

STEVENSON-METROGROVE PROPERTIES
STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF
FINAL SITE PLAN APPLICATION

I. INTRODUCTION

The Applicant, Craftmark Homes, is submitting this Application for Final Site Plan approval (the “Application”) for residential development on the following parcels (collectively, the “Properties”):

- A. A portion of the “Urban Core” area of Watkins Mill Town Center (“WMTC”) identified as 1) Parcel P240 on Tax Map FT22, consisting of approximately 3.54 acres located north of the CSX Railroad tracks and south of Exchange Avenue (“Parcel 240”); 2) Part of Parcel P209 on Tax Map FT22, consisting of approximately 1.16 acres located north of the CSX Railroad tracks (“Pt. Parcel 209”);¹ 3) Parcel W, Block E of Watkins Mill Town Center on Plat 23611, consisting of 0.05 acres (“Parcel W”); and 4) the Exchange Avenue right of way between Parkview Avenue and its terminus at Parcel W, containing approximately 0.81 acres of land. No changes are proposed to the balance of the WMTC project, including the area developed as the Parklands residential community, which is not part of the Application.
- B. Parcels P238 and P241 on Tax Map No. FT22 containing approximately 5.72 acres of land bounded by WMTC to the west and Metropolitan Grove Road to the east (the “Stevenson Property”).

¹ No changes are proposed to the balance of the WMTC project including the area developed as the Parklands residential community, which is not part of the Application.

C. Parcels 304, 305, 342, and 310 on Tax Map No. FT22 containing approximately 6.96 acres and bounded by the Stevenson Property to the north, WMTC to the west, the CSX Railroad tracks to the south, and Metropolitan Grove Road to the east (the “Metrogrove Property”).²

Collectively, the Properties total approximately 18.22 acres. As detailed below, the Application implements Sketch Plan SK-7194-2022, which was approved on June 21, 2022 (the “Sketch Plan”) and Schematic Development Plan SDP-9558-2023, which was recommended for approval by Mayor & Council during February 21, 2024, hearing with conditions.

II. BACKGROUND

The Property and Surrounding Uses

The Properties are zoned Mixed Use Development (MXD) and are generally located on the west side of Metropolitan Grove Road and the north side of the CSX rail tracks.

² Craftmark Homes is the contract purchaser of Parcel 240, the Stevenson Property, the Metrogrove Property, and Parcel W. All owners of the parcels included in this Application have consented to the Applicant’s filing of the Application.

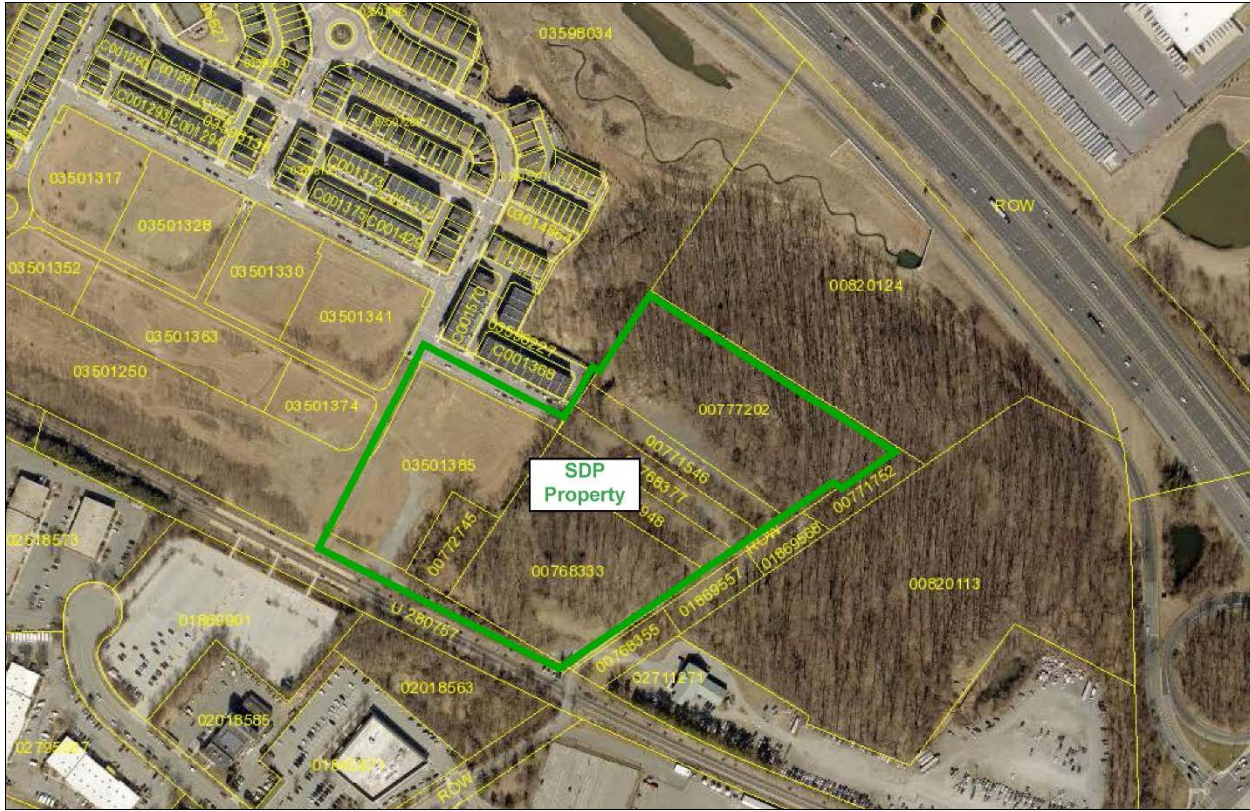


Figure 1 Aerial Image of Property

The Properties are surrounded by a variety of uses. A portion of the mixed housing Parklands community is located to the north across Exchange Avenue from Parcel 240, and the undeveloped Urban Core of WMTC is located on the west side of Parcel 240. Development plan applications for office development on a portion of the Urban Core are currently pending approval from the City. Several undeveloped parcels owned by the City, SHA, Montgomery County, and private owners are adjacent to the east side of the Properties. To the northwest of the Properties, across Interstate 270, is the Spectrum at Watkins Mill. To the northeast, across Interstate 270, are the Kaiser Permanente medical building, the FedEx Ground distribution center, and the Matan company's redevelopment of the former IBM building into a mix of retail and research and development buildings. To the south, across the CSX railroad, are industrial and research and development properties, a church, a bowling alley, an adult day care center, a MARC Station and

parking lot, a Motor Vehicle Department branch, a self-storage center, and a large apartment complex (The Gateway).

The Sketch Plan

As noted above, Sketch Plan SK-7194-2022 was approved for the Properties on June 21, 2022. The Sketch Plan was approved for up to 287 units, including townhouses, single-family attached units (2 over 2's) and triplexes. As discussed below, the development proposed in this Application is in accord with the Sketch Plan.

The Schematic Development Plan

As noted above, Schematic Development Plan SDP-9558-2023 was recommended for approval by Mayor & Council during February 21, 2024, hearing with conditions. The Schematic Development Plan was approved for up to 232 units, including townhouses, single-family attached units (2 over 2's) and triplexes. As discussed below, the development proposed in this Application is in accord with the Schematic Development Plan and associated following conditions in the resolution.

Condition 1. Applicant to work with the City to implement a historical marker – The location of the historical marker is identified on the final site plan in coordination with City Staff.

Condition 2. Applicant to redesign Parkview Avenue as two-lane street – The Parkview Avenue section has been revised to be a 2-lane street per the discussions with DPW staff. Associated improvements to the curb, sidewalk, crosswalk etc. are also reflected in the Final Site Plan.

Condition 3: Applicant must dedicate HOA Parcel A for Parkview Avenue right-of-way: The Final Subdivision Plan shows the dedication for the Parkview Avenue Right-of-way.

Condition 6 (provided via email dated 03/19/2024 : Applicant to explore the potential of retaining specimen trees, where feasible as part of the final site plan at no net loss of units and no redesign of the preliminary subdivision plan” – Every effort is made to save the specimen trees onsite and offsite, however due to the design of the site and associated infrastructure, not many are saved. A new tree variance was submitted to the City and approved by Planning Commission on 09/19/2024.

III. THE APPLICATION

This Application proposes medium density development of the Properties with residential uses that will complement development in the Urban Core and the existing Parklands community.

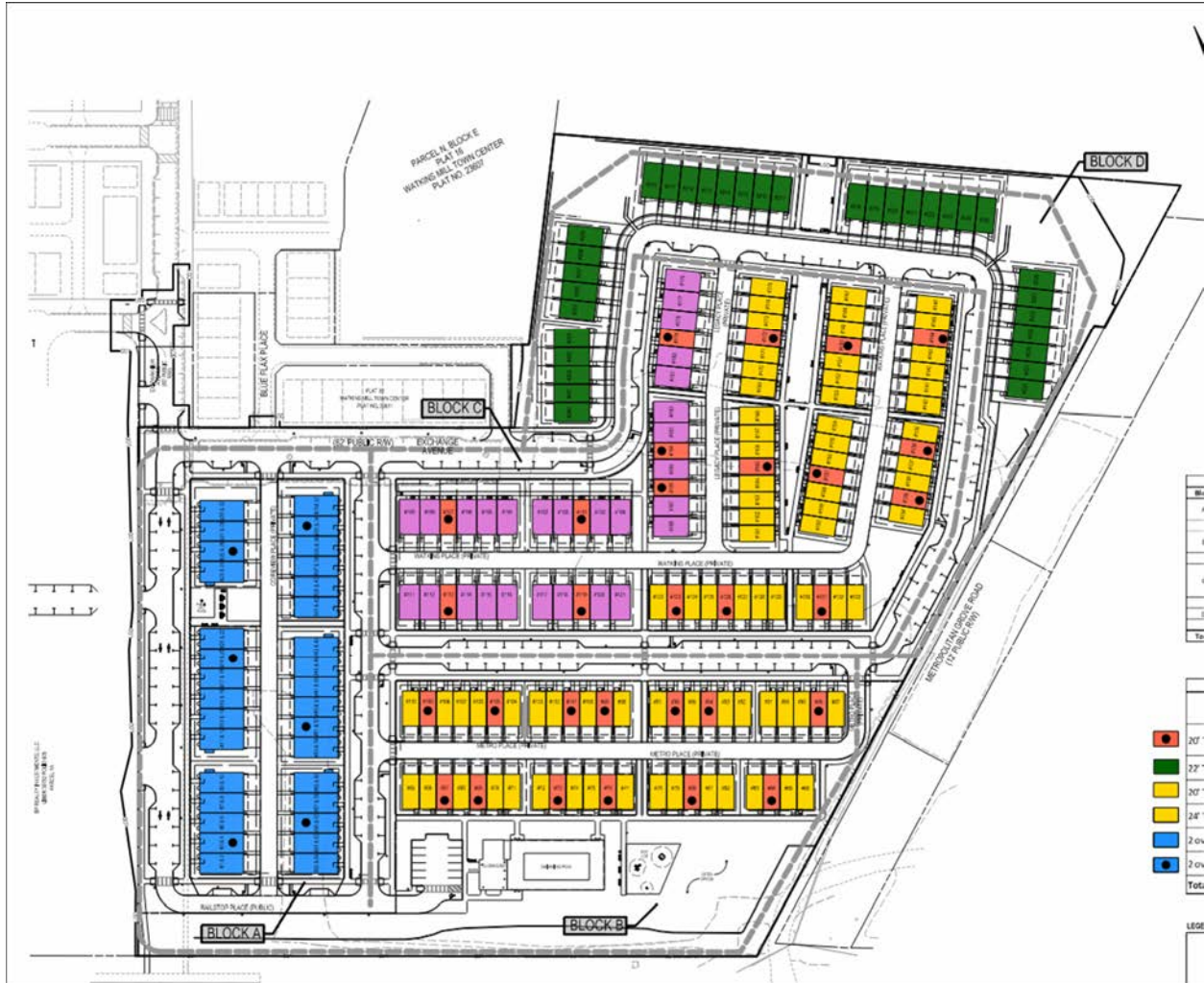


Figure 2 Proposed Final Site Plan

In particular, this Application proposes development of the Properties with 232 dwelling units, including 64 2-over-2's and 168 townhouses with associated open spaces and amenities (the "Project").³ Although permitted by the Sketch Plan, no triplexes are proposed. The Project's layout achieves compatibility with the adjacent future development in the Urban Core and the existing Parklands community. As shown on the SP (Figure 2 above), the Applicant locates the higher density stacked 2-over-2 units adjacent to the Urban Core and MARC Train station, while

³ The final number and mix of units will be determined at the time of Final Site Plan within the maximum number permitted under this SDP.

locating the townhomes farther from the Urban Core and station, consistent with the urban planning approach taken in the development of the Parklands community.

The Project will be developed in five thoughtfully planned development blocks/parcels as shown on the Final Subdivision Plan submitted with the Application:⁴

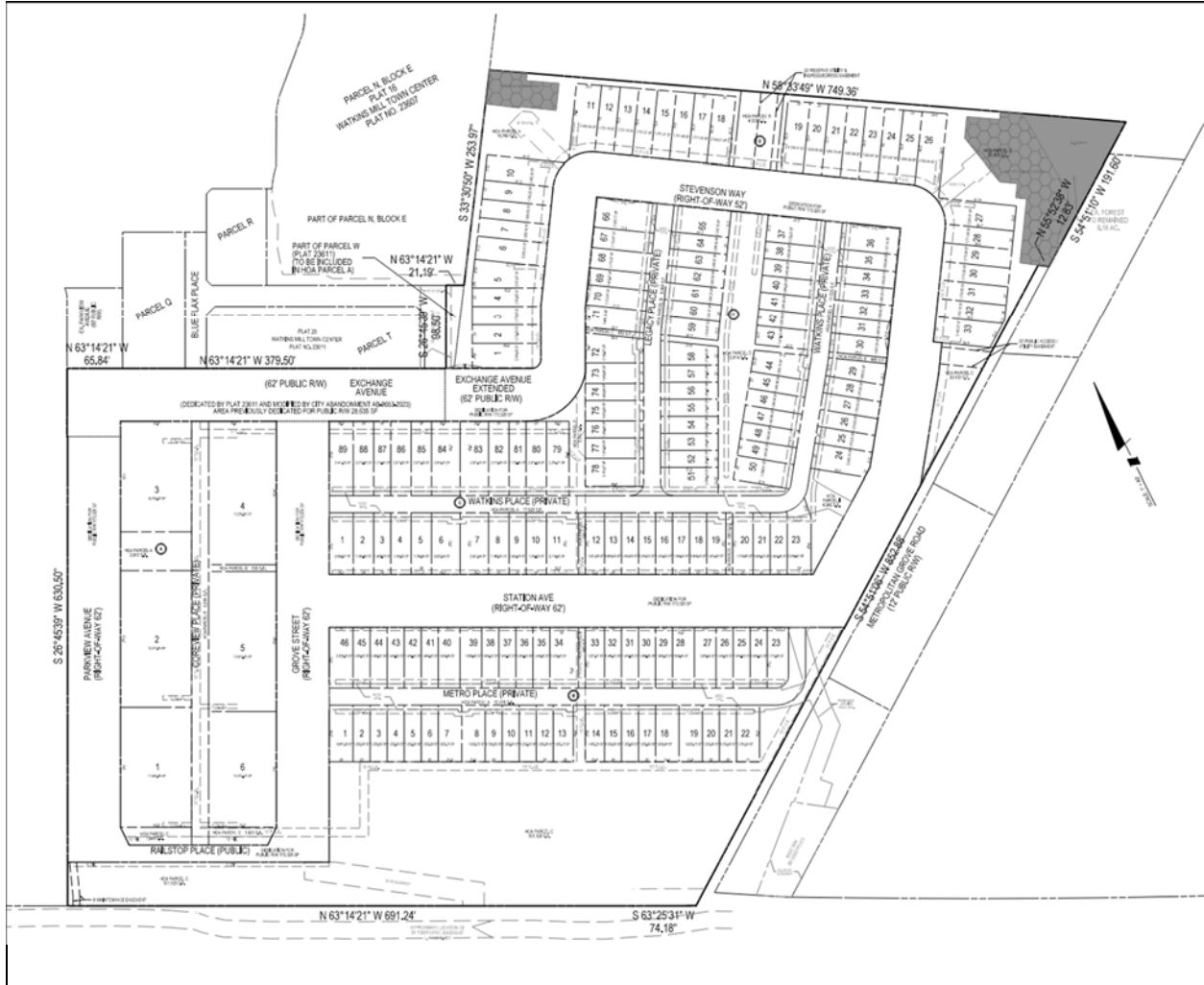


Figure 3 Proposed Subdivision Plan

⁴ The blocks and parcels identified in this Statement correspond to the blocks and parcels shown on the Final Subdivision Plan submitted with the Final Site Plan Application. The blocks and parcels in the Subdivision Plan are identified with different letters than the blocks and parcels identified in the approved Sketch Plan. Further, the Subdivision Plan combines the areas identified as Blocks B and C in the SDP into one block, identified as Block C. Notwithstanding the changes to block and parcel identification and delineation, the maximum number of units proposed for each block is below the maximum allowed for the corresponding blocks in the approved Sketch Plan.

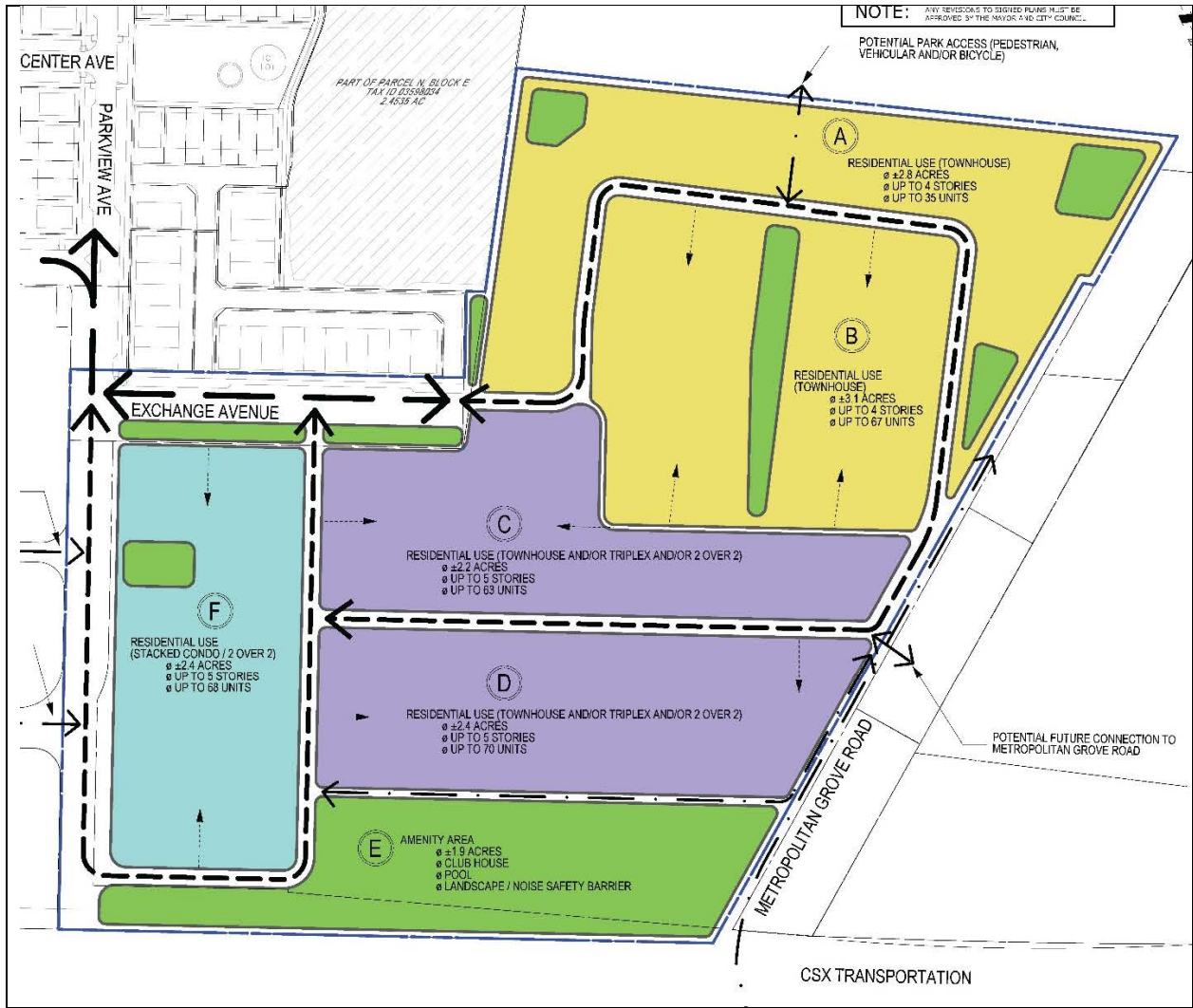


Figure 4 Approved Sketch Plan

Preliminary Subdivision Plan				Approved Sketch Plan			
Block	Acreage	Usage	Units	Block	Acreage	Usage	Units
A	2.06	2-over-2	64	F	2.4	2-over-2	68
B	1.93	Townhouse	46	D	2.4	Townhouse/Triplex/2-over-2	70
C	4.57	Townhouse	89	B & C	5.3	Townhouse/Triplex/2-over-2	130
D	2.85	Townhouse	33	A	2.8	Townhouse	35
Parcel B		Ammenity Area		E	1.9	Ammenity Area	

Figure 5 Block Comparison

Block A corresponds to Block F on the approved Sketch Plan and contains approximately 2.06 acres. This block is proposed for 64 2-over-2's up to 4 stories in height. These higher density stacked 2-over-2 units are adjacent to the Urban Core and MARC Train station. This product also helps meet the need for attainable housing.

Block B corresponds with Block D on the approved Sketch Plan and contains approximately 1.93 acres. Block C corresponds with Blocks B and C on the approved Sketch Plan and contains approximately 4.57 acres. Block D corresponds with Block A on the approved Sketch Plan and contains approximately 2.85 acres. Blocks B, C and D are proposed for residential townhouse use up to 4 stories in height. Forty-six units are proposed for Block B, 89 units are proposed for Block C, and 33 units are proposed in Block D. The homes in Block B will benefit from proximity to the community amenities area adjacent to the south side of the block. The number of proposed homes in Blocks C and D will benefit from the forested area with large mature trees that exists on the city-owned park to the north and east, as well as Parcel N to the west.

Homeowners Association Common Amenity Area

Homeowners

Parcel B, which corresponds with Block E, contains approximately 2.32 acres and is proposed as a community amenity area. It will include a pool, pool house and additional open space and/or recreation areas. The Applicant recognizes that there may be visual and audible impact on the Project from the adjacent train tracks. In order to mitigate these impacts, the Applicant is planning to build a noise and safety barrier along the southern edge of Block B adjacent to the train tracks. A Sound Study prepared by Phoenix Noise and Vibration submitted with the Application shows that the noise and safety barrier will adequately mitigate the exterior

noise levels of the community amenity area to below 65 dBA Ldn, as required by Gaithersburg's noise guidelines. The interior noise levels for the closest homes will be below 45 dBA Ldn.

Open Space

The Project proposes a variety of well-designed open spaces and linkages that will improve the overall experience for the residents and visitors to the community.

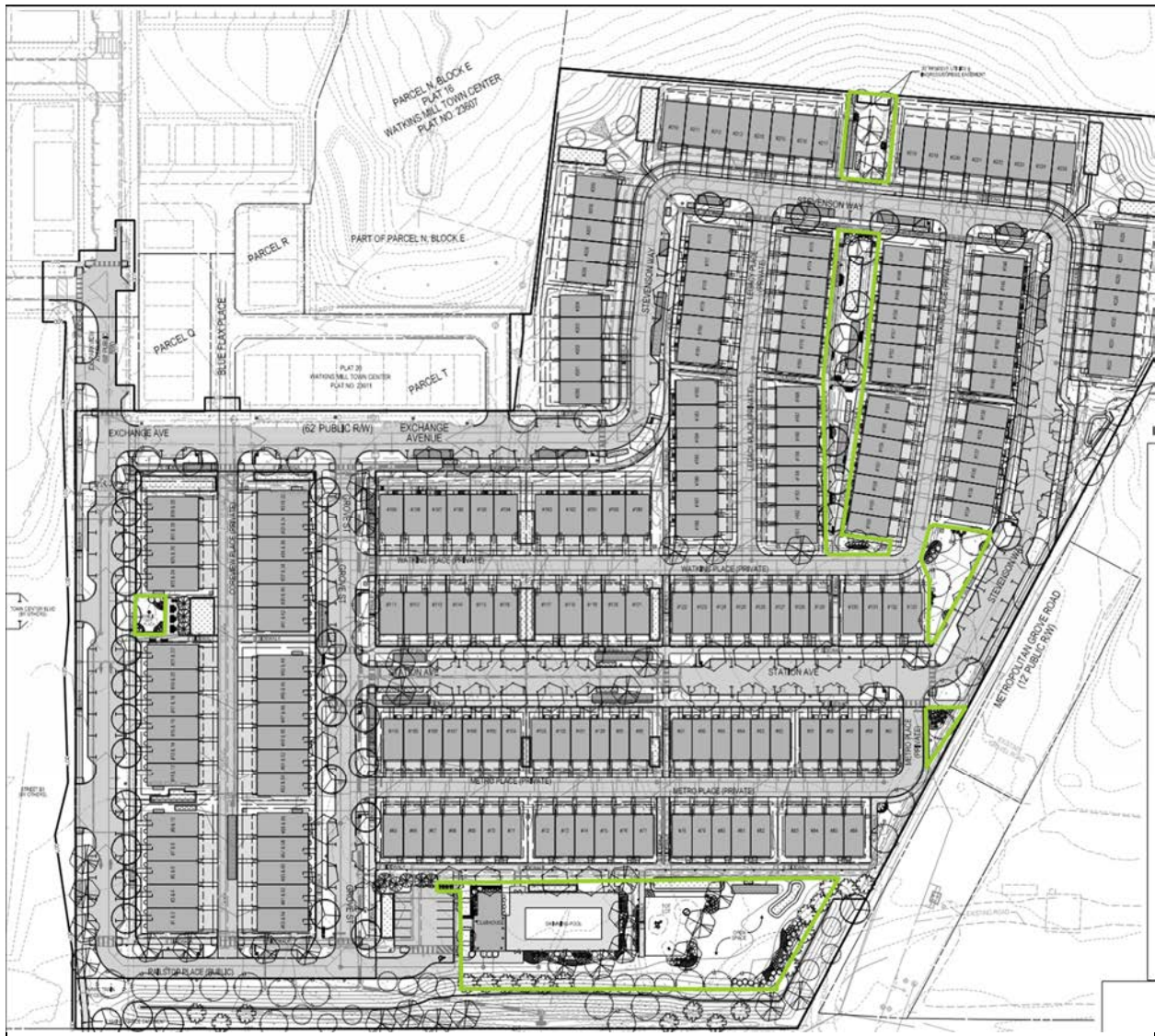


Figure 6 Proposed Overall Landscape Plan

As shown on the Overall Landscape Plans, open space is interspersed throughout the Project, highlighted by a large linear space running from the northern edge of the property adjacent to the City parkland to Alley A in the center of the Project. Although stormwater management facilities are located in portions of the open space, the area will be available for passive recreational use by residents. Smaller open space parcels are also provided on each block.

The Applicant anticipates providing 42.94% of the tract area as green area, exceeding the 40% green area requirement of the MXD Zone.

Amenity features are incorporated in convenient locations within the proposed open space. This will ensure access to amenity features by future residents of and visitors to the Project. The Project will be governed by its own HOA, and will include its own pool house, pool and other amenities. The details of the open space and amenities therein are provided with the Final Site Plan.

External and Internal Circulation

The Project will provide for safe and efficient access and circulation patterns for both vehicles and pedestrians. As shown on the Circulation Exhibit included with the Application [Figure 5], site access will be provided via internal streets connecting to Exchange Avenue and Parkview Avenue within the Urban Core.

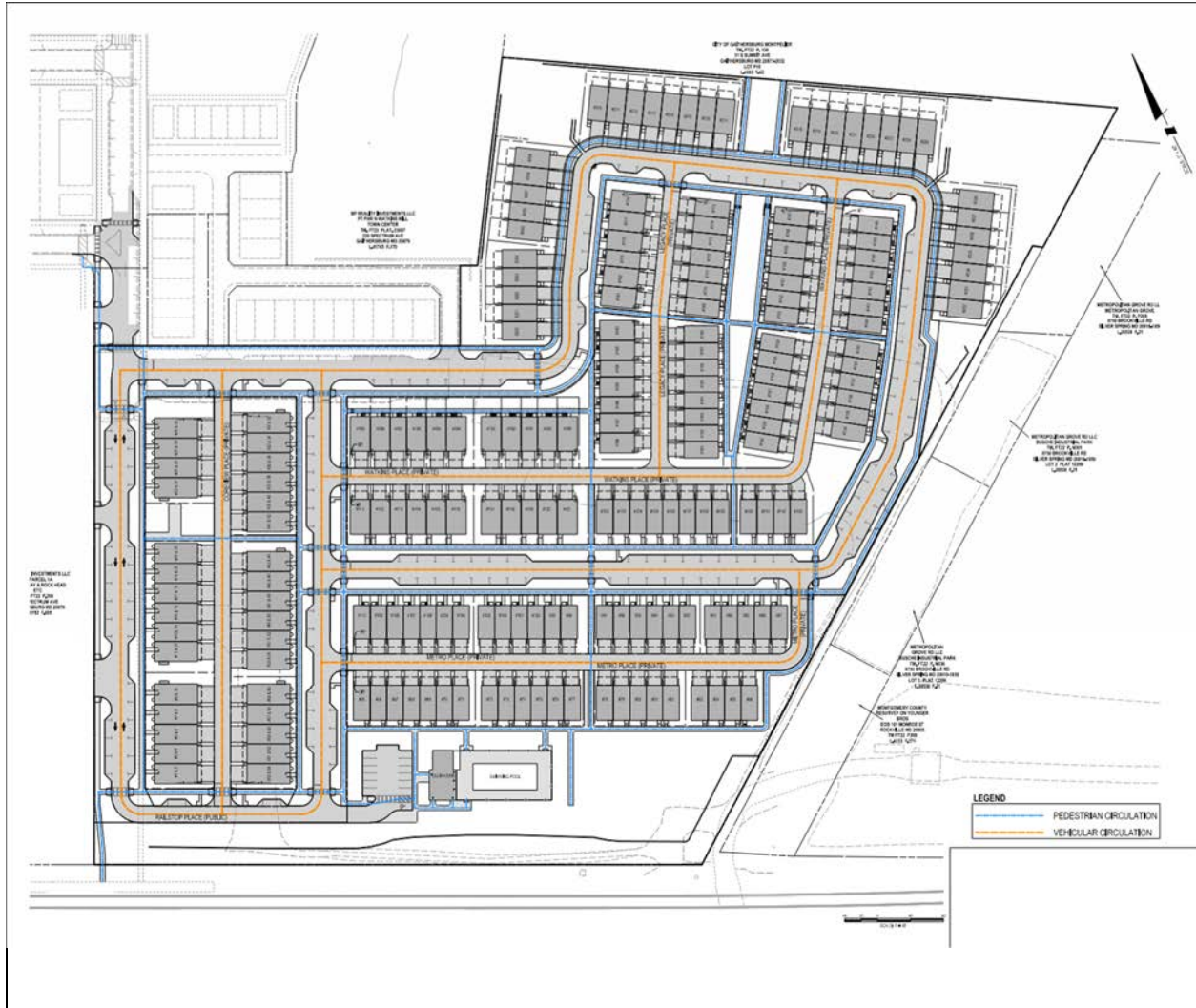


Figure 5 Circulation Exhibit

To better distribute traffic generated by the Project, the owners of the Urban Core (BP Realty) have agreed to allow the Applicant (Craftmark Homes) to construct the segment of proposed Town Center Boulevard in the Urban Core from Watkins Mill Road to Grand Street.⁵ This segment is shown on Sheet 21 of approved Site Plan SP-05-0013:

⁵ Town Center Boulevard from Watkins Mill Road to Parkview Avenue was approved by Site Plan SP-05-0013 and the right-of-way has been dedicated to public use by Plat 23608.

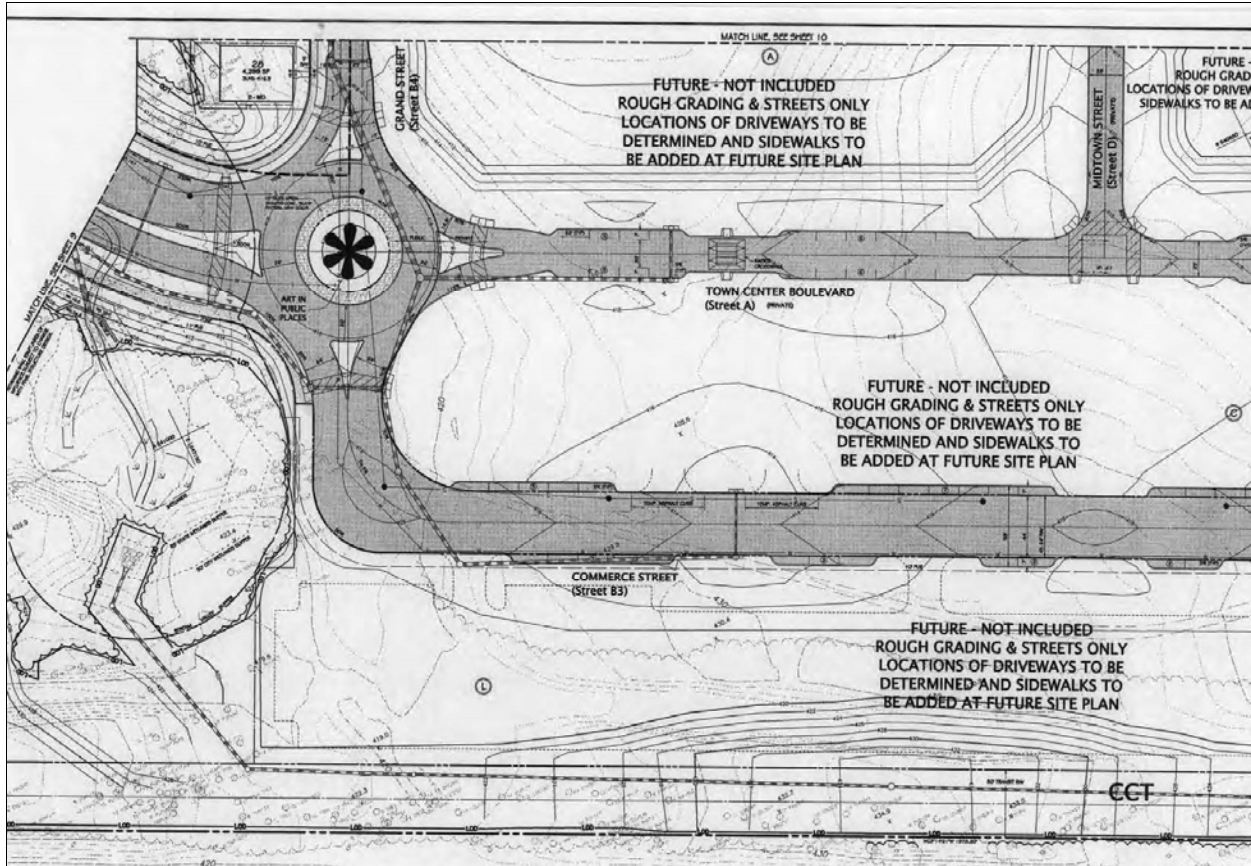


Figure 6 Sheet 21 of approved Site Plan SP 05 0013

The connection will allow vehicles to enter and exit the Project via Exchange Avenue along the northern edge of the Urban Core instead of from Parkview Avenue through the Parklands community. The connection will be constructed prior to the completion of the Project. When the Urban Core is developed, additional access roads from Watkins Mill Road through the Urban Core may be constructed to create a grid network that disperses traffic away from the Parklands community. The Project also facilitates potential future connections to both Metropolitan Grove Road and the adjacent City-owned parkland to the north. The Application also proposes a “road diet” to a segment of Exchange Avenue. A re-designed road with reduced pavement width will allow for additional green area and streetscaping, while retaining a similar amount of on-street parking. In addition, Parkview Avenue section was revised in discussions with City Staff. The 4-

lane section is reduced to 2-lanes, with removal of existing island at the intersection and modification to the existing curb, sidewalk and associated ramps.

Internal circulation also will be efficient for both vehicles and pedestrians. Within the Project, the Application proposes a semi-regular street grid with sidewalks which will promote safe and efficient vehicular circulation. Pedestrian circulation is provided by a series of interconnected sidewalks that connect the site in both the north-south and east-west directions. Furthermore, the majority of the 2-over-2's and townhouses will be rear-loaded units served by an alley system. This will reduce vehicular conflicts and conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. Although planning for construction traffic is not required at Sketch Plan, the Applicant understands the residents of the Parklands are concerned about the impact of construction traffic on their community. The Applicant is working on a plan to route the majority of the construction traffic across the at the at-grade crossing of the CSX tracks utilizing a temporary construction entrance.

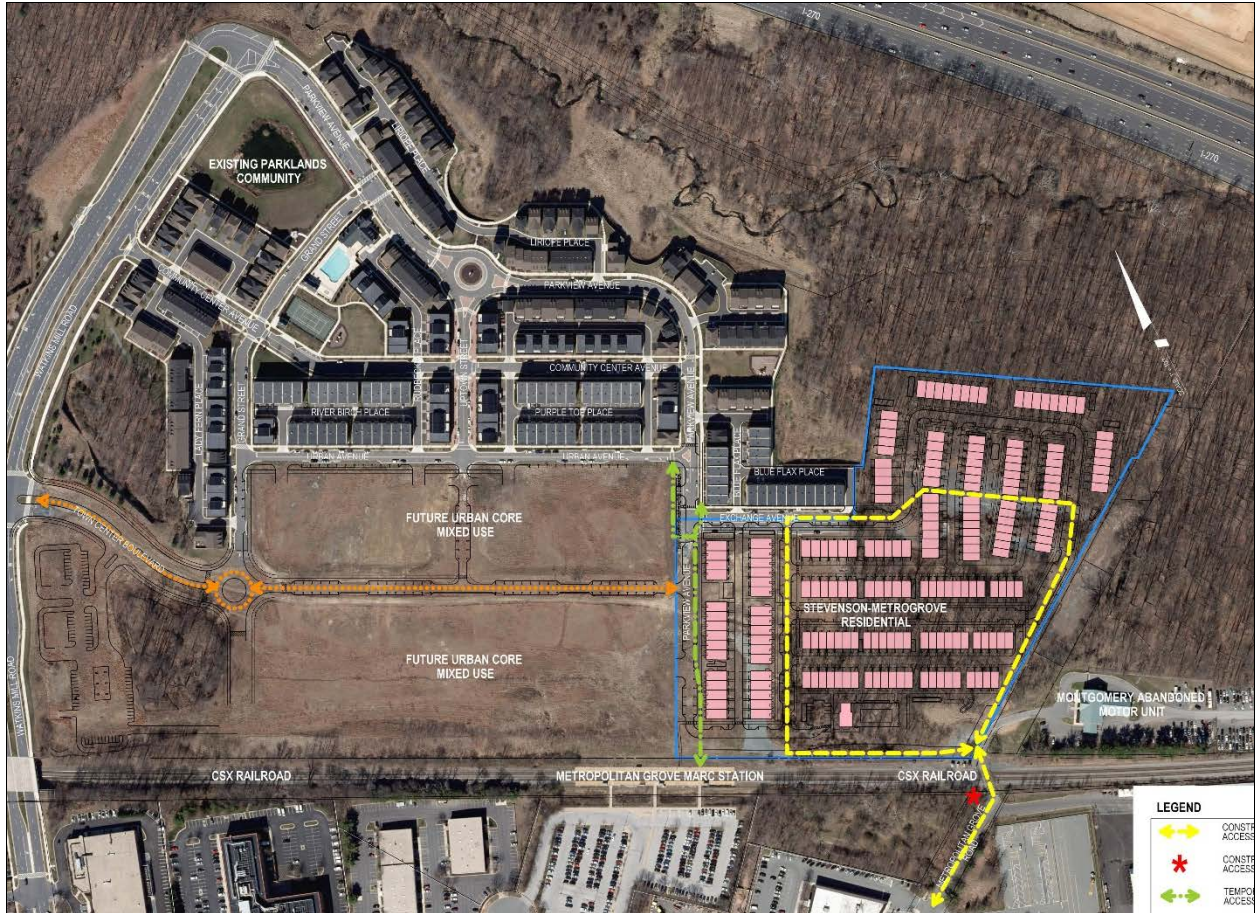


Figure 7 Construction Traffic Exhibit

IV. APFO Compliance

The APFO requires that any development project be served by at least two fire stations within a ten-minute response time (§ 24-248 of the Zoning Ordinance). The Project is located within a ten-minute response time of three fire stations and meets this APFO requirement:

- Station 31 (Rockville)
- Station 22 (Germantown/Kingsview)
- Station 8 (Gaithersburg)

Conclusion

The Planning Commission should approve the Site Plan as it conforms to all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, develops an underutilized site with needed housing, and promotes the sustainability of the Project.