

March 19, 2018

Ms. Sara Ullman
City of Aurora, Planning and Development
15151 E. Alameda Parkway, 2nd Floor
Aurora, CO 80011

Re: Argenta Redevelopment: First Submittal – Site Plan, Master Plan and Subdivision Plat
DA-1017-09
Letter of Introduction

Dear Sara,

Enclosed please find the submittal items requested for the Argenta Redevelopment Site Plan, Master Plan and Subdivision Plat (1st submittal). The intent of this Site Plan, Master Plan and Subdivision Plat is to thoroughly express our design intent for the Argenta property. Per the comments received in our initial pre-application meeting (held October 06, 2016) we have made adjustments to reflect many of the comments received. A letter has been provided, under separate cover, to respond to the items noted by staff.

The following team members contributed to this submittal:

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Introduction

Argenta is an 11.78 acre mixed-use development located within the Havana Street Overlay District, south of E. 6th Avenue, north of E. 3rd Avenue and between Geneva Street and Havana Street. The community will include 86 townhome units within 14 buildings with western views in the first phase. The community is also planned to include multifamily units, live-work units, retail and office space in future phases.

To enhance the urban character of the development, all buildings are oriented to front the surrounding roadways or a shared greenspace. Townhome units will be accessed on the pedestrian level via front doors located along common open spaces and courtyards. Future apartment buildings can be accessed both from the parking side as well as the street side. These pedestrian routes will be denoted through the use of enhanced pavements, street trees, and architectural elements. Future retail and office spaces are accessed from both the parking side (west) and Havana Street with pedestrian-friendly connections located throughout the length of the block.

Site Access

The site is accessed via two connections from Geneva Street, two connections from Havana Street, and one connection from 3rd Avenue. Phase 1 will be accessed through the Geneva and 3rd Avenue connections. Internal circulation is provided through an east-west local street connecting 3rd Avenue to Geneva Street, and a north-south local road connecting Havana Street directly to Geneva Street. This local road serves as the main pedestrian corridor through the site, connecting the office/retail portion of the site to the residential portion directly to the west. This corridor passes through a central amenity area and is denoted through the use of enhanced pavement patterns and curb extensions. The central amenity will be designed in greater detail with future phases of the development.

Parking

Parking for the Argenta Master Plan will be provided via on-street parking spaces, covered parking areas, shared surface lots, and in-unit garages. Phase 1 parking will be provided via 2 in-unit garage spaces per townhome as well as on-street parking. A shared parking strategy is proposed to accommodate parking within future phases. More information regarding parking will be provided with future site plan applications.

Parks, Open Space, & Amenities

A small community oriented urban park is provided, centrally located within the site. This urban park will be constructed with a future phase of the development. It is envisioned as a community gathering area which will include a small play environment, open turf lawn, plaza area, and a variety of seating options. Additional amenities within this park may include a covered community shelter, decorative paving, a communal plaza, a food truck/vendor event space, a grill and picnic area, climbing structure, permanent bench seating, and enhanced landscape areas. Outdoor gathering spaces are also planned along the retail / office areas. These areas are situated along planned pedestrian corridors and will provide seating and dining options.

Community amenities within the first phase of development include shared courtyards/mews between townhome buildings. These courtyards include turf areas, gathering spaces, permanent bench seating, and enhanced landscape. Also included in the first phase of development is a detention pond on the North of the site. Other areas of the site are landscaped according to the buffer requirements set by the City of Aurora code.

Site Restrictions & Encumbrances

There are no known site restrictions such as floodplain or aviation encumbrances. There is a corner outparcel located at 301 N. Havana Street which contains an underground petroleum plume that flows in a northwesterly direction with a small area affecting the Argenta site. The contaminated site is currently undergoing remediation through the Colorado Petroleum Storage Tank Fund program and should be completed in 2018. No other known encumbrances have been established with the proposed site.

Site Phasing

The Argenta development is planned to be completed in three (3) phases. The initial phase will include 86 townhome units along the Geneva Street. Additionally, the north-south local road internal to the site and the detention pond will be included in this phase. The second phase of development will include the area east of the north-south local road. This area includes two (2) multi-family buildings, the central small urban park, shared parking fields, and all remaining access points and roadways. Phase three will complete the construction of the retail/office uses and associated pedestrian connections located along Havana Street.

Site Plan Approval Criteria

The below listed Site Plan approval criteria is associated with the first phase of development only.

1. *Consistency with comprehensive plan.* The proposed site plan is consistent with the provisions of the comprehensive plan, the City Code, and plans and policies adopted by city council that apply to the affected area.

Response: The Argenta property currently located within the Original Aurora Strategic Area. The vision for this strategic area includes residential and mixed-use developments with a focus on the existing arts scene. The Argenta development proposes a mix of residential, retail, and office uses. The first phase will primarily be alley loaded townhomes, however future phases will include additional residential options, retail, and office uses. In addition, a strong focus on public art is incorporated into the development. Please reference the enclosed Public Art Narrative for additional details related to public art.

2. *Impact on existing city infrastructure and public improvements.* The proposed development does not result in undue or unnecessary burdens on the city's existing infrastructure and public improvements, or that arrangements are made to mitigate such impacts.

Response: The Argenta development is considered an in-fill development and will be serviced off of existing infrastructure within the City. No known undue or unnecessary burdens are expected with this development.

3. *Density.* If the density is different from those of adjacent properties, specific steps are to be taken to achieve compatibility. For residential site plans abutting residential zones of lower density, the development shall provide for transitions in density and building height to protect the character of the lower-density residential areas.

Response: Eighty-six townhome units are proposed within the 4.76 acres of the first phase of development. The proposed density for this phase is 18 dwelling units per acre. This density is consistent with the Original Aurora Strategic Area and SIR zoning.

4. *Protection and appropriate use of environmental features and topography to enhance the development.* New development shall be designed, where reasonable, to preserve and protect the water quality and wildlife habitat of riparian corridors, wetlands, and floodplains affected by the proposed development. Open space and natural areas shall be preserved, where reasonable, and integrated into developed areas to provide visual diversity in the landscape and to define neighborhood and community character. The design and placement of buildings on a site incorporate and protect view corridors. Where reasonable, the design of the development shall maintain the approximate topographic form of major ridgelines, swales, and landforms.

Response: The Argenta development is considered an in-fill development and is not located in proximity to any existing environmentally sensitive areas or open spaces.

5. *Landscaped area.* All site plans shall conform to adopted landscaping standards or guidelines adopted by city council. Certain portions of the city may be designated for special design treatments and standards.

Response: The Argenta development is in compliance with the existing City of Aurora landscape requirements as well as the Havana Overlay District specific requirements.

6. *Internal efficiency of design.* The proposed design of the site plan achieves internal efficiency for its users, including safe and convenient pedestrian access to common areas for recreation and other services, facilities, and amenities provided by the development. The proposed design shall provide for safe and convenient access for service and maintenance personnel performing routine duties related to but not limited to mail delivery and pick-up, utility meter reading, and other services.

Response: The first phase of the Argenta development is accessed by E. 3rd Avenue and Geneva Street. On-street parking and direct access to townhome units is provided via a local road way connecting E. 3rd Avenue to Geneva Street. Individual units are accessed through private drives located to the rear of units.

7. *Control of nuisance impacts.* The proposed development controls nuisance impacts on itself and surrounding land uses including heat and glare, traffic congestion, noise, arrangement of signs and lighting, features to prevent littering and accumulation of trash, the amount and quality of storm drainage, the provision of adequate light and air, compatible screening of rooftop mechanical units, and other factors deemed to affect public health, safety, and general welfare.

Response: The Argenta development takes into consideration impacts on existing surrounding developments by limiting the impacts associated with traffic, lighting, noise, trash, storm drainage, and others. Phase one of the development includes a detention pond to accommodate impacts associated with anticipated rain events. Parking is located internal to the development so as to limit impacts on existing local streets. Noise, light and other impacts shall be limited through the use of landscaping, building placement, and fixture selections.

8. *Urban design, building architecture, and landscape architecture.* The site plan shall establish a high quality of design, demonstrate how compatibility with adjacent development and surrounding urban design elements will be achieved as well as internal consistency of design, and satisfy the city's adopted

design standards and/or guidelines. The relationship between mass and space shall be combined and integrated to produce aesthetic and functional buildings and landscapes.

Response: The Argenta development will utilize aesthetic elements, building forms, and landscape elements that tie into and enhance the existing community character. Such elements include a strong street presence, public art installations, vibrant color and material selections, unique public spaces, and smart landscape materials.

9. *Adequacy, accessibility, and connectivity of traffic and circulation plans.* The design, efficiency, and connectivity of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation systems, linkages to open space and trails, availability of resident and guest parking, loading spaces, convenience of location, and access to public transit facilities shall be adequate and functional.

Response: Internal circulation within phase one of the Argenta development is provided by both north-south and east-west connections. Vehicular parking will be provided via on-street and in-unit spaces. Bicycle parking will be provided via bike racks located in convenience public and shared spaces. Transit accesses is provided off of Havana Street. In addition, the property is conveniently located nearby the Highline Canal Trail as well as public amenities such as the Lowry Sports Complex, Expo Park, McMullen Park and Del Mar Park, among others.

10. *Street standards.* Public and private streets included in the site plan shall conform to city street standards.

Response: All proposed public and private streets are in compliance with the City Street Standards. Please reference the enclosed Site Plan for more detailed information related to street types and alignments.

11. *Past Performance.* The city council and the planning commission are authorized to consider the past performance of an applicant in their consideration of any site plan. The planning commission or city council may deny any approval of a site plan if the applicant or developer thereof is determined to be in violation of any requirements, conditions, or representations on a prior development.

Response: The development partners for Argenta have completed many notable projects in and around the City. For example, Tom Klein is a development partner of the Florence Square apartment complex at 9800 e Colfax. This is a 181-unit affordable apartment complex developed in 2005-2007. Urban renewal funds were used and have been completely paid back. Also, Tom Klein was a partner in the Gallantry project at 6th and Quebec. This is an eight-unit rehabilitation of officer duplexes built in the 1930's that were converted into single family homes. This project was completed in 2010.

Master Plan Approval Criteria

The below listed Master Plan approval criteria is associated with all phases of the Argenta development.

1. *Consistency with comprehensive plan.* The proposed site plan is consistent with the provisions of the comprehensive plan, the City Code, and plans and policies adopted by city council that apply to the affected area.

Response: The Argenta property currently located within the Original Aurora Strategic Area. The vision for this strategic area includes residential and mixed-use developments with a focus on the existing arts

scene. The Argenta development proposes a mix of residential, retail, and office uses. The first phase will primarily be alley loaded townhomes, however future phases will include additional residential options, retail, and office uses. In addition, a strong focus on public art is incorporated into the development. Please reference the enclosed Public Art Narrative for additional details related to public art.

2. *Impact on existing city infrastructure and public improvements.* The proposed development does not result in undue or unnecessary burdens on the city's existing infrastructure and public improvements, or that arrangements are made to mitigate such impacts.

Response: The Argenta development is considered an in-fill development and will be serviced off of existing infrastructure within the City. No known undue or unnecessary burdens are expected with this development.

3. *Density.* If the density is different from those of adjacent properties, specific steps are to be taken to achieve compatibility. For residential site plans abutting residential zones of lower density, the development shall provide for transitions in density and building height to protect the character of the lower-density residential areas.

Response: Eighteen dwelling units per acre are proposed within the first phase of the development. The second phase is planning to include multi-family and live/work residential options. The third phase of development is planned to include retail and office uses. Approximately 180 multi-family units are proposed within phase 2 of the development (+/-30 du/ac) and approximately 31,000 square feet of retail/office spaces is planned for phase 3 of the development. This density is consistent with the surrounding developments and SIR zoning.

4. *Protection and appropriate use of environmental features and topography to enhance the development.* New development shall be designed, where reasonable, to preserve and protect the water quality and wildlife habitat of riparian corridors, wetlands, and floodplains affected by the proposed development. Open space and natural areas shall be preserved, where reasonable, and integrated into developed areas to provide visual diversity in the landscape and to define neighborhood and community character. The design and placement of buildings on a site incorporate and protect view corridors. Where reasonable, the design of the development shall maintain the approximate topographic form of major ridgelines, swales, and landforms.

Response: The Argenta development is considered an in-fill development and is not located in proximity to any existing environmentally sensitive areas or open spaces.

5. *Landscaped area.* All site plans shall conform to adopted landscaping standards or guidelines adopted by city council. Certain portions of the city may be designated for special design treatments and standards.

Response: The Argenta development is in compliance with the existing City of Aurora landscape requirements as well as the Havana Overlay District specific requirements.

6. *Internal efficiency of design.* The proposed design of the site plan achieves internal efficiency for its users, including safe and convenient pedestrian access to common areas for recreation and other services, facilities, and amenities provided by the development. The proposed design shall provide for safe and convenient access for service and maintenance personnel performing routine duties related to but not limited to mail delivery and pick-up, utility meter reading, and other services.

Response: The first phase of the Argenta development is accessed by E. 3rd Avenue and Geneva Street. On-street parking and direct access to townhome units is provided via a local road way connecting E. 3rd Avenue to Geneva Street. Individual units are accessed through private drives located to the rear of units. Future phases of the development will also be accessed via Havana Street and will be serviced through an internal local road street network. Parking will be located internal to the site, so as to limit impacts on existing nearby development. On-street and covered parking will also be available.

7. *Control of nuisance impacts.* The proposed development controls nuisance impacts on itself and surrounding land uses including heat and glare, traffic congestion, noise, arrangement of signs and lighting, features to prevent littering and accumulation of trash, the amount and quality of storm drainage, the provision of adequate light and air, compatible screening of rooftop mechanical units, and other factors deemed to affect public health, safety, and general welfare.

Response: The Argenta development takes into consideration impacts on existing surrounding developments by limiting the impacts associated with traffic, lighting, noise, trash, storm drainage, and others. Phase one of the development includes a detention pond to accommodate the anticipated rain events. Parking is located internal to the development so as to limit impacts on existing local streets. Noise, light and other impacts shall be limited through the use of landscaping, building placement, and fixture selections.

8. *Urban design, building architecture, and landscape architecture.* The site plan shall establish a high quality of design, demonstrate how compatibility with adjacent development and surrounding urban design elements will be achieved as well as internal consistency of design, and satisfy the city's adopted design standards and/or guidelines. The relationship between mass and space shall be combined and integrated to produce aesthetic and functional buildings and landscapes.

Response: The Argenta development will utilize aesthetic elements, building forms, and landscape elements that tie into and enhance the existing Fitzsimons community character. Such elements include a strong street presence, public art installations, vibrant color and material selections, unique public spaces, and smart landscape materials.

9. *Adequacy, accessibility, and connectivity of traffic and circulation plans.* The design, efficiency, and connectivity of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation systems, linkages to open space and trails, availability of resident and guest parking, loading spaces, convenience of location, and access to public transit facilities shall be adequate and functional.

Response: Internal circulation is provided by both north-south and east-west connections. Vehicular parking will be provided via on-street and in-unit spaces. Bicycle parking will be provided via bike racks located in convenience public and shared spaces. Transit accesses is provided off of Havana Street. In addition, the property is conveniently located nearby the Highline Canal Trail as well as public amenities such as the Lowry Sports Complex, Expo Park, McMullen Park and Del Mar Park, among others.

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Response: The development partners for Argenta have completed many notable projects in and around the City. For example, Tom Klein is a development partner of the Florence Square apartment complex at 9800 e Colfax. This is a 181-unit affordable apartment complex developed in 2005-2007. Urban renewal funds were used and have been completely paid back. Also, Tom Klein was a partner in the Gallantry project at 6th and Quebec. This is an eight-unit rehabilitation of officer duplexes built in the 1930's that were converted into single family homes. This project was completed in 2010.

The Argenta development will become a valuable infill piece to the existing neighborhood fabric. It will help provide additional higher density housing options to better serve the ever-expanding Fitzsimons Campus, Lowry and adjacent neighborhoods. The combination of townhomes and multi-family units in proximity to retail, office, and live/work units offers a unique appeal to independent professionals, entrepreneurs, and start-up companies.

We are pleased to present you with this application for Site Plan, Master Plan and Subdivision Plat for Argenta. We look forward to working with the City of Aurora on creating another unique community.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the application please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Norris Design



Brad J. Haigh, PLA
Principal