



City of
Lawrence
Indiana

Address: 5405 N Post Rd
Parcel #: 4003653
Docket #: 26 LUSV 12
Hearing Date: 07/21/26
Council District #: 3 ~ Sherron Freeman

Petitioner: Woda Cooper Companies, Inc.
gmustric@wodagroup.com
500 South Front Street, 10th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
614-396-3222

Owner: Fort Harrison Reuse Authority
rbrown@clarkquinnlaw.com
heather@fhra.org
9001 E 59th Street, Suite 202
Lawrence, IN 46216
317-337-3400

Request:

Woda Cooper Companies, Inc. is seeking a variance from the City of Indianapolis-Marion County Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and a variance of use from the Fort Harrison Reuse Authority ("FRHA") Master ReUse Plan to take the property designated as light industrial and use it for a multi-family development that matches the D-8 zoning standards in the Indianapolis-Marion County Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance as defined in Chapter 742, Article I, Section 03.

Woda Cooper Companies, Inc. is seeking a zoning variance to enable the development of a 30-unit general-occupancy residential community on a 2.38-acre parcel within the Harrison Centre commercial development in Lawrence, Indiana. Specifically, this request seeks to allow residential use consistent with D-8 zoning as defined in Chapter 742, Article I, Section 03 of the Indianapolis-Marion County Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance. This infill site offers a unique opportunity to bring much-needed affordable housing to this community. The housing units will consist of attached townhomes in 6 separate buildings along with the mixed-use structure consisting of 4 live-work units (and 4 attached townhomes) in a building fronting along North Post Road.

Analysis:

The subject property consists of approximately 2.38 acres located within the Harrison Centre development at 5405 N. Post Road. The property is currently vacant and is designated DP within the Fort Harrison Reuse Authority zoning framework, with a Master ReUse Plan designation of Light Industrial. The petitioner requests approval of a variance of use from both the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and the Fort Harrison ReUse Plan to allow development of a 30-unit townhome community with four live-work commercial units designed to meet the development standards of the D-8 Multifamily District.



The property is designated Village Mixed Use on the City's Comprehensive Plan and is located within the Metro Compact Context Area and the Transit-Oriented Development Overlay. The proposed development advances the intent of these planning policies by introducing a compact residential neighborhood integrated with neighborhood-serving commercial space in a walkable environment.

Although the property is designated for light industrial use, the surrounding development pattern has evolved into a mixed-use commercial district consisting of retail, office, healthcare, banking, restaurants, and service businesses. Staff finds that residential townhomes with integrated live-work units are more compatible with the surrounding land uses than traditional light industrial development. The project will activate a vacant parcel, increase residential density within walking distance of existing businesses and transit, and reinforce the mixed-use character envisioned for the Fort Benjamin Harrison area.

The proposed development also provides several design elements that minimize impacts on adjacent properties, including rear-loaded parking, internal sidewalks, landscaped open space, professionally managed common areas, and architectural features that complement the surrounding development. Staff finds that the proposal is compatible with surrounding uses and is not expected to create adverse impacts on neighboring properties or public infrastructure.

The request satisfies the required findings for a use variance. The property possesses unique characteristics as a vacant infill site located within an established mixed-use commercial center where strict adherence to the existing industrial designation limits reasonable development opportunities that are consistent with the area's current character and long-term planning objectives. Granting the variance will allow redevelopment of an underutilized parcel while furthering the City's Comprehensive Plan and the continued redevelopment goals of the Fort Harrison district.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends **approval** of Docket 26-LUSV-12 based upon the following findings:

1. The proposed use will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare of the community. The development will convert a vacant parcel into a professionally managed residential community that complements surrounding commercial and mixed-use development.
2. The proposed use will not adversely affect the use or value of adjacent properties. The project is designed to be compatible with surrounding development through quality architecture, landscaping, pedestrian connectivity, and appropriate site design.
3. The need for the variance arises from conditions peculiar to the property. The site is a vacant infill parcel located within an established mixed-use commercial district where residential development is more compatible with the existing development pattern than the currently permitted light industrial uses.
4. Strict application of the zoning regulations would create an unnecessary hardship by limiting the property's ability to develop in a manner that is consistent with the surrounding area and the City's long-term redevelopment objectives for the Fort Benjamin Harrison district.



5. Approval of the variance will not substantially interfere with the Comprehensive Plan. The proposal advances the Village Mixed Use land use designation by providing compact residential development with integrated live-work commercial space within a walkable, transit-supportive environment consistent with the City's planning policies.

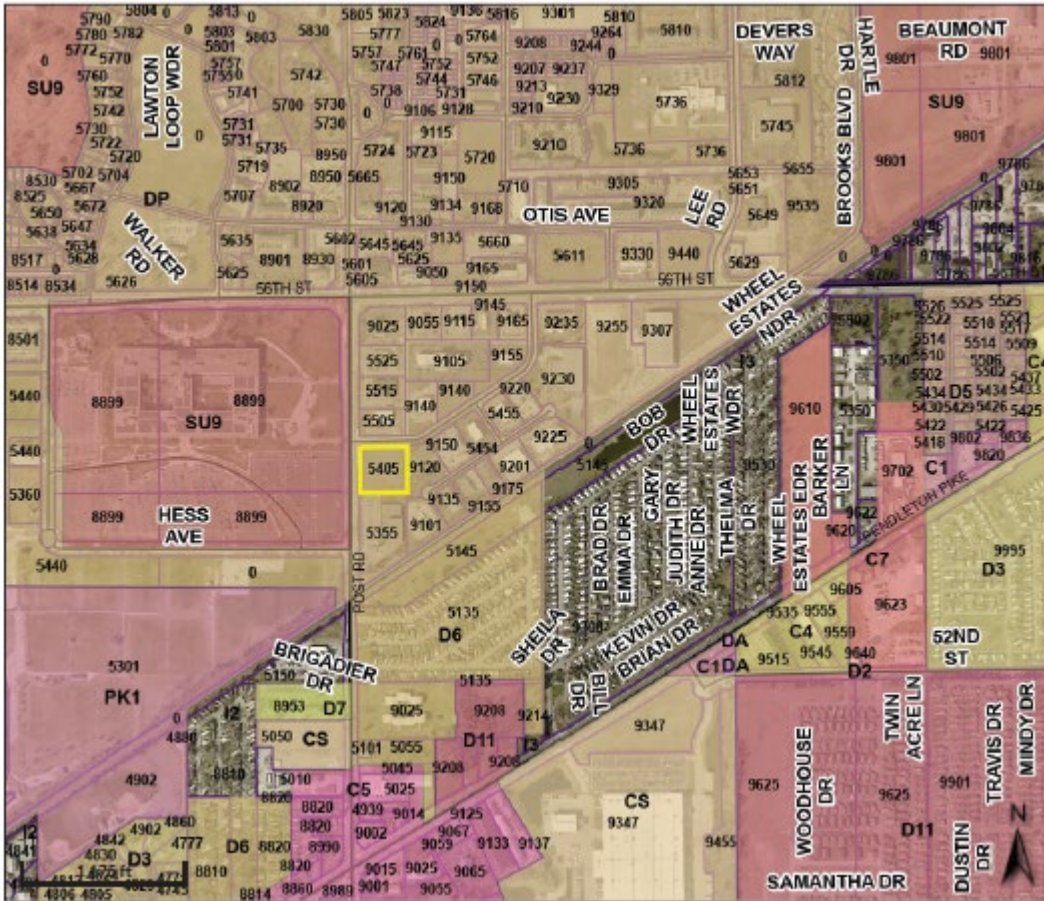
Summary of the Subject Property Zoning Standards

Current Zoning Designation:	DP
Surrounding Property Zoning	
North:	DP
South:	DP
East:	DP
West:	SU9
Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation:	
Current Land Use:	Village Mixed Use
Compact Context Area:	Metro
Transit-Oriented Development Overlay	Yes



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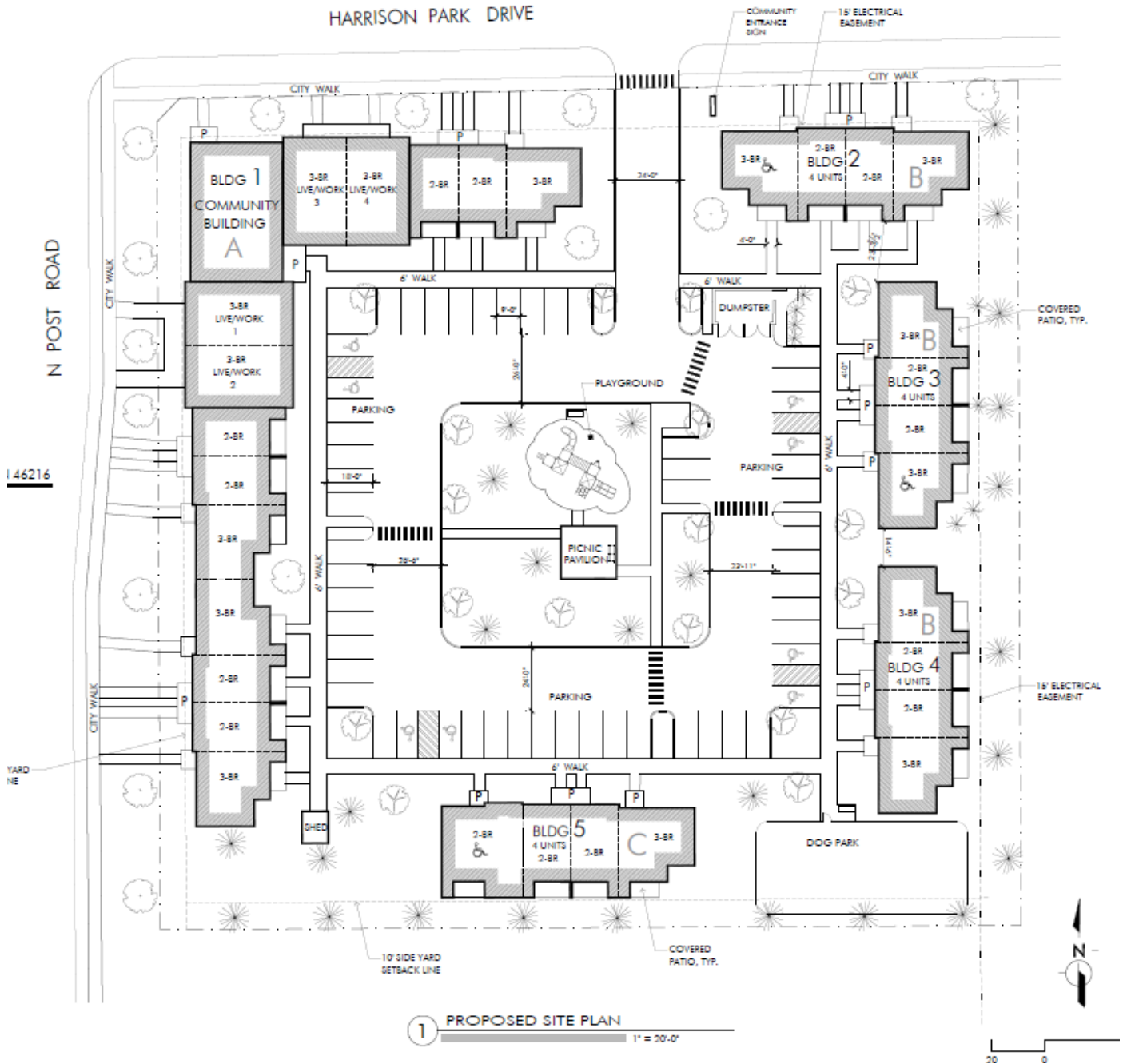
Zoning Base Map:





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Site Plan:





SITE / DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION

SITE: 2.38+/- ACRES

ZONING: EXISTING: DP -13

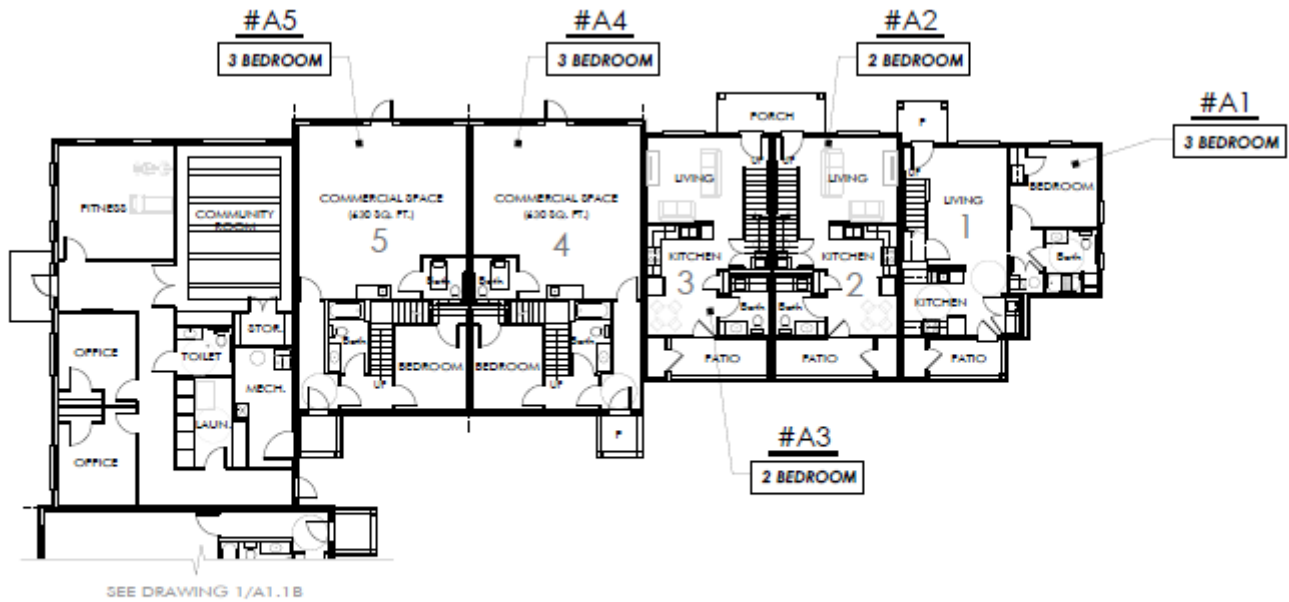
PROJECT: 30 TOWNHOME APARTMENT UNITS
(FAMILY / GENERAL OCCUPANCY)
(INCLUDES 5 TYPE A ACCESSIBLE UNITS)
UNIT MIX
15 3-BEDROOM UNITS
15 2-BEDROOM UNITS

4 LIVE/WORK UNITS W/ COMMERCIAL SPACE
AT GROUND FLOOR
EA. LIVE/WORK UNIT W/ 675 SQ. FT. OF
GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL SPACE
UPPER FLOOR OF L/W HAS 3 BEDROOMS

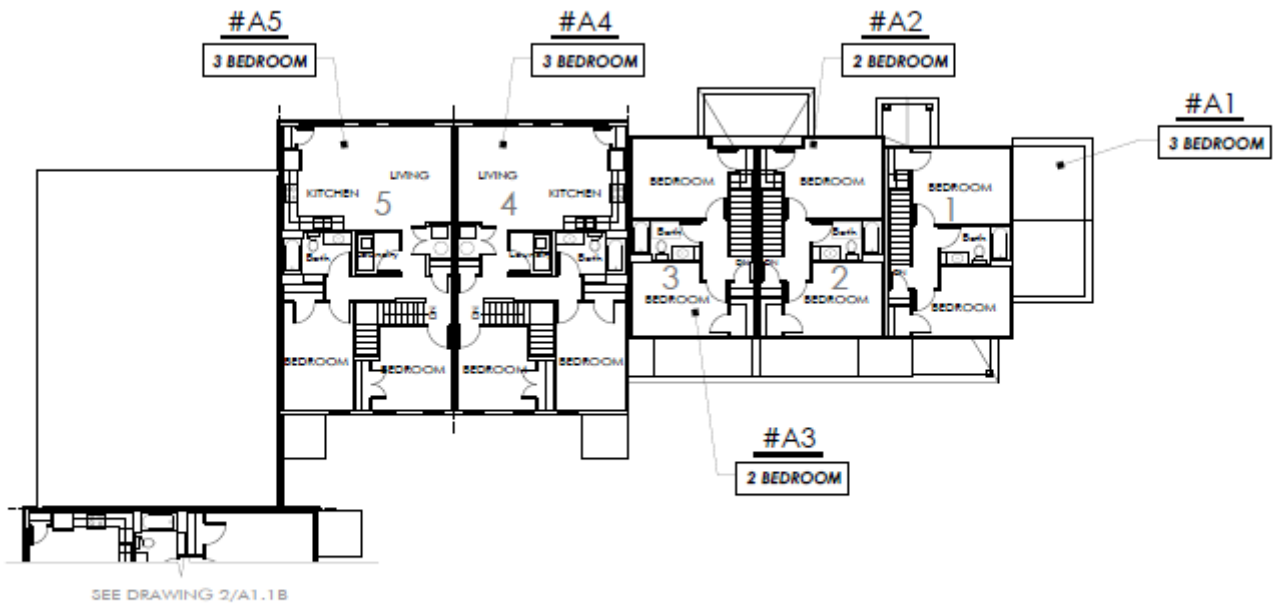
AMENITIES: PLAYGROUND
PICNIC AREA W/ COVERED TERRACE
FENCED-IN DEDICATED DOG PARK



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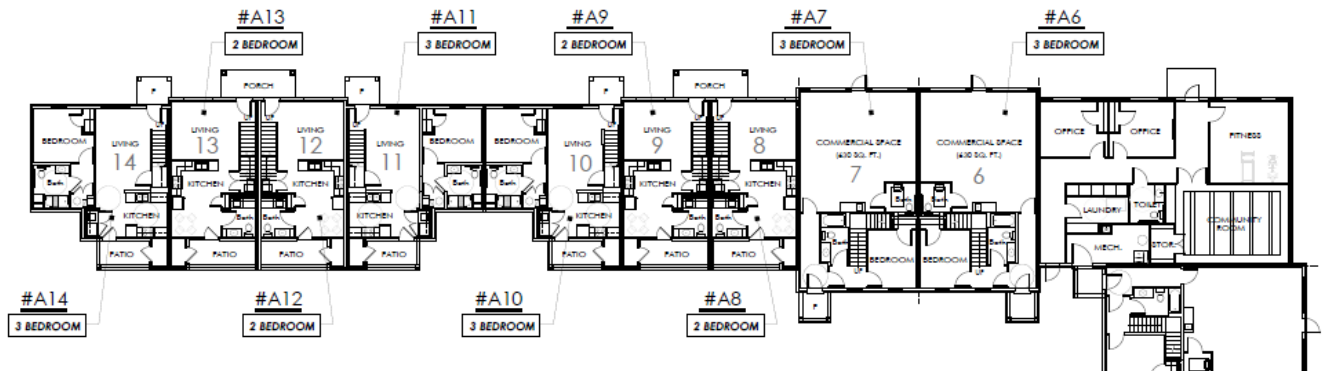
1 BUILDING TYPE A - FIRST FLOOR PLAN



2 BUILDING TYPE A - SECOND FLOOR PLAN

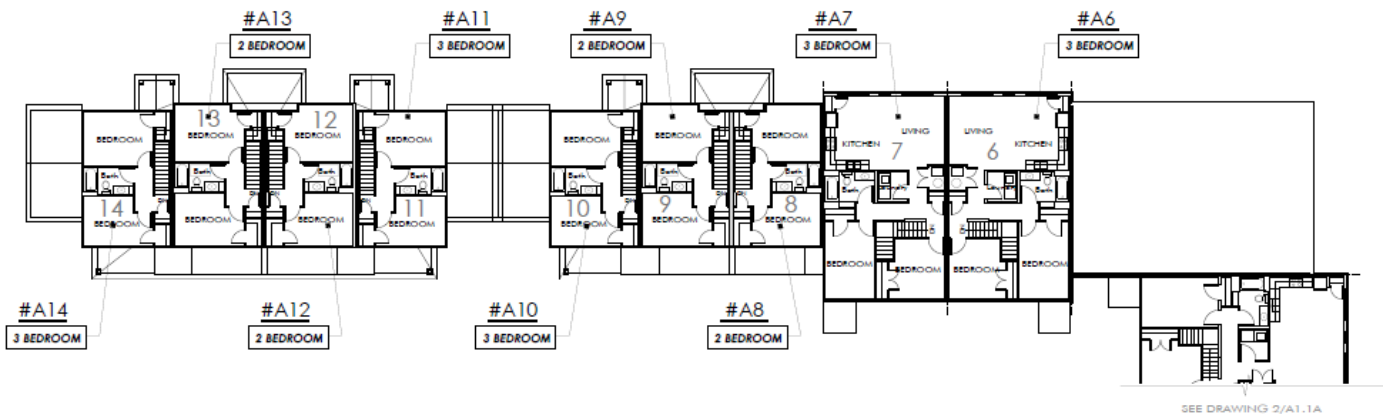


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1 BUILDING TYPE A - FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SEE DRAWING 1/A1.1A

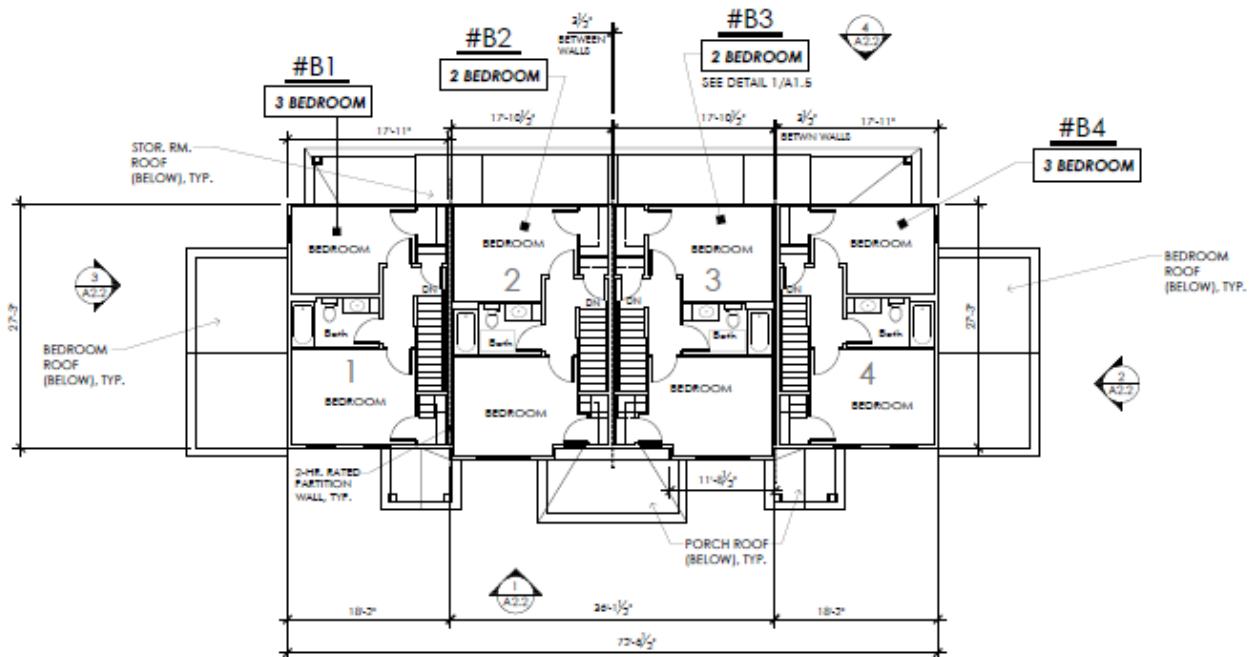
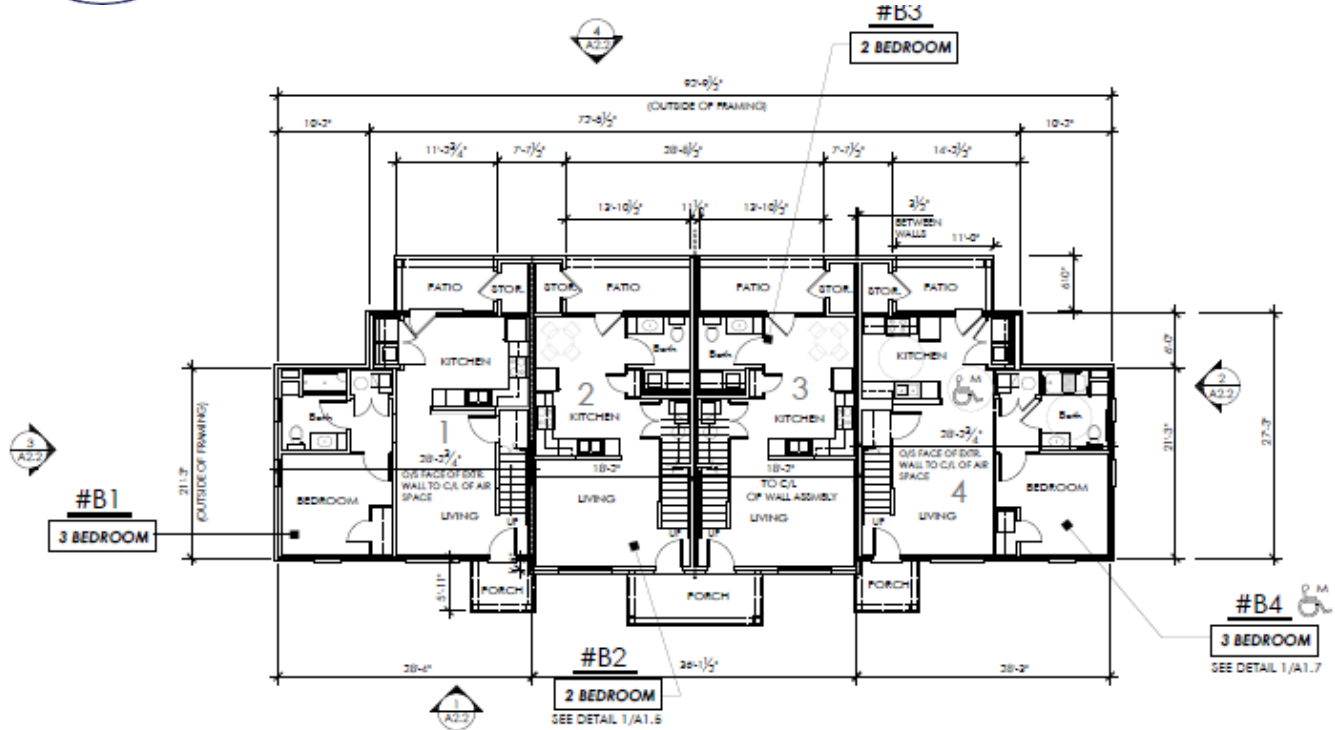


SEE DRAWING 2/A1.1A

2 BUILDING TYPE A - SECOND FLOOR PLAN

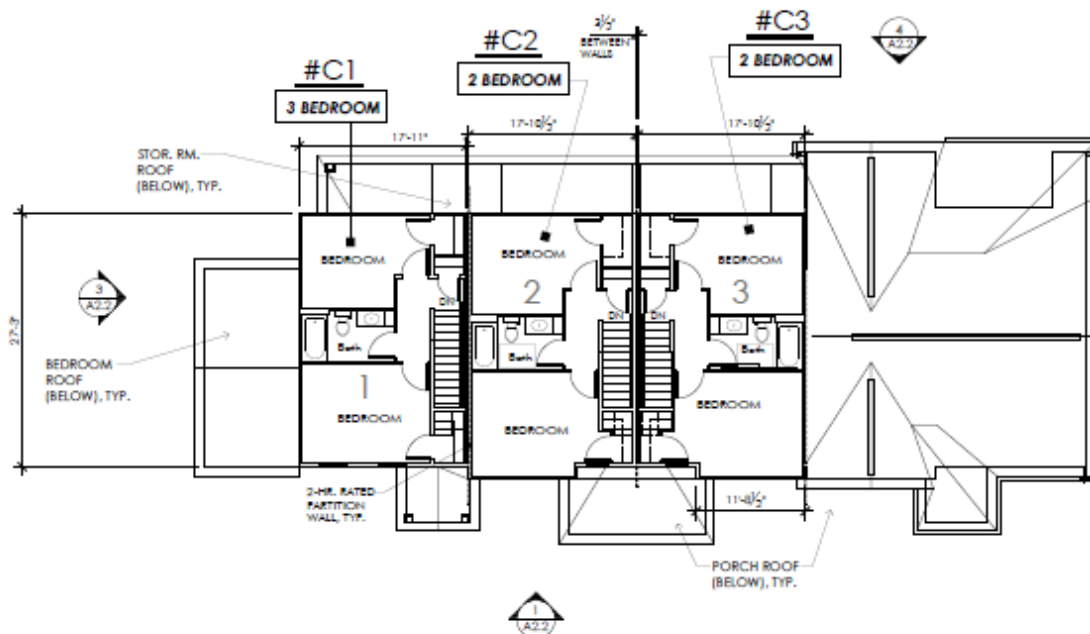
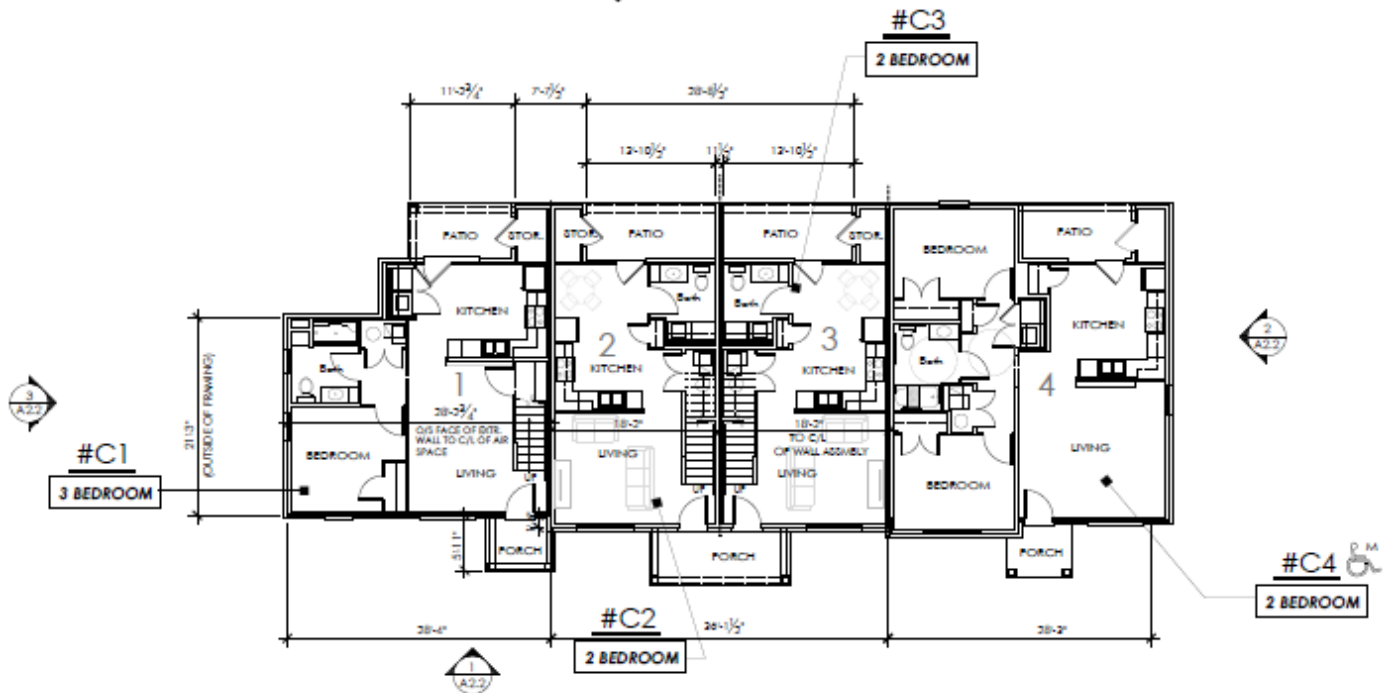


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Elevation:



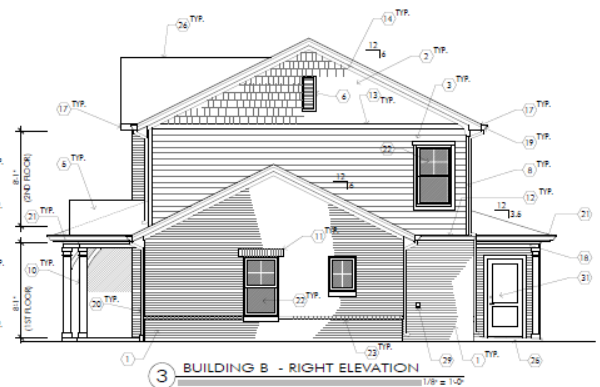
1 BUILDING TYPE A - NORTH POST ROAD ELEVATION

SHEET NOTES

1. BRICK WALL FINISH SQUARE TO GRADE
2. GUTTER PERMANENT VINYL LAP SIDING, 8" PROFILE
3. GUTTER PERMANENT VINYL LAP SIDING, 8" PROFILE
4. 6" x 6" x 10' PILL INCLUDED URETHANE CORNER, PTD.
5. 20' x 8' x 10' PILL INCLUDED URETHANE CORNER, PTD.
6. 12" x 16" x 20' INCLUDED URETHANE ATTIC VENT, PTD.
7. PERMANENT VINYL 1/2 TRIM STRIP @ MATERIAL CHANGE
8. VIN PERMANENT VINYL OUTSIDE CORNER POST 1/2 PIECE
9. BRICK ROWLOCK WINDOW SILL W/ TRIM WALL FINISHING BELOW
10. TREATED 6" x 6" POST WRAPPED WITH CELLULOSE FIBER WRAP SYSTEM
11. BRICK ROWLOCK WINDOW HEAD W/ STEEL LINTELS W/ LINTELS COVER
12. BRICK ROWLOCK WINDOW CAP W/ BRASS-BEIT PLATING, TYP.
13. 1" x 8" TRIM WRAPPED W/ BRASS-BEIT ALUMINUM W/ PERMANENT PLATING, ABOVE
14. 1" x 8" TRIM BOARD WRAPPED W/ BRASS-BEIT ALUMINUM UNDER SILL TRIM
15. 1" x 8" TRIM BOARD WRAPPED W/ BRASS-BEIT ALUMINUM UNDER SILL TRIM
16. 2" x 8" RAISE BOARD WRAPPED W/ BRASS-BEIT ALUMINUM
17. 2" x 8" GUTTER BOARD WRAPPED IN ALUMINUM
18. PUNCH BOARD WRAPPED W/ BRASS-BEIT PERMANENT ALUMINUM
19. 8" TYPE 6 PERMANENT ALUMINUM GUTTER
20. 2" x 2" PERMANENT ALUM. D.S. TO DRAIN AS FOLLOWS. UNDERGROUND COLLECTION (DRAINAGE AT POINT OF BUILDING) DRAIN TO GRADE AT REAR OF BUILDING
21. PRECAST CONCRETE DRAINAGE AT GRADE @ BACK D.S. LOCATION
22. 20' x 8' x 10' INCLUDED URETHANE CORNER, PTD.
23. BRICK HEADER COURSE CORNER OUT 20' CONTINUOUS
24. INCLUDED URETHANE CORNER BOARD 8" x 10" x 10' PILL, PTD.
25. CONCRETE PUNCH BOARD 20' x 8' x 10' BOARD, 20' x 8' x 10' BOARD
26. ROOF RIDGE VENT (INTERMITTENT) PRE-PAINTED ALUMINUM @ TRIM WALL UNIT
27. INSULATED 1/2 LITE PERMANENT ENTRY DOOR, PAINTED
28. 1/2" x 8" x 10' INCLUDED URETHANE ATTIC VENT, PTD.
29. PERMANENT VINYL DRIVE VENT LOUVER - COORDINATE W/ WOOD DRIVE
30. PERMANENT VINYL DRIVE VENT LOUVER - COORDINATE W/ WOOD DRIVE

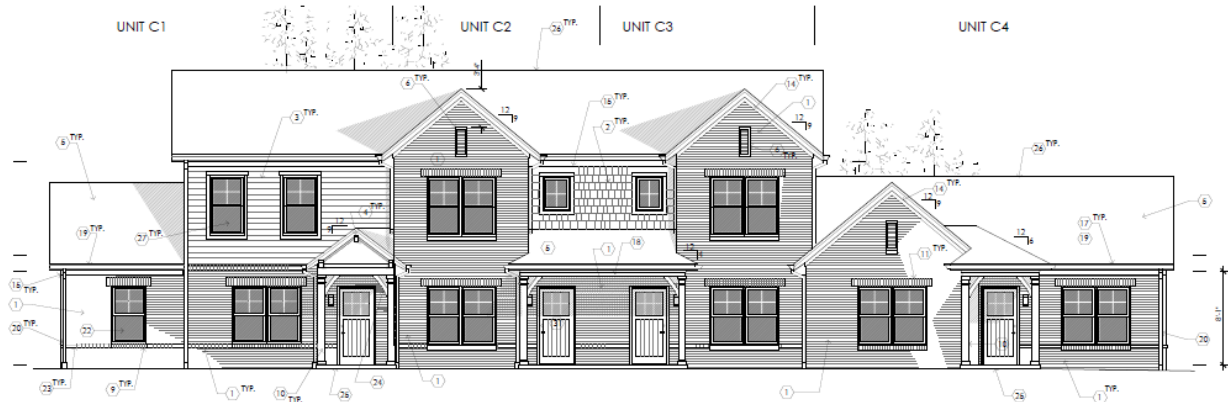


2 BUILDING TYPE A - HARRISON PARK DRIVE





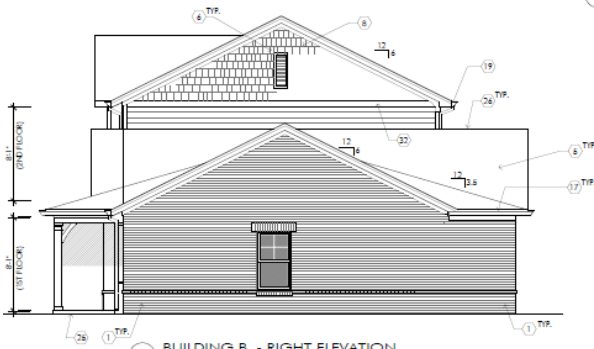
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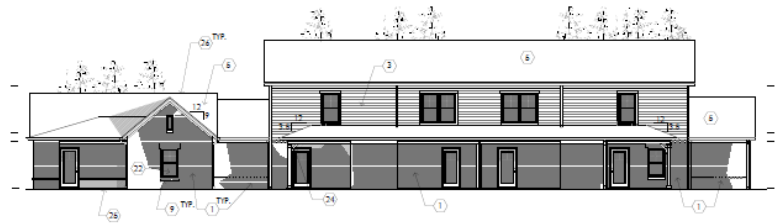
1 BUILDING TYPE B - FRONT ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"

SHEET NOTES

1. BRICK WALL VENEER (OVER 2" TO GRADE)
2. SHOOKY-PREHUNG VINYL SHUTTERS
3. SHOOKY-PREHUNG VINYL SHUTTERS, 1/2" PROFILE
4. 8" x 8" x 12" PROL. INSULATED URETHANE CORBEL, PTD.
5. 20-YEAR DIMENSIONAL ASPHALT FLUSH DRIVEWAYS
6. 12" x 12" x 20" INSULATED URETHANE ATTIC VENT, PTD.
7. PERMANENT VINYL 1 x 2 TRIM STRIP @ MATERIAL CHANGE
8. 1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2" VINYL OUTSIDE CORNER POST (1-PIECE)
9. BRICK KINGSIDE WINDOW SILL W/ TRIM WALL FLASHING BELOW
10. TREATED 2 x 4 POST WRAPPED WITH CELLULOSE FIBER WRAP SYSTEM
11. BRICK SILLER WINDOW HEAD W/ STEEL UNITS (W/ UNITS, COVER)
12. BRICK KINGSIDE WALL CAP W/ BRICK-SENT FLASHING, TYP.
13. 1 x 6 TRIM WRAPPED W/ BRICK-SENT FLASHING, TYP. (UPPER, ABOVE)
14. 1 x 6 TRIM BOARD WRAPPED W/ BRICK-SENT FLASHING (UNDER SILL TRIM)
15. 2 x 6 RAFTER BOARD WRAPPED W/ BRICK-SENT FLASHING
16. PORCH BEAM WRAPPED W/ BRICK-SENT FLASHING
17. 8" TYP. x PERMANENT ALUMINUM OUTLET
18. 2" x 2" PREHUNG ALUM. D.S. TO DRAIN AS FOLLOWS. UNDERGROUND COLLECTION SYSTEM AT FRONT OF BUILDING. DRAIN TO GRADE AT REAR OF BUILDING
19. PRECAST CONCRETE SPRAIN-BLOCKS AT GRADE @ EACH D.S. LOCATION
20. 36" x 60" SHULK-MAN-DRY INSULATED VINYL WINDOW
21. BRICK HEADER COURSE CORBELLED OUT 2" W/ CONTINUOUS
22. INSULATED URETHANE PORCH BEAM BRACKET (8" x 12" x 12" PROL. PTD.
23. CONCRETE PORCH PATIO SUB-GRADE, SLOPE AWAY FROM BLDG.
24. ROOF RIDGE VENT (INTERMITTENT @ PREHUNG FURWOOD @ TRIM WALL LINE)
25. INSULATED 1/2" LITE PEEKGLASS ENTRY DOOR, PAINTED
26. 1/2" x 2" x 2" INSULATED URETHANE ATTIC VENT, PTD.
27. PERMANENT VINYL ORN. TRIM (CROWN @ CORNERS) W/ MATCH DRILLS
28. PERMANENT STORAGE RAIL DOOR W/ CHAIN CLOSURE, PAINTED



2 BUILDING B - RIGHT ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



3 BUILDING C - REAR ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



Findings of Fact (as provided by applicant):

1. The grant will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community because:

The requested variance will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare of the community because there is a demonstrated need for quality attainable housing in the City of Lawrence. This site represents an opportunity to bring new housing units online during a time of significant housing shortage, particularly for households seeking safe, accessible, and affordable housing options. The proposed development will replace currently vacant land with a productive residential use that supports neighborhood stability and contributes positively to the surrounding area.

Benjamin Townhomes will consist of approximately 30 townhome-style residential units featuring two- and three-bedroom layouts designed to provide high-quality workforce and attainable housing opportunities for residents with incomes ranging from 30% to 80% of Area Median Income. The development is intended to create long-term housing stability and pathways to homeownership through a potential lease-to-purchase model that would allow qualified residents the opportunity to purchase their homes in the future. The development will incorporate a walkable residential design with rear-loaded parking, landscaped open space, pedestrian connectivity, and modern architectural elements that complement the surrounding area.

In addition to the residential component, the development will include approximately 2,500 square feet of live-work commercial space intended to support small businesses, neighborhood serving retail, or office uses that activate the site and contribute to the mixed-use character envisioned for the area. The live-work space will create opportunities for small business growth while providing amenities and services accessible to residents and the surrounding community.

The development team is partnering with Helping Veterans and Families of Indianapolis, whose mission is to end veteran homelessness by providing supportive housing, employment services, and stability resources that help veterans and their families achieve long-term self-sufficiency and improved quality of life.

The property will be owned and professionally managed long-term by Woda Cooper Companies, ensuring consistent oversight and high-quality operations. The development will also include professional property management and maintenance oversight to support ongoing upkeep, safety, and responsiveness to resident needs. In addition, the project will include secure residential access, accessible parking, landscaped open areas, sidewalks, and community gathering spaces that support resident well-being and long-term neighborhood stability.

2. The use or value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner because:

The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner because the proposed development will improve a currently vacant parcel by bringing approximately 30 new townhome-style residential units to



the site. Activating this underutilized property with a professionally managed residential community will contribute positively to the surrounding neighborhood and support nearby commercial activity.

The surrounding properties include healthcare facilities, a bank, and several retail and service businesses. The addition of new residents within walking distance of these services will provide additional customers and strengthen the local business environment. Increasing the nearby residential population supports surrounding commercial uses and enhances the overall stability and vitality of the area.

In addition, the proposed development will include approximately 2,500 square feet of live-work commercial space designed to accommodate small businesses, office users, or neighborhood serving retail uses. These live-work units will further contribute to economic activity in the area by creating opportunities for local businesses, increasing foot traffic, and encouraging additional investment within the surrounding commercial corridor. The integration of residential and live/work space is consistent with the mixed-use vision for the area and will help create a more active and connected neighborhood environment.

The proposed development will provide adequate on-site parking and will be designed to integrate with existing traffic patterns, ensuring that surrounding properties can continue to operate as they currently do without disruption. In addition, the project will include professional management, secure residential access, landscaped open areas, sidewalks, and accessible design features that support long-term property maintenance and neighborhood compatibility.

3. The need for the variance arises from some conditions peculiar to the property involved and the condition is not due to the general condition of the neighborhood because:

The requested variance is needed because the property is a vacant and underutilized parcel located within an existing commercial area in the Fort Benjamin Harrison district. The surrounding area includes retail, healthcare, banking, and other service-oriented businesses, but this specific parcel has remained undeveloped despite growth and investment in the area. The site is uniquely suited for the proposed mixed-use development because it can support both commercial activity and additional housing. The development will include approximately 30 townhome-style units and approximately 2,500 square feet of live-work commercial space, allowing the project to fit within the commercial character of the corridor while also providing needed housing opportunities.

The addition of new residents within walking distance of nearby businesses will increase foot traffic and support surrounding retail and service businesses. The live-work space will also help bring additional business activity to the area and contribute to a more active and walkable environment throughout the Fort area.

Because of the property's location within an established commercial corridor and its proximity to existing businesses and services, the need for the variance is specific to this parcel and not due to conditions affecting the surrounding neighborhood as a whole.



4. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance constitutes an unusual or unnecessary hardship if applied to the property for which the variance is sought because:

The current light industrial zoning creates a hardship because the property is located within an area that functions primarily as a commercial and mixed-use corridor rather than a traditional industrial area. Although the site is zoned for light industrial use, the surrounding environment consists of retail, dining, healthcare, office, and service-oriented businesses that rely on an attractive and pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. The parcel itself has remained vacant and underutilized despite the continued growth and investment occurring around it.

Due to the size, location, and surrounding character of the property, developing the site with a light industrial use would be difficult to integrate compatibly with the adjacent businesses. Industrial uses often involve truck traffic, loading activity, outdoor operations, noise, and other characteristics that do not align with the walkable and customer-oriented nature of the Harrison Centre area. These types of uses could negatively impact nearby businesses and reduce the overall appeal of the corridor.

In contrast, the proposed mixed-use residential development provides a use that better reflects the existing development pattern within the area. The inclusion of townhome-style housing and live-work commercial space would activate a currently vacant parcel while supporting nearby businesses through additional residential density, pedestrian activity, and long-term neighborhood investment.

Strict application of the current zoning ordinance therefore limits the reasonable and compatible development of this property. The requested variance allows the site to develop in a manner that is more consistent with the surrounding area and the long-term vision for the Fort Benjamin Harrison corridor.

5. The grant does not interfere substantially with the comprehensive plan because:

The requested variance does not interfere substantially with the comprehensive plan because residential development is an important component of the Village Mixed-Use vision identified for the Fort Benjamin Harrison area. The Village Mixed-Use typology is intended to encourage compact, walkable development patterns that integrate housing, small businesses, and community amenities within a pedestrian-oriented environment. The proposed development supports these goals by introducing townhome-style housing and live-work commercial space within an existing commercial corridor.

The proposed project is designed in a manner that complements the surrounding area through pedestrian-scale development, street-oriented architecture, and a residential component that supports nearby businesses and services. The addition of residential density within walking distance of restaurants, retail, healthcare, and other amenities helps create the type of live-work/play environment envisioned by the comprehensive plan.

Additionally, the property is located near the IndyGo Purple Line Bus Rapid Transit corridor along Post Road and supports the broader goals of promoting connectivity, walkability, and development patterns that reduce reliance on vehicle trips. The project activates a currently



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underutilized parcel while reinforcing the mixed-use character encouraged throughout the Fort Ben area.

Therefore, the requested variance supports and advances the goals of the comprehensive plan by facilitating compatible mixed-use infill development within an area planned for walkable and integrated growth.