

February 23, 2022

Mr. Dan Osoba
City of Aurora - Planning Department
15151 E. Alameda Pkwy
Aurora, CO 80012

RE: LONA SITE PLAN

Dear Mr. Osoba,

On behalf of Forum Investment Group, we are pleased to submit this Site Plan application for Lona, a multifamily community located at the southwest corner of E 6th Avenue and Gun Club Road. The consultants listed below have been assembled to realize this plan and we look forward to working closely with Aurora to make this new community a success. Please note that a Letter of Authorization was submitted with the annexation of this site, which granted Norris Design permission to process any resulting entitlements, including site plans and master plans.

Applicant

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Planner

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Landscape Architect

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CONTEXT

The 8.9-acre site is zoned MU-R, Mixed-Use Regional in keeping with the zoning of much of the surrounding land. Land north of the site is vacant and E-470 is immediately west of the site. South of the site is the Lamar Landing Master Plan area, which will feature multifamily residences and commercial uses. East, on the opposite side of Gun Club Road are condominiums which are part of the Cross Creek Master Plan area.

SITE PLAN DESIGN

The Lona site plan proposes a multifamily community of 321 units in four buildings featuring ample open spaces and a community clubhouse and pool. Buildings line Gun Club Road and the Main Street, creating a Boundary Road. The overall site plan has been designed to meet the proposed guidelines for the MU-R districts, by incorporating the following concepts.

Focal Point

The project's focal point will be the clubhouse / leasing center located in the center of the property along the north / south street that connects to the adjacent development to the south. In addition to providing a strong urban street edge, this building also acts as the terminus to the east west pedestrian Main Street promenade that connects to Gun Club Road. This building will provide a unique architectural treatment creating a focal point from both the Boundary Road / Main Street and from E-470 for enhanced visibility of the project. In addition to the clubhouse with the 4-story buildings, each of the corner elements will provide for additional opportunity to create architectural emphasis for the project.

Boundary Road / Walkable Main Street

The proposed north / south drive that runs through the center of the property connecting the Lamar Landing development to the south with the 6th Avenue ROW to the north of the property serves as a Boundary Road with the residential

buildings and clubhouse on the west side of the road serving as the “high visibility sites” nearest E-470. Due to the property’s small land area, this central Boundary Road will also have the characteristics of a “walkable main street” with diagonal parking, building frontage defining the street’s edge and pedestrian-oriented streetscape improvements, including an 8-foot sidewalk on the eastern side of the street. The area is also being designed as usable outdoor space, with eight feet of landscaping adjacent to sidewalks, creating an enhanced pedestrian experience.

Public Plaza

The site plan features a large public plaza at the southwest corner of East 6th Avenue and Gun Club Road. This Plaza area exceeds the minimum required area of 600 SF, by providing 890 SF that could offer multiple functions in its use and design. The intent is to create a strong plaza element at the northeast corner of the property offering unique focal point for the pedestrians and vehicular traffic along Gun Club Road, while also providing a location for project identification and placemaking elements.

Parking

The parking for the project is designed to minimize its visibility from the street and adjacent surrounding areas, while providing secured and convenient access for residents. The project has a total of 397 spaces with an overall parking ratio of approximately 1.23 spaces per unit. The garages have been placed along the western edge of the site to minimize their visibility from the main roads as well as to provide additional sound and buffering of E-470. Garages have also been located along the Boundary Road / Main Street to provide an edge to the streetscape and enhance the pedestrian environment. Bike parking will be integrated in key locations within the community to both meet the standards of the code and offer residents convenient access to support active lifestyles.

Detention

The proposed development will utilize an underground stormwater detention and water quality system to attenuate additional storm runoff produced by the project. The system will consist of arch-shaped chambers made of polypropylene buried in a crushed angular aggregate. The system will be located in the southwest corner of the project and will substantially maintain the historic drainage pattern of the existing drainage basin in which the project is located.

Usable Open Area

As a multifamily residential site, Lona must provide 20% (1.75 acres) Usable Open Area on the site. The plan as proposed provides 2.05 acres / 23.5% of total site area as usable open space. This includes 10,280 square feet of balcony space and 79,205 square feet of usable open space on-site. Please see the attached Usable Open Space exhibit for further details.

Public Land Dedication

The 0.23 acre east-west Neighborhood Connector Trail area adjacent to Gun Club Road is designed to PLD standards with a minimum 30-foot width, 6’ wide sidewalk and amenities including seating, lighting, dog stations, and enhanced landscape. In addition, the 0.02ac public plaza is proposed as Open Space for PLD requirements, as it meets the definition of being publicly accessible and intended for limited outdoor recreation.

In addition to the open space that meets Usable Open Area definitions and Public Land Dedication requirements, there are 0.52 acres of open space, including a 20’ landscape buffer along Gun Club Road.

Sound Attenuation

The design team has received comments requesting the provision of an 8-foot tall sound attenuation wall along the western site boundary, per the Aurora UDO requirement that such walls be provided for all residential development adjacent to E-470. However, the design team believes that distance, berming and proposed structures between the highway and residential buildings provide more sound attenuation than a wall would. Given a minimum of 281-feet from E-470 to residential buildings, the 9-foot tall earthen berm, and 12’ tall carports, garages, and mechanical building occupying 59% of the western boundary, a sound attenuation wall would have minimal additional impact on sound attenuation on the site.

An acoustic study has been ordered for this site and is currently in-process. It will be sent to Aurora for review as soon as it is completed.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The landscape has been designed with rectangular layout arrangement of interesting ground materials and plantings. This design is intended to be more contemporary in nature and work with the proposed contemporary architecture (see Architectural Design below). Landscaped bands and rectangles are arranged to highlight important streetscape, building façade, entry, and pedestrian areas to include 2 types of smaller rock mulch, river rock cobble, crusher fines, native seed, and turfgrass. The scale and frequency of this design concept is intended to create visual interest and complexity to both pedestrians and vehicles, without making future landscape maintenance burdensome. Plants have been selected to be lower water-use.

The Neighborhood Connector Trail area provides a centrally located and pedestrian-friendly amenity for the community. Paved areas are located at each end to provide opportunities for seating and gathering. A crushed aggregate “court” allows space for bocce ball, bag toss, and other yard-style games. Lush, diverse plantings along the edges help to soften the space and screen it from adjacent residences.

Required landscape quantities have been provided, including the E-470 buffer, the Gun Club Road buffer, and other buffers associated with multifamily development. Additionally, required streetscape trees and planting have been provided along Gun Club Road and E 6th Avenue.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The building façade has been designed using a variety of quality materials and colors to break up the overall mass while keeping a contemporary horizontal design that fits along the E-470 corridor. The building has been designed with a contemporary base, middle, and top. The 1 and 2 story base elements are provided using masonry veneer with change of materials at the 4th floor to provide a defined top. Varying parapet elements and color changes help break up the masses to provide a sleek design on all four sides of the project. The backs of the garages that front the vehicular main street and E-470 have been treated with the same level of design as the main buildings utilizing quality materials in the same building color pallet.

MASTER PLAN COMPONENTS

Norris Design met with Aurora Planning staff in December 2020 to discuss Master Plan requirements as they relate to the Lona site. Though a master Plan is required by the UDO, the full scope of documents is not necessary for an 8.9-acre, single use, single phase site. As a result, it was decided that the Site Plan submittal would include:

- Open Space, Circulation, & Neighborhood Plan
- Land Use Map, Matrix, and Standard Notes
- Urban Design Standards
- Landscape Standards
- Architectural Standard

ADJUSTMENTS

UDO Section 146-7.9.G.

In all residential developments adjacent to E-470, a minimum 8-foot-high solid sound attenuation wall shall be constructed along the development's E-470 frontage and shall meet all the material and design requirements for fences and walls along arterial streets.

Proposed Adjustment:

The applicant is proposing to forego a sound attenuation wall, given existing site conditions and alternate sound-attenuation features on and adjacent to the site.

Justification:

With a minimum distance of 281-feet from E-470 to residential buildings, an existing 9-foot-tall earthen berm, and proposed 12-foot-tall carports, 12-foot-tall garages, and a 12-foot-tall mechanical building occupying 59% of the western boundary, a sound attenuation wall would be redundant and have minimal sound-attenuation impact on the site.

UDO Section 146-4.8.5.D: 1.

The maximum building length of any multifamily or mixed-use building shall be 200 feet in Subareas B and C.

Provided Building Lengths:

- Building A – 266'-4"
- Building B – 248'-2"
- Building C1 – 257'-2" x 252'-4"
- Building C2 – 257'-2" x 252'-4"

Justification

To achieve the desired density in this setting, the building footprints must exceed the 200' length allowed per code. This additional length is required to proportionately compliment the buildings' 4-story height; it helps reduce the building scale, and the articulation of the building materials is intended to separate the mass while still maintaining the modern prairie theme. This creates a linear design with enhanced frontage and ground floor access along the boundary road. The building elevations are designed with a variation of quality materials with horizontal areas of articulation provided at breaks of less than 50' along the primary façade elevations.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL CRITERIA

- a. The application complies with the applicable standards in this UDO, other adopted City regulations, any approved Master Plan that includes the property, and any conditions specifically applied to development of the property by the Planning and Zoning Commission or City Council in a prior decision affecting the property.

The Lona site plan is in conformance with the included Master Plan components.

- b. The City's existing infrastructure and public improvements, including but not limited to its water, wastewater, street, trail, and sidewalk systems, have adequate capacity to serve the proposed development, and any burdens on those systems have been mitigated to the degree practicable.

The site is near already built infrastructure and will connect in the most efficient ways possible. As Lamar Landing to the south develops, the team plans to pursue efficiencies with that site's infrastructure as well.

- c. Major Site Plans shall be designed to preserve and protect natural areas, ridgelines, swales, natural landforms, water quality and wildlife habitat of riparian corridors, wetlands, and floodplains affected by the proposed development and to integrate those areas into site design where practicable.

The proposed development will utilize an underground stormwater detention and water quality system to attenuate additional storm runoff produced by the project. The system will be located in the southwest corner of the project and will substantially maintain the historic drainage pattern of the existing drainage basin in which the project is located.

- d. The application will improve or expand multi-modal connections with adjacent sites, neighborhoods, and urban centers.

This neighborhood will provide connection to the community to the south and an extension of 6th Avenue to access the site, which may be used by future users located to the north.

- e. The application is compatible with surrounding uses in terms of size, scale and building façade materials.

The neighborhood will be compatible with the nearby mixed-use and residential developments, with maximum building heights of 60'-0", pedestrian-scale massing, and traditional residential façade materials.

- f. The application mitigates any adverse impacts on the surrounding area to the degree practicable.

As one of the first developments in the area between Gun Club Road and E-470, the site has minimal impact on nearby development and is fulfilling Aurora zoning and comprehensive plan vision to create a diversity of uses and density of housing in the E470 corridor.

We look forward to working with the City of Aurora on this highly anticipated community. Thank you for considering our application.

Sincerely,

Norris Design



Associate