



CITY OF BURLINGAME PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item: 6c	Hearing Date: September 8, 2025
Project No.	DSR22-0050
Location	1115 Paloma Avenue APN: 026-211-100
Applicant	Simon Kwan, Kwan Design Architects
Property Owner	Jeffery Chan
Staff	Ruben Hurin, Planning Manager
General Plan Designation	Medium-High Density Residential
Zoning	R-3 (Medium-High Density Residential)
Lot Area	5,750 SF

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Review of an application for Major Design Review and Condominium Permit for a new three-story, 3-unit residential condominium building in the R-3 (Medium-High Density Residential) zoning district.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission, by resolution, approve the Major Design Review and Condominium Permit as conditioned, and recommend approval of the Tentative Parcel Map to the City Council.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is an interior lot and currently contains a two-story duplex dwelling with attached garages. The applicant proposes to demolish all structures on the site and build a new three-story, 3-unit residential condominium building. The project site is surrounded by existing duplex and apartment buildings.

The subject property is zoned R-3 and has a General Plan land use designation of Medium-High Density residential with 21-50 dwelling units per acre, which allows up to six units on this lot. The applicant is proposing three units which is a density of 23 dwelling units per acre.

The proposed building would contain three residential units in three floors, with enclosed at-grade parking garages for each unit. Each residential unit has their entry and an attached two-car garage on the ground floor facing the interior, left side property line. The second floor of each unit includes a living room, kitchen and dining room, and a full bathroom. The third floor of each unit includes two bedrooms and two bathrooms. A private balcony, approximately 45 SF in size, is located on both the second and third floors of each unit.

The overall height of the building, as measured to the top of the highest roof ridge, is proposed at 39'-6" above average top of curb level where 46'-0" is the maximum allowed as a Tier 1 project. As proposed, the project is compliant with building height regulations.

Code Section 25.40.030 requires off-street parking based on the number of bedrooms in each unit. Two spaces are required for a two-bedroom unit and 80% of the total spaces required must be covered. Each unit provides the required two spaces in each respective garage. No guest parking is required for projects that are less than 10 units.

A total of 175 SF of open space is required per unit, which may be met through private or common spaces, or combination of both. The proposed project provides 698 SF of common open space located at the rear of the lot, and a combined total of 276 SF in private open space. Therefore, the project is in compliance with open space requirements (324 SF per unit).

The existing site contains a protected size Beech tree (multi-trunk, 53 inches in diameter) in the rear yard and there are two existing street trees along the parcel frontage. An arborist report, prepared by Buena Vista Tree Service, dated April 2025, notes that the existing Beech tree is in poor condition. This tree has a poor structure, is leaning, has hollow buttress roots and dead stems, root rot, and is almost dead and failing at the base. This tree is proposed to be removed; the Parks Division will not oppose this tree removal, and a Tree Removal Permit will be required. The arborist report also provides tree preservation measures for the existing street trees which will need to be followed.

Proposed landscaping throughout the site is shown on the Landscape Plan (sheets L1 and L2). The proposed project includes planting six new 15-gallon landscape trees throughout the site, including three Crape Myrtles, one London Plane, one Western Redbud, and one Gingko. The proposed number of trees complies with the Urban Reforestation and Tree Protection Ordinance requirements based on the proposed lot coverage and replacement requirement for the tree being removed.

Since the proposed project contains less than six units, providing affordable units or payment of residential impact fees is not required.

The applicant is requesting the following applications:

- Major Design Review for a new three-story, 3-unit residential condominium building (C.S. 25.68.020.C.2.a.);
- Condominium Permit for construction of a new residential condominium building (C.S.26.30.020); and
- Recommendation of Tentative Parcel Map for Condominium Purposes – Resubdivision of Lot 11, Block 4, Easton Addition Burlingame (recommendation for approval by City Council).

ANALYSIS

The proposed project has been designed in accordance with the R-3 zoning district development standards. The architectural style and massing of the new three-story, 3-unit dwelling is complimentary to the context of the other residential structures on the block and will be integrated into the neighborhood with the use of quality materials and architectural elements. Staff does not have any suggested changes for the Planning Commission to consider.

June 23, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting

At the Planning Commission study meeting on June 23, 2025, the Commission had several suggestions regarding this project and voted to place this item on the Consent Calendar when all information has been submitted and reviewed by the Planning Division.

The applicant submitted revised plans, date stamped August 22, 2025, to address the Planning Commission's comments. Below is a summary of the Commission's comments and changes made to the project.

1. Consider improving the street-facing façade, it should be more welcoming and pedestrian friendly. Consider adding a clerestory window on the ground floor on the front elevation, similar to what is proposed on the rear elevation.
 - On the Front Elevation, address numbers for the condominium units (111, 1113, and 1115) were added to the concrete wall at the ground level. A 2' x 2' window was added at the front unit entry. See revised renderings, floor plan, and Front Elevation.

Table 1: Project Information

Table 1 below and on the following page compares the proposed project to the development standards for a multi-unit dwelling based on the R-3 zoning district. The proposed project complies with all R-3 zoning district development standards.

	PROPOSED	ALLOWED/REQ'D
<i>Density:</i>	3 units (23 du/acre)	6 units (50 du/acre)
<i>Front Setback (1st flr): (2nd flr): (3^d flr):</i>	16'-9" (all floors)	16'-9" (block average)
<i>Right Side (1st flr): (2nd flr): (3^d flr):</i>	4'-0" 6'-0" 6'-0"	4'-0" 6'-0" 6'-0"
<i>Left Side (1st flr): (2nd flr): (3^d flr):</i>	18'-10" 8'-10" 8'-10"	4'-0" 6'-0" 6'-0"
<i>Rear Setback (1st flr): (2nd flr): (3^d flr):</i>	20'-0" (all floors)	20'-0"
<i>Lot Coverage:</i>	2,814 SF 48.9%	2,875 SF 50%
<i>Building Height:</i>	39'-6"	46'-0" (Tier 1)
<i>Open Space:</i>	324 SF/unit (186 SF private + 698 SF common open spaces)	175 SF/unit (may be provided through private or common open spaces, or both)
<i>Off-Street Parking:</i>	6 covered spaces (2 spaces per garage)	6 spaces (5 spaces must be covered)

Summary of Proposed Exterior Materials:

- **Windows:** aluminum with no window trim
- **Doors:** painted wood entry doors and painted aluminum garage doors
- **Siding:** smooth fiber cement lap siding and wall panels, aluminum trim between panels, and concrete
- **Roof:** membrane roofing (made from TPO (thermoplastic polyolefin) or PVC (polyvinyl chloride))
- **Other:** wood balcony railings, smooth fiber cement roof eave fascia

Design Review Criteria

The criteria for design review for multi-unit dwellings as established in Ordinance No. 2000 adopted by the City Council on December 6, 2021 are outlined as follows:

1. Consistency with any applicable design standards and guidelines;
2. Respect for the mass and fine scale of adjacent buildings even when using differing architectural styles;
3. Maintaining the City's tradition of architectural diversity;
4. Privacy of residents both on the property and on adjacent properties with regard to window placement and location of outdoor private and common open space areas;
5. Incorporating materials that are of high quality and weather well;
6. Accommodating convenient and safe pedestrian access to primary entrances from the streets immediately serving the development;
7. Landscaping and its proportion to mass and bulk of structural components; and
8. Compliance with the objective design standards adopted by ordinance or resolution.

Environmental Review

The project is Categorically Exempt from review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), per Section 15303 (b) of the CEQA Guidelines, which states that construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures including a duplex or similar multi-family residential structure totaling no more than four dwelling units is exempt from environmental review. In urbanized areas, this exemption applies to apartments, duplexes and similar structures designed for not more than six dwelling units.

Attachments:

Area Map
Arborist Report
Public Works Dept Memorandum
Resolution
Proposed Plans dated August 22, 2025
Previous Plans dated May 19, 2025