



THE MEWS - 300 EAST MULTIFAMILY

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*Cover: approaching project by sidewalk, from the south  
This page: approaching project at evening, from the north*

# THE MEWS

*mews: a British term for a yard or cobbled street lined by dwellings*

## INTRODUCTION

The Mews, a proposed planned development, will occupy two parcels located at 720 and 724 South on 300 East in Salt Lake City, Utah. These parcels are currently each occupied by a duplex residence, one of which has been abandoned. The new development will place 7 townhomes on the site, each with a dedicated private yard facing out of the property.

The development mimics a typology set forth in British housing, called a “mews.” The townhomes proposed at The Mews add features of this typology to create units with private, secured outdoor space, which is a commodity often lacking in other townhome developments within the city. While other developments reduce or altogether forgo private yard space to maximize unit counts, this development seeks to attract a family-oriented market with its generous unit sizes and private yards.

The Mews has been designed to comply as closely as possible with the applicable zoning setbacks, building heights, and lot coverage, such that only a minimal variance from the zoning code is required to create the development. This preserves the inherent qualities of the area by increasing the density of the site to provide much needed housing without over-developing the site or creating large, imposing buildings which tower over neighboring uses.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROPOSED USE

The two parcels being developed are located at 720 South and 724 South on 300 East. Both are currently zoned RMF-35. Adjacent parcels to the north and south, and across 300 East to the east are also zoned RMF-35. Adjacent lots at the rear property line, to the west, are zoned SR-3.

Both of the two parcels pertaining to this project currently have a duplex on the lot. Originally constructed as single family residences, both have undergone additions and renovations to convert them into rental properties. While the additions to the 720 South property are moderate, the additions to the structure on 724 South include a number of interconnected garage and storage spaces which cover a majority of the quarter-acre lot. This larger structure has sat abandoned for over a year, and is designated by the county assessor as a “salvage” residence.

The neighboring properties support a variety of uses, including commercial at the north (former site of Koko Kitchen), apartment buildings to the east, and condominiums, single-family residences, duplex residences, and multiplex buildings on all sides. The 300 East right-of-way also has a well-developed biking infrastructure, with bike lanes protected from vehicular travel lanes by a buffering zone of parallel parking stalls.

The proposed use for the site places 7-townhomes along a shared private street. The development takes cues from a British housing typology, called a “mews.” Historically, these were stables built along a shared yard or alley which were then converted into dwellings. Modern adaptations of a mews



*Project site, located at 720-724 South 300 East SLC, UT*



*Clockwise, from top Left:  
 Current site, with two duplex residences.  
 The former Koko Kitchen located at the north of the site.  
 River Rock Apartments, across the street from site.  
 Condominium development to south of site.*

are now constructed as new blocks of dwellings along a shared street, with private yards serving as an access to each unit. The shared street creates a semi-public shared space for residents which expands the sense of livable area in their housing community, while the yards adjoining each unit provide much-needed private spaces.

The Mews incorporates elements of this typology to create a grouping of townhomes which are not typical for the area, and perhaps not found in the city as a whole. The 7 townhomes are generously sized three-bedroom, four-bathroom units. And, unlike many townhomes which group 5 or even 10 units in a continuous building, these 7 townhomes are split into three buildings, making six of the townhomes a greatly-desired end unit. This design strategy increases the ability to freely place windows and balconies adjacent to interior living spaces, filling the units with natural light and allowing them to live bigger than the limited floorplate.

At the ground level, each end unit fronts onto a private, securable outdoor yard which connects either back to the shared interior street or directly to 300 East. Each unit has a two-car garage which backs onto the shared private drive. This private driveway also connects to a shared courtyard at the front of the site, which serves as an additional public space and provides seating and bicycle storage areas. The development as a whole is meant to be marketed to a family-oriented demographic, which will greatly enjoy and benefit from the dedicated yards, larger unit sizes, and shared courtyard.

## DEVELOPMENT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

*"Demonstrate how your project meets the purpose and objectives of a planned development as stated in 21A.55.010 of the Planned Development ordinance."*

### Purpose

The RMF-35 Zoning District seeks to "provide an environment suitable for a variety of moderate density housing types, including single-family, two-family, and multi-family dwellings with a maximum height of thirty five feet." The proposed buildings for The Mews comply with all required setbacks, building

height maximums, lot coverage limits, and design treatments prescribed by the RMF-35 zone. However, rather than placing all the townhouse units in one or two buildings that have frontage along 300 East, a three building scheme allows for each unit to have the desired private yard space along the side and rear property line and creates the greater ratio of end units. This alternative design means the rear building of the development does not interface directly with 300 East, even though it can be seen at the end of the shared driveway.

The Central Community master plan for the area proposes the site have a unit density of 15-30 units per acre (Central Community Master Plan (2005), p. 2; see Central Community Future Land Use Map). With 7 townhomes placed on the combined .41 acres, The Mews achieves a moderate density of approximately 17 units per acre. A sample of five nearby townhouse developments puts this project at the lower range of local townhouse densities, which have calculated densities ranging from approximately 11 to 42 units per acre (see graphics on following pages). The Mews balances unit counts with required zoning setbacks to create a project which meets the recommendations of the local master plan while still preserving the buffers between these new buildings and any current or future uses on abutting properties.

Additionally, the splitting of the units into three buildings fits well around the required emergency access and turn-around. This emergency access and turn-around doubles as the shared drive for the development, which provides sufficient room for accessing garages and also a route for waste management collection toward the rear of the site.

Another way The Mews supports the city master plan is through its unit size. The Central City neighborhood planning area states that a goal of its residential areas is to "provide more three and four bedroom housing units" (Central Community Master Plan 2005, p. 5). The Mews will be a development of this type, with each unit having three bedrooms.



Select locations of nearby townhouse developments



A



B



C



D



E

Views of nearby townhouse developments. See previous page for locations.

**A:** Maven Townhomes. 25 units on .59 acres, or 42 units/acre (zone D-2).

**B:** Block 18 Green Housing. 11 units on .8 acres, or 14 units/acre (zone RMF-45).

**C:** Marcat Condominiums. 6 units on .53 acres, or 11 units/acre (zone RMF-35).

**D:** ModaSego Townhomes. 28 units on .97 acres, or 29 units/acre (zone RMF-35).

**E:** Liberty Court Townhouses. 9 units on .5 acre, or 18 units/acre (zone RMF-35).



## Objectives

In addition to the purposes listed above, the development seeks to specifically address the following objectives:

### Objective A: Open Space and Natural Lands

The existing single-family residence at 724 S 300 E is a sprawling mass of garages and interconnected storage spaces. A bit of an eyesore, this parcel lacks open space since the building's metal-wrapped additions abut nearly every property line around the site.

Next door, though it complies with zoning better, the residence at 720 S 300 E similarly suffers from a lack of yard space because the 724 S property to the south also wraps around its west property line. Along this western boundary, both properties have created a large, shared concrete parking area. This greatly reduces the usable space of the smaller 720 S parcel, making it more beneficial to develop it in conjunction with a new scheme on the two parcels combined.

The new Mews development places new buildings on the site which comply with prescribed building setbacks to restore open space to the edges of the property. As previously described, the side and rear yards will provide private yard space adjoining each townhouse unit. In addition to these private yards along the side and rear property lines, the required front yard of the property is occupied by open yards and a common plaza area for seating and bicycle parking. This activates the street frontage by creating an attractive frontage for people walking and biking along the 300 East frontage.

### Objective C: Housing

The Mews, with its private yards and shared central street, is a townhouse typology. This is common in the area, but the more recent developments of the same typology are much denser than this proposal, achieving densities around 30 or 40 units per acre, with 5 to 9 units in a single continuous block. The Mews proposes a modest density of approximately 17 units per acre, with either 2 or 3 units in a single building. Thus, both the scale of the individual buildings and the density of the whole development is greatly reduced from other typical townhomes, which relates better

to the neighboring duplexes and single-family residences on its block. These units are also better marketed to families because of their three bedroom layouts and private yards.

### Objective D: Mobility

Since The Mews will be located along a street with a well-developed biking corridor, the project dedicates space within the front yard to a shared courtyard with seating and bike racks. These amenities encourage use of the semi-public courtyard space and strengthen the connection to the walking and biking infrastructure throughout the city.

## PLANNED DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

*"Demonstrate how your project meets the Standards for Planned Developments as stated in 21A.55.050 of the Planned Development ordinance"*

### Standard A: Planned Development Objectives

Apart from allowing for a rear building that does not have street frontage along 300 E, the development does not require any other modifications to the RMF-35 zoning. As described in the "Objective A: Open Space" section, the purpose for this allowance is to prioritize the private yards adjoining each townhouse unit. Each building fully complies with the zoning district's setback, height maximum, and lot coverage requirements. Additionally, the splitting of the development into three buildings allows for a turn-around to exist within the site for emergency vehicle access.

### Standard B: Master Plan Compatibility

The densities indicated in the Central City Master Plan (2005) show that this site has a target density of 15-30 units per acre. The Mews achieves 17 units per acre, which is towards the lower end of this target. This will help balance densities within the greater area, as other nearby apartment buildings and townhomes have densities exceeding 40 units per acre.

### Standard C: Design And Compatibility

#### 1. Scale, Mass, and Intensity

The cluster of buildings sits within the prescribed building envelope of the RMF-35 zoning. These buildings are similar in height to nearby townhome developments, although each building only has 2 or 3 units. This greatly enhances the product by providing 6 end-units in a 7-townhouse scheme, whereas conventional townhouse developments would only have 2 or 4 end-type units at this same density. Additionally, compliance with zoning setbacks preserves yard spaces around the site, making this development less imposing on adjacent uses and properties.

#### 2. Building orientation and materials

Both buildings which front 300 E have units with entrances facing the street. The rear building's center unit also faces the street and is distantly visible from the street, as the unit is centered on the shared private drive extending into the site. The remaining four units have ground-floor entrances which are accessible through their adjoining yards, which then connect back to the private street via sidewalks and gates.

Although the RMF-35 has no design treatment requirements for materials, all three buildings have a variety of materials on each facade, as well as pop-out bays to break up the building elevations.

#### 3. Building setbacks

The proposed setbacks for the development are entirely compliant with the RMF-35 zoning requirements. This creates sufficient space for private amenities on the property, a buffer between the development and adjacent properties, and ample space for maintaining the exterior finishes and servicing utilities on the property.

#### 4. Building facades offer transparency and access and pedestrian interest

The RMF-35 zoning district does not require a minimum amount of glazing, or any architectural design features to engage the street. However, design for The Mews still activate the street facade with ground level entries, pop-out bays and glazing which orient interior living spaces to the street, courtyard spaces along the street, and generous amounts of landscaping to provide pedestrian interest.

#### 5. Lighting design

Lighting will be placed at porch entries, along sidewalks, and along the shared driveway to provide adequate nighttime lighting on the property.

#### 6. Dumpsters screened

Dumpsters for the site have been located behind the southern building, and have also been designed with an enclosure to provide additional screening for the property to the south.

#### 7. Parking areas buffered

All required parking for the development is provided within the townhome garages (2 parking spaces for each dwelling unit). All garage openings face toward the interior of the site.

### Standard D: Landscaping

Mature trees only exist within the public right-of-way. As there are no existing landscape buffers between the property and any abutting properties, restoring the site's yard setbacks will greatly improve the quality of landscaping around the site.

### Standard E: Mobility:

The drive access to 300 E is located at the center of the site, creating a clear view of the 300 E corridor. The site is designed with dedicated pedestrian access, and provides bike racks at the front of the development within a semi-public courtyard. The site also accommodates a hammerhead turn-around for emergency vehicle access.

### Standard F Existing Site Features

The existing site hosts two structures and a large, concrete parking area, which do not significantly contribute to the character of the neighborhood.

### Standard G: Utilities

The development plans for brand new utilities to site, which will be connected back to city infrastructure.

## LONG TERM MAINTENANCE

*"Describe the plan for long term maintenance of all private infrastructure as stated in 21A.55.110 of the Planned Development ordinance"*

**A:** The estimated initial cost for capital improvements to sewer, water, and storm water management is \$297,520.88. The estimate for on-site paving, fencing, and vehicle driveways is \$233,182.50. The probable construction cost for landscaping is estimated at \$120,000. The total estimate for all capital improvements is \$650,703.38.

**B:** The properties, including the structures and the site infrastructure, will be maintained through the establishment of a non-profit HOA, which will collect funds and manage an account that will maintain all common areas and improvements.

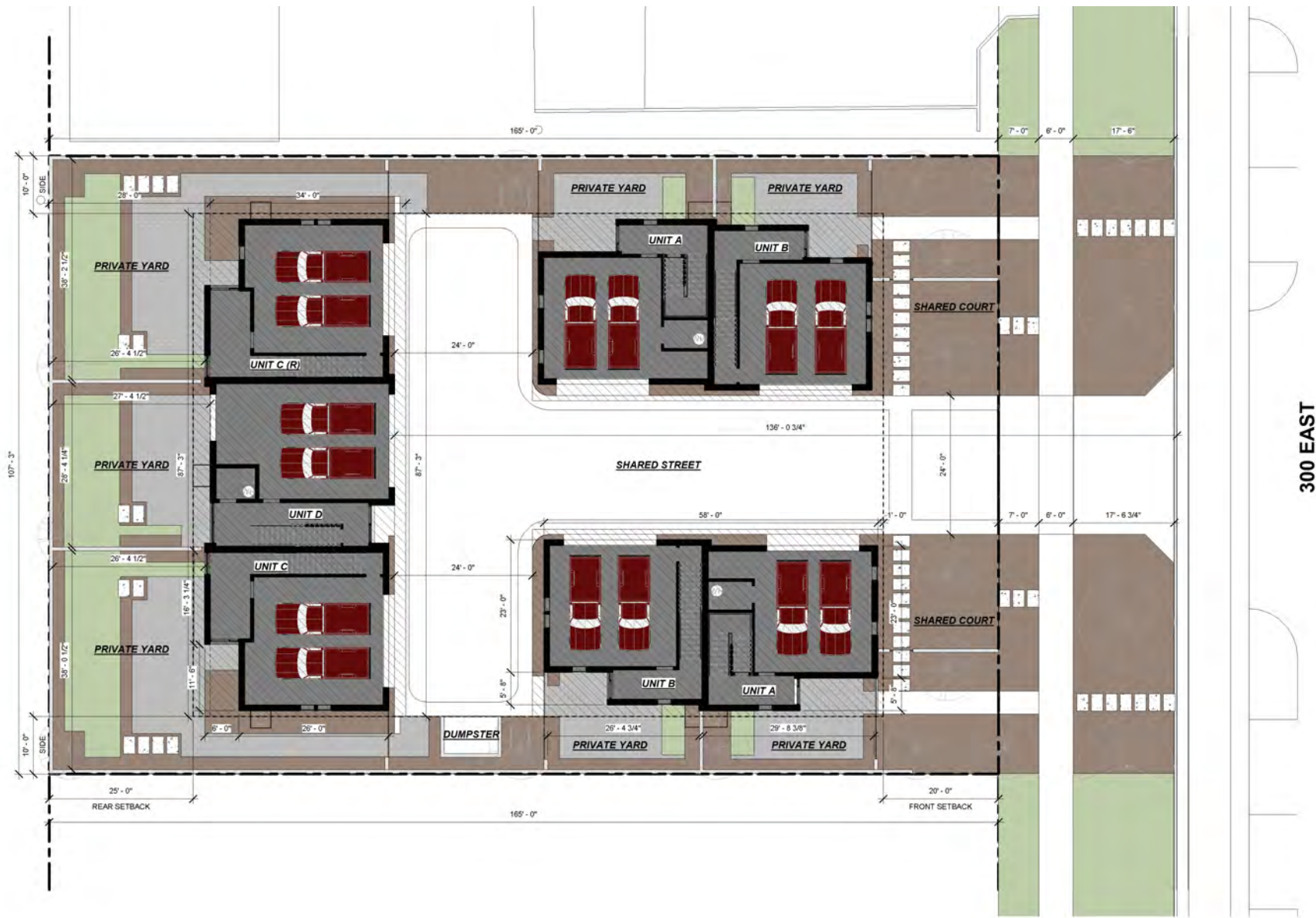
**C:** The non-profit HOA will notify property owners yearly of estimated yearly expenditures for maintenance, as well as actual expenditures incurred.

**D:** The HOA will ensure the site remains operational and maintained such that access to the planned development is available to the City for emergency and other services, and to ensure the condition of private infrastructure does not interrupt the operation of public facilities to which the private infrastructure connects or to which it may be adjacent.



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*Vegetation and sidewalks cross through highly-transparent fences to visually expand the sense of public space*



300 EAST

Site plan for The Mews



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*A courtyard off 300 East serves as a shared amenity*



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*Vegetation and pavers activate the shared street*



*Up-down exterior lighting and modern landscaping create an environment that is welcoming at both day and night.*



*Both townhome units along the 300 East frontage have entries that directly face the public right-of-way, as well as bay pop-outs and a variety of materials to engage with the street and create visual interest.*



*The development's rear building takes cues from the two front buildings, with this building's center unit engaging directly with the shared driveway.*



*Each rear corner unit has a dedicated pathway extending from the unit's entry, through the private yard, and out to the shared street.*