



City of Ann Arbor

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES — PLANNING DIVISION

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Ann Arbor Design Review Board Application

Section 1: General Information	
Project Name:	"Standard At Ann Arbor"
Project Location and/or Address:	405 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI (Corner of Main & Williams to Corner of Main & Packard)
Base Zoning District, Character Overlay District, and Building Frontage Designation:	D2 - Zoning District "Main Street" Character Overlay District Primary (Main St., Williams St.) and Secondary (Packard)
Type of Site Plan Petition (check):	<input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan for City Council approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site Plan for Planning Commission approval <input type="checkbox"/> PUD Site Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Planned Project Site Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Amendment with façade change
Developer:	The Standard at Ann Arbor, LLC
Property Owner:	DTE Energy
Property Owner's Signature:	
Developer's interest in property if not owner:	

Design Team (include all individuals, firms and groups involved):	Eric Leath - Development Manager - Standard of Ann Arbor, LLC Ben Ridderbos - Project Manager - Lord Aeck Sargent
Contact Person (name, phone number and email of one person):	Ben Ridderbos - (734) 827-3925, bridderbos@lordaecksargent.com

Section 2: Project Details	
Project Specifics:	<p>Site size (sq. ft.): <u>50,572 SFT</u></p> <p>Total floor area (sq. ft.): <u>202,288 SFT (400% FAR Premium)</u></p> <p>Number of stories: <u>Partial 5 story / Partial 10 story</u></p> <p>Building Height (ft.): <u>Partial 60' / Partial 120'</u></p> <p>Ground floor uses: <u>Retail, Amenity, Leasing Office</u></p> <p>Upper floor uses: <u>Residential, Amenity</u></p> <p>Number dwelling units: <u>238 Units</u></p> <p>Number off-street parking spaces: <u>108</u></p> <p>Open space (sq. ft.): <u>8,105 SFT</u></p>

On a separate sheet(s), please address each of the following in separate statements:

- 2a. Brief description of design concept (what the project/structure looks like).
- 2b. Brief description of development program (intended uses, known or possible tenants, etc.)

Section 3: Project Design

On a separate sheet(s), please address each of the following in separate statements:

- 3a. Describe the context of the site.
- 3b. Is there an inspiration or a theme for the design concept? Describe.
- 3c. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for its Character District.
- 3d. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Context and Site Planning.
- 3e. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Buildings.
- 3f. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Building Elements.
- 3g. If desired, note any other important elements, features or design concepts not covered above that will help the Design Review Board understand how the project fosters excellence in the design of the built environment of downtown Ann Arbor, the overarching goal of the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Section 2: Project Details

2a. Brief description of design concept (what the project/structure looks like).

The design concept is to create a new standard of young professional and graduate student housing, with a mixed use component, designed to maximize the allowed urban density, in a way that extends, and enhances, the urban fabric and pedestrian activity at this prominent intersection in downtown Ann Arbor. An engaging street-wall, which respects, and draws interpretive clues from, the traditional main street character, forms the base from which rises a carefully articulated tower element on the downtown edge, with a lower rise portion to the south. The tower will be modelled to reduce the visual bulk of the structure, recognizing and exceeding required tower setbacks above the base.

2b. Brief description of development program (intended uses, known or possible tenants, etc.)

The development program for this project will include ground floor retail and amenities (including fitness center and leasing lobby space). Upper floors will consist mostly of residential units targeting young professionals who want to live closer to downtown and Graduate Students from the University of Michigan. There will also be a podium-level amenity space for the residents that will consist of a pool deck and activities center. Common study areas will be located throughout the building. Residential units will consist of flexible layouts that could be altered for other uses later in the future. Parking will be provided below the ground floor, on one basement level, with some surface parking located behind the building on the ground level.

Section 3: Project Design

3a. Describe the context of the site.

The site is located on Main Street along the east side from Williams Street to Packard. There is a public alleyway that borders the east side of the site from Williams to Packard with six residential properties on the opposite side of the alley and four commercial properties. The site is within the "Main Street" Character Overlay District and essentially serves as the gateway to downtown, transitioning from the more student populated residential areas south of the site, to the urban city center area on the north. An existing parking lot and commercial office building, currently occupy the site. The site is therefore not exploiting its potential to provide a strong urban edge condition, drawing the downtown Main Street character further south.

On the opposite side of Main Street, on the corner, is a gas station, with a 9 story mixed use building as its neighbor to the south, followed by Ashley Mews, town house style residential development.

The site across William Street, is currently undeveloped, providing a small parking lot, with a tower parking structure to its east side, and finally, diagonally across the intersection of Main and William is a 4 story mixed use structure. It is a varied context relative to both use and scale.

3b. Is there an inspiration or a theme for the design concept? Describe.

The design inspiration for the development, is to create a signature building that elegantly translates into reality, the intent and vision of the City's Design Guidelines for this site, enhancing density with mixed use residential accommodations, creating a southern gateway to downtown, via the articulated upper tower portion on the corner of William and Main, and adding to the vibrancy of the street and urban context.

3c. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for its Character District.

Since the site is located within the Main Street Character District, the proposed height of the Street-wall, at a minimum of 24 feet high, will maintain the scale, indicative of the traditional, downtown Main Street context.

Uses at the street level will include retail and/or restaurants along the E. William Street frontage, and around the corner on Main Street. Further south, the Main Street frontage will include building amenity functions such as the leasing offices and a fitness center. All storefronts will include large areas of transparent glazing. The proportions of the glazing and the street-wall modules will echo the proportions on traditional Main Street, including some variation of storefront widths, separated by solid brick piers.

The visual transparency, together with the interactive nature of the functions, will engage pedestrian traffic, extending and enhancing the lively main street character south of E. William Street. This will assist in mitigating the effect of the gas station on the southwest corner of the intersection, which tends to interrupt pedestrian connectivity.

The primary residential entrance will be located midway along the S. Main Street frontage. This will be architecturally emphasized as a destination point, also setting up a dialogue with the mixed-use tower on the west side of S. Main Street. The Distinct module at the entry zone will further serve to reduce the visual extent of the street-wall. The street level residential portion, south of the entry, relates to the existing residential townhouses at Ashley Mews.

Finally, outdoor restaurant seating, canopies, deciduous trees, and street furniture, will provide the ambience, which is a hallmark of existing Main Street.

3d. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Context and Site Planning.

The proposed development will continue the zero setback urban context of downtown Main Street, per the zoning ordinance. This characteristic enhances density and supports the continuity of pedestrian activity at the street level. The nature of the street level uses (Retail/Restaurant) will enhance street activity, by encouraging outdoor, sidewalk seating areas and interaction on both E William and S Main. On S. Main, in particular, the increased pedestrian traffic will support pedestrian connectivity to the lower southern Main Street area, helping to knit the downtown core with the existing residential neighborhoods, via the D2 interface zone.

Currently the proposed site has a surface parking lot on the southeast corner of the intersection, with an existing gas station on the south west corner, both of which serve to discourage the desirable pedestrian connectivity from downtown to the established commercial activity further south, and the recently increased residential density.

Proposed new residential use on the subject site adds downtown density, supporting the businesses, restaurants, and entertainment venues along Main Street and within the core.

As a proposed LEED Silver project, there is a team commitment to engage the natural environment and issues of sustainability at every opportunity, within the constraints of the urban site.

An open landscaped green space is provided on the east side of the building, to provide an outdoor, ground level recreation area for residents, in addition to an outdoor amenity deck at the top of the podium. This green space softens the interface between the lower rise portion of the development and the rear yards of the residential use across the lane. It has an eastern and southern aspect, bringing light and views to the interior of the site.

An appropriate quantity and location of public bicycle racks will be developed along the sidewalks. Bike storage for residents is envisioned undercover/indoors, adjacent to the east building entrance.

Building service access, as well as underground and surface parking access, is provided from the alley on the east side of the site. This minimizes any interference with pedestrian activity on the street frontages, apart from the existing alley entrances on William and Packard.

3e. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Buildings.

The massing has been modelled to underscore the desired principles of scale, height, and façade treatment, with a conscious sensitivity to the varying contextual relationships.

The tower element is located at the intersection of East William Street and South Main Street, adjacent to the downtown core. While this is a larger contiguous site, the significant 'courtyard' setbacks in the tower face, above the base, carve the massing into narrower vertical elements, which relate more closely to the traditional Main Street property frontages, and have more elegant, slender proportions. There are two existing, neighboring tower structures in the immediate context, one opposite on the west side of Main Street, and the other diagonally opposite on the north side of William Street.

The building steps down to 5 stories, on the south side of the tower, transitioning to a scale appropriate for the intermediate zone between the downtown core and the residential neighborhoods. This is also in line with recent development further south on the main street corridor.

The 12' setback of the lower massing, above the base, at the southern end of the Main Street façade, reduces its visual presence, allowing the streetwall to acknowledge the scale of the existing townhouse development (Ashley Mews) across the street, on the west side of Main Street.

On the East side of the site, the lower massing is set back more than 30' from the public alley centerline, responding to the existing residential properties across the alley. In addition, the central portion of this building mass is set back a further 30', as the building steps around the large recreational open space (approximately 60' total setback). This breaks the horizontal form of the building into 3 distinct, smaller modules, ameliorating its scale and presence. Trees and landscaping in the open space, adjacent to the alley, further soften the appearance of the building from the neighboring residential back yards. Finally, the southern end of the building, along Packard Street, is stepped in plan, developing a saw tooth relationship with the street edge, creating varying depth landscape front yard areas, and acknowledging the predominantly residential character along Packard.

The treatment of the facades is based on a harmonious color scheme of deeper 'grey' hues and lighter, warm, 'tan' tones, for the primary materials of brick and the fiber cement rain-screen cladding panels. The dynamic play of the color fields on the facades breaks down the visual massing. This application on the tower, with its contemporary feel, recognizes its gateway location, at the southern entry to downtown, and introduces an iconic character to the tower, within its urban context.

Brick is the primary material at the base, and the color blocking of the grey and tan tones, is employed to introduce sub modules within the base. The 12' setbacks in the superstructure, creating terraces above the base, contrast with the consistent street edge location of the base, introducing a subtle play between the tower and the streetwall. The delicately differentiated portions of the streetwall, combined with the permeability introduced in specific zones, recognizes the varying conditions that exist around this site.

3f. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Building Elements.

The architectural character of the building is essentially contemporary in its detailing, but the modulation of storefronts and masonry piers have a traditional rhythm, reflecting those on Main Street. The retail uses on William Street, and around the corner onto Main Street, provide the opportunity for storefront canopies, which may vary in design and color, depending on tenant mix, creating a more vibrant foil to the restrained contemporary detailing. The color palette is enriched by the scale and texture of brick at the streetwall, closest to the pedestrian interactive zone. Entry frequency will be a function of tenant subdivisions, so will add a subtly organic layer to the rhythms at the base.

The primary street entry to the residential superstructure is located in the mid-zone of the Main Street elevation, between retail and amenity uses. It will be architecturally accented, with an expressive canopy, marking it as a focal point on the façade. This location relates to the tower across the street. Glazing and storefronts at the amenity façade will be consistent with the treatment at the retail facades.

South of the amenity zone is a street level residential component. Here the streetwall placement on the property edge is maintained. Large openings in the wall reveal recessed terraces in front of the street level units. This architectural layering initiates the transition from downtown to the more residential character further south on Main Street in recent developments such as 'The Yard', and '618 South Main'. This spatial interface with the street also reflects the residential character of the entry stoops/porches at the townhouses across the street (Ashley Mews), recognizing the immediate contextual relationship at this zone of the project.

Above the streetwall and storefronts, the fenestration on the superstructure facades comprises vertically proportioned windows, reflecting the window geometry on the historic Main Street Buildings, with a relatable balance of solid to void. However, their spacing introduces a playful 'dancing' rhythm, which is contemporary and iconic in character. Above the intersection of William and Main, the building skin at the corner is primarily glass. This creates a marker at this significant urban location, and by eroding the mass, spatially engages the intersection. The transparency at the corner, echoed by the color articulation reinforcing it, creates a slender, elegant building proportion at this downtown interface.

Building operational systems are located on the east side of the building, with access from the public alley for waste management, underground parking and services, avoiding interference with the pedestrian focus on the primary street fronts.

The project is being designed to a LEED Silver standard, incorporating sustainable elements wherever applicable and appropriate, and embracing the concept of environmental stewardship.

3g. If desired, note any other important elements, features or design concepts not covered above that will help the Design Review Board understand how the project fosters excellence in the design of the built environment of downtown Ann Arbor, the overarching goal of the Downtown Design Guidelines.