

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

JULY 1, 2024

Circle Gateway

Owner/Applicant: Woodbridge Commons, LLC

Woodbridge Commons, LLC is an affiliated company of Aksoylu Properties, LLC who, together with its affiliated companies is a regional full service real estate firm located in Northern Virginia whose roots can be traced back to the 1980s.

Since its founding, the patriarch of the family, Ahmet Aksoylu, has guided the office and grown its capabilities into a first class fully integrated firm capable of acquiring, developing, constructing, financing, and operating an array of assets spanning the mixed-use, office, retail, residential, hospitality, and industrial sectors. Aksoylu Properties currently owns and operates more than one million square feet of commercial and residential property with an additional 2 million square feet of owned property in development.

The Development Team:

- Owner/Developer: Woodbridge Commons, LLC
- Architect: Davis, Carter, Scott Ltd.
- Civil Engineer: Urban Engineering and Associates, Ltd.
- Traffic Engineer: Gorove/Slade Associates
- Environmental Engineer: Geo-Technology Associates, Inc.
- Geotechnical Engineer: Geo-Technology Associates, Inc.
- Land Use Attorney: Carlos M. Montenegro, PC
- Special Counsel: John E. Carter, PC

The Development Proposal: Circle Gateway

Woodbridge Commons, LLC an affiliate of Aksoylu Properties, LLC, recently purchased the following two parcels totaling 1.64 acres and located just southwest of Fairfax Circle:

- 3226 Old Lee Highway – formerly tenanted by 7-11
- 3250 Old Lee Highway – formerly tenanted by Lotte

Mr. Aksoylu's team shares in the City's vision, as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, to transform the Fairfax Circle neighborhood into an around the clock active center replete with a mix of uses that will foster and anchor a unique sense of place supporting the needs of our diverse and inclusive community. The team will work with the City to accomplish our shared objectives, including:

- Removing two existing aged and blighted structures; and
- Redeveloping the property into a high-quality mixed-use project (“**Circle Gateway**”) including approximately sixteen thousand (16,000) square feet of street front restaurants and retail uses, plus up to two hundred and sixty one (261) multi-family apartment homes, with a structured parking facility to support the program.

To achieve this vision, Circle Gateway proposes several key ideas that include:

I. A Sense of Arrival and Identity. Promoting and emphasizing the sense of “place” and attractiveness of this portion of Fairfax City.

II. A Balance of Uses. The existing car-reliant single use development characteristic of the mid-twentieth century is not responsive to the implementation of the varied forms of transportation now available and warrants replacement with a vibrant mix of uses that will create a sense of place, foster activity throughout the day and evening, reduce single-use peak traffic, and revitalize and sustain our environment.

III. A Creation of a Grid of Streets. Historically, the east side of our City has struggled to integrate a street grid that provides much need connectivity between neighborhoods and places of entertainment and service. Circle Gateway promotes a new connected active street network by functionally allowing the future extension of Old Picket Road through the property to facilitate the City’s much-desired extension of the travelway to Campbell Drive to the North.

IV. An Equitable and Inclusive Housing Offering. By providing a high-quality housing choice to the community, Circle Gateway can meet the needs of a variety of households regardless of their socio-economic status, age, and physical needs. The inclusion of the proposed residential component is central, if not critical, to the creation of an active and energetic destination in the Fairfax Circle neighborhood. The Applicant has indicated (via its Proffers) that it will provide moderately priced residential units in accordance with the City’s regulated goals.

V. An Active Street Front. Activating both Blenheim Boulevard and the new extension of Old Picket Road requires that both the vertical and horizontal design components interact in an exciting and cohesive manner. Pedestrian friendly sidewalks have been designed to accommodate the City’s bicycle trails with attractive hardscapes adjacent to translucent storefronts with lofty ceilings will promote an energetic ground floor plane.

VI. A Sustainable Design. The current condition of the property is almost 100% impervious. Through the use of a variety of low impact

development techniques, Circle Gateway will deploy a stacked best management practice that, subject to final engineering, may include below grade filtration, planter filters, porous pavement, roof top filtration and below grade manufactured detention devices to both (i) decrease the storm water discharge from the site while assuring adequate outfall to the existing floodplain located to the South, and (ii) improve the quality of water leaving the site such that the downstream environment can thrive.

VII. Traffic Management. The Applicant has proffered to implement traffic management strategies in accordance with applicable City guidelines, including having a TDM coordinator responsible for its management.

Comprehensive Plan Conformance.

The adopted Comprehensive Plan sets forth several concepts in support of the Application. These recognize that “as developable land has become scarcer, new residential development has been more dependent on infill and redevelopment sites. Developers are offering higher-end products and seeking greater densities to offset the higher land values and development costs associated with redevelopment sites.” This Application is in an infill location and provides extraordinarily high quality for the proposed project.

The Comprehensive Plan also advises that “This means that some flexibility must be provided with a balanced mix of development types that accommodate adaptations without negatively impacting the existing community. New development and redevelopment should be complementary to surrounding areas and contribute to an attractive, accessible, and economically viable place.” This Application fully complies with this recommendation.

The Comprehensive Plan also advises that “In general, new development in Activity Centers should support a connected street network as recommended in the Multimodal Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan; provide an improved streetscape and pedestrian connections to surrounding uses, including links to the existing pedestrian network; and include inviting public and/or private open spaces. Buildings should be oriented toward streets or open spaces with direct pedestrian access to these areas. Parking should be provided in structured or below-grade facilities where reasonable.” All of these recommendations are fully addressed by the Application.

The Comprehensive Plan also advises that residential multifamily uses are acceptable as components of mixed use buildings or as stand-alone buildings. This Application fully complies with this recommendation.

The Comprehensive Plan also advises the majority of future residential growth is anticipated to occur within the five Activity Centers identified in the

Future Land Use Map. When referring to the prospective Small Area Plans for the application property, the Application fully complies with the specific recommendations on residential growth and future considerations to accommodate growth in its Activity Center. The proposed development offers benefits that support the vision of the Comprehensive Plan for its Activity Center. Such benefits include the following: 1. A mix of uses within the development site; 2. Contributions toward a connected street grid; 3. Usable open space, and; 4. High quality design.

In summary, if we collectively commit to the aforementioned key ideas then we are confident that Circle Gateway shall be successful on all fronts. As is necessary, redevelopment of infill properties requires innovative thinking and a development party who shares and believes in the City's vision and planning principles. It is also important to recognize, that the project has been thoughtfully conceptualized to be realized today and thus catalyze further harmonious development within the neighborhood activity center.

Respectfully submitted,

Carlos M. Montenegro, Esq.
Counsel for Woodbridge Commons, LLC