



Northsiders Engaged in
Sustainable Transformation

November 17th, 2023

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Cincinnati Northside Urban
Redevelopment Corporation,
dba NEST, is a 501(c)3
tax-exempt, tax deductible
non-profit corporation.

Please find development program statement below, and concept plans attached for the proposed Planned Development District.

Northside Gateway is an approximately .98 acre project across three separate parcels, two owned by Cincinnati Northside Community Urban Revitalization Corporation (dba NEST, one of the project partners) at 3925 and 3927 Old Ludlow Avenue and one owned by the City of Cincinnati, in the Northside neighborhood. The northernmost parcel contains the former Stagecraft, Inc. building, a vacant 4-story building; the central parcel is vacant land; and the southernmost parcel is a supply yard for the Department of Public Services, owned by the City of Cincinnati.

The project partners are NEST, Over-the-Rhine Community Housing (OTRCH), and Urban Sites. The project partners intend to submit the site to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency for a competitive award of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). That application is due on February 29, 2024. A threshold requirement for the LIHTC application is that the property be zoned for its intended use, which is only achieved by the timely approval of the proposed Planned Development District.

If the project partners are awarded the LIHTC for affordable family housing, the site will be developed into approximately 50-70 units of multi-family affordable housing, with roughly 1 parking space per 2 units. Total residential square footage is expected to be 57,362 sf. The plan calls for the Stagecraft building to be improved with storefront retail on the corner of Hamilton and Old Ludlow, and housing on floors 2-4. The remaining units would be built in a 4-story new construction building on the other two parcels. Construction would likely begin in summer of 2025, with completion expected in late 2026.

The award date for LIHTC is expected in May 2024. The Department of Public Services would continue to operate its supply yard until some time before construction begins; if the project partners are not awarded the LIHTC, the supply yard could continue operating with the same rights as under the current Manufacturing General designation.

The goals of Northside Gateway are:

1) to provide family housing for the Northside neighborhood; and

2) assist in revitalizing the Northside business district, as the Stagecraft building sits on a prominent corner on Hamilton Ave.

All tenants would need to have income at or below 60% of the Cincinnati metro area's area median income. The project would be owned by NEST and OTRCH. Tenants will be connected to a range of resident services.

The Northside Gateway project aligns with the Northside Comprehensive Land Use Plan (adopted by City Council in 2014) and meets the following goals highlighted on page 44: Increase our population, Build on our assets, Be aggressive and strategic in future growth and development, Facilitate sustainable development and Lead by example for other neighborhoods. The LUP explicitly calls for concentrated revitalization of the Neighborhood Business District (page 47) and linking centers of activity with effective transportation (page 48). Our proposed project correlates with the Northside Future Land Use map on page 56 calling for the mixed-use redevelopment of the historic Stagecraft property. Overall, the Northside Gateway achieves all the category initiatives set out to comply with Plan Cincinnati on page 57: Compete, Connect, Live, Sustain and Collaborate. Lastly, through NEST's routine, extensive community engagement, we know the project achieves some of Northside's highest goals: increasing affordable housing and incentivizing sustainable public transit use amongst residents and visitors.

The project partners have started gathering input from the community, and plan to continue to reach out for support. We presented at NEST's Project Committee in early November 2023, and will be presenting at the Northside Community Council at its November monthly meeting.

The proposed development is in a desirable location for individuals and families looking for affordable housing. It is located nearby the bike lane on Central Parkway and is within a 10-minute walking proximity to existing retail, entertainment, expanded transit and parking amenities, K-12 education and library, and recreation, such as the Mill Creek Trail and McKie Recreation Center, offering choices to residents across age and life stage, socio-economic background, and mobility.

The proposed Planned Development District includes a request for a site less than two acres, but the requested zoning designation is most appropriate within the context of the proposed density of residential housing, community desires, and transportation-related connections of this project, as well as the changing demand in community development in and around Northside.

The proposed zone change would permit rehabilitation of an existing building at the northern portion of the site, which sits within an historic district and neighborhood business district, for future multi-family residential and commercial use. The uses around the site are high-density and include a White Castle restaurant and a row of single-family houses to the east, a five-point intersection of right-of-way from the north, and the Ludlow Viaduct to the west. In addition, the site intersects a FEMA Flood Hazard Zone, with the Mill Creek and the William P Dooley Bypass acting as the southern boundary. In many ways, this site has operated like an island, disconnected and landlocked from surrounding development, as well as being under-utilized.

Flexibility is needed for new development and adaptive reuse in this area and at the site for height, massing, setback, character, and use.

At the same time, the proposed development does not conform to the existing zoning. Currently, the site is zoned Community Commercial – Mixed and Manufacturing General. The current uses around the site have changed over the past two decades, shifting toward adaptive reuse of older, light industrial buildings to high-density residential, with recent installations in transit infrastructure, such as the Northside Metro Transit Center, and buffering of the Central Parkway to Downtown bike lanes. In fact, along the periphery of the south end of Northside, most of the uses in the current manufacturing zone are commercial, including amenities such as restaurants, retail, building material sales and services, banks and financial institutions drinking establishments, convenience markets, and maintenance and repair services. The existing Stagecraft building has been previously used commercially, as a shop and showroom. While no final plans have been made for establishing future commercial tenants, possible future uses we hope to mix with multi-family residential at the site include amenities for families, such as commercial retail and services, eating and drinking establishments, and recreation and entertainment. In any event, the total commercial space will not exceed 4,056 square feet. As we move forward with community engagement and receive feedback, future plans for commercial uses at the site will be outlined.

NEST is Northside's community development corporation with a mission to ensure Northside thrives as a vibrant and sustainable community by preserving, improving and creating the neighborhood's built environment. Any questions or inquiries may be directed to me via email: Sarah@northsidenest.org.

Regards,



Sarah Thomas
Executive Director