

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of July 1, 2025

**SUBJECT: 1208 South University Site Plan for Planning Commission Approval  
Project No. SP25-0029**

### **PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission approves the 1208 South University Site Plan version 4, dated May 30, 2025, and recommends approval of the Development Agreement.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the **site plan** be **approved**, because the contemplated development will comply with all applicable state, local, and federal law, ordinances, standards, and regulations, and the development limits the disturbance of natural features to the minimum necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission additionally **recommend approval** of the **Development Agreement**.

### **SUMMARY:**

#### Site Plan Proposal:

- Current proposal is for an 18-story building: 259 dwelling units, 959 bedrooms and 5,189 sf retail
  - Previous site plan approved for this location in August 2024 for a 17-story building, 186 dwelling units, 716 bedrooms and 4,600 sf retail
- Currently two-story mixed-use (retail/office) on south side of South University between Church St and Forest Ave
- Project includes leasing office, elevator lobby, utility rooms, bicycle storage, trash room, amenity space, and fitness space
- Apartments to range from micro/studio to six bedrooms (3<sup>rd</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> floors)
- 18<sup>th</sup> floor includes a pool, outdoor amenity space, restrooms
- Stormwater collection proposed via underground detention chamber



*Figure 1: Location Map*

#### Zoning:

- D1 Downtown Core, South University overlay
- 30% height bonus (sustainability/electrification)

Sustainability

- Natural gas connection for emergency generator only
- Rooftop solar coverage: approximately 15,000 sf of solar panels
- LEED Gold equivalent design

Parking:

- 83 parking spaces (72 EV-Capable, 11 EV-Installed)
- 29 on first floor, 54 on 2nd floor accessed through rear driveway

Design Review Board:

- Reviewed plans December 11, 2024
- Site plan consistent with design plan

Citizen Participation:

- Community meeting held December 10, 2024
- Invites sent to residents/property owners within 1,000 ft

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PETITION:**

The applicant seeks site plan approval to construct an eighteen-story residential building providing 259 dwelling units totaling 959 bedrooms. The ground floor houses the leasing office, elevator lobby, utility rooms, bicycle storage and trash room, amenity space and 5,189 square feet of retail space. The second floor will contain parking and from the third floor up to the eighteenth floor, apartments ranging from micro/studio up to six bedrooms are proposed. In addition to the apartment units, the eighteenth floor will also contain a pool with amenity space and a fitness room.

The project utilizes the 30% height bonus available when a sustainable component is provided, and complete electrification is achieved. The building will be all-electric and only utilize a natural gas connection for an emergency generator. Solar panels will cover almost 15,000 sf of the rooftop surface satisfying the sustainable component requirement. The petitioner has obtained a copy of a will-serve electric capacity letter from DTE. Sufficient capacity does exist to support an all-electric building.

The development also includes a total of 83 vehicle spaces, 29 on the ground level and 54 on the second floor, this includes EV-Capable (72 spaces) and EV-Installed (11 spaces). Parking and solid waste facilities will be accessed from the rear alley. The site is in the D1 Downtown Core zoning district and South University character overlay district and has Primary Street frontage designations. The total amount of Floor Area is 435,991-sq feet or 1,338%.

Storm water is proposed to be collected primarily through roof drains with limited surface collection. The roof conductors and surface drains will be routed to a detention chamber located under the proposed building. This underground tank is designed for full infiltration. There are no natural features or Landmark Trees located on the site.



Fig 2 (above): excerpt from ground level site plan



Fig 3 (above): rendering of proposed development from South University

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS REVIEW:**

The proposed site plan complies with all applicable development review standards of the D1 Downtown core zoning district, South University Character overlay district, and Primary Street designation provided in Chapter 55 Unified Development Code.

	<b>PROPOSED</b>	<b>APPROVED 2024 PLAN</b>	<b>REQUIRED/PERMITTED</b>
<b>Lot Area</b>	32,595 sq ft (.75 acre)	25,300 sq ft (.6 acre)	No MIN
<b>Floor Area</b>	435,991 sq ft	324,590 sq ft	Not applicable
<b>Streetwall Height</b>	3 stories	3 stories	2 stories MIN 3 stories MAX
<b>Offset at Top of Streetwall</b>	5 ft	5 ft	5 ft AVG
<b>Building Height</b>	195 ft	195 ft	195 ft MAX: 150 ft plus 30% (45 ft) for sustainable component
<b>Setbacks Side</b>	0 ft East Side 0 ft West Side	0 ft East Side 0 ft West Side	0 ft MIN
<b>Front Setbacks</b>	0 ft	0 ft	0 ft MIN
<b>Rear Setbacks</b>	0 ft	0 ft	0 ft MIN
<b>Parking – Automobiles</b>	83 total; 11 EV-I and 72 EV-C	77 total; 8 EV-I and 69 EV-C	None (if installed, then 10% EV-I, 90% EV-C) With 83 spaces: 9 EV-I and 74 EV-C
<b>Parking – Bicycles</b>	157 Class A; 4 Class C (ROW)	125 Class A; 4 Class C (ROW)	115 - Class A

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:**

Design plans were presented to and discussed by the Design Review Board on December 11, 2024. Application materials can be found on the STREAM system at [stream.a2gov.org](http://stream.a2gov.org) for plan number DR24-0006 and the meeting packet materials including staff report can be found on the Legistar system at [a2gov.legistar.org](http://a2gov.legistar.org). The architectural drawings submitted as part of the site plan are consistent with the design plan discussed by the Design Review Board.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:**

The petitioner held a citizen/community participation meeting on December 10, 2024. Invitations were sent to all residents and property owners within 1,000 feet of the site. The applicant’s report of the meeting can be found on the STREAM system at [stream.a2gov.org](http://stream.a2gov.org) for plan number SP25-0029.

**HISTORY and SITE PLANNING:**

This site is currently used for basement and ground floor retail space with second floor offices. There is no parking provided on the site. There is currently pedestrian access through the building to the alley and parking structure to the rear. The site plan for the existing structure was approved in December 1985.

A mixed-use site plan for the 1208 South University parcel was approved in August 2024 by the Planning Commission. After that approval the petitioner acquired an adjacent property (610 S

Forest) and revised the project to expand the total building size, increase on-site parking and increase total units and bedrooms.

### **CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

Seven documents constitute the current Comprehensive Plan and are listed below. Taken together, the Comprehensive Plan seeks to guide the city towards a more dense, sustainable, safe and inclusive community.

- Land Use Element (2009)
- State Street Corridor Plan (2013)
- Downtown Plan (2009)
- Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (2016)
- Natural Features Master Plan (2004)
- Treeline Allen Creek Urban Trail Master Plan (2021)
- Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2021)

The Land Use Element denotes Downtown Core for future land use on this site and surrounding block. It also sets numerous goals and strategies for new buildings, infill and redevelopment that emphasize orderly transitions between areas of higher density or commercial use. The design and massing of new or redeveloped buildings should match the scale and character of the area.

Overall, the Comprehensive Plan supports increasing density to achieve the overarching goals of more housing, affordable housing, sustainable transportation, and making Ann Arbor a safe, inclusive and livable community.

### **SERVICE UNIT COMMENTS:**

Parks - The developer has agreed to make a parks contribution in the amount of \$161,875, reflected in the draft Development Agreement.

Planning – The project does have an approved and recorded Development Agreement from the previous approved project. A Development Agreement amendment is required for the revised voluntary parks contribution, required easements for access to the rear parking and solid waste facilities, as well as for improvements to the adjacent public plaza and public right-of-way along South Forest Avenue. If the site plan is approved by the Planning Commission, the Development Agreement amendment will proceed to City Council for approval.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA) – The private alley and plaza adjacent to 1208 South University shall be restored according to an updated design approved by the DDA. The South University Plaza Schematic Design is incorporated into the Dimensional Site and Landscape Plan. The DDA and City Staff have worked closely with the developer to create an approved plan for this area. The City and developer are agreeable to the final design details being worked out during the Civil and Building Permit process.

Prepared by Matt Kowalski, Principal Planner  
Reviewed by Hank Kelley, Deputy Planning Manager

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Attachments: Site Plan v.4, dated May 30, 2025  
Architectural Plans v.1, dated April 18, 2025  
Zoning Map  
Aerial Map  
First Amendment Development Agreement – June 2025 Draft  
[Additional Project Files \(STREAM\)](#)

c: Owner/Applicant – Landmark Properties (Tucker Snipes)  
Engineer – Midwestern Consulting (Scott Betzoldt)  
Architect – Myefski Architects (Josh Dawson)  
Project No. SP25-0029