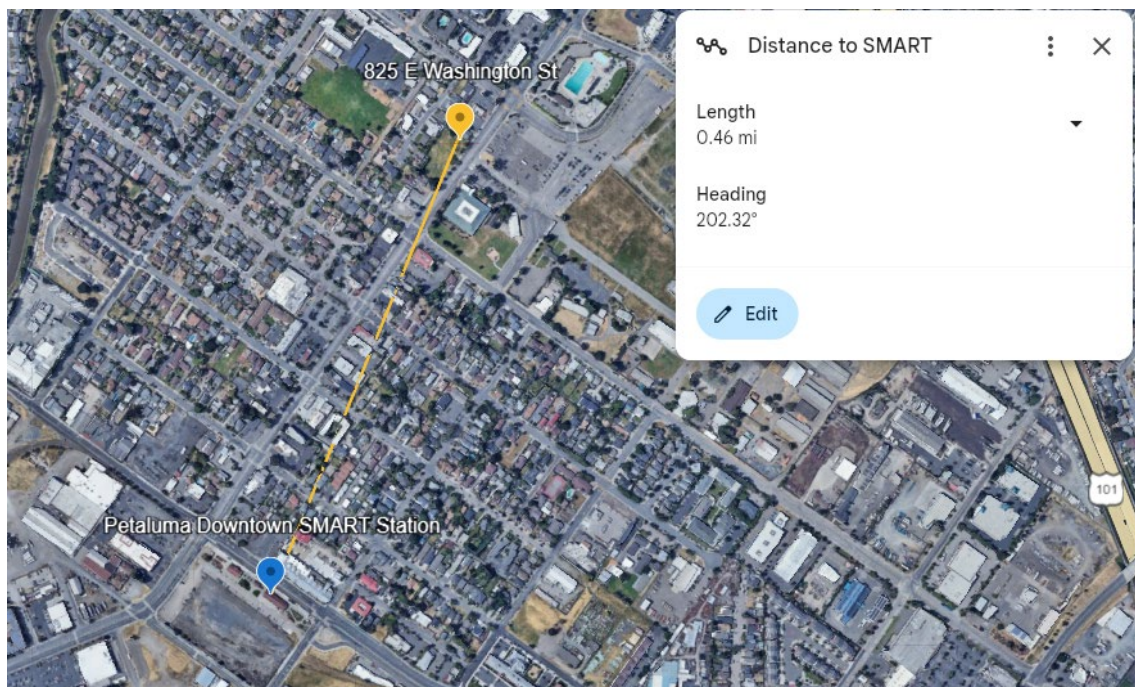
MidPen Housing is pleased to submit this ministerial application for a 4-story, 100% affordable development located at 817,821 & 825 Washington Street in Petaluma, California. This is an application for a development permit pursuant to Government Code § 65913.4, otherwise known as Senate Bill 35 (SB 35). The project is also subject to the protections of Government Code section 65589.5, the Housing Accountability Act. The project is eligible for a density bonus pursuant to State Density Bonus Law (SDBL), Government Code § 65915, including concessions and waivers to support the proposed project's development.

## Washington Commons Description and Location

Washington Commons is the new construction of a 49-unit affordable rental community for family households, consisting of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. This also includes 1 two-bedroom on-site staff unit. All units at Washington Commons, excluding the manager's unit, will be restricted to Low and Very Low Income households.

The proposed project occupies a relatively shallow 0.75-acre site fronting on E. Washington Street across from the Regional Library, Golden Gate Transit stop, and Petaluma Fairgrounds. It is close to several shopping centers, healthcare, and other community amenities. It is also located .46 miles from the Downtown Petaluma Sonoma Marin Train (SMART) station.

Commercial uses are located on each side of the property along E. Washington Street, and to the north of the site are single-family, duplex, and triplex residential structures.



### Physical Characteristics/Design

The design team carefully considered the design of the site, buildings, and units at Washington Commons to ensure they comply with the City's Zoning and General Plan requirements, as well as complement the existing neighborhood character and meet the needs of the residents. The site design, buildings, and landscaping were designed to fit within the context of the neighborhood character, which consists of a mix of commercial and civic structures. In addition, measures have been taken to address climate change and enhance the pedestrian experience.

The four-story building fronts directly onto E. Washington Street to create an active, urban street edge. The main floor is elevated approximately 18 inches to address geotechnical requirements. A "front porch" is incorporated on this elevated base to create an arcade and provide connection from the main entrance to the sidewalk. Residential units will activate the façade on all floor levels. Outdoor patios and play areas at the rear of the building extend the indoor amenity areas to the outdoors.

The overall building design is contemporary with a light, neutral palette. The façade is stepped along the street edge, reflecting the angle of the site, and providing additional articulation to the façade. The primary building material is cement plaster, however, an accent material such as cementitious siding may be incorporated as an accent material at the wall base. Deeper colors are also incorporated at the base and in select accent areas within the façade to provide additional interest.

The building walls and windows will be designed to achieve acoustical ratings that support a peaceful interior environment. The equipment, furnishings and fixtures will be constructed of durable materials to ensure long-term sustainability of the property.

The 4-story building will be constructed as a Type VA wood-frame building with a slab on-grade foundation system and will be equipped with an NFPA-13 fire sprinkler system. An elevator will provide accessibility to all units.

All the units will be adaptable per the CBC 11(A) except for that 15% of the units will be "mobility units" designed per CBC 11(B). In addition, 4% of the units will have communication features. Each residential unit will be furnished with kitchen appliances, including cabinet storage, dishwasher, garbage disposal, refrigerator, stove, and a kitchen sink.

### Parking and Site Access

This project is subject to California State Density Bonus Law in accordance with California Government Code Sections 65915 - 65918. Per Section 65915 (p)(3), developments with 100%

## Washington Commons Narrative

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of units dedicated to lower income households and that are located within one-half mile of a major transit stop are not subject to local vehicular parking standards.

Washington Commons meets these criteria and therefore is not required to provide any parking. However, the project team wishes to achieve a parking ratio of approx. 0.5 spaces per unit or 25 spaces. To achieve this, the project proposes a vehicular driveway along E. Washington Street close to the eastern site boundary. This entry drive aisle, perpendicular to the street is 26 ft. wide as required to accommodate an aerial access fire truck. To minimize the impact of parking on the site, the drive aisle behind the building is proposed to be 22 ft wide as allowed elsewhere within the City of Petaluma, such as within the Central Petaluma Specific Plan. Similarly, the size of spaces varies to accommodate “unistall” parking, compact spaces, electric vehicle spaces and accessible spaces.

Secure bicycle parking will also be provided within the building adjacent to the rear resident entrance, and two guest bicycle spaces will be provided near the main entrance along E Washington Street.

### **Amenities**

There are a variety of resident amenities and services. These spaces are designed to encourage socialization and create a thriving, active community. They include a centrally located lobby with mail center. Offices for Property Management and Resident Services are conveniently located near the lobby. A community room with demonstration kitchen and storage, and a community laundry facility are centrally located and provide access to a large outdoor courtyard. A central maintenance room and a large bicycle storage room are also provided.

Outdoor amenities consist of active and passive recreation areas (play area and quiet sitting areas). This includes outdoor play space for children. The outdoor spaces are intended to allow indoor social spaces to expand to the outdoors and activate the space between the building and the street edge.

Landscaping will be integrated into these spaces and will include drought-tolerant trees, shrubs, vines, and ground covers.

### **Sustainable and Green Building Elements**

MidPen is committed to sustainable development including the use of advanced green building methods, recycled content materials, energy-efficient and water-efficient appliances, photovoltaic panels, and drought-tolerant landscaping. Washington Commons will be evaluated per Build It Green GreenPoint Rated standards.

The project will be all-electric with no gas hook-ups or gas appliances and will include an electric hot water system. A photovoltaic system will be installed. Throughout the site, there will be bio-swales, drought-tolerant landscaping, and drip irrigation systems. The units will have Energy Star appliances as well as energy-efficient light and water-saving fixtures in the kitchens and bathrooms. Double-pane Low-E windows will be installed to maximize natural light and minimize solar heat-gain. In addition, GreenLabel Plus carpet and low-VOC paint will be used in the interiors of the units, further creating high quality and healthy homes for the residents.

### **Legislative Context**

The housing crisis continues to impact Californians across the state significantly. The Regional Housing Needs Assessment for 2023-2031 has allocated a total housing quota of 3,824 dwelling units for Sonoma County. This allocation includes a specific quota for Very Low-, Low-, and Moderate-Income levels. This project will assist the City in meeting its quota by producing 49 units of permanently affordable housing in the City of Petaluma.

The proposed project is eligible for the SB 35 Streamlined Affordable Housing approval process and is eligible to utilize the State Density Bonus Law. The project will provide 49 affordable units that will be deed restricted as affordable for 55 years.

The proposed project is also subject to Government Code Section 65589.5, also known as the Housing Accountability Act (HAA). The project is consistent with the provisions of State Density Bonus Law, Streamlined Affordable Housing, and HAA State laws. These three Government Code sections are state legislative efforts that recognize the severity of California's housing crisis, and the difficulties associated with developing new housing at appropriately zoned and urbanized locations. This project will bring a residential density of 66 DU/Acre to the area.

### **SB 35 Eligibility**

This project is eligible for SB 35 ministerial approval because it is 100% permanently affordable, meets the City's objective zoning and design criteria, and meets the locational criteria from Government Code § 65914.3. This application includes a SB 35 eligibility screening that shows the project site complies with the site restrictions of the SB 35

legislation. The site is not located in any of the following zones which would render it ineligible: severe fire zone, important farmland, wetlands, conservation areas, species of concern habitat, FEMA flood zones, earthquake fault zones, or historic structures. The project site also does not appear on the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) Cortese List of contaminated sites. The project does not appear on the Department of Toxic Substances Control List for hazardous materials contamination or on the State Water Resources groundwater cleanup sites. Lastly, the project is in a general plan designation and zoning district that allow multi-family residential uses.

### AB 168

Per Senate Bill 330 and Assembly Bill 168 requirements, the City of Petaluma formally notified State-designated tribal representatives from NAHC's Most Likely Descendants (MLD) list of the proposed project on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Tribal consultation concluded October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, as evidenced by the execution of a tribal monitoring agreement between MidPen, The City of Petaluma, and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.

### State Density Bonus Law

Per California's Density Bonus Law, projects with 100% of units serving Low and Very Low Income households (excluding manager's units) and located within half a mile of a major transit stop are granted certain exceptions from local development standards. Such exceptions applicable to Washington Commons include:

1. **Maximum Height Limit:** Per 65915(d)(2)(D), a height increase of an additional three stories or 33 feet from the baseline zoning limit is allowable. Petaluma Zoning Code limits building height in Zone MU-1A to 30 feet. Washington Commons is 45 feet in height which is within the allowed 63 feet height limit granted by SDBL.
2. **Parking:** Per Section 65915(p)(3), no parking is required. Washington Commons is exceeding that requirement by providing 0.5 spaces per unit.
3. **Unit Count:** Per Section 65915(f)(3)(D)(ii), no maximum density limits may be imposed. Washington Commons' density is 66 dwelling units per acre.
4. **Incentives / Concessions:** Per 65915(d)(2)(D), up to five incentives or concessions are available to the project. Washington Commons is seeking only waivers and not incentives or concessions.

### Land Use Conformance

The project is located in the MU1A land use zone. Although the project generally conforms to the development standards for this mixed-use zone, there may be some waivers required to achieve the necessary density. They include but may not be limited to:

1. **Ground-Floor Use:** The City's General Plan prohibits ground floor residential units in the mixed-use zone. This project requires a waiver from this requirement to achieve the necessary density.
2. **Setback:** The mixed-use zone has a transitional step back to the adjacent R-3 Zone to the north. This project requires a waiver from this requirement to achieve the necessary density.
3. **Tree Mitigation:** City of Petaluma Zoning Code, Chapter 17: Tree Preservation requires tree mitigation for the removal or impacts to existing oak trees. Due to project density, on-site mitigation measures are unachievable. Alternatively, in-lieu fees are cost prohibitive. This project requires a waiver from this requirement to achieve the necessary density.