

## **Village at Town Center West**

### **Background and Justification**

On September 24<sup>th</sup> 2019 the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors held a conceptual review hearing to provide Oakmont Senior Living feedback and suggestions related to the proposed Mixed-use development for Town Center West.

Based upon the thoughtful considerations and suggestions expressed by the Board of Supervisors and others in the community, Oakmont Senior Living proposes to create a mixed-use, multi-generational development designed to best serve El Dorado County and its citizens by providing housing and services for all age groups.

The existing entitlements for Town Center West are General Commercial Planned Development (GC-PD) overlay, which was established in the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan. Many of the uses that were anticipated to take hold in 1995 when PD-95-02 was approved are no longer viable in today's economy. Millions of square feet of R&D and Light Manufacturing land in the business park to the South continues to sit vacant with no immediate plan for development. Even though the PD overlay 95-02 allows for additional uses to be added from time to time via an approved ministerial process identified in the PD conditions of approval, Oakmont will nevertheless conduct a focused E.I.R. The Department of Transportation and El Dorado County Planning may request an updated traffic study as well to determine the impacts of the additional residential use. Oakmont is not proposing to make any changes or amendments to the existing PD, Specific Plan or General Plan other than the addition of the mixed-use designation section (130.40.180) to +/- 34 acres of the GC-PD zoned 46 (+/-) acre property. Oakmont is not proposing any additional square footage or transfer any single-family residential units in the Specific Plan.

Planning staff has previously verified that in accordance with the El Dorado County zoning ordinance section 130.40.180, (mixed-use development) is allowed under the general commercial zoning district of Town Center West. Paragraph B of section 130.40.180 paragraph C (Development Standards) states that 30% of the total gross floor area of a mixed-use development must be commercial. This requirement has already been exceeded. A total of 443,577 square feet (sf) of commercial development has been completed. These commercial uses as defined in section 130.22.020 include Blue Shield (252,308 sf) Superior Self Storage (89,470 sf), Oakmont Senior Living (85,799 sf) and CVS (16,000 sf).

In addition, +/- 12 acres outside the boundary of the Villages project, but still within the planned development area, remain to be developed as commercial uses consistent with the PD95-02 approvals including a 250 room Hotel and Conference Center. These parcels are eligible for immediate building permits subject to the design and development standards approved for PD95-02.

Oakmont's proposal for the Town Center West acreage will be designed to be a viable, stand-alone, mixed-use project using a combination of the existing PD entitlements and development standards alongside design criteria described in the mixed-use design manual. While all existing entitlements will remain in place for the entirety of PD95-02, should residential uses be implemented as part of a Mixed-Use development only 34 acres of the planned development described as APN #'s 117-160-048,049,050,051,052,053,054,and 069 will be amended to allow residential development. Villages of Town Center West is located within both the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan Village U and the planned development permit for Town Center West PD95-02 which PD95-02 was approved by the El Dorado County Planning Department and adopted by the Board of Supervisors in May of 1995.

The Villages at Town Center West which will only encompass +/-34 acres is anticipated to be constructed consistent with Town Center West adopted plan development PD95-02 and shall be amended to allow for mixed use development consistent with County Zoning Code section 130.40.180 which in-part states that Mixed- Use is allowed in all commercial zones. This amendment would allow for the Villages of Town Center West to be developed with residential uses at a maximum density of 20 units per acre, however because Oakmont desires to build a development which includes open space, recreation areas, walking paths and large setbacks from the neighboring homes, a self- imposed cap of 490 residential units will be proposed. This cap equates to just over 14 units per acre, or 197 fewer units than what would be allowed under the Mixed-Use guidelines for the +/- 34 acres. Furthermore, Oakmont will commit to retaining a 60 ft. landscape buffer along the westerly property line. To further protect the residents of the Springfield Meadows and Stonebriar subdivisions only two- story buildings will be built directly adjacent to the buffered area (See Land use Plan) These two- story buildings will be become part of the Senior Age Restricted portion of the development. Oakmont's years of experience providing senior care services will be utilized to create floor plans and living elements which seniors deem important to age in place.

For over 30 years Oakmont Senior Living has been at the forefront of long-term senior care in California. We have recently opened a new assisted living and memory care community in Town Center West. Through our early marketing efforts for the new facility it became apparent that there is a definite pent up demand for assisted living and memory care in El Dorado Hills, but surprisingly there has been an equal number of inquiries from people 55 and over who are still very active expressing the desire for apartment rentals. These inquiries led to a more in-depth study into El Dorado County's housing needs. We discovered that the residents of El Dorado County have few options if they choose to relocate. Either they rent a modest apartment with few amenities or purchase a very expensive home. There is **nothing** in between.

There is a severe shortage of housing options in El Dorado County. Oakmont's research of housing needs goes beyond El Dorado County and the trends are the same throughout California. People want and need options. Young and old alike are increasingly opting to rent rather than own their own homes. By design apartments are a more affordable option than purchasing a home. Oakmont has found that the ability to adapt to residents' needs as their lifestyle changes is key to a successful community. Having a living space that evolves with different stages of a person's life is very important. In addition, a broad unit mix that can accommodate seniors, a family, or a multi-generational household is important. Oakmont's plan is to build a community that supports different demographic age groups over their lifetime so that their needs are met as they grow older and require different types of living arrangements. With the baby boomers retiring or getting close to retirement age Oakmont is seeing a trend of long-time home owners looking to down size into smaller apartments, with ease of access to local amenities and a high priority placed on walkability. Ironically, that thought process is also similar to that of younger generations – Apartments close to town centers with activities and amenities nearby. We have two large generations of the population who are looking for the same lifestyle. The only difference is age.

Oakmont desires to perpetuate the characteristics which are unique to El Dorado County by creating a mixed-use Village at Town Center West that fully utilizes the existing zoning established in PD-95-02 and provide more housing options for El Dorado County. A mixed-use Village at Town Center West would not only create a stronger neighborhood character, but would make the best use of a currently underutilized property. By providing a mix of residential and commercial uses, residents of the community could walk or bike to their destinations within Town Centers East and West.

The Village in Town Center West development will be beneficial to the community without exceeding any other building square footages that are currently approved for the site. In addition, the proposal would have a significant positive effect on the surrounding area because of a substantial reduction in traffic volumes that were anticipated by the existing entitlements for Town Center West.

Oakmont's goal is to create a village community in which the residents will enjoy meaningful, daily engagement by providing opportunities to exercise their bodies and minds. The heart of the community will be the Health and Wellness Center. The center will include a technology suite, activity rooms, lecture hall, library, fitness center, wellness counseling, educational, social and recreational programs. Perhaps most importantly, a Concierge will be available to help facilitate any in-home needs which the Village residents may desire to obtain from local specialty service and care companies, such as: housekeeping, laundry services, assistance with activities of daily living and home health therapies. Such a service would give the residents of the community who are not in need of managed care an opportunity to be active participants in their wellness as opposed to being a patient. People want to take care of themselves rather than being taken care of. A village-based community would provide a coordinated and comprehensive approach to engaging and meeting the needs of the residents.

Oakmont believes that a strong multi-generational community will enhance the lives of both young and old. Social isolation and loneliness in seniors and its association with mental decline is very real in today's society. These areas are immediately eliminated when you introduce younger generations to the equation. Social engagement levels drastically increase, leading to a much healthier lifestyle. Reciprocal beneficial opportunities for all residents will evolve naturally. For example: A single working mother who cannot afford day care may find a senior neighbor who can watch her children during the day for a fee she can afford. Seniors love children; both parties' benefit. On the other hand, seniors will have younger neighbors nearby to help with remedial tasks, but they will also teach them skills such as email, social media, how to Skype with loved ones, and most importantly they provide companionship. With this approach, the village residents will become natural partners in life and with the local businesses that are anticipated to be drawn to the commercial uses of Town Center West. This mixed-use village model does not currently exist in El Dorado County despite the need. Oakmont believes it will set a new standard for living in the area. With inclusive and diverse options available, Oakmont believes the residents will feel confident in knowing that they can age in place with support, companionship, strength and dignity.

To further bring the community together, there will be walking paths throughout the development which pass through community gardens, a pet park and meander along the banks of the protected wetlands. Lush landscaping will provide a scenic outdoor environment. There will be a large fitness center complete with modern exercise equipment, two outdoor swimming pools, (one for adults only) cabanas, tennis courts, bocce ball and pickle courts. The developments proximity to all of the activities and services available at Town Center East is a very important aspect of Oakmont's vision. Oakmont feels that the addition of housing in Town Center West along with the commercial uses already existing or approved for development will

complete the circle for both the Specific Plan and El Dorado County officials who desire to provide an integrated, mixed-use development.

### **Proposed Amendments to the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan**

The El Dorado Hills Specific Plan was approved in 1987, long before the County had considered mixed use development. Since that time the County has, of course, gone to great lengths to adopt a zoning ordinance and detailed regulations designed to encourage mixed use development in order to complement its goals in establishing sustainable communities and help minimize dependence on the automobile. The intent of these proposed amendments to add mixed-use development to Village 'U' is to bring the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan and the Town Center West PD into compliance with these goals.

When the Specific Plan was approved long ago, the vision for El Dorado Hills south of Hwy 50 was a large shopping mall surrounded by major retail department stores, large home improvement centers and sporting goods stores. Just the type of development that is failing miserably all across the nation today. Luckily Tony Mansour and others had the foresight to create what the community now enjoys; a beautiful development that has evolved and grown based upon the market demands of the community. The same type of development that many cities in California are desperate for. MIXED-USE, the proper mix of services all located within a walkable environment.

Oakmont's Mixed-Use proposal for the Town Center West will benefit the citizens of El Dorado County and El Dorado Hills by substantially reducing traffic counts compared to what is already approved for the site. Provide needed housing options, add new commercial services that do not currently exist in Town Center East and create a financial engine for El Dorado County by utilizing the Hotel and Conference Center as an economic tool to show off what El Dorado County has to offer.

This application is for minor amendments to the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan and the Town Center West Planned Unit Development (PD95-02) in order to allow for the implementation of mixed- use development within Town Center West. Ordinance Code Section 130.40.180 and the Mixed- Use Design Manual were adopted by the County with the intention that all commercially zoned property would allow mixed use development. However, the Specific Plan was adopted long before the significant advantages of mixed -use development were recognized and contains language which would appear to prevent mixed use development. Accordingly, the application is simply a request for language changes to the Specific Plan and Planned Development as set forth below.

## Specific Plan Amendment

### Section 1.4.3 Commercial Policies

Amended by adding subsection i to read:

**“i. Mixed use development shall be allowed in Village U to encourage residential uses in close proximity to stores and services to lessen dependence on automobiles for transportation.”**

### Section 2.2 Residential Densities

Amended by changing the last sentence of the Section to read:

The number of dwelling units in any of the three residential neighborhoods shown on Table 1 may vary, provided that the densities within any village shall not exceed the densities permitted by the Area Plan, nor shall the total units, gross and net densities for the **residential neighborhoods** exceed the totals given in Table 1.

Explanation: This wording change is designed to make the “total units” and “net densities” as described in this section to be applicable only to the residential neighborhoods as described in Table 1. Accordingly, the introduction of residential units in Village U through the mixed- use program will not impact in any way the allowable densities within the residential neighborhoods of the Specific Plan.

### Section 3.2.1 Regional Commercial (Village U and T)

Amended by adding the following sentence to the end of the section:

**“Residential uses will be allowed in Village U, provided such use is part of a mixed- use project consistent with Ordinance Code Section 130.40.180 and the Mixed- Use Design Manual.”**

# Planned Development PD 95-02 Amendment

## Design Guidelines and Development Standards

### Section 1. The Land Uses

Amended by adding the following sentence to the end of this Section:

**“Further, residential uses consistent with Ordinance Code Section 130.40.180 and the Mixed-Use Design Manual shall be allowed within Planning Areas B and D.”**

### Section 1.5. Uses Not Specified

Amended by changing the first sentence to read:

**As set forth earlier, residential uses within a mixed-use project will be permitted in Planning Areas B and D, and** additional uses may be permitted when by determination of the Director of Planning, such uses are found to be similar in nature to those established within the Town Center West Planned Development.

### Section 3.4 Site Planning Criteria

Amended by adding subsection 3.4.13 to read:

**“All structures along the western boundary of the project, adjacent to existing residential uses, shall be limited to two stories.”**

Explanation: Oakmont recognizes the concern of the neighbors on the western boundary of the site and is committed to providing a buffer which includes reducing the possible building massing along the boundary. This represents the only modification to the existing PD guidelines other than allowing mixed use development in Planning Areas B and D.