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City of Lynden Planning Department
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Rezone Narrative in Support of Kode Kamp Vista Long Plat and Rezoning Applications

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This narrative is provided in support of the Applicant's proposed rezoning of the Kode Kamp Vista Long Plat, which is approximately 28.4 acres of largely undeveloped property currently used for agricultural purposes and currently zoned RS-100.

Applicant has fulfilled the various submission requirements set out in the City of Lynden Rezoning Application, which Applicant submitted electronically on October 2, 2020 and as part of a formal

submittal package separately delivered. We now wish to proceed with the Rezone and through formal plat approval.

Overview and Background:

Northwood Partners, LLC (“Northwood” or “Applicant”) is made up of lifetime Lynden residents Kent Kamphouse, Derek DeKoster, and Tim Koetje. The partners all presently still call Lynden home, and all have a vision of contributing back to their hometown by providing affordable and available residential home sites. All three partners are active in local construction, so each has first-hand experience with what a shortfall in building lots can and will do to the community. Opportunities for an increasing variety of housing options is key in the City of Lynden’s sustainable growth strategy, and housing is the bedrock for community growth, tax base, job retention and opportunities for Lynden’s children.

With that in mind, Northwood Partners proposed a new residential long plat including 94 new single- and multi-family duplex lots of various sizes conforming with the proposed RMD zoning, plus limited open space and internal pedestrian access on a site just south of the recently developed North Prairie Phase 7 residential development. Currently the site is approximately 28.4 acres in size and previously used solely by a single family for its agricultural purposes.

The RMD rezoning is determined to provide a better mix of homesites to various builders, including a large number of single family residence sites with average lot sizing in excess of the neighboring 7,200 square foot average, combined with several smaller duplex sites that offer a variety of builders the option to create affordable living in a well-developed plat. Price points are projected to start in the \$300s - \$400s for finished duplex units, which will likely represent the most affordable housing options available when the units come to market. This will not come at the cost of quality of life or decreased overall sense of the Kode Kamp neighborhood. There will be a blend of larger view lots, mid-sized building lots and duplex lots – in short, a well-conceived neighborhood that doesn’t simply maximize density.

In this fashion, Kode Kamp Vista meets the purpose and intent of the Residential Mixed Density Zone criteria of increasing density by integrating multifamily homes with single family neighborhoods within the Lynden community. The intent of RMD is to allow a creative mix of single family and duplex housing styles and types. The plat demonstrates careful use of the various topography and potential view corridors that will be attractive to a variety of custom and speculative home builders, which in turn leads to architectural diversity. All lots will be sufficiently sized to promote individual homeowner landscaping and provide space and privacy.

This mix of lots will focus attention on keeping an appropriate housing aesthetic quality that compliments Lynden in general and the immediate surrounding neighborhoods specifically.

Northwood simultaneously submitted the rezone application along with the plat application. Northwood’s request is that each application, while reviewed using their respective approval criteria, is being considered holistically as they are co-dependent – the plat is dependent on the rezoning.

Reasons for Seeking the Proposed Rezone, and the Effect of the Proposal on Adjacent Areas:

The property at present is not built-out to highest and best use and is mostly vacant land except for one home and an agricultural business spread across 28 acres. Inefficient development results in higher infrastructure and utility costs. Yet, public sewer and water utilities are available in the public right of way in Northwood Road, and are viable in serving the RMD density of development on the property. This parcel best serves the community land use needs with an appropriately designed residential plat, taking advantage of more compact development and offering an array of home choices.

Northwood Partners is sensitive to the continued acute shortage of available single- and multi-family lots to local builders. Whatcom County generally and Lynden specifically face housing shortages brought about by increasing demand – the opportunity to live and work in the Lynden area is hugely popular – and the impacts to our local economy by not meeting builders’ needs. Lynden is quickly running out of building options, the lack of which will translate to lost City revenues, jobs, and opportunities.

For these reasons, Northwood proposes a medium density development with a thoughtful blend of single-family homes and duplexes, all built on lots that conform with the requirements of LMC 19.16:

1. No lot will be less than 6,000 square feet, and these smaller lots will be used solely for duplex units;
2. More than 40% of the lots will be in excess of 7,200 square feet;
3. All setbacks will be met or exceeded;
4. All Kode Kamp Vista lots adjoining the North Prairie development will exceed the minimum lot sizing of that adjoining zone; and
5. Lot sizes and lot frontage widths are intermixed in the plat design to encourage varying house designs and promote more street interest.

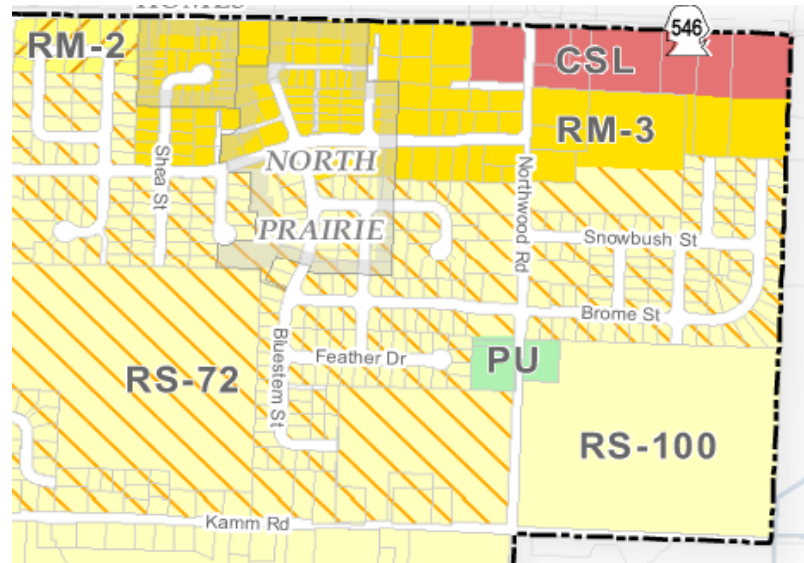
The proposed zoning change would allow a higher density of residents over the existing RS-100, which has been shown to decrease the per-capita footprint of local infrastructure. This translates into less total infrastructure required, which decreases land impact and sprawl. Utilization of public sewer and the appropriate waste disposal facilities will minimize impact on land quality. The existing riparian margin will assist in the protection of local waterways. Development shall include storm-water mitigation pursuant to city code and public works standards. There are no impacted wetlands.

The full build-out of the property (at the proposed zone designation of RMD) would entail new rights of way to be dedicated to the public domain, and increase cross-connectivity in the immediate vicinity at a much higher rate than the existing RS-100 zoning, and a higher number of residents could reside in proximity to these new dedications and utilize the infrastructure. Development in the proposed zoning designations will create extension of convenient, safe, and efficient transportation facilities.

The change in zoning would further allow a higher density and more efficient use of land, and thusly, utilities and energy resources. Smaller, more efficient homes would be permissible as a result of the zone change. Proximity to significant destinations such as two public schools could be argued to lower the daily Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) by residents of the development. Allowing a higher density of

residents would comprehensively decrease the strain on energy resources comparing to lower density uses long-term.

There will also be no negative impact on the immediately surrounding area. Kode Kamp Vista is bordered to the south and to the east by unincorporated land outside Lynden City limits and outside the UGA, and the effect on the north and western borders will be to bring our proposed development into harmony with the North Prairie neighborhood. Here is how the property appears as-zoned today:



Granting our request for change of zoning to RMD will clearly bring consistency and a greater sense of community to the existing neighborhood. The Kode Kamp Vista plat will offer very similar sized lots designed to attract an array of builders and buyers

Statement on Changed Circumstances in the Area since Adoption of the Current Zoning:

The undeveloped parcel is located in East Lynden and is presently zoned RS-100, which is overly restrictive for development purposes and inconsistent with the City’s growth plan and the pressing need for residential lots. Following the City’s Comprehensive Plan, the annexed East Lynden land was specifically targeted for growth; more than 73% of all new single family and multifamily homes have been built in North and East Lynden sub-areas in the past 18 years, and the majority of these homes were built in East Lynden.

The North Prairie development sets the tone for the East Lynden sub-area and a majority of residential growth is concentrated in East Lynden. The 2004 annexation foresaw this growth curve, and now is the time for updating the underlying zoning to meet the realized growth.

Statement on How the Proposed Rezone is Consistent with the City’s Comprehensive Plan, applicable Sub-Area Plans, and with the Protecting the Public Health, Safety, and Welfare:

The Comprehensive Plan states that the zoning ordinance shall allow variable lot sizes in single-family residential subdivisions, consistent with the Growth Management Goals and Policies. Specifically, the City of Lynden Value Statements include, among other items:

- Targeting an average net residential density of five units per acre within the City limits;
- The City will maintain a lot inventory, or land supply, sufficient for five years of growth;
- The City will continue to pursue housing options within the City that provide opportunities for home ownership; and
- The City will seek to maintain a ratio of 75% single family homes and 25% multifamily homes.

The proposed change in zoning supports these Value Statements by providing more opportunities for well-planned single-family and multi-family developments, which is the primary type of development that offers significant lot variability. The primary land use goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to manage growth in a coordinated and sustainable fashion, and in such a manner as to reduce sprawl, protect the environment, and enhance Lynden residents’ quality of life. Rezoning from a minimum of 10,000 square feet per lot and no multifamily meets that litmus test. Extending neighborhoods with consistent, thoughtful planning maintains community spirit and a small-town atmosphere while encouraging appropriate growth and meeting the challenge for new home options.

Kode Kamp Vista, as platted, provides availability of affordable housing to many economic segments, promotes a variety of residential densities and housing types, all while protecting the environment and surrounding agricultural lands. There are no impacted wetlands in the development. There are no areas of environmental significance that will be disturbed. Utilities are already present in the public right of way, minimizing the financial burden on the City of Lynden and reducing the development impact to the land.

This is the last available undeveloped parcel on the eastern border of the City limits, and it represents an opportunity to enhance Lynden’s housing options.

Respectfully submitted,
NORTHWOOD PARTNERS, LLC

Jeff Palmer

Jeff Palmer
Chief Financial Officer