



MKG & ArchiLOGIX: The Flats @ 528B ST Design Concept Narrative

City of Santa Rosa
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Planning & Economic
Development Department

MKG & ArchiLOGIX’s The Flats @ 528B, a mixed-use office and apartment development promotes superior design through a thoughtful, integrated design approach that is consistent with City of Santa Rosa CD-5 zoning development standards, design guidelines and overall intent of policies set forth for the adjacent neighborhood and districts. The site is unique for its location within multiple policy districts: the St. Rose Historic District, the Courthouse Square Sub-Area as well as the Entryway Street Type designation within the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, making for a rich diversified development environment.

The Flats @ 528B development proposes demolishing the existing, 1-story commercial structure to make way for a 5-story, 32,360 sf mixed-use building. The proposed 5-story building is an appropriate scale and height, consistent with the existing adjacent 5-story City-owned parking structure at 521 7th Street. The development is consistent with the goals of the *Entryway Street Type* as described in the 2007 Downtown Station Area Specific Plan: *“to mediate between the small scale residential (St Rose Historic Preservation District) and the large scale development (encouraged in the Courthouse Square Sub-Area) to create a pleasantly landscaped, walkable street, using window systems that engage the public and at the same time create a pleasant interior work environment.”*

Sustainability goals, connectivity to vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian networks:

The proposed infill development actualizes sustainability goals through the building design and site features that maximize water conservation, energy efficiency, exterior and interior structural and finish materials that respect environmental stewardship. Generally, goals for infill developments further sustainability goals as less water and energy demand is associated due to the smaller lot size and reduced square footage. Long-term climate goals that improve quality of life is accomplished through reduced driving miles for residential and commercial tenants.

Parking for the Flats @ 528B is accommodated in the adjacent City-owned parking garage structure #1 which is immediately east of and adjacent to the project site. Residents and employees of the ground-floor office will have parking passes for the City-owned garage. However, office users and apartment residents along with visitors will be encouraged to walk, bike, and use alternative modes of transportation given proximity to downtown and related services.

The Downtown Station Area Specific Plan promotes Transit-Oriented Development especially mixed-use development with ground floor activating uses on key streets throughout the plan area in order to facilitate pedestrian connectivity in proximity of transit opportunities. The project site is less than a ½

mile from the SMART station and an easy walk to other transit options including Santa Rosa City bus stops in either direction on B Street.

The project location is a ¼ mile from Courthouse Square where cultural and sponsored events regularly take place that are available for residents and employees. Other amenities include restaurants, bars, breweries, theaters, gyms, and retail shopping establishments.

Thoughtful, integrated architecture that respects the existing historical neighborhood and furthers the goals of intensified development at the downtown core:

The Cultural Heritage Board policy states while new infill development can be contemporary, it should not seek to mimic or match existing buildings in the St. Rose District. The Flats @ 528B will provide a thoughtful balance between the eclectic and architectural styles seen in the district. The architectural character of the proposed building is defined by massing and detailing elements from the 1920's and 30's building style which is found in the St. Rose Historic District. See our inspiration photo sheet that reinforces our approach.

The first level or base of the building is a combination of substantial wall materials using split-face concrete block and steel sash windows and header beams for all openings. The substantial look of the first level supports the lighter looking 2nd through 5th floors that are finished with a building material that is smooth in finish and is articulated using horizontal and vertical reveals. The type and location of windows in conjunction with the exterior balconies creates a building esthetic that is light and open in its feel yet diverse in its massing. The exterior building composition is a deliberate attempt to express the building's mixed-use functions.

Landscape material selections (trees, ground cover and hardscape) respond to site conditions to create a welcoming transition from B Street and the parking structure. Our proposed site plan and building placement respond to the historical neighborhood and Courthouse Square planning criteria. The entry to the first-floor office space is slightly setback from the public realm/sidewalks to reinforce the walkable streetscape. A semi-private paseo-type exterior space with direct connection to B Street, as well as the parking structure, will be accessed through a secured ground floor lobby for office users and the residents of the upper level apartments.

The landscape plant palette in the paseo softens the wall surfaces of the building and the fence to the north that screens our neighbor's exterior open space. Similarly, the landscape palette at the street is low in height below the office windows. The landscape material and green screen at the base of the split-face concrete block stairwell is taller and robust and anchors the southwest corner of the building.

Attention to Placemaking/Livability:

The ground floor of the building design concept is enhanced with our landscape approach, creating a visual balance between mass (building structure) and transparency (window systems). The Station Area Specific Plan Entryway street type is intended to create focal points or nodes of activity in order to animate the public realm as well as enhance exterior and interior spaces. The Flats @ 528B creates additional opportunity for more eyes (and feet) on the street in an entry gateway into downtown Santa Rosa.