

**PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Date: January 18, 2023

To: Reno City Planning Commission

Subject: **Staff Report (For Possible Action): Case No. LDC23-00018 (Aspire at North Hills) - A request has been made for a conditional use permit to allow a 192 unit multi-family development. The ±8.64 acre subject site consists of four parcels with ±308.63 feet of frontage on North Hills Boulevard and ±179 feet of frontage on East Golden Valley Road. The subject site is located within the General Commercial (GC) zoning district and has a Master Plan land use designation of Suburban Mixed-Use (SMU).**

From: Leah Brock, Assistant Planner

Ward #: 4

Case No.: LDC23-00018 (Aspire at North Hills)

Applicant: Selective Real Estate

APN: 502-120-12, 502-120-13, 502-120-18, 502-120-20

Request: **Conditional Use Permit:** To allow a 192 unit multi-family development.

Location: See Case Maps (**Exhibit A**).

Proposed Motion: Based upon compliance with the applicable findings, I move to approve the tentative map, subject to conditions.

Summary: The subject site consists of four vacant parcels containing ±8.64 acres of land accessed from the east via Golden Valley Road, from the south via North Hills Boulevard, and from the west via an existing shopping center anchored by Raley's supermarket. The proposed conditional use permit would allow for a 192-unit multi-family development including seven apartment buildings, a clubhouse, and associated amenities. Key project issues include: 1) site and building design; and 2) compatibility with surrounding uses. With all recommended conditions of approval, the proposal exceeds all code standards and addresses applicable findings. Staff recommends approval subject to the conditions outlined in the staff report.

Background: The subject site was annexed into the City of Reno in 2006. The site has never been developed, but was graded flat in the past; most likely during the construction of the adjacent

shopping center in 1986. A conditional use permit is required to develop more than 100 multi-family residential units in the GC zoning district.

Analysis:

Site Design and Architecture: The proposed project includes six three-story apartment buildings, one two-story apartment building, and one clubhouse with associated common areas, recreation areas, and amenities (**Exhibit B**). The project includes 192 units in two 36-unit buildings and five 24-unit buildings. The buildings will contain a mix of 1, 2, and 3-bedroom units, and the maximum height of the tallest apartment building within the development will be 41.25 feet when measured from grade to the highest point of the roof. The height of all proposed buildings is well below the maximum height for the GC zoning district, which is 65 feet measured to the average height of the highest gable of the roof. Additionally, all buildings which exceed 35 feet in height within the project have been sited so they will not cast a shadow on residentially zoned property between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on December 21, as required by RMC 18.04.101 (c)(2).

Compatibility with Surrounding Uses: The northern boundary of the subject site abuts the rear yards of single-family homes on Copper Vista Court and Alice Smith Elementary School. The eastern boundary is adjacent to single-family homes across Golden Valley Road. The southern boundary includes commercial uses along North Hills Boulevard, as well as a Burger King and QuikStop on the corner of North Hills Boulevard and Golden Valley Road. The western boundary abuts a large shopping center anchored by a Raley's supermarket. Other tenants in the shopping center include the North Valleys Library, a thrift store, several restaurants, and a dentist office. A table listing all adjacent land uses is below.

Direction	Use	Zoning
North	Alice Smith Elementary School	Public Facilities (PF)
	Single-Family Homes (<i>Copper Vista Ct.</i>)	Single Family Residential (SF-3)
East	Single-Family Homes (<i>Across Golden Valley Rd.</i>)	
	Fast Food Restaurant	General Commercial (GC)
	Gas Station/Convenience Store	
South	Auto Service and Repair	
	Post Office	
	Dentist Office	
West	Raley's Shopping Center	

Per RMC 18.04.808, land use screening is required for a new multi-family development along property lines abutting PF and SF-3 zoning. To provide the adequate land use screening between the apartment complex and Alice Smith Elementary School, a landscaped solid or semi-opaque buffer will be provided along the shared property line (**Condition 5**).

Per RMC 18.04.808, minimum land use screening required between a multi-family development and the SF-3 zoned properties on Copper Vista Court is a six-foot high solid wood fence plus a five-foot wide landscaping screen including a minimum of one evergreen tree and three shrubs planted every 30 linear feet. However, land use screening exceeding these minimum requirements is necessary based on the nature and scale of this proposed development which includes apartment buildings immediately adjacent to single-family homes and an eighteen foot grade change between the subject site and the houses on Copper Vista Court. The applicant has solicited feedback from property owners on Copper Vista Court and worked with City staff to modify their project design for increased compatibility with adjacent single-family residences.

As a result of meetings with neighboring property owners and discussions with City staff, there are additional screening measures that will be implemented as part of the site development. Additional screening will be provided on both sides of the existing emergency access road as shown in **Exhibit C**. There is an existing six-foot tall solid wood fence along the property line shared by this development and single-family homes on Copper Vista Court which will remain (**Condition 6**). A second six-foot tall decorative fence (**Exhibit C**) will be installed by the applicant at the top of the slope between the residential neighbors on Copper Vista Court and the proposed development. Between these two fences, a dense vegetative screen comprised of evergreen trees will be planted by the applicant and maintained for the life of the project (**Condition 7**).

To further increase compatibility with the adjacent single-family homes, the applicant has reduced the height of the apartment building nearest to Copper Vista Court from the original application materials (**Exhibit B**). Building 8 is the nearest building to single-family residences on Copper Vista Court. To increase compatibility, the applicant has modified their project design to eliminate the third story of Building 8, reducing overall building height by ± 9 feet. In addition to removal of the third story, Building 8's roof has been modified by removing a portion of the parapet roof as well as lowering the entire roof from a pitch of 4:12 to a pitch of 3:12 to minimize shadow casting to the greatest extent possible. These modifications to Building 8 have resulted in a 12-unit reduction of the overall unit count for the project (from 204 units to 192 units). Additionally, minor impacts to surrounding properties are anticipated during construction and hours of construction will be limited (**Condition 8**).

Lighting: Due to the grade change and proximity to single-family homes on Copper Vista Court, photometric plans and cut sheets or details of all exterior light fixtures proposed with this project will be required at the time of building permit review (**Condition 9**). City staff will verify that site lighting complies with all zoning code requirements for exterior lighting (RMC Chapter 18.04 Article 13) and residential adjacency (RMC Chapter 18.04 Article 14). All light fixtures shall be aimed and shielded so that the direct illumination shall be confined to the subject property and

joining public rights of way. Lighting shall not be aimed onto adjacent properties, including residential properties to the north. Spillover lighting shall be less than 0.5 foot-candles at the north property line as required by the zoning code. As an additional requirement, mounting height for all exterior light fixtures on apartment buildings near single-family homes will be limited to 12.5 feet (**Condition 10**).

Schools: In coordination with the Washoe County School District (WCSD), the applicant has agreed to maintain a walking connection from Golden Valley Road and Alice Smith Elementary School property immediately to the north. The existing emergency access road will also remain in its present function to allow emergency access to the school property. WCSD will review final building plans to verify the walking access connection and the emergency access road (**Condition 11**).

Parks: No public park facilities are included with this development, which is projected to have about 500 residents. The development will include a clubhouse/office and additional private recreation amenities as shown in **Exhibit B (Condition 12)**. The development will not meet the level of service target identified in the Reno Master Plan, which is 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents for new development. Residential Construction Tax (RCT) revenue will be generated by this development. The current RCT rate is 1% of construction cost per residence or \$1,000 (whichever is less), meaning that this development is projected to generate \$204,000 of revenue for RCT District 1 - North Valleys. RCT money collected from this developer will be used to construct new parks, and/or improve existing parks within an RCT District 1.

Public Safety: The subject site is within existing service areas for the Reno Police Department (RPD) and Reno Fire Department (RFD). Distance from the development to the closest fire station (RFD Station #10 located at 5250 N. Virginia Street) is approximately 2.6 miles with an approximately 6 minute response time.

Public Infrastructure: Water service for the project will be provided by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), and sanitary sewer treatment will be provided by the City of Reno via the Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Plant (TMWRP). The on-site sewer system will be privately maintained.

Access and Circulation: The proposed project will include vehicle access from North Hills Boulevard, Golden Valley Road and through the Raley's shopping center to the west. Vehicle access points on North Hills Boulevard and Golden Valley Road will utilize existing curb cuts, and no new driveways or street configurations are required. Additionally, there is an existing emergency access road across the site running from Golden Valley Road to Alice Smith Elementary School which will be maintained.

Traffic: The 192-unit project is expected to generate 1,229 daily trips with 73 AM peak hour trips and 93 PM trips. The intersection of Golden Valley Road and North Hills Road and the project driveways to both Golden Valley Road and North Hills Road were analyzed. All three intersections will operate at acceptable levels under all study scenarios. The project will have direct access to the existing gas station at the intersection of Golden Valley Road and North Hills Boulevard.

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the 7th Edition Regional Road Impact Fee Capital Improvement Program (RRIF CIP) identifies that North Hills Boulevard will be widened from two lanes to four lanes between Buck Drive and Golden Valley Drive in the 2026-2030 timeframe. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall coordinate with the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) to provide the necessary right-of-way for the future expansion of North Hills Boulevard (**Condition 13**). Renters will be provided with information on the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) Smart Trips Program. This information shall be included with lease documents for tenants (**Condition No. 14**).

Master Plan Conformance: The subject site has a Master Plan land use designation of Suburban Mixed-Use (SMU). The site includes a location identified as a Neighborhood Center and is within the Outer Neighborhoods area of the Structure Plan Framework in the Master Plan. As proposed and with the recommended conditions, the project is in substantial conformance with the Master Plan land use designation and the following applicable Master Plan goals and policies:

- General Policy 4.3B: Infill and Redevelopment
- Area Specific Policy CNC-G.3: Housing
- Area Specific Policy CNC-G.18: Expanded Mix of Uses
- Area Specific Policy N-ON.1: Mix of Housing Types
- Area Specific Policy N-ON.3 Connectivity

Public and Stakeholder Engagement: Agency comments were received and incorporated into the analysis (**Exhibit D**). The applicant presented this project to the Ward 4 Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB) in October 2022 and no written comments from NAB members were received. Courtesy notices were sent out to allow for early engagement with surrounding property owners, which led to both City staff and the applicant being contacted by homeowners on Copper Vista Court. The applicant engaged homeowners on Copper Vista Court, and revised their plans to lower the height of the building nearest Copper Vista Court and include additional landscape screening.

This item was originally scheduled to be heard at the November 17, 2022 Planning Commission meeting, but was moved to the January 18, 2023 meeting at the request of the applicant. Immediately prior to the November 17, 2022 Planning Commission meeting, over twenty written public comments and four voicemails were received for this item. All written public comments received for this item are included in **Exhibit E**, and the voicemails related to this item will be replayed at the January 18, 2023 public hearing. The main concern expressed in public comments

was the impact of this development on traffic in the North Valleys. Additional concerns expressed related to schools, crime, and the need for more commercial options in the area. There was one public comment in support of the proposed development. Required project noticing will occur prior to the January 18, 2023 public hearing, and any future comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission.

Recommended Conditions of Approval: All conditions shall be met to the satisfaction of Development Services Department staff, unless otherwise noted.

1. The project shall comply with all applicable City codes, plans, reports, materials, etc., as submitted. In the event of a conflict between said plans, reports, materials and City codes, City codes in effect at the time the application is submitted shall prevail.
2. The owner or developer shall apply for a building permit for the entire project within 18 months of the date of approval of the conditional use permit review application and maintain the validity of that permit, or the conditional use permit approval shall be null and void.
3. Prior to the issuance of any building permit associated with this project, the applicant shall attach a copy of the final approval letter. The approval letter shall accompany a narrative provided by the applicant that describes how the requested permit addresses each of the approved conditions of approval.
4. The applicant, developer, builder, property owner, or business proprietor, as applicable, shall continuously maintain a copy of this approval letter on the project site during the construction and operation of the project/business. The approval letter shall be posted or made readily available upon demand by City staff.
5. Prior to approval of a building permit for site improvements, the applicant shall provide plans demonstrating that landscaped screening will be installed along property lines adjacent to Public Facilities (PF) zoned properties. Screening type shall be solid or semi-opaque, and shall meet or exceed the minimum requirements specified in RMC 18.04.808(b).
6. The existing six-foot tall wooden fence located along the shared property lines with APNs 502-120-03, 502-120-04, and 502-120-05 shall not be disturbed by this project.
7. Prior to issuance of any building permit for vertical construction, a six-foot tall decorative fence and landscape screening shall be installed between the existing emergency access road and APNs 502-120-03, 502-120-04, and 502-120-05. Landscape screening shall consist of a dense row of evergreen trees planted approximately 20 feet apart, on center.

8. Hours of construction, including grading, shall be limited to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. There shall be no construction on Sundays, excluding dust control and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan measures. A note to this effect shall be placed on the title sheet of all building permit plan sets and a sign shall be posted at the construction site. If the construction hours need to be varied for the pouring of concrete slabs, a plan detailing the construction operations and provisions to minimize impacts on nearby residential areas shall be submitted and approved to the satisfaction of the Administrator.
9. All building permits associated with this project including exterior light fixtures shall include a photometric plan and cut sheets of all proposed exterior light fixtures proposed.
10. Mounting height for exterior light fixtures on the north and east sides of Buildings 7 and 8 shall not exceed 12.5 feet.
11. Accessible pedestrian connection(s) to Golden Valley Road and Alice Smith Elementary School shall be provided, and the existing emergency access road from Golden Valley Road to Alice Smith Elementary School shall be maintained. Prior to approval of a building permit for site improvements, the applicant shall coordinate with the Washoe County School District to develop an acceptable design of proposed pedestrian connection(s) and emergency access road to the satisfaction of Development Services staff.
12. Prior to issuance of any building permit for vertical construction, plans shall be approved demonstrating a clubhouse recreation areas and private recreation amenities such as BBQ areas, dog recreation areas, children's playground, etc. consistent with **Exhibit B** of the staff report.
13. The applicant shall coordinate with the Regional Transportation Commission regarding plans for the future expansion of North Hills Boulevard. Prior to the issuance of a site improvement permit, the applicant shall provide written correspondence with RTC verifying coordination to the satisfaction of the Administrator.
14. Prior to the approval of building permit for vertical construction, the applicant shall provide staff with a copy of information provided by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) on the RTC's Smart Trips Program. This information shall be included with lease documents for each tenant.

Findings:

General Review Criteria: The decision-making body shall review all development applications for compliance with the applicable general review criteria stated below.

- 1) Consistency with the Reno Master Plan: The proposed development shall be consistent with the Reno Master Plan. The decision-making authority:
 - a. Shall weigh competing plan goals, policies, and strategies; and
 - b. May approve an application that provides a public benefit even if the development is contrary to some of the goals, policies, or strategies in the Reno Master Plan.
- 2) Compliance with Title 18: The proposed development shall comply with all applicable standards in this Title, unless the standard is lawfully modified or varied. Compliance with these standards is applied at the level of detail required for the subject submittal.
- 3) Mitigates Traffic Impacts: The project mitigates traffic impacts based on applicable standards of the City of Reno and the Regional Transportation Commission.
- 4) Provides Safe Environment: The project provides a safe environment for pedestrians and people on bicycles.
- 5) Rational Phasing Plan. If the application involves phases, each phase of the proposed development contains all of the required streets, utilities, landscaping, open space, and other improvements that are required to serve or otherwise accompany the completed phases of the project, and shall not depend on subsequent phases for those improvements.

Conditional Use Permit: In addition to meeting the criteria in Section 18.08.304(e), *Approval Criteria Applicable to all Applications*, the following findings shall be made prior to granting a conditional use permit:

- (1) The proposed location of the use is in accordance with the objectives of this Title and the purpose of the zoning district in which the site is located;
- (2) The proposed land use and project design is compatible with surrounding development;
- (3) The proposed land use and project design is consistent with applicable development standards;
- (4) Public services and facilities are available to serve the project, or will be provided with development;
- (5) The characteristics of the use as proposed and as may be conditioned are reasonably compatible with the types of use permitted in the surrounding area; and
- (6) The granting of the conditional use permit will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare. The factors to be considered in evaluating this application shall include:
 - a. Property damage or nuisance resulting from noise, smoke, odor, dust, vibration, or illumination; and
 - b. Any hazard to persons and property.

Attachments:

Exhibit A. Case Maps

Exhibit B. Application Materials

Exhibit C. Proposed Screening

Exhibit D. Outside Agency Comments

Exhibit E. Public Comment