

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: October 20, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: John Jay, Contract Associate Planner
Responsible Department: Planning Department
Subject: 8100 Valentine Avenue



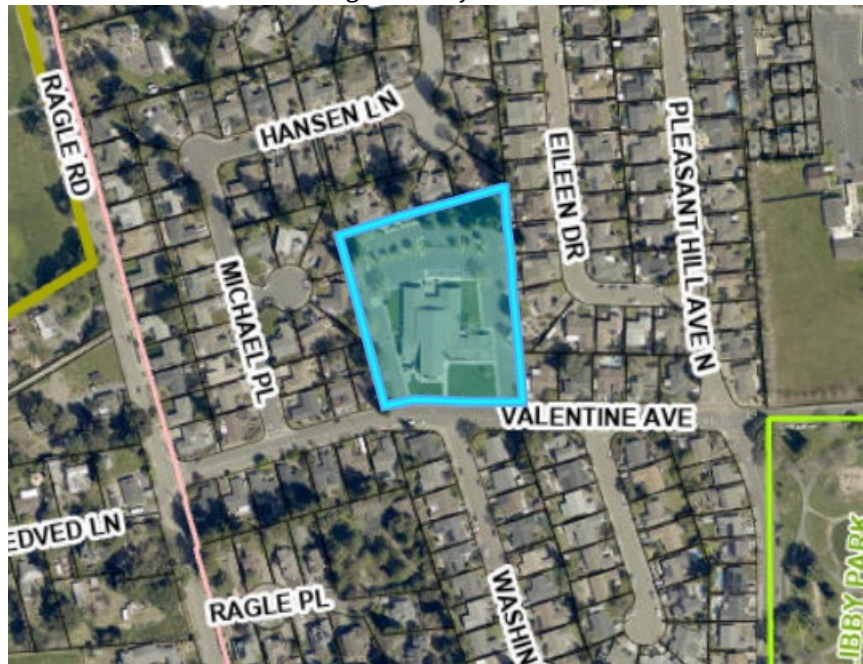
City of Sebastopol

As stated in the Applicant's written project description, the project targets the "missing middle" housing market segment, providing an alternative to for-sale homeownership opportunities without reliance on public subsidies. Three (3) of the single-family homes would be sold at restricted affordable prices to moderate-income households, and would remain subject to affordability restriction in perpetuity. The project requests waivers and concessions under State Density Bonus Law from certain development standards and has been reviewed for environmental compliance under CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 as a project consistent with the City's General Plan and Zoning.

Project Location and Surrounding Land Uses:

The project site is located at 8100 Valentine Avenue in Sebastopol, on the west side of Valentine Avenue within an established residential neighborhood (see *Figure 1*, below). The 2.69-acre parcel is currently developed with a religious facility building (formerly the LDS Church) and associated parking. The church ceased operations approximately 18 months ago, and would be removed to allow the residential development. Surrounding land uses consist of existing single-family residential development to the north, south, east and west, consistent with the site's Medium Density Residential (MDR) General Plan designation and R-4 zoning.

Figure 1 Project site



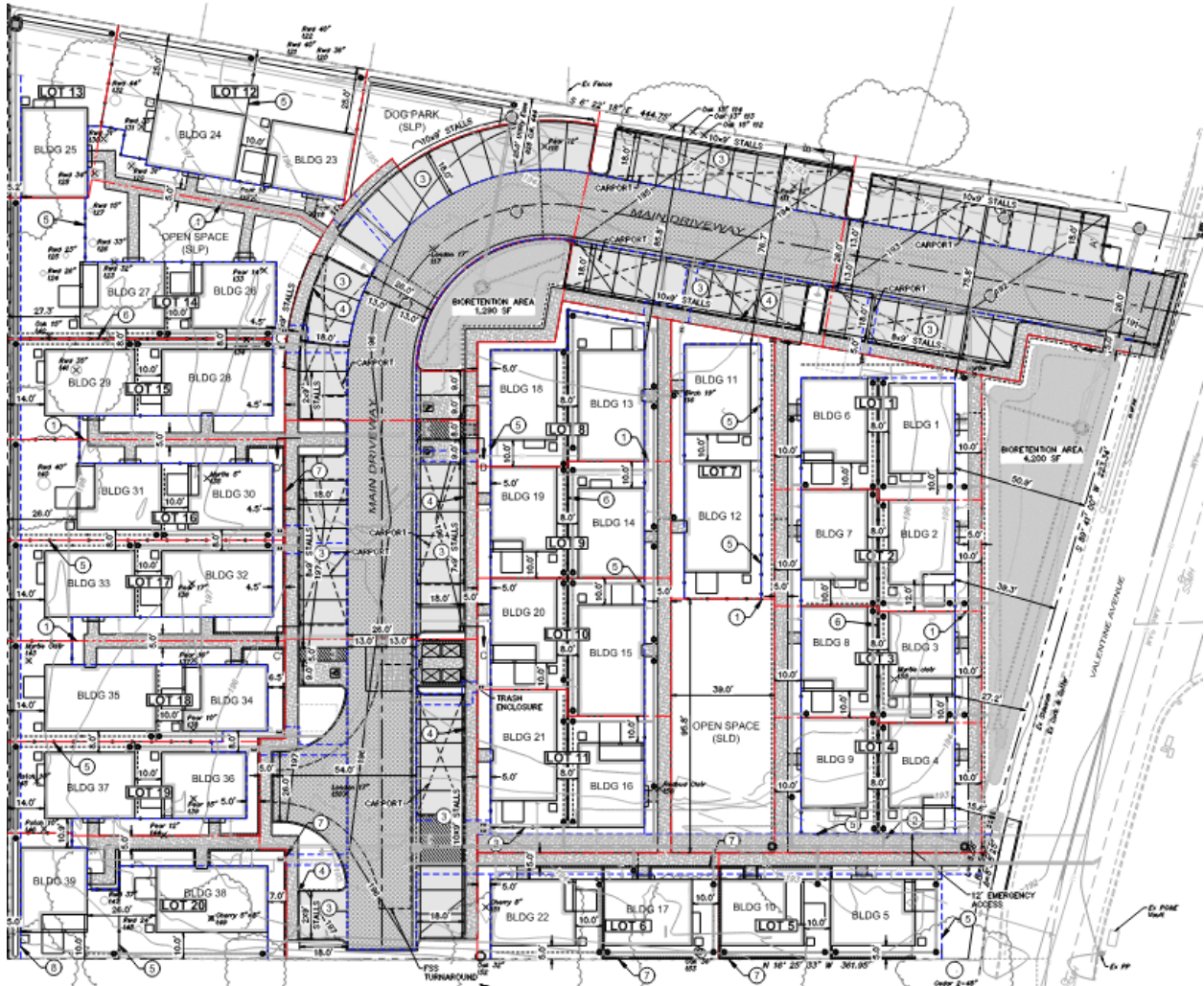
Access, Circulation and Parking:

The project takes vehicular access from a single 26' wide private entrance on Valentine Avenue, terminating in the northwest portion of the site with a hammerhead turn-around. A 12' secondary resident evacuation route in the event of an emergency is also provided, but is not proposed to support emergency vehicles (see *Figure 2*, Project Site Plan). As for parking on the site, it will be accommodated by 83 surface parking spaces with carports scattered throughout the site. Additionally, the applicant will be, and has, provided EV capable parking stalls and ADA parking stalls.



City of Sebastopol

Figure 2 Project Site Plan



Utilities

The project would be served by a new 6-inch looped municipal water main which runs along the Valentine Avenue frontage, with 20 individually metered water services (one per lot). Water and Sewer usage between the primary home and ADU on each lot would be measured by private submeters.

Utilities: An existing 12-inch municipal storm drain pipeline runs north-south within an existing 25' public utilities easement along the eastern property line. The project will utilize this existing infrastructure. As part of the review process for City staff, the applicant provided water and sewer studies for the 39 units to determine if there was enough water and sewer capacity on, which the reports indicated there was. City staff then took these studies and ran them into their cumulative modeling to ensure that the effect of 39 new residential units would not overburden the City's system. The project would connect to the City's existing sewer main on Valentine Avenue. This section of pipe has had ongoing maintenance issues, including root intrusion and debris buildup, which have caused high water levels and made it difficult for the City to fully inspect the pipe with camera equipment. A CIP project is planned to



City of Sebastopol

address this issue in upcoming years. The proposed project will pay its fair share to correct these existing maintenance issues through the payment of sewer connection fees, a portion of which will be used for this purpose.

The City's engineering consultant (GHD) studied this pipe segment to determine whether the high water levels were caused by a lack of pipe capacity or simply by the buildup that needs to be cleaned out. The study found that once the pipe is cleaned and the blockages are removed, it has enough capacity to handle both the current flow and the additional flow from the proposed project, with room to spare. The modeling concluded that the pipe does not need to be enlarged or replaced to serve the project.

This conclusion depends on the City completing routine cleaning and maintenance of the affected pipe segments before the project connects to the system. Because the project would use the City's existing sewer system, and because that system has been confirmed to have adequate capacity once routine maintenance is completed, the project would not require any new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities. As conditioned, the project would be paying its fair share to correct these preexisting maintenance issues through the payment of sewer connection charges, a portion of which will be used to facilitate the cleanout of this section of the pipe.

Stormwater: The eastern 25 feet of the site is encumbered by a utility easement for the existing storm drain and sanitary sewer. The project integrates this easement area into the site plan as the primary entry roadway, parking areas, and expanded private backyards. This would include the location of this easement within the rear yards of Lots 12 and 13. Additionally, there is a 5' private Storm Drain easement that runs east and west and would affect Lots 13-20. Notably, the proposed development will reduce total impervious surface from approximately 85,000 sf under existing conditions to approximately 66,000 sf, increasing available system capacity. The project includes two on-site water-quality basins that will collect and treat site runoff prior to discharge.

Water: The project will connect to an existing 6-inch municipal water main on Valentine Avenue. A new 6-inch looped water main will serve the community with 20 individual metered services (one per lot). Usage between the primary home and ADU on each lot will be measured by private submeters.

Sewer: An existing 6-inch municipal sanitary sewer line runs north-south along the eastern property line. A new on-site 6-inch sewer main within the private street, with 4-inch individual laterals to each lot, will serve all residential units.

Dry Utilities: Electrical, telecommunications, and related services will utilize existing infrastructure along the Valentine Avenue frontage. At this time, it is unsure as to what companies would be used for supplying the development with internet and phone services.

Solid Waste: A centralized trash enclosure will serve all residents under a single HOA-managed service contract. The trash enclosure design and truck turnaround location have been reviewed and conceptually approved by the local trash service provider from a letter provided by the applicant. However, this letter doesn't include any final design features or specifications and additionally does not include service times or frequency. The project has been conditioned to provide a waste management plan for the approval by Planning Director and Sonoma County Resource Recovery prior to recordation of the Final Map.



DISCUSSION:

Legal Framework:

The City's consideration of the proposed project is restricted by State Housing Law, specifically the Housing Accountability Act and State Density Bonus Law.

State Density Bonus Law provides projects that dedicate a certain percentage of their units as affordable housing certain benefits. The proposed project qualifies for the State Density Bonus Law's benefits because they are providing 3 of the 20 primary units (15%) as affordable for moderate income households (which also satisfies the requirements of the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance). A moderate income household has an income of between 80-120% of the Area Median Income for Sonoma County. Projects that qualify for the State Density Bonus Law are entitled to unlimited number of "waivers," which may be used to eliminate or reduce any standard that would physically prevent the project from being built at the otherwise allowable density as designed. The project is also eligible for one "concession". A concession may be used to for any "regulatory incentives or concessions proposed by the developer...that result in identifiable and actual cost reductions" for the project.

The Housing Accountability Act prohibits a local agency from denying a residential project (or approving it at a reduced density) if the project "complies with applicable, *objective* general plan and zoning standards and criteria, including design review standards, in effect at the time that" the application is submitted. Importantly, a project complies with applicable objective development standards if the project has used a waiver or concession under the Density Bonus Law to reduce or eliminate an objective standard.

The City may only deny a requested concession or waiver, or deny a project that complies with adopted objective standards, in very limited circumstances, including if it would have a "specific, adverse impact" on public health and safety, and there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the impact." A "specific, adverse impact" is a "significant, quantifiable, direct, and unavoidable impact, based on objective, identified written public health or safety standards, policies, or conditions as they existed on the date the application was deemed complete."

General Plan Consistency. The project site is designated Medium Density Residential (MDR) on the City of Sebastopol General Plan Land Use Map. The MDR designation is applicable to single-family residential areas with densities up to approximately 8.7 units per acre and provides for a range of housing types consistent with the established residential character of surrounding neighborhoods.

The proposed project's base density of 7.43 dwelling units per acre (20 lots on 2.69 acres) is consistent with the maximum density of 8.7 dwelling units per acre permitted in the R-4 zone. As conditioned, the project is consistent with the Sebastopol General Plan and the EIR that was certified for it.

Additionally, the project is consistent with the following General Plan policies as shown below.

- Policy LU 1-2: Avoid urban sprawl by concentrating development within the City limits; favor infill development over annexation.
- Policy LU 5-5: Strongly encourage residential development in a balanced and efficient pattern that reduces sprawl, preserves open space, and creates convenient connections to other land uses.
- Policy LU 6-1: Promote increased residential densities.
- Policy LU 6-2: Promote compact urban form that provides residential opportunities in close proximity to jobs, services, and transit.



City of Sebastopol

- Housing Element Policy C-4: The City will encourage development of new housing to meet a range of income levels, including market-rate housing, and a variety of housing sizes and types.
- Housing Element Goal D-1: Promote Housing Affordability for both Renters and Homeowners.

Tree Ordinance.

The applicant has also requested a concession to excuse full compliance with the City's Tree Protection Ordinance. Specifically, the applicant is proposing to eliminate the requirement to obtain a tree removal permit from the Design Review Board, and instead have the permit issued administratively by staff. The requested concessions does not change the substantive requirements of the Tree Protection Ordinance.

As discussed above, the applicant may request as a concession any regulatory incentives that result in identifiable and actual cost reductions. There is no minimum threshold for how substantial the cost reductions must be. The City may deny a concession if it would have a specific, adverse impact upon public health and safety that cannot be mitigating. The requested concession will not create this type of impact, because any public health impacts caused by the removal of the trees from the project site will still be mitigated pursuant to the substantive requirements of the Tree Protection Ordinance. For this reason, staff has determined that the requested concession must be granted.

The concession and the remaining substantive requirements for tree mitigation are captured in a proposed condition #2 of Exhibit A of the conditions of approval for the project. A full tree protection plan will be required before grading or improvement plans are approved.

Zoning Consistency. As noted above, the project involves waivers from several R-4 development standards under Table 17.20-2 of the Sebastopol Municipal Code. The table below shows the requirements based on the R4 Zoning standards and what has been provided by the applicant for the project. The items marked with an asterisk (*) are where the project requests a waiver.

Table 1: Waivers

Development Standard (R-4 Zone, SMC Table 17.20-2)	Requirement	Proposed
Minimum Lot Area (interior, single-family)*	5,000 sf	Smallest proposed lot: 2,501 sf; largest: 5,902 sf
Minimum Lot Width (interior)*	50 ft.	50 ft.
Minimum Lot Width (corner)*	60 ft.	Not applicable
Maximum Height (main buildings)	30 ft., 2 stories	Single-story plans (Plan 1, Plan 2): 15'-7" to 18'-2"; two-story plans (Plan 3, Plan 4): 26'-9" to 29'-0"
Maximum Height (accessory dwelling units)*	17 ft.	Plan 1 748 sf, single-story, 16'-2" to 18'-2"
Front Yard Setback*	20 ft.	15 ft.
Interior Side Yard (main building)*	10% of lot width, or 5 ft., whichever is greater, not to exceed 9 ft.	4 ft.
Interior Side Yard (accessory dwelling unit)	4 ft.	4 ft



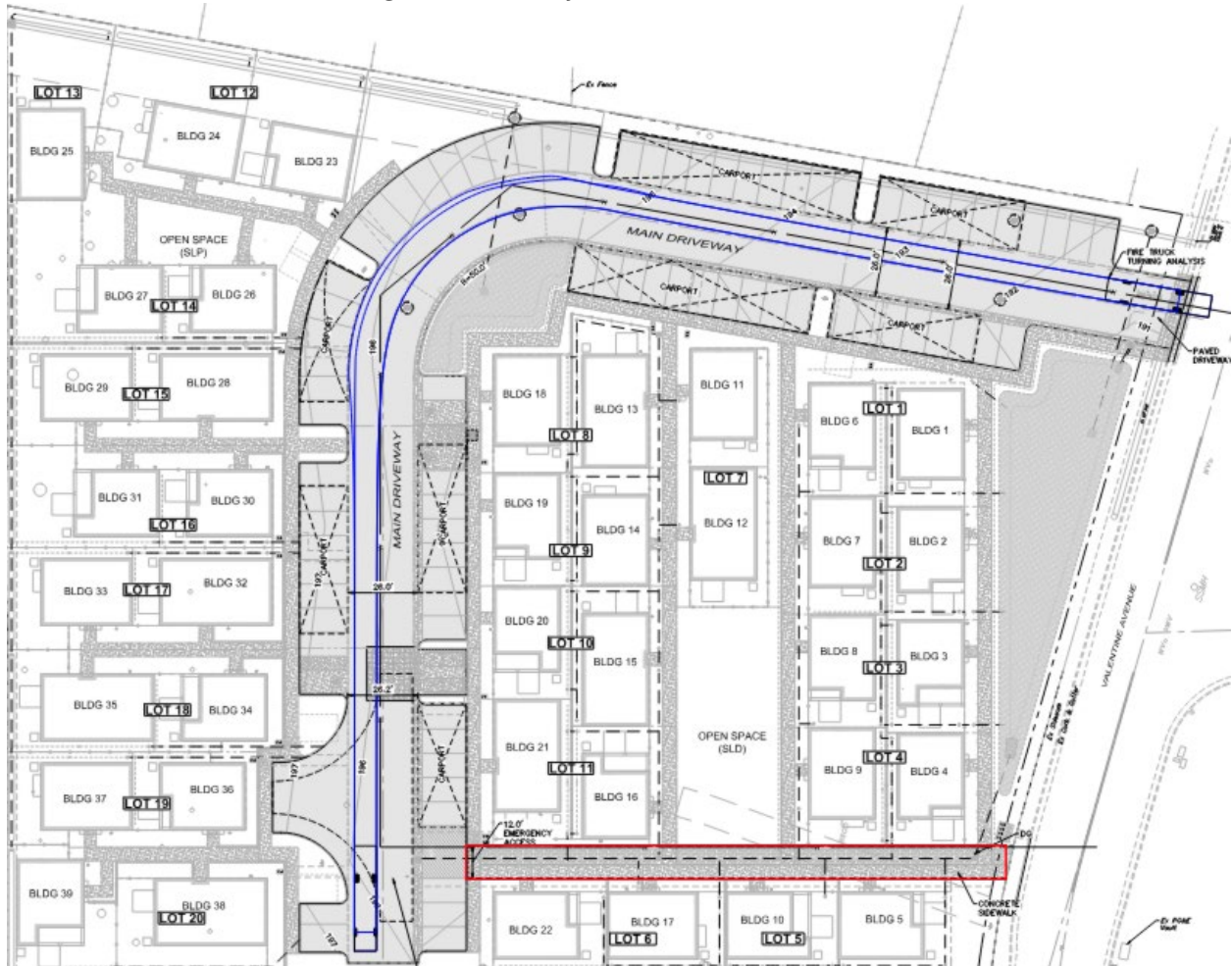
City of Sebastopol

Rear Yard (main building)*	20% of lot depth, no less than 20 ft. nor greater than 30 ft.	10 ft.
Rear Yard (accessory dwelling unit)	4 ft.	5 ft or more
Special Setback – Mechanical Equipment*	50% of applicable setback, not less than 5 ft. from rear/side lines	Project conditioned to meet the requirements of Chapter 20 of the Building Code and will be conditioned to attenuate noise at the property line.
Maximum Lot Coverage (parcels ≤ 5,000 sf)*	50%	Not shown
Maximum Residential Density	1 DU/3,630 sf lot area (~8.7 du/ac)	20 Units or 7.43 du/ac which is within the range of 5.4 to 8.7.
Minimum Usable Open Space	50 sf/DU	Will be conditioned to meet this requirement
Minimum Dimensions for Parking (Covered)	10'x20'**	Carport spaces: 54 (39 w/ EV)
Minimum Dimensions for Parking (Uncovered)	9'x19'**	Regular stalls: 9' x 18' (44 stalls)
** As required by SMC 17.110		



City of Sebastopol

Figure 3 Secondary resident evacuation route



The applicant has also requested a waiver to Chapter 17.110 of the Zoning Ordinance. The covered parking stalls are required to be 20ft in length and 10ft in width and the project proposes 18ft by 9ft. However, because the project is providing more parking than is required under code provisions and does not provide any compact spaces, the parking standards could be considered to be met. The project will provide at least one (1) Electronic Vehicle (EV) charging capable parking spot per residential unit. The project proposes to have covered EV charging spaces and staff has recommended the applicant provide additional EV parking spaces in the uncovered areas that are dedicated to EV's only.

Subdivision Map Act/Subdivision Ordinance Consistency:

The proposed 8100 Valentine Avenue subdivision has been reviewed against the findings required for tentative map approval under the California Subdivision Map Act (Government Code Section 66474, copied below for reference) and the findings set forth in Sebastopol Municipal Code Section 16.28.070, which incorporates the state findings into local law.



City of Sebastopol

The subdivision is consistent with the site's General Plan designation of Medium Density Residential and its R-4 zoning, which permits a maximum density of 8.7 dwelling units per acre. The 20 proposed lots fall within the base density allowed on the 2.69-acre site, with an additional 19 detached ADUs. The site was previously developed with a church building that is allowed through the Conditional use permit process. As the site was previously developed it supports the findings that the property is physically suitable for both the type and density of development proposed.

The project's primary environmental sensitivity is the removal of protected native trees. Of the 20 trees meeting the City's protected tree threshold, seven are proposed for removal, with the remaining thirteen retained and mitigation proposed for those removed. The applicant has also proposed an alternative plan which will remove up to 12 on-site protected trees for removal, with three retained and mitigation proposed for those removed. The alternative plan exchanges the placement of primary dwellings and ADUs on the north property boundary and also adjusts one two story dwelling away from the property boundary on the western boundary, addressing community concerns. A full tree protection plan will be required before grading or improvement plans are approved.

Public health and safety findings are supported by the Fire Department Conditions of Approval prepared for the project, WELO-compliant irrigation, and standard drainage and utility improvements, the circulation and drainage design standards under SMC Chapter 16.40 have been confirmed through the Public Works and Engineering departments.

The Fire District has reviewed the proposed subdivision and confirmed that the project, as conditioned, meets all requirements of the Fire Code, including those requirements related to emergency vehicle access and residential evacuation.

Subdivision Map Act Government Code 66410:

A legislative body of a city or county shall deny approval of a tentative map, or a parcel map for which a tentative map was not required, if it makes any of the following findings:

- (a) That the proposed map is not consistent with applicable general and specific plans as specified in Section 65451.
- (b) That the design or improvement of the proposed subdivision is not consistent with applicable general and specific plans.
- (c) That the site is not physically suitable for the type of development.
- (d) That the site is not physically suitable for the proposed density of development.
- (e) That the design of the subdivision or the proposed improvements are likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and avoidably injure fish or wildlife or their habitat.
- (f) That the design of the subdivision or type of improvements is likely to cause serious public health problems.
- (g) That the design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will conflict with easements, acquired by the public at large, for access through or use of, property within the proposed subdivision. In this connection, the governing body may approve a map if it finds that alternate easements, for access or for use, will be provided, and that these will be substantially equivalent to ones previously acquired by the public. This subsection shall apply only to easements of record or to easements established by judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction and no authority is hereby granted to a legislative body to determine that the public at large has acquired easements for access through or use of property within the proposed subdivision.



City of Sebastopol

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Staff's analysis of the proposed project addresses consistency with the Sebastopol General Plan, the Municipal Code (Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances), and CEQA. Because the applicant is requesting waivers and concessions under State Density Bonus Law, each departure from an otherwise-applicable development standard is discussed below and evaluated under the one-concession, unlimited-waiver framework established by Government Code Section 65915(d) & (e)¹, rather than treated as an automatic General Plan or zoning inconsistency.

Parking drive aisle widths and length. The project provides 83 surface parking spaces on site that measure 9' wide by 18' in depth. Of these parking spaces there is a mix of covered parking through the construction of carports and uncovered parking that is dispersed throughout the site. The SMC requires all covered parking to be no shorter than 10' in width and 20' in length. As the proposed development does not meet this requirement it shall either be conditioned to do so, or the Council can find that due to the excess parking provided by the development, roughly double, and inclusion of compact parking spaces, that the parking standards have been met. For parking spaces that are designed at 9' wide by 19' in depth, a minimum 25' width between the end of parking spaces shall be provided; this development provides a 26' width.

Site access is provided via a single private entrance from Valentine Avenue with full turning movements. As shown in Figure 3, a secondary 12-foot-wide secondary resident evacuation route is provided along the western portion of the site, to be maintained by the project's homeowners' association, for use as a secondary point of egress for residents in case of an emergency

Planning Commission summary:

At the scheduled Planning Commission meeting of September 22, 2026, the commission heard a presentation from staff, the applicant, and heard public comment about the project. The Commission had questions to staff related to the sewer and water capacity of the site and how it would be served. As part of that discussion the Public Works Director confirmed that, as conditioned, the project does not worsen the water and sewer system and that the applicant's payment on sewer connection fees will cover their fair share of assisting with the cleanout and repair of this stretch of pipeline. Additionally, there were questions about whether the fixes for this line were within the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and staff did confirm that a greater overall fix of this infrastructure, which includes this stretch of line, is in fact included in the plan and these impact fees would help facilitate those infrastructure improvements.

Another topic of discussion was around the additional roadway "secondary emergency access for residents" as stated on the Vesting Tentative Map and if the Fire Department had signed off on this. Staff explained that this was a highly discussed item with the Fire Chief from Gold Ridge Fire Department and that as conditioned, the roadway would be sufficient to assist the emergency evacuation for residents in the event of an emergency. This also includes the confirmation from the Fire Department that the hammerhead turnaround that is included in the northwestern corner of the project would serve the department's fire truck apparatus to fight any structure fires in that part of the site. The Homeowners Association (HOA) would be the body responsible for ensuring this access is kept clear, maintained, and signage kept up to date to ensure that nothing blocks this emergency access road.

¹ The project qualifies for one concession under Government Code section 65915(d)(2)(A) because at least 10 percent of the units are reserved for moderate income households in a common interest development.



City of Sebastopol

Lastly, the public provided many comments about the setbacks of this development and how close both single and two story structures were to their property. For this, staff explained to the Commission that through Density Bonus Law the applicant is allowed to request a certain number of concessions and is also granted an unlimited number of waivers if they provide a percentage of the units at an affordable rate. This project includes three deed restricted affordable units, which is 15% of the total units, 20, and thus meets the City's inclusionary requirement and the State requirement of 10%. With that, the applicant requested many waivers from the traditional development standards such as setbacks, building height, and lot size which is shown in Table 1. In summary, this means that the City has limited control over where they can enforce these development standards and is required to grant these waivers to the applicant which allows them to site these buildings where they are currently located. The Commission did provide recommendations to the applicant on how they could best incorporate the concerns of the neighbors that have privacy issues with design options, flipping orientation of plan layouts, and other screening opportunities.

Based on the feedback received at the Planning Commission, the applicant has proposed alternative option for the Council to consider, which would involve the ADUs moving to the rear of each of the new lots on the north boundary of the property, and adjusting one two-story dwelling away from the property boundary on the western boundary, and the primary units moving to front. The intent of this option is to minimize privacy concerns because the ADUs are only one story. However, this change would result in the removal of more trees to accommodate the new locations of the primary units, and decrease the number of heritage trees that would remain on the property to 3. These additional tree removals would be subject to the requirement of the Tree Protection Ordinance, and replacement requirements.

CEQA Review:

The proposed project has been evaluated for compliance with CEQA pursuant to Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines (Projects Consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan, or Zoning). Section 15183 provides that a project consistent with the development density established by an existing General Plan or zoning designation for which an EIR was certified need not undergo additional environmental review, except as necessary to examine site-specific effects that are peculiar to the project or its site and were not addressed as significant effects in the prior EIR, or to determine whether more recent information shows the effects will be more significant than described in the prior EIR.

A Section 15183 Consistency Checklist has been prepared for the project addressing all twenty environmental topic areas identified in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Service Systems, Wildfire, and Mandatory Findings of Significance), using the certified City of Sebastopol General Plan Update Final EIR (GPU FEIR, certified November 15, 2016, SCH# 2016032001) as the programmatic baseline of analysis. For each topic, the checklist evaluates whether the project would result in impacts peculiar to the project or its site that were not analyzed as significant in the GPU FEIR, or whether new information shows more severe impacts than previously disclosed.

Based on the checklist analysis, staff has concluded that the project, as conditioned, would not result in any new significant environmental effect, or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified significant effect, beyond what was analyzed in the GPU FEIR, and that no project-specific significant impact peculiar to this parcel has been identified.

This determination will not change if the Council decides that the project shall proceed with the alternative layout that relocates the ADUs to the rear of the lots, but which results in the removal of a greater number of heritage trees.



City of Sebastopol

The removal of those trees will continue to be mitigated through the imposition of a condition of approval that will govern the planting of replacement trees in accordance with the substantive requirements of the Tree Protection Ordinance .

Accordingly, staff recommends the City Council determine the project exempt from additional environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS/PRIORITIES AND GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

This agenda item represents the City Council goals/priorities as follows:

- Goal 4.5.1 Ensure proactive Housing Element compliance and streamlined permitting, as this project would be aligned with the permit streamlining act, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance, and would be furthering housing production within City limits that of which is one of the main goals of the Housing Element.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of the agenda item.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The project includes no fiscal impact to the City as the deposit account for the project has been paid for by the project applicant and City staff hours are billed to that account. Additionally, the project would provide impact fees, building permit and plan check fees to the City should it move through its entitlements and on to building permit application.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council adopt a resolution approving the Vesting Tentative Map to subdivide a 2.69 acre lot into 20 lots for the property located at 8100 Valentine Avenue project, including the associated Findings, and subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval, and find the project exempt from additional environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.

OPTIONS:

1. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- A. Draft Resolution with Conditions of Approval
- B. Application materials
- C. Vesting Tentative Map package
- D. Site Plan, Architectural Elevations, and Floor Plans



City of Sebastopol

- E. CEQA Section 15183 Consistency Checklist, with Exhibits A-D
- F. Public Comments
- G. Revised site plan
- H. Redline Conditions of approval noting changes from Planning Commission

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 10/15/2026
 CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 10/15/2026

The proposed action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15183 (Consistency with a General or Community Plan) and no further environmental review is required. (Class 15 exemption)

Administrative Services/Financial Approval: Approval Date: 10/15/2026

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

Account Code (if applicable) _____

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 10/15/2026

City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 10/15/2026