



September 26, 2019

Planning Commission
City of South San Francisco
315 Maple Street
South San Francisco, CA 94083

Re: 1051 Mission Road – SSF PUC Site – Applicant’s Statement

Dear Chair Murphy and Members of the Planning Commission,

On behalf of AGI-KASA, we respectfully request the Planning Commission’s recommendation of approval for the proposed Tentative Subdivision Map, Planning Application, Conditional Use Permit, Environmental Compliance certification and Planning Commission Waiver for the South San Francisco PUC Site Project (“Project”). The Project will redevelop ~6 acres of an ~6.6 acre parcel comprised of vacant, unused and publicly inaccessible land near South San Francisco’s BART Station into a transit-oriented mixed use apartment community of three separate buildings containing residential apartments, on-site child care facilities, commercial space supportive of small local retail and production tenants, on-site affordable housing, and nearly 3 acres of open space improvements accessible to the public. Moreover, the Project will be consistent with the City’s El Camino/Chestnut Area Plan (“ECR/C Area Plan”) and District Zoning while providing new homes and amenities for South San Francisco (“SSF”).

Background

AGI-KASA was selected to be the developer of the Project by the SSF City Council in Q2 2018 following a rigorous RFQ/RFP process that began in May 2017. When selected by the City Council as the developer for the SSF PUC Site, a project design was not selected. Instead, we were tasked with working closely with both the SSF City Staff as well as the local communities to try and design a Project that found a healthy compromise between the needs of the City (as well as the State and County Oversight Board that controls disposition of the SSF PUC Site) with the needs and concerns of residents and stakeholders of SSF. During the RFP process and subsequent to being selected as the developer, we have worked closely with both the SSF City Council and City Staff as well as members of the community to understand the key needs and concerns of both the City and the community with regards to a new high density transit oriented development at the SSF PUC Site.

Since the Fall of 2018 to present, we have engaged in extensive outreach efforts with the community in order to understand how we could best tailor the Project in a way that provides as much benefits to the community while mitigating the major concerns residents had with the density of the Project. Through three hands-on workshops, interactive websites with online message boards and polls and numerous in person meetings with various community groups and members, we believe the Project has found the right balance for a transit-oriented project on the PUC Site. We have significantly redesigned our project

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to reduce the impact of height and density to the neighboring communities and along Mission Road and to improve the design and pedestrian experience along Mission Road.

Additionally, we have worked closely with the Design Review Board (“DRB”), Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (“BPAC”) and Housing Standing Committee to incorporate their feedback into our designs. The resulting changes made to the Project in response to DRB, BPAC and Housing Committee feedback have made the designs of the Project better for both our residents as well as the surrounding public. We believe the Project is now ready for review and approval by your Commission.

ECR Zoning Additional Development Standards Incentive Program

The Project proposes developments with a combined density of 121 dwelling units per acre (800 units/ 6.6 acres). As permitted by ECR/C Zoning District, the Project requests a Conditional Use Permit to increase the allowable density from 120 DU/acre to up to 180 DU/acre, and the FAR of Parcel B from 2.0 to 3.0, per the ECR-C RH sub-district Sections 20.270.004(A)(1)-(2) and Section 20.390, to accommodate the Project’s proposed density as necessary.¹ The Project proposes the following components per the District requirements:

1. Incorporation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Measures

The Project should qualify for the 30 DU/acre density bonus and 0.5 FAR bonuses provided by Section 20.270.004(A)(1) for “the incorporation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures specified in Chapter 20.400, or as deemed appropriate by the Chief Planner for residential projects.” AGI-KASA has proposed a TDM Plan that achieves the metrics set forth in Section 20.400 as it reduces peak hour driving trips and promotes travel by alternative forms of transportation in order to meet a minimum alternative mode use of 28% or greater. This TDM Plan will be implemented by AGI-KASA and managed by our onsite property management staff, including annual monitoring and reporting of progress to the City of South San Francisco. The Project’s TDM intends to include:

- 100% unbundled parking, which is a key measure shown by a broad range of case studies to reduce car trips generated by our Project. In conjunction with our proposed Parking Management and Monitoring Plan and planned parking enforcement, we believe unbundling all 100% of our parking spaces will help reduce auto trips from our residents and we will be able to ensure our residents who do need parking have ample supply of parking spaces within our Project and do park in nearby neighborhoods.
- Enhanced improvements to Centennial Trail, including creating additional paths of connection to the trail for the public and residents of the Project.
- Improved connections for pedestrian and bicyclists between Mission Road and El Camino Real
- Potential expansion of City Shuttle routes as well as private company bus routes to encourage residents of the Project to utilize these alternative commutes

¹ With both 20.270.004(A)(1)-(2) and 20.390 applied to the project, density up to 180 DU/acre can be allowed at this site, but the Project does not need that high of density given the density of 121 DU/acre for the entire site, and with the Project proposed on Site B having the highest density of the 3 buildings with 138 DU/acre.

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- Installation of Real-Time Transit Displays in all lobbies and additional multi-modal wayfinding signage around the Project to encourage access and utilization of Centennial Trail and other connections between Mission Road, El Camino, Centennial Trail and the SSF BART Station.
- Introductory Clipper cards to new residents for use on BART, Caltrain, and SamTrans
- Incorporation of Bike Share programs into project designs for both residents of the Project as well as the greater community
- 800 (1:1 ratio) secure resident bicycle parking spaces (Class I) and bike fix-it stations in each building
- 93 visitor bicycle parking spaces (Class II) near lobbies, along Oak Avenue and Centennial Trail.
- Onsite fitness centers, lounges and co-working spaces with free wi-fi to promote telecommuting
- Onsite daycare facilities to reduce commuting for childcare services
- Electric vehicle parking stalls and charging stations, with additional capacity designed for expansion of charging stations in the future
- Welcome transit information packages for residents and employees
- Online Transportation Coordinator and online web portals to facilitate carpooling

2. High Quality Designs, Massing Respectful to Nearby Community, Public Amenities Including Outdoor Recreation and Non-Vehicular Commuting Promoted

Section 20.270.004(A)(2) of the Zoning Code provides for an additional 0.5 FAR and up to 30 DU/acre for “(a) [p]rojects that include high quality, innovative design and product type, and maximum provisions for pedestrian and bicycle use; (b) [p]rovision of off-site improvements [that] may include off-site amenities and/or infrastructure (other than standard requirements and improvements) such as funding for public safety facilities, libraries, senior centers, community meeting rooms, child care or recreation, or new and enhanced public spaces, or (c) [p]rovision of green building measures over and above the applicable green building compliance threshold required pursuant to Title 15 (“Building and Construction”) of the South San Francisco Municipal Code.” We believe the Project proposed meets subsections (a) and (b) and arguably subsection (c) as well and should qualify for the additional FAR and density bonuses under Section 20.270.004(A)(2).

a. Architecture and Massing and Bike and Pedestrian Supportive Designs

As the high density housing site for the ECR/C Area Plan, an area that SSF envisions as a future central core to its growing city, the architectural design intent of the Project is to create three distinct and yet related buildings that both reflect South San Francisco’s industrial and rural past while also responding to South San Francisco’s future and aspirations. Architecturally, the buildings utilize a mix of articulations and materials that reference South San Francisco’s past and create welcoming and warm street level experiences, while also taking contemporary approaches with skin materials, particularly as the Project moves further from the residential neighborhood and closer to the future Civic Campus building. Additionally, all three buildings’ massings have been sculpted to cap maximum heights so that the Project’s rooflines are lower than the nearby Kaiser Hospital. Furthermore, the Buildings’ Mission Street pedestrian experience masks the Buildings’ heights by utilizing multiple levels of setbacks along Mission Road, installing landscaped paseos between buildings for public access, utilizing tall species of

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native trees to add to natural screening, and locating the highest floors further off Mission Road. All of these massing strategies have been made as a part of our sensitivity and effort to minimize impacts to current residents' views and to avoid creating large wall-like structures along Mission Road and to encourage public interaction with and traversing through the Project. Through several community workshops and incorporating the feedback received, we believe we have achieved a balanced project that respects the past and present and that also looks towards the future.

The two northernmost buildings (Buildings C1 and C2) are located on Mission Road and are closer to existing residential neighborhoods. Building C2 is the furthest north and closest to the Sunshine Gardens residential neighborhood. As such, in order to more gradually grow from the existing 2-3 story structures nearby, we have designed C2 with the smallest footprint, shortest height (7 stories max as opposed to 8 stories like C1 and B) and with the largest setbacks along Mission Road and along the adjacent neighboring condominium building to the North (C2 is 3 stories along the northern lot line shared with the existing 3 story condo building). Both C1 and C2 meet Mission Road with three story expressions of townhomes with residential stoops and landscape strips and with brick/stone facades at grade and open space landscaped decks above the third floor. The brick materials and stoops help create a warmer and lived-in feel and scale as the Buildings interface with the public realm. After a 10-12' setback above the third floor, the buildings rise up to the fifth or sixth floor and incorporate additional skin materials such as corrugated metal, corten steel, plaster and other materials that further reference South San Francisco's industrial past while the buildings take on more contemporary shapes and articulations. Finally, even deeper setbacks (~35' deep) along Mission Road occur above the fifth or sixth floors in a manner that moves the highest stories away from Mission Road such that pedestrians walking along the Project on Mission Road will rarely see above the fifth floor. Similar skin materials for these upper floors are utilized; however, they are differentiated in order to give the impression that these upper floors are separate geometric expressions, which is a more modern technique to massing a building with multiple setbacks and planes. The westward facing portions, following detailed feedback from the Design Review Board, now incorporate many of the same skin details and massing expressions as the Mission Road facing facades.

The southern building (Building B), which is adjacent to the Civic Campus and is separated from Mission road by the Colma Creek canal, utilizes fewer setbacks and incorporates a more contemporary glass and metal exterior, with colors and expressions to complement the current proposed glass and metal designs for the Civic Campus development. On the ground floor of Building B, where the Colma Creek will meet the Oak Avenue extension to be built as a part of the Project, a new public plaza adjacent to a Market Hall commercial space will become a focal point of the Project and as a new destination – in conjunction with the Civic Campus – for the public. Small setbacks above the Market Hall plaza at the 6th and 7th floors, along with decorative metal paneling and balconies above the Market Hall will both reference the Civic Campus building while also creating a dynamic facade above the Market Hall. Finally, north of the Market Hall Plaza, and prominently facing Mission Road, the elevator core presents an opportunity for a multi-story mural or other artwork to be installed on Building B for the public to enjoy.

All three buildings are utilizing garages that are interior to the structures and predominantly invisible to the public. Buildings C1 and C2 have residential and other active uses completely wrapping around the

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parking structure so that only C1's driveway entrance is visible on Mission Road. All three buildings utilize mechanized parking systems to maximize parking while minimizing garage footprints. Moreover, Buildings C1 and B include below grade parking levels with mechanized parking in pits to minimize the amount of above grade parking that requires wrapping or screening. Only Building B has a portion of its garage at grade or on the second level that isn't completely wrapped by active uses along the backside of the building and along a portion of the Oak Avenue extension. Where this occurs, decorative perforated metal panels that reference the Civic Campus proposed metal panels will be used to screen the parking from view while allowing the required open-air circulation required for garages. As a result, all three buildings will maximize active uses along Mission Road, Oak Avenue as well as the Centennial Trail and Colma Creek frontages, including townhomes, flex spaces for residential or commercial use, lobbies, childcare and the Market Hall.

Finally, as further discussed below, the Project maximizes provisions for pedestrian and bicycle use for its residents. All 3 buildings provide 1 to 1 secured bike parking spaces per unit. All three buildings have bike repair stations and workshops available for residents to use. All buildings include wayfinding signage and up to date information on available public transit options and timing. With the SSF BART station 0.5 miles to the north, and CalTrain a 10 minute bike ride to the east, these provisions help make car free commuting an easy and viable option for our residents.

b. Public Improvements to Landscaping, Oak Avenue and Centennial Trail

Utilizing and upgrading the existing Centennial Trail and Colma Creek experiences has been a driving inspiration for us since the RFQ was issued in 2017. Through SSF staff help with working with BART and Kaiser, the Project will landscape and improve adjacent parcels controlled by BART, SSF and Kaiser, as well as our SSF PUC Site, in order to create a network of trails and a variety of outdoor amenities for both residents of the Project as well as the public.

Outdoor amenities that the Project will provide and that are open to the public include:

- Two new paseos, one north of Building C2 and another between C1 and C2, that allow access from Mission Road through the site to landscaped improvements along Colma Creek and the Centennial Trail.
- A play structure and area for kids behind Building C2.
- A sculpture lawn with seating areas at the end of the main paseo between Buildings C1 and C2.
- An outdoor workout station behind Building C2
- Additional landscaped areas for congregation along Colma Creek behind Building B.
- Improved lighting and landscaping along the Centennial Trail and Colma Creek.
- Improved Centennial Trail connections through the site and into the Civic Campus Site.
- An outdoor plaza adjacent to the Market Hall.
- A grand stair and switchback ramp for pedestrian/bike/ADA connection from El Camino Real to the Oak Avenue right-of-way along Building B.

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- A shared plaza Oak Avenue right-of-way that can double as surface parking as well as an extension of the Market Hall plaza for additional uses such as farmers markets, food truck events, etc.
- Public bike parking spaces throughout the site and bike share stations to be considered in conjunction with SSF staff.

Conceptual designs for all of the above noted amenities are included in the revised entitlement package of drawings provided to SSF staff on September 19, 2019. All of these outdoor amenities, many of which are offsite, will be included as part of the Project, *in addition to* the approximately \$9.5 million in Park and Recreation fees that the Project will generate for the City.

c. Additional Public Project Benefits

Along with the Additional Development Standards outlined above, the Project will also provide the following benefits to South San Francisco:

- **Childcare Facility:** ~8,300sf childcare facility on the ground floor of Building C1 that can accommodate 75-100 children. This facility will be open to the public and our operating partner intends to apply for grants to allow 25% or more of the tuitions to be subsidized. We have further agreed to backstop up to 10% of these subsidized tuitions should our childcare partner fall short of receiving State or local funds sufficient to subsidize 25% of tuitions.
- **New Apartment Homes:** 800 new homes that are walkable to BART, trails, neighborhood services and other public transit.
- **20% of Homes Affordable to Low and Very Low Income Residents:** Building C2 will be the location of ~158 new affordable homes that will seek to incorporate a SSF live-work preference where legally possible. Moreover, over 50% of these units will be 2-BR or 3-BR units, accommodating more families.
- **All Electric Building:** Though not yet required by building code, cities and states have begun to consider requiring all new buildings eliminate natural gas infrastructures.² Because we believe eliminating gas from our buildings is critical to developing a building that is better for reducing our carbon footprint, rather than wait for codes to change we have gone forward and design the Project to be 100% electric. Additionally, our building will include car charging stations and the infrastructure for future installation additional car charging stations and solar panels for when the market further supports these installations.
- **New Oak Avenue:** A vehicular connection with intersection upgrades at Mission Road and Oak Avenue extending Oak Avenue over Colma Creek and into Antoinette Lane will be constructed as part of the Project. Additionally, the right of way of a potential further future vehicular extension of Oak Avenue to El Camino will be feasible. Before this second phase occurs, the Project will include an at grade shared plaza along this right-of-way that provides additional

² On July 17, 2019, Berkeley, CA became the first city in the nation to pass a law requiring all new buildings to be built all-electric starting in January 1, 2020.

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parking to the Civic Campus and creates a bike and pedestrian pathway between Mission Road and El Camino Real.

- **Market Hall:** ~13,000 sf of new commercial space that will target smaller local businesses seeking retail and production space, with a goal of creating a Market Hall type of atmosphere and activation.
- **Mission Road Sidewalk/Landscaping installation:** New sidewalks on Mission Road will include landscaping, streetlights, and create new pedestrian paths along the PUC Site where none currently exist.
- **Undergrounding of Overhead Utility Lines**
- **~\$12 million Park and Recreation Fees**
- **~\$3 million in School Impact Fees**
- **~\$460,000 in Public Safety Impact Fees**
- **~\$140,000 in Bicycle and Pedestrian Impact Fees**
- **Initial Purchase Price of land** benefitting the South San Francisco School District, the City of South San Francisco, the San Mateo County, and other taxing entities.
- **Increased assessed property valuation by approximately \$475 million**, benefitting the South San Francisco School District, the City of South San Francisco, the San Mateo County, and other taxing entities.

Given the aforementioned project details, we believe our Project qualifies for the FAR and density bonuses set forth in Section 20.270.004(A).

Conclusion

We look forward to working closely with the South San Francisco Planning Commission and we respectfully request the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council approve our Project.

Regards,

DocuSigned by:


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Brian Baker

Vice President of Development

CC: South San Francisco Economic & Community Development Department