

\$300 million West Oakland project revamps design, seeks approvals

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A huge influx of both apartments and people will hit West Oakland BART station in the coming years, and it could start at 500 Kirkham St.

Developer [Panoramic Interests](#) will seek final approvals from the Planning Commission this spring for its 1,032-unit project, a go-ahead that would come after three redesigns, a fight over parking and years of planning.

The developer has added a second park — for a total of 40,000 square feet of green space — and slimmed down the appearance of the 23-story tower that serves as the centerpiece. The project also includes two smaller buildings rising to eight and nine stories apiece. With just 59 parking spaces, the goal is to create a transit village that’s almost entirely carless and allows community businesses to take advantage of lower retail rents throughout 44,000 square feet of retail, said [Patrick Kennedy](#), CEO of Panoramic.

“It’s being able to incorporate ideas we’ve been working on for decades all in one place — car-free, super efficient, the activity on the sidewalks, the interaction with the two parks,” Kennedy said.

A bar on the corner of Seventh and Union Streets, 7th West, will expand in the retail area, Kennedy said, while Panoramic will court other local barber shops, restaurants and shops for the remaining space.

The project is one of two directly adjacent to the station, but could be the first to come online. China Harbour Engineering Co. and [Strategic Urban Development Alliance](#) (SUDA) recently chose designs for nearly 800 apartments and office space at 1451 7th St., but project details are still in the early stages. [Holliday Development](#), meanwhile, [broke ground last month on a 110-unit modular apartment project](#) at 532 Union St. about three blocks away.

Kennedy [wanted to keep the number of parking spaces as low as possible](#) at the site, originally proposing just eight spots and finally compromising at 59. With more than 3,000 residents planned for the development, that’s still practically going cold-turkey, as he put it.



SOLOMON CORDWELL BUENZ

Panoramic Interests' project at 500 Kirkham St. now includes a second park and a slimmer tower design.

“We haven’t seen projects outside downtown with this few spaces, so this is a test case in many ways to see if this amount of parking is successful,” said Darin Ranelletti, policy director for housing security at the mayor’s office, in July.

Panoramic brought on two new architects, Solomon Cordwell Buenz and Einwiller Kuehl, as they pushed the project through the design changes. Lowney Architecture designed the building.

If approvals go ahead this May or June, the developer aims to break ground in the first quarter of 2020 on the site. Pankow Builders is the general contractor.

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