

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of March 4, 2025

**SUBJECT: 1209 South University Avenue Site Plan for Planning Commission Approval
Project No. SP24-0020**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission approves the 1209 South University Avenue Site Plan dated January 31, 2025 subject to combining all lots prior to application for any permits, except demolition permits, and recommends approval of the Development Agreement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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

LOCATION:

This site is located at the northeast corner of South University Avenue and Church Street and includes 1201, 1209 and 1213 South University Avenue.

SUMMARY:

The applicant seeks site plan approval to construct a new 19-story mixed-use residential building with ground floor retail on a 0.39 acre site. The proposed development includes demolition of the existing retail buildings and reconstruction of the pedestrian corridor along Church Street and South University Avenue. The proposed project is located in the D1 (Downtown Core) base and South University Character overlay zoning districts with Primary Street type designation. The site is located in Ward 1.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

Existing Conditions – The 16,934 square foot site consists of three lots partially containing single-story commercial uses and empty lots. The existing buildings will be demolished and the three parcels will be combined.



Figure 1: Location Map

Proposed Development – The proposed development is a 19-story apartment building with ground floor commercial space. The proposed total gross floor area is 230,709 square feet. The development includes 183 new residential units totaling 625 bedrooms, targeted towards university students. One existing curb cut on South University Avenue will be relocated per an existing access easement and will also provide access for solid waste collection and removal. A new underground storm water management system will also be constructed.



Figure 2: View Looking Northeast

NOTABLE SITE PLAN DETAILS:

- **Ground Floor Mixed-Use** – The ground floor is proposed to have 4,332 square feet of commercial space.
- **Sustainability** – The proposed building height is 19 stories (195 feet) and uses the 30% sustainability bonus exception to height limits. The project will provide a solar collector surface in compliance with UDC Section 5.18.4 to cover at least 60% of the building footprint. Electrical panels shall have the capacity to solely serve the building by electricity.

The building is planned for 100% electrification on day 1, including all-electric heating sources.

- Parking – No vehicular parking is proposed. Seventy-nine Class A and 2 Class C bicycle parking spaces will be provided.
- Streetscapes – New sidewalks and reconstruction of the pedestrian corridors along Church Street and South University Avenue will be provided.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS REVIEW:

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

1209 SOUTH UNIVERSITY REVIEW CHART	
STANDARD	REVIEW RESULTS
Article V Administrative Bodies and Procedures	
Required Information	Complies
General Procedures	Complies (fees paid, Type 1 Citizens Participation complete)
Specific Procedures	Complies: Land Combination authorization; DRB complete
Article III Use Regulations	
Permitted Use	Complies: Proposed multi-family residential
Use Specific Standards	Not applicable
Article IV Development Standards	
Zoning District Dimensional Standards [Section 5.17]	
<i>Table 5.17-4: Mixed Use Districts</i>	
Min Lot Area/Dwelling Unit	None
Min Open Space, Active Open Space	None
Required Setbacks	None
Max Height	None
Lot Dimensions	None
<i>Table 5.17-6: Downtown Character Overlay Zoning Districts Building Massing Standards (South University Overlay District)</i>	
Streetwall Height	2-3 stories: complies, 2 stories
Offset at Streetwall Height	5 ft average: complies, 5 ft
Maximum Building Height	150 ft: complies, 195 ft sustainability bonus + 12 ft solar energy system
Massing Articulation	45 ft: complies
Maximum Tower Diagonal	Not applicable
Minimum Side and Rear Setbacks	30 ft from lot line abutting R district: not applicable

1209 SOUTH UNIVERSITY REVIEW CHART	
STANDARD	REVIEW RESULTS
<i>Table 5.17-7</i>	
Front Setbacks	Complies, 0 ft
Building Materials	Complies: masonry, cementitious panels, factory painted aluminum panels
Building Design	First story height 19 ft, first story window height compliant Window transparency and glazing compliant
Special Dimensional and Site Layout Standards [Section 5.18]	
Setback Line and Yard Alternatives	None
Exceptions to Height Limits	30% sustainability bonus – 195 ft; 12 ft solar energy system Can meet energy capacity; will be all electric at open
Parking [Section 5.19]	
Spaces	N/A: none provided
Design and Placement	N/A: none provided
Bicycle Parking	1/2500 residential sf 100% A: 79 provided 1/10,000 nonresidential sf 100% C: 2 provided
Design and Placement	Complies
Driveways	10-15 ft one-way, 18-28 ft two-way: complies 22 ft at ROW

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:

Design plans were reviewed and discussed by the Design Review Board on July 10, 2024. Application materials can be found on the Stream system at stream.a2gov.org for plan number DR24-0002 and the meeting packet materials including staff report can be found on the Legistar system at 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 July 11, 2024. Invitations were sent to all residents and property owners within 1,000 feet of the site. There were seven attendees from the public. The applicant's report of the meeting can be found on the Stream system at stream.a2gov.org for plan number SP24-0020.

SERVICE UNIT COMMENTS:

The site plan and application materials were reviewed by the staff from the Planning, Downtown Development Authority, Fire Marshal, Forestry/Natural Resources, Parks Planning, Engineering, Systems Planning, Solid Waste, Land Development, and Transportation units.

Staff across these units has recommended approval or approval with conditions, which have been incorporated into the Development Agreement.

A draft Development Agreement addressing the following items is attached:

- An easement to the City for solid waste collection (further details to be determined by the City Attorney's Office),
- A voluntary contribution of \$118,125 to Parks and Recreation for improvements to nearby and community-wide parks for the proposed increase of 183 households.
- Constructing the building consistent with the elevation drawings attached to the site plan.

Prepared by Julia Shake, City Planner

Reviewed by Alexis DiLeo, Principal Planner and Hank Kelley, Deputy Planning Manager

Attachments: Site Plan

Development Agreement – February 21, 2025 Draft

Zoning Map

Aerial Map

[Link to all project file documents](#)

c: Applicant – CRG (Alison Mills)

Engineer – Midwestern Consulting (Ted Hirsch)

Architect – LJC (Istvan Walker)

Architect – Shapack Partners (Jeff Shapack)

Consultant – J Bradley Moore & Associates (Brad Moore)

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