

Date: November 1, 2021
To: City of Austin Design Commission
From: Planning & Urban Design Working Group
Subject: Density Bonus Working Group review of 80 Rainey for substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines

Meeting date: October 22, 2021; 12:00 pm; Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting
Applicant: Amanda Swor- Drenner Group

The project is located at 80 Rainey Street.

The project includes mixed use of residential (482,317 sf) and retail (17,444 sf). The project also includes 5 parking levels (none underground).

The applicant is seeking a Density Bonus to raise the FAR from 8:1 to 20:1 resulting in a total project gross area of 564,979 gsf. The site is 0.66 acres (28,814 sf) with a current allowable building size of 230,512 nsf based on the current allowable 8:1 FAR.

The total building height is 546 ft (49 floors). The maximum height achievable under the Density Bonus program is unlimited.

Per the Density Bonus Program ordinance, the applicant is required to meet the three gatekeeper requirements:

- Substantially comply with the City's Urban Design Guidelines
- Provide streetscape improvements along all public street frontages consistent with the Great Streets Program Standards
- Applicant must commit to a minimum of 2-star green building rating (3-star proposed).

WORKING GROUP COMMENTS REGARDING COMPLIANCE WITH THE URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

AREA WIDE GUIDELINES

1. Create dense development –
25:1 far is being requested. Project complies with this Section.
2. Create mixed-use development –
Residential and substantial retail uses are proposed. Project partially complies with this Section.
3. Limit development which closes downtown streets –
This project is not permanently closing down any streets. Project complies with this Section.
4. Buffer neighborhood edges-
The reused existing bungalows and proposed Paseo help buffer the adjacent neighborhood edges. Project complies with this Section.
5. Incorporate civic art in both public and private development –
This project is proposing public art at the Paseo Gateway. Project complies with this Section.
6. Protect important public views –
Since this project is already surrounded by high-rises, there are no important public views to protect. Not applicable.
7. Avoid historical misrepresentations –
Project complies with this Section.
8. Respect adjacent historic buildings-
This project is protecting and reusing two existing on-site bungalows. Project complies with this Section.
9. Acknowledge that rooftops are not seen from other buildings and the street –
Project complies with this Section.
10. Avoid the development of theme environments-
Project complies with this Section.

11. Recycle existing building stock –
This project is protecting and reusing (recycling) two existing on-site bungalows. Project complies with this Section.

Project complies with 10 of 10 applicable Area Wide Guidelines. Item 6 is not applicable.

GUIDELINES FOR THE PUBLIC STREETScape

1. Protect the pedestrian where the building meets the street-
Building is set back from Great Streets sidewalk and Paseo is provided for east-west circulation and connection to MACC. In addition, streetscape is being extended in front of 86 Rainey, replacing existing dangerous sidewalk. Project complies with this Section.
2. Minimize curb cuts-
There are no curb cuts on streetscape. Parking Garage entry/exit is through back alley. Project complies with this Section.
3. Create a potential for two-way streets-
Rainey Street is already a two-way street. Not applicable.
4. Reinforce pedestrian activity-
Entire streetscape frontage except alley is retail and Paseo is surrounded with retail except Austin Energy Vault, greatly reinforcing pedestrian activity for the community as well as for its tenants. Project complies with this Section.
5. Enhance key transit stops-
There are no transit stops on site this. Not applicable to this project.
6. Enhance the streetscape-
Great Streets Program is fully implemented and additional components have been added, such as the Paseo and the extension of the streetscape to replace the existing sidewalk in front of 86 Rainey. Project complies with this Section.
7. Avoid conflicts between pedestrians and utility equipment-
Utilities are located on Back Alley; there are no conflicts between pedestrians and utility equipment. Project complies with this section.
8. Install street trees-
Street trees are being installed but there was discussion regarding tree palette. Project complies with this Section.
9. Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting-
Project complies with this Section.
10. Provide protection from cars/promote curbside parking-
Pedestrians are protected at sidewalk but no curbside parking provided, especially for ride-share pickup and drop-off. Project partially complies with this Section.
11. Screen mechanical and utility equipment-
Equipment is either screened and/or within building envelope. Project complies with this Section.
12. Provide generous street-level windows-
Large windows are shown at street level. Project complies with this Section.
13. Install pedestrian-friendly materials at street level-
The street level materials appear to be pedestrian friendly. Project complies with this Section.

Project complies with 11 of the 11 applicable Public Streetscape Guidelines. Items 3 and 5 are not applicable.

PLAZAS AND OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES

1. Treat the four Squares with special consideration- Not applicable.
2. Contribute to an open space network-
This project provides a Paseo that connects pedestrians from Rainey Street to the MACC and Butler Hike and Bike Trail. Project complies with this Section.
3. Emphasize connections to parks and greenways- Not applicable.

4. Incorporate open space into residential development (pool, deck, dog area)-
Two open air amenity decks provide open space for the tenants of the building. Project complies with this Section.
5. Develop green roofs-
Green roofs are not provided, however extensive rooftop planters are proposed. Project partially complies with this Section.
6. Provide plazas in high use areas- Not applicable.
7. Determine plaza function, size and activity- Not applicable.
8. Respond to microclimate in plaza design- Not applicable.
9. Consider views, circulation, boundaries and subspaces in plaza design- Not applicable.
10. Provide an appropriate amount of plaza seating- Not applicable.
11. Provide visual and spatial complexity in plaza design-
Although not a plaza, the area including the restored bungalows, Paseo, artistic gateway, mural and plantings provide the visual and spatial complexity of a plaza. Project complies with this Section.
12. Use plants to enliven urban spaces-
Urban spaces are enlivened by the use of plants. Project complies with this Section.
13. Provide interactive civic art and fountains in plaza-
The Paseo area provides interactive civic art and fountains are somewhat discouraged these days so are not applicable. Project complies with this Section.
14. Provide food service for plaza participants- Not applicable.
15. Increase safety in plazas through wayfinding, lighting and visibility- Not applicable.
16. Consider plaza operations and maintenance- Not applicable.

Project complies with 5½ of the 6 applicable Plaza and Open Space Guidelines. Ten Items are not applicable.

GUIDELINES FOR BUILDINGS

1. Build to the street-
Building built to the street but inset from streetscape to provide retail spaces an outdoor connection to the public realm. Project complies with this Section.
2. Provide multi-tenant, pedestrian-oriented development at the street level-
All of project's streetscape frontage is retail except for Main Entry/Lobby. Project complies with this Section.
3. Accentuate primary entrances-
Primary entrances are well accentuated by inseting the entry from the streetscape. Project complies with this Section.
4. Encourage the inclusion of local character-
Local character is especially visible in the Paseo area of this project. Project complies with this Section.
5. Control on-site parking-
All parking is in the Garage. The design screens visibility of vehicles. Project complies with this Section.
6. Create quality construction- Project complies with this Section.
7. Create buildings with human scale-
The building presents a very comfortable sense of human scale, with its various retail spaces breaking up the façade and the various landscape elements adding to it. The avoidance of a huge Lobby also contributes to this sense. Project complies with this Section.

Project complies with 7 of the 7 applicable Building Guidelines.

WORKING GROUP COMMENTS

Positive Attributes of the Project:

- Great example of a building engaging the pedestrian/public realm with mostly retail frontage and a nice sensitivity to human scale.
- Providing a basement for building functions frees up the street level for retail, which activates the streetscape.
- Paseo offers the community a connection from Rainey Street to the MACC and Butler Trail, and also opportunities to highlight local character.
- The architecture of the building shows a sensitivity to its site and the surrounding area.

Concerns regarding the Project:

- If a naturalistic, informal and species diverse tree solution is desired; Great Streets requirements have not been implemented. 80 Rainey is a more informal tree mixture. However, the more recent projects in the area have implemented single species solutions.
- Bike Room facilities should be shared with employees of the building and not just limited to tenants.

The Density Bonus Working Group has determined that the 80 Rainey project is in substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines.

The Working Group appreciates the opportunity to preliminarily review and comment on this project and we look forward to a continued collaborative process while moving this project forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "EVAN K TANIGUCHI". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "E".

Evan K. Taniguchi, AIA
City of Austin Design Commission
Planning & Urban Design Working Group of the