



Written Narrative

a. Explain if the applicant will have a development project readily available for the site.

The applicant will be submitting a land use application this summer for the development of a multifamily apartment building. To keep the process moving in a timely fashion, as they are looking to start development in Fall of 2021, they are submitting the Comprehensive Plan Amendment now.

b. Is the change consistent with the goals and objectives or other elements of the Comprehensive Plan?

Yes. The amendment will change the northern half of the parcel from an Industrial District to City Center District, which would allow for a mix of uses. The change is consistent with the goal of completing the build-up and build-out of the community and creates growth in housing choice, and also increasing the development and enhancement of the City Center District. The proposed development will also take place on what is currently a vacant parcel and will offer a pedestrian friendly walking path that will better connect the parcel to the surrounding area.

c. Will the amendment create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated? (i.e., roads, sewers, water supply, drainage, schools, police, fire, and parks).

No. The developer had a preliminary conversation on February 22, 2021, with Nolan Wall (Planning/Community Development Director), Kevin Watson (City Administrator), Chris Hearden (Fire Chief), and Jesse Farrel (Public Works Director/City Engineer) to discuss the project and any impacts on public facilities and services. Locations of future roads, sewers, water supply and fire safety were all discussed, and changes will be made to incorporate feedback and comments. The developer and architect will continue to work with the city as plans progress to make sure there are no adverse impacts.

d. Will development resulting from the amendment create an undue impact on surrounding properties?

No. The property is located between to Hwy 35E to the west, a marsh to the north, an urban farm and vacant land to the east, and a Children's Discovery Center to the south. All these properties will benefit from the developed site providing a higher and better use. Both the residents of the new apartment complex and Children's Discovery Center can benefit from being so close by in terms of potential new clients and/or employees. There will be an additional 230 households with income ranging from \$58,000 to \$139,000 that will be a benefit to the surrounding businesses.

e. Is the proposed development consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood? Would the development upgrade and improve its viability?



Yes. The neighborhood consists of a variety of retail, office and hotel uses, at a mix of heights. After development the site will fit in well with the surrounding area, as it will bring residents to the area and help support local businesses. Furthermore, the site will create a multi-use path connection to other trails and sidewalks making the space more pedestrian and environmentally friendly. The site is currently vacant land that was used as a landfill/dump for an old hospital that was torn down. The site is heavily contaminated and must be dealt with carefully and in compliance with MPCA codes and ordinances.

f. Will the amendment allow a more viable transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current use?

Yes. As mentioned, the site is currently vacant, and was previously used as a dump for a hospital that was torn down. The site is located in an area that is predominantly City Center District. The amendment would allow for the site fit in better with the surrounding area, help spur development on adjacent parcels, and intensify the uses as provided in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

g. Will the amendment have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment including trees, slopes and groundwater? Could the impact be mitigated by improvements on the site or in the same vicinity?

The site itself is primarily an open field with a billboard located on it. The proposed project will call for the removal of a nominal amount of trees, and a tree study will be provided as part of a future application. Extensive research and reporting have taken place with respect to the wetlands located on the site. The proposed development will not impede on any of the wetland areas as called out in the wetland delineation report.

h. Has there been a change in City policies or neighborhood characteristics that would justify an amendment?

The site is one large parcel that is around nine acres in size. Per the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the site was split into different zoning districts. Roughly two thirds of the site was designated as City Center District, and the other portion was designated as Industrial District. Creating a consistent use on the entire parcel with further promote the goals and objectives associated with the City Center District.

i. Does the amendment correct an error made in the original Comprehensive Plan?

The site's current Land Use Designation is undeveloped, and we will be redeveloping it into a higher and better use that is consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

j. Is there a community or regional need identified in the Comprehensive Plan for the proposed land use or service?

Yes. The proposed land use would designate the entire parcel as City Center District. Per the Comprehensive plan, the city of Vadnais Heights has goals built around increasing housing choice, continuing the development and enhancement of the City Center District, reducing land conflicts through redevelopment of vacant sites, and enhancing public spaces across the community. The proposed land use: 1) increases the housing choice in the area by adding around 230 new residential units 2) increases development located in the City Center District while also better preparing the area for a spur in redevelopment on adjacent parcels 3) redevelops a vacant



parcel of land, and therefore reducing land conflicts 4) includes a multi-use path that will allow for connection to other nearby trails and sidewalks, making a pedestrian friendly connection for residents and nearby neighbors.

k. Does the amendment help the City meet its life-cycle and affordable housing objectives?

Yes. The development will provide a diverse unit mix with a range of rental costs to accommodate the population of Vadnais Heights. The apartment complex consists of studio, alcove, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three- bedroom units. At this time, the proposed project does not contain any affordable housing units.

l. Does the amendment adversely affect any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties? Can the impacts be mitigated through relocation, commemoration, or dedication?

No. The property is not near any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties.

m. What are the differences in traffic generation from the current versus the proposed land use?

The site is currently vacant land and generates little to no traffic. The proposed use of the land is multifamily housing with around 230 units. The main traffic drivers to the site will be property management staff, tenants in the building and guest of the tenants.

n. If applicable, is the proposed traffic in conformance with the I-35E Corridor Study?

Per city staff, this site is not applicable.