

# Marina Plaza

## The Urban Village



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Best known to the outside world as the home of Apple, Cupertino is located in the heart of the Silicon Valley. Indeed, Cupertino has transformed rapidly with the growth of the high technology industry, and is currently 95% built-out with existing green space designated as preserved open space. Redevelopment of under-utilized properties presents the best path forward for Cupertino to address its urgent need for more housing near jobs and services.

Faced with the necessity to identify sites with redevelopment potential, the Cupertino 2014-2022 Housing Element plan identified several sites as potential housing opportunities. A site owned by De Anza Ventures, on which the beloved and culturally significant grocery store, Marina Foods, has been serving the community since 1991, was one of the identified sites. Fortuitously, a recent assessment conducted by De Anza Ventures indicated the Marina Foods site was in need of repairs, opening the door to redevelopment discussions. Marina Plaza, the resulting vision of those discussions, is a redevelopment plan to create a vibrant mixed-use urban village for the residents of Cupertino that is aligned with the City's updated land use plans as well as providing an optimal investment opportunity for De Anza Ventures. The project has now received unanimous entitlement approval.

**Location:** Cupertino, CA

**Owner:** De Anza Ventures

**Site Size:** 5.12 acres

**Features:** 122 room hotel, 188 residential units – market rate and affordable, and 22,600 sq. ft. of retail and restaurant space with existing offices and banks integrated into the design

Project entitled, Construction pending building permits

### Marina Plaza

Innovative redevelopment of an underutilized shopping center into a vibrant mixed-use urban village

#### CHALLENGES

With an adjacent shopping center anchored by Target on one side, the Apple campus adjacent on the other side and adjacent local bus stops, De Anza Ventures asked DAHLIN to develop a design to capitalize on the site's optimal location and its unique opportunity to bring together all the elements that make up a sustainable community:

- Redevelopment versus green field development
- Connectivity
- Walkable
- Transit
- Interactive
- Public spaces
- Landscape
- Sustainable design
- Housing opportunities near jobs, shopping, and restaurants

Marina Plaza, with great design, can be a mixed-use, infill development with an impact that is much greater than the sum of its parts. However, every opportunity has its challenges, and Marina Plaza faced two primary challenges in its journey through entitlement: uncertainty and parking.

One of the primary sources of uncertainty stemmed from the fact that the City is still in the midst of transitioning into their new zoning guidelines. Since the design has



coincided with this transition, the City has struggled to provide firm responses to proposed designs, specifically regarding number of units allowed, requiring numerous design changes as the City continued to change its position. Another source of uncertainty arose due to an unanticipated misunderstanding regarding neighboring easements. While this is being proactively resolved by working with various neighbors to create a shared vision and community spirit for the entire block to which all can contribute, the design must remain responsive should the outcome of the shared vision require further revisions.

As is frequently the case, parking requirements are a significant design challenge for urban projects, and was quickly the case in the early design stages of this project. De Anza Ventures requested a design for Marina Plaza to keep the Marina Foods grocery store on the site, build residential on top of it, and add a hotel as called for in the City's plans. However, the results of a traffic impact study revealed that the grocery store drives a high volume of vehicular traffic. Additionally, in creating a pedestrian realm, finding

an elegant balance between the residential parking, circulation, and retail and restaurant parking presented a further design challenge to overcome.

#### HOW DAHLIN HELPED

In overcoming these challenges, DAHLIN synthesized De Anza Venture's vision for Marina Plaza with the needs of the City, the community, the owners and the site's potential into a mixed-use urban village, friendly to pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike.



# The center point of the village is the central plaza that forms the hub



The hub is the meeting and event area for the entire block. Designed with a multipurpose turf and terraced seating, it will be an inviting place for one to enjoy a casual lunch in the sun, people watch, experience the occasional afternoon concert or event, or even possibly a weekly farmers market. Integrated into as well as playing off this hub is a framework of connectivity that continues the friendly balance between pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular movement. For example, a tree canopied pedestrian and bike friendly boulevard connects Stevens Creek, neighboring offices and banks to the plaza while a vibrant tree canopied promenade for the pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular realm connects the plaza to the office neighbor to the south, Bandley Drive and the Target center. From the Plaza, a tree covered, landscaped Paseo Park connects to Alves Drive, the hotel and office neighbors. This animated paseo is articulated by the indoor/outdoor lounge, bar, and restaurant of the hotel and the landscaped raised porches of the residential.

This dynamic and welcoming framework of the community opens the door to three new buildings that will provide needed residential apartments – market rate and affordable, contemporary hotel rooms with amenities for the business traveler, plus neighborhood restaurants and conveniences that will serve Cupertino residents.



## MARINA PLAZA

The tree canopied and pedestrian ambience of Cupertino continues on the perimeter street scene, Alves, Bandley, and De Anza. Significant plazas at the corners, an urban landscape with outdoor dining possibilities at the restaurant, and a layered softer landscape at the residences accent the street scene. Having places to sit and pause, featuring dramatic architecture at the focal points of the street scene and community, further enhances the pedestrian character.

Since much of the uncertainty affecting the design is dependent upon the City's vision, neighbors, Cupertino residents and public officials and staff, DAHLIN preserved project momentum by tightly managing response times. Achieved using a flexible design approach informed by active listening to enable quick turnarounds between iterations, this solution is a blend of science and art, process as the science and experience as the art, particularly DAHLIN's experience working collaboratively with municipal planning commissions.

Early in the design process, it was determined that the grocery store simply required more parking than could be accommodated given the additional residential and hotel uses. Rather than compromise the optimal mix of uses as well as to preserve walkability and the open spaces, Marina Foods is relocating to a nearby site; thereby, keeping this culturally significant grocery store in the community it has served for nearly three decades. Even without the grocery store, parking was still a very significant issue requiring careful planning in order to create a pedestrian village. Moving much of the parking underground and simplifying vehicle circulation with a single main street to serve the site provided the required parking without sacrificing the pedestrian village. Retail and restaurant patrons will have the option to surface park on the main street or within the adjacent ground level parking garage of Building B while all the residential and hotel parking is below their respective buildings. As a result, the entitled design now has a lower traffic impact than the current usage.



## RESULTS AND FUTURE PLANS

De Anza Ventures, as a both a family business and key property owner in Cupertino, is committed to continuing to invest in their properties in ways that make a positive contribution to their community. Working with neighbors on final site agreements, De Anza Ventures and DAHLIN look forward to starting construction documents for Marina Plaza as early as Spring 2017 with construction beginning as early as the start of 2018.

Through De Anza Ventures' vision and DAHLIN's tailored approach to design and working with the city planners, the Marina Plaza design creates a unique walkable place that its residents can enjoy along with the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods and workplaces. By continuing the ambience of Cupertino's tree lined boulevards, the creation of stronger community connectors for pedestrian and cyclist alike, development of public spaces, and the proposed community amenities will enhance Cupertino for years to come. Marina Plaza creates a model for future redevelopment and provides local conveniences and comfort to the tech-savvy and mobile residents and travelers of Silicon Valley.



GROUND LEVEL