

MEMORANDUM

To: Jennifer Krieger, City of Dacono

Prepared By: Susan Wade, Redland

Date: September 29, 2021

RE: Sweetgrass Preliminary Development Plan - Project Narrative

Dear Jennifer,

We are pleased to re-submit this letter in conjunction with the associated documents on behalf of Dacono Development Company, Inc. (“DDC”), for a formal request for review and comment of a Preliminary Development Plan for the Sweetgrass community. This memorandum will provide information on the project application, site layout, proposed uses and conformance with the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

The purpose of the Preliminary Development Plan application is to amend the existing governing documents. The property is currently governed by the approved Amended Master Plan/Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) dated May 19th, 2008 and the First Amended and Restated Agreement dated March 24th, 2014 and is currently zoned Commercial, Light Industrial, Commercial Residential and Residential R-1.

The Sweetgrass PUD Amendment will build upon the existing PUD with more versatility and flexibility to contemporary market sensitivities. The existing PUD was established prior to the City’s Municipal Code update and the creation the current PUD process. Our main goal with the requested Sweetgrass PUD Amendment is to clarify the development standards to better meet today’s market demands and to adjust proposed land uses that may no longer be applicable or desirable.

Sweetgrass Site Context and Layout

The Sweetgrass Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) will build upon the already successful residential community. There are several key factors that influence the remaining Sweetgrass neighborhood, including:

- Dacono Forward Comprehensive Plan - updated 2017
- City of Dacono Municipal Code – Chapter 16
- Proximity to the I-25 and future access to Weld County Road 10 (“WCR 10”)
- Opportunity for create a “gateway” image for the City of Dacono, across I-25 from Erie’s proposed “gateway”
- Highly successful existing residential neighborhood
- Proximity to and life expectancy of Colorado National Speedway
- Commercial frontage and visibility along I-25
- Opportunities to expand existing trail and open space system
- Opportunities to provide a mix of housing types for existing and future residents

The remaining Sweetgrass neighborhood, subject to this PDP, consists of 284.13 acres and is located primarily along I-25 to the west and WCR 10 to the north. The I-25 edge creates an enhanced marketing opportunity for both the City of Dacono and Sweetgrass to set the City apart from neighboring markets. DDC looks to create a landmark community that embraces Dacono’s story of being a place that offers all the sought-after qualities of a small-town with easy access to big city amenities.

Sweetgrass development will build on the successes of Filings 1-5 by providing residential and commercial opportunities for the growing City and the greater north metro Denver region. With the continued increased need for housing across the front range, Dacono and Sweetgrass are perfectly situated to capture the attention of those buyers who desire to live in a family friendly community with a “hometown” feel. The diverse range in residential product types will be sure to satisfy the needs of those in all stages of life including multi-generational households. Amenities and open space will establish a sense of community and provide a platform where neighbors become friends and friends become family.

The Applicant

DDC and its affiliates, commonly known as Community Development Group (CDG), are committed to growing and enhancing the northern Colorado region and has been working in Dacono and the surrounding municipalities since 1997. In addition to Sweetgrass, they are responsible for other successful communities including Erie Commons, Colliers Hill, Wyndham Hills, Morgan Hill, Silverstone, and another 1,250 acres in the planning process. CDG strives to create each neighborhood design to meet the unique local community and buyer profile. Furthermore, CDG prioritizes community involvement and a long-term vision of ownership.

Proposed Development Uses

The Sweetgrass PDP takes advantage of the new PUD regulations and relates strongly with the City’s Comprehensive goals and policies. Sweetgrass is located in two defined districts within the City’s Comprehensive Plan—the Multi-Generational District and the Commerce and Industry District.

The Sweetgrass PDP illustrates an intended distribution of residential and commercial uses. Maintaining the commercial parcels along the north and west will activate the edge of the community along I-25. These commercial parcels will also provide a platform for local businesses to flourish and further the story of “hometown” living.

The original PUD allowed a maximum 1,664 units. The new Sweetgrass PDP requests an 1,800 maximum unit count due to the removal of the Light Industrial Land Use along I-25 as well as the desire to provide a greater mix of housing types to meet a broader buyer profile. The targeted 121 units within PA11 plus the previous maximum allowed unit count of 1,664 total 1,785 units, resulting in the request for 1,800 maximum units. The new Sweetgrass PDP will include up to 1,213 units over 284.16 acres, resulting in an average density of 4.3 dwelling units per acre.

Parks and open space are a major component to any successful neighborhood, and it is a primary goal of Sweetgrass to further the City’s desire for interconnecting trails and open space. Three additional parks have been located within the new Sweetgrass filings and proposed trail systems will help unify the community and provide alternative ways for residents to travel through the neighborhood. It is our hope that the trail systems will expand outside of the Sweetgrass development and link to Downtown Dacono and the outlying communities. Please note, as we discussed with staff, a Landscape Plan is not part of this PDP submittal based on the large scale of the PDP at 284 acres. The landscape character will be in line with the initial Sweetgrass filings and be submitted with the Plat process.

Dacono Forward Comprehensive Plan

The Sweetgrass neighborhood supports the City of Dacono’s Comprehensive Plan vision and values components. We have outlined below how the future Sweetgrass will continue to contribute to the City’s goals.

Live... Provide a diversity of living choices and a variety of commercial offerings and services.

Work... Provide a broad range of employment opportunities and capitalize on the agricultural roots.

Shop... Shorten the distance to essential products and services for day- and nighttime populations.

Play and Move... Provide parks within walking distance of each home. Support a safe pedestrian network that connects activity nodes throughout the City.

Learn... Engage Kenneth Homyak PK-8 into the neighborhood and encourage continued educational opportunities to promote life-long learning.

Honor... Provide amenities representing emerging values around green development, sustainable living and recreational parks and trails.

Lead... Encourage and educate officials, residents, business, property-owners and other stakeholders toward the vision and values of the City of Dacono.

These core principles drive the community and reinforce both the functional and aesthetic nature of Sweetgrass. The amended PUD will allow the development to grow in a way that

supports the need for trails that connect communities, commercial opportunities which support local families, front porch living that promotes life outside, and a variety of housing that meets the needs for all types and price points. The attached documents support Dacono's core values while still providing the flexibility to meet the ever-changing market. The five guiding principles will lead and direct the next phase of Sweetgrass and create a place where there is a heart and a home.

Guiding Principals

1. *Grow the City's economy through diversification of job and business opportunities and balance growth through efficient development patterns.*

Sweetgrass provides both commercial and residential uses and creates an enhanced "gateway" to Dacono along the I-25 corridor frontage.

2. *New development and redevelopment will meet Dacono's expectations for excellence in design and the creation of places consistent with long-term economic viability.*

The existing Sweetgrass Filings 1-5 have illustrated a commitment to quality and community investments.

3. *Today's neighborhoods remain vital and desirable places that meet the needs of existing residents and also appeal to future residents.*

The existing Sweetgrass community consists of successful neighborhoods with 587 homes or future platted lots. The existing and future residents of Sweetgrass will have convenient access to commercial uses, easy access to regional transportation, within walking distance to Kenneth Homyak PK-8, and a variety of housing types and price points.

4. *Housing choices available in Dacono are accessible and affordable to people at all stages of their lives.*

The Amended PUD will refine the development standards to allow for a variety of housing types to provide housing solutions for entry level and senior buyers as well a focus on more attainable price points across housing types.

5. *City leaders and decisionmakers will focus sufficient attention and investment on distinctive areas throughout the City so that each can achieve the vision described in this plan.*

Dacono is one of several rapidly growing edge communities within the trade area of Denver-Aurora Combined Statistical Area (CSA). Dacono is situated along the I-25 corridor and is poised to attract its fair share of future residential, commercial

and employment growth over the next 20 years. Surrounded by other attractive communities, Dacono is poised to compete for residential diversity with housing products in high demand (small lot single family, townhomes, rowhomes, patio homes, and multi-family).

To ensure an increased level of investments in the community, Dacono would like to offer more opportunity to “age in place” and raise the median income and education level.

Timing and Phasing

The community will be completed in several phases. Development phasing will occur in a logical and cost-effective manner based on market conditions and infrastructure extensions and may not be in planning area sequence.