



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

FROM: The Office of the City Manager **DATE:** March 15, 2018

SUBJECT: SDP 2017-06 Public Hearing and consideration of a request from Beaten Path Development for a Special Development Plan for portions of the northwest and northeast corners of Mid Cities Boulevard and Holiday Lane, being 11.89 acres described as portions of Lots 1 and 2, Block 33, and all of Lots 1R, 2R1, 3R, and 4, Block 34, Fox Hollow Addition; and Tracts 11 and 11D, John Barlough Survey, Abstract 130.

PRESENTER: Clayton Comstock, Planning Manager

SUMMARY:

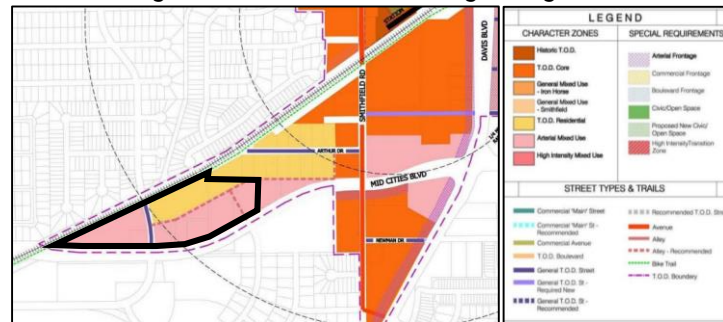
On behalf of Long Real Estate Investments, RCC/CT LLC, and DFW Oil, Beaten Path Development is requesting approval of a Special Development Plan (SDP) in the Smithfield Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District. The applicant proposes to develop a project that includes 93 new townhome lots and one existing commercial lot. The property is located on the north side of Mid-Cities Boulevard on the east and west sides of Holiday Lane.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The project is located within the "Arterial Mixed Use" and "TOD Residential" subzones of the Smithfield TOD district.

- The "Arterial Mixed Use" subzone is intended to provide appropriate transitions to major regional roadways while taking advantage of the frontage for limited auto-oriented uses and sites. The subzone does not permit townhomes by right. Any residential proposed within the "Arterial Mixed Use" subzone is limited to second floors above non-residential uses.
- The "TOD Residential" subzone provides the transitions from higher intensity development of the TOD Core and existing residential neighborhoods and allows townhomes by right. The map excerpt below, taken from the Smithfield TOD Regulating Plan, shows the subject property (thick black outline), the subzone districts, and recommended thoroughfares.

Figure 1: Smithfield TOD Regulating Plan



The subject property is governed by the TOD Residential and Arterial Mixed Use subzones.

Below is a summary of the proposed development, which is planned for construction in two sections on the east and west sides of Holiday Lane. A complete concept plan of the project is attached.

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY			
	WEST Holiday Lane	EAST Holiday Lane	COMBINED TOTAL
Project Area	2.69 acres	9.20 acres	11.89 acres
Townhome units	15 units	78 units	93 units
Residential density	5.58 units/acre	9.42 units/acre	8.48 units/acre
Commercial acreage	-	0.92 acres	0.92 acres
Open space, programmable	1.17 acres	0.74 acres	1.91 acres
Common areas	5 lots	19 lots	24 lots
Parking spaces/residential unit	3.6 spaces	3.83 spaces	3.80 spaces

TOD WAIVERS REQUESTED: The following waivers to the TOD Code are being requested by this Special Development Plan proposal:

1. **TOD Subzone Deviation.** The “Arterial Mixed Use” subzone of the TOD code is a subzone found only in the Smithfield TOD and only along Mid-Cities Boulevard. The subzone does not permit single family or first-floor residential. It is intended to encourage continued commercial development along Mid-Cities Boulevard to support the increasing residential densities in other subzones of the district. Because of its proximity along Mid-Cities and at the edge of the TOD district, elements of Conventional Suburban Design (CSD) are permitted by the code. This includes deeper building setbacks from the street, 100% commercial uses, and standard site landscaping. As an example, the shopping center at the northeast corner of Smithfield Road and Mid-Cities Boulevard (Fitness 2000, Subway, The Corner Café, etc.) was designed to meet the TOD code’s Arterial Mixed Use subzone.

2. **Townhome lot width.** The minimum width of any townhome lot permitted by the TOD code is 25 feet. The applicant is proposing 73 townhome lots with a lot width of 22 feet dispersed throughout the development.
3. **Customized street design.** The new street proposed on the west side of Holiday Lane is a customized street section for this development and is intended to discourage and/or slow cut-through traffic from southbound Holiday Lane to westbound Mid-Cities Boulevard. On-street parking is provided on one side of the street and multiple curb bump-outs are provided. In order to encourage a healthier street tree root zone, 5-foot sidewalks are also proposed along this street rather than the required 6-foot sidewalks. See plan view and cross section below.



4. **Parking driveway width.** Because of the narrower width of the lots and need for parallel parking off the rear alleys, the maximum permitted residential driveway width of 20 feet may not be achievable. Instead, a continuous concrete parking lane along the alleys will likely be necessary.
5. **Build-to-Zone.** Both the TOD Residential and Arterial Mixed Use subzones require front build-to-zones with a minimum setback of 10 feet. The applicant is proposing to adopt a front setback of 5 feet.
6. **Window and door coverage.** The architectural standards for residential buildings within the TOD require windows or doors covering not less than 30 percent of all street facing facades. The code does not distinguish between first floor and entire façade when calculating this ratio. On page 11 of the Design Guidelines, the applicant's proposed architectural standards requests a minimum of 35 percent of the first floor façade area be covered in window and door openings. Staff's rough calculations of these conceptual renderings show a window/door opening ratio below 30 percent for the entire façade.

DRC REVIEW: The Development Review Committee (DRC) evaluated the proposal based on the design intent and standards for the Smithfield TOD. The DRC recommendation of denial is based on the following factors.

Lack of proper connectivity. The purpose of the Transit Oriented Development code is to seamlessly integrate and connect various uses, making them walkable. Additionally, establishing safe and connected vehicular routes that minimize points of conflict and increase access to safe, signalized intersections is a high priority. It

is DRC's recommendation that the primary east/west street be stubbed to the east, allowing seamless integration of the office development to the east into the neighborhood. As a result, the four-unit building at the far northeast corner of the project should be rotated to face the new street extension. This will also correct the concern for the fronts of townhomes facing the side of a townhome without adequate separation. Without this street connection, existing and future office uses on the properties to the east will not be afforded access to the median opening on Mid-Cities Boulevard, resulting in an increase in the frequency of U-turns at the Smithfield and Holiday intersections.

Inadequate separation between townhome blocks. In two instances on the plan (provided at right), the front faces of three townhomes (total of six units) directly face the side face of another townhome with as narrow a space as 30 feet. The applicant cites one example in Hometown Canal District and one example in Iron Horse Commons as precedent for this unusual and undesired configuration.

The example in Hometown Canal District has two single family detached units whose front façade is 31.17 feet from another unit's side façade. The lots are also part of a larger block of mews units that face a community open space and includes a neighborhood cluster mailbox, so the space is used by the entire block of residents.

The example in Iron Horse Commons also has two single family detached units whose front façade is 42 feet from another unit's side façade. The lots are also part of a larger block of mews units that face a half-acre community open space.

The Development Review Committee did not see these two examples as being similar to the proposed arrangement or establishing precedent for three townhome units in a dead end open space alley situation and is not supportive of it in this circumstance.

Lot orientation. The orientation of Block C creates a situation where over half of Block A units do not have neighbors facing them across "Street A." As it is, "Street A" should be treated as the primary street frontage for all lots unless/until Block C is changed to a centralized open space, in which case lots should face the open space.

Lack of usable, centralized open space. There is one open space lot of approximately 3,600 square feet currently proposed in Block B. However, this open space is buried within the neighborhood and is not treated as a centralized or substantial focal point for the neighborhood. Furthermore, the "private dog park" proposed on the far west end is hidden, inaccessible, and unlikely to be used by



residents. This space would be better conveyed to the City for wildflower area, shaded rest area, and/or possible realignment of the Cotton Belt Trail crossing.

Local market uncertainty of 22-foot townhome product. The DRC recognizes that over 90 units of 22-foot wide townhomes were approved in the Iron Horse TOD; however, those townhomes have not yet hit the sales market. The DRC is not supportive of additional deviations to the 25-foot minimum lot requirement for townhome lots until the community has a better understanding of the local market for 22-foot townhomes or direction is provided by City Council that this is a favorable and targeted product for North Richland Hills.

The sketch below demonstrates how the concepts outlined above may be implemented. While it still assumes use of 22-foot townhomes, the neighborhood design and integration of office development would be supported by the Development Review Committee.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & CURRENT ZONING: This area is designated on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and is currently zoned Transit Oriented Development. The purpose of the transit oriented development code is to support the development of the community's station areas into pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use urban neighborhoods, with convenient access to rail transit, shopping, employment, housing, and neighborhood retail services. The goal of each station area is to encourage an efficient, compact land use pattern; encourage pedestrian activity; reduce the reliance on private automobiles;



promote a more functional and attractive community through the use of recognized principles of urban design; and allow property owners flexibility in land use, while prescribing a high level of detail in building design and form.

SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: The applicant is requesting a special development plan for consideration of modifications to the standards of the transit oriented development district. The special development plan process is intended to allow applicants development flexibility to address specific market opportunities and/or contexts within the transit oriented development district. In evaluating a special development plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council must consider the extent to which the application meets the following:

- the goals and intent of transit oriented development in the city;
- provides an alternative "master plan" approach by consolidating multiple properties to create a predictable, market responsive development for the area;
- fits the adjoining context by providing appropriate transitions;
- provides public benefits such as usable civic and open spaces, livable streets, structured and shared parking, and linkages to transit; and,
- does not hinder future opportunities for higher intensity transit oriented development.

CITY COUNCIL: Following a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission, a public hearing for this item will be held by the City Council at the March 26, 2018 meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

Deny SDP 2017-06.