

August 13, 2018

Deborah Bickmire  
City of Aurora, Planning Department  
15151 E. Alameda Parkway, 2nd Floor  
Aurora, Colorado 80012

## RE: THE AURORA HIGHLANDS - ZONING (REZONING)

Dear Ms. Bickmire,

Enclosed please find the submittal for The Aurora Highlands zoning application. The letter of introduction below describes the area proposed for rezoning, and how this area relates to the larger Aurora Highlands development area. This application has been prepared by and for the following parties to the benefit of the citizens of Aurora and the surrounding areas.

<b>Owner / Developer:</b> <i>The Aurora Highlands LLC</i> <i>Carlo Ferreira</i> 6550 South Pecos Road, Suite 124 Las Vegas, NV 11711 720.436.1572 carlo@theaurorahighlands.com	<b>Owners Representative:</b> <i>Beyond Dirt, LLC</i> <i>Matt Deibel</i> 8804 S. Indian Creek Street Highlands Ranch, CO 80126 303.356.1422 matt@theaurorahighlands.com	<b>Transportation Engineers:</b> <i>Beam, Longest &amp; Neff L.L.C.(BLN)</i> <i>Bruce Haynes</i> 1675 Broadway St. Suite 2000 Denver, CO 80265 303.534.1732 bhaynes@B-L-N.com
<b>Planners and Landscape Architects:</b> <i>Norris Design</i> <i>Diana Rael</i> 1101 Bannock Street, Denver, CO 80204 303.892.1166 drael@norris-design.com	<b>Civil Engineer/Surveyor:</b> <i>HR Green, Inc.</i> <i>Ryan Littleton</i> 8310 S. Valley Highway, Suite 300 Englewood, CO 80112 303.602.4999 rlittleton@hrgreen.com	<b>Attorney:</b> <i>Fairfield and Woods, PC</i> <i>Rita Connerly</i> 1801 California Street, Suite 2600 Denver, CO 80202-2645 303.894.4411 rconnerly@fwlaw.com
<b>Traffic Engineers:</b> <i>Felsburg, Holt &amp; Ullevig</i> <i>Chris Fasching</i> 6300 S. Syracuse Way, Suite 600 Centennial, CO 80111 303.721.1440 chris.fasching@fhueng.com	<b>Architects:</b> <i>Woodley Architectural Group</i> <i>Mike Woodley</i> 731 Southpark Drive, Suite B Littleton, CO 80120 303.683.7231	<b>District Program Manager:</b> <i>Terraforma Solutions</i> <i>Todd Johnson</i> 303.257.7653 Todd@terraformas.com
<b>Owners Representative:</b> <i>Sheldon &amp; Associates</i> <i>Michael Sheldon</i> 5290 DTC Parkway, Suite 160 Greenwood Village, CO 80111 303.770.0200 jbritt@msheldonlaw.com	<b>Architects:</b> <i>EV Studio</i> <i>Matthew A. Svoboda</i> 335 W. 48th Ave, Suite 300 Denver, CO 80212 303.670.7242 matt@evstudio.com	<b>Program Management:</b> <i>Summit Strategies</i> <i>Matt Hopper</i> 303.339.0042 matt@summit-strategies.net

## STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Aurora Highlands is a mixed-use planned development consisting of a variety of proposed land uses that include: residential housing options, neighborhood commercial, mixed-use, corporate campus, medical campus, civic campus, schools, parks and open space, and potential oil and gas operations.

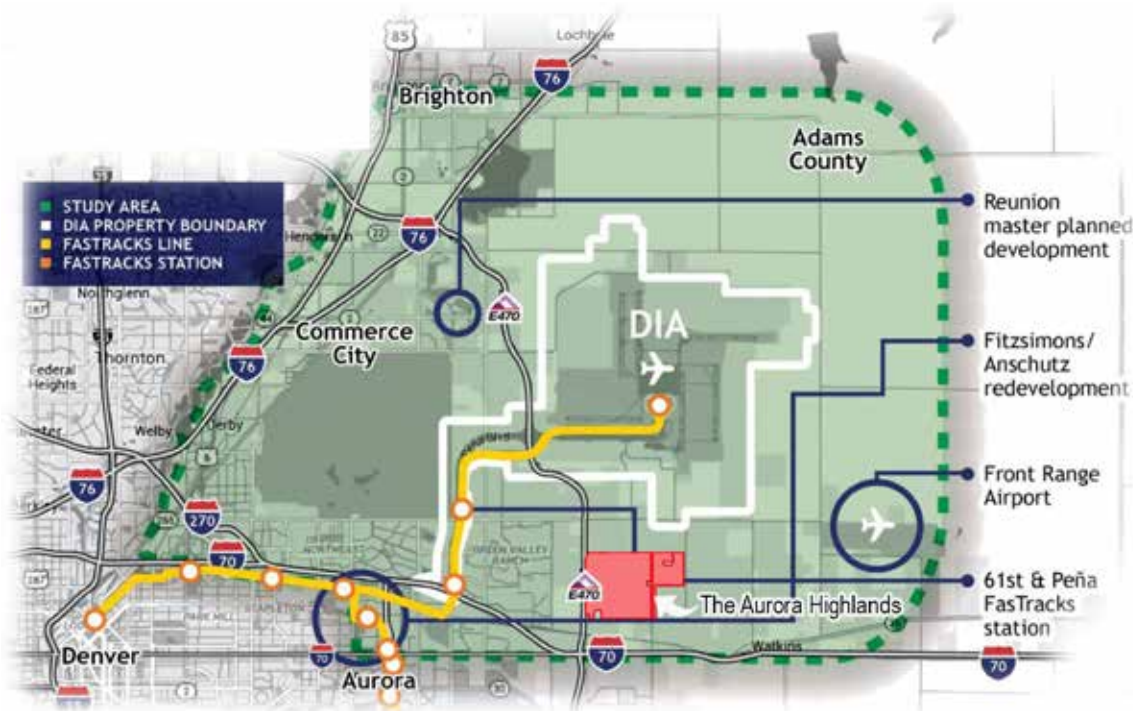
The Aurora Highlands is within the Aerotropolis visioning study area. An Aerotropolis is an urban plan in which the overall layout, infrastructure, and economy are centered around an airport. Potential economic growth within the Aerotropolis is vast; forecasted to bring 74,000 jobs to the area by 2040. These new jobs will be filled by a local labor force, and will create upwards of \$600 million dollars of additional tax revenue. The Aurora Highlands will aid in providing areas for economic growth through the medical, corporate, and civic campuses, as well as commercial and industrial areas. The community will also provide housing options for the Aerotropolis workforce as well as commuters.

## BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The Aurora Highlands is a new master planned community located on the high plains prairie, approximately three miles south of Denver International Airport (DEN). Surrounding this new community is the Colorado Aerotropolis, an urban plan in which the layout, infrastructure and economy are centered around DEN and the infrastructure associated with the airport. In 2015, Denver and Adams County approved 1,500 acres for new development in the DEN Transit Corridor, creating upwards of 12,000 new jobs in the immediate vicinity and opening up a new economic front line for the Aerotropolis and the City of Aurora.

Success of the Aerotropolis area will rely on two key components: extending infrastructure and building a sustainable housing base. Aerotropolis has the potential to generate 74,000 new jobs by 2040 if corporations call this area home. (Aerotropolis Visioning Study, 2016). However, as Cal Fulenwider, President of L.C. Fulenwider Inc. states in an article addressing the Denver Aerotropolis, “Corporate America doesn’t come until they’ve got a place for their workforce to live and be happy”. (Jackson, Denver Post 2012) This is achieved by creating a solid residential foundation from which large corporations can be supported. A variety of residential housing options is a key component in supplying the labor force and commerce needed for a successful industry based region.

Homes and businesses cannot be established until the infrastructure needed to support them is available. Rapid, collaborative infrastructure development is needed for the Aerotropolis region to be successful.



Key opportunity areas for infrastructure development in the region are RTD connectivity and vehicular connections point to DEN from the south, specifically Jackson Gap Street and Piccadilly Road - both of which would be accessible through future development adjacent to The Aurora Highlands.

Aerotropolis, being a regional vision plan, would be implemented over many decades and through the collaborative efforts of many neighboring jurisdictions and overseeing entities. These groups would all serve a part in creating the required housing and infrastructure needed for the regional vision. The following guiding principles are encouraged in the planned growth of the region:

- Infrastructure development contiguous to active developments
- Planned developments that reflect current local jurisdictional goals
- Incremental growth of infrastructure based on previous investments such as FasTracks Light Rail and the widening of Tower Road
- Guiding early development toward projects that are attainable and feasible, given current conditions
- Encouraging cross-jurisdictional developments that require regional collaboration
- Continued support of the long-term Aerotropolis vision

These principles, in combination with a strong residential foundation, will foster the continued growth of the Region and the Aerotropolis vision.

The design for the Aurora Highlands community fully embraces the Aerotropolis Study and the City of Aurora's recently adopted South of DEN Transportation Priority Study. Implementation of the infrastructure requirements in and around the airport as proposed in this development will create a new frontier in the City of Aurora. The Aurora Highlands will be the catalyst enabling a new opportunity for growth, commerce, and connectivity. This community will be planned, designed, and built with a uniquely focused vision that prioritizes the potential of connectivity and continuity—linking the past and future, the urban and the frontier, and embracing the Aerotropolis visions of easy access to transportation, commerce, and new community enthusiasm. The design intent is one where urban and suburban become one.

The Aurora Highlands is one of the largest communities planned in Aurora to date. The land area is comparable to the larger south Aurora development area which includes the communities of Tollgate Crossing, Sorrel Ranch, Pomeroy, Southlands, Forest Trace, Tallyn's Reach, Serenity Ridge, Beacon Point, and Wheatlands combined. Central to the character and feel of the community will be an emphasis on consistent continuity and style. As a new community in the high plains prairie of North East Aurora, The Aurora Highlands will embrace its geographical roots with stylized versions of its agricultural and prairie lineage. This "Prairie Influence" combined with modern versions of the classic and successful architectural styles found along the Front Range of Colorado will unify square miles of development into a cohesive community.

The intent of The Aurora Highlands is to provide villages with a clear community focus that fulfill the Aerotropolis vision of connectivity, commerce, and community. It will feature a large variety of housing categories from attainable attached, multi-family groupings, and single-family residences to larger single-family and estate based offerings. Homes range in size and affordability. Large, statement homes are integrated throughout the community in key areas and act as a beacon to all home owners aspiring to ascend the real estate ladder. These distinct and diverse villages will attract baby boomers and millennials alike, with homes that bring classic styles into a modern age and that offer residential amenities ranging from recreation centers to open space and parks. For local workers, retirees, and families, The Aurora Highlands will be home, a place to build the lifestyle that suits them best in a place like no other. The Aurora Highlands makes it easy to travel the world, while providing everything you need right outside your door.

Community activity centers and neighborhood level commercial centers will anchor the villages, providing places to work, shop, play and relax. These clusters of commercial, corporate campus, medical, civic and mixed-use centers will emphasize important focal points between neighborhoods, and encourage the development of businesses that provide a variety of desired products and services for the region and local community.

The community provides key land uses that create a diverse master-planned community such as areas for higher density residential, schools, civic amenities, retail, restaurants and office space, providing the urban

village lifestyle that multiple generations of home-buyers want and often demand in the suburban setting they so desire. It is this “city within a city” feel that provides crucial support services to the rapidly growing community. With City and County service facilities and easy connections to DEN, commuter rail, E-470 and I-70, The Aurora Highlands will deliver residents the convenient connectivity to work and play that defines the Aerotropolis vision.

## **SITE LOCATION**

The Aurora Highlands is located in northeastern Aurora, Colorado. The site is generally located east of E-470, between 48th Avenue, and 26th Avenue. The property is west of Powhaton Road (future alignment) with a portion also east of Powhaton south of 48th Avenue (future alignment). Today, barriers to successful development are the result of poor access to this portion of Aurora. The Aurora Highlands will develop significant infrastructure improvements, opening of regional connectivity for additional future developments.

There are some areas affected by floodplain within The Aurora Highlands which are intended to be incorporated into a open space/park. In addition, the First Creek watershed is nearby the site to the southwest, but does not extend into the site boundary. In addition to floodplain encroachment, The Aurora Highlands also has portions of the development that are within the 65+ LDN noise designation of Denver International Airport and the Airport Influence District of Denver International Airport. This portion of the site is limited to industrial uses. All residential areas of the site are within the 55 to 60 LDN noise designation.

## **SITE ZONING**

Existing Zoning- The Aurora Highlands is a planned development with existing and proposed zoning under the E-470 and North East Plains Sub-Areas. The zoning sub-categories include: E-470 Airport Corporate, E-470 Medium Density Residential, NE Plains Medium Density Residential, and NE Plains I-70.

Proposed Zoning (Rezoning)- One (1) re-zoning application is being submitted. This rezoning application is a request to change 29.9 acres from E-470 Medium Density Residential to E-470 Retail/Commercial subdistrict. This area is located directly east of E-470 and south of 38th Avenue. It is currently targeted for Corporate Campus land uses, and located just north of an area targeted for a Medical Office Campus. E-470 Retail/Commercial is an ideal zoning classification for this use and the location provides a suitable buffer between the residential neighborhoods and E-470. Additionally, Main Street will provide a natural boundary between the residential neighborhoods to the east and the Corporate Campus and Medical Campus uses.

## **BENEFITS TO THE CITY OF AURORA**

The Aurora Highlands development will create multiple, thoughtful villages for residents and industry alike. The villages will each have their own unique character and appeal to a variety of residents. Multiple home types offer options for a spectrum of home-buyers and increase diversity within the overall community. Proposed corporate and medical campuses along with a main street retail village and community activity centers offer multiple job and economic opportunities within the development, decreasing the need for commuting and promoting community involvement. Parks, community centers, schools, civic amenities, and open space trails offer a variety of activities for residents and create a network of connectivity across the development and into the larger regional system.

The Aurora Highlands will be a valuable addition to the City of Aurora and a catalyst for new development for the City and the region. The Aurora Highlands will accelerate transportation and utility infrastructure development in the area and serve as a stimulus to advance the economic goals pursued by Aurora City Council. The Aurora Highlands commercial centers, in combination with the residences that make them possible, will be an economic attraction to the neighboring Denver and Commerce City residents traveling through the E-470 and DEN areas, generating additional sales tax revenue for the City of Aurora. A successful Aerotropolis places emphasis on access to jobs and industry near the airport to gain a greater share of the global economic activity that is driven by air travel.

## WAIVER REQUESTS

No waiver requests are being proposed with this zoning application.

## ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS

Additional applications being filed concurrently with this zoning application include:

- Framework Development Plan for +/-3,146.0 acres

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this zoning application please contact myself or any member of the team listed above.

Sincerely,  
Norris Design



Diana R. Rael, PLA  
Principal