



**PROJECT LOCATION**  
123- 135 Primrose Road

# City of Burlingame

*Environmental Scoping, Design Review, Special Permit, Lot Combination and  
Tentative Parcel Map*

**Item No. 9e**  
**Design Review Study**

**Address:** 123 -135 Primrose Road

**Meeting Date:** July 12, 2021

**Request:** Application for Environmental Scoping, Design Review, Special Permit for building height, Lot Combination and Tentative Parcel Map for a new, 14-unit multifamily apartment building with at-grade parking.

**Applicant and Architect:** Abha Nehru, Carrasco and Associates

**APNs:** 029-221-040 and -050

**Property Owner:** Albert K. Wong

**Zoning:** HMU

**General Plan Designation:** Downtown Specific Plan, Howard Mixed Use

**Combined Lot Areas:** 10,716 SF

## **Adjacent Development:**

Left side: 119 Primrose, zoned BMU (Bayswater Mixed Use) - multifamily residence  
Across the street: 112, 116, 120 Primrose Road, zoned BMU - Parish church and gymnasium  
132 Primrose Road, zoned BMU - Lot G public parking  
Right side: 139 Primrose Road, zoned HMU - food pantry (CALL Primrose)  
Rear of property: 1443 Howard, zoned BMU – preschool and United Methodist Church  
124 El Camino Real, zoned BMU - multifamily residential

**Current Use:** Single story office building (123 Primrose Road) and gravel parking lot (135 Primrose Road).

**Proposed Use:** 14-unit, four-story multifamily residential apartment building with at-grade parking.

**Allowable Use:** Multifamily residential uses, retail and personal services, offices above the first floor.

**Environmental Scoping:** The Planning Commission should review the proposed project for areas of potential significant environmental effects. The Commission should add any additional effects of the project that they anticipate might be potentially significant. The areas of investigation for environmental evaluation as defined by CEQA are listed on the attached sheet for your reference. These potential environmental effects which will be considered in the CEQA document include:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology, Soils and Paleontological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Cumulative Impacts

The issues identified by the Commission will be incorporated into the environmental documents for the project. At this time, staff notes that based on preliminary analysis, it appears that the type of CEQA document required will be a Class 32 Infill Exemption. However, the type of CEQA document will be finalized during the environmental review process.

**Project Summary:** The applicant is proposing to combine Lot 2B (123 Primrose Road) and Lot 3 (139 Primrose Road), to create a single lot that totals 10,716 SF. The existing single-story office building at 123 Primrose Road would be demolished. Lot 3 is currently a vacant, gravel parking lot with 12 parking spaces that are leased by the United Methodist Nursery School at 1443 Howard Avenue and CALL Primrose (food pantry) at 139 Primrose Road. These leased parking spaces are not included in the existing parking calculations or in any existing Conditional Use Permit for either the Nursery School or for CALL Primrose.

With the proposed lot combination, the proposed lot would have a linear street frontage of 99'-11 ¾" where 50'-0" is the minimum required frontage. The two existing curb cuts would be eliminated and a single curb cut is proposed at the left side of the building to access the enclosed at-grade parking on the first floor.

The proposed apartment building would have at-grade parking and a lobby, 14 residential units in the three stories above the garage, and a rooftop terrace. The rooftop terrace level does not contain enclosed living space and is therefore not counted as story. Fourteen bicycle parking spaces are provided in the at-grade parking level.

Each of the proposed living units contains a kitchen and living room, bedroom(s), bathroom(s), a laundry room, and a balcony. The proposed project includes seven one-bedroom units, six two-bedroom units, and one three-bedroom unit. Affordable (below market rate) units are not required and no below market rate units are proposed for the project. Unit sizes range from 916 SF to 1,946 SF; the average unit size proposed is 1,237 SF where a maximum average unit size is 1,250 SF. An enclosed trash room is provided at the ground floor lobby.

The proposed ground level ceiling height is required to be 15 feet and the proposed project meets this standard. Retail space is allowed, but not required on the ground floor. The proposed project has a ground floor that includes a lobby with a mail room, storage, elevator, stairway, and trash enclosure areas.

Planning staff identified the following applications required for this project:

- Design Review for the proposed construction of a new four-story, 14-unit multifamily residential apartment building (C.S. 25.29.020 and 25.57.010, and Chapter 5 of the Downtown Specific Plan); and
- Special Permit for building height for architectural features (C.S. 26.33.070); and
- Lot Merger to combine three existing lots (Lot 2B – 123 Primrose Road and Lot 3 – 135 Primrose Road) into one lot.

**Design Review:** The proposed project is subject to Chapter 5 of the Downtown Specific Plan (Design & Character). Section 5.3 (pages 5-17 through 5-21) provides design guidelines specifically for residential projects within the Downtown Specific Plan area. Section 5.4 (pages 5-22 through 5-27) provides more general design guidelines that apply to all areas of the downtown, including residential and mixed use areas. These applicable sections of the Design and Character chapters of the Downtown Specific Plan have been attached for reference.

The materials proposed for the exterior of the building include scored stucco, a mix of wood and stone cladding, a framed glass staircase façade, black steel windows, perforated metal garage door, c-channel metal band over the lobby, and glass balcony guardrails. Please refer to the materials sheet on A0.4 and the building elevations on sheets A5.1, A5.1a, A5.2 and A5.2a.

**Special Permit for Building Height for Architectural Features:** Zoning Code Section 25.33.070(a) allows architectural features in excess of the maximum building height which do not extend more than ten (10) feet

above the maximum height and do not occupy more than ten (10) percent of the roof area. The architectural features shall enhance the design of the building and shall be reviewed as part of the Design Review process outlined in Chapter 25.57. The applicant is requesting a Special Permit for the two stair enclosures designed as features of the building façade and for the rooftop trellis designed to provide architectural interest to the common open rooftop area. The total percentage of the roof area for these three features is 720.5 SF (9.9%) where 722.3 SF (10%) is allowed.

**Off-Street Parking:** Parking requirements are based on the number of bedrooms proposed per unit. Zoning Code Section 25.70.032 provides reduced residential parking standards specific to properties located within the boundaries of the Downtown Specific Plan. In the HMU District, the minimum parking requirement is one space for each studio unit or one-bedroom unit, 1.5 spaces for each two-bedroom unit, and 2 spaces for each three-bedroom unit. The proposed project includes seven one-bedroom units, six two-bedroom units, and one three-bedroom unit, and therefore the total number of required parking spaces for the residential units is 18 spaces. A service/delivery space is not required for apartments, but the project includes one designated service/delivery space. No guest parking is required on-site for properties located within the Downtown Specific Plan area (no designated guest parking provided). There are a total of 20 at-grade parking spaces provided where 18 parking spaces are required.

All of the proposed parking spaces are located in an enclosed parking garage at grade. An automated stacker system would provide six parking spaces. Twelve unistall spaces, one service/delivery space, and one van accessible parking space would be provided at-grade. All vehicles would enter and exit the project through the proposed driveway with a garage door entry on Primrose Road.

The proposed automated stacker parking system is manufactured by Klaus (see attachments for the specifications). The system accommodates six vehicles stacked vertically in two levels. The Municipal Code does not include specifications for automated parking systems, so the City currently does not have a standard mechanism for review and approval. However, as a policy the Downtown Specific Plan encourages “creative approaches” to providing on-site parking including automated parking systems. To date, several City-approved commercial and residential projects with parking lifts/automated parking systems have been built and are operational.

The Downtown Specific Plan notes that “new development should provide safe, secure facilities for bicycles. This can be accomplished in a number of ways, depending on the type of development. Where possible, secured, indoor parking space (i.e. lockable, caged space) for bikes should be provided in all new residential and commercial buildings. New projects should include bike stalls to allow users the opportunity to securely store their bicycles.” The applicant proposes that bicycles can be stored in 14-space bicycle parking area on the first floor; one space would be assigned to each residential unit.

**Landscaping:** There are no landscaping standards for multifamily apartment units in the HMU zoning district. There are no existing protected size trees on site. The applicant has provided Landscape Plans (Sheets L1. – L3.0) to show a total of nine 24-inch box size Maple trees to be planted at grade, as well as two garden areas and planter boxes at the rooftop garden. One existing street tree, a Sycamore, will remain with construction and two new Coral Bark Maples are proposed to be planted in the right-of-way between the curb and sidewalk.

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**123-135 Primrose Road**  
**Lot Area:** 10,716 SF

**Plans date stamped:** June 21, 2021

		PROPOSED	ALLOWED/REQUIRED
<b>SETBACKS:</b>			
<b>Front</b>	(flr 1): (flr 2): (flr 3): (flr 4):	0'-6" 0'-0" 0'-0" 0'-0"	0'-0" 0'-0" <sup>1</sup> 0'-0" <sup>1</sup> 0'-0" <sup>1</sup>
<b>Left Side</b>	(flr 1): (flr 2): (flr 3): (flr 4):	13'-9" 10'-0" 10'-0" 10'-0"	7'-0" <sup>2</sup> 8'-0" <sup>2</sup> 9'-0" <sup>2</sup> 10'-0" <sup>2</sup>
<b>Right Side</b>	(flr 1): (flr 2): (flr 3): (flr 4):	0'-3" 0'-3" 5'-2" 8'-10"	0'-0" 0'-0" 0'-0" 0'-0"
<b>Rear</b>	(flr 1): (flr 2): (flr 3): (flr 4):	<u>Left side / Right side</u> <sup>3</sup> 11'-0" / 9'-0" 10'-0" / 9'-0" 10'-0" / 9'-0" 10'-0" / 9'-0"	<u>Left side / Right side</u> <sup>3</sup> 7'-0" / 0'-0" 8'-0" / 0'-0" 9'-0" / 0'-0" 10'-0" / 0'-0"
<b>Building Height:</b>		53'-7" to top of parapet 60'-5" to top of stair enclosures <sup>4</sup> 58'-0" to top of trellis <sup>4</sup> 64'-9" to top of elevator <sup>5</sup>	55'-0" maximum 65'-0" maximum with Special Permit 65'-0" maximum with Special Permit 65'-0" for mechanical equipment
<b>Private Open Space:</b>		75 SF – 155 SF per unit	None
<b>Common Open Space:</b>		2,690 SF rooftop <u>262.5 SF backyard</u> 1,952.5 SF top	None
<b>Off-Street Parking:</b>		6 spaces in stackers 12 unistall spaces 1 service parking space <u>1 van accessible space</u>  Total = 20 spaces	7, 1- bdrm units x 1 = 7 spaces 6, 2- bdrm units x 1.5 = 9 spaces 1, 3 bdrm unit x 2 = 2 spaces Guest space = 0 space <u>Service or delivery space = 0 space</u>  Total = 18 spaces

- <sup>1</sup> Per C.S. 25.33.060(b), 60% of the structure over the first floor must be located at the property line (0'-0", or no front setback). For the proposed project, 88% of the structure over the first floor has a zero setback, no front setback).
- <sup>2</sup> Per C.S. 25.33.060(d), R-3 side setback standards apply to property lines with an existing residential use on the abutting property. Therefore R-3 C.S. 25.28.075(b) side setback regulations apply to the left side of the proposed structure, which abuts a multifamily structure at 119 Primrose.
- <sup>3</sup> The right, rear side of the building can be built to the property line where the property abuts the daycare at 1443 Howard Avenue.
- <sup>4</sup> A Special Permit is requested for architectural features that do extend more than 10 feet above maximum allowed height (C.S. 25.33.070).
- <sup>5</sup> Up to 5% of roof area may project not more than 10 feet above top of parapet and may be used for enclosing elevators or mechanical equipment.

**General Plan/Specific Plan:** The General Plan designates the site as Downtown Specific Plan. In 2010 the City Council adopted the *Burlingame Downtown Specific Plan* (with amendments in 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017), which serves as an element of the General Plan. The subject property is located within the boundaries of the planning area for the Downtown Specific Plan; the site is in the Howard Mixed Use District. The Plan describes the HMU District as follows:

*The Howard Avenue Area is the area to the south of Burlingame Avenue and consists of a mix of uses, including retail and office along Howard Avenue, and multifamily residential uses between Howard and Peninsula Avenues. Burlingame Avenue and Howard Avenue together form the "Burlingame commercial" area. Ground floor retail use is encouraged, and housing is allowed on the upper levels above commercial uses. The interceding side streets--Lorton Avenue, Park Road, Primrose Road and Highland Avenue--will act as connector streets with the commercial uses along those streets strengthening the relationship between Burlingame Avenue and Howard Avenue.*

**Public Facilities Impact Fee:** The purpose of public facilities impact fees is to provide funding for necessary maintenance and improvements created by development projects. Public facilities impact fees are based on the uses, the number of dwelling units, and the amount of square footage to be located on the property after completion of the development project. New development that, through demolition or conversion, will eliminate existing development is entitled to a fee credit offset if the existing development is a lawful use under this title, including a nonconforming use.

Based on the proposed 14-unit residential apartment development, the required public facilities impact fee for this development project is approximately \$63,089.00.

**Residential Impact Fee:** The purpose of residential impact fees is to support and build new homes for lower-income residents. The fees can be charged to developers of new residential projects and used for land purchase, construction costs, or site rehabilitation related to providing workforce housing. The residential impact fee, depending on whether prevailing wage labor is used, is approximately \$294,440.00 - \$346,400.00.

**Staff Comments:** The applicant has worked with Public Works to develop a trash pickup area at the curb in front of the building that will satisfy Recology requirements. A single street parking space will be eliminated by the trash receptacles for approximately four hours on the day that Recology schedules a pick-up.

**Planning Commission Action for the Scoping/Study Meeting:**

1. **Environmental Review:** The Planning Commission should review the proposed project for areas of potential significant environmental effects.
2. **Design Review Study:** The Planning Commission should comment on the design of the project as required by Chapter 25.57 of the Zoning Ordinance, Design Review, and to the following design criteria for multifamily projects (Code Section 25.57.030 f, 1-4):
  - (1) Compatibility with the existing character of the neighborhood;
  - (2) Respect the mass and fine scale of adjacent buildings even when using differing architectural styles;
  - (3) Maintain the tradition of architectural diversity, but with human scale regardless of the architectural style used; and
  - (4) Incorporate quality materials and thoughtful design which will last into the future.
3. **Special Permit:** The Planning Commission should comment on the design of the project as required by Chapter 26.33.070 for the following Special Permit findings:
  - (a) The blend of mass, scale and dominant structural characteristics of the new construction or addition are consistent with the existing structure's design and with the existing street and neighborhood;
  - (b) the variety of roof line, facade, exterior finish materials and elevations of the proposed new structure or addition are consistent with the existing structure, street and neighborhood;
  - (c) the proposed project is consistent with the residential design guidelines adopted by the city; and
  - (d) removal of any trees located within the footprint of any new structure or addition is necessary and is consistent with the city's reforestation requirements, and the mitigation for the removal that is proposed is appropriate.

Erika Lewit  
Senior Planner

c. Abha Nehru, applicant and architect

Attachments:

Application to the Planning Commission  
Klaus Automated Parking Stacker Specification Sheets  
Downtown Specific Plan Applicable Design Guidelines (reference only)  
Notice of Public Hearing – Mailed July 2, 2021  
Area Map