

Proposed Affordable Rental Housing on Mission Boulevard between D Street and E Street

Summary of Community Meetings held in **March 2019**

On Saturday, March 2nd and Tuesday, March 5th, MidPen Housing hosted community meetings to present the updated proposed design to the community. The meeting format included a 15-minute introduction, followed by a 15-minute Question and Answer (Q&A) session where MidPen's team answered questions. Once the Q&A session was complete, community members had the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments at 5 different stations that addressed the following topics: Architectural Design, Landscape Design, MidPen Property Management, Preference for Households Living or Working in Union City, and MidPen Resident Services.

The notes below are a summary of the questions, answers, and comments MidPen heard from community meeting attendees. We are making these notes accessible to ensure that community members are aware of the discussions that took place at these community meetings.

Written responses to some of the frequently asked questions included here can be found on the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) page](#) of the proposed development's website.

The purpose of this summary is to document the questions and feedback received. As of yet, design and programmatic decisions have not been finalized for the project.

Community Feedback

Due to the variety of questions and comments received at the stations, we have organized feedback by topic area.

Architectural Design

- Community member shared that they like the proposed building design and the way it looks.
- What is the square footage of the site?
 - Answer: Site is approximately 1.6 acres.
- Will some people's views of the hills be blocked because of this proposed development? What will the view from 2nd St. look like?
 - Answer: The proposed development is currently designed to take the surrounding neighborhood into consideration. On the side facing the community on 2nd St., we are proposing to build 2-story townhomes so that we can preserve the community's building scale. On Mission Blvd., we are proposing 4-stories, which matches the height of the AT&T building located on 2nd and E St. In addition, we are proposing to have a break between the two buildings in order

to provide a corridor for views of Mission Blvd. and the hills from 2nd Street. At the meeting, we provided an image from 4th and D St., which shows the view of the proposed development as well as the view of the hills. The image is included below:



- How many parking spaces are available per apartment?
 - Answer: Currently, we are proposing the following parking assignments per apartment size.
 - 1 bedroom: 1 parking space
 - 2 bedroom: 1 parking space
 - 3 bedroom: 2 parking spaces
- Has the City done anything about the parking permits for 2nd St.? Can you limit parking along 2nd St.?
 - Answer: This feedback will be shared with the City.
- Could you build an underground parking garage to build more apartments above ground?
 - Answer: As much as we'd like to build underground parking and increase the number of apartments at the proposed property, building an underground parking garage is cost prohibitive. While taking into consideration the community's need for affordable housing, MidPen also wants to make sure that we provide enough parking onsite. If we were to build more apartments, then we would need to build more parking at the proposed development, and we believe that the current mix of total apartments and parking spaces is an appropriate balance.

- Will the apartments located closest to the parking garage have a sound barrier against the garage?
 - Answer: The City and MidPen will be evaluating the noise levels inside the apartments, given the proposed development's location, and a noise study will be prepared as part of the project's environmental review during the planning process.
- How do you plan on reducing traffic noise that comes from Mission Blvd.?
 - Answer: For apartments facing busy streets or railroad tracks, MidPen would look at what noise levels would need to be mitigated and install noise-mitigating measures, such as windows with extra panes.
- The corner of Mission Blvd. and E St. is accident prone, and so having a garage entry on E St. is problematic. There's also a store on the corner of Mission and E St. where the entrance is on Mission Blvd. and it causes a lot of traffic. Because E St. goes all the way through Decoto, people drive through it, and a pedestrian once was hit by a speeding car.
 - Answer: We will work with the City on the appropriate locations for the garage entries and a traffic study will be performed to look at traffic safety issues in the vicinity of the project site.
- Can anything be done to limit pedestrian accidents on Mission Blvd. as a result of speeding vehicles?
 - Answer: Mission Blvd. is a state route, not a local road, but we will share this feedback with the City. A traffic study will be done as a part of the environmental review stage that will look at traffic safety issues in the vicinity of the project site.
- Will there be parking along Mission Blvd. for this proposed development?
 - Answer: All parking for the proposed apartments will be provided onsite in two parking garages. The City is exploring time restricted use of street parking along Mission Blvd. to help encourage turn over during business hours.
- Will Centro de Servicios' food distribution be moving to their new office space at this proposed development? It would bring a lot more people to this site.
 - Answer: Centro de Servicio's food distribution will not be taking place at the proposed development. The food distribution services were recently relocated to the Union City Family Center at Barnard-White Middle School. With this proposed relocation, Centro's clients requesting legal assistance and other services would come to this new office location at the project site. MidPen and the City are excited about the opportunity to provide new office spaces for Centro de Servicios and Youth and Family Services to provide services.
- Will the other side of Mission Blvd. be developed as well?
 - Answer: The land east of Mission Blvd. is not proposed for development and is subject to voter-approved restrictions pursuant to the Hillside Area Plan.

- Will there be any apartments built out for individuals with physical disabilities?
 - Answer: Yes, at least 10% of the units will be built out to be fully-accessible for disabled residents. The state building code currently requires 5% of the units to be fully-accessible and some funding programs, which the proposed development will be applying for, require 10% of the units to be fully-accessible. The remainder of the apartments will be built to be adaptable and can easily be made accessible if a household requires modifications in their apartment.
- Can you also design accessible showers?
 - Answer: We are proposing to install ADA compliant tubs, which have a higher tub dam, bench attachment, and grab bars, and allow an individual to maneuver more easily from a wheelchair to the tub.
- How large will the apartments be, and how many bathrooms are in a 2 bedroom apartment? The current living spaces in Mission Gateway are small.
 - Answer: A typical one-bedroom apartment would be approximately 600 sq ft, a typical two-bedroom apartment would be approximately 750 sq ft, and a typical three-bedroom apartment would be approximately 1,000 sq. ft. The exact square footages for the proposed apartments have not been finalized; however, these apartment square footages are what we see at some of our other MidPen properties. One and two-bedroom apartments are proposed to have one-bathroom and three-bedrooms may have either one or two bathrooms.
- Will the apartments have air conditioning?
 - Answer: The exact type of cooling system has not yet been determined, but the apartments will have some kind of mechanical cooling system.
- What land could we use to create more parks?
 - Answer: This question will be shared with the City.
- Are there requirements around creating publicly accessible open spaces for this proposed development?
 - Answer: All rental developments are required to pay a per unit fee to support public parks. There is no particular requirement to provide public open space for rental developments. From the community outreach completed to date, we have not heard much community feedback on a need for this type of space onsite. We have heard feedback on the need for an indoor community meeting space and so we are exploring this for the proposed development.
- There is a need for community space and a community room for events like the “Bystander Intervention Training” workshop. Ideally, the community room would fit 50 people and would be flexible in terms of use.
 - Answer: As noted above, we are exploring the provision of a community room at the proposed development.
- What will be the population mix at the property?

- Answer: This property will primarily serve families since we are proposing two and three bedroom apartments. However, MidPen expects that it will also serve single-member households since we are proposing to build one-bedroom apartments as well.
- The design is appealing to the eye, but we wish there were more apartments.
 - Answer: We have tried to strike the right balance in the number of units that can fit comfortably on the site.

Landscape Design

- Community member likes the proposed trees, play area, and planters.
- Community member appreciates how accessible the street level courtyard will be.
- Can the public access the ground level courtyard?
 - Answer: The current proposed design includes a sizable separation between the two buildings and this separation serves as a view corridor of the hills from 2nd Street. A portion of this area between the two buildings includes a ground floor courtyard, which will be gated along 2nd Street and Mission Boulevard and accessible to residents only. A rendering of this ground level courtyard was shared at the third series of community meetings held in March 2019 and is included below.



VIEW OF 2ND STREET



MidPen Property Management

- Will the property have units for households with vouchers? What about Project-Based Section 8 Vouchers?
 - Answer: Currently, we are not proposing Project-Based Section 8 Vouchers at this proposed development. Due to federal funding limitations, there are

currently no Project-Based Section 8 Vouchers available. However, MidPen does accept households with a HUD voucher who meet MidPen's eligibility requirements.

- When will you start taking applications for this proposed development?
 - Answer: Since this proposal is so early in the process and has not been approved, we are not currently accepting applications. If the proposal is approved by City Council, MidPen will then open an interest list so that community members, who are interested in the proposed development, can provide their contact information to us and then be informed once the application is available. It is anticipated that applications would be available approximately 6 months before construction completion.
- When does the waitlist to this property open?
 - Answer: Since this proposed development is still in its very early stages, a waitlist currently does not exist. However, if the proposed development is approved, then MidPen will open an interest list to receive contact information for individuals who want to be informed as to when applications are available in the future.
- Are these apartments for rent or for sale?
 - Answer: All of the apartments at this proposed development would be for rent.
- There is big gap between the 20% and 50% Area Median Income (AMI) levels. Would it be possible to add another level in between them to make it more balanced? I know families or individuals whose incomes are very low, or who are practically homeless who wouldn't be able to afford the 50% AMI level rents. If you can't lessen the gap between 20%-50% AMI level units, can you increase the number of 20% AMI units? If the consequence of increasing the number of lower-level AMI units is that you'd decrease the property's income, which would reduce the property's ability to pay its operating expenses, are there more funding options available that can help you prioritize households with lower AMI levels?
 - Answer: In addition to serving the community's needs, we want to be sure that the proposed development can pay all of its operating expenses year after year for the long-term. Currently, the proposed development is proposing to have 16 apartments restricted at 20% AMI. If there are more apartments restricted at lower income levels, it is challenging for the property to pay its operating expenses and requires more public subsidy. There are some funding programs, such as Project-Based Section 8 Vouchers, which support households at lower AMI levels; however, due to federal funding limitations, Project-Based Section 8 vouchers are currently not available. In addition, the Project-Based Section 8 program does not permit a live or work preference to be applied to those subsidized units and we have heard that a live or work preference is important to the community.

- How do you qualify for this property? I am a 4-person household and my income is \$58,000. What would be my rent?
 - Answer: In order to qualify to live at the proposed MidPen community, a household must earn less than a certain percentage of the Area Median Income (AMI), which is published annually each year by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and varies depending on the number of people in the household and the County. In this case, the rent for a 4-person household with a household income of \$58,000 in 2018 would either be \$1,307 per month for a 2-bedroom apartment or \$1,510 per month for a 3-bedroom apartment.
- I make \$30,000 per year and have a household of two people. What would I qualify for?
 - Answer: Using the income limits available for 2018, you would qualify for a 50% AMI restricted apartment and so your rent would be about \$1,090 per month if you were to live in a one-bedroom apartment.
- How much would the rent be for a family of five with a household income of \$42,000?
 - Answer: Using the income limits available for 2018, a family of five, whose household income is \$42,000, would qualify for a 50% AMI restricted apartment and so rent would be \$1,510 per month for a 3-bedroom apartment.
- Are these proposed rents the same at your other properties?
 - Answer: No, each property's rent depends on different factors, such as which funding programs are applicable to each property, and so the rent can be different from property to property.
- Are there rental increases at MidPen properties?
 - Answer: Yes, there can be rental increases at MidPen properties. However, we follow regulatory restrictions and do not charge rents above what is permitted by the regulatory restrictions. The rent increases are typically limited to 3-10% annually such that the increased rent is no more than approximately 30% of a household's income.
- In looking at someone's household income, do you also look at their bank accounts? I have savings account with money in the bank. Would that change my income limits? And, what if you have a 401k account?
 - Answer: As a part of the income qualification process, you will be required to provide copies of bank statements. Any income received from assets, such as interest received from a savings account, will be calculated into a household's annual income. Some examples of assets generating income include, but are not limited to: savings accounts, 401k accounts, stocks, and bonds. When reviewing a household's income, we review to confirm that the household's income falls below the maximum income range specified for the household size.
- Are you checking households' incomes regularly?
 - Answer: Yes, we would check your income once a year to determine your rent for the following year.

- As part of the process to lease a vacant unit, will the leasing team be checking credit history?
 - Answer: Yes.
- What if you have no credit?
 - Answer: Each property evaluates each person applying to live at its community with a credit-risk scoring system that is provided by an independent consumer-reporting agency and consistently applied to all of the applicants. This scoring system uses a statistical model to estimate the credit risk that an applicant may not satisfactorily fulfill his/her lease obligations. The absence of credit history by itself will not be reason to deny an applicant household.
- If a household's income increases, can a household still live at the property?
 - Answer: Yes, we cannot evict someone because their income has increased. There are regulatory agencies that currently prohibit landlords from evicting tenants because a household's income has increased. There are two sides to this - there is a great need for affordable housing and there's limited availability. However, if a household is able to live at the property and can increase their income, they can stabilize their lives. MidPen's Resident Services team can provide support to households whose income have risen over time to help the household explore other housing options, such as qualifying for homeownership or another apartment.
- Can I apply for housing at multiple MidPen properties? Does MidPen have other properties with available units?
 - Answer: Yes, we encourage that households apply to as many properties that they qualify for. If you are looking for affordable housing at a MidPen property, please visit MidPen's website here at www.midpenproperty.midpen-housing.org/PropertyList to learn more about where our properties are located and which have open waitlists or interest lists.
- Is there anything open at Mission Gateway?
 - Answer: The waitlist for Mission Gateway for particular apartment sizes was open last year. However, the waitlist is currently closed. Please check MidPen's website here to view which properties have open waitlists: www.midpenproperty.midpen-housing.org/PropertyList.
- I put in an application for Mission Gateway in December last year, and I never heard back.
 - Answer: Please contact the Mission Gateway leasing office directly. You may not have been contacted yet because there is little turnover at our properties and leasing staff at Mission Gateway may not have had to go very far down the waitlist to fill vacancies.
- Is it possible to decrease the number of parking spots to increase the number of apartments at the proposed property?

- Answer: We're trying to take into consideration the community's need for affordable housing while also ensuring that we provide enough parking onsite. If we were to build more apartments, then we would need to build more parking.
- How do you connect cable TV in an apartment?
 - Answer: Hookups will be available in the apartment for cable TV for certain service providers. It has not been finalized as to which service providers will be available for this property.
- Will there be transit passes offered to the residents?
 - Answer: The property is located in an area with AC Transit service lines. We'll be exploring the possibility of offering AC Transit bus passes to residents.

Live or Work Preference

- Will there be a preference for households who currently live or work in Union City? Are the Board of Supervisors controlling the ability to implement a preference?
 - Answer: We are proposing to implement a preference at this development for households who live or work in Union City. As part of the process, we are required to hire a consultant to prepare a displacement study, which studies displacement occurring in the City, and the study will be submitted to the County. The County will then determine if a preference can be applied.
- Can anyone apply, or do you have to live in Union City?
 - Answer: Anyone, regardless of where you live or work, could apply. If a preference is approved by the County, then households who live or work in Union City would have priority. The number of apartments at this proposed development that would have this preference has not yet been determined. We are preparing a displacement study, which will be submitted to the County for review. We will require County's approval before a preference can be applied and the number of apartments to apply the preference.
- Will parents with children currently in the school district have a preference?
 - Answer: We are currently looking at a preference for individuals and families who live or work in Union City. If this preference is approved by the County, families who live or work in Union City would have a priority on the waitlist. Families, who have children attending a New Haven Unified School District, but do not live or work in Union City, may not qualify under the live or work preference.
- Will displaced families qualify for the preference?
 - Answer: We are currently exploring which groups we can grant the preference to while ensuring compliance to all Fair Housing Laws.
- Preference should apply to households who live or work in Hayward-Fremont-Union City, instead of only Union City.

- I think it's important to have affordable housing for veterans and disabled individuals. Can this proposed development also prioritize these individuals?
 - Answer: In the community meetings held to date, we have not heard feedback from community members to prioritize veterans and disabled individuals at this proposed development. We have primarily heard feedback to prioritize those who live or work in Union City. We will review this feedback and also share it with the City.

MidPen Resident Services

- Community member suggested a partnership between MidPen Resident Services and Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center for education programs.
- Are the MidPen Resident Services programs and services only for MidPen residents?
 - Answer: The MidPen services and programs provided onsite at MidPen properties are intended and tailored to serve MidPen residents, but does not exclude community members. MidPen is currently exploring the possibility of if and how to open up some of MidPen's programs at this proposed development to the surrounding community.

General Comments

- What is the purpose of this meeting?
 - Answer: We want to receive feedback from the community on the proposal before we submit a formal application to the City for review. We would like to hear your ideas and concerns about the proposal.
- What is MidPen's challenge to speed up the development's process?
 - Answer: We understand that the need for affordable housing is great and urgent. However, the development process requires time and construction costs have escalated substantially over time. MidPen is working to submit proposals as quickly as possible so that cities can review in a timely manner while fulfilling local processes and requirements.
- How will MidPen deal with trash and vandalism that accumulates on and around the site? I am concerned about the cleanliness because of the trash and vandalism around Station Center located at 11th Street.
 - Answer: At Station Center, one of MidPen's properties located at 11th Street in Union City, there are 2 MidPen maintenance staff working at the property who pick up trash at and around the property. Since there is public space located adjacent to this MidPen property, the City's maintenance crew also manages the trash and vandalism around this area.
- I have concerns around overcrowding at the high school. There are already many issues from overcrowding classrooms. The proposed development will only increase the number of students.

- Answer: If the proposal moves forward, MidPen will be required to pay the New Haven Unified School District an impact fee that will go towards either improving existing or expanding new school infrastructure. In addition, MidPen is trying to implement a live or work preference for the proposed development, which would help keep families already living in the City and supported by the City's public schools.
- The community could get overcrowded because too many people are living in one apartment.
- Union City has poor air quality because of its proximity to freeways and trains.
- Will the environmental report for the proposed development be available?
 - Answer: In order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an environmental study will be completed for this proposed development to determine if/what impact it may have on the environment. The environmental study will look at noise, air quality, and other items. Once the study is complete, it will be available to the public for comment. The City will notify the surrounding neighborhood once it's available for public review.
- I think it's important for there to be vocational opportunities, such as construction work opportunities, so that they are available through the proposed development for Union City and Decoto youth. Having vocational or training opportunities would reduce gang activity.
- Can we get the timeline board on the City of Union City website?
 - Answer: MidPen has set up a website specifically for this proposed development, which is www.mission2de-midpen.com and the timeline board will be available there.
- Where can I sign up to get emails?
 - Answer: If you would like to receive email updates for this proposed development, please visit our website, complete the form at www.mission2de-midpen.com/participate.html, and provide your email address to be added to our emailing list so that you can receive updates on the proposal. If you provided your email address at the registration table and indicated that you would like to receive updates, we will also add you to our emailing list.