

**APPROVAL OF A CONDITIONAL USE TO PERMIT TOWNHOMES IN THE R2  
ZONING DISTRICT**

- a. *The establishment, maintenance or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to, or endanger the public health, safety and general welfare.*

The intent of the R2 Zoning District is to provide multiple-family areas accommodating a variety of housing types and compatible uses, which is precisely the objective Petitioner seeks to achieve by offering townhomes and two separate series of traditional single-family homes. Townhomes are widely desirable given the demographic shift the real estate market has seen with Millennials fleeing large cities for the suburbs<sup>1</sup>. This trend has been gaining traction over the past couple of years where large U.S. Cities have been losing tens of thousands of millennial residents to nearby suburbs since 2018<sup>2</sup>. We saw this trend continue to grow in 2020 and most recently in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic prompting millennials to move out of large populated cities and purchase their first home in the suburbs at an affordable price point now that working-from-home is common practice and the need to be in close proximity to a city office is reduced. Townhomes are widely desirable for a first-time homebuyer leaving Chicago in that they have little to no maintenance obligations and are priced more affordably than a traditional large-lot single-family detached home. Moreover, townhomes are largely sought among empty nesters looking to downsize with little maintenance obligations, but who are not yet ready to take the leap

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://fortune.com/2020/07/17/people-leaving-cities-coronavirus-data-population-millennials-marriage-families-housing-real-estate-suburbs/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/millennials-continue-to-leave-big-cities-11569470460>

into an age-restricted community. Petitioner plans to incorporate first floor master bedrooms into The Townhomes, which will be an appealing feature to the empty nesters. Therefore, approving the conditional use will provide more housing opportunities to the millennials fleeing Chicago along with empty nesters looking to downsize, which will not be detrimental to or endanger the health, safety, and general welfare as it will provide a much-needed housing product in a time where townhomes are in high demand.

*b. The conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate area for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.*

In its current state, the Subject Property is vacant and unimproved. Nokia specifically sought approvals from the City to rezone the Subject Property for residential use in order to improve property values and the general appearance of the neighborhood. Approval of a conditional use to permit townhomes will provide a harmonious transition with the neighboring townhome community immediately east of the Subject Property. Internally, Petitioner thoughtfully designed the proposed development to include a stormwater management facility between The Townhomes and The Meadows and said stormwater management facility will act as a buffer between the two housing types. Therefore, The Townhomes will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property within the area.

*c. The establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the adjacent property for uses permitted in the district.*

The establishment of townhomes within this proposed residential community will not impede development of adjacent properties. The Subject Property is within the Nokia Campus, which is improved with multiple interconnected office buildings comprising approximately 1.6 million square feet and is served by a combination of parking decks and surface parking lots. The Subject Property makes up the remainder of the Nokia Campus and is currently vacant and

underperforming to which the City agreed the highest and best use of the Subject Property is for a variety of housing types under R2 zoning. With the exception of the proposed development, the Nokia Campus to the south will otherwise be untouched, with no plans of future development and the property immediately east of the proposed townhome component has already been developed into a townhome community. Therefore, the conditional use will not impede development of adjacent properties.

*d. The establishment of the conditional use is not in conflict with the adopted comprehensive master plan.*

The Subject Property falls within the City's East Sector Plan Update, which designates the Subject Property for Office, Research and Development. It is important to note the Comp Plan was approved 22 years ago in 1998. Since then, many of the market demands concerning land use and real estate in the area have drastically shifted and the City recognized this by recently rezoning the Subject Property for residential use (R2 PUD) in April of 2020. The conditional use to permit townhomes within the proposed development is in harmony with the intent of the R2 zoning district in that it will promote a mixed-residential community offering a variety of housing types consistent with the adjacent residential neighborhoods.