



July 18th , 2023

Office of Development Assistance, City of Aurora
15151 E. Alameda Parkway, Suite 5200
Aurora, CO 80012

RE: Sable Blvd. Townhomes
KA#: 222010

Dear Jazmine Marte & Dan Osoba,

On behalf of the applicant, Utah Development Group, we are pleased to submit an application for a Site Plan, Plat, and Zone Map Amendment for a townhome community project.

The following team has been assembled to complete this application:

- Developer – Marco Diaz: Utah Development Group - 324 S. 400 W. Suite 175
Salt Lake City, UT 84101 / (801) 641-8956 / marco@utahdevelopmentgroup.com
- Land Planner – Jeff Neulieb: KEPHART – 2555 Walnut St. Denver, CO 80205
(303) 832-4474 / jeffn@kephart.com
- Architect – John Davis: Layton Davis Architects - 2005 E 2700 S Suite 200 SLC, UT
84109 / (801) 487-0715 / john@laytondavisarchitects.com
- Civil Engineer / Landscape Architecture – Woody Bryant: Engineering Service
Company - 14190 East Evans Avenue Aurora, Colorado 80014 / (303) 337-1393 /
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Site Context

The proposed townhome development is located along the east side of Sable Boulevard in between E. 21st Avenue and E. Montview Blvd. The site includes roughly 3.8 acres and is zoned R-R rural residential with the intention of rezoning to R-2 to allow for townhome development. Single-family residential uses border the property to the north and east, while manufactured housing and multifamily development border the property to the south and west. The Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan designates this property as an established neighborhood and encourages single-family attached residential development. This proposed townhome community includes approximately 70 for-sale units creating an overall density of 18.4 du/ac.

Site Plan

The proposed townhome development is arranged in a green court configuration where front doors face a common shared open space. This type of design configuration is allowed within the R-2 zoning designation and was the preferred design solution between the applicant and City planning staff. Each Townhome unit has an attached two-car garage that is accessed from an

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alley. Alleyways can be accessed from E. 21st Ave. and E. Montview Blvd. The neighborhood will be served by a mix of 140 attached garage parking spaces and 24 proximate internal surface and 11 on-street parallel parking. The proposed parking ratio is 2.5 spaces per dwelling unit.

The green courts are approximately 48’ in width and 265’ in length and will be programmed with a variety of passive and active recreational activities. City code requires green courts to be a minimum of 30’ in width, however the design team decided to increase the size to make them a useable amenity within the project. Buildings are arranged in 4 and 5 plex configurations and are a total of three stories in height. The front door of each unit either faces a green court or Sable Boulevard. Locations of plant material have been meticulously laid out to provide interest along the street, enhancement of amenity spaces and buffering of parking areas.

Zone Map Amendment & Site Plan Approval Summary:

As part of this application, a rezoning from R-R to R-2 will be required. The rezoning of the property will be required to allow for townhomes to be built on the property. July 13th, 2021, City planning staff reviewed the requested change on to R-2 and the request was labeled as “neutral”. The following explanation below justifies the zone map amendment request for approval:

According to section 5.4.1.C.3.a of the Aurora Unified Development Ordinance, “An application for initial zoning, rezoning, and changes to the Zoning Map for individual parcels or small areas shall only be recommended if the Planning Director and the Planning and Zoning Commission finds that the following criteria have been met, and shall only be approved if City Council finds that the following criteria have been met.”:

(a) The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed initial zoning or rezoning is consistent with the spirit and intent of the Comprehensive Plan, with other policies and plans adopted by the City Council, and with the purpose statement of the proposed new zone district(s);

Justification - The proposed rezone from R-R to R-2 is supported by several contextual factors and aligns with the goals of the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan. The surrounding land uses on the property's borders provide a clear indication of the appropriate zoning designation. Single-family residential uses border the property to the north and east, indicating that these areas are primarily intended for low-density housing. On the other hand, manufactured housing and multifamily development border the property to the south and west, suggesting a higher density of housing in these areas.

By rezoning the property to R-2, the zoning would match the context to the west, where higher-density housing is already present. This ensures a harmonious transition in building scale and density between the proposed development and the existing multifamily developments. Additionally, the R-2 zoning designation would provide a suitable buffer between the higher-density housing to the west and the adjacent single-family neighborhoods to the east and north.





This buffer would help maintain the character and scale of the established single-family neighborhoods, preserving their quality of life and property values.

Furthermore, the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan designates this property as an established neighborhood and encourages single-family attached residential development. This designation acknowledges the existing character of the area and supports the addition of attached townhomes as a suitable housing option. According to the Aurora Housing Study's Figure 17, Subarea A of the city severely lacks a mid to high level attached townhome product. By allowing the proposed development of attached townhomes through the R-2 rezone, the city would address this housing shortage and provide a diverse range of housing options within the subarea.

Overall, the proposed rezone to R-2 is justified based on the surrounding land uses, the need for a transition in building scale, the support of the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan, and the identified housing shortage within Subarea A. The rezone would contribute to the city's goal of providing high-quality housing options across all socioeconomic levels and help create a more balanced and inclusive community within Aurora.

(b) The applicant has demonstrated that the size, scale, height, density, and multi-modal traffic impacts of the proposed initial zoning or rezoning are compatible with surrounding development or can be made compatible with surrounding development through approval conditions; and

Justification – The proposed rezone from R-R to R-2 is supported by several contextual factors and aligns with the goals of the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan. The surrounding land uses on the property's borders provide a clear indication of the appropriate zoning designation. Single-family residential uses border the property to the north and east, indicating that these areas are primarily intended for low-density housing. On the other hand, manufactured housing and multifamily development border the property to the south and west, suggesting a higher density of housing in these areas.

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Additionally, a comprehensive traffic impact study has been diligently prepared to assess the potential effects of the zone change. The study demonstrates that the proposed rezone will not result in any adverse impacts on traffic conditions. This finding indicates that the surrounding road infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate the projected increase in traffic resulting from the zone change. Therefore, the proposed development can be expected to integrate smoothly into the existing transportation network without causing significant disruptions or congestion.





(c) *The application demonstrates that the change in zoning will not create significant dislocations of tenants or occupants of the property, or that any impacts are outweighed by other public benefits or progress toward other Comprehensive Plan goals that would be achieved by approval of the application.*

Justification - There are currently no residents or occupancy within the proposed development, therefore the project does not create any significant dislocations.

Additionally, the proposed Site Plan complies with the site plan approval criteria found in section 146-5.4.3.B.c.i based on a variety of reasons. The proposal is identified as a secondary land use in the Emerging Neighborhood Placetype in the Aurora Places Plan and furthers the “Housing for All” principle. The proposal is compatible with the surrounding land uses and adverse impacts have been mitigated to the extent practicable. Lastly, the existing City infrastructure has sufficient sewer capacity to accommodate the proposed development and improvements, including sidewalks, trail connections, and various other public enhancements. These upgrades will not only enhance the City's infrastructure but also contribute to overall public improvements.

Code Adjustment Summary:

To develop this project under the current UDO a series of code deviations are being requested. A list of code deviations is described below along with justification for each deviation:

Section 4.2.2. Table 4.2-1: 1,600 SF lot area minimum for Single-family attached fronting a public street for a private street meeting public street standards in an R-2 zoning district.

Adjustment: To reduce the minimum lot area of a single-family attached lot fronting a public street from 1,600 SF to 1,000 SF on the 9 lots fronting Sable Blvd.

Justification: Given the various constraints posed by the infill condition, complying with the minimum lot size requirement for this project proves to be excessively restrictive. However, by implementing a reduction in the minimum lot size, we can unlock the potential to increase the number of units on the site. This adjustment allows us to optimize land utilization and provide housing opportunities to a greater number of individuals and families.

To ensure a seamless transition and address any potential challenges associated with accommodating an increased number of units, we have taken proactive measures to enhance the overall living experience for the residents. One key aspect of our approach is the expansion of the size of the green courts. By allocating more space to these communal areas, we create vibrant and inviting environments where residents can connect with nature, relax, and engage in recreational activities.

By striking a balance between increasing the number of units and expanding the green courts with added amenities, we aim to achieve a harmonious integration of residential density and recreational spaces. This approach not only addresses the constraints of the infill condition but





also ensures that the community thrives in a sustainable and livable environment that promotes well-being and fosters a sense of belonging.

Section 4.2.3.A.2 Table 4.2-5: The minimum lot area of single-family attached dwellings (alley loaded only) must be 1,380 SF for end units and 1,250 SF for interior units.

Adjustment: To decrease the minimum lot size of end units from 1,380 SF to 1,100 SF & to decrease the minimum lot size of interior units from 1,250 SF to 1,050 SF.

Justification: Given the various constraints posed by the infill condition, complying with the minimum lot size requirement for this project proves to be excessively restrictive. However, by implementing a reduction in the minimum lot size, we can unlock the potential to increase the number of units on the site. This adjustment allows us to optimize land utilization and provide housing opportunities to a greater number of individuals and families.

To ensure a seamless transition and address any potential challenges associated with accommodating an increased number of units, we have taken proactive measures to enhance the overall living experience for the residents. One key aspect of our approach is the expansion of the size of the green courts. By allocating more space to these communal areas, we create vibrant and inviting environments where residents can connect with nature, relax, and engage in recreational activities.

By striking a balance between increasing the number of units and expanding the green courts with added amenities, we aim to achieve a harmonious integration of residential density and recreational spaces. This approach not only addresses the constraints of the infill condition but also ensures that the community thrives in a sustainable and livable environment that promotes well-being and fosters a sense of belonging.

Section 4.2.3.A.4 Table 4.2-6: The minimum building setbacks for single-family attached dwellings (alley loaded only) is a 10 ft. front setback and 10 ft. side setback for end walls.

Adjustment: To decrease the minimum front setback from 10 ft. to 4.5 ft. and to decrease the side end wall setback from 10 ft. to 0.5 ft.

Justification: Considering the various limitations imposed by the infill condition, adhering to the minimum front and end wall setbacks proves to be excessively restrictive. However, by implementing reduced setbacks, we are able to accommodate a higher density of units on the site. This adjustment not only allows for an increased number of residences but also enables us to create more spacious green court areas for the community's benefit, in contrast to allocating land for private individual front and side yards.

Recognizing the potential challenges that may arise from accommodating a larger number of units, we have taken proactive measures to ensure the residents' satisfaction. To mitigate any potential issues, we have significantly expanded the size of the green courts. By doing so, we





have created ample open spaces where residents can relax, socialize, and engage in recreational activities. Furthermore, we have incorporated additional amenities within these green court areas to enhance their functionality and appeal.

Additional architectural enhancements have been thoughtfully integrated into the side elevations of the townhomes, resulting in a more visually appealing and harmonious design. These enhancements include the introduction of enhanced cementitious siding on the right elevation and the incorporation of additional brick veneer on the left elevation. These elements have been strategically employed to effectively break up the monotony that may have been previously associated with the stucco on the side elevations.

The enhanced cementitious siding on the right elevation not only adds texture and depth to the facade but also contributes to the overall durability of the structure. Its clean lines and modern aesthetic blend seamlessly with the overall architectural theme, creating an inviting and stylish appearance that complements the surrounding environment.

On the left elevation, the addition of brick veneer brings a timeless and classic touch to the townhomes. The brickwork introduces a warm and rich color palette, contrasting beautifully with the stucco and providing a pleasing visual balance. This choice not only enhances the aesthetic appeal but also imparts a sense of sophistication and character to the townhomes.

By striking a balance between increased density and the provision of larger green courts, we aim to create a harmonious living environment that meets the needs of the community while maximizing the use of the available space.

Section 4.2.3.C.1.b.xi: All Green Court Dwellings shall have front entry features (porches or stoops) fronting on a Green Court open space or a street. If porches are provided to meet this requirement, they shall be a minimum 45 square feet in area and a minimum of five feet wide in the narrowest porch dimension. Porches and stoops facing the Green Court open space may extend up to five feet beyond the building façade provided that no roof or associated structure exceeds one story in height.

Adjustment: To adjust the porch/ stoop requirement on the first level of each townhome.

Justification: Taking into account the numerous constraints associated with the infill condition of this project, we have made deliberate efforts to prioritize the well-being and satisfaction of the residents by designing larger and more functional green courts. These green courts serve as essential communal spaces, providing additional amenities that enhance the overall living experience within the development.

However, one particular challenge arose when considering the incorporation of porches or stoops on the first level of each townhome. While these features may offer certain advantages, such as a welcoming entrance or outdoor seating area, they would also lead to a reduction in the size of the green courts and an increase in the overall lot size. Recognizing the importance of





preserving the spaciousness and functionality of the green courts, we have devised a mitigation measure to address this concern.

To strike a balance between providing desirable features and maintaining the integrity of the green courts, we have introduced balconies on the second and third levels of each townhome. These balconies have been strategically positioned to overlook the green courts, offering residents an elevated vantage point to enjoy the surrounding greenery and foster a sense of connection with nature. By locating the balconies on higher levels, we not only preserve the size of the green courts but also create an elevated outdoor space that adds an element of privacy and tranquility for the residents.

The balconies serve as an excellent alternative to porches or stoops, ensuring that the townhome units still have outdoor spaces where residents can unwind, socialize, and enjoy the views. Additionally, the balconies provide an opportunity for residents to personalize their living spaces with plants, seating arrangements, and other personal touches.

By incorporating these balconies as a thoughtful mitigation measure, we maintain the integrity and usability of the green courts while simultaneously offering residents an appealing outdoor space that complements their lifestyle. Our aim is to create a harmonious blend of functional green spaces and individualized townhome units, fostering a sense of community while respecting the unique preferences and needs of each resident.

Section 4.2.3.C.1.b.viii.: Both end units of each group of attached Green Court Dwellings shall abut a public or private street or alley, without intervening common open space between the side wall of the end unit and the right-of-way of the private or public street or alley, except as provided in Subsection ix below.

Adjustment: To adjust the Intervening Common Open Space requirement.

Justification: In response to the significant grade change of the site, we have strategically placed several retaining walls along the periphery to ensure that these retaining walls do not encroach upon individual owned lots. Extending the end lot lines to align with the edge of the property line would result in the retaining walls falling within the boundaries of the individual lots. However, to prevent the burden of ownership and maintenance falling on individual homeowners, the end lots have been reduced in size and the homeowners association (HOA) will assume responsibility for the ownership and upkeep of the retaining walls.

Section 4.2.3.C.(1)(B)(v): In Subareas A and B, no more than 14 dwelling units may face the same Green Court open space.

Adjustment: To increase the number of allowed green court dwellings on a single green court from 14 to 18.

Justification: Due to the infill nature of the site, the site plan has been designed to provide contiguous, useable green courts without interruption from 21st Ave. to Montview Blvd.





Additional units facing the same green court creates three contiguous open spaces courts within the project that will be programmed with a variety of recreational activities. An adjustment from this requirement also allows for increased building and open space efficiency. A north/south street grid connects E. 21st Ave. with E. Montview Blvd. Additionally, green courts internal to the site will connect with the adjacent existing sidewalk and pedestrian network.

Overall, the project’s intent is to provide a high quality, sensitively designed residential community within the City of Aurora to help meet the current and future market demand for housing in this area. As always, our team is excited to continue work with Aurora staff throughout this process.

Section 4.7.9.T.2.c.: Retaining walls in residential development shall be a maximum of 30 inches in front yard setback.

Adjustment: To adjust the maximum retaining wall height requirement for residential development from 30 inches to 48 inches.

Justification: The need for a retaining wall along the Sable Boulevard frontage, and a portion of the 21st Avenue and Montview Boulevard frontages, is due to the finished floor elevations of the proposed western units vis-à-vis the elevation of Sable Boulevard. The minimum finished floor elevations for the western units of the development (those facing Sable Boulevard) were established based on the depth of the closest public sanitary sewer infrastructure, located in 21st Street. The existing conditions of the property and the surrounding roads, as well as the required street improvements, contributed to the need and height of the retaining walls. The adjustment allows an increase to the maximum retaining wall height to 48 inches which will enable the development to overcome these site constraints and optimize land use without compromising safety or stability.

Sincerely,

Jeff Neulieb
KEPHART