

February 9, 2024

Mr. Jonathan Lait
Planning Director
Planning & Development Department
City of Palo Alto
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

RE: Buena Vista Commons
SB 330 Planning Application Submittal

Dear Mr. Lait:

The Santa Clara County Housing Authority (**Housing Authority**) is pleased to submit this SB 330 Planning Application for the development of Buena Vista Commons at 3980 El Camino Real in Palo Alto. Buena Vista Commons is the apartment component of a larger redevelopment occurring at the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park (**Park**). In 2017, the City of Palo Alto (**City**), County of Santa Clara (**County**) and the Housing Authority came together to preserve the Park as an affordable housing resource in Palo Alto, and avoid displacement for the existing families who lived there. At the time it was acquired, the intent for Buena Vista was to complete a redevelopment that accomplishes a few goals: make substantial physical improvements, ensure long-term financial sustainability, and maintain over 100 affordable homes. This Planning Application submission is a significant step towards meeting those goals and maintaining the Buena Vista community for the long term.

Buena Vista Commons will consist of 61 units of affordable housing for families. 100% of the units are subject to affordability restrictions in accordance with the tri-party regulatory agreement that is held between the Housing Authority, City, and County. The project will be developed on land owned by Poco Way HDC, Inc., a California nonprofit public benefit corporation that is wholly controlled by the Housing Authority, the developer.

The project uses The Housing Crisis Act (SB 330) and the California State Density Bonus Law (AB 1763). Buena Vista Commons satisfies the requirements of SB 330 and AB 1763, as detailed in the enclosed Project Description. On December 19, 2023, we submitted an SB 330 Preliminary Application to Palo Alto Planning staff.

We are excited to move forward with our proposal and submitting our full entitlements application. Please find enclosed the designs and supporting documentation.

We look forward to continuing to work with the City on this new project. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Kris Adhikari at (650) 582-9359 or kris.adhikari@scchousingauthority.org.

Sincerely,



Flaherty Ward (Feb 9, 2024 09:36 PST)

Flaherty Ward
Director of Real Estate

ENTITLEMENTS/SB-330 APPLICATION

Prepared: Feb 09, 2024

3980 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA

Buena Vista Commons

Submitted by:

Santa Clara County Housing Authority

505 W. Julian Street

San José, CA 95110



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1. Introduction

a. Project Description

Buena Vista Commons is the apartment component of a larger redevelopment occurring at the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park (Park), Palo Alto's only mobile home park, located at 3980 El Camino Real, in the Barron Park neighborhood. Buena Vista Commons is proposed as a 61-unit apartment building, which occupies 1.69 acres of the existing 4.5 acre property. The location has been used for housing since at least the 1950s, when Buena Vista first converted from a car camp along El Camino Real to a mobile home park with spaces and hook-ups for homes. It eventually became a critical part of natural affordable housing stock in Palo Alto. Buena Vista Mobile Home Park had its last substantial renovation in 1970. As a result, the infrastructure is outdated and insufficient, the Park is overcrowded, and many homes require replacement. Buena Vista Commons is a critical part of the redevelopment that is necessary to address overcrowding at the Park and to achieve other project goals that are shared between the City, County and Housing Authority: to make substantial physical improvements, ensure financial sustainability, and maintain over 100 affordable homes.

Buena Vista Commons will be deed-restricted as 100% affordable housing. The apartment will serve existing renters who live at the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park, and it will increase affordable housing opportunities to more families in Palo Alto. Among the current resident population of the Park, a 2023 income recertification found that 90% of all current households are low-income (below 80% AMI and over half of households are very low-income (below 50% AMI). The average affordability level for each home at Buena Vista Commons is expected to be below 42% of AMI. The proposed project preserves affordable housing among the Park community and helps meet the larger community need for more affordable housing in Palo Alto.



Aerial illustration of Buena Vista Commons- the proposed 3-story apartment building

The location for Buena Vista Commons is an important one for more housing. It sits in the Barron Park neighborhood, which is an area that is rich in resources for families. It is less than a half-mile away from an elementary school, grocery store, public transit, and other restaurants, parks and cafes. In addition, housing costs throughout the Bay Area, including Palo Alto, have continued to skyrocket over time. Projects such as ours are critical to preserve and expand affordable housing opportunities in Palo Alto, helping maintain and increase socioeconomic and racial diversity. Immediately adjacent land uses to this site are another affordable housing property (Oak Manor Townhouses) to the west, commercial businesses to the east, and single family residential to the north.

Through its design features, Buena Vista Commons will bring energy efficiency, community cohesion, and curb appeal. It will also use materials that are intended to maintain well over time. For energy efficiency, Buena Vista Commons will be all-electric, use natural flooring, use Energy Star appliances, have bicycle parking, and will be setup to accommodate electric vehicle charging. For the resident community, it will have a barbecue area, teen room, community room, and resident services offices. And compared to the built structures at Buena Vista Mobile Home Park today, the apartment will have playful angles, fresh colors, and new trees that will make it attractive to passers-by in the Palo Alto community.



Barron Park neighborhood



Barron Park Elementary School



Adjacent building: Oak Manor Townhouses by Alta Housing



Adjacent commercial building along El Camino Real

b. Project Team

- **Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA):** Is the project developer. SCCHA is a public agency whose mission is to provide and inspire affordable housing solutions to enable low-income people and families in Santa Clara County to achieve financial stability and self-reliance.
- **The John Stewart Company:** The John Stewart Company has been Property Manager at Buena Vista Mobile Home Park since 2020 and will remain property manager for Buena Vista Commons. They are experienced with affordable housing compliance requirements, such as annual income recertifications.
- **Burke, Williams & Sorensen, LLP:** Real estate and land use attorneys.
- **Van Meter Williams Pollack LLP:** Architect.
- **Sandis Civil Engineers:** Civil Engineer.
- **Associated Right of Way Services, Inc.:** Relocation consultant.

c. About the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA)

Santa Clara County Housing Authority is a public agency whose mission is to provide and inspire affordable housing solutions to enable low-income people and families in Santa Clara County to achieve financial stability and self-reliance. It is one of the original 39 Moving to Work agencies (out of 3,200 nationwide public housing authorities), which gives it a special designation to make strategic program and policy changes.

The Housing Authority was established in 1967. One of its functions is as a developer and asset manager for affordable housing. It currently owns nearly 3,500 homes throughout Santa Clara County. It has an active development pipeline of over 1,200 homes, which is through large master-plan projects, smaller development sites, and deeply mission driven developments like Buena Vista. Currently, Bellarmino Place, Alvarado Park, and the Pavilion Inn are under construction and will provide 257 affordable homes for seniors, families , and transitional aged youth in San Jose when they are completed in 2024 and 2025. Our projects have utilized various different funding sources, including private and public sources such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and conventional loans.

In addition to housing development and ownership, the Housing Authority administers federal rental assistance to over 19,000 households through the Housing Choice voucher program.