

September 26, 2024

Leah Piccotti  
City of Reno  
1 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Reno, Nevada 89501

Re: **2400 W 7th Street Tentative Map (LDC25-00003)**  
**Justification on Meeting the Definition of Cluster Development**

Leah,

This letter is to address the definition of a cluster development according to the City of Reno Municipal Code RMC 18.04.903(a) which states:

*Cluster Development is encouraged to support the protection of sensitive natural resources, viewsheds, or other unique site features; promote fire safety within the wildland interface; provide opportunities for shared common open space; protect documented wildlife corridors;*

## Response:

The project is designed address the above definition by providing better viewshed protection than non-clustered development through a combination of increased setbacks/buffering and elevation change. Further, the project design proposes improvements to help meet unique site features to address off site drainage constraints. These improvements are provided in the proposed shared common open space which will also include amenities to help make the common open space more usable for the residents.

## Viewsheds:

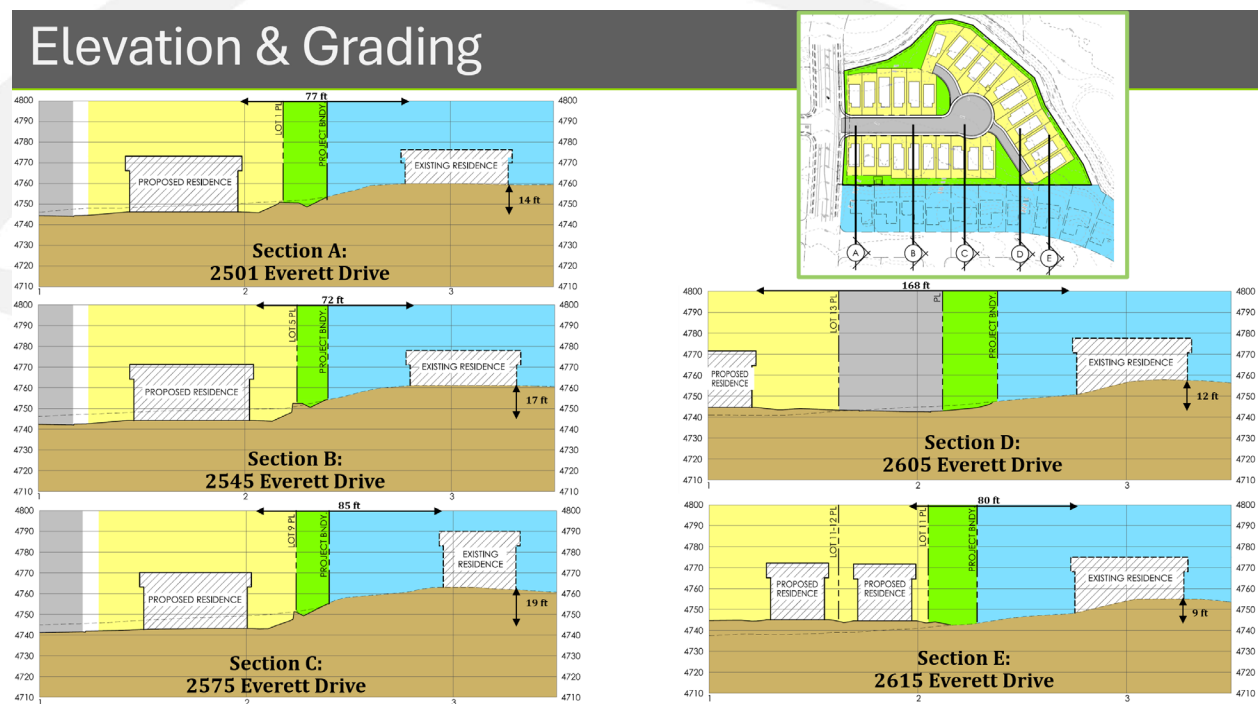
To better support the protection of the viewsheds for the adjacent neighbors to west, the project has been designed to allow the proposed lots to be set back further than code requirements, while still meeting the minimum setbacks of the underlying zoning. A common area buffer ranging from sixteen foot (16 ft) to twenty-two foot (22 ft) is provided between lots 1-10 and the adjacent neighbors. Furthermore, the proposed homes provide the minimum required setbacks, resulting in an overall increased separation of twenty-eight feet (28 ft) to forty-three feet (43 ft) from the adjacent properties to the west as demonstrated in Figure 1. When considering the viewshed, the buffer and the location of the proposed homes not only sets the houses farther away from the western property line, it also allows the homes to be lower in elevation than the existing homes, further helping to protect the existing viewsheds, as compared to



Figure 1

traditional lot development. Please note, if traditional, non-clustered lot standards were employed, proposed homes could be located as close as 20-feet to the western boundary of the project.

The grading is proposed to generally slope from west to east; therefore, the further east the proposed lots are located, the lower in elevation they can be set. As proposed, the finished grade of the houses are at an elevation that is between approximately nine feet (9 ft) to nineteen feet (19 ft) lower in elevation than the adjacent finished grades of homes along Everett Drive. This will allow the proposed two-story homes to sit lower than the elevation of the existing homes. The proposed homes are currently designed to be twenty-seven feet (27 ft) tall (less than the 35-foot maximum code height) as demonstrated in the cross sections in Figure 2. With the graded elevation difference, the perceived building height of the proposed 2-story homes will be that of a single-story structure. This combination of increased vertical and horizontal separation from the existing homes serves to better protect the viewshed than traditional lot development.



**Figure 2**

### Unique Site Features:

The site is unique, as it must accommodate drainage coming from the developed lots to the west and draining onto the property. In addition, per the requirements of the Truckee Meadows Regional Drainage Manual (Section 305) the developed site is not permitted to continue to drain to the Highland Canal to the south and east as it historically does. Therefore, onsite improvements to accommodate for the onsite drainage must be provided to capture the onsite flows as well as any offsite flows from the adjacent properties to the west. These flows would traditionally be collected onsite and discharged to an adjacent storm drain facility in the public right-of-way. However, W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street does not have existing storm drain facilities adjacent to the project site which, in turn, requires retention ponds, in lieu of detention ponds to be provided on site. Therefore, the combination of the offsite flows from the adjacent property, the inability to continue to drain to the Highland Canal, and the lack of storm drain facilities in W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street is driving the need to utilize the common open space area to provide a drainage channel along the western boundary to capture the flows from the existing properties to the west and the utilization of an onsite



retention basin where the water from the surrounding properties and the water collected onsite can be allowed to percolate into the ground without discharging into the Highland Canal or W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

Typically, with infill development, the entire property can be used for development and does not need to accommodate for capturing flows from surrounding properties. This is typically seen at developments located on the boundaries of town in the outer and foothill neighborhoods where the land around the project is not developed and surrounding flows drain onto the property. However, this project must provide drainage facilities to capture these flows on an infill site. The proposed retention facilities accommodate for the unique site features while supporting protection of the viewshed but limits the opportunity for usable common areas.

Common Area Open Space:

As described above and throughout the materials submitted with this application the common area provided will allow for a landscaped buffer to provide a better transition between the existing lots to the west and the reduced lot size proposed in this request. This buffer will provide additional trees to enhance this transition and help to mitigate any potential impacts. The common area will also provide onsite retention ponds and drainage channels for capturing and conveying onsite, as well as offsite flows. To provide amenities that would allow the common areas to be more usable, two areas have been identified. The areas to the south of Lot 10 and to the west of Lot 11 will allow for usable common area amenities. The applicant has agreed to provide a gathering space and benches to create a usable amenity for the community to enjoy. An example of this is provided in Figure 3 below.



**Figure 3**

In addition to the amenities, the common area will be landscaped with trees and shrubs. It is intended that any viable evergreen onsite and particularly along the western boundary be protected. However, with the concerns listed in previous correspondence this may not be feasible and will be determined at

final map. New trees within the buffer and throughout the common area will help to make the common area a usable amenity the community can enjoy.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me at [ehasty@woodrogers.com](mailto:ehasty@woodrogers.com) or 823-9770.

Sincerely,

**WOOD RODGERS, INC.**



Eric Hasty, AICP