2701 Shattuck Avenue
Zoning Adjustments Board: Materials in Support of Approval

September 23, 2013

AXIS Development Group
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FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL:

- Cover letter
- Findings
September 19, 2013

Michael Alvarez-Cohen, Chair
Members, Zoning Adjustment Board ("ZAB")
2120 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704

Re: 2701 Shattuck, Findings in Support of Approval

Dear Chair Alvarez-Cohen and ZAB Members:

On behalf of Axis Development Group, I request that you approve the application for this beautifully designed 70-unit mixed-use project at the corner of a major commercial and transit thoroughfare, the proportions of which dictate both its height and density (see Tab 7). This booklet provides, in a concise format, the evidence, facts, documents, and exhibits to support the findings required to vote to approve this application, a vote I ask you to take tonight.

To assist you in that determination, on the following pages of this section, I am providing findings, and the requisite evidence to support them. Acceptable evidence to support a finding is evidence that provides the logical step between the ultimate decision and the facts in the record (Public Resources Code, Section 21082.2 (c)). This includes facts, reasonable assumptions predicated on those facts, and expert opinion supported by facts (Ibid.). What cannot support findings are argument, speculation, unsubstantiated opinion, or narrative. This is clearly not acceptable evidence (Cal. Pub. Resources Code Sec. 15384 (a)).

These findings, and the evidence to support them, are divided into sections. First are the general findings for this mixed-use project. This section describes the general benefits of this application, the need and rationale for the proposed height and density at this location, and, the conformity of this project with the purposes of the C-SA District. Next are evidence and findings, which support the relaxation of development standards for this location on Shattuck Avenue—both the general use permit findings in 23B.32.040 and the additional special findings for the C-SA District in 23E.52.090.

There are many people supporting this project. The opponents will claim, without substantiated evidence, that they have more people and that fact, alone, should require you to deny this project. However, the number of people, the level of their anger, and even their proximity to the project, standing alone are not evidence upon which a decision can be legally sustained. "A DENIAL BASED ON THE MERE FACT OF NEIGHBORHOOD OPPOSITION, QUITE INDEPENDENT OF WHETHER THAT OPPOSITION IS RATIONAL, CANNOT SUPPORT A DECISION OF DENIAL" (Ross v. City of Yorba Linda)
Cal.App.4th 954, 965). Thus, the fact that several people have vociferously opposed this project cannot, without facts, be a deciding factor. In this case, there are no sustainable facts that support findings against approval.

On behalf of Axis Development Group, I want to thank you for the time and consideration that you have given our proposal.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

RENA RICKLES
FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

Use Permits Required:

- Use Permit under BMC §23E.52.030 to construct a mixed-use building with greater than 5,000 square feet gross floor area.
- Use Permit under BMC §23E.52.050 to construct over 3,000 square feet gross floor area.
- Administrative Use Permit under BMC §23E.52.030 to establish a full-service food use over 1,000 square feet.
- Use Permit under BMC §23E.52.030 to allow the incidental service of beer and wine, within a full-service food use.
- Use Permit under BMC §23E.52.070.D.7 to modify height/stories (60’/5 proposed, 50’/4 maximum), reduce setback on all sides (west: 0’ proposed, 15’ required; east: 8’ proposed, 15’ required; north: 0’ proposed, 6’ required; south: 6”-14” proposed, 4’ required), and allow increased lot coverage (95% proposed, 40% maximum).

General Findings in Support of Use Permits (23E.52.030, 23E.52.050)

Overview
The proposed mixed-use development at this location, a gateway to South Berkeley on a major thoroughfare, meets the General Use Permit Findings of 23B.32.040 in that, under the circumstances of this case, it serves the purposes of the C-SA District, and the General Plan. It provides an iconic design worthy of this gateway intersection that includes a pedestrian friendly commercial corridor frontage, a new high end full-service restaurant with outdoor seating, and 70 new residential units; all greatly needed in this area.

Moreover, this building’s exterior is designed to create a public gateway statement and still blend in well with the residential housing to its East. While, at the same time, the interior design creates a desirable living situation for its residents, by providing all units with access to natural light, privacy, usable open spaces, and a large resident lounge.

As such it is the ideal combination of the highest attributes of sustainable urban development, distinguished architectural design, green construction fundamentals; which will transform a dormant, lackluster intersection into a vibrant magnet for pedestrians, diners, new residents, and retail. The features of the project include LEED Silver construction, integrated mixed-use, high end design and materials, innovative construction for internal uses, and maximization of open space, –all aimed at maximizing public transit along this historically significant transit corridor.

General Benefits of this Proposal

- The retail district desperately needs more ‘feet on the street’. The benign neglect and purposeful activism to stop development here has prevented this portion of Shattuck from achieving the vibrancy of Shattuck’s other commercial corridors. (see Adeline/Alcatraz Merchants Association letter, Tab 3)

- There are services available for the new residents. Our walkability index is 94% this will be given to you tomorrow along with the vicinity map (see Tab 5)
• The project benefit package, only feasible at this size, does for this area what the City cannot afford to do: Improves the vitality of the corner by enhancing the passenger area at the bus stop and creating a public mini-park.
• New exciting restaurant to spark foot-traffic along this part of Shattuck.
• Transformation of dull, underutilized and oversized sidewalk into vibrant draw. This project will convert a corner that people currently pass by; to one where they want to stop. (see photographs, Tab 4)
• Storefront open to the street.
• Environment /Green Sheet. (see Tab 6)
• Large, inviting tenant open space: exceeding zoning standard by almost 200%.
• Bicycle storage in excess of zoning standards, both internal and external.
• Strong transit access: (4 blocks to BART, Several AC Transit lines: The "F" and the 18 stop in front of the building. The 1, 1R, 51, 49, 12 and 800 are close by. Most of them run until midnight. The 800 runs all night.)
• Creation of a new mini-park to connect existing neighbors, new tenants, and businesses to the local community.

Need for High-Density Project at this location
The design and intent of this proposal is consistent with Berkeley’s goals along all of its major commercial and established transit corridors (see Tab 7), creating high-density mixed-use and prominent buildings. Without the foot traffic created by building new mixed-use developments along Shattuck, the Transit-Oriented Commercial Corridor does not work. There are few places where this is more evident than in the drop-off from downtown, going South on Shattuck. The residents with their "eyes on the street," the new restaurant and outdoor café, and mini-park all change the way it feels to walk down this area of Shattuck.

There are two previously granted entitlements for this property. Both involved use permits for relaxation of development standards for height, setbacks, and lot coverage. Yet, because of the conditions and limitations imposed, neither project was built. This project, which is somewhat taller, but comparable in terms of density (48 bedrooms, assuming 1.5 persons/bedroom), provides many more public benefits, and serves an important underserved population; units intended for single occupancy (see Tab 7; SPUR article, Tab 8).

Existing Setting
The corner is dark, lifeless, and an invitation to crime and other unsafe activities. (See Tab 4) As such, it must be among the lowest amount of business and property taxes of any section along Shattuck Avenue.
Existing Commercial Situation at this Site
The small merchants on Shattuck within the vicinity of Derby have the least foot traffic and least success of any area along Shattuck\(^1\). Low foot traffic and an uninviting public right of way discourage consumers, and this becomes a “pass-by” area. (see Adeline/Alcatraz Merchants' Association letter, Tab 2)

Benefits to Local Merchants
This project is designed specifically to attract an established customer base, which will result in an increase in the number of small businesses. This could eventually make it possible for the South Berkeley merchants to have the tax base to form a Business Improvement District that could result in continuity along Shattuck from Ashby to Rose. In order to do that, they need a large number of new residents/customers to live there. The excitement of new growth and new life coming South from downtown and North from Ashby withers at this intersection

Conclusion Supporting Use Permits for this Mixed Use Project
This proposed project, with its design, size, and density can turn the existing situation of an ignored, lackluster business district around. The design makes a statement that this corner is important. The new restaurant, with its sidewalk dining, and the formation of the mini-park creates an inviting gathering place for people to enjoy, rather than hurry by. This project, as proposed, is a vast improvement over the 35 foot-wide grey, cement wasteland of a public right-of-way that for decades now has showcased a parking lot.

The Project meets the purposes of the C-SA District.
The use permits for increased height and reduced setbacks, under the circumstances of this case and the purposes of the C-SA District, are not detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood and contribute to the comfort and general welfare of people residing or working in the area, the commercial district and the City as a whole.

This project as proposed serves at least three of the purposes of the C-SA District:
23E.52.020 Purposes

- A. Implements the Master Plan’s designation for Community Commercial, the Commercial/Residential Area, as well as the policies of the South Berkeley Area Plan. This project fulfills the need create a new mixed-use project in the South Shattuck area where sites have remained vacant ‘despite interest on the part of Developers.’ (South Shattuck Strategic plan, p.1) It creates a pedestrian friendly neighborhood-serving business (same), and the re-use of vacant and undeveloped Shattuck sites.
- G. Encourage developments that support pedestrian oriented uses. This mixed-use development enhances more foot traffic to consume retail products.
- H. Encourage appropriate mixed-use development (retail/residential) on appropriate sites in the District. This mixed-use project is located on one of the widest sections of historically commercial and transit oriented Shattuck Avenue.

\(^1\) This is evident in the high vacancy rates among the storefronts.
The Project’s Request for Relaxation of Development Standards for This Section of Shattuck Avenue: height, reduced setbacks, lot coverage, satisfy the Required Additional Special Findings of 23E.52.090

A. This project meets the General Use Permit Findings of 23B.32.040 based on the evidence set out below and, and the special findings of paragraphs B and C.

B. This project
   1. Is, as set out above, compatible with the purposes of the District
   2. Is compatible in design and character with the District and adjacent neighborhoods. After five DRC meetings this revised design was found to be compatible with the District and adjacent residential neighborhoods. This mixed-use project and its intensity and size are proportional with the width of Shattuck Avenue. The proportions, including height and density are dictated by the proportions of this location. (see Tab 7). And the sidewalk at the corner (35’) of Derby and Shattuck. The 60’ height steps down so it is under 22’, including the 4-5’ landscaped railings where it is 8’ from the residential property line. Homes in this district are allowed to be 28’ in height. While many are currently one-story; they can with use permits go to 2 stories and 28’.
   3. Not applicable

C. Each requested Use Permit (height, setbacks and lot coverage) meets at least two (only one required) general purposes.
   1. Encourage utilization of public transit in the area of the proposed building. (There is no off street parking facility so this part is not applicable): The project is 4 blocks from the nearest BART station, right on two bus lines, and very near 4 others. Some of the bus routes run until midnight; one runs 24 hours. 2701 Shattuck clearly meets this purpose;
   2. To permit consistency with the building setbacks existing in the immediate area where a residential building setback would serve no useful purpose: The western 0’ setback and the southern 6” meet this purpose in that along almost all of Shattuck Avenue, the commercial buildings have a 0’ setback and that the southern setback mirrors the setback of the building to the south and, therefore, a larger setback services no useful purpose.
   3. To facilitate the construction of affordable housing. The project at its current size will contribute $1.4 million to Berkeley’s Housing Trust Fund. To disallow the requested relaxation of development standards would reduce significantly the amount of money donated to that fund (see Staff Report August 8th, 2013 for this project for the specific amount of loss of funds for each disallowance).

HEIGHT

- The zoning code addresses what exceptions and what the extent of those exceptions should be in the R-SA district. At 60’ this project is within those excepted limitations.
- The City’s Zoning and South Shattuck Strategic Plan are designed to promote healthy communities, foster efficient building design, and attract private capital to meet the City’s pressing need for new housing and commercial businesses on major thoroughfares, such as Shattuck Avenue.
- This height is proportionally correct for a gateway corner facing a 120’-wide major commercial thoroughfare.
• The 60' height is the roughly same height as the corner building at the southern end of this block and is five feet shorter than the most recently approved mixed use corner building 1½ blocks to the north. To create a new building shorter than these end-posts will result in an incongruous streetscape that is inconsistent with urban design standards.

• A lower height would reduce the impact of this special corner.

• The 60' height is on the Shattuck Avenue, Commercial side of the building, while the height steps down on the residential elevation so that the side facing the residential properties is lower than the maximum height allowed for residential houses in the District.

• The reduced height at the rear of the building (augmented by the increased setbacks above the podium level/residential levels) serves to minimize the detriment on the abutting rear neighborhood.

• The elevation facing the residential neighborhood is softened by green plants and hedges (see Tab 7).

• The R District's view of the major corridors has historically been of tall buildings on the corridor, as seen by residential homes even blocks away. The storage building at the southern end of the block is the leading example for this specific neighborhood. There are several others along Shattuck Avenue, both existing and entitled. The height of this structure does not block any view corridor, as it is defined in the Zoning Ordinance. There has not been, nor could there reasonably be, a claim that this building impacts any "significant vista that substantially enhances the value and enjoyment of real property." (23F.04)

• If this project’s height is reduced, it could be seen as detrimental to the City’s goal of providing affordable housing. As stated in the August 8th Staff Report, a reduction in the height to 50' (or 4 stories) would result in a reduction of $360,000 (from the current $1,400,000) to Berkeley, which our project’s contribution to the City's desperately needed housing trust fund.

Shading on the residential properties to the east: The 2701 Shattuck site is located to the West of a residential district, and will cast shadows on the adjacent structures due to its proximity. The redesign, with its mass angled to follow Shattuck, helps to minimize the impact on the surrounding buildings in the residential district to the East.

• The shadow study shows:
  • In the summer the shading impact is minimal; the project begins to impact the surrounding structures after 6pm, only two hours before average sunset;
  • The impact of shading on adjacent structures is greatest in the fall and spring equinox; shadowing begins at 4pm, an average of three and a half hours before sunset;
  • This impact during the fall and spring equinox is mainly of the roofs of adjacent structures, and since the sun is at a lower angle, it will be each adjacent structure on Derby that will shade their neighbors to the East;
  • In the winter, partial shading begins at 2pm and full shading occurs at 4pm, only fifty minutes prior to sunset.
  • With the impacts greater in the time of year when the sun is lower in the sky, reducing the size and height of the building will not provide a significant change from the current design.
  • Thus, the shadow impacts of this project to the neighborhood during the Winter and Spring and Fall solstices, respectively, are minimally detrimental and are not unreasonable, in light of the financial and programmatic consequences of reducing the size and height of the project.
• The shadow study that has been completed clearly shows that the project does not have a significantly or unreasonably detrimental shadowing effect on the neighborhood to the East that would outweigh the benefit of approving this project.

Setback on Eastern Elevation: (See Tab 7)

• We have designed the Northeast corner of the building, in both materials and massing, to be respectful to the neighborhood. The articulation on the building and the color and materials are designed to echo the architecture and appearance of the homes in the area
• The East side setback is 8’ at the podium. While this is the rear setback of 2701 Shattuck, it confronts the side setback of the residential neighbors. Those homes are only 4’ in distance from the property line, while our proposed abutting project is, at a minimum, 8’ from the property line, for a 12’ total distance from their homes
• The confronting setbacks from our proposed project to the first home to the east is consistent with each setback of each of the successive homes to the East
• The impact of less than 15’ setback is mitigated by the following: (i) the entire 8’ setback will be filled with mature green plantings and the adjacent podium’s concrete wall will be softened by attached and overhanging green plantings, and (ii) above the podium level the distance of the project from the nearest residential neighbor ranges from 17’ on the northeast to 41’ along the Southeast
• The entire effect upon the neighbors to the East is not an unreasonable detriment because of these changes made to accommodate the concerns of the neighbors to produce a view from the residences of a green, forested neighbor to the East, replacing the existing view of the dilapidated lot.

Setbacks to the North, South and West:
The 0’ setback along the western frontage is consistent with the properties (existing and entitled) all along that block. It will not impact pedestrians, as the sidewalk of Shattuck Avenue is over 24’ wide (at some points, the sidewalk exceeds 36’ in width) in that area. The reduced side setbacks are in conformity with the one adjacent entitled building to the south; the North 0’ setback is consistent with the commercial area corner buildings and the edges are softened with new tree plantings to create a friendly entrance to the neighborhood. The reduced rear setback, 8’ where 15’ is required, is tempered by plantings along the podium level, as well as plantings in the eastern side yard. And, at the residential levels, the building meets and, because of its angling away from the East property line, at places, considerably exceeds the rear setback requirements, so that the average rear setback for the entire eastern elevation averages much more than 15’.

Lot Coverage: the requested relaxation in the lot coverage requirement is under the circumstances of this case not detrimental in that:

• This project sacrifices lot coverage to provide the ground floor amenities and zoning requirements for a mixed-use project, e.g. the residential portion of the project requires, at the ground floor, parking, a lobby, an elevator, an emergency egress staircase, and easily accessible bicycle storage. The mixed-use portion requires additional parking, ground floor seating, and a kitchen; both require adequate trash containers. The benefits of meeting and exceeding those requirements outweigh any detriment caused by exceeding the lot coverage standard.
To put some of those services (bicycle and automobile parking) underground would make the building infeasible, given the water table level/underground creek under the project site.

The City has consistently found in all recent mixed-use projects on major transit corridors, that strict adherence to lot coverage standards results in underutilization of land in these prime commercial areas.

**Impacts of the Proposed Use to the Residential Neighbors**

- **Noise** from podium garden will be controlled through House Rules and engineering controls.
- **Noise** from Resident Lounge will be controlled by House Rules and noise mitigation construction techniques.
- **Noise** from roof terrace will be controlled both by House Rules and acoustic controls.
- **Mitigation:** With the attached House Rules, Resident Lounge Rules and Regulation re: use and hours, onsite manager unit adjacent to the Resident Lounge, the noise and other potential nuisance issues will be mitigated to the level of non-detriment.

**Based on the Above Evidence, the Special Required Findings for this District to support increased height, reduced setbacks can be made for this proposal (23E.52.090.B).**

This proposal as designed is: (i) compatible with the Purposes (A, G, and H) of this District, and (ii) is compatible in design and character with the District and Adjacent residential properties. This design is among the most advanced in terms of design characteristics, scale, and material in the entire neighborhood. The design carefully steps away from the adjacent residential neighborhood, contains design elements to assure the privacy of the adjacent neighbors and new building residents, and utilizes attractive landscaping to present a pleasant view to the neighborhood (23E.52.090.B).

Front setback and Additional Height: All adjacent (present and entitled) building setbacks have the same 0’ setback and height; no useful purpose would be served by increasing the front setback. Additionally, the width of the sidewalk would make an awkward street front if an additional 15’ were added between the building and the street.

North side setback of 0’: this is a corner building. It is intended to be a gateway; no useful purpose would be served by increasing the front setback.

South side setback of 6”-14”: this mirrors the setback from the adjacent building.

Rear setback of 8’+: although at the podium level the rear setback is 8’, on average it is greater than the required 15’. The ground floor area is necessary to accommodate required parking, bicycle facilities both inside and outside the building, and to accommodate the Purposes of this District (see above).
LETTERS OF SUPPORT:

• Letters from neighbors
• Adeline/Alcatraz Merchants’ Association
• Urban Habitat, RCD, Livable Berkeley & Transform
• Berkeley Chamber of Commerce
12 September 2013

Department of Planning & Development
2120 Milvia St.
Berkeley, CA 94704

RE: 2701 Shattuck Ave (PDR #12-30000059)/ (PDR #12-30000059)– SUPPORT

Dear Zoning Adjustment Board,

I am writing to encourage your support for the project at 2701 Shattuck.

I have devoted my career to helping design and evaluate the sustainability of communities and regions. I am pleased to support a project which will both improve our City and provide much needed housing, and help the region achieve its overall greenhouse gas reduction targets.

The plan for the South Shattuck Priority Development Area deliberately offers a 60 foot height option as an incentive for a mixed use project that will place housing above retail, as that is the ideal use for the site. Getting an active ground floor presence is a victory worth celebrating.

60 feet is also just under 1/3 the width of Shattuck at this location- a sound goal for the height to width ratio along a commercial corridor. This minimum height ratio is acknowledged in LEED Neighborhood Design (ND), the green building/design standard for neighborhood development. Because the parcel is located at a visually important bend in the road, it is an especially important place to meet the height goal. The location, use, and height of this project are all appropriate and worth supporting.

The project is also very well designed when it comes to mitigating transportation impacts. The parking is unbundled, a best practice. The ratio of car to bike parking is 35 to 81, which is also very favorable. In addition, the project sponsors have agreed to buy 40 year transit passes for the residents. This suite of measures will encourage people to walk, bike, and take transit for most of their needs.

Very few projects in the Bay Area will be able to perform as well as this one. If Berkeley is serious about addressing climate change, as its adopted policies require it to be, we have every reason to take the best advantage of opportunities like this one.

Sincerely,

Joe DiStefano
1972 Los Angeles Ave
Berkeley, CA 94707
Dear Zoning Adjustment Board,

I am a retired transportation planner who was once Director of Transportation for the City of Berkeley. For 40 years my specialty was reducing energy consumption in urban regions. I am especially concerned about the threat of climate change and its implications for future generations.

In commenting on the Bay Area’s regional plan, I have supported the strategy of concentrating homes and other activities in priority development areas, particularly when they offer good public transit and are close to destinations.

2701 Shattuck is a good example of what could be. It features numerous environmental pluses and no minuses. It would address the needs of a variety of currently underserved groups in Berkeley: students, empty nester seniors, and starting out professionals. The project meets all of the objectives of the local general plan and the regional plan. Not merely is it the right project in the right location, it also features significant innovations that matter from an environmental perspective.

Modular factory built construction uses building materials more efficiently than site built construction. That construction technique allows for fast on site work and reduces disruption of the neighborhood. Many green building associations and environmental groups like Sierra Club California advocate such construction.

In a neighborhood where walking is convenient, bus transit ample and BART close by, and campus and downtown entertainment are a short bike ride away, this project would attract residents who live without owning cars. Underscoring this alternative, the project employs three key strategies worth emphasizing. First they have unbundled parking (payment for parking is separate from that for residence). Economists and environmental groups like the Sierra Club and Transform favor this approach. Second they have provided ample bicycle parking, with more than twice the number of bike spaces as car spaces. Finally, they have committed to providing long term transit passes to all residents.

What is at issue here is not just good environmental performance. Reduce both energy consumption and greenhouse gas generation. The project would also serve emergent market trends among both young and old. You can contribute to saving the planet and to meeting a broad range of social needs.

I urge your support.

Robert R. (Bob) Piper, Ph.D.
1705 California Street
September 12, 2013

To: Secretary of the Berkeley Zoning Adjustment Board, Department of Planning & Development 2120 Milvia St. Berkeley, CA 94704

From: Susan Lu
2004 Prince Street
Berkeley, California

RE: 2701 Shattuck, Support

Dear Zoning Adjustment Board

I am a new member of this community, having recently bought a duplex just blocks from this site. My partner and I enjoy walking to the Berkeley Bowl for groceries, picking up new house supplies from the Ace Hardware store on the way, and eating at local venues such as The Starry Plough and Nick’s Pizza. The proximity of our new home to BART, coffee, dining, and entertainment is what first attracted us to this neighborhood.

Currently the close-by site is occupied mostly by surface parking. Shattuck, in this stretch, appears bereft of inviting activity and foot traffic. Projects like this would create a more vital street scene, given its attractive design and dining options on the ground floor.

If we support more projects that promote smart development and community feeling, this neighborhood can become a model for a healthier lifestyle and a safer environment. It would be nice to see my new neighborhood realize its full potential.

As a physician and environmentally conscious
citizen, I like the idea of building homes in areas where it is convenient for residents to walk, bike, and take public transportation to as many destinations as possible. This enables a more healthy lifestyle for all. This project appears to do just that. I entreat your support for this project.

Sincerely

[Signature]

Susan Lu
ADELINe/ALCAtRAZ MERCHANTS’ ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 3427
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94703-0427

Zoning Adjustments Board
City of Berkeley
2120 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704

September 17, 2013
Re: Project, 2701 Shattuck Avenue

Dear Chairperson Alvarez-Cohen and Members:

The Adeline/Alcatraz Merchants’ Association would like to express its strong support for the proposed mixed-use project at 2701 Shattuck Avenue. The project, at the intersection of Shattuck Avenue and Derby Street, City of Berkeley, is ideal for a new, high-quality, mixed-use development.

The proposed project has 70 market-rate residential units above street-level commercial. The addition of 70 new residences is great for the area because these provide new occupant/customers who can support local businesses by patronizing them and encouraging neighbors and friends to shop. Also, these 70-units are micro-units, utilizing a one person per unit design, each unit between 304 and 345 square feet. Residents will enjoy the convenience of being able to walk to local shops, rather than traveling countless freeway miles to the “big-box” stores.

Mixed-use development where commercial space is provided on the ground-level below a high-density of residential units is ideal for this area of Shattuck near to the University and strengthens the relationship between occupants and business owners.

The residents of this proposed project are encouraged to walk, bike & use public transit, as there are only 31 car-parking spaces provided for the 70 residents units. However, there are 61 secured bike parking spaces provided to residents with an additional 20 more on the sidewalk for the general public. Moreover, each resident will be given an AC Transit pass. All of these features encourage the residents of 2701 Shattuck Avenue to be a part of the neighborhood, walking or biking to and from stores and being exposed to other shops and businesses bordering the area.

The proposed project provides a beautiful Mini-park running along the Shattuck in front of the building. This space provides an area for residents of the proposed project and neighbors from the wider area to interact with each other. These types of street-level improvements help to enhance the overall aesthetic of the South Shattuck corridor and will improve the pedestrian experience at this corner. In addition to aesthetic improvements, this mini-park adds an “eyes on the street” element to this corner, improving the overall sense of community and safety. Additionally, this mini-park provides an indoor-outdoor element to the restaurant which is wonderful for the business owner as well as the neighbors who enjoy the space.

The proposed restaurant on the ground-level of the project promotes economic development, increasing commerce in the South Shattuck area and adds to the network of South Berkeley Merchants, as well as highlighting the diversity of the area. Overall, the proposed project at 2701 Shattuck Avenue, the mini-park and of the improvements to this corner will be a huge benefit to the overall revitalization of the South Shattuck corridor and the South Berkeley Business District.

For all of the reasons stated above, the Adeline/Alcatraz Merchants’ Association strongly urges your support of the proposed project at 2701 Shattuck Avenue.

Sincerely,

Samuel M. Dyke, President
September 12, 2013

Department of Planning & Development
2120 Milvia St.
Berkeley, CA 94704

RE: 2701 Shattuck Ave (PDR #12-30000059)/ (PDR #12-30000059)– SUPPORT

Dear Zoning Adjustment Board,

On behalf of Urban Habitat, I write to express our support for 2701 Shattuck Ave.

Urban Habitat builds power in low-income communities and communities of color by combining education, advocacy, research and coalition building to advance environmental, economic and social justice in the Bay Area. We envision a society where all people live in economically and environmentally healthy neighborhoods. Clean air, land and water are recognized as fundamental human rights. Effective public transportation and land-use planning connect people to the resources, opportunities and services to thrive. And affordable housing provides a healthy and safe home for all.

This is a strategically important parcel located at a turn in what otherwise are lengthy straight stretches of the historic Adeline/Shattuck transit corridor. It is also the entrance to Berkeley. In recognition of the parcel’s importance, Berkeley's general plan includes zoning incentives to encourage a mixed-use building of precisely the scale of this project.

Ground floor uses that actively engage the sidewalk, such as a restaurant, and new residences above will work together to provide greater vitality to the pedestrian realm of what should be a vibrant node for active living (emphasis on walking and biking and transit rather than car-oriented).

Proximity to Berkeley Bowl, restaurants and other businesses on Shattuck and extensive transit connectivity make this one of the better locations for active living in the Bay Area. Its walk score of 94 is an indication of just how good a site this is.

Stepped massing provides the valuable presence needed on Shattuck Ave. This is the right approach to the architectural challenges of the site.
Transportation impacts are a relevant issue. But the pressure from some neighbors to build more parking is the wrong approach. Nor is reducing the number of residences constructive.

The right approach is to deemphasize the automobile and take every practical measure to encourage residents as well as the restaurant customers to walk, bike and take transit. The project proposes to provide all the parking required by zoning, but has unbundled the parking and is providing far more parking for bikes than cars. This is exactly the right approach for this location. It is good for the neighborhood and the region.

The contribution that this project makes to address the city’s housing needs is important too. The market rate units in this project are designed to address one underserved market segment, while the in-lieu fees address the need for the most affordable homes.

Full payment of in-lieu fees to address the need for affordable housing is a fair way to provide the most affordable units, and has been recognized as a best practice by the Non Profit Housing Association of Northern California in its landmark 2005 publication “On Common Ground: Joint Principles on Inclusionary Housing Policies.” Urban Habitat supports that approach.

The proposed project represents a significant contribution towards building a more sustainable Berkeley and a more sustainable Bay Area and deserves your support.

Sincerely,
Bob Allen
Acting Executive Director
Urban Habitat
September 16, 2013

Muhammad A. Nadhiri  
Axis Development Group  
580 California Street, 16th Floor  
San Francisco CA 94104

RE: 2701 Shattuck Development and Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee.

Dear Mr. Nadhiri,

I understand that the proposed development at 2701 Shattuck Avenue will be paying an affordable housing mitigation fee of $1.4 million to the City of Berkeley’s Housing Trust Fund (HTF). I am pleased to hear this for the following reasons.

- The affordable housing mitigation fee allows for the 2701 Shattuck project to support the creation of needed new affordable housing in Berkeley that can mitigate additional demand for affordable units related to the development of the project.

- The $1.4 million payment to the Housing Trust Fund will be an important contribution to the HTF, increasing Berkeley’s capacity to provide affordable homes. HTF funds generally leverage 3 to 5 times more funding than the original HTF contribution to a project from non-city sources, so your payment is likely to spark even more significant investments in affordable housing in Berkeley. Local support such as the HTF is often the critical “first-in” piece that allows us to capture state and local funds that are required to make affordable housing developments viable.

At RCD, we are very aware of the incredible need for affordable homes in Berkeley. Our Oxford Plaza development, which opened in 2009, had over 3,500 applicants for 97 affordable units. Berkeley has a tremendous need for affordable housing across a variety of user groups, including families, the homeless, people living with disabilities, and the elderly. It is critical that the Housing Trust Fund is funded for the City to be able to provide a significant amount of units towards solving our affordable housing need.

We at RCD are very supportive of Berkeley’s Affordable Housing Mitigation Program, and we are appreciative of the developers and projects that will be contributing to the Housing Trust Fund as part of that program.
Sincerely,

Dan Sawislak
Executive Director
September 13, 2013

Zoning Adjustment Board
City of Berkeley
2120 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA  94704

Re: Conditional GreenTRIP Certification for 2701 Shattuck

Dear Board Chair Cohen and Members,

Congratulations! I am writing to inform you that 2701 Shattuck qualifies for Conditional GreenTRIP Certification based on the currently proposed design and amenities.

In 2009, TransForm launched GreenTRIP, a certification program for new residential development, focused on Traffic Reduction and Innovative Parking. 2701 Shattuck is the third project in the City of Berkeley to seek GreenTRIP Certification.

The purpose of GreenTRIP is to recognize projects that will provide low traffic development through appropriate density, proximity to transit, services and job centers, and Traffic Reduction and Innovative Parking strategies proven to be the most effective.

When it comes to green building, how people get to a building is even more important than what that building is made of because of the multiple benefits from health impacts, safety, economic vitality, housing and transportation affordability. GreenTRIP is emerging as a trusted measure for low-traffic development.

Since 1997, TransForm has been working for world class public transportation and walkable communities in the Bay Area and beyond. GreenTRIP certifies projects that will allow new residents to drive less while increasing their mobility in a variety of ways. When households have access to affordable homes close to schools, services, jobs and transit, and developments are designed with traffic reduction and innovative parking, there are benefits for all:

- Increased household transportation savings.
- Economic support for locally serving businesses.
- Less freeway traffic and fewer vehicle collisions.
- Improved public health through increased walking and improved air quality.
- Greater demand and support of transit service.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions, supporting compliance with SB375 and AB32.

Based on the information provided by the developer, Axis Development Group, 2701 Shattuck meets the GreenTRIP Certification Standards for the “Urban Neighborhood” place type. The Urban Neighborhood Place Type is determined according to definitions set forth by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s (MTC) Station Area Planning Manual, 2007. GreenTRIP Certification Standards are designed according to these Place Types and tailored to create a feasible yet innovative standard.

The following describes how 2701 Shattuck meets GreenTRIP standards. Please
refer to the attached Project Evaluation Report for more details.

1. **2701 Shattuck must create less than 25 miles/household/day.**
   Using a model recommended by the California Air Resources Board for estimating greenhouse gas emissions, future residents at 2701 Shattuck are projected to drive only **15 miles/household/day**. This is **69% less than the Bay Area regional average** of 50 miles/household/day. The primary reasons for reduced driving are the project's density, location and proximity to jobs, services and transit.

2. **2701 Shattuck must have no more than 1.0 parking space per unit.**
   The conceptual design of 2701 Shattuck meets this standard by providing 31 parking spaces for 70 units. Fewer spaces provided for parking allows for more resources to be spent on other community amenities including local retail and transit passes described below. We are conditionally certifying the project based on the understanding that the parking will not exceed 1.0 spaces per unit.

3. **2701 Shattuck must provide at least 2 of 3 Traffic Reduction Strategies: Unbundled parking, Free CarShare Membership or 50% Discount on Transit Passes.**
   Axis Development Group will provide a free AC Transit EasyPass for 40 years to each unit. Thanks to the bulk purchase price offered by AC Transit, the cost of purchasing passes will be 80-90% below the retail value of a standard monthly pass. Axis Development Group has also agreed to **100% unbundled parking**. We expect to see these commitments included in the conditions of approval being considered at the Zoning Adjustment Board meeting on September 26, 2013.

   **Since this project is still going through entitlement, we are awarding a Conditional GreenTRIP Certification. We will award a final GreenTRIP Certification upon city approval of final entitlements, if those entitlements include the following project characteristics:**
   
   1. A total of 70 units (5 stories).
   2. Net density of 259 units per acre.
   3. Providing one free AC Transit EasyPass per unit for 40 years.
   4. BikeLink cards with $10 for residents at the signing of the lease.
   5. Bike repair station with stand and tools.
   7. Marketing of units to people who are willing to live without a car.
   8. Data shared annually on number of vehicles owned by residents, transit use and car share use.

   If any of these characteristics change significantly in the ZAB approval (entitlement) process, we will need to re-evaluate the project to determine if the project still meets criteria for GreenTRIP Certification.

   For more information please refer to our website at: http://www.GreenTRIP.org.

   Sincerely,

   [Signature]

   Ann Cheng
   GreenTRIP Program Director
Livable Berkeley would like to express its strong support for the proposed mixed-use housing project at 2701 Shattuck Avenue. At the intersection of two major commercial and transportation corridors, this location represents a prime opportunity to create high-quality, mixed-use housing and strengthen the South Shattuck area. Livable Berkeley believes 2701 Shattuck will expand housing choice, enhance access to transportation, and benefit both the surrounding neighborhood and Berkeley as a whole. We urge the Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) to support 2701 Shattuck and make the necessary findings and approvals to move this proposal forward.

2701 Shattuck is an ideal location for the creation of dense, mixed-use housing. Residents of 2701 Shattuck would be able to walk to Downtown Berkeley or the UC Berkeley campus in 20 minutes or less, Ashby BART station in about 10 minutes, and Berkeley Bowl supermarket and Walgreens pharmacy in 5 minutes or less. Residents would also be served by AC Transit lines F, 18, and 800, offering round-the-clock connections to Downtown Berkeley, Downtown Oakland, the UC Berkeley Campus, and San Francisco. The project’s proposed scale and orientation are perfectly appropriate for this portion of Shattuck Avenue, which—at 100 feet wide—is just the sort of major corridor for which the City has envisioned the development of multi-story, mixed-use housing.

2701 Shattuck would contribute to the supply and diversity of housing available in Berkeley, and would put Berkeley at the forefront of national demographic and lifestyle trends. Given the strong and growing demand for living space in Berkeley, we should welcome opportunities to increase the city’s housing supply. Nationwide, an increasing proportion of households are composed of single individuals living alone; 2701 Shattuck would help meet the needs of this underserved and growing demographic. Many of these single-person households lead an active lifestyle. They desire living spaces where urban amenities are close at hand and good design enables the economical and comfortable use of compact private spaces. Currently, only a very small portion of Berkeley’s housing stock is characterized by this space-efficient, contemporary design; 2701 Shattuck Avenue would serve to increase housing choice for those who seek this lifestyle. Even those who prefer shared or more spacious living arrangements benefit from the reduction in competition for housing that results from building new units of all types. Innovative designs for compact, comfortable living spaces are being embraced all over the country, with everything from micro-units in San Francisco, to the gracious Katrina Cottages that are replacing FEMA trailers. Berkeley should
encourage the creation of diverse housing that will give its residents greater freedom to choose the lifestyle that’s right for them.

2701 Shattuck would allow residents to live more sustainably by reducing energy and automobile use. The location of 2701 Shattuck is convenient to transit, employment centers, the UC Berkeley campus, and stores which meet everyday needs. The project’s provision of ample bicycle parking and potential inclusion of a car-sharing location would enable residents to avoid not only individual trips by private automobile, but perhaps even car ownership altogether. The compact, well-insulated units of the project would enable residents to substantially limit their home energy use, thereby reducing carbon emissions and utility bills. Altogether, 2701 Shattuck would reduce automobile dependence and per capita energy use, helping Berkeley meet its sustainability and climate action goals.

2701 Shattuck would contribute positively to its surrounding neighborhood and the city of Berkeley as a whole. Shattuck Avenue south of Downtown Berkeley has enormous potential to better serve area residents. South Shattuck could act as a gateway that extends Downtown Berkeley’s vitality into areas that currently lack strong commercial and pedestrian activity. Development of 2701 Shattuck could spark a positive trend of replacing or adaptively reusing vacant or underutilized blocks along South Shattuck. By generating new pedestrian activity, including that associated with the proposed restaurant use, 2701 Shattuck would put eyes on the street and improve the safety and comfort of the South Shattuck Area. Designs for 2701 Shattuck have made a strong effort to respect and address the needs of immediate neighbors, including through building massing that improves upon previous proposals for the site, as well as through incorporation of setbacks, vegetative screening, privacy buffers, and other conscientious design elements. Finally, development of 2701 Shattuck would contribute substantially to Berkeley’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund, supporting future development of affordable housing.

2701 Shattuck Avenue is a well-conceived, innovative project that would benefit the South Shattuck neighborhood and the City of Berkeley, and it deserves the support of the ZAB. We thank the ZAB or this opportunity to comment, and we urge ZAB members to keep an open mind toward innovative housing options. We encourage ZAB members to work with neighbors and project developers to move forward with a viable project that will enhance its surroundings, expand housing choice, and advance Berkeley’s economic and sustainability goals.

Sincerely,

Eric Panzer,
Chair, Livable Berkeley Board of Directors
EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH:
• Meetings with Neighbors & Community Groups
• Design changes based on DRC and community input
EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH & INTERACTION:
Meetings with Neighbors and Community Groups

Axis Development Group has held **five meetings**: three with immediate neighbors and two community wide meetings (neighbors within 300’ radius of the Project).

1. **Thursday, April 18, 2013 at 5:00pm**: the Axis team met with Rolf Bell & Ron Bogley at Rolf’s house (2141 Ward) to discuss the neighborhood meeting and review current plans for the Project.

2. **Saturday, April 20, 2013, from noon-2:00pm**: the Axis team’s picnic at Le Conte Elementary School was the first full neighborhood meeting. The Axis team presented a walk-through of the Project to 25+ attendees (14 signed in on the ‘Welcome Sheet’).

3. **Tuesday, April 23, 2013 at 3:30pm**: the Axis team met with Tom Ratcliff at his house (2130 Derby) to discuss the second planned neighborhood meeting.

4. **Wednesday May 8, 2013 at 7:30pm**: the Axis team held the second neighborhood meeting at Tom Ratcliff’s house (2130 Derby).

5. **Wednesday, July 31, 2013, from 5:30pm-7:30pm**: the Axis team met with the greater community at the South Berkeley Library for the third neighborhood meeting. Flyers were hand delivered to all neighbors within 300’ of the Project (list provided by the Berkeley Planning Department) and emails were sent to individuals who provided contact information to the Berkeley Planning Department. Additionally, hard copies of the plans were given to five neighborhood leaders (people who self-identified as neighborhood leaders). These five were hand-delivered. There was also an available plan-set at the South Berkeley Library beginning Friday, July 26th.

At the meeting, design boards of the project lined the room and were available for review and comment from 5:30pm-7:30pm. Ken Lowney, the Project Architect, presented the project, and Bruce Jett, landscape architect, described the plantings and outdoor open-space plans. During his presentation and immediately afterward, Mr. Lowney and Muhammad Nadhiri, Axis Managing Partner, took questions from the audience. Approximately 30 people attended this meeting.

In addition to the above meetings with the neighbors, the Development Team met with the following Community Groups;

- Monday, September 9, 2013: **The Berkeley Chamber of Commerce**
- Monday, September 9, 2013: **Adeline Alcatraz Merchants’ Association**
- Wednesday, September 11, 2013: **Berkeley Design Advocates**
EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH & INTERACTION:
Design Changes Based on DRC & Neighbor Input

Design Evolution

During the past six months we have had several meetings with the Design Review Committee, City Planning Staff, and local neighbors. In this time, we made extensive changes to improve the overall design of the Project and also modified it to better reflect the scale of the residential neighborhood to the East of the property. However, after the June DRC meeting, it became clear to us that the Project needed the architectural expertise of an architectural firm that had successfully worked with the unique type of modular construction this project entails.

After a review of the design, Lowney Architecture essentially agreed with the criticisms from the DRC at its June meeting. We bit the bullet, understanding that a quick tweak would not cure the all problems the DRC members had, and agreed, at great expense, to move forward with a design that would 'work' in every way. Primarily, with this revised submission, Axis Development Group has said, “We heard you. We are responding to you, and, like you, we want a design project of which we can all be proud – today, and years into the future.” Thus, the project that is now before the Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB), reflects the changes made in response to the DRC, Staff, and neighborhood comments.

Below is a description of what we have done to address the concerns and/or comments that we heard from our meetings with the Design Review Committee and neighborhood groups. We have categorized the comments into five areas: (i) Neighborhood Context, (ii) Building Design, (iii) Open Space and Landscape Design, (iv) Community Outreach, and (v) Use Permits.

I. Neighborhood Context

We have ensured that the entire project context works both for the main arterial, as well as with the adjacent residential neighborhood.

We made the building efficient by consolidating all of the units into a single, four story mass pushed as far away from the neighborhood to the east as possible, aligning, instead, with the frontage facing the bustling Shattuck Avenue commercial corridor. A large, landscaped open space is provided between the building edge and the property line. The podium, which is actually shorter than the adjacent property, is arrayed with a series of planters and large trees which will buffer the effect of the building as it meets the neighborhood.

Each elevation has been thoughtfully designed, as well. The openings have variation in size and operation. They have proportions appropriate for a residential use, in keeping with the neighborhood. We have decided to use porcelain tile and wood siding, which further reflects the materiality of the neighborhood.

We have fully thought out the design of the edge of the Project, where the second stair meets the Derby frontage; this outdoor stair is enclosed in a metal mesh screen and incorporates the wood detailing, which alludes to the Arts and Crafts tradition visible along Derby & Ward Street residences. We have addressed the neighborhood-facing portions of the Project through the use of planting and vertical landscape elements. On the ground level, trees and green-screens with vines soften the visual
impact while podium–level shrubs and trees create a transition in scale from the single family homes to the multifamily homes, thus reducing the perceived height of the building.

We have designed the Shattuck Avenue frontage to stand out, but in a contextual manner with the Shattuck Avenue streetscape, including the approved project directly to the south. These changes take advantage of a proven successful and award winning design for this type of modular construction. At the upper levels, the building mass is articulated with 3-foot undulations created by alternating the unit types along the corridor. The Shattuck elevation is enriched with a warm colored porcelain tile and wood siding. The typical window openings along Shattuck will add interest to the overall elevation and will be built with rich and durable materials. A metal awning at each window opening will provide shade for these units and will also cast a play of shadows across the Shattuck elevation.

We softened the restaurant-level window frontage with a continuous wood trellis and periodic vertical garden elements that extend to the ground along Shattuck Avenue. We feel it is important to note that the outdoor restaurant seating will bring a human scale to the Shattuck Avenue sidewalk experience and create an atmosphere of energy and excitement along the West side of our building.

The outdoor seating space has been designed with a view to the specific setting: paving, oncoming headlights, and the existing bus stop. Our outdoor seating design and landscape plan completely address these concerns along Shattuck Avenue. We are using architecture and landscaping to create a public mini-park at the corner; reprogramming what is currently an overly-wide and empty sidewalk. Our design incorporates the requirements of the existing bus stop.

The street trees have been spaced so that they align with the building architecture. We have set the distance between the street trees along Shattuck Avenue at 25 feet.

II. Building Design
The podium design creates attractive articulation on all elevations.

We have coordinated the building design and colors to create an important gateway. We have articulated the corner of the building to respond to the fact that this location is a terminus of the Shattuck Avenue view corridor and, thus, its natural position as a location of a vertical landmark. We have a 14-foot high commercial glass storefront for almost the entire 140-foot length of the Shattuck Avenue elevation. We intend to have a gourmet restaurant in our building, which will create a dynamic indoor/outdoor dining environment. And, subsequently, lead to a lively feeling on the block, and to the South Shattuck Avenue area.

The corner statement is strong. We look forward to input on our signage program, but we intend for it to be strong.

As mentioned above, we have developed the design at the corner, inclusive of the mini-park, to make a strong statement. We agree that elegantly simple signage will reinforce our efforts to create a beautiful and inviting Southern termination of the Shattuck Avenue visual corridor and help contribute to the building’s natural position as a Berkeley icon.

Proportions of the design have been configured to reflect form and utility.
The typical openings at each unit have a full sense of function and proportion. They will be constructed of durable materials. Each unit will have access to large casement windows that will allow for a seamless connection between the interior of the unit and the outdoors. A red rust frame articulates the front of the window system and adds an element of interest to the overall elevation. At the top of each sliding window, an awning is provided that both shades the interior and creates an interesting pattern of shadows across the front and rear elevations.

We have designed the proportions and added more interest and movement to the design. The design is highly modulated and has a great amount of variety, movement, and interest on all sides, with special attention to modulating and scaling-down of the east side of the building facing the existing residential neighborhood.

The color palette for the inside of the restaurant has been selected to be an attractive component to the Shattuck/Derby facades. Our tenant improvement package will be crafted to address this issue specifically.

Unit sizes have been configured to two styles and designed so that each one creates both a workable and enjoyable living space.

III. Open Space/Landscape Plan
The exterior podium open space and roof deck allow for a superb outdoor environment.

We have designed a fully usable community space both indoors and outdoors. The design exceeds Zoning Ordinance required open space. The outdoor open spaces are large enough to allow for better use of space. In addition to the outdoor open space, there is one large interior community meeting room has been created and will incorporate well with the podium level open space.

The courtyards create gathering spaces for individuals, small groups, and parties. We have broken-up the linearity with vertical trellises and winding paths. All seating, whether benches or chairs, will have seat backs to ensure comfort.

Plantings and design elements have been created specifically for this open space. The podium design expands both planting and socialization areas. Planting areas have been created along the building and podium perimeter that break up the space with shrubs and trees of various colors and textures. Planting areas have been arranged so that each unit looks out onto a “garden”, and planting design updated to take advantage of the sunnier, eastern orientation of the podium. There are two paved spaces designed for small group and individual seating areas that are oriented to the southeast away from adjacent buildings and project units. Shrubs and trees in planters have been added to the podium perimeter to help screen the space from adjacent residences.

The exterior and interior landscape plan, shows in detail a “Bay Friendly” plant palette. Our landscape and planting plan includes a great variety of “Bay Friendly” species, including native and drought-resistant varieties.
SITE TRANSFORMATION:

• Before/After: Derby/Shattuck corner
• Comparison of Proposed Project & Previously Entitled Project
SITE TRANSFORMATION: Before/After

BEFORE: CORNER OF SHATUCK AVE. & DERBY ST.

AFTER: CORNER OF SHATUCK AVE. & DERBY ST.
SITE TRANSFORMATION: Before/After

Shattuck Avenue (BEFORE)  Shattuck Avenue (AFTER)
SUBSTANTIAL PROJECT BENEFITS:

- Vicinity Map & Walkability index
- Project Benefits & Mini Park Design
- Illustrative Ground Floor Plan: Mini Park Design
- Boston Globe Article
SUBSTANTIAL PROJECT BENEFITS

The proposed project at 2701 Shattuck Avenue is not just a project that addresses a large, unmet housing need; this project will serve as a catalyst for a more vibrant and energetic, and safe, neighborhood environment in the South Shattuck area. As has been mentioned before, the proposed project site is one that is unique in Berkeley; it is, quite literally, a transition point for the South Shattuck area. By orienting the project around a sustainable, transit-based design concept, we believe the confluence of building and project amenities will result in a meaningful activation of the corner at Shattuck and Derby. The underlying principal is that the project is a member of the neighborhood; the residents, the restaurant, and the neighbors must all be able to interact seamlessly in a manner that contributes to both the neighborhood and the City. The benefits that the project extends to residents and the larger community are:

- **The public mini-park at the corner of Shattuck and Derby.** This park space is designed to provide a way for the public to more fully enjoy the extra-wide sidewalk at the North end of the project, while serving as a soft transition from the public space to the restaurant at the building.

- **Two car-share spaces on Shattuck.** These spaces are available for both residents and the public. By placing them on Shattuck in spaces that are not available for public street parking, we maintain all currently-available street-side parking in the neighborhood.

- **20 public bicycle racks.** In response to the high bicycle usage in the neighborhood – and Berkeley, in general – we have provided 20 bicycle racks for non-residents to secure their bicycles, as they enjoy the mini-park or the restaurant. Residents will have secure bicycle storage inside the building.

- **The restaurant.** In concert with the mini-park, the restaurant serves that the primary activation component of the project; the combination of gourmet food and a sheikh indoor/outdoor dining experience being married to the public space at the corner results in the generation of incredible neighborhood energy at an iconic corner.
MOST CONVERSATIONS about micro-apartments start and end with their size. That’s only natural, since, with measurements dropping as low as 300 square feet, the tiny apartments now sweeping across the Seaport District are far smaller than anything Bostonians have seen before. As these micro-apartment units roll into the market, jokes about living in a shoebox are being met by something else — shock at how much it costs to live in a shoebox.

This is partly the fault of officials in City Hall, who initially sold small living as one answer to Boston’s crushingly high rents. The problem’s bigger than that, though. City officials have been pushing for the development of micro-apartments, but they’ve never been able to articulate why 300-square-foot micro-units might be preferable to conventional 700-square foot apartments. The micro-apartments actually are a perfect fit for a place like the Seaport, but the reason has nothing to do with price.

The real impact of micro-apartments isn’t felt in any one resident’s monthly rent check, but in the concentration of bodies and disposable income in neighborhoods that need street life. The tiny units can double the number of residents a typical apartment building would accommodate, enabling neighborhoods to achieve density without towering height. They’re a means to an end, a way of flooding dead zones with vitality. And they only work when they’re placed with this end in mind.

The boom in tiny apartments comes from a fundamental question that followed Mayor Tom Menino’s 2010 rebranding of the Seaport — the stretch of underdeveloped warehouses and parking lots running between the Fort Point Channel and Boston Harbor — as the city’s Innovation District. The designation was less a policy than a challenge. A thorny question followed soon after Menino’s challenge: What does innovative, unique housing actually look like? Architects and developers pitched the city on a couple of models from Europe, semi-finished loft spaces and dorm-like co-housing complexes. Boston officials never told Innovation District developers exactly what they wanted to see built; they just demanded
innovation without regard for the city’s zoning code, and pushed harder when they didn’t like the proposals they received.

CONTINUE READING BELOW ▼

Micro-apartment units have emerged from this fundamentally subjective enterprise as the city’s preferred means of bringing innovation to Seaport District housing. The units are tiny, and rely on shared living (communal living rooms and outdoor spaces) and working (conference rooms and desk space) amenities. The apartments are targeted toward young entrepreneurs who work long hours and value amenities in their building and in their neighborhood over extra square footage inside their own units. And, in theory, the apartments’ small size means they come at a discount to the high prices that bedevil Boston housing.

However, if anything, micro-apartments are more expensive to build than conventional apartments. A developer constructing two 300-foot micro-apartments instead of one 600-foot studio has to build more walls, run more wiring, and double up on plumbing, bathroom fixtures, and kitchen counters and cabinets. All these things cost money. So when micro-apartments cost relatively more to build, they don’t get the kind of discounts their tight confines might suggest. Rent in a new innovation unit on Melcher Street in Fort Point starts at $1,700 per month.

The fact that innovation housing is expensive doesn’t mean that micro-apartments are worthless. In a country that has privatized public space and withdrawn behind closed gates for decades, micro-apartments alter the balance between private, shared, and public space in intriguing ways.

What’s most important, though, is the potential micro-apartments have for the way urban neighborhoods are constructed or revived. When micro-apartments squeeze more bodies into a set square-footage allotment, they form deeper pools of income, and more robust markets for local businesses. They amplify the benefits of new development.

Successful urban neighborhoods start with sidewalk traffic and active ground floors; when deployed right, micro-apartments could deliver dense concentrations of new residents needed to speed neighborhood turnaround efforts. Fort Point is a good place to build micro-

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http://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2013/04/22/seed-urban-neighborho...
Dudley Square. City officials are trying to seed a neighborhood comeback by building a new municipal office building in the square, but the area also needs a big residential push. And unlike the Seaport, Dudley doesn’t have the high land costs that make even tiny apartments expensive.

*Paul McMorrow is an associate editor at Commonwealth Magazine. His column appears regularly in the Globe.*
ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES:

- Sustainability/LEED/Green Building
- GreenTRIP: Project Evaluation Report
ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES: Sustainability/LEED/Green Building

Per LEED standards, the site is considered a Smart Location; the proposed project is near existing communities and public transit infrastructure. The proposed project aims to reduce vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled; and to improve health by encouraging daily physical activity associated with walking and bicycling.

The site has multimodal transportation choices, which will reduce motor vehicle use, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and other adverse environmental and public health effects associated with motor vehicle use.

The proposed project is adding a public mini-park along Shattuck Avenue in front of the building. This mini-park aims to improve public health by providing a safe, appealing, and comfortable street environment that encourages daily physical activity and increase pedestrian safety by adding an “eyes on the street” element that is severely missing from this area.

Sustainable/Green/LEED Elements of the proposed project:
- Certified Green Building; the project will be certified LEED Silver or higher
- ZETA Communities’ modular construction system; reduces pollution from construction activities by controlling soil erosion, waterway sedimentation, and airborne dust generation. The in-factory manufacturing greatly reduces construction-period waste
- Infill/Compact Development; conserves land, promotes walkability & use of public transit
- White roof; solar-reflective white coating immediately reduces temperatures inside and out. A roof covered with solar-reflective white paint reflects up to 90% of sunlight as opposed to the 20% reflected by a traditional black roof.
- Water efficient landscape design & rainwater management system
- Solar panels on the roof
- All electric, energy-efficient appliances
- Design & construction will be energy-efficient to reduce air, water, and land pollution and adverse environmental effects from energy production and consumption
- Mixed-use developments promote reduced vehicle distance traveled and automobile dependence; encourage daily walking, biking, and transit use; and support car-free living
- Reduced Parking Footprint; per LEED guidelines, parking should be designed to increase the pedestrian orientation and minimize the adverse environmental effects of parking facilities. Locate all new off-street surface parking lots at the side or rear of buildings, leaving building frontages facing streets free of surface parking lots.
- Access to Public Parks; the project is located within 1/2mi from 3 public parks. Additionally, the project will be constructing a new mini-park on-site.
- All units are ADA adaptable; to enable the widest spectrum of people, regardless of age or ability, to more easily participate in community life inside our building.
- Transit-oriented development; to reduce vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
- Each resident will receive a free AC Transit Pass
- Only 31 un-bundled residential parking spaces for 70 units; to encourage walking, biking, use of public transit
- Site is located near a protected bicycle network as well as a system of bike lanes
- 61 secured bicycle parking spaces for residents & 20 bike parking spaces on the sidewalk
2701 SHATTUCK AVENUE

CONDITIONAL CERTIFICATION AS OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2013

2701 Shattuck has qualified for a Conditional Certification. Full Certification is contingent on inclusion of key project characteristics in final city entitlements.

PROJECTED DAILY DRIVING BY RESIDENTS

**GreenTRIP standards**

- **LESS THAN 25 MILES/DAY**
  - PER HOUSEHOLD, BASED ON URBEMIS Projection
  - URBEMIS 2007 v9.2.4

- **APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF PARKING**
  - **MAXIMUM 1.0 SPACES/UNIT**
    - 31 PARKING SPACES
    - 70 HOMES
  - 0.44 SPACES/UNIT

- **TRAFFIC REDUCTION STRATEGIES**
  - **FREE TRANSIT PASSES & UNBUNDLED PARKING**
    - 100% UNBUNDLED PARKING
    - PROVIDING ONE FREE AC TRANSIT EASYPass PER UNIT FOR 40 YEARS

- **PLACE TYPE**
  - GreenTRIP standards are customized for different types of neighborhoods, or “Place Types,” as defined by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s Station Area Planning Manual.

- **URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD**
  - 2701 Shattuck meets GreenTRIP certification standards for the Urban Neighborhood Place Type. Above is an evaluation of how 2701 Shattuck satisfies each category.

- **PER HOUSEHOLD**
  - BAY AREA AVERAGE IS 50 MILES DRIVEN PER DAY

- **LESS THAN 25 MILES/DAY**
  - MAXIMUM 1.0 SPACES/UNIT
  - AT LEAST 2 OF 3 TRAFFIC REDUCTION STRATEGIES
  - 69% LESS DRIVING
  - 59% LESS GHGs
  - PROJECTED* TO RESULT IN:

- **69% LESS DRIVING**
  - Bay Area Average is 50 Miles Driven per Day, per Household

- **59% LESS GHGs**
  - Each household of 2701 Shattuck is expected to emit 15 pounds of GHGs per day.

*URBEMIS Model 2007 v9.2.4

GreenTRIP evaluates how well a proposed residential project design achieves Traffic Reduction and Innovative Parking strategies.

GreenTRIP conducts an evaluation based on information provided by the developer, Axis Development Group, and gathered from publicly available sources.
TRIP REDUCTION CREDITS

The following is an inventory of URBEMIS model inputs. The projected driving is affected by the following trip reduction credits.

**Density**

259 Units/Acre
Source: Axis Development Group

25% Reduction

**Mix of Uses**

Within a Half-Mile
4,355 Jobs
6,706 Homes

4% Reduction

**Local Retail Present**

Source: 2010 Census

2% Reduction

**Transit Service**

1,120 Buses in 1/4 Mile
266 BART trains daily

13% Reduction

**Pedestrian/Bicycle Friendliness**

453 Intersections per Sq. Mile
100% Streets w/ Sidewalks
100% Arterial Streets w/ Bike Lanes

7% Reduction

**Affordable Housing**

0% of units are Deed Restricted Below Market Rate Housing

Source: Axis Development Group

0% Reduction

Families living and working within a 1/2 mile or 10 minute walk to transit are 10 times more likely to take transit. ¹

Families living within a 1/2 mile of transit drive 50% less than those living further away. ²

QUESTIONS?

Contact: Ann Cheng, Program Director
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(510) 740-3150 x316 www.GreenTRIP.org

a project of

¹ ABAG New Places, New Choices, 2007
² Cervero, Arrington, TCRP Report 128, 2008
SITE CONTEXT:

- Neighborhood Renderings
- Urban Form Diagram & Write-up
Site Context: Neighborhood Renderings

Looking North on Shattuck Ave.

View from Residential Rear Yard

View from 2143 Derby St.
SITE CONTEXT: Urban Form Diagram & Write-up

We believe that a prominent building is appropriate at 2701 Shattuck Avenue based on our analysis of the urban form of this segment of Shattuck Avenue, and this area of Berkeley, as described in our three observations. As we are proposing a residential mixed-use development, a prominent building here is a tall (60’) and dense (70 units) project. By urban form we mean the shape, size, and character of the city’s parts such as streets, sidewalks, buildings, uses and lots.

Urban Form Plan #1
Shattuck Narrows

To the north of the project site, Shattuck is a significant commercial corridor approximately 170’ wide measured building to building. South of our project site, Shattuck narrows to a 70’ wide street and becomes primarily lined with single family homes. The shift in width and use occurs at our site, marking it as an important node along Shattuck Avenue where a taller, denser building is appropriate. The changing width and character of Shattuck from 170’ to 70’ is highlighted in red on the plan.

Urban Form #2
“Parking Pockets” disappear

North of our site, Shattuck Avenue is lined with “parking pockets” (highlighted in blue) between the street proper and the sidewalks. South of our site, these parking pockets disappear. This transitioning away of the “parking pockets” occurs at our site as the sidewalk narrows from 34’ at Derby to 21’-6” to the South. We are using this site opportunity to propose a public park in front of our project. This park will include a seating area for our proposed restaurant. This sidewalk condition acts as urban cue for something important to occur at this site. The increased width of the sidewalk suggests that a taller building is appropriate here.
Shattuck Avenue shifts to the west at our site. This has the effect of offering more frontal, prominent views of our building, as the site angles towards the viewer. Typically on Shattuck, as on most streets parallel to building frontages, you only get glancing, sideways views of buildings. Going north on Adeline, our project would be visually prominent as Adeline terminates into it. From this direction, our building would act as a gateway to the Shattuck Avenue commercial corridor to the north. Going south on Shattuck Avenue, our project would act as a terminus, marking the end of this recognizable segment of Shattuck. Currently, there is no building on the site and we are left with a spatially undefined condition— a missed opportunity. The frontal views of the project are indicated by red arrows on the site plan. The visual prominence of this site suggests a taller, denser building be located here.
INNOVATIVE RESIDENTIAL DESIGN:
• 38 Harriet - SmartSpace Brochure
• (CD) Video Tour of 38 Harriet
• SPUR article
Green Features

Applying for LEED Platinum certification
Urban infill housing
Natural light and ventilation
Solar thermal water heating
EcoBatt insulation
LED and CFL lighting
Low VOC finishes
Energy Star appliances
Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) lumber
Formaldehyde-free cabinetry
Rainwater harvesting
Low-flow plumbing fixtures
Recycled building materials
Cool roof membrane

The SmartSpace® SoMa neighborhood:

- **Shopping:** Westfield Shopping Center, Whole Foods, Harvest Urban Market
- **Parks:** Victoria Manalo Draves Park, Yerba Buena Gardens, Howard & Langton Mini-Park
- **Restaurants & Cafes:** Le Charm French Bistro, Oola, Lulu, Basil Thai Restaurant, Extreme Pizza, Blue Bottle Coffee, Sightglass Coffee, Rocco’s Cafe
- **Of Note:** Warfield Theater, Zeum Museum, Moscone Center, SF Federal Building

ZETA is the official manufacturer of SmartSpace® SoMa. They build high-performance and net-zero energy modular residential, educational, and commercial buildings.

Compared to conventional site-built methods, ZETA processes deliver dramatic speed, quality and cost advantages.

ZETA products achieve the highest level of sustainability, meeting LEED Gold and Platinum certifications.
Interiors
Bay windows
Plyboo sustainable hardwood floors
300+ cubic feet of storage in each unit
SmartBench® seating area
9 ft. ceilings

Kitchen/Bathroom
In-unit washer/dryer
Caesarstone countertop
Stainless steel appliances
Porcelain tile floors
Extra-deep soaking bathtubs

Floor Plans
The **Duo** offers two twin beds, the SmartBench®, work/desk space, and the option of additional desk space between the beds.

The **Suite** features an Inova TableBed, which converts from a dining table to a queen bed in seconds.
In New York, a third of all households are single people living alone; in San Francisco, it’s 38 percent. Why aren’t we designing housing for that demographic?

Single people are taking over U.S. cities. The numbers are so staggering that it’s hard to understand why housing policy has been so slow to react. In New York City, a third of all households are single people living alone. San Francisco beats New York at 38 percent, and Washington, D.C., Seattle and Denver top the charts for larger cities, with over 40 percent of their homes occupied by a lone resident. But even in smaller cities like Atlanta, Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, single people make up close to half of their households.

One reason it is difficult for policy makers, and the market, to digest these astounding numbers is our confused definition of household. Since the 1950 census, “household” has been synonymous with “family.” Data splits households into family and nonfamily categories, relegateing single people and their housing need to an oddity.

This idea of household equaling family also keeps our housing supply frozen in the 1950s and even permeates our housing vocabulary, as in “multifamily buildings” and “single-family homes.”

In New York City, as in many other cities across the country, housing regulations have worked to steadily increase the permitted minimum size of all new apartments over the last 60 years to encourage housing for families. Many areas of the city have a 400-square-foot minimum, and strict density controls on the number of units allowed in a building act as a disincentive to building smaller units.
However, due to our research and educational efforts, New York City policy makers have began to explore housing options that better suit the needs of single adults. This resulted first in the development of a building of microapartments on East 27th Street in Manhattan. The pilot project of small studios between 250 and 350 square feet will test the impact of flexible space standards and of waiving density rules to accommodate more singleperson households. And many other cities are also catching on, with similar pilot projects of microunits being built in San Francisco, Boston, Seattle and Providence.

Some recent significant changes have led cities to reconsider the desirability of providing appropriate housing for a single population.

First, the government (and the market) is beginning to understand that the single population is incredibly diverse — and is not going away. There is a common preconception that single people are young and transient, and will eventually transform into a “real” household — a family. In fact, in New York City, only 19 percent of single-person households are under 35 years old. Twenty percent are 35–55 years old and just over 50 percent are over 55. People are marrying later if at all, and half of all marriages end in divorce. And the single elderly are almost entirely disregarded by the private marketplace.

As city officials begin to accept that singles are a permanent part of their population, they also start to understand the repercussions of failing to respond to single people’s need for appropriate housing. If safe and legal housing options are not developed, single people are forced to live in shared arrangements in housing that is not designed for it.

To address these challenges, the Citizens Housing & Planning Council created a more realistic, demand-based analysis of how our population really lives. We found that a quarter of all New York City homes and apartments are being shared in some way. Adult children are staying in the family home for longer. Older single relatives are moving in with family members. Strangers are banding together to find housing through Craigslist, creating unnaturally high household incomes, which distorts the housing market by pushing up rental prices.

Many of these shared arrangements also rely on illegally occupied or subdivided housing. Illegal shared housing has become so widespread in New York City that the government estimates that the 2010 census resulted in an undercount of our population by approximately 250,000. Worst of all, illegal subdivisions have become a frequent cause of deaths by fire. The need for safe, legal housing options designed for the single population becomes paramount.

CHPC’s Making Room initiative seeks to match a city’s housing stock with the actual needs of its households. We have been honored to have an exhibition this year at the Museum of the City of New York (open until September 2013) that has educated thousands of attendees about new ways to allow our housing to respond to demographic change. We will continue to guide the New York City government as it moves from a pilot project to more substantial zoning and building code changes that would allow microapartments to flourish.
Making Room includes four key areas of scrutiny:

1. How a city’s population is really grouping itself into households, breaking with the traditional methodology that equates household with family
2. The type of people that a city hopes to attract in the future, and their likely lifestyles and housing needs
3. Best practices regarding the design of homes and apartments across the world
4. The revision of zoning, planning and building code controls, as well as subsidy policies, to facilitate and encourage the development of different housing models

In looking at these four areas, we can see that many of our cities need to revise their housing and planning policies to allow microapartments to address the needs of our booming single population across all ages and incomes.

Such innovative cities as San Francisco and New York must remain national leaders by making room for their real populations, both now and in the future.

http://www.spur.org/publications/library/article/time-make-room
AXIS DEVELOPMENT GROUP:

- Axis Development Group – Mission Statement
- Team Bios
AXIS DEVELOPMENT GROUP:
Experience & Vision

Axis Development Group is a privately-owned San Francisco-based real estate development firm that specializes in the creation, execution, and management of highly-serviced, uniquely-stylized luxury urban-infill and world-class mixed-use projects. Axis’ Principals bring over 25 years of acquisition, structuring, entitlement, construction, marketing, and sale/lease-up experience to the projects the firm pursues. Axis’ core strategy is to take the experience of its Principals and leverage that knowledge into projects that respond to the complex urban environments in which the firm operates.

Axis was founded on the belief that projects building on the person-driven energy underlying the richly-woven and deeply-interconnected fabric of urban environments become the foundations of communal identity. To that end, Axis focuses its development efforts on areas with pockets of concentrated incremental growth; the projects chosen by Axis demonstrate the Principals’ vision of livable interactive places of social exchange, where families and neighbors combine with businesses and activities to form communities.

PRINCIPALS

Muhammad A. Nadhiri
Muhammad is the Co-Founding Managing Partner of Axis Development Group. Prior to forming Axis with Theo Oliphant, Muhammad was the founder and Managing Partner of M.A.N. Associates, LLC, a San Francisco Bay Area-based niche real estate development firm. While at M.A.N. Associates, Muhammad oversaw the completion of the firm's development activities.

Before forming M.A.N. Associates, Muhammad was a Senior Project Manager at AF Evans Development, Inc., where he was responsible for the development of two downtown-revitalization residential/retail mixed-use projects, totaling 433 for-sale units and 70,000 square feet of retail over five city blocks.

Muhammad began his real estate career as an Associate at Wilson Meany Sullivan, LLC in San Francisco, where he co-managed the development of rental and for-sale residential/retail mixed-use projects in San Francisco and the Bay Area; one of which was as a member of the project team for the historic renovation of the Ferry Building. Prior to beginning his career in real estate development, Muhammad was an investment banker; he was an Analyst at Nationsbanc Securities and an Associate at RBC Dominion Securities.

Muhammad holds a B.A. in Business Administration with a concentration in Corporate Finance from Morehouse College and an M.B.A. from Columbia Business School.

Theo F. Oliphant
Theo is the Co-Founding Managing Partner of Axis Development Group. Prior to forming Axis with Muhammad Nadhiri, Theo was the Director of Public Private Partnerships in the City of Oakland's
Mayor's Office under Ronald V. Dellums. Before joining the Mayor's Office, Theo was a Partner in the Corporate & Securities Group at the international law firm of DLA Piper in the Corporate Group.

Theo is an experienced counselor and business executive with proven track record of executing sophisticated transactions, including complex equity and secured debt financings, real estate fund formation, real estate transactions, joint ventures, recapitalizations and asset divestitures, management buyouts, and mergers and acquisitions.

His key assets include developing and implementing operating strategies, deep experience with risk analysis and mitigation planning for large corporations, and creative problem-solving.

Theo has a law degree from University of California Berkeley and obtained his undergraduate degree at University of California Irvine in Social Ecology.

ASSOCIATES

Liz Beaubois
Liz serves as Project Manager for Axis Development Group. Prior to joining Axis, Liz worked as the Assistant Project Manager for UrbanCore Development in San Francisco.

Before beginning her career in Real Estate Development, Liz gained municipal planning experience as the Planning/Code Enforcement Intern for the Community Development Department of the City of Foster City.

Additionally, Liz worked as an Interior Architectural Designer for Studio One Design in Los Gatos, California and consulted with multiple non-profit organizations in the areas of land use, transit-oriented development and sustainable design/development.

Liz holds a B.S. in Interior Architectural Design from the Art Institute, San Francisco and a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from San Jose State University.
LOWNEY ARCHITECTURE:

- Statement of Design Intent
- Team Bios
LOWNEY ARCHITECTURE:
Highest Standard of Design

What sets Lowney apart?
1. Our designers.
2. Cutting edge building information technology provides more detailed energy studies.
3. We've been Green all of our lives.

Creating responsive architectural solutions
Lowney Architecture delivers architectural solutions that respond to today’s accelerated design process, environmental and community requirements. A progressive, community-oriented group of professionals, Lowney Architecture provides a single point of contact for all aspects of building design projects.

Commitment to each project
How do we make great buildings? Our clients benefit from the full attention of our focused staff and the commitment of our partners. We are committed to having at least one Partner intimately involved with every project so that our clients’ needs are met consistently.

Design excellence and technical expertise
Lowney Architecture’s staff has diverse and extensive professional experience in both building design and construction management and completion. The result is a unique blend of design excellence backed by technical expertise and years of professional experience designing retail, commercial, hotel, restaurant, religious and residential projects.

Community involvement/Sustainability
Lowney Architecture is committed to sustainable business and architectural practices for our collective healthful future. Community involvement includes Chairmanship of the Rotary Club’s House Building Committee and long time participation with the Greenbelt Alliance’s Compact Development Team, helping to help make our cities become sustainable.
LOWNEY ARCHITECTURE:
2701 Shattuck Avenue Design Team

Ken A. Lowney AIA, LEED AP
Ken Lowney founded Lowney Architecture in Oakland, CA in 2003 and is the president and design director of the firm. Ken has worked with large and small corporations, city governments, communities and private developers. Areas of design expertise include grocery stores, restaurants, retail environments, offices, multifamily housing, parking structures, bridges, and urban design. The firm has won AIA, Golden Nugget and other industry awards.

Lowney Architecture has earned particular acclaim for its retail and multifamily design. Throughout Northern California, the firm has designed “vertical”, podium style retail projects that incorporate grocery stores, parking structures, retail space and housing. In 2012, the firm completed the first modular multifamily housing project in San Francisco, and continues to design modular multifamily projects throughout the Bay Area.

Ken is also primarily responsible for maintaining and developing the business relationships of the firm. His efforts are consistently recognized by the San Francisco Business Times by ranking Lowney Architecture as a top firm in the greater East Bay Area.

Ken has over twenty years of architectural experience. He has a BA in philosophy from Occidental College, studied architecture at the Architectural Association (AA) in London and received his M.Arch from the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc).

Nick Gomez
Nick Gomez was born and raised in the bay area, and has lived in Berkeley for the past 5 years, though his roots in Berkeley go back about 30 years. He has over 12 years of experience in Mixed-use Multifamily, Affordable Housing and Institutional projects. As a Senior Designer and Project Manager, he has successfully completed several housing projects that have received both local and national awards. Nick has also completed a range of both small and large scale projects for West Contra Costa and Berkeley Unified School Districts. Specifically, in Berkeley, Nick has worked on the King Dining Commons, BUSD Transportation Facility, Berkeley High Stadium, and BUSD West Campus District Offices.

Nick is active in the local arts community and has completed a large scale public art project for the city of Oakland as well as exhibited his work in local galleries and museums. He was appointed to the Alameda County Public Art Advisory Committee in 2012, where he has the opportunity to recommend and help oversee the approval of public art projects for the county.

Nick is now the proud parent of a King Middle school Star honor Roll, Jazz band, Concert band and Cross Country student. She plays a mean trumpet. Nick also has son in the 4th grade at Cragmont Elementary.

Tony Valdez
Tony is a California-licensed architect with over 12 years of experience managing small to mid-scale projects in a variety of market sectors including retail, mixed-use and residential developments. He leads multi-disciplinary teams of designers and engineers and is routinely involved with presenting designs at community meetings. He is also involved in realizing several projects utilizing prefabricated modular construction. Tony is interested in how architectural details can influence the larger form of a design project.