

## **3500 Pickett Road**

### **Statement of Support**

**November 22, 2019**

#### **Introduction**

EYA Development LLC (the “Applicant”) proposes to redevelop approximately 3.7 acres of underdeveloped land, identified as Tax Map No. 58-1-02-021 (the “Property”), located at 3500 Pickett Road, with fifty-two (52) townhomes thoughtfully designed to include high-quality urban design, landscaped sidewalks, and a large activated open space. In furtherance of this proposal, the Applicant is requesting the Property be rezoned from the Residential Low (“RL”) zoning district to the Planned Development – Residential (“PD-R”) zoning district (the “Rezoning”), concurrent with a Comprehensive Plan – Future Land Use Map Amendment to change the existing designation from Institutional to Townhouse/Single-Family Attached Neighborhood. The City’s Comprehensive Plan (the “Plan”) offers support for the Applicant’s use, as detailed below.

As a specialist in infill housing, the Applicant intends to create a unique community that is context-appropriate and achieves the vision and policy objectives set by the City of Fairfax, while being respectful and compatible with adjacent developments. To that end, the Applicant’s design is oriented around a large, public open space fronting Pickett Road while also providing substantial setbacks and buffers to the residential neighborhood to the north. The design also maximizes the views of and relationship to the existing golf country club immediately to the west. Finally, the Applicant proposes to create ownership opportunities in conformance with the draft affordable housing ordinance for persons whose incomes fall below the Area Median Income (“AMI”) by contributing ten (10) percent of all units constructed on the Property into the City’s pilot workforce and affordable housing program. The benefits of the project include:

- the introduction of high-quality townhomes to the emerging residential neighborhoods on Pickett Road;
- appropriate re-use of institutionally utilized property;
- large, usable open space;
- compatibility with the adjacent Barristers Keepe neighborhood;
- the building of a section of the City’s proposed Daniels Run trail; and
- the provision of new, affordable homeownership opportunities for City residents.

#### **Site Description**

The Property is currently zoned RL under the City of Fairfax Zoning Ordinance (the “Zoning Ordinance”) and is bounded by a 100-foot wide City owned property to the south, the Army Navy Country Club to the west, a small lot residential development known as Barristers Keepe to the north, and Pickett Road to the east. The Property is developed with a 17,000- square-foot, single-story building and a large surface parking lot, which is currently used for a church and related activities. The surrounding land uses and zoning

complement and support the Applicant's proposed development, with the property to the north Planned Development Mixed Use (PD-M), to the east zoned PD-R, to the south zoned Residential Medium ("RM") and to the west zoned RL.

### **Planned Development (Rezoning) Request**

The proposed Rezoning would permit the development of a neighborhood consisting of twenty-six (26) front-loaded and twenty-six (26) rear-loaded townhomes (inclusive of the five (5) workforce housing units) (the "Proposed Development"). The units facing Pickett Road will be set back a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet and a maximum of one hundred and fifteen (115) feet. All of the units, rear or front-loaded, will be at least three stories in height with an optional fourth story loft and/or roof-top terrace that will provide outstanding views of the Army Navy golf course. The maximum building height of each unit will be forty-five feet (45'), including the roof-top terraces. Notably, the units closest to the Barristers Keepe neighborhood were originally planned to be set back twenty (20) feet from the adjoining property line. After discussion with the Barristers Keepe Homeowner Association, the Applicant has increased the setback to fifty (50) feet in order to provide a significant buffer between the existing and proposed homes.

In addition to the unique, site-specific architecture, the Applicant has designed a neighborhood filled with landscaped sidewalks, backyards, activated open spaces, and a sizeable park, which will include a landscaped promenade that will be a highly utilized amenity for neighborhood events, and will provide fire access off Pickett Road. Markedly, the proposal is providing twenty-two percent (22%) open space. In conformance with the Plan, the Applicant's proposal also includes the offsite construction of an extension of Daniel's Run Trail immediately south of the Property. This improvement will provide a three hundred and thirty (330) foot long extension of Daniel Run Trail onto Pickett Road and is consistent with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Additionally, the Proposed Development's location on the Pickett Road corridor is proximate to a plethora of walkable, pedestrian-friendly and family-oriented commercial retail, service, and office uses including the Fairfax Ice Arena and several grocery stores and restaurants. This proximity will offer future residents shopping, recreation, and employment opportunities within a safe and convenient distance. In return, residents of the neighborhood will provide the businesses along Pickett Road with users and shoppers that will support and sustain these important commercial establishments.

Importantly, the unit types proposed by the Applicant are in high demand but in low supply within the City of Fairfax. Although the City includes a diverse mix of housing products, only fourteen (14) percent are townhomes. In addition, the Pickett Road corridor, while accommodating apartment, condominiums, and single-family homes, does not have any townhomes built, planned, or proposed. Because of the relative ease of their maintenance and upkeep, townhomes appeal to all segments of the housing market, including young professionals, families, active adults and empty nesters. The Proposed Development will bolster the townhome offerings in the City, while also providing much-needed affordable housing.

## **Affordable Housing Units**

As noted above, the City has not yet formally adopted an affordable housing ordinance. Nevertheless, the Applicant proposes to provide ten (10) percent of the total number of units within the Proposed Development as the first workforce housing units to be utilized within the City's pilot workforce housing program. These units will be for-sale but income restricted to persons and families making between seventy percent (70%) and eighty percent (80%) of the AMI. The Applicants affordable housing proposal is in line with the City's draft affordable housing ordinance. Further, the draft ordinance details a twenty percent (20%) bonus density that the applicant would qualify for based on the proposed percentage of affordable housing. Because this ordinance is not yet adopted, the applicant is pursuing a rezoning to the Planned Development – Residential ("PD-R") zoning district which will allow flexibility for the proposed unit density. If this ordinance was already adopted, the applicant's proposal would be in line with the Townhouse/Single-Family Detached Neighborhood (which limits development at twelve (12) dwelling units per acre) along with the applicable twenty percent (20%) bonus density. As such, the Applicant proposes fifty-two (52) units – included five (5) affordable dwelling units.

The Applicant is excited to work collaboratively with the City to kick off the affordable/workforce housing pilot program.

## **Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan**

The Property is designated as Social and Civic Network Place Type within the Plan and is planned for public and private schools, libraries, places of worship, post offices, and other public facilities. In light of the changing nature of these uses, however, the Plan anticipates the need to re-designate areas currently planned for Social and Civic Network Place Types with residential uses in conjunction with other uses, in order to achieve the objectives outlined in the Plan's Housing Guiding Principles. Specifically, Page 39 of the Plan states "in particular, potential alternative Place Type designations should be considered for privately-owned sites with a Social and Civil Network designation".

Page 37 of the Plan states that new developments when located in residential neighborhoods, such as this proposal, should be complementary in character of the surrounding properties, orient buildings toward the street network, and provide additional pedestrian connections. The Applicant's proposal achieves all of these objectives outlined, as the Applicant has designed a community that orients the buildings immediately adjacent to Pickett Road toward that existing street. The Proposed Development is reflective and complementary of Barristers Keepe, the residential development immediately to its north. Additionally, the proposal will provide a pedestrian connection along the Property's Pickett Road frontage as well as extending Daniels Run Trail to connect with Pickett Road. This offsite commitment will fill a gap within the existing trail network, as envisioned in the Plan on Page 78. As noted on Page 46 and 47 of the Plan, with relatively little undeveloped land available in the City for new residential neighborhoods the Proposed Development will provide infill housing that complements the character of the surrounding homes and provides missing pedestrian links as

envisioned within the Plan. Note that, these design elements are interwoven into many elements of the Plan and can be found within the Housing Goals (Page 56), the Neighborhood Goals (Page 54), and the Multimodal Transportation Goals (Page 76). The Applicant's proposal provides all of the aforementioned design characteristics, achieving the City's vision for future neighborhoods.

In furtherance of the Housing Goal's, specifically Action H2.1.2 on Page 56 of the Plan, the Applicant has committed to providing 10% of the total number of units constructed within the Proposed Development as affordable housing units. Although the City has not formally adopted an affordable housing policy, the Applicant's proposal is in conformance with the City's draft affordable housing ordinance.

Accordingly, the Applicant seeks approval of a Comprehensive Plan – Future Land Use Map Amendment to change the Social and Civic Network Place Type designation to Townhouse/Single Family Attached Neighborhood Place Type to permit the Proposed Development. This proposal is consistent with the Plan's objectives and compatible with the surrounding land uses.

### **Transportation**

The Property is currently served by two access points to Pickett Road: with one full-movement access point to the north of the site, and one right-in/right-out access point to the south of the site. The Applicant, as part of the Rezoning, proposes to shift the northern full-movement access point approximately fifty (50) feet south of its existing location. Similarly, the southern right-in/right-out access point will be shifted approximately one hundred and fifty (150) feet south of its existing location to accommodate on-site circulation and setbacks from adjacent properties. The Proposed Development is anticipated to generate approximately 13 new trips during a typical weekday morning peak hour, 16 new trips during afternoon peak hour, and 182 new daily trips. As such it will have a negligible impact on the existing transportation network.

### **Tank Farm Analysis**

The applicant as chosen to work with Jensen Hughes, a leader in safety, security and risk-based engineering, to study the proposed infill re-developments proximity to the TransMontaigne tank farm facility. Jensen Hughes has prepared a code compliance review which demonstrates that there is significant separation distance between the tank farm and proposed development which substantially exceeds code regulations.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed infill re-development is consistent with significant City objectives outlined in the Plan and provides residential units that will increase housing diversity and affordability within a convenient and safe distance from existing shopping, dining, and employment opportunities. The Rezoning converts underutilized RL land and allows it to be redeveloped in a complementary manner to the existing residential uses along Pickett Road. The Proposed Development will provide a well-blended neighborhood of high-

quality townhomes and will provide the first units to implement the workforce housing pilot program for the City. The Applicant respectfully requests the City's support of this infill townhome residential development that will help alleviate the dearth of townhome units and increase housing affordability in the City.

## Requested Zoning Ordinance Waivers and Modifications

The Applicant is seeking approval of five modifications of the Zoning Ordinance, as noted below.

1) Modification of Section 3.5.1.C:

*“No more than two of any 10 or one of any three to five abutting dwelling units having the same front yard setback. Varied front yard setbacks shall not be less than two feet offset from adjoining units as measured at the principal foundation line of each unit and no setback distance shall be less than the required minimum.”*

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to provide the same front yard setback dimensionally for more than two abutting dwelling units.

**Justification.** Although the front yard setback may be the same dimensionally for more than two abutting dwelling units, the architectural elevations for each individual unit will include design treatments that provide dimensional differentiation for the front yards. Such features include projected or recessed entryways, projected windows, and many other material and design treatments, such that the units will be distinct.

2) Modification of Section 3.8.7.B.3:

*“The minimum width for any required recreation and open space shall be 50 feet. The zoning administrator may grant exceptions for items such as trail easements and mid-block crossings, when their purposes meets the intent of §3.8.7.”*

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to provide fifty (50) feet of open space, inclusive of rear yards, from the northern property line to the rear wall of the units immediately adjacent to Barristers Keepe.

**Justification.** At the request of the adjacent northern neighborhood, Barristers Keepe, the Applicant has agreed to provide fifty (50) feet of open space, inclusive of rear yards for nine units. This open space area will enable the rear walls of the units immediately adjacent to Barristers Keepe to maintain a distance of fifty (50) feet, providing a significant buffer between the existing and proposed homes.

3) Modification of Section 3.6.1:

*“Residential Districts Dimensional Standards: Height, Maximum: 35 feet”*

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to modify the maximum permitted height to forty-five (45) feet.

**Justification.** In order to appeal to all segments of the housing market, including young professionals, families, active adults and empty nesters the units within the community

have been thoughtfully designed to provide high-quality urban designs, which include an optional fourth story loft and/or roof-top terrace. The integration of outdoor living spaces, such as a roof-top terrace, throughout the community will provide residents with an additional outdoor amenity space, albeit private, that will supplement the publically accessible open spaces and amenities located throughout the community.

In order to provide this supplemental outdoor amenity space, all of the units, rear or front-loaded, will be at least three stories in height with an optional fourth story loft and/or roof-top terrace. The maximum building height of each unit will be forty-five feet (45'), including the roof-top terraces.

4) Modification of Section 4.4.4.A.1:

*“Unless otherwise specified below, sidewalks shall be required on both sides of all arterial, collector and local streets.”*

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to provide sidewalks along one side of all local streets throughout the community.

**Justification.** Although a “sidewalk” by definition is not proposed on both sides of the local streets, the driveway aprons located parallel to the proposed sidewalk locations will act for all intents and purposes as a sidewalk. The proposed sidewalk locations throughout the community, focus the pedestrian circulation along the fronts of the rear-loaded units and away from driveway aprons. This careful design will provide a continuous pedestrian network focused along the internal roads thereby creating a looped pedestrian network to the sizeable park (including the landscaped promenade) and the activated open spaces throughout the community.

5) Modification of Section 4.5.5.C.2(b)(1):

*“Project boundary transitional yards (b) Except as provided in paragraph (a) above or unless modified by the city council in the approval of a master development plan, the following boundary transitional yards shall be provided along project boundaries in accordance with §4.5.5.D: (1) PD-R: TY2 transitional yards.”*

**Modification.** The Applicant is seeking to modify the transition yard requirements along all four of the property’s boundaries outlined in more detail below.

**Justification.** The Applicant is seeking to waive the requirement for a TY2 Transitional Yard (the “Transitional Yard”) along the southern property line given the property is immediately adjacent to a ninety-four (94) foot wide swath of existing trees.

The northern most property line adjacent to Barristers Keepe is also planted with a significant tree stand along with an existing fence. If required to plant the Transition Yard, the Applicant would be removing a large portion of the existing mature vegetation along this boundary in order to install a smaller and less significant buffer than what exists today.

Along the Property's eastern boundary, the Applicant will provide the quantity and types of landscaping required within the Transitional Yard, however due to utility conflicts seeks to modify the location of the Transition Yard by shifting the plantings slightly inward toward the open space area along Pickett Road. Additionally, the Applicant seeks to waive the barrier requirement along this important frontage in order to create a warm and inviting "front door" and focal point for the community.

The Applicant proposes to provide an enhanced buffer along the western boundary of the site to provide more plantings than required, however, due to site and grading challenges the Applicant seeks to waive the barrier requirement. The property immediately to the west is the Army Navy golf course and the enhanced buffer will provide a natural and aesthetically pleasing buffer than would otherwise be provided with the required Transition Yard.



## Requested Public Facilities Manual Waivers and Modifications

The Applicant is seeking the approval of five modifications of the Public Facilities Manual, as noted below.

### 1) Modification of Section 2.3.4.A.1

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to provide nine (9) foot wide driveways to service the single-car garage townhomes constructed throughout the community.

**Justification.** The implementation of nine (9) foot wide driveways for units with a single-car width tandem parked garage will greatly reduce the amount of impervious areas throughout the site, while providing an appropriately designed driveway that will accommodate a single-vehicle within the driveway.

### 2) Modification of Section 401-01

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to provide twenty-four (24) foot wide interior private streets, without parking, throughout the community.

**Justification.** Designing a community that provides interior streets in conformance with the Fire Marshal's minimum fire lane width allows the Applicant to maximize on-lot parking (3.3 spaces/per unit) and to reduce the amount of imperious area on site.

### 3) Modification of Section 2-4.1

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to provide a road radius that is less than one hundred and seventy-five (175) feet.

**Justification.** By providing a reduced road radius, vehicular traffic will flow seamlessly through smoother road curves throughout the community rather than navigating a perpendicular t-stub out. Additionally, the reduced radius provides the Applicant with the ability to retain the existing mature vegetation that would otherwise be removed to accommodate a larger road radius.

### 4) Modification of Section 2.10

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to provide a ten (10) foot radius at the property line for the alley.

**Justification.** The implementation of a ten (10) foot radius permits innovation within the community design while achieving auto turn requirements. Such innovation includes the ability to provide additional permeable areas with additional landscaping and a unified streetscape than would otherwise be permitted.

5) Section 403.03

**Modification.** The Applicant seeks to provide rolled curbs instead of a curb cuts for driveways throughout the community.

**Justification.** Although the Public Facilities Manual does not include a design standard for rolled curb, it is a common practice and actively being used throughout the City. Therefore, the Applicant seeks to implement a rolled curb design reflective and complementary of those found throughout the City. Providing a rolled curb throughout the community will create a visually seamless streetscape that is not cluttered by protruding standard curb sections. Additionally, it facilitates a safer walking environment for pedestrians by eliminating standard curb sections that inadvertently become tripping hazards.