

ITEM #: 7
DATE: 11-28-12

COMMISSION ACTION FORM

DATE PREPARED: November 12, 2012

REQUEST: Rezone land from "RL" (Residential Low Density) to "RH" (Residential High Density).

PROPERTY OWNER: First Evangelical Free Church, Inc.
2008 24th Street
Ames, Iowa 50010

APPLICANT: Linda Doyle
Northcrest, Inc.
1801 20th Street
Ames, Iowa 50010

LOCATION: 2008 24th Street
(See attached Location Map)

ACREAGE: 4.80 acres

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION: High Density Residential
(See attached LUPP Future Land Use Map)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On June 7, 2012, First Evangelical Free Church (property owner) and Northcrest Community (applicant) submitted a letter to the Ames City Council requesting that the City Council consider their request to grant a Land Use Policy Plan Map Change and a rezoning of the same property at 2008 - 24th Street from Low-Density Residential to High-Density Residential.

On July 10, 2012, the City Council passed a motion directing that the Land Use Policy Plan Map Change be processed as a "minor amendment."

On August 2, 2012, the applicant submitted a completed application for a Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) Map Change for analysis by City staff and consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. Northcrest Community intends to purchase the land from First Evangelical Free Church upon City Council approval of the LUPP Map Change and rezoning of the subject property for development as High-Density Residential.

On September 25, 2012 the City Council approved the minor amendment to change the LUPP land use designation to High Density Residential. The City Council also approved

a motion for staff to work with the applicant to include conditions on the rezoning that would mirror the existing uses by Northcrest.

Applicant's Statements. The applicant has provided an explanation of the reasons for the rezoning (*see Attachment F*).

Applicable Laws and Policies. The City of Ames laws and policies that are applicable to this proposed rezoning are included in *Attachment E*.

Land Use Designation/Zoning. If approved, the proposed rezoning would bring the subject property into conformance with the Future Land Use Map (*see Attachment B*). The following tables provide the future land use designation and zoning of the subject property and other surrounding properties.

Direction from Subject Property	LUPP Map Designation	Zoning Map Designation
Subject Property	Low-Density Residential	"RL" (Residential Low-Density)
North	Village/Suburban Residential	"S-GA" (Government/Airport)
East	High-Density Residential	"RH" (Residential High-Density)
South	Low-Density Residential	"RL" (Residential Low-Density)
West	Low-Density Residential	"RL" (Residential Low-Density)

Existing Land Use. Land uses that occupy the subject property and other surrounding properties are described in the following table:

Direction from Subject Property	Existing Land Uses/ Ownership of Properties
Subject Property	Church/ First Evangelical Free Church
North	Vacant Land/ Ames Community Schools
East	Senior Housing/ Northcrest Community
South	Single-Family Homes/ Individual Home Owners
West	Single-Family & Two-Family Homes/ Individual Home Owners

Infrastructure. The subject area is already a developed lot and served by all City infrastructure. Public utility mains and streets are immediately adjacent to the subject property with infrastructure to serve a redevelopment of the site.

Sufficient land area for the future growth of senior housing sites is limited throughout the

community. Other sites in the community suited for senior housing are also in high demand for development as apartment buildings to provide housing for students attending Iowa State University.

Access. The present configuration of the subject property allows for access to the north onto 24th Street. If the rezoning is approved, it is the intent of the property owner to complete the purchase of the subject property and consolidate their existing property with the subject property into a single parcel of land.

Impacts. The rezoning of this one parcel would be an extension of the “RH” (Residential High-Density) zone abutting the east property line of the subject property. The subject property is in a prime location as an infill site for high-density residential development given the access to 24th Street (a minor arterial), and access to 20th Street (a collector).

It should be noted that the Northcrest Community development abuts not only the subject property, but also presently abuts the low-density residential development to the south, occupied by single-family detached homes. Expansion of the Northcrest development would extend senior housing facilities to abut other single-family homes that front Prairie View East Street to the south and two-family dwellings that front Prairie View West Street along the western boundary of the site.

The back yards of the single-family lots to the south serve as a landscaped buffer between the houses and the subject property. It could be reasoned that the existing development as a religious institution is more intense in its nature than would be the extension of senior housing facilities on the subject property. The openness of the existing Northcrest Community development is very different than the large amount of impervious surface composed of buildings and parking lots/drives on the developed church site. Extension of Northcrest and demolition of the existing church facilities, if developed in a manner similar to the existing senior housing facilities, would greatly increase the on-site open space and landscaped areas for storm water infiltration as compared to the more auto-dependent church development.

This zoning change to high-density residential is particularly compelling because it is a logical extension of high-density residential development to the west, and will transition to lower density development with landscaped back yards to the south and two-family dwellings to the west.

Goals of the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP). Several of the ten goal statements of the LUPP speak indirectly to this request for rezoning. However, Goal No. 5 seems to address the rezoning proposal most directly since it states that “it is the goal of Ames to establish a cost-effective and efficient growth pattern for development in new areas and in a limited number of existing areas for intensification.” Objective 5.C.states: “Ames seeks continuance of development in emerging and infill areas where there is existing public infrastructure and where capacity permits.” This site could allow for intensification of development in an already developed area by utilizing an existing infill site for development of residential units, in an area where the public utilities are already in place to serve the site.

Findings of Fact. Based upon an analysis of the proposed rezoning and laws pertinent to the applicant's request, staff makes the following findings of fact:

1. Ames *Municipal Code Section 29.1507(2)* allows owners of 50% or more of the area of the lots in any district desired for rezoning to file an application requesting that the City Council rezone the property. The property represented by the applicant is entirely under one ownership, which meets the minimum requirements for ownership of the property requested for rezoning.
2. The subject property has been designated on the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) Future Land Use Map as "High-Density Residential."
3. The "High-Density Residential" land use designation is implemented through the "RH" (Residential High-Density) zoning designation, which is what the applicant is requesting.

Public Notice. Notice was mailed to property owners within 200 feet of the rezoning area and a sign was posted on the subject property.

Conclusions. Based upon the analysis in this report, staff concludes that the proposed rezoning of the subject property is consistent with the Future Land Use Map, as well as the Goals and Objectives of the City of Ames Land Use Policy Plan. Staff believes the rezoning of the subject land would be a logical extension of the "RH" (Residential High Density) zoning to the south of this site.

If the zoning classification is changed to High-Density Residential but the subject property is not developed as senior housing, apartment buildings could be constructed on this land. **In line with the City Council's directive, the Commission could recommend that the Zoning change be approved with conditions that the use of the site be limited to only group living uses, consistent with or existing on the current Northcrest senior care facility property. That could include such uses as senior housing consisting of townhome or apartment style residences, assisted living facilities, nursing care facilities or specialized care facilities. There could also be a condition to not exceed existing building heights or be limited to 50 feet or 4 stories (this would be in line with the RM zoning district).**

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council approve the request for rezoning of land located at 2008 24th Street from "RL" (Residential Low Density) to "RH" (Residential High Density) with the following conditions:
 - a. The use of the site be limited to only group living uses, consistent with or existing on the current Northcrest senior care facility property, such as; senior housing consisting of townhome or apartment style residences, assisted living facilities, nursing care facilities or specialized care facilities, and

- b. The maximum building height not exceed the existing building height of the current Northcrest property or 50 feet or 4 stories, whichever is lower.
2. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council approve the request for rezoning of land located at 2008 24th Street from “RL” (Residential Low Density) to “RH” (Residential High Density).
3. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council deny the request for rezoning of land located at 2008 24th Street from “RL” (Residential Low Density) to “RH” (Residential High Density).
4. The Planning and Zoning Commission can defer action on this request and refer it back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information.

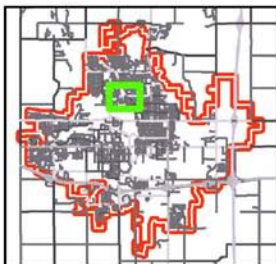
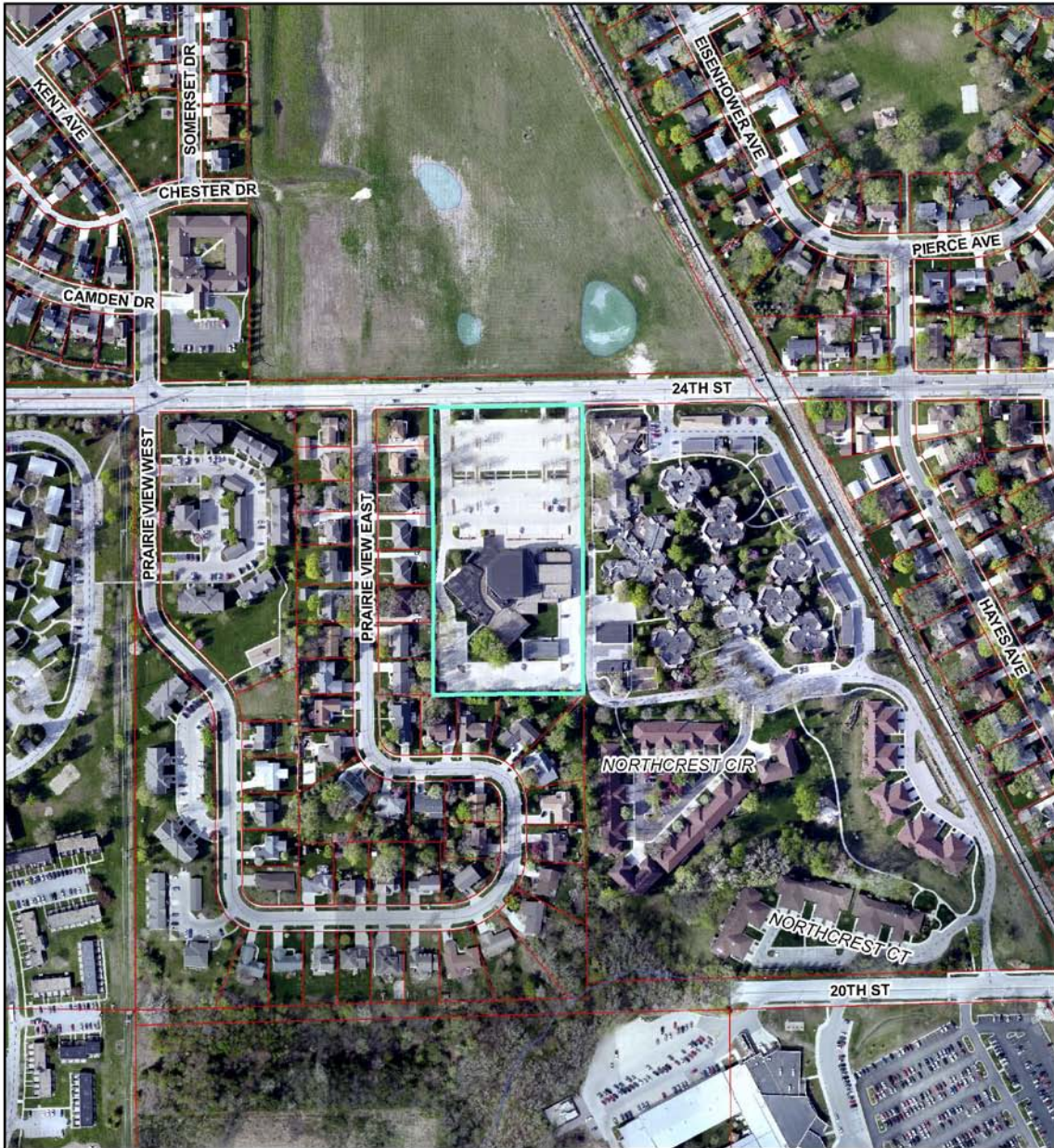
RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff has reviewed the proposed rezoning and finds that the proposed change is consistent with the Land Use Policy Plan.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Department of Planning and Housing that the Planning and Zoning Commission act in accordance with Alternative #1, which is to recommend to the City Council approval of the request for rezoning of land located at 2008 24th Street from “RL” (Residential Low Density) to “RH” (Residential High Density) with the noted conditions.

Attachment A

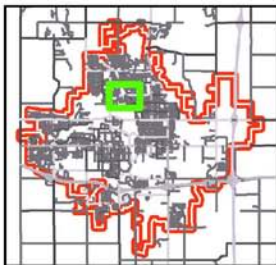
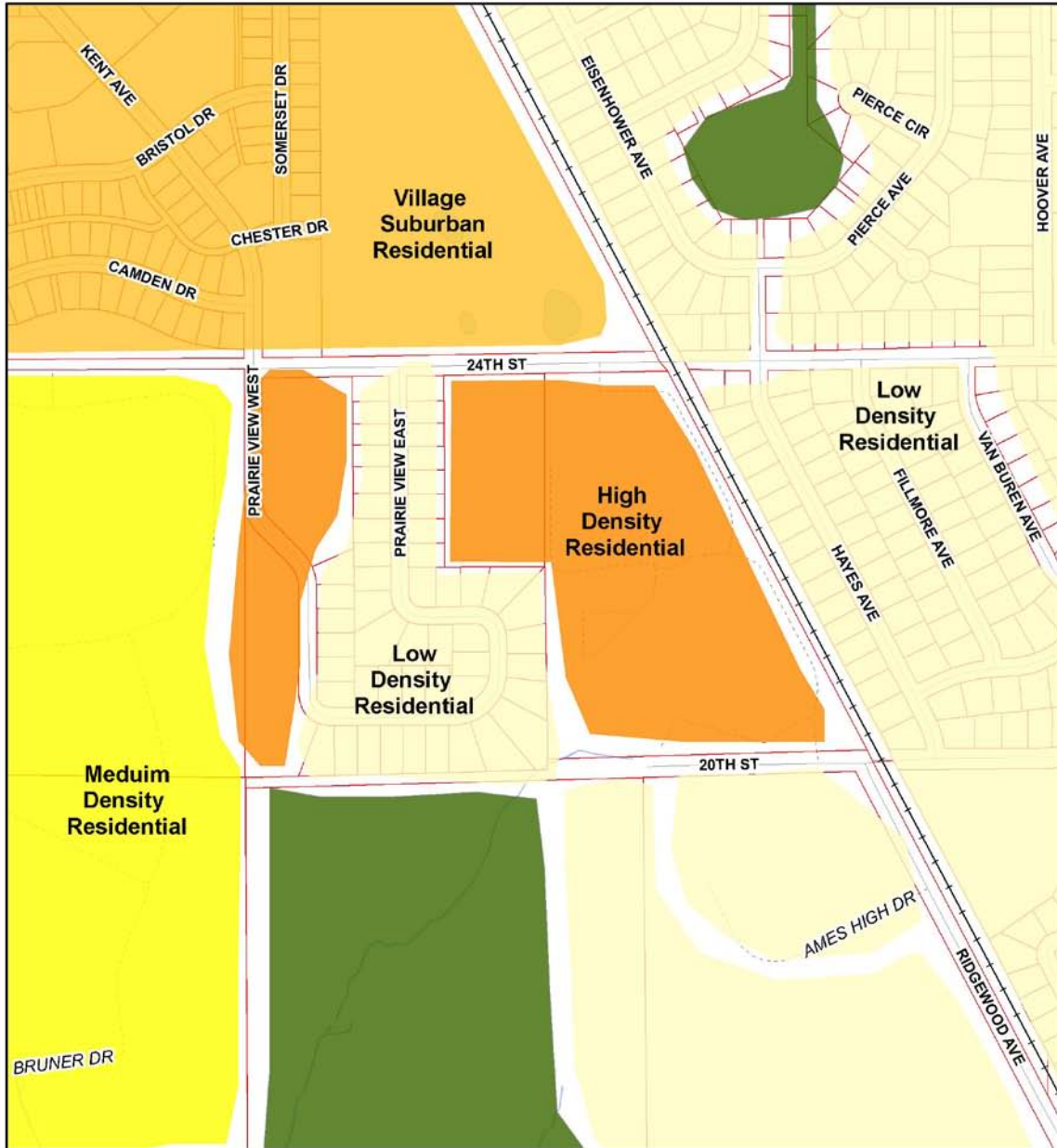
Location Map



Location Map

Attachment B

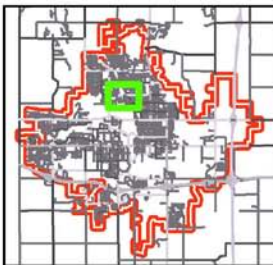
LUPP Future Land Use Map



Land Use Policy Plan Map

Attachment C

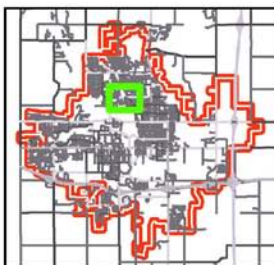
Existing Zoning



Existing Zoning

Attachment D

Proposed Zoning



Proposed Zoning

Attachment E

Applicable Laws and Policies

The laws applicable to the proposed rezoning at 2008 24th Street are as follows:

- Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) Goals, Policies and the Future Land Use Map:

The Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) Future Land Use Map identifies the land use designations for the property proposed for rezoning.

- Ames *Municipal Code* Chapter 29, Section 1507, Zoning Text and Map Amendments ,includes requirements for owners of land to submit a petition for amendment, a provision to allow the City Council to impose conditions on map amendments, provisions for notice to the public, and time limits for the processing of rezoning proposals.
- Ames *Municipal Code* Section 29. 701, Residential Low Density, includes a list of uses that are permitted in the Residential Low Density (RL) zoning district and the zone development standards that apply to properties in that zone.
- Ames *Municipal Code* Section 29. 704, Residential High Density, includes a list of uses that are permitted in the Residential High Density (RH) zoning district and the zone development standards that apply to properties in that zone

Attachment F
(See attached PDF of Applicant's Statements)

Request for Re-zoning

DATE PREPARED: September 26, 2012

REQUEST: Property zoning change

LOCATION: 2008 24th Street
(*See Attachment A*)

ACREAGE: 4.80 Acres

**CURRENT
LAND USE
DESIGNATION:** High-Density Residential

**CURRENT
ZONING:** Residential Low-Density
(*See Attachment C*)

**PROPOSED
ZONING** High-Density Residential
(*See Attachment D*)

PROPERTY OWNER: First Evangelical Free Church, Inc.
2008 24th Street
Ames, Iowa 50010

APPLICANT/CONTACT: Linda Doyle

Northcrest Community
1801 20th Street
Ames, IA 50010

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On June 7, 2012, First Evangelical Free Church (property owner) and Northcrest Community (applicant) submitted a letter to the Ames City Council requesting that the City Council consider their request to grant a Land Use Policy Plan Map Change and a rezoning of the same property at 2008 24th Street from Low-Density Residential to High-Density Residential. That request was subsequently processed as a minor amendment and the LUPP was revised to a RH designation by action of the City Council.

On August 2, 2012, the applicant submitted a completed application for a Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) Map Change to the City for analysis by City staff and consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.

Northcrest Community and the First Evangelical Free Church have executed a purchase agreement for sale of the property at 2008 24th Street contingent upon the re-zoning of the subject property for development as High-Density Residential. Upon purchase Northcrest intends to co-join the property into a single parcel and will develop the property in a manner consistent with the architecture and the outdoor environment of the existing Northcrest property.

Land Use Designation/Zoning. The subject property and other surrounding properties are designated on the LUPP Map and on the Zoning Map as follows:

Direction from Subject Property	LUPP Map Designation	Zoning Map Designation
Subject Property	High-Density Residential	"RH" (Residential High-Density)
North	Village/Suburban Residential	"S-GA" (Government/Airport)
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Existing Land Use. Land uses that occupy the subject property and other surrounding properties are described in the following table:

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Land Use

The parcel at 2008 24th Street and the area immediately to the west are designated as Low Density Residential. In reality, this relatively small area is bordered by areas designated as High Density Residential, or by public property. A

number of the structures immediately adjacent to the property are actually duplex units.

Existing Northcrest Property

Northcrest currently has 187 residents, which comes out to be about 8.5 people per acre. We believe that Northcrest actually functions much like a low density residential area. Traffic flows into and out of the Northcrest property are low and adequate parking exists within the property for all residents and visitors.

Northcrest has maintained a very park like setting in its current location and we would maintain that atmosphere with similar development of the 2008 24th Street property. That would be consistent with the principles of the Ames LUPP.

Northcrest is a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) located in Ames, Iowa on a 22 acre parcel on 20th Street. Northcrest is home to 176 residents and a staff of 122 (both FT and PT). Northcrest has operated continuously at its current location for 50 years. During those 50 years Northcrest has developed the property between 20th & 24th Streets by adding additional residences, additional community space, and a facility specialized in Alzheimer care. The development of the campus has a consistent architectural theme and consists of no structures more than three stories tall. Northcrest does not have operations in any location other than the 24th Street site.

Northcrest has entered into a purchase agreement with E-Free for the purchase of the property at 2008 24th Street. That sale is contingent upon the re-zoning of the parcel to be RH, consistent with the zoning of the existing Northcrest property. If this is accomplished and the sale is allowed to proceed, Northcrest would intend to ask that the two parcels be co-joined into a single parcel. Our intent would be to develop the new land area with structures to serve our current and future residents. Any development would be consistent with the existing Northcrest property and the nature and layout of the new property would be consistent with what exists on the current Northcrest property.

Potential Development of the Property

Northcrest and E-Free collaborated to have the property value assessed a couple of years ago. The outcome of that assessment was as follows:

	Assessed Value
Story County Assessor	\$ 3,470,300
Continued use of the facility as a church	\$ 3,200,000
Appraisal Value as "RH"	\$ 1,105,000
Appraisal Value as "RL"	\$ 231,000
Demolition Costs	\$ 200,000

The assessment firm concluded that if the property was not saleable as a church, the value of the property would drop significantly.

If the property were to be re-developed as an RL property (as currently zoned), the number of homes that could be added on the property would not be significant once you add roads and common space. In addition the re-development cost would be significantly affected by the demolition costs for the existing structures.

In the re-development of the property, Northcrest would likely demolish most of the structures and parking lots on the property.

Adverse Impact

Northcrest intends to develop the property in a manner that is consistent with the architecture and outdoor environment that currently exists. We do not believe that there will be any adverse impact on existing neighbors. In many ways Northcrest, as a 24/7 operations will result in less traffic and less noise than the existing church does.

In addition, Northcrest is a 501c.3 corporation and has a property tax exempt designation. This means that with the acquisition of this property that the 2008 24th Street property and the current Northcrest property, that there would be no negative impact on the tax base in Ames.

In fact, this redevelopment of a seemingly unsalable church property would put this land back to use to provide necessary services for residents who would live in Ames and provide valuable contributions to the community. The alternative would be to likely have a long term vacant property at the site.

Public Benefit

Northcrest has been providing exceptional and innovative services to the citizens of Ames for almost 50 years. The additional property would provide opportunities to continue that mission of service to older adults and broaden the range of senior

living options. While we are not certain of the exact type of services for this property, we have been researching innovative programs across the United States looking for ways to address unmet needs in the community. The models of retirement living and long term care continue to change as new generations of older adults demand more amenities and environments that are more like the homes to which they are accustomed.

Redevelopment of church property and buildings can be problematic if another church is not interested in purchasing the property. Northcrest is uniquely positioned to re-develop the land because it is immediately adjacent to Northcrest. This proposal would put this land back to use to provide necessary services for residents who would live in Ames and provide valuable contributions to the community. The alternative would be to likely have a long term vacant property at the site.

Impact of Site Services

We do not believe that the sale and re-development of the property at 2008 24th Street will have any impact on existing services:

Transportation – Northcrest maintains adequate parking within its boundaries to serve all residents and visitors. Vehicles visits to Northcrest can access the site either from 24th Street or from 20th Street, which dilutes traffic turning patterns on busy streets. We believe that total vehicle visits in and out of the combined site will be less than is currently being experienced with the activities of the E-Free church.

Sanitary Sewer – Service is available on the site and will be adequate for the re-development.

Water - Service is available on the site and will be adequate for the re-development.

Storm Sewer – re-development of the site will result in less impermeable area than currently exists. This should actually reduce storm water flows from the site.

Housing Employment – If one takes a ratio from the existing Northcrest operations, the 2008 24th Street property could support up to 40 residents and would result in the addition of up to 28 staff positions (FT and PT).

Fire Protection – Fire protection access to both Northcrest and the 2008 24th Street property should be improved as site circulation is improved and with 2 arterial streets available to access the combined site.