

Staff Report

**Request for LUPP Amendment for
Evangelical Free Church Property on 24th Street**

July 10, 2012

The City Council recently received a letter from David Miler and Linda Doyle, representing Northcrest Community, concerning the Evangelical Free Church site at 2008 24th Street. Their request seeks to redesignate the site from Low Density Residential to High Density Residential, which is the current Northcrest site designation. **This report provides background information to help the Council determine whether it desires to give formal consideration to this request. Should Council decide to proceed further, a determination would then be needed as to whether the proposal is a major or a minor amendment to the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP).**

BACKGROUND

The Evangelical Free Church site is designated as Low Density Residential on the LUPP map, and is currently zoned RL (Residential Low Density). The site abuts the Northcrest development to the east, which is currently designated High Density Residential, and abuts low density development to the west and south. The vacant property directly across 24th Street is designated Village/Suburban Residential and is owned by the Ames School District. Although the subject site is currently zoned low density residential, it is developed as a large church, which is allowed in the zone under the provisions of a special use permit.

The proposed change to the LUPP map designation is subject to the amendment process and considerations that were recently adopted by the City Council. This process describes two types of amendments (major and minor) and includes criteria for the City Council to use to determine which type is requested. The definitions are below. The full text of the process and the consideration for LUPP amendments can be found at <http://www.cityofames.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=6625>.

II. AMENDMENT TYPES

Amendments of the LUPP are defined as major or minor, more specifically defined as follows:

1. **Major Amendments.** These include any amendment that is either a *change* to current goals and policies, or that is *inconsistent* with current goals and policies.

2. **Minor Amendments.** These include changes determined by the Council to be of minor consequence. Examples might include:
- a. Shifting the boundary of a land use designation to account for existing site conditions and/or lot configurations.
 - b. Changing a land use designation to a related type of land use designation, as follows:
 - i. Residential to next level intensity residential.
 - ii. Non-neighborhood commercial to another type of commercial.
 - iii. Commercial node to another type of commercial node.
 - iv. Industrial to next level intensity industrial.
 - v. Any change which the Council determines necessary to address an immediate public need or to provide broad public benefit, and which is determined by the City Council to further the current vision, goals and objectives of the Land Use Policy Plan.

The determination of whether the amendment is major or minor is important in determining the process for seeking approval. A major amendment has a greater public input process than does a minor amendment. Following the determination of whether it is a major or minor amendment, the City Council may choose to either consider the amendment immediately, or else to defer any action on the proposed amendment until the next scheduled review of the entire LUPP. The LUPP states that the Plan should have a comprehensive review approximately every five years.

MAJOR OR MINOR AMENDMENT:

To determine whether the proposed change is a major or a minor amendment to the Land Use Policy Plan, the City Council should consider whether the proposal is a change to or is inconsistent with current goals and policies.

Goals pertaining to both low density residential and the proposed high density residential designations primarily focus on achieving targeted densities. The change to facilitate expansion of the Northcrest community will be more effective at achieving targeted residential densities than the existing zone (and certainly more than the existing church building).

Pertinent LUPP Goals stated under *Goals for a New Vision* beginning on pg. 18 of the Plan include:

Goal No. 2, which pertains to ensuring the availability of sufficient suitable land resources to accommodate the range of land uses that are planned to meet growth and to eliminate market constraints. This goal also speaks to achieving greater compatibility among new and existing development.

Goal No. 4, which speaks to achieving a more integrated and compact living/activity areas where daily living requirements are provided in readily identifiable and accessible areas.

Goal No. 5, which speaks to the continuance of development in emerging and infill areas where there is existing public infrastructure and where capacity permits.

Goal No. 6, which speaks to increasing housing opportunities through various means, Including: increasing overall supply of low and moderate-income housing; increased densities; higher densities in existing areas where residential intensification is designated with the further objective that there shall be use and appearance compatibility among existing and new development; and relieving the current constraints to land supply/availability by such means as releasing lands for development that are currently controlled by institutions.

Staff is not aware of any goals or policies of the plan that would not support the proposed change. The only consideration may be how development of the proposed high density residential development might interface with the existing single family neighborhood to the west and south. It should be noted, however, that the existing church may be seen as a higher intensity of development that already abuts these existing neighborhoods. The abutting residents may or may not consider higher density residential development to be similar in impacts to the existing church development.

NEXT STEPS

The goals and policies of the Land Use Policy Plan noted above provide background for Council's initial decision on whether or not to formally consider this request. If Council decides it merits further consideration through a formal application, it must next determine whether the application will be processed as a major or as a minor amendment.

In doing so, the City Council should first review the goals and policies of the Ames Land Use Policy Plan noted above, and also the additional criteria Council adopted in the amendment process. Council may find that the proposal is consistent with the adopted goals and policies of the Land Use Policy Plan. Council may also find in this situation that it meets the criteria for shifting the boundary of a land use designation to account for existing site conditions and/or lot configurations.

If the Council determines that the proposed amendment does not meet any of the criteria or is inconsistent with adopted goals, it should designate the proposal as a major amendment. It may, nonetheless, designate the proposal as a minor amendment if the City Council determines the change is necessary to address an immediate public need or to provide broad public benefit, which the Council determines will further the current vision, goal, and objectives of the LUPP. Alternately, the City Council could decide to defer action until the next scheduled review of the LUPP.

LETTER FROM DAVID MILLER & LINDA DOYLE



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June 14, 2012

Ames City Council
P.O. Box 811
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To: Members, Ames City Council

Re: Permission to submit application for amendment to the current LUPP

Northcrest, Inc. has entered into a real estate agreement to purchase the Evangelical Free Church property located at 2008-24th St. That purchase offer is contingent upon re-zoning of the property and E-Free has authorized Northcrest Inc. to be their agent in seeking that re-zoning.

We are excited about the possibility of acquiring the E-Free property and while we do not currently have development plans for the parcel, the use of the property would be an extension of the current Northcrest campus, with a similar function and character of the existing Northcrest site. The adjacency of the E-Free property to our current property would allow us expand our services to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding retirement age population. The transfer of the title to this property would not occur until late 2014.

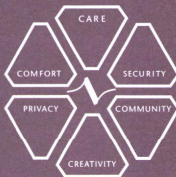
To accomplish this plan we will need to seek re-zoning of the E-Free parcel to be revised from Low Density Residential to become High Density Residential which is the current Northcrest site zoning. We also intend to ask that the two parcels be co-joined to create a single property entity in the future.

Northcrest, Inc. wishes to inform the Ames City Council of our intent to submit an application for an amendment to the current LUPP. We ask that you determine the amendment by type (major or minor) and authorize the submittal of a formal application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

David J. Miller, President Northcrest Inc.
Linda K. Doyle, CEO/Administrator Northcrest Inc.



*Uniquely Yours,
Uniquely Home*

LOCATION MAP

