

EXHIBIT A



January 30, 2024

Les Reardanz
Whatcom County Transportation Authority
4011 Bakerview Spur
Bellingham, WA 98226

RE: Lynden Station Masterplan
Summary of Finishings

Dear Les;

Over the past several months, we have been engaged in a masterplan process to assist in determining the site capacity of the remaining property at the Lynden Station. The proposed redevelopment of the site would include affordable housing, supportive services, and continued use by WTA. During this process, we have met with Heidi Gudde, Planning Director at the City of Lynden, as well as several representatives of agencies involved in the development and management of affordable housing in Whatcom County. Based on this research, we offer the following summary of our findings.

Zoning Restrictions

Section 19.23.110 of the Lynden Municipal Code allows certain flexibility in development of properties that are over one acre in size and within one quarter mile of a qualifying commercial center. Known as the "Mixed Use Centers Overlay," the primary purpose of these centers is to:

- Provide a compatible mix of multifamily housing, neighborhood businesses and semi public open spaces.
- Foster a development pattern offering direct, convenient pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access to residences and businesses.
- Promote a compact growth pattern to efficiently use developable land.
- Foster the development of mixed use areas that are compatible with surrounding land uses.
- Ensure that buildings and other components are oriented to facilitate pedestrian access.

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To that end, the following provisions apply to the development of the Lynden Station property.

Applicability

- Minimum size 1 acre Lynden Station is 3.5 acres
- CSL or CSR Zone Lynden Station is in CSR Zone
- Within one quarter mile of existing commercial center Lynden Station qualifies

Flex Space Requirements

- Purpose is to facilitate pedestrian oriented development and street level activity.
- Defined as semi-public open space or as neighborhood commercial.
- Must be 20% of net lot area or 60% of cumulative first floor area as commercial use (19.23.110(H)).
- Flex space may be left undeveloped at time of construction but must meet the following criteria:
 - Provide a public access easement
 - Must be a pedestrian oriented plaza or irrigated lawn
 - Provide outdoor seating at 1 per 250 sf (half in shade)
 - Accommodate outdoor vending and food trucks
 - Provide other amenities as listed

Areas of Use

- Residential Recreational Open Space: 10% of net lot area
- Multifamily Housing and Parking: 70% of net lot area
- Flex space: 20% of net lot area



Height and Bulk

- Maximum Stories: 4 stories
- Maximum Residential Building Height: 52' (60' with CUP)
- Maximum Commercial Building Height: 48'
- Side/Rear Yard Setbacks: If adjacent property is zoned residential, the setback along that property line is 20', or half the allowable building height (whichever is greater). If adjacent property is commercial, industrial or public, the setback along that property line is 15'.
- Front Yard Setbacks: Per CSR zoning setbacks along the street are 20'.

Parking Requirements

- Multi Family
 - Studio 2 per unit
 - One Bedroom 2 per unit
 - Two Bedroom 2 per unit
 - Three Bedroom 3 per unit (one per bedroom)
 - 3+ Bedrooms More... 1 per bedroom
- General Commercial 1 per 250 sf (varies)
- Barrier-free parking is in addition to the parking identified above
- See Zoning code for a parking reduction based on shared parking and a parking study.

Residential Open Space

- Required when multifamily residential is introduced into commercial zones.
- Open space must include functional amenities (play grounds, sports courts, picnic areas, off-leash dog parks, etc.)
- Minimum of 10% of net lot area



Affordable Housing Providers

In the course of our research, we spoke with representatives from the following affordable housing agencies:

- Bellingham Housing Authority
- Catholic Community Services
- Mercy Housing Northwest
- Opportunity Council

Although various opinions were expressed, we have attempted to summarize our assumptions used in the master planning process.

Phasing

- The ideal project size per phase is 75 to 80 units for maximum efficiency, but should not be less than 60 units per phase.
- Phasing of the site development should include clearly defined property lines and access easements.
- Bringing more than 100 units on-line at one time could overpower the market.
- Subsequent phases may serve other affordable markets depending on absorption of the first phase.

Unit Mix / Size

- Farmworker housing should include 50% three bedrooms, with the balance being some combination of one and two bedrooms. Some four bedroom units may be desirable.
- For planning purposes, the following unit sizes would be suitable:

One Beds	600 sf	(26' x 26')
Two Beds	900 sf	(28' x 32')
Three Beds	1,200 sf	(28' x 42')

Amenities

- There was a preference for shared laundry facilities on each floor vs. in-unit washer/dryers.
- If possible, private decks serving larger units would be desirable.
- Spaces like community kitchens, meeting room, outdoor patio, BBQ area, children's play area are always well used.



Services

- A “Farmworker Center” similar to the one in Skagit County would act as a resource center for residents accessing services.
- A childcare center serving residents and the public would be helpful.
- Space for a community healthcare worker and other services would be well used.

Other Considerations

- Three story walk-up style buildings would avoid the need for elevators that are expensive to buy and maintain.
- Surface parking will be a more cost effective alternative than structured parking.

Opportunities & Challenges

The site offers many good opportunities. Obviously, its large size allows for a great deal of flexibility. The recently revised zoning code which now allows mixed use centers to be developed in commercial zones provides some unique design alternatives. Other attributes of the site include:

- Good vehicular access on two sides of the property
- Gently sloping site from North to South allowing positive drainage for stormwater management
- Opportunity to consolidate WTA facilities allowing more developable area
- Good soil conditions that will allow for conventional foundation systems
- Pedestrian access to retail and other services nearby.

However, it should be noted that the City of Lynden has recently adopted some restrictive parking requirements for multifamily development. The municipal code allows for a 25% reduction of the stalls required for commercial uses in the “flex space” but, despite this, their parking requirements are still much higher than other jurisdictions. Unless a parking reduction is granted, providing for the required parking on-site will compete for space for buildings, open space and other on-site amenities. A solution for dealing with this potential conflict has been built into the development strategy.



Development Strategy

Based on the research gathered to date, RMC Architects has prepared a phased masterplan based on the following criteria:

- Consolidate WTA facilities to include a location for a bus stop that provides for a bus and the van utilized by the Lynden Hop.
- The first phase of the development will provide affordable multi-family units serving the farmworker community. Subsequent phases may serve alternative affordable housing demographics such as senior, family, or workforce housing.
- Provide space for on-site services such as a farmworker center, childcare center, medical clinic, etc. in the “flex space” required by the zoning code.
- Acknowledging that any reduction of parking requirements will likely need to be based on demonstrated use, reserve a portion of the site for future development that can be used for overflow parking until actual parking usage can be documented in the form of a parking study.
- Add +/- 27 parallel parking stalls along 19th street to provide additional off-site parking options.

While there are many options that could be explored, the proposed masterplan is organized around a central roadway circulation system that provides access to surface parking as well as potential bus access through the site. The City-required Flex Space is oriented toward Front Street and utilizes the existing building currently occupied by a fast-food restaurant. The three building pads are developed with three- and four-story buildings that are constructed around open courtyards that function as semi-private open space and play area.

Phase 1

The first phase is comprised of 60 units, including 28 three-bedroom town houses, 15 two-bedroom units, and 17 one-bedroom units. Per the parking strategy identified above, a temporary parking area has been located on the southern portion of the site to supplement the permanent surface parking more immediately adjacent to the building. This parking (52 spaces total) is in the location of the future Phase 2 and is intended to satisfy the City of Lynden’s code-required parking until such time it can be demonstrated that a reduced parking ratio (two spaces per unit) can be used.

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Phase 2

The second phase is comprised of 56 additional units, including 20 three-bedroom townhouses, 18 two-bedroom units, and 18 one-bedroom units. It is built over one level of structured parking that is partially open-air (Level P1). This level of parking includes 107 stalls, which would provide enough parking on-site to satisfy the parking demand (provided a parking reduction to two parking spaces per unit is granted by the City). However, if the City for some reason did not approve a relaxation of the parking requirements, a second level of structured parking (Level P2) would be required. This level includes 51 stalls and would require an access easement across the northeast corner of the adjacent property. The stormwater memo (attached) assumes that the P2 Level parking will not be constructed – if Level P2 is built as shown, it will require an alternate stormwater management solution.

City Review

RMC has had several proactive discussions with Heidi Gudde, Planning Director at the City of Lynden, regarding the proposed development. Although they have expressed support for the general direction of the master plan, it should be noted that the first step in the approval process will be a formal submission for a pre-application meeting and review once a site plan has been finalized.

It should also be noted that the City is amenable to the request for a parking reduction based on a parking survey study that can be conducted before Phase 1 is constructed. In this manner, actual parking usage can be documented and applied toward Phase 2.

Additional Resources

Please refer to the following documents for further resources regarding the site development.

- Survey: A boundary line survey was completed in June 2014 by Pacific Survey and Engineering
- Geotechnical: GeoEngineers provided a preliminary assessment of the geotechnical condition of the site dated December 13, 2023
- Environmental Site Assessment: A study was conducted by GeoEngineers and dated August 15, 1996.
- Stormwater: Pacific Survey and Engineering has provided a stormwater strategy based on the proposed masterplan. That study is dated January 23, 2024.

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Conclusion

Thank you for this opportunity to assist WTA on this exciting project in the North County. Please let us know if there is any additional information we can provide as you move into the PPP process with potential developers.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. McClure'.

Jeffrey L. McClure, AIA
Principal

Enclosed: Survey
 Geotechnical Letter
 Environmental Study
 Stormwater Letter