DATE: December 3, 2019
TO: Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board
FROM: Dexter O’Connell, Associate Planner (530-879-6810)
dexter.oconnell@chicoca.gov
RE: Architectural Review 19-24 (Creekside Place)
    Notre Dame Blvd., about 200 feet south of Humboldt Rd. APN 002-180-109

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board adopt the required findings contained in the agenda report and approve the proposed project, subject to the recommended conditions.

Proposed Motion

I move that the Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board adopt the required findings contained in the agenda report and approve Architectural Review 19-24 (Creekside Place), subject to the recommended conditions therein.

BACKGROUND

The applicant proposes to construct one three-story apartment building with two wings. The project would have a total of 101 residential units restricted for use by senior citizens. The units would be affordable for individuals making 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI), and the majority would be affordable for individuals making 30% of AMI. The site is located on the west side of Notre Dame Boulevard, about 200 feet south of the intersection of Notre Dame Boulevard and Humboldt Road (see Attachment A, Location Map). The site is designated High Density Residential (HDR) on the City’s General Plan Land Use Diagram and zoned R4 (High Density Residential). The resultant density for the project would be 20.5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), which is consistent with the allowable range of 20 to 70 du/ac for the R4 zoning district.

The site plan illustrates the layout and orientation of the buildings, as well as the location of the trash enclosure, site amenities, and parking (see Attachment B, Site Plan). The structure is centered on the property, and follows the general dogleg shape of the parcel. It is surrounded by sidewalks, parking areas, and landscaped areas, including a community garden.

The project includes a total of 129 off-street vehicle parking spaces in a partially-covered outdoor lot wrapping around the building, and bicycle parking in both indoor and outdoor locations.

Removal of 16 trees is proposed (See Attachment E, Tree Removal Plan). The landscape plans call for a variety of species with low-to-moderate water demands (see Attachment D, Landscape Plan), with a large number of trees and bushes including Chinese elm and valley oak.

The vast majority of the proposed landscape has moderate-to-low water requirements,
meeting state standards for water efficiency. Of the 4.92 acres of the site, 1.94 acres are landscaped, which minimally meets city requirements.

DISCUSSION
The proposed apartment complex is an attractive development of permanent supportive housing for low-income seniors. The complex achieves a unified identity through use of a rich earth tone color palate, set off by modern white and traditional red accents at appropriate locations in the two wings of the building.

The project is consistent with General Plan goals and policies that encourage compatible infill development (LU-1, LU-4, and CD-5) and providing an adequate supply of rental housing to meet a wide range of renters’ current and future needs throughout the city (H-3, H-3.2, and H-3.4) while also assisting the city in meeting the housing goals quantified in General Plan (H-4.4) are met.

The building would feature a gable roof over each of the wings, occasionally broken up by perpendicular gable elements covering balconies of the units. The exterior would have an earthy color palate featuring bright red accents (see Attachment F, Colored Elevations). Exterior walls would use diverse materials including modern-looking cement paneling, lap siding in a variety of colors, and two different balcony finishes (see Attachment G, Color and Materials Sample Panel). Exterior doors would be either clear glass or accent red (Sherwin-Williams “Sun Dried Tomato”), and window frames would be black (primarily on the ground floor) or white vinyl. Roof material would be grey composite shingles. All units would have a balcony or covered patio.

Fifty off-street parking spaces are required based on the proposed land use. The project includes a total of 129 off-street parking spaces. Regarding excessive parking, Chico Municipal Code (CMC) Section 19.70.040.F states in part that “[P]arking spaces which exceed the minimum number of spaces required by more than 35 percent may be administratively approved by the Director when a combination of additional landscaping, pedestrian/bicycle improvements, and/or pervious surfaces are provided above those required by this chapter.” In this case, the relocation and improvement of the existing Class I bike path and creation of a new bicycle crosswalk as required by Condition #7, along with the thorough landscaping and the decision to cover a large proportion of the spaces, meet the Code’s requirements with regard to providing excessive parking. The Director administratively approved this arrangement on November 22, 2019 (see Attachment I).

The parking requirements of Chico Municipal Code Section 19.70.040 are met for this use. No guest parking is specifically required, but there will be adequate parking for guests and employees. Bicycle parking would be provided in a small number of dispersed carrells, accessible to entrances and exits. Indoor bicycle parking would be available to residents.

Parking lot lights would be dispersed around the building and mounted at 14 feet in height. The covered parking would also be illuminated underneath, and Condition #6 requires it to be constructed with minimal glare and spill in accordance with Chico Municipal Code Section 19.70.060.F and Figure 5-12. Mechanical units would be located primarily on the street side of the building, screened from view by appropriate fencing and landscaping. Two concrete block trash enclosures, covered as required, are proposed within the parking area, on either side of the building.

The landscape plans call for a variety of species with low-to-moderate water demands (see Attachment D, Landscape Plan), with a large number of trees and bushes. The primary
trees would be Chinese elm and Chinese pistache. Accents of valley oak, particularly on the
creek side of the structure, will give a native feel, while cork oak and Madrid strawberry are
proposed for variety. The trees, shrubs, and other plantings are located throughout the
development, and street trees in particular will be of large and prominent species.

Removal of 16 trees is proposed (See Attachment E, Tree Removal Plan). Nine of those
trees do not qualify for protection or mitigation under the City’s ordinances, and one is
already dead. It is obvious that many large trees have been removed in the past, as several
stumps and large trunk pieces exist on the site. Condition #9 accounts for mitigation of the
six trees proposed for removal which qualify, and for the preservation measures which must
be taken around trees to remain.

Most aspects of the project are in conformance with their surroundings and do not
unnecessarily alter the character of the area or block any views of meaningful or important
landmarks. The pedestrian and bicycle access to the Creekside and other bike trails will be
improved and better-connected to Marsh Junior High, knitting the community more tightly
together.

REQUIRED FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

Environmental Review
The project has been determined to be categorically exempt from Environmental Review
under Section 1.40.220 of the Chico Municipal Code, and pursuant to the California
Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15332 (Infill Development Projects).
This exemption applies to infill projects which are consistent with the general plan and
zoning; are on sites less than five acres in size within the City limits; are substantially
surrounded by urban uses; have no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened
species; would not create any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water
quality; and can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

Architectural Review
According to Chico Municipal Code Section 19.18.060, the Architectural Review and Historic
Preservation Board shall determine whether or not a project adequately meets adopted City
standards and design guidelines, based upon the following findings:

1. The proposed development is consistent with the General Plan, any applicable specific
plan, and any applicable neighborhood or area plans.

The proposed project is consistent with General Plan goals and policies that encourage
compatible infill development (LU-1, LU-4, and CD-5) and providing adequate supply of
rental housing to meet a wide range of renters and future needs throughout the city (H.3,
H.3.2, and H.3.4). This project also fulfills in part the quantified goal of H.4.4 (“Assist in
the provision of housing for seniors”), “fund the development of 50 units of low-income
affordable senior housing by 2022.”

The proposed project includes new landscaping with low to moderate water needs,
consistent with sustainability policies that promote water conservation and energy
efficiency (SUS-4.2). Because this project is relocating a bike path and improving
infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians, it also helps to achieve general plan goals and
policies that require new development to “finance and construct internal and adjacent
roadway circulation improvements as necessary to mitigate project impacts, including… pedestrian, and bicycle facilities,” (CIRC-1.2) and upgrade “streets to provide complete streets amenities and connections between and within existing and new neighborhoods for bicycles and pedestrians.” (CIRC-2.1.2 and CIRC 2.1.3) This project’s bike-related improvements support several aspects of General Plan Goal CIRC-3, which focuses on quality bicycling infrastructure.

There are no specific plans or neighborhood plans applicable to the site.

2. **The proposed development, including the character, scale, and quality of design are consistent with the purpose/intent of this chapter and any adopted design guidelines.**

The proposed structure has meaningful architectural character and high-quality design elements. The proposed landscaping and configuration of the parking area help to minimize the views of automobiles (DG 1.1.14) in the open lot.

There is a picnic area with a proposed grill and shade structure (DG 4.1.45). The common open space has pedestrian access (DG 4.1.42, 4.1.43), and is dispersed around the complex, taking advantage of the fine location next to Little Chico Creek. This encourages individuals to make use of the open space by setting it in a meaningful relationship with its surroundings. There is also access via the proposed new biking trail to a network of surrounding bike and pedestrian trails (DG 4.1.45). Lighting is designed to minimize glare and spillover impacts (DG 1.5.14) while still maintaining a safe atmosphere.

The buildings are at a similar scale (DG 1.2.13) as the adjacent Murphy Commons Apartments, three-story structures arranged densely toward the center of the site. Murphy Commons Apartments features two-story structures toward the creek, but the view from the street is characterized by its own three-story buildings. The proposed Creekside Place complex would have a substantial creek side setback, compensating for its use of three-story construction adjacent to the creek. The components are somewhat representative of individual dwelling units (DG 4.2.11) through materials and colors that break up the façade and indicate from the outside a meaningful sense of differentiation. The overall plan has the character, scale, and quality expected of new architecture in the City of Chico by the Chico Municipal Code and by the Design Guidelines.

3. **The architectural design of structures, including all elevations, materials and colors are visually compatible with surrounding development. Design elements, including screening of equipment, exterior lighting, signs, and awnings, have been incorporated into the project to further ensure its compatibility with the character and uses of adjacent development.**

In an area that primarily treads well-covered architectural ground, the proposed Creekside Place Apartments are satisfactory. Creekside Place provides as much or more character, especially regarding materials and colors, as any other nearby building. Both Marsh Junior High, across the street, and the adjacent Murphy Commons Apartments are primarily in tan tones, with only occasional accents or banding to provide visual interest. Creekside Place will be more colorful. Its size will not be out of place, as Marsh’s street-facing gymnasium and the main buildings of Murphy Commons are both of similar height.
Materials are typical of the construction style, though not necessarily the adjacent neighbors. Marsh Junior High is primarily sided with stucco, and Murphy Commons has a mix of stucco and painted wood siding. The complexes on the other side of the creek are somewhat more daring. Creekside Place will not seem incompatible, particularly in the nature of its use. Apartments are characteristic of the area.

Ancillary elements have also been reviewed. Proposed signs are in reasonable locations and administrative review based on the City of Chico’s guidelines will ensure that they are tasteful and of high quality. Exterior lighting is minimal and thoughtfully-arranged. Screening of mechanical equipment and refuse areas is consistent with best practices of other new multi-family developments in the City of Chico. Where specific screening and landscape elements are not yet explicitly delineated, Condition #5 requires administrative architectural review of their placement and design.

4. The location and configuration of structures are compatible with their sites and with surrounding sites and structures, and do not unnecessarily block views from other structures or dominate their surroundings.

None of the developments in the immediate surroundings of the proposed Creekside Place complex are oriented to the street in a meaningful way. Creekside Place also has minimal street interaction. For a proposed Senior Housing complex, orienting the facility towards natural features and paths for residents to use for recreation or relaxation is an appropriate alternative.

The proposed structure is similar in stature to the Murphy Commons Apartments, just south on Notre Dame Boulevard, and to the three-story gymnasium of Marsh Junior High school across the street. They will not unnecessarily block views or dominate their surroundings from a distance. A landscape buffer of volunteer creekside tree species will remain the primary view from the other side of the creek.

The aspects of the project are in conformance with their surroundings and do not unnecessarily alter the character of the area or block any views of meaningful or important landmarks. Additionally, the pedestrian and bicycle access to the creekside and other bike trails will be improved and better-connected to Marsh Junior High, knitting the community more tightly together.

5. The general landscape design, including the color, location, size, texture, type, and coverage of plant materials, and provisions for irrigation and maintenance, and protection of landscape elements, have been considered to ensure visual relief, to complement structures, and to provide an attractive environment.

Landscape design includes a large number of trees and bushes. The parking lot will be well-treed, with the primary species proposed as Chinese elm and Chinese pistache. Accents of valley oak, particularly on the creek side of the structure, will give a native feel, while cork oak and Madrid strawberry are proposed for variety. The trees, shrubs, and other plantings are located throughout the development, and street trees in particular will be of large and prominent species.

Parking lot shading is more than adequate and a partially-shaded, shared recreational area will also contribute towards providing an attractive residential environment. Where specific screening and landscape elements are not yet explicitly delineated, Condition #5
requires administrative approval of their placement and design.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. All approved building plans and permits shall note on the cover sheet that the project shall comply with AR 19-24 (Creekside Place).

2. All wall-mounted utilities and roof or wall penetrations, including vent stacks, utility boxes, exhaust vents, gas meters and similar equipment, shall be screened by appropriate materials and colors. Adequate screening shall be verified by Planning staff prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

3. All painting and exterior materials work shall be conducted as approved and field-verified by Planning staff prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

4. All new electric, telephone, and other wiring conduits for utilities shall be placed underground in compliance with CMC 19.60.120.

5. Building plans shall delineate locations and detail as needed the final design of specific screening and landscape elements, subject to final approval by planning staff. This includes, but is not limited to, signs, irrigation equipment, and any changes to landscape planning that may be required due to alterations in configuration of the parking area of the property.

6. Proposed covered parking areas shall have adequate nighttime illumination, and shall otherwise be constructed with minimal glare and spill in accordance with Chico Municipal Code Section 19.70.060.F and Figure 5-12.

7. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the existing bike path shall be relocated as shown on the approved drawings, subject to final approval by Public Works staff.

8. During construction, adequate temporary bicycle access from the existing Little Chico Creek Bike Path to Notre Dame Boulevard shall be provided, and signs shall be posted to direct bicyclists to the temporary orientation of the path.

9. As required by CMC 16.66, any trees removed shall be replaced as follows:
   a. On-site. For every six inches DBH removed, a new 15-gallon tree shall be planted on-site. Replacement trees shall be of similar species, unless otherwise approved by the urban forest manager, and shall be placed in areas dedicated for tree plantings. New plantings’ survival shall be ensured for three years after the date of planting and shall be verified by the applicant upon request by the director. If any replacement trees die or fail within the first three years of their planting, then the applicant shall pay an in-lieu fee as established by a fee schedule adopted by the City Council.
   b. Off-site. If it is not feasible or desirable to plant replacement trees on-site, payment of an in-lieu fee as established by a fee schedule adopted by the City Council shall be required.
c. Replacement trees shall not receive credit as satisfying shade or street tree requirements otherwise mandated by the municipal code.

d. Tree removal shall be subject to the in-lieu fee payment requirements set forth CMC 16.66 and fee schedule adopted by the City Council.

e. All trees not approved for removal shall be preserved on and adjacent to the project site. A tree preservation plan, including fencing around drip lines and methods for excavation within the drip lines of protected trees to be preserved shall be prepared by the project developer pursuant to CMC 16.66.110 and 19.68.060 for review and approval by planning staff prior to any ground-disturbing activities.

10. The applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Chico, its boards and commissions, officers and employees against and from any and all liabilities, demands, claims, actions or proceedings and costs and expenses incidental thereto (including costs of defense, settlement and reasonable attorney’s fees), which any or all of them may suffer, incur, be responsible for or pay out as a result of or in connection with any challenge to or claim regarding the legality, validity, processing or adequacy associated with: (i) this requested entitlement; (ii) the proceedings undertaken in connection with the adoption or approval of this entitlement; (iii) any subsequent approvals or permits relating to this entitlement; (iv) the processing of occupancy permits and (v) any amendments to the approvals for this entitlement. The City of Chico shall promptly notify the applicant of any claim, action or proceeding which may be filed and shall cooperate fully in the defense, as provided for in Government code section 66474.9.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Ten days prior to the 12/18/2019 meeting date, a notice was published in the Chico Enterprise Record, notices were mailed out to all property owners and tenants within 500 feet of the project site, and a notice was placed on the project site. The meeting agenda was posted at least 10 days prior to the Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board meeting.

ATTACHMENTS
A. Location Map
B. Site Plan
C. Floor Plans
D. Landscape Plan
E. Tree Removal Plan
F. Colored Architectural Elevations
G. Materials Elevations
H. Color and Materials Sample Panel
I. Director’s Administrative Approval of Excessive Parking

DISTRIBUTION
Kris Zappettini. Community Housing Improvement Program. 1001 Willow St. Chico, CA 95928. kzap@chiphousing.org
Kuchman Architects, c/o Philip Harvey. 2203 13th St. Sacramento, CA 95818. phil@kuchman.com
CREEKSIDOE PLACE
PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE PLANTING PLAN
**TREE MITIGATION TABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TREE ID</th>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>DIAMETER (DBH)</th>
<th>REMOVE/RETAIN</th>
<th>MITIGATION REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **NOT A QUALIFYING TREE.**
- **EXCEPTED SPECIES.**

**TREE MITIGATION TABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TREE ID</th>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>DIAMETER (DBH)</th>
<th>REMOVE/RETAIN</th>
<th>MITIGATION REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **NOT A QUALIFYING TREE.**
- **UNDER DBH.**

**TOTAL DBH OF QUALIFYING TREES REMOVED**

54" 9 REPLACEMENT TREES OR IN-LIEU FEES FOR 9 TREES IS REQUIRED.

**OBTAIN TREE REMOVAL PERMIT FROM THE CITY OF CHICO PRIOR TO THE REMOVAL OF ANY TREES.**

**CREEKSIDE PLACE**

**TREE REMOVAL PLAN**
Attachment H

Color and Materials Sample Panel

*If you would like to view the Color and Materials Sample Panel, please visit the City of Chico Planning Department or attend the ARHPB meeting on December 18, 2019.*
Dexter O'Connell

From: Brendan Vieg
Sent: Friday, November 22, 2019 4:43 PM
To: Dexter O'Connell
Subject: RE: Excessive Parking -- AR 19-24 (Creekside Place)

Dexter:
I have reviewed your email and the attached material, and approve the request for excessive parking spaces.

Thanks -

Brendan Vieg, Director
City of Chico, Community Development Department (Planning & Housing)
(530) 879-6806 / brendan.vieg@chicoca.gov
411 Main Street, Chico, CA  95928
PO Box 3420, Chico, CA  95927

From: Dexter O'Connell
Sent: Friday, November 22, 2019 1:19 PM
To: Brendan Vieg <brendan.vieg@Chicoca.gov>
Subject: Excessive Parking -- AR 19-24 (Creekside Place)

Brendan,

The Creekside Place development has a parking requirement of 50 spaces, but is proposed with 129 spaces. The extra spaces are to serve guests (guest parking is not required for senior housing proposals, if this was a multi-family proposal it would require 20 guest spaces) and for the large number of staff who will be present to provide wraparound supportive services to the residents in this permanent supportive housing complex.

CMC Section 19.70.040.F states in part that “[P]arking spaces which exceed the minimum number of spaces required by more than 35 percent may be administratively approved by the Director when a combination of additional landscaping, pedestrian/bicycle improvements, and/or pervious surfaces are provided above those required by this chapter.” The additional landscaping (significantly more and higher-quality trees are proposed for the site than would be required) and bicycle improvements (reconfiguration of the path with increased crosswalk safety improvements) provided, as well as the need for the parking for staff providing wraparound services appear to make this a good candidate for approval of the excessive spaces.

If you agree, would you approve this excessive parking? I’d be happy to provide more information. I’ve attached the site and landscape plans.

Thanks,
Dexter