



## PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

### STAFF REPORT

**DATE:** JULY 28, 2020

**TO:** DESIGN COMMISSION

**FROM:** DAVID M. REYES, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**SUBJECT:** APPLICATION FOR FINAL DESIGN REVIEW  
NEW SIX-STORY MIXED-USE PROJECT WITH 54 RESIDENTIAL UNITS,  
100,898 SQUARE FEET OF OFFICE SPACE, 7,852 SQUARE FEET OF  
RETAIL SALES AND 3,540 SQUARE FEET OF RESTAURANT  
83 N. LAKE AVENUE

---

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Design Commission review the applicant's submittal and this report and determine whether the submitted design adequately responds to the Commission's conditions of approval from the February 11, 2020 Concept Design Review and is consistent with the applicable design guidelines. If the Commission determines that the project meets the findings for approval, staff recommends the following findings and conditions:

#### **Environmental Determination**

Affirm that the application for Concept Design Review was subject to environmental review in the Categorical Exemption adopted by the Planning Commission for Conditional Use Permit #6658 on October 23, 2019, and that there are no changed circumstances or new information which would require further environmental review.

#### **Findings for Compliance with the Tree Protection Ordinance**

Acknowledge that there are no protected trees on the project site.

#### **Findings for Final Design Approval**

1. Find that the project, upon implementation of the conditions of Final Design Review approval, will comply with the conditions of Concept Design Review;

2. Find that the proposed deviations from the maximum setback requirements at the corner of Lake Avenue and Union Street are necessary to improve pedestrian character at that location;
3. Find that the project, upon implementation of the conditions of Final Design Review approval, will be consistent with the purposes of design review, the design-related goals and policies in the Land Use Element of the General Plan and the Design Guidelines in the Central District Specific Plan; and,
4. Based on these findings, approve the application for Final Design Review subject to the following conditions, which shall be subject to staff review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit unless otherwise stated:

**Conditions:**

1. The walls flanking the vehicular driveway along Union Street and the area to the east of the communicating stairs shall be further softened using landscape, materials, colors or other means proposed by the design team.
2. Create a direct pedestrian connection from the southern end of the second-level courtyard to the residential amenity/pool deck. This connection may be access-controlled and any such access control shall be subject to further staff review of design details and specifications prior to issuance of a building permit.
3. Further reduce the scale of the vehicular access portal along Hudson Avenue.
4. Further study means of articulating the massing of the residential building, including the possibility of accentuating the articulation created by the use of recessed balconies.
5. All visible soffits, including at balconies, shall either be in the same material as the adjacent wall surface/fascia or be painted to match the material as closely as possible.
6. Study the inclusion of shade structures at the fifth level office terrace.
7. The window details shall include callouts to indicate proposed recess dimensions. All windows shall be recessed a minimum of 2" from the exterior building wall surfaces and floor plate edges.
8. The main office lobby and commercial entry frame elements shall be clad on all sides in a single material. Consider differentiating the materials of the main office lobby frame from the commercial entry frames.
9. Provide additional details of the method of attachment of the fiber-cement panels to the building at the lower volume of the office building. The edges of the proposed solid panels shall be concealed to the greatest extent feasible. Concealment methods may include terminating the panels at the floor and ceiling plates and integrating them into the storefront framing on the sides or, if intended to slightly project from the façade,

incorporating a framing device from the panel manufacturer. Other methods may be proposed by the design team for staff review and approval.

10. Mechanical venting shall be directed to the roof to the greatest extent feasible. If through-the-wall vents are required for mechanical ventilation, their locations shall be depicted on the building elevations and they shall be arranged in a clear and logical pattern on the façade and not placed on street-facing elevations. Provide materials specifications and architectural details of the mechanical vent covers to ensure a high-quality, integrated installation (i.e., no exposed flashing).
11. Provide details of overflow drainage for the balconies and terraces to ensure that scuppers are either avoided (preferred) or, if required, carefully integrated into the design of the building and are high quality.
12. Any mechanical equipment, piping, conduit, utilities or other similar features within the parking entry portals shall be screened from public view and any publicly visible walls or ceiling of the portals shall be finished in a high quality manner that is consistent with the design and finishes of the building.
13. Approval of a Master Sign Plan shall be required prior to installation of any project-identification, wayfinding or commercial signage on the building.
14. Revise the demolition plan to clearly depict the retention of all existing street trees.
15. The project shall comply with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and any changes to the proposed landscape design that may be required shall be reviewed and approved by staff prior to issuance of a building permit.
16. A copy of this decision letter, including written responses to each condition indicating how and where they are addressed in the building plans, shall be included in the plans submitted for building permit plan check.
17. The lighting temperature specified on the final plans shall not rise above 3,000 kelvin for all proposed exterior fixtures. Replacement lighting elements should be regulated by maintenance staff in the future.
18. An 8' x 8' minimum mock-up panel of the buildings' finishes shall be provided and reviewed by staff prior to installation of exterior materials.
19. Prior to issuance of a building permit, submit to staff written confirmation from utility providers (Pasadena Water & Power and The Gas Company) that the utility equipment shown on the plans is sufficient to meet the demands of the project and that the locations shown in the plans are approved.
20. This project will be subject to 50%, 75%, and 100% inspection points and sign-off by staff of the Design & Historic Preservation section to ensure that the project is constructed as indicated and specified in the decision letter and that all work is performed consistent with the approved plans.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The application presents design revisions in response to the conditions of approval from the previous Concept Design Review phase in addition to providing more detailed plans, elevations, sections and color and material information for the project. The current drawings are more fully detailed and present a palette of materials that is consistent with the design of the building. Upon reviewing the drawings in detail, staff is concerned that all of the conditions of approval from Concept Design Review may not have been met and recommends that the Commission review the project, consider the applicant's presentation and, if satisfied with the final design, staff recommends approval of the application with the conditions of approval outlined above and explained within this report.

## **BACKGROUND:**

On February 11, 2020, the Design Commission approved an application for Concept Design Review for construction of a new six-story mixed-use project with 54 residential units, 100,898 square feet of office space, 7,852 square feet of retail sales and 3,540 square feet of restaurant at 83 N. Lake Avenue. This application is for Final Design Review of the same project.

## **Project Overview**

- General Plan Designation: High Commercial (0 – 3.00 FAR)
- Zoning: CD-5 (Central District Specific Plan, Lake Avenue Subdistrict)
- Design Guidelines: The applicable design guidelines are the design-related goals and policies in the Land Use Element of the General Plan and the Design Guidelines in the Central District Specific Plan.
- Site: The site is comprised of a single approximately one acre lot at the southwest corner of N. Lake Avenue and E. Union Street. A portion of the site extends to South Hudson Avenue. The property is irregular in shape and is currently developed with two one-story restaurant buildings and a one-story multi-tenant commercial building within a surface parking lot. A tree inventory provided with the application identifies six street trees along the perimeter of the site, eight non-protected trees on the project site, one non-protected shared-ownership tree and seven non-protected off-site trees in close proximity to the project site.
- Surroundings: Surrounding properties include several multi-story office buildings between 9 and 11 stories in height as well as lower-scaled commercial and residential buildings and surface parking lots. The nearest historic resources to the project site are the Constance Hotel at 940 E. Colorado Boulevard and Robinson's Department Store (now Target) at 777 E. Colorado Boulevard, immediately across Hudson Avenue from the project site.
- Project Description: The project involves demolition of all existing buildings; removal of all on-site trees, five off-site trees and one shared ownership tree (all non-protected); and construction of a six-story mixed-use project in two separate building volumes over a

common elevated podium. Parking would be provided in three subterranean levels and at-grade behind ground-level commercial spaces and the residential lobbies.

- Site Design: The project is designed with a continuous elevated podium level over the entire site with two building volumes extending above it, separated by a linear courtyard space extending from Union Street on the north end to the southerly property line. The easterly office/commercial building volume is proposed to extend to 90' in height using height averaging (previously approved by the Design Commission during Concept Design Review) and the westerly residential building volume is proposed to be 75' in height. The portion extending to Hudson Avenue is proposed to have a podium-level pool deck and, at the street edge, a two-story residential amenity building with a second vehicular access portal.
- Architectural Style: Contemporary
- Developer: Singpoli BD Development, LLC
- Architect: Adept Architecture
- Landscape Architect: Korn Randolph Landscape Architecture

**ANALYSIS:**

**Conditions of Concept Design Review:**

Below are the Commission's conditions of approval and recommendation from Concept Design Review for the project, as well as the architect's responses and staff's comments. See Attachment A for the complete set of revised plans, elevations, wall sections, architectural details and materials specifications and imagery.

Concept Design Review Conditions, February 11, 2020:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
1. The building massing along Lake Avenue shall be further broken down into sub-volumes that more closely align with the average unbroken building façade lengths along the street. The massing of the residential building shall also be further articulated in a manner more consistent with the design previously proposed during Preliminary Consultation. The logic of the materiality shall also be further studied to respond to the articulation of the massing.	"Due to the program restrictions for creative offices, it's not ideal to break the building mass into separated sub-volumes. Therefore, we tried to resolve this issue by adding architectural features that would help to articulate the facades. Architectural fins with 2 different colors are added in a pixelated manner to break up the rigidity of the storefront system. Window frames pop-outs are also added to break the linear length of the building facade on Lake. The residential building was also further articulated to speak with the language of the commercial building. Materiality has been studied to	The massing and architectural character of the office building does not appear to have substantially changed since the approval of Concept Design Review and staff is concerned that this condition has not been satisfactorily addressed in a manner that would ensure massing articulation that corresponds more closely to the surrounding context.  Additional articulation appears to have been incorporated into the massing of the residential

<b>Concept Design Review Conditions, February 11, 2020:</b>	<b>Architect Responses</b>	<b>Staff Comment:</b>
	<p>enhance the pixelated manner of the facades. Please see perspective views, page 108 &amp; 110.”</p>	<p>building, although it does not appear to be as significantly articulated as was originally depicted during Preliminary Consultation. Staff recommends that the applicant continue to study ways to accentuate the massing articulation created by the use of stacked recessed balconies, perhaps by differentiating or breaking the roofline at these locations. In addition, while the building appears in elevation to incorporate extensive in-plane materials transitions rather than transitions that correspond to the building massing, the wall sections and details provided depict the areas of light grey plaster being furred out from the remaining wall surfaces, creating a greater feeling of depth on the facade. Staff has recommended a condition requiring further study of the massing articulation of the residential building, which, upon implementation, will satisfactorily address the residential portion of this condition. Staff is concerned that the massing articulation of the office building is not sufficient to satisfy the office portion of the condition and recommends that the Commission review the applicant’s presentation to determine if the architectural features implemented by the design team are sufficient to meet the intent of the condition. If found to be sufficient, staff</p>

Concept Design Review Conditions, February 11, 2020:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
		has provided findings and conditions for approval of the project.
<p>2. Revise the design of the main lobby entrance to the office building to make it more prominent in terms of size, articulation and use of materials.</p>	<p>“The main Lobby entrance was revised to be more prominent than other entries. Please see East elevation, page 38 and perspective view 1, page 109.”</p>	<p>The redesign creates a frame around the lobby entry that breaks the continuous banding at the first floor ceiling line. Above this is a large projecting window element that spans across the fourth and fifth floors and also gives prominence to the lobby location. Staff finds that this condition has been satisfactorily addressed.</p>
<p>3. Further define the design of the proposed ground-level box frames, including how they will interact with the proposed band between the first and second floors. In addition, provide a similar feature at the commercial entry on Union Street and consider projecting the upper portion of the frames as a canopy on which signage could be installed.</p>	<p>“Ground-level has been re-designed per Design Commission’s recommendation to open streetscape corner at Lake/Union to be more consistent with the design previously proposed in the Preliminary Design. The mass at ground-level is pushed in to allow seating areas at the corner of Union &amp; Lake and Union frontage. The ground floor mass on Lake were also recessed in to allow the 2nd floor slab to cantilever out so that signage could be installed. This move also created a balcony for the 2nd floor on Lake facade, breaking the vertical mass of the building. See Signage proposal, page 48, and perspective view 1&amp;2, page 109.”</p>	<p>The redesign of the ground floor of the building is a strong improvement to the building’s design. The projecting floor slab, as well as the continuous glazing at the second floor, creates a clear base element to the building and the framing and signage panels at each commercial tenant entry location are more unified on both street frontages. Staff finds that this condition has been satisfactorily addressed.</p>
<p>4. Revise the design of the vehicular access portal and communicating stair along Union Street to ensure that it is designed with high-quality finishes that unify the designs of the building volumes that flank it and integrate this zone into the overall design of the project.</p>	<p>“Please see 3D view on the cover page, or perspective view page 27 and view 5, page 110.”</p>	<p>The specific design elements of this zone were difficult to determine during Concept Design Review and the current drawings bring more clarity to the proposal, which incorporates materials that are utilized in the design of the buildings as well as landscaping along the top edges. The large walls flanking the vehicular entry appear somewhat stark in the revised design and staff has recommended a</p>

Concept Design Review Conditions, February 11, 2020:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
		condition of approval requiring these walls to be softened using landscape, materials, colors or other means proposed by the design team. An additional staff-recommended condition requires the publicly visible area within the parking structure to be finished to match surrounding surfaces and to avoid or screen views of utilities, piping and equipment that may be installed in this area. With these conditions implemented, staff finds that this condition will be satisfactorily addressed.
5. Incorporate into the Lake Avenue elevation the accent panels proposed on the north, west and south elevations of the office building volume.	“The office building is read as 2 masses merging together with one of the masses slightly rotated. The facades of these 2 masses are meant to reflect 2 architectural features of 2 separated volumes that comes together. Therefore, the taller mass is designed with fins on the facades and the lower mass is designed with accent panels on its facades.”	The previous design appeared to include both fins and accent panels on the lower-height volume of the office building while the taller volume had fins only. The intent of the condition was to ensure an appropriate design logic to the building. While the design team has not addressed the letter of the condition, it has addressed the intent by further differentiating the two volumes. As such, staff finds that this condition has been satisfactorily addressed.
6. Create a direct pedestrian connection from the southern end of the second-level courtyard to the residential amenity/pool deck.	“The Pool Deck is meant for residential uses only. Therefore, it should remain private and not have public access from the second-level courtyard.”	The intent of this condition was to create a more direct path to the residential courtyard for use by the residents, which was not restricted from the inclusion of access control measures that would limit its use to the residents only. As this required connection has not been made, the condition has not been addressed

Concept Design Review Conditions, February 11, 2020:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
		and staff recommends that it be repeated in this decision, with the additional clarification that it may be access-controlled.
7. Clarify the design of the proposed balconies on the residential building (i.e., recessed vs. projecting) and ensure that the floor plans and elevations are consistent with one another regarding the balcony configuration.	“Floor plans and elevations have been revised to be consistent. Balconies on the East and West elevations are recessed balconies. Balconies on the front units (on Union St) and the back units area projecting.”	The floor plans and elevations are consistent with each other and the balcony configuration is more clearly and accurately represented in the current drawings. As such, this condition has been satisfactorily addressed.
8. Further study means of reducing the scale of the vehicular access portal along Hudson Avenue.	“See perspective views page 27, and elevations page 42.”	The redesign of this opening retains the overall size and incorporates an articulated lower ceiling element within the opening. While this new feature helps to break down the size of the opening, it remains over scaled at the street edge. Staff recommends that this condition be repeated in this decision to require further reduction in the overall scale of the opening.
9. Extensive details and physical samples of the proposed metal cladding material shall be required to be submitted for review during Final Design Review. Details shall include application methodology and treatment of corners, edges and transitions to stucco walls. The material shall be a manufactured, insulated system that has demonstrated high performance in similar applications and that will not produce oil-canning effects.	“See page 44-46 for the proposed exterior materials. There will be no metal cladding. All fins, accent panels and vertical sidings will be fiber cement boards.”	With the removal of the previously proposed metal cladding, this condition has been satisfactorily addressed.

<b>Concept Design Review Conditions, February 11, 2020:</b>	<b>Architect Responses</b>	<b>Staff Comment:</b>
<p>10. Further study the addition of appropriate amenities within the shared residential/office courtyard space. In addition, study the inclusion of shade structures at the fifth level office terrace.</p>	<p>“The courtyard space is intended for public use and for office use. There should be no share amenities between the residential and the office due to privacy and security purposes. The Pool deck will be the residential designated amenities.”</p>	<p>The hardscape plan for this courtyard space on sheet 104 depicts a row of semi-circular seat-walls surrounding circular planters proposed to be planted with 36” box Brisbane Box trees or 10’ brown trunk Date Palm trees along the west side of the courtyard. In addition, a row of tables and chairs is proposed along the east side of the courtyard. These amenities are appropriate for the shared space between the residential and office buildings. The fifth floor office terrace is shown with seating, a tree and landscape planters and a water feature with no shade structures proposed. The applicant’s response does not indicate whether or not this was studied. To ensure the usability of this space, staff recommends repeating this portion of the condition of approval in this decision.</p>
<p>11. The proposal to remove existing street trees is subject to separate review by the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee and approval by the City Manager. If the request is not approved, and changes to the approved concept design are required to accommodate the existing trees, an application for Changes to an Approved Project will be required to be reviewed prior to submittal of an application for Final Design Review.</p>	<p>“While considerations initially made to remove Street Trees 3, 4 and 6, as indicated on the Arborist Report (page 13 &amp; 14) by Carlberg, this direction has since been reconsidered and all street trees will remain. See page 15.”</p>	<p>Since all street trees are now proposed to remain, this condition has been satisfactorily addressed.</p>

Concept Design Review Conditions, February 11, 2020:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
12. Break the cornice/roof line with a fifth floor terrace to reduce the building façade mass fronting Lake Avenue.	“The facade mass fronting Lake Ave belongs to the taller mass volume. It would break the architectural design concept of having 2 volumes merged together if we break the cornice/roof line with the fifth floor terrace.”	This condition has not been addressed, as described in the applicant’s response. Staff recommends that the Commission review the applicant’s presentation to determine whether the findings for approval of the application can be made. If so, staff has provided findings and conditions for approval.
13. Removal of the vertical fins on the second-floor of the office building is preferred.	“Vertical fins are removed on the 2nd floor.”	This condition has been satisfactorily addressed.

Concept Design Review Recommendation, February 11, 2020:	Architect Responses	Staff Comment:
1. Explore arcades or other means to open the streetscape corner at Lake/Union, more in keeping with the Preliminary Consultation.	No response.	The design has been modified to deeply recess the storefronts at the Lake/Union corner. As such, this recommendation has been implemented.

**Materials & Colors:**

**Office Building**

The office building is comprised of two intersecting volumes– a six-story volume along Lake Avenue (“higher volume”) and a four-story volume that surrounds the six-story volume on the north, west and south sides (“lower volume”). The higher volume has a continuously glazed ground floor (Arcadia aluminum storefronts in dark bronze color) with solid framing elements at each commercial entry and the main lobby entry. The materials of the entry frames are called out as dark bronze plaster (custom color to match the storefront framing) with brown fiber-cement cladding (Trespa Meteon “Roman Bronze” or equivalent) on the interior surfaces. Minimal solid bulkheads are shown in the elevations at the base of the storefronts to address sloping conditions; the materials of the bulkheads are not specified, but appear to be concrete. The second floor of this volume has continuous storefront glazing with an exposed concrete band painted dark bronze to match the storefront framing and a glass railing at the floor plate. The third through sixth floors also have continuous storefront glazing with some thin areas of translucent glass, projecting exposed concrete floor plates (shown thinner than the second floor plate), randomly placed projecting fiber-cement fins in white and brown colors (Trespa Meteon “Athens White” and “Roman Bronze” or equivalent) and framed areas of glazing that project out slightly beyond the edge of the extended floor plates. These glazed projections are shown framed in dark bronze plaster; most of them are shown spanning a single floor and one, which is placed above the main lobby entry on the east elevation, spans two floors. The roof edge is proposed to be exposed concrete painted light grey.

Wall sections and details indicate that, within this volume, windows are deeply inset from the edges of the floor plates, although specific dimensions are not noted, and projecting fins are also proposed to slightly extend beyond the floor plates and connect to storefront mullions. The parapet is also shown set back from the roof edge plate in line with the window recesses and shown with a metal cap. The commercial and main lobby entry frame details on sheets 64 and 65 show fiber-cement panels within the interior of the frame wrapping to the fascia for 2", transitioning in-plane to plaster (9 1/2") with a 1/2" reveal between the two materials. The projecting, framed window boxes at the upper floors of this volume are detailed on sheet 67 and show the concrete frames projecting slightly from the floor plates, the windows slightly recessed from the frame edges, and butt-joint windows within the frames connected with spider connectors. Glass railings are shown inset into the concrete floor plate and consisting of 1/2"-thick tempered glass with no top rail.

Related to the detailing of this volume, staff recommends conditions requiring inclusion of window recess dimensions on the building plans (with a minimum 2" recess throughout the project) as well as utilizing a single material to wrap the commercial and main lobby entry frames for a cleaner, simpler installation, avoiding an in-plane materials transition along the outer fascia. To further differentiate the main lobby entry from the other commercial entries, consideration should be given to differentiating the main lobby frame materials from the commercial frame materials; however, because the main lobby is already differentiated by other means, staff does not recommend requiring this change as a condition of approval.

The lower volume has similar design features to the higher volume including continuous storefront glazing, exposed concrete floor plates, and commercial entry framing elements. As previously noted, the ground floor storefronts are deeply recessed at the corner of Lake Avenue & Union Street and exposed concrete supports forming an arcade are introduced in this location. In lieu of the projecting fins and glazing elements that are included on the higher volume, the lower volume incorporates randomly placed solid fiber-cement panels with a mixed wood tone finish (James Hardie smooth panels in a mix of "Monterey Taupe," "Cobble Stone," "Mansion Tan," and "Sun Tint" or equivalent), except at the second floor of the west and north elevations adjoining the shared central courtyard at that level. These panels are shown terminating at the exposed concrete floor plates at the bottoms of the panels and covering the floor plates at the tops of the panels, except at the lowest floor plate and roofline. The roof edge is proposed to be exposed concrete painted dark grey.

Wall sections and details provided indicate that the window frames in this volume are set flush with the floor plates and wall panels are applied to solid wall surfaces and sit slightly proud of the edges of the floor plates. Related to the detailing of this volume, staff recommends conditions requiring additional attachment details be provided of the fiber-cement panels and that the edges of the panels be concealed, either by terminating them at floor and ceiling plates or, if intended to slightly project from the façade, with integrated frames from the panel manufacturer. As noted previously, staff also recommends a condition requiring all windows to be recessed a minimum of 2" from the exterior building edges.

## **Residential Building**

The residential building is proposed to be clad in a combination of dark bronze (custom color to

match storefront framing), white (La Habra “Dove Grey”), and brown (custom color to match the bronze fiber-cement panels) smooth plaster and mixed wood tone color fiber-cement cladding described above. On the north elevation facing Union Street, the use of Dove Grey plaster is limited to thin framing devices that divide the façade into areas exclusively clad in fiber-cement cladding and areas of mixed dark plaster colors and fiber-cement cladding. These framing devices are also used on the south elevation; however, the application of cladding is more regimented in these areas rather than being mixed, and Dove Grey plaster is also used on this elevation to coat a larger wall area. The east and west elevations are largely shown clad in the proposed fiber-cement cladding with a repeating pattern of wide, medium and thin white plaster areas applied vertically and connected horizontally at the second and sixth floor plates. Within these white-plaster-framed areas there are also wall surfaces clad in the proposed mixed wood tone fiber-cement panels as well as the darker plaster colors that are part of the proposed materials palette. Aluminum-clad wood windows by Andersen are proposed as well as both glass and solid-plaster balcony guardrails. On the west elevation, two circulation towers near the north and south ends of the building are shown coated in dark bronze plaster.

Wall sections and details of this building are included on sheets 70-80. The wall sections depict the wall areas clad in Dove Grey stucco being furred out slightly from the remaining walls of the building. Although not dimensioned, the offset appears to be approximately 4-6” in depth. A wall section at one of the areas of stacked recessed balconies shows the wall area at the top of the building being clad in fiber-cement panels and transitioning to a stucco soffit at an outside corner, which is generally an undesirable location for a transition in materials. As previously noted, staff has recommended a condition requiring further study of the massing articulation of the residential building, including the possibility of breaking the roofline at the recessed balconies and this materials transition further emphasizes the need for this to be further studied. Stepping the wall plane back to the recessed wall and incorporating a thinner canopy element or pergola for shade could address both issues. Staff has also recommended a condition requiring the material of the exposed soffit be the same material as the adjacent wall surface or painted to match.

Wall sections and details of the amenity building along N. Hudson Avenue are provided on sheets 81-83. Staff has no concerns with respect to the detailing of this building, other than further reducing the scale of the parking portal as previously noted.

### **Mechanical Screening:**

The roof plans of the two buildings depict placement of mechanical systems on the roofs of the building, with a screening system of perforated metal panels deeply inset from all building edges. The Ground Level Plan on sheet 20 depicts the locations of an electrical vault access within the driveway from Union Street and a Fire Department connection/backflow device at the southeast corner of the site, integrated into a stair and ramp at that location. Gas and electric meters are proposed to be placed in a utility room under the communicating stair from Union Street to the shared courtyard, accessed from the east side. Mechanical vents are not depicted on the building elevations. For a building of this size, it is unlikely that all vents will be able to be routed to the roof; however, if that is possible under the Building Code, it would be the preferred design. In the event that through-the wall vents are required, staff recommends a condition requiring them to be depicted in a clear and logical pattern on the elevations and not located on street-facing elevations as well as provision of vent cap details to ensure quality, integrated

finishing of the caps.

Roof drainage is shown within the building walls; therefore, there would be no exposed gutters or downspouts on the building. Both buildings incorporate solid railings at balconies and decks which will require provision of primary and overflow drainage. As the method of draining these balconies is not indicated, and the inclusion of overflow scuppers would interrupt the design of the balcony rails, staff has recommended a condition requiring provision of balcony drainage details, with overflow drainage being integrated into the design and avoiding visible scuppers to the greatest extent feasible.

### **Landscaping:**

Hardscape and landscaping plans have been provided for the project, on sheets 92-95 (landscape) and 104-106 (hardscape). The design includes minimal space for ground-level plantings; however, where there is space, planters with drought-tolerant shrubs and grasses are strategically incorporated including at all pedestrian entries to the office building, surrounding the arcade at the corner of Lake Avenue and Union Street, adjacent to the west edge of the Union Street driveway and at the northwest corner. Planter details on sheet 69 depict them being made of concrete and painted.

At the western edge of the shared podium-level courtyard between the two buildings, two rows of trees are proposed along with integrated seating. The easterly row of trees is proposed to be 36" box Brisbane Box trees or 10'-high brown trunk Date Palm trees and the westerly row is proposed to be 36" box Purple Robe Black Locust trees. Also at this level, planters containing shrubs and grasses are proposed along the perimeter of the vehicular entry portal, at the northern end of the courtyard, and along the edge of the residential building. Hardscape in this area is proposed to consist of 24" square porcelain pavers by Tile Tech in "Earth Tone Series" color with a circular area of accent paving at the north end being in "Wood-Plank Series" color in the same size and by the same manufacturer. The perimeter walkway surrounding the residential building and the outer edges of the residential courtyard/pool area are proposed to be covered in a cement decking system with a stamped tile pattern by MACoat in a color to match the "Earth Tone" series pavers utilized in the shared courtyard. Adjacent to the pool, the same system, but in a color matching the "Wood-Plank Series" porcelain tiles are proposed. At the residential courtyard/pool area, plantings are proposed along the north, south and east edges and include 10, 15-gallon Eastern Redbud trees, three 36" box Brisbane Box trees or 10'-high brown trunk Date Palm trees as well as multiple shrubs and grasses.

At the fifth-level office terrace, a row of rectangular planters is proposed along the west side as well as a planter surrounding a skylight at the eastern side toward the southern end of the terrace. A 36" Swan Hill Olive tree is also proposed to be planted in a circular planter at the southern end of the terrace. Proposed hardscape at this terrace consists of MACoat decking system in three colors – "Sandy Beige" over most of the area, "Anchor Gray" at the western edge and a wood plank finish in a circular area adjacent to the proposed tree planter at the southern end of the terrace. As noted in the responses to comments above, all three terraces include appropriate amenities for their intended use, including tables and chairs and seat walls in the shared podium-level terrace, a swimming pool, spa and associated seating at the residential courtyard and tables and chairs at the fifth-level office terrace. Overall, the proposed landscape and hardscape scheme and materials are appropriate for the uses on the site and

the architectural style and materials palette of the buildings. As noted previously, staff has recommended a condition of approval requiring additional softening of the side walls of the parking entry portal from Union Street and the area to the east of the communicating stair in this location, which may include additional landscaping.

The demolition plan on sheet 16 appears to indicate the removal of two street trees adjacent to the proposed vehicular driveway; however, other sheets in the plans depict these trees remaining and the applicant has also stated in response to Condition 11 of Concept Design Review approval that all street trees are proposed to remain. As such, staff recommends a condition of approval requiring the demolition plan to clearly depict retention of all existing street trees. The Department of Public Works has incorporated conditions of approval regarding street tree protection during construction into the approved Conditional Use Permit for the project. None of the private trees proposed to be removed from the site are protected by the City's Tree Protection Ordinance. As the City has adopted a Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, the planting plans will require review for compliance with this ordinance during plan check.

### **Lighting:**

Detailed lighting plans and specifications are provided on sheets 97-102. Proposed fixtures include short circular bollard lights, round ceiling lights and rectangular, angled wall sconces, all in dark bronze color by Bega Lighting. Subject to the standard condition regarding lighting temperature not rising above 3,000 Kelvin, the lighting fixtures proposed are high quality and consistent with the design of the buildings.

### **Signage:**

Conceptual signage plans are provided on sheet 48. Proposed signage is designed with individual letters and includes soffit-suspended panels for commercial tenant signage, address signage at the office lobby entrance attached to a window mullion, a freestanding sign at the corner of Lake Avenue and Union Street, bicycle and vehicular parking signs, address signs and small office and residential lobby signs. Because the Zoning Code requires design review for signs on all new development projects, staff recommends that this requirement be reinforced with a condition of approval requiring a Master Sign Plan.

### **Comments from Other Departments & Environmental Review:**

The Planning Commission approved Conditional Use Permit #6658 for this project on October 23, 2019. Both interdepartmental review and environmental review pursuant to CEQA occurred in conjunction with the Conditional Use Permit entitlement process. The design presented is substantially the same as was provided for the Conditional Use Permit review; therefore, no further environmental review is required for this application. Staff routed the plans submitted for this review to the Current Planning Section to confirm Zoning Code compliance and the project was found to be out of compliance with two Zoning Code development standards related to minimum commercial depth along Union Street and maximum setbacks along both Union Street and Lake Avenue in conjunction with the proposed corner arcade at the ground floor. Regarding the commercial depth requirement, the Zoning Code allows the Zoning Administrator to waive this requirement on side streets and, as part of this review, the Zoning Administrator has waived this requirement.

With respect to the setbacks at the corner of Lake Avenue and Union Street, the project requires granting by the Design Commission of setback exceptions, as allowed in the Central District Specific Plan. The setbacks of the building exceed the maximum allowed by the Zoning Code on both street frontages. The Zoning Code permits deviations from setbacks pursuant to §17.30.050.A and a corresponding Zoning Administrator interpretation, which allow alternative setbacks in situations where pedestrian character or street wall continuity would be improved or to provide a well-designed pedestrian paseo and/or to protect the character of an architecturally significant building or landscape.

The proposed setbacks along Lake Avenue and Union Street are intended to allow for a covered arcade feature at the prominent corner location as well as potentially providing space for outdoor dining. These setbacks would be consistent with improving pedestrian character at this location and are responsive to the Design Commission's Concept Design Review recommendation, "Explore arcades or other means to open the streetscape corner at Lake/Union, more in keeping with the Preliminary Consultation." Staff recommends that the setback exceptions be approved as proposed.

**CONCLUSION:**

It is staff's conclusion that the current submittal does not address all of the conditions of approval from the Commission's approval of Concept Design Review. Staff has provided 20 recommended conditions that, if complied with, would satisfy most of the conditions of Concept Design Review and ensure consistency with the applicable design guidelines. The applicant believes that their submittal does address the issues and they will provide their responses at the hearing. Staff recommends that the Commission review the submitted application and this report and, if it determines that the applicants have substantially addressed the comments provided, staff's recommended findings and conditions have been provided. The Commission may elect to include these conditions or modify as necessary after hearing from staff and the applicant.

Respectfully submitted,



\_\_\_\_\_  
David M. Reyes  
Director of Planning & Community Development  
Department

Prepared by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Johnson, Senior Planner

Reviewed by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Leon E. White, Principal Planner

Design Commission  
Final Design Review – 83 N. Lake Avenue  
July 28, 2020  
Page 17 of 17

Attachment:

- A. Applicant submittal package including plans, elevations, details, materials and responses to Concept Design Review conditions