



CITY OF BURLINGAME PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item: 8b	Hearing Date: February 23, 2026
Project No.	DSR25-0023
Location	1355 De Soto Avenue APN: 027-152-060
Applicant and Architect	Grant Takahashi Lee
Property Owner	Kearns-Ngyuen Family Trust
Staff	Erika Lewit, Senior Planner
General Plan Designation	Low Density Residential
Zoning	R-1 (Low Density Residential)
Lot Area	6,000 SF

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Review of an application for Major Design Review and Special Permit for plate height to construct a 535 square-foot first and second story addition to an existing 2,849 square-foot single-unit dwelling on a 6,000 square-foot site in the R-1 (Low Density Residential) zoning district.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is an interior lot and currently contains a 2,849 square-foot two-story single-unit dwelling with a 385 square-foot detached garage. The applicant proposes adding 245 SF to the first floor and 290 square SF to the second floor. The existing detached garage will not be altered. The project requires a Major Design Review application reviewed by the Planning Commission (C.S. 25.68.020.C.1.b.).

The applicant is requesting a Special Permit for a 9'-1" plate height at the second floor addition, which would match the existing 9'-1" plate height on the second floor (9'-1" proposed where 8'-0" is the maximum allowed on the second floor) (C.S. 25.10.030, Table and 25.78.020.A.6.).

ANALYSIS

The project meets the applicable development standards for single-unit dwellings based on the R-1 zoning district, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Project Information

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	ALLOWED/REQ'D
Front Setback (1st flr):	16'-6"	no change	15'-0"
(2nd flr):	23'-4"	no change	20'-0"
Side Setback (left):	2'-7" ¹	no change	4'-0"
(right):	8'-6"	no change	4'-0"
Rear Setback (1st flr):	49'-4"	36'-5"	15'-0"
(2nd flr):	59'-6"	49'-5"	20'-0"

Lot Coverage:	2,022 SF 34%	2,383 SF 39.7%	2,400 SF 40%
FAR:	2,849 SF 0.48 FAR	3,384 SF 0.56 FAR	3,405 SF ² 0.57 FAR
Off-Street Parking:	1 covered in garage (19'-9" x 17'-7") ³ 1 uncovered on driveway (9'-0" x 18'-0")	no change	1 covered (10'-0" x 18'-0") 1 uncovered (9'-0" x 18'-0")
Building Height:	26'-7"	26'-7"	30'-0"
Plate Height (1st flr): (2nd flr):	8'-4" 9'-1"	8'-4" 9'-1" ⁴	9'-0" 8'-0"
Declining Height Envelope:	18 SF existing left side encroachment	complies	C.S. 25.10.055.A.1.

¹ Existing, non-conforming left side setback to the first floor.
² (0.32 x 6,000 SF) + 1,100 SF + 385 SF = 3,405 SF (0.57 FAR).
³ Existing, non-conforming depth for covered parking spaces.
⁴ Special Permit request for second floor plate height.

Urban Reforestation and Tree Protection Ordinance

Existing and proposed trees to be planted are shown on the Existing Site Plan and Landscape Plan. There are no existing trees of protected size on site. There is one existing landscape trees to remain on site, a Strawberry tree in the rear yard. Based on the proposed floor area, three landscape trees are required on-site. As part of this project, three new 24-inch box landscape trees are proposed (Magnolia, Ginko, and Crabapple). With a total of four trees on site, the project complies with the Urban Reforestation and Tree Protection Ordinance requirements. There is one existing street tree (Camphor) along the parcel frontage which is to remain. Tree protection measures are called out on Sheet L2.

Design Review

The proposed project has been designed in accordance with the Residential Design Guidelines and R-1 zoning district development standards, and design criteria for Major Design Review for single-unit dwellings established in Municipal Code Section 25.68.060.C., which requires:

1. Consistency with any applicable design guidelines;
2. Compatibility of the architectural style with that of the existing character of the neighborhood;
3. Respect for the parking and garage patterns in the neighborhood;
4. Architectural style and consistency and mass and bulk of structures, including accessory structures;
5. Interface of the proposed structure with the structures on adjacent properties;
6. Landscaping and its proportion to mass and bulk of structural components; and

7. In the case of an addition, compatibility with the architectural style and character of the existing structure as remodeled.

The proposed first and second story addition is compatible with the existing Spanish architectural style of the dwelling and includes distinctive architectural details such as arched windows at the first and second stories on the front elevation to echo the porch design, as well as terracotta roof tiles. The proposed design is consistent with the character and massing found in the neighborhood in that the design proposes plate heights that match those of the existing dwelling, gable roofs, articulated walls, and appropriate fenestration on all four building elevations. The architectural style is enhanced with details such as windows with divided lights with wood sills and arched wood gable vents that are consistent with the same or similar materials found in the neighborhood. The on-site landscaping, which includes retaining existing trees and planting new 24-inch box size trees throughout the site, and the addition of flatwork and stucco walls to enhance the front elevation is appropriate and proportional to the mass and bulk of the house.

Summary of Proposed Exterior Materials

- **Windows:** aluminum clad wood with simulate true divided lites and spacer bars and wood sills
- **Doors:** wood front door
- **Trim:** wood fascia
- **Siding:** stucco throughout and composite wood siding at the rear left side of the first and second floors with composite trim board at transition to stucco
- **Roof:** terracotta roof tile
- **Other:** metal railings and planter box, arched gable wood vents

Staff supports the requested Special Permit for the second floor plate height (9'-1" proposed) because it matches the existing second floor plate height and results in an overall balanced design that does not appear top-heavy. Staff has the following suggestion for the Planning Commission to consider:

- The existing structure contains stucco exterior cladding, as does most of the proposed project. The applicant is proposing composite wood siding at the first and second floors at the rear corner of the house (see Proposed Rear and South Side Elevations). While this corner is not visible from the street and will possibly be screened from neighbors at the side and rear by newly planted trees, staff believes that the proposed siding in that corner is not consistent with the aesthetic of the dwelling as a whole. Staff suggests that for consistency, the applicant either add composite wood siding accents to other elevations or eliminate the proposed wood composite siding from the design.

Attachments:

Area Map
Proposed Plans dated February 2, 2026