

May 4, 2019

John Kerns  
City of Suisun City  
701 Civic Center Blvd.  
Suisun City, CA 94586

Re: Lawler Residences, Suisun City, CA

Dear Mr. Kearns,

Lawler Mixed-Use will be located on the corner of Lawler and Anderson Drive. After this property has remained vacant for decades, the proposed project will introduce 73-unit high-quality residential apartments accompanied by 7200 SF of upscale commercial buildings poised to attract commercial uses that will serve the Suisun community and beyond.

Lawler Mixed-Use will be the first high-quality luxury apartment complex to be introduced in Suisun City. This project seeks to exceed the similar luxury apartments in neighboring cities by highlighting Suisun's environmental assets and combining them with stylish amenities and maximum convenience. The apartments will feature a welcoming entrance and enclosed lobby, a fitness center, and a secure temperature-controlled environment. Residents will also have access to elevators, which are an important and expensive feature of this project because of the tremendous convenience they provide occupants and their guests.

The project will feature a four-story residential building and two 3600 SF retail buildings on a 2.81-acre lot<sup>1</sup> accompanied by 153 parking spaces. The 73 apartments are comprised of 25 one-bedroom, 40 two-bedroom, and 8 three-bedroom luxury apartments with floor plans ranging from one-bedroom, one-bathroom to three-bedroom, two-bathroom. These units will be 660 SF to 1260 SF and will rent for \$1800 to \$2350, a new market price point for Suisun City. The commercial buildings on either side of the main entrance to the apartments will create immediate easy access from these residential units to the commercial space.

Mixed use projects have gained popularity and redefined the way buildings are designed in many urban cities throughout the country. Projects like Lawler Mixed-Use capitalize on the desire to reduce expenses and increase social interaction by providing common facilities for both residential and commercial use. In highly urbanized cities, commercial, residential, and parking facilities are stacked on top of each other. This style, though efficient in land use, is much more expensive than can be born in a suburban area such as Suisun City's.

Lawler's residential units, though an integral and economically vital component of this project, are physically stepped back by approximately 15 feet to avoid the construction pitfalls of placing midrise residential above commercial uses like restaurants. Lawler's unique integration

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<sup>1</sup> Commercial Mixed-Use Zoning Code §18.20.030 - residential density of 25.8 (du/ac) is compliant with requiring "10 to 40 dwelling units per gross acreage".

of commercial and residential units is a more suitable and economically attainable alternative for the Fairfield-Suisun market.

This project is 48'6" at its highest point. The four-story residential building was designed to provide residents on the third and fourth floors with rich views of the Suisun wildlife amongst a backdrop of Mt. Diablo's silhouette. The views are considered a marketing attraction for this project. The provision of elevators is considered an uncompromising advantage over the competition. Elevators are expensive to build and to maintain, as such, the number of units and floors were designed to absorb this cost.

Additionally, a few architectural features are added to the top of the parapet that are necessary to cover the roof top mechanical equipment and the solar panels. This project will be equipped with the latest technology in lighting, heating, and cooling systems that are environmentally friendly and will significantly benefit the residents. The finalized plans will also relocate the storm drain easement from its current location to the eastern portion of the property within the project parking lot.

The project will have onsite management and leasing office, which will manage and maintain the building and the grounds. However, this Project will also join the Lawler Ranch Lighting and Landscape Maintenance District.

This developer has been involved in the development of commercial centers for the past two decades commencing with Chevron and Popeyes on Anderson Drive followed by the Grey Hawk Mixed-Use subdivision. The developer has taken a tiered strategy to deliver increasingly higher quality residential projects toed with commercial units to boost the area's marginal commercial success and to evolve the city over time.

The McCoy Creek Mixed-Use Apartments was constructed in 2018 as another component of the development projects that aim to push the outer limit of the market in Suisun. This 10-units high-quality mixed-use apartment project is fully occupied and has established a new rent benchmark in the multi-unit residential market in Suisun City. The success of this Project hints the viability of high-end mixed-use projects in Suisun City.

Lawler Mixed Use is designed to elevate the new market price point that is crucial to the economic viability of larger luxury developments in Suisun. Initially, the absorption of these units as well as the commercial units will be slow – an expense that can be very burdensome to the project – however, we understand that the city shares the importance of achieving the socio-economic goals that accompany this project for the City as a whole.

Lawler Mixed-Use will diversify the housing options and income levels in Suisun City and fill a long-existing void. The attraction of the higher income families that choose the remedy the lack of upper scale apartments, making Suisun a prime option for high-income Bay Area migrants and Travis Airforce Base families. As the population density and housing demand increases in the Bay Area, the cost of living along with the scarcity of options are pushing residents toward Solano County. Ultimately, Lawler will put Suisun City in equal footing with

more prestigious residences in the neighboring cities. High income levels would be able to better support the local businesses and elevate Suisun's profile within the region.

In addition, the residential units are toeing 7200 SF of commercial space.<sup>2</sup> The commercial space will be constructed concurrently with the residential units and are open to all allowable uses in the CMU zone. While the ratio of commercial space versus residential can be the subject of discussion, it is noteworthy to emphasize the stated purpose of the CMU zoning code, which is to provide retail and services that "effectively respond to changes in the market and promote economic viability."<sup>3</sup> This proposal does just that. It infuses high end commercial space into Lawler Commercial Center by leveraging the market demand for housing.

Commercial developments in Lawler commercial have proven to be very slow-coming over the years. The proposed project attempts to accelerate commercial development two elegant commercial buildings that capitalize on the influx of residents and high-visibility to bolster commercial appeal. The allowed uses for these buildings will be typical of those required for the mixed zoning code and complement existing businesses. As a result, apartments and commercial tenants will be a significant contribution to local businesses and expand the economic base in the area.

We believe that Lawler Mixed-Use will be an overall benefit for both the residential and commercial markets. This project will also mark the beginning of an exciting new era for Suisun City.

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<sup>2</sup> Commercial Mixed-Use Zoning Code §18.22 requires minimum of 50% of the site reserved for retail use. Expected minimum square footage of retail = 15,409 SF.

<sup>3</sup> Commercial Mixed-Use Zoning Code §18.22.010