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## **Project Statement**

November 21, 2023

City of Colorado Springs  
Planning and Development Department  
Attn: Gabe Sevigny, Planning Manager  
30 S. Nevada Avenue, Suite 701  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Re: Printers Hill – Development Standards Adjustment Project Statement

To the City of Colorado Springs Planning and Development Department,

Please accept this document as the Project Statement for the Development Standards Adjustment application pursuant to the Development Standards Adjustment Application Submittal Checklist in association with the concurrently submitted Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning) and Land Use Plan applications.

### Background

Printers Hill (formerly known as the Union Printers Home property) is located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and is comprised of two parcel totaling 24.63 acres, both of which are currently zoned R-5, Multi-Family High. The historic Union Printers Home and the associated dormitories and boiler building are located on the larger of the two parcels. The 5-story Union Printers Home castle structure was built and established in the late 1800s and was later expanded to its current size of 91,434 square feet in the early 1900s. The facility was historically used as a care facility for members of the International Typographical Union, and was later opened up as a more general convalescent home. More recently, however, the facility was operated as a private nursing home until it closed and was sold to UPH Partners, LLC, in 2021.

The property is located immediately adjacent to the east of Memorial Park and lies at the southeast corner of the Union Boulevard and Pikes Peak Avenue intersection at a distance of approximately 1.3 miles east of Downtown Colorado Springs.

### Request

The owner of the Union Printers Home property, which is a local partnership known as UPH Partners, LLC, is proposing to redevelop the site as a mixed-use master planned community

while still preserving, rehabbing, and repurposing the historical structures. This development standards adjustment is needed to facilitate the proposed development along with approval of the concurrently submitted Land Use Plan and Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning) applications.

### Code Section

The MX-L: Mixed-Use Large Scale Zoning District is included in Section 7.2.305 of the City of Colorado Springs Unified Development Code. More specifically, this Development Standards Adjustment requests an adjustment to the maximum building height standards included within Table 7.2.3-E, MX-L: Lot and Building Standards, of Section 7.2.305. Table 7.2.3-E identifies the maximum building height in the MX-L Zoning District as being 65 feet generally and 85 feet for lots with arterial frontage.

### Justification

The proposed Development Standards Adjustment would allow for much more vertically conducive mixed-use development to occur on the property. The increased vertical mixed-use height within the MX-L Zoning District pairs well with the proposed transfer of massing away from internal view and pedestrian travel corridors so as to facilitate a more well-integrated pedestrian environment while still preserving the economic viability and overall aesthetic quality of the project. Additional justification in support of this request has been included below in the review criteria compliance analysis.

Graphics depicting the proposed maximum height increase as well as the transfer of massing described throughout this project statement are attached. It is important to note that even the existing historic castle structure would exceed the applicable maximum building height of the MX-L Zoning District. Other noteworthy features of the attached exhibits include depiction of the unique architecture of the proposed buildings and appropriate transfer of massing away from the view corridors leading to the historic castle as well as the planned pedestrian corridors and gathering areas and towards the more aesthetically benign perimeter areas of the property. The exhibits depict how the proposed Development Standards Adjustment, if approved, will allow for a variety of positive improvements to the development, including: creating more defined gateways into the property, preserving unmatched view corridors, and establishing a pedestrian-first character for the development that will both welcome and engage the general public and residents living within the development.

### Compensating Benefit

An analysis of the compensating benefits of this request has been included below within the Compliance with Review Criteria section of this Project Statement.

### Recommendation

The applicant requests and recommends approval of the proposed Development Standards Adjustment to increase the maximum building height in the MX-L Zoning District as it applies to the Printers Hill development.

## COMPLIANCE WITH REVIEW CRITERIA

Please see below for an analysis of compliance of the Printers Hill Development Standards Adjustment with the City of Colorado Springs Unified Development Code (UDC), specifically the Development Standards Adjustment Criteria for Approval as outlined in Section 7.5.525.E of the UDC.

**1. The alternative design achieves the intent of the subject standard to the same or better degree than the standard for which a waiver is requested**

The proposed design as shown in the attached exhibits promotes an effort to shift building massing within the site from internal areas towards the perimeter of the site. The shift, when considered with the concurrently reviewed Land Use Plan, effectively results in a net decrease in the amount of building massing that would otherwise be available under the MX-L Zoning District if the property were to development as a single development parcel with more monolithic building designs. The aesthetic result is a more pleasing plan for developing the site that creates and preserves view corridors without creating unreasonable visual impediments for adjacent properties.

**2. When considered together with compensating benefits, the alternative design advances the goals and policies of this UDC to the same or better degree than the standards for which a waiver is requested**

Purposes of the UDC

The purpose of the UDC is outlined in Section 7.1.103 and includes the following:

- A. Promote health, safety, and general welfare of the public;
- B. Protect private property from adjacent nuisances such as incompatible uses and noise;
- C. Implement the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan;
- D. Establish the orderly subdivision of land;
- E. Ensure the logical growth of the City's physical elements;
- F. Encourage adequate multi-modal transportation facilities;
- G. Promote opportunities for affordable and attainable housing throughout the City; and
- H. Facilitate adequate provision of utilities, schools, parks, and other public infrastructure services.
- I. Enhance the quality, diversity, and safety of neighborhoods by encouraging pride and investment.

***Promote health, safety, and general welfare of the public***

The proposed development standards adjustment and associated rezoning and land use plan applications support a plan for repurposing the historic structures on the property and creating additional development opportunities on underutilized portions of the property which will improve the general welfare of the citizens of the City. Allowing for an increase in the maximum building heights within the development will enhance the economics of the

project so as to allow other areas of the property to remain free from vertical construction. These open areas are planned for parks, extensive pedestrian connections, and unique gathering places, which should only serve to enhance the sense of community in the area and promote the public's interests. These areas are intended to improve the level of convenience for existing and future residents in the area to pursue recreation and social engagement, thereby enhancing the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.

### *Protect private property from adjacent nuisances such as incompatible uses and noise*

The development standards adjustment only proposes to increase the maximum building height in the underlying MX-L Zoning District and, therefore, will not create nuisances for other private properties in the area or result in new incompatible land uses or excessive noise.

### *Implement the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan*

The project statements included with the associated rezoning and land use plan applications provide extensive analysis of the overwhelming consistency of the proposed Printers Hill development with PlanCOS. The development standards adjustment bolsters the associated rezoning and land use plan applications by effectively allowing for a tradeoff of available horizontal floor area and projected building square footages to take vertical shape on the individual development parcels. By doing so, many of the pedestrian-based corridors and gathering spaces that define the project can be created where traditional horizontal mixed-use development might otherwise suggest establishing more expansive building footprints.

### *Establish the orderly subdivision of land*

The Development Standards Adjustment will not adversely affect the subsequent subdivision of the property. The concurrently reviewed land use plan already includes a conceptual division of the land to create individual development parcels and open space and parks sites. Final layout and design of any future division of the property via the subdivision process will occur at later stages of the development process but are not inhibited whatsoever by this request.

### *Ensure the logical growth of the City's physical elements*

The concurrently submitted Printers Hill Land Use plan plans for and incorporates appropriately located and scale components of the proposed development, all of which represent a logical growth of the City's physical elements and are overwhelmingly supported by the goals and policies for future growth in the City as found in PlanCOS.

### *Encourage adequate multi-modal transportation facilities*

Multi-modal access to the site has been anticipated and can be accomplished via three vehicular access points and connections to existing pedestrian and bicycle pathways. In addition, the site sits along the number 7 bus line, which connects Downtown to neighborhoods to the east. The area is also served by Mountain Metro Transit as well as a private shuttle connecting the existing parking in the area to UCHealth Memorial Hospital.

### *Promote opportunities for affordable and attainable housing throughout the City*

The proposed Development Standards Adjustment, in concert with the concurrent rezoning and land use plan, will be the perfect complement to the nearby Printers Parkway employment hub and to Downtown Colorado Springs by bringing more housing and services to the immediate area. Creating additional employee housing within walking and biking distance to so many nearby places of employment is a significant component of the Printers Hill development and is strongly encouraged within PlanCOS.

### *Facilitate adequate provision of utilities, schools, parks, and other public infrastructure services*

#### Utilities

The Printers Hill development represents both infill and redevelopment of the Union Printers Home property, which means that connections to the required utility services are readily available at or near the property boundaries. The development team has had several meetings with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) staff to gauge the availability and capacity of existing infrastructure in the area to serve the planned development. CSU staff has confirmed that the proposed development can be served. The Printers Hill Land Use Plan depicts the planned on- and off-site connection points and well as corridors through the site for utility extensions necessary to serve the development. The Plan sheet also highlights segments of off-site utilities that will need to be upsized to support full build out of the project, which include the upzoning of two sanitary sewer lines and the addition of one sanitary connection line.

#### Schools

The Printers Hill development is proposing to develop 945 new residential dwelling units on the site, which includes both single family attached and multi-family dwellings. School District No. 11 has a school impact fee established that is applicable to new residential development within the District's boundaries. Those fees are calculated and collected at the time of subdivision, which is a subsequent stage of development to the proposed land use plan and associated rezoning processes.

District No. 11 will inevitably realize a significant long-term increase in revenue from the Printers Hill site following development pursuant to current District mill levy of 42.821

mills. The District has not expressed any concerns regarding having the capacity to serve the proposed residential uses in the Printers Hill development.

### Parks

The project is conveniently located across Union Boulevard to the east from Memorial Park, which is a City of Colorado Springs owned and maintained park facility. The proximity of Memorial Park and the potential for creating better pedestrian connections through the property to the Park represents significant potential for additional use and accessibility of Memorial Park for the new residents within the development as well as for the surrounding neighborhood.

The presence of Memorial Park as a public gathering and recreational option for the future residents of the development will be further enhanced by planned parks and open spaces within the development as depicted in the associated land use plan.

### Other Public Facilities

Onsite stormwater facilities constructed withing development of the site are proposed to be owned and maintained by the Printers Hill Metropolitan District. The planned development anticipates providing onsite water quality and detention and is proposed to discharge stormwater flows into existing the storm sewer system in the area.

All other public facilities anticipated for the Printers Hill development have been discussed with the respective reviewing entities. None of the entities have raised concerns regarding the ability to serve the project or that project is otherwise inconsistent with their applicable long-range plans.

### *Enhance the quality, diversity, and safety of neighborhoods by encouraging pride and investment*

The proposed redevelopment of the historic Union Printers property will have the effect of positively activating the otherwise vacant and dilapidated buildings and surrounding land. Renewed interest in this area will most certainly enhance the quality and diversity in this area of the City by bringing in additional housing and retail options, as well as creating safe and unique places and experiences for the surrounding community. The project could very well serve as a catalyst for additional reinvestment in the area, including in the amenities offered at Memorial Park, and will represent the best of what Colorado Springs has to offer. The ownership group, comprised of all local investors, takes pride in being able to preserve the historic structures located on the property while also being able to offer a path forward for reinvesting in one of the truly unique areas of the City.

### Purpose of the MX-L Zoning District

The stated purpose of the MX-L Zoning District is:

*The MX-L zone district accommodates a high-intensity mix of, for example, commercial, retail, office, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, and multifamily residential uses. Land uses are as indicated in Table 7.3.2-A: Base and NNA-O District Use Table. MX-L zone districts typically serve the City as a whole and have significant traffic generation potential. Some MX-L zone districts may also include uses that have a regional draw. Uses in MX-L zone districts may be mixed horizontally or vertically mixed depending on their density and intensity. MX-L zone districts should be organized to promote synergy among uses, combine destinations, support more effective transit service, and provide viable pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation. MX-L zone districts should have direct access to existing or planned major transportation facilities and be designed to promote compatibility with adjacent land uses. The layout of permitted use types shall be as shown in a Land Use Plan approved pursuant to Section 7.5.514 (Land Use Plan).*

The requested Development Standards Adjustment is consistent with the purpose of the MX-L Zoning District since it will help facilitate the development of a mixture of land uses such as a hotel, office, retail, restaurants, and multifamily residential while still providing a variety of unique pedestrian amenities. The intent is to mix uses both horizontally across the development and well as vertically within some of the parcels. The synergy created by mixing the uses, incorporating residential development, and providing pedestrian pathways within the project will help enhance access and circulation in the area and throughout the site. In addition, the site is adjacent to an existing bus route and will have access to a planned transit corridor to the north. The planned development will promote compatibility with the adjacent non-residential land uses and provide retail and service opportunities to residents living in neighborhoods within close proximity to the property. The associated land use plan depicts the layout of the permitted use types for the property.

### **3. The alternative design imposes no greater impacts on adjacent properties that would occur through compliance with the specific requirements of this UDC**

Although the alternative design would result in some of the proposed structures being taller than the standards established in the MX-L Zoning District, the actual impact to the adjacent properties is considerably less due to the above-mentioned plan to transfer density in order to preserve view and pedestrian corridors and to create unique, community-based spaces. A worst-case scenario build out of the property would allow for 85 foot buildings to be built all along the Union Boulevard and Pikes Peak Avenue corridors, creating a very unpleasant and visually obstructing “walling” effect, which would most certainly have a greater impact on adjacent properties than the occasional height increase on certain parcels separated by a variety of natural and man-made unique areas, creating appropriate visual relief throughout the site.



- 4. The alternative design provides compensating benefits that are reasonably related to the proposed waiver and would not otherwise be required by this UDC or State law. Compensating benefits may include one or a combination of the following:**

*Benefits to the general public*

The concurrently submitted land use plan incorporates much needed pedestrian connections and pathways into and through the proposed development. The planned pedestrian corridors connect to a variety of parks and open space areas, which provide transitional buffers between the project and adjacent development areas as well as between internal land uses. The corridors also connect planned pedestrian gathering areas and ground floor retail establishments throughout the site creating a unique and well-defined human-scaled environment that can be experienced and enjoyed by nearby residents, employees, and other pedestrians visiting the project. The proposed parks and open space areas are intended include preservation of several natural features and the display of public art are some of the unique characteristics planned for these areas.

The redevelopment of the vacant and underdeveloped Union Printers Home property will result in a substantial increase in the amount of services and housing available in the Hillside neighborhood and the City as whole, plus over time it will generate a significant increase in the amount of tax revenue received from the property by the City, El Paso County, School District No. 11, the Library District, and other taxing authorities.

*Benefits to the users, customers, or residents of the proposed development*

As discussed above, the Printers Hill land use plan features a number of parks and open space areas including a neighborhood park, numerous open green spaces, mini-park plazas, a community garden and other similar recreational amenities. All of these features are possible with approval of this requested Development Standards Adjustment due to the transfer of massing away from these areas into development parcels. Even within the development parcels, the proposed increase in vertical massing is intended to allow for greater architectural design of the proposed buildings by allowing the amount of square footage needed to make the project economically viable to fill a different, more visually appealing massing envelope than is otherwise anticipated and encouraged by the dimensional standards of the MX-L zoning district.

The land use plan also incorporates designs for more parkland acreage to be provided within the development than is required under the City's Parkland Dedication Ordinance (see the associated Printers Hill Land Use Plan for the specific calculations), many of which provide a secondary benefit as natural buffers into and within the development. Access to these areas will be available to all members of the public and can be

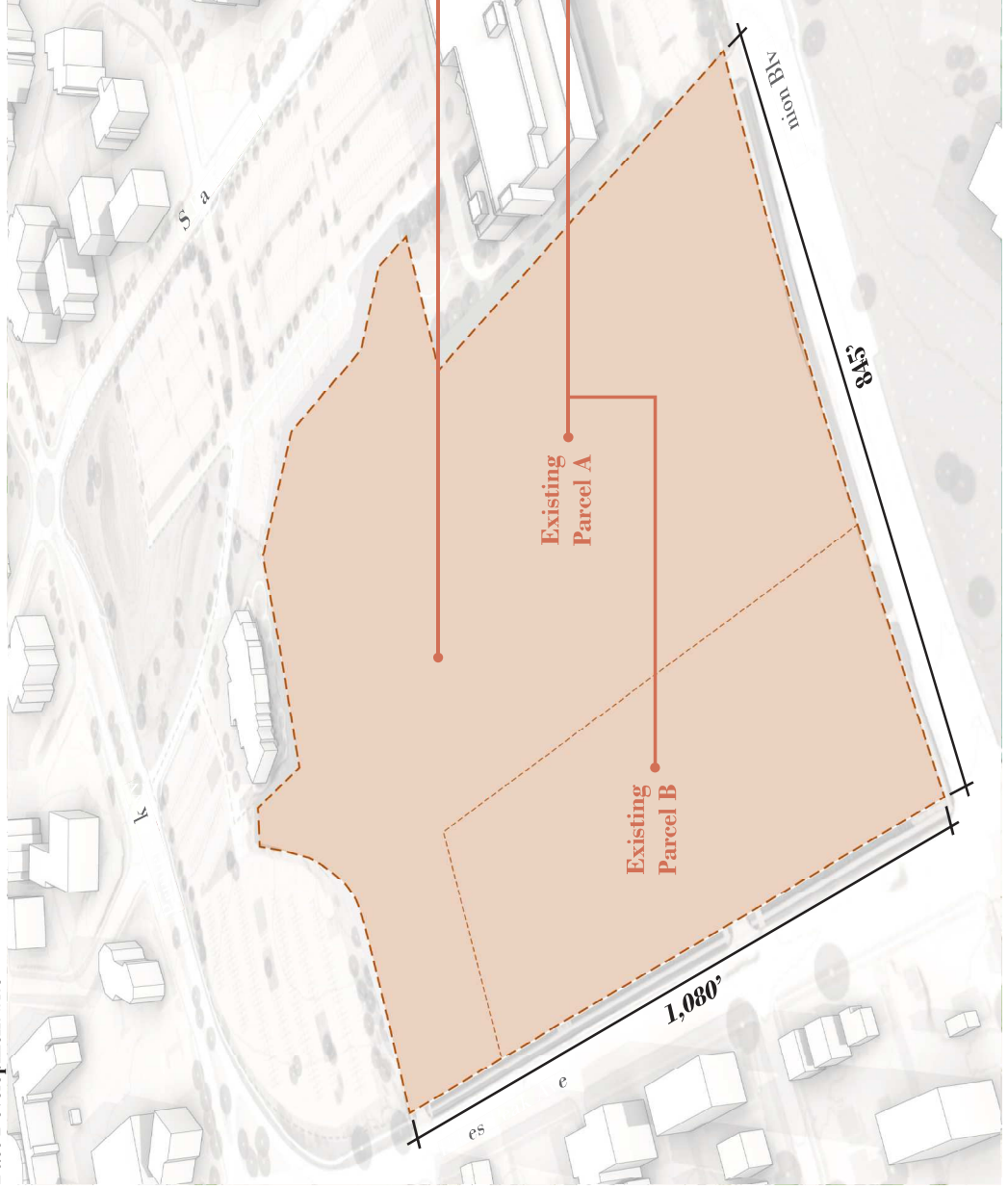


accomplished via walking or biking into the site or by parking in one of the proposed public parking facilities within the proposed development.

# UPH SITE

## Massing and Density Logic

### Base Development Site



24.63 total site acres (AC)

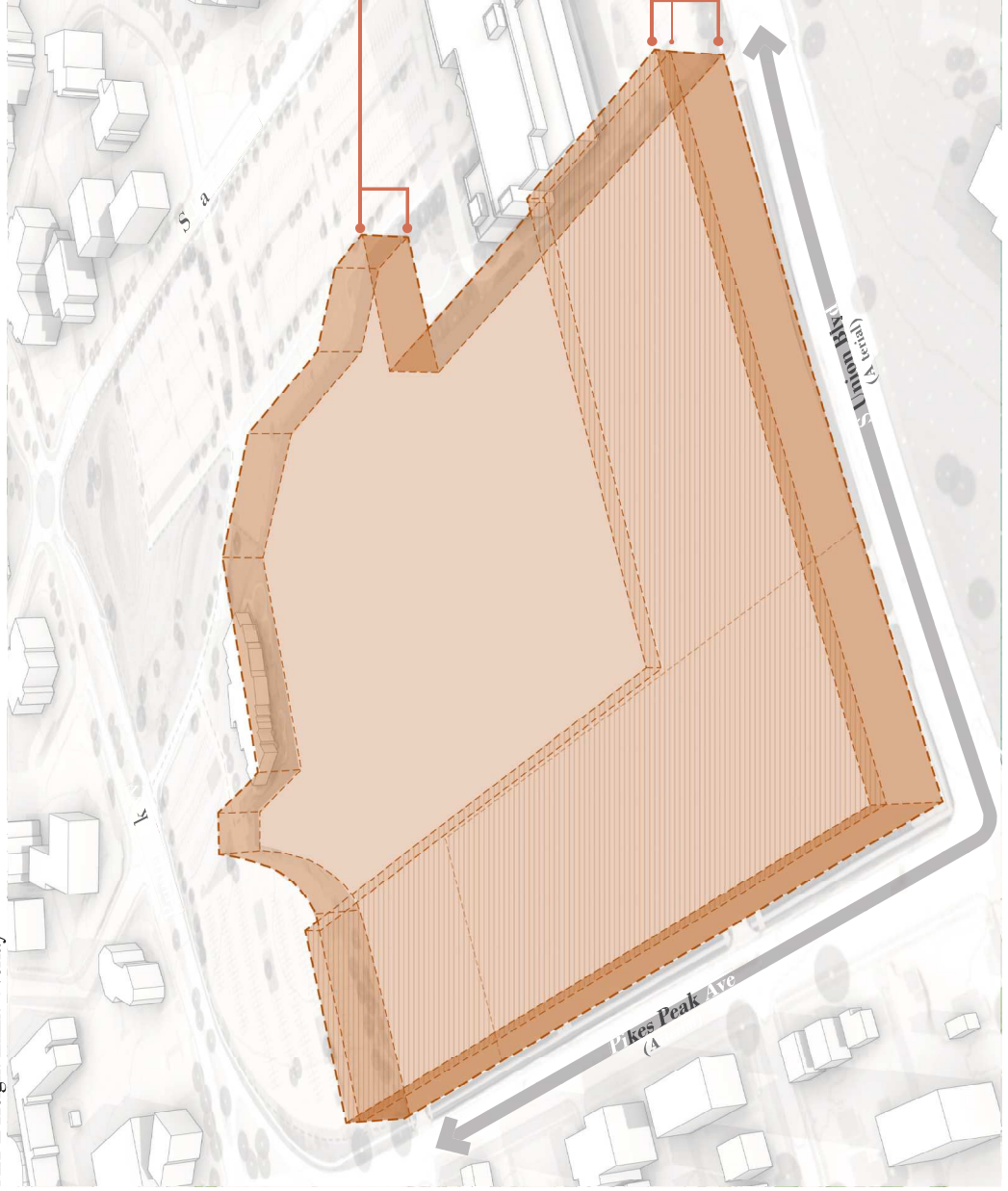
1,072,800 total site square footage (SF)

Base Development Site =  
Existing Parcels A + B

# UPH SITE

## Massing and Density Logic

### MX-L Height Limit Overlay



65' MX-L Massing Height Limit

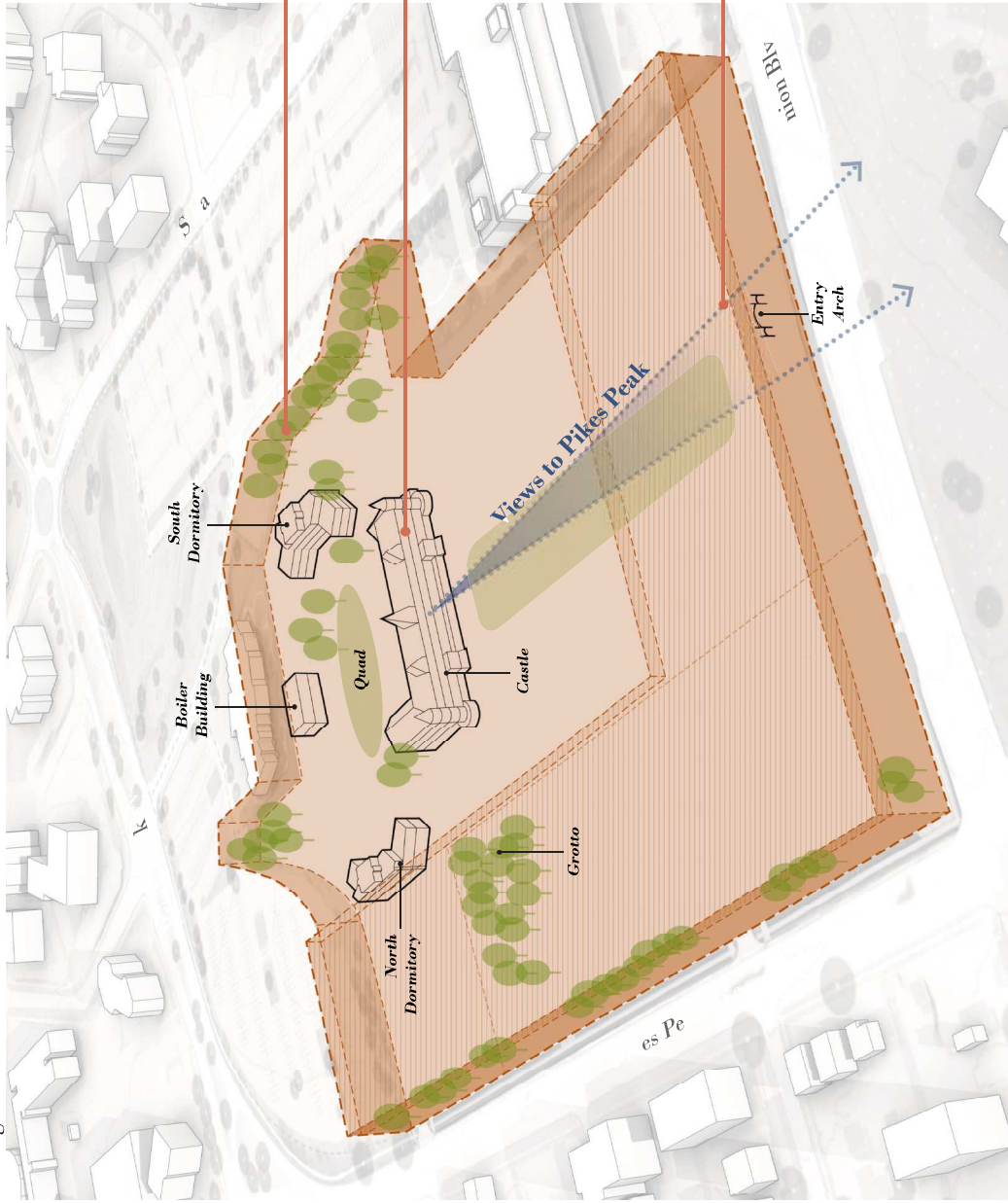
85' MX-L Massing Height Limit  
Along Lots with Arterial Frontage

20' 65''

# UPH SITE

## Massing and Density Logic

Existing Site Amenities



Existing Trees

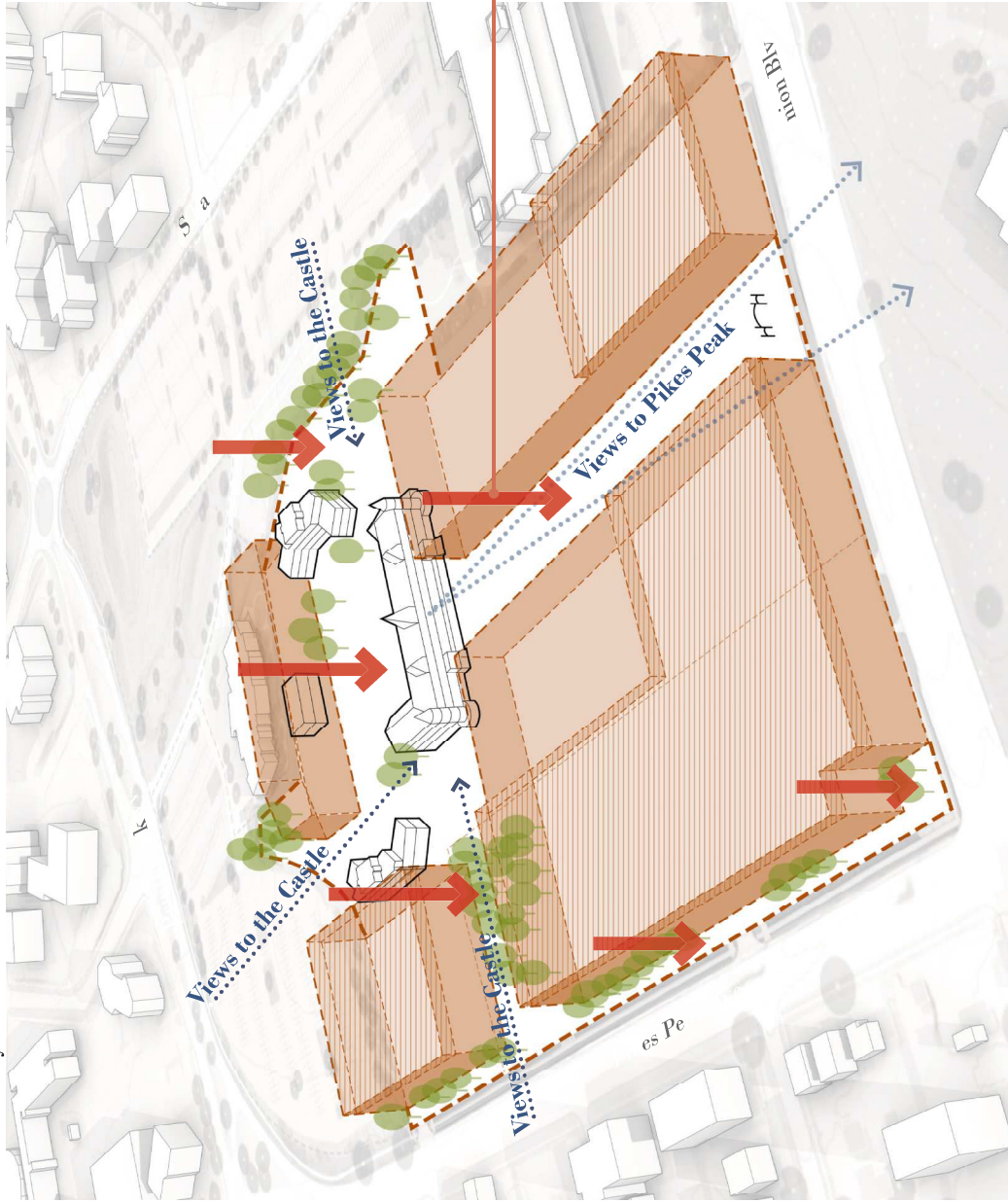
Historic Buildings

Existing Mountain Views

# UPH SITE

## Massing and Density Logic

Reduced Density Potential

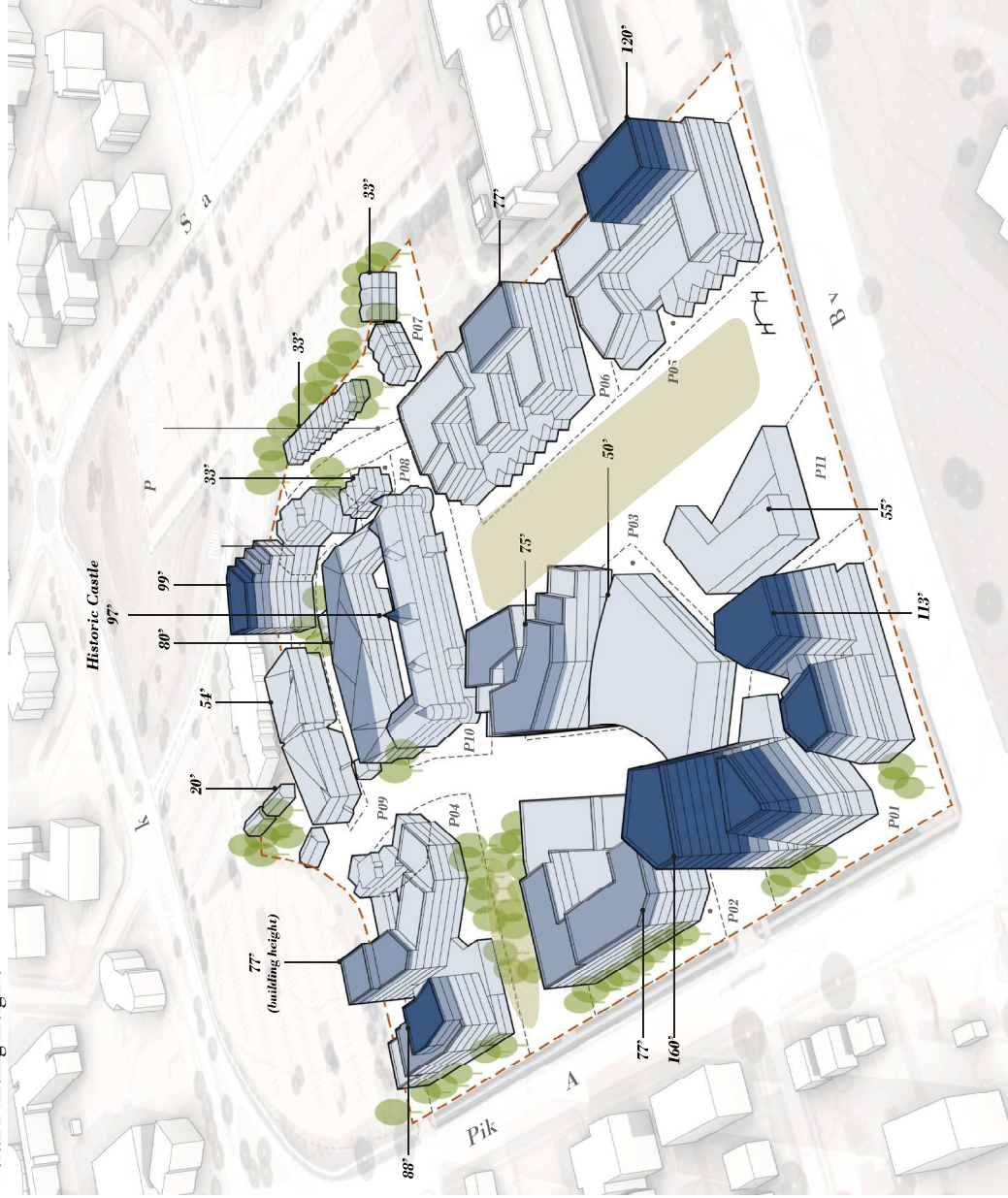




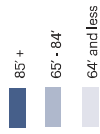
# UPH SITE

## Massing and Density Logic

### Overall Building Heights



### Building Height



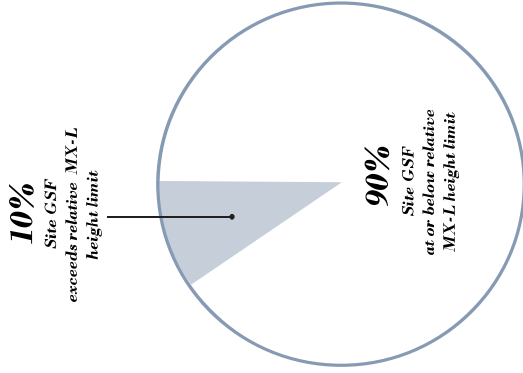
# UPH SITE

## Massing and Density Logic

MX-L Overlay and Height Delta (Relative to 65' and 85' Height Limit Zones)



**Existing Site Structure Exceeds MX-L Height Limit**



**Building Height**

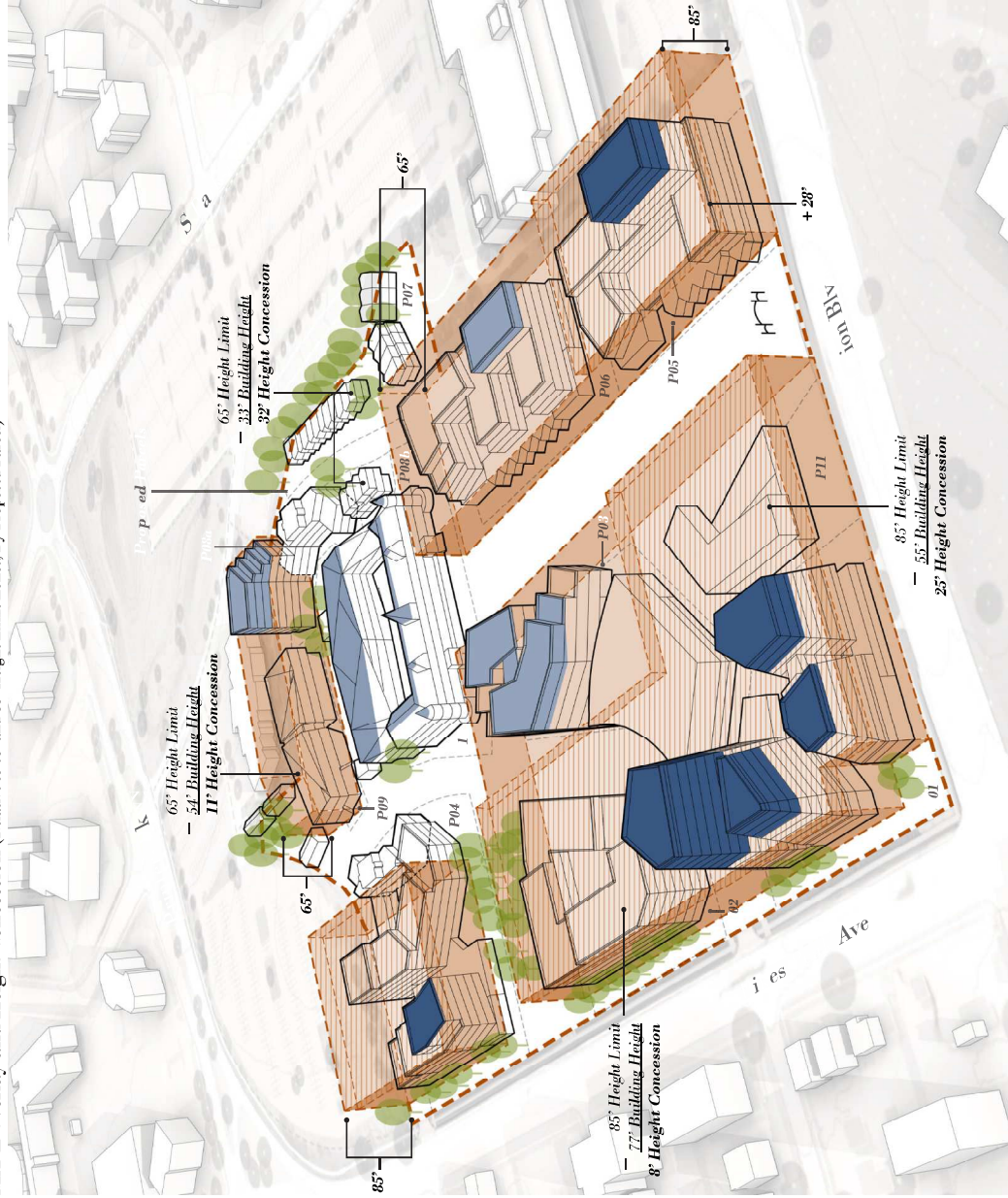
- Exceeds 85' MX-L height limit
- Exceeds 65' MX-L height limit



# UPH SITE

## Massing and Density Logic

MX-L Overlay and Height Concession (Relative to 65' and 85' Height Limit Zones, By Proposed Parcel)



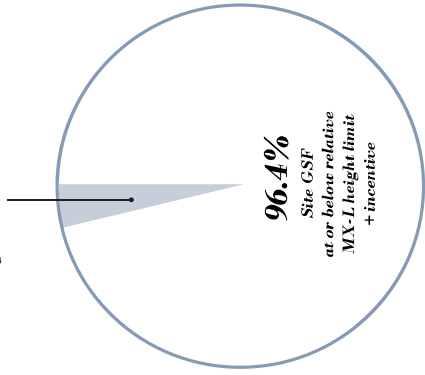
# UPH SITE

## Massing and Density Logic

Development Incentives, Height Delta, & Transference of Density



**3.6%**  
Site GSF  
exceeds relative MX-L  
height limit + incentive



**96.4%**  
Site GSF  
at or below relative  
MX-L height limit  
+ incentive

### Development Incentives

**Sustainability and Resilient Development Incentive + 24'** (previously exceeding MX-L height limit)

- Low Impact Development Stormwater Management
- Light Colored Hardscaping
- Covered Parking
- Building Efficiency
- Various other sustainable and resilient development methods will be evaluated and employed, including but not limited to green roofs, public/private partnerships, local/small business incentives, etc.

**Buildings above 104'** (65' MX-L height limit + 24' height increase from sustainability incentive)

**Buildings above 89'** (65' MX-L height limit + 24' height increase from sustainability incentive)