



**Letter of Intent for Proposed Development
226 North 17th Street (Roosevelt Apartments Site)
Project Name: Roosevelt Senior Apartments
Applicant/Project Owner: New Directions Housing Corporation**

April 12, 2021

Joel P. Dock, AICP
Planner II
Planning & Design Services
Department of Develop Louisville
LOUISVILLE FORWARD
444 South Fifth Street, Suite 300
Louisville, KY 40202

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Dear Mr. Dock:

It is our pleasure to submit this letter of intent to pursue a zoning change from C-1 to OR-2 for the development on the approximate 1.88 acre (81,900 square feet) property in Louisville Metro at 226 N 17th Street (Primary Parcel ID 015F0289000), currently owned and operated by New Directions Housing Corporation. The Zone Map Amendment from the C-1 District to the proposed OR-2 District is more appropriate for the context of the neighborhood and in full compliance with the Goals and Objectives of the Metro Louisville Comprehensive Plan 2040.

Mission

New Directions Housing Corporation develops and maintains affordable housing and vital communities in partnership with neighborhoods and other stakeholders. In keeping with its mission, New Directions, one of the leading community development organizations in Louisville, provides affordable housing to nearly 1,000 families, primarily in West Louisville. Most of these residents are extremely low-income residents, making no more than 30% of Area Median Income on an annual basis.

Project Summary

The Project is pending award of the FY 2021 Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD"). This program favors areas of non-minority elderly concentration and the subject site meets this requirement. This project was originally submitted to HUD for Section 202 funding in 2019, but did not receive funding at that time. In connection with its 2019 application, New Directions sought and received Category 3 Plan Approval on August 8, 2019 for the construction of one 3 story residential building and a parking lot to serve the residents comprising eighteen (18) 1-Bedroom apartments. New Directions is now looking to apply again to HUD for Section 202 funding, but is seeking a zoning change in order to permit the construction of up to 36 senior housing units, rather than the initial 18 units. New Directions believes this increase in density will enhance the attractiveness of the project to HUD.

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Under Section 202 requirements, these apartments will be reserved for senior residents (ages 62 and over) with a 40-year affordability requirement. The Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program provides funding for the development and operation of supportive

rental housing for very-low-income persons ages 62 years or older and project rental subsidies in the form of Project Rental Assistance Contract (“PRAC”) to maintain ongoing affordability of the residents. This program provides very-low-income elderly persons with the opportunity to live independently, but with important voluntary support services such as nutritional, transportation, continuing education, and/or health-related services.

Existing Site Conditions

Currently zoned C-1, the property contains three buildings used for forty-seven apartment units, a community space in the basement of one building and a small office in another adjacent building. All of the apartment units are leased to low-income families. The unit mix includes three Studios, five 1-Bedroom, thirty-six 2-Bedroom, and three 3-Bedroom apartments. The site is bordered by single-family development on Duncan Street to the north, 18th Street to the west, and Columbia Street to the south, and by Habitat for Humanity of Metro Louisville on 17th Street to the east.

Residential Specifics

The Project's up to thirty-six (36) new 1-Bedroom units will all meet physical design standards that will facilitate aging in place by the residents. In the context of housing for the elderly, required accessibility features under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Act, Titles II or III of the ADA, HUD encourages design standards that address fall prevention, enhances accessibility features, visitability, universal design, and electronic communication mechanisms.

The Project will meet the requirements of EPA's ENERGY STAR Qualified Homes including installation of water-conserving fixtures.

New Directions intends to collaborate with The Thrive Center, Inc. on this Project. The Thrive Center Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) technology innovation, and educational center designed to enhance the quality of life for those aged 50 and over. The Thrive Center features innovative technology and, specialized educational programming to enhance elder wellness.

Finally, New Directions hopes to partner with UberGreen Spaces & Homes, an innovative company that specializes in healthy, zero-energy, water-efficient, durable homes and buildings. UberGreen is led by Sy Safi, who is both a progressive builder and sustainability designer in the residential and commercial space, and a recipient of national and international awards. Sy and his team are determined to bring their cutting edge and energy saving technology to the affordable housing industry.

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Requested Variances and Waivers

In conjunction with the Zoning Map Amendment, New Directions also wishes to apply for the following:

Variances: NDHC requests several variances, primarily to allow for a contextual siting of the proposed new senior living apartment building.

- To allow for the proposed structure to be located closer to the road than the existing structure on the Columbia Street side. This variance is not out of context with the neighborhood and allows for adequate placement of the building on Duncan without modifying the actual senior living unit design to reduce the footprint design.
- To allow for the proposed structure to be setback further from the road than the existing structure on the Duncan Street side. This requested setback will allow for compliant ADA accessibility into the units from the Duncan Street ingress/egress. This setback distance was also approved in the 2019 Category 3 approval of the senior living facility.
- To omit the private yard area required for residential uses in a Traditional Form District on both lots. In that the proposed senior living units are becoming a part of the existing Roosevelt Square development, the site layout and development is accomplishing a similar intent that private areas accomplish and open space areas are available for all residents of the new development and Roosevelt Square.

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Conclusion

The Project complies in all aspects with both the Comprehensive Plan 2040 as well as all of the requirements of the OR-2 Zoning Classification and the Traditional Neighborhood Form District, except for a slight increase in the additional density needed to construct the additional senior units.

New Directions believes such a minimal increase in density for this project is greatly offset by the benefit that these senior affordable housing units can have to the overall neighborhood, especially given the critical shortage of affordable housing in Louisville, especially for low-to-moderate income seniors.

The current C-1 zoning designation, while allowing for residential, is not currently applicable or in context with the current neighborhood environment, nor does the C-1 zoning district support the need to maximize the residential development of the infill property, an Objective of the Comprehensive Plan 2040. The OR-2 zoning district is more appropriate in that housing is a primary focus of the district, allows for a compatible infill density in context with the neighborhood

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and does not suggest or allow for an inappropriate commercial use of the property in the residential neighborhood. Thus, the requested Zone Map Amendment meets the threshold for an appropriate Zone Map Amendment. The existing zoning classification given to the property is inappropriate and the proposed zoning classification is appropriate as demonstrated in the proposed plan for development.

Enclosed is the executed Zoning Map Amendment Application, District Development Plan, property deed and application fee required for development of the property. The foregoing also complies with all of the requirements of the Louisville Landmarks Commission ("Landmarks Commission") since the current proposed changes do not affect the existing historic landmark located on the site, but will only entail new construction of the thirty-six (36) new 1-Bedroom units for seniors. Thus, a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required through the Landmarks Commission.

As a result, we strongly request approval of the Zone Map Amendment from C-1 to OR-2 by the Louisville & Jefferson County Planning Commission and Metro Council, as well as the requested variances and waivers, based on compliance with the Land Development Code, the Comprehensive Plan 2040, thresholds of KRS 100 and contextual compatibility of the Project in the existing neighborhood.

Sincerely,

NEW DIRECTIONS HOUSING CORPORATION

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kathleen O. McKune'.

Kathleen O. McKune
Chief Revitalization & Legal Officer

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