

LETTER OF INTENT

The proposed regulations for this district work to create a walkable, urban neighborhood, where a diverse mix of uses and higher building densities promote less dependence on the automobile. As the neighboring Wilson District has established a code in support of that same goal, our team has worked to apply and modify standards from the regulations adopted in that code to extend the area of an urban node for northern McKinney. The narrative here outlines the rationale for each requested variance from the base UDC regulations in support of creating this new urban node.

TRACT IV – HEIGHT AND MASSING

Large volumes of vehicles have access to the sites along US 75, with more access expected along the future US 380 bypass. The proposed standards and conceptual design work to establish Tract IV as a gateway for the district. Taller office, hotel, and multifamily buildings signal to passerby's that the contents of this neighborhood are different than might normally be expected at the edges of a city. These larger buildings visually and acoustically screen a central park space lined by a variety of restaurants and retail establishments, designed for families and friends to leave their cars and meander, dine, sip, and play. Open spaces and moments of reprieve are provided through intentional landscapes that dot the whole project, each pocket park made accessible by sidewalk or by a continuous trail connecting each tract.

PARKING REQUIREMENTS AND SHARING

Close proximities of uses allow for parking to be shared between office, hotel, and restaurant/retail uses, with walks between destinations lying no more than 1,000 feet from each other – distances from the proposed parking garage reduce travel distance even further to individual destinations. Proposed parking for multifamily uses is provided at 1.5 spaces/unit, as additional parking for guests is provided through parallel spaces codified in the street sections, and in the central garage to be shared among all uses. While lower than the UDC standard, this rate mirrors parking rates for mixed-use districts in neighboring Collin County municipalities. Further, integrated mixed-use environments have been demonstrated to lessen the demand for vehicles, and many households are more likely to share vehicles because an array of the amenities and necessities for a high quality of life are within walking distance.

DENSITY AS GROSS NUMBERS RATHER THAN DU/ACRE

Development standards are proposed for each tract, scaling down in density from the densest tracts, 3 & 4, to the lower scale development proposed on Tracts, 1 & 2, with each block having distinct height and residential yield caps. Residential uses of varying types are proposed at each tract, with each tract limited by a total unit cap, to be applied to individual properties within that tract. While this figure differs from the UDC formatting of units/acre, the aggregate unit figure hews closely to the 30 units/acre when measured across the entire acreage of the tract. Additionally, with an ongoing acquisition of right-of-way from TXDOT and future discussions anticipated regarding stoplights and roadway design, slight changes to the amount of land within each anticipated lot are likely. Thus, we feel it is more accurate to state density in terms of gross numbers rather than units per acre.

FRONT YARD SETBACKS

Front yard setbacks are reduced at each tract to 20' as we work to maintain urbane frontages along Laud Howell and Trinity Falls and to remain consistent with those setbacks established in the neighboring Wilson District. It is further noteworthy that all of our drives—along which the 20-foot setbacks are proposed—are internal and private.

TREE MITIGATION

Tree mitigation standards are requested to allow for the development of valley storage ponds to the west of Tract 2. While this area is still under active design and review, it is our team's vision that this area functions as a kind of preserve while fulfilling its function as infrastructure. Currently, our numbers show that the total number of trees to be remediated on the property include (a) 140 four-inch-caliper trees, and (b) 35 six-inch-caliper trees (i.e., Tract 1: 21 four-inch and 6 six-inch; Tract 2: 35 four-inch and 8 six-inch; Tract 3: 29

four-inch and 8 six-inch; and Tract 4: 55 four-inch and 13 six-inch). Due to the footprint of the US 380 right-of-way, this floodplain reclamation activity is limited in the location of the valley storage ponds needed for the proposed reclamation. The resulting valley storage ponds are primarily wooded areas within the floodplain presenting a hardship to avoid 30 percent of quality trees per the typical requirements of the UDC. Large numbers of trees are to be preserved around the ponds, with additional planting provided along the future 380 frontage. Paved trails will wind through this area, connecting back into the trail system established for the developed tracts. The trees that must be mitigated from this tract are to be mitigated at a defined rate among the four development tracts as further provided in our proposed development standards.

CONCLUSION

While this project is large in scale and will proceed in multiple phases that necessitate some deviations from standard UDC requirements, there is a unified vision for a connected and walkable mixed-use project that will create an appealing environment for people to reside, come to work, gather with friends and family, and recreate. Attached to this letter of intent is a current draft of the master concept plan to further illustrate the vision.