

## **Spencer Property Pre-Application Meeting**

Date: March 7, 2022

Submitted to: City of La Center  
305 NW Pacific Highway  
La Center, WA 98629

Applicant/Owner: Beth Spencer  
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Site Location: 1319 Aspen Ave (Parcel No. 258891000)

Site Size: 4.1 acres (178,596 SF)

Current Zoning: Low Density Residential (LDR-7.5)

### **Narrative:**

The 4.1 acre site is currently zoned Low Density Residential (LDR-7.5) and has two single-family residences on site. The applicant is proposing a zone change to Medium Density Residential (MDR-16). The site is primarily surrounded by developed single-family residential lots zoned LDR-7.5. To the south is Residential/Professional (R/P) zoned land and further south is the downtown area. Directly west is Aspen Avenue and the two parcels to the north of the site are zoned Urban Public Facilities (UP).

To develop the site under the LDR-7.5 zoning designation, the site would need to comply with the city's applicable standards, such as road infrastructure design and minimum density. Based on the previous pre-application meeting submission from PLS Engineering, the site cannot accommodate the infrastructure requirements while complying with the minimum density standard, creating an undevelopable site under the current zoning designation.

The applicant is proposing a zone change from LDR-7.5 to MDR-16 to create a developable site. The MDR-16 zone allows for multi-family residential uses. The site plan submitted consists of four, smaller apartment buildings. Each one has eight units and ranges from two to three stories. The site is not proposed to be developed at this time. The site plan is intended to show a potential future development that meets applicable city standards, including private street

standards and minimum density. The MDR-16 zoning designation will allow for the site to be developed. Otherwise, variances will be required under the LDR-7.5 zoning.

The proposed zone change meets the Residential Development Land Use Policies in the City's Comprehensive Plan below.

***Residential Development Land Use Policies:***

*1.2.1 Provide an adequate supply of land zoned for residential purposes in order to meet the residential needs of the city. Developments shall emphasize low density residential uses, but also allow for, and encourage, medium density development in certain areas.*

**Response:** The site is surrounded by primarily low density residential developments. The area already emphasizes lower density, and the zone change from LDR-7.5 to MDR-16 will allow for, and encourage, medium density in the area. Per the City's Comprehensive Plan, "the city projects a population growth of 4,433 new persons and the County VBL model projects only enough capacity to accommodate 3,971 new persons. The city anticipates that these additional 462 people can be accommodated by a combination of up-zoning land from low density to medium density..." The proposed zone change will help the City meet the projected population growth.

*1.2.2 Encourage residential development to use opportunities provided through infill development and redevelopment of existing housing stock, in addition to new construction on larger undeveloped lands.*

**Response:** The 4.1 acre site is considered an infill lot and is larger than most land in the area. The required minimum density of 4 units per acre is not met with the existing two residences. As discussed above, the current zoning does not allow for a new development to meet the minimum density. However, the MDR-16 zoning allows for the minimum density to be met, creating a developable site on an infill lot.

*1.2.3 Provide at least three (3) land use designations in which residential uses are allowed. They include:*

*a) "Urban Residential District" designation, in which low density residential uses with minimum 7,500 square foot lot sizes and medium density residential uses with a minimum density of 8 units per acre and a maximum density of 16 units per acre are permitted.*

*b) "Residential/Professional District" designation in which low density residential uses (minimum of 4 units per acre) and medium density residential uses (range of 8 to 16 units per acre) are permitted.*

*c) "Mixed Use" designation in which residential uses, primarily in upper stories, may be permitted in conjunction with commercial or office uses.*

**Response:** The LDR-7.5 and MDR-16 zoning fall under the "Urban Residential District " designation. As discussed above, the MDR-16 zoning will allow for the minimum density of 8 units per acre to be met. Per LCMC18.140.015, MDR-16 zoning districts should generally be in

close proximity to collector or arterial roadways, transit routes, employment centers and access to schools. Aspen Avenue is directly west of the site and is considered a major collector. The subject site is within walking distance to the downtown area where there are employment opportunities. The zone change complies with the location requirements for the MDR-16 zoning.

*1.2.4 Prohibit land divisions within the UGA creating one or more residential lots with buildable areas larger than 15,000 square feet unless the applicant reserves the larger parcel for future development.*

**Response:** The site is not proposed to be subdivided or developed at this time. The site plan with the pre-application submittal is intended as a visual representation to show the need for a zone change.

*1.2.5 Allow "Urban Residential" lot size for newly created lots to reach 11,000 square feet where the lot abuts the Urban Growth Boundary, particularly if there are no roads at the boundary.*

**Response:** The site does not abut the Urban Growth Boundary and subdividing the land is not proposed.

*1.2.6 Monitor overall population density and annually report findings to the City Council.*

**Response:** Per the City's Comprehensive Plan, there is not enough capacity to accommodate the projected population growth. The up-zoning from LDR-7.5 to MDR-16 will help solve this issue.

*1.2.7 Provide a variety of housing products citywide and ensure that no single type of housing product, for example single family detached dwellings, comprises more than 75% of all housing stock overall. The city may accomplish this by allowing detached and attached housing and manufactured homes.*

**Response:** The proposed zone change from LDR-7.5 to MDR-16 will provide a range of housing options because the area consists of mostly single-family residences. The MDR-16 zoning designation would allow for medium density residential uses such as a smaller multi-family development, while the current LDR-7.5 zoning encourages more single-family residential development. Creating an opportunity for medium density development within an area that is mostly zoned lower density residential, will ensure that no single type of housing product, such as single-family residences, comprises more than 75% of the overall housing stock.

## Elevations

The elevations for the proposed multi-family development could potentially look like the images below. The site plan submitted includes two and three story, smaller, apartment style buildings. The applicant is not proposing development at this time. These images are potential elevations for future development.



The first photo is a two story, eight unit building. The building is smaller in nature with a height similar to the surrounding single-family residences.



The second photo is a traditional, craftsman style apartment building.



The third photo is a modern style, three story building. The rooftops would allow residents to utilize the view on the sloped site.

**Questions:**

1. The site plan submitted is not proposing a land division. Can the roads be private within the multi-family development?
2. Are there city requirements the site plan does not meet?
3. Per CMC 18.140.040.2.B.ii, indoor and outdoor recreational areas are required for multi-family developments with less than 35 units. Would the proposed indoor recreational facility, dog park and kids play area shown on the site plan satisfy this requirement?
4. Would staff be in support of a zone change on the site from LDR-7.5 to MDR-16?