



July 13, 2023

Project Planner
City of Novato Planning Division
922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945

**Re: Grant and 3rd Project Description
1212-1214 Grant Avenue | APN 141-262-13 & 141-262-12**

To Whom It May Concern:

AMG & Associates, LLC (AMG) and the California Housing Defense Fund (CalHDF) are pleased to submit an application for the proposed Grant and 3rd Street Mixed Use project that will be located at 1212-1214 Grant Ave in the City of Novato in Marin County. This project is located in Downtown Novato surrounded by a variety of land uses including residential and commercial. According to the 2035 General Plan, the land use designation of the site is Downtown Core which allows 10.0 to 23.0 units per acre in mixed-use developments and a maximum FAR of 2.0 when housing is part of the project. The intended uses of this designation include “mix of retail, service, office, recreation, assembly, and education uses... [and] residential (mixed use and live work)”. The site is zoned Downtown Core Retail with a Downtown Overlay (CDR: D) which is consistent with the General Plan designation of the property. The project is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Code with the exception of the requested density bonus, concessions, and waivers as detailed in the enclosed Density Bonus Memo. The Grant and 3rd Street Mixed Use project will add vital affordable housing to the City’s overall housing stock. Utilizing the designations detailed above, Density Bonus Law, the Housing Accountability Act (HAA), and the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022 (AB 2011), we propose a mixed-use project with 1,345 square feet of ground floor retail along Grant Avenue and a total of 60 studio units on upper floors. The project FAR is 3.2. The project will be 100% affordable as detailed in our density bonus memo.

This five-story mixed-use community will consist of newly constructed studio units, community amenities for residents, and ground floor retail. Ribbed, metal paneling finished black wraps the building’s exterior with portions of the façade finished in a contrasting light gray or brick finish to provide additional volume and articulation to the structure. For additional visual interest, the building features a varied roofline with a portion of the parapet sloping to a point at the structure’s northwest corner. The building entrance and retail space are framed with an earth-toned façade using brick siding with metal awnings to differentiate the ground floor spaces from the residential units above. Metal awnings are again incorporated at select windows on the top floor to create a unifying design. The summation of these industrial and traditional architectural elements creates a distinct yet understated building identity appropriate to the scale of Grant Avenue.

The ground floor consists of a single 1,345 square feet of retail space. The hours of operation for the retail space are unknown at this time as the tenant is to-be-determined. At the ground floor beyond the retail space and leasing office are utility rooms, trash collection rooms, secure bike storage, and interior community amenity spaces. The interior amenity space leads to an outdoor patio with a bistro table and bench. Landscaping composed of a mix of shrubs, perennials, vines, and grasses is provided through the building perimeter with areas provided for bioretention.

As permitted by State Density Bonus Law and elaborated on in our Density Bonus Memo, the City shall not impose parking standards for a 100% affordable project that is also “located within one-half mile of a major transit stop and there is unobstructed access to the major transit stop from the development”. Within one-half mile of this project is a major transit stop – the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) station located at 695 Grant Avenue. As a result, zero vehicle parking spaces are provided, though secured bicycle storage is incorporated on all levels of the building.

Floors two through five of the project will be residential units. The upper floors are accessible via centrally located ADA-accessible elevator and a stairwell. Entry to the residential units through these access points will be secured with key fob. Each residential floor will have a central corridor with studio flanked on either side with units also spanning along the street facing portion of the building. Next to the elevator, bike storage and trash rooms are provided on each floor with the ground floor containing a dedicated retail trash room. Common laundry rooms are provided on each residential floor next to the elevator. Each unit will have new energy efficient appliances and designed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all applicable State standards for universal accessibility and adaptability. All units will be designed for acoustic separation and isolation in compliance with state acoustical standards. All current construction standards will be observed in order to assure that a quality housing development is provided.

The City’s Art Program (Division 21 of Novato’s Code) requires either the payment of in-lieu fees or the installation of art on the project site. At this time we intend to comply with this Program by paying the in-lieu fee.

AMG and CalHDF look forward to working with the City on creating a beautiful and safe project for the community. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any comments or questions. You can reach me at alocke@amgland.com or (818) 600-2518.

Thank you,



Amanda Locke
AMG & Associates, LLC



Dylan Casey
California Housing Defense Fund