



October 13, 2025

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City of Hopkins
1010 1st Street South
Hopkins, MN 55343

RE: 501 Mainstreet & 15 6th Avenue

Project Narrative

Footprint Development is seeking a Planned Unit Development to develop a four-story, 41-unit, carbon-smart, climate-resilient multifamily apartment building and 3 parking spaces at 501 Main Street, as well as 26 surface parking spaces at 15 6th Avenue N.

The project will add 41 quality market-rate apartment units. The development will be built to Phius sustainability standards and thus will be more affordable to operate and occupy into the future. The units are designed as small well-appointed units with minimal amenities in order to maintain a reasonable rent structure. The amenities will include a bike room to promote transit choices, a small lobby, and an indoor play area for children. Access to exterior space is also provided as an amenity with common outdoor deck areas, a semi-private courtyard on Main Street, a private courtyard at the rear of the lot, and a dog run. Providing meaningful access to outdoor areas is a core item to promote healthy lifestyles and living.

The project is designed with a center courtyard facing Main Street. This provides an outdoor amenity space, and the ability to provide units with two-sided access to light and air enhancing the overall livability of the units. The massing of the three parts also suggests the historical spacing of the older portions of Main Street construction. The south and east sides have extensive areas of brick with siding as accents. The north and west sides are predominantly siding. Windows are ultra- high efficiency windows to meet Phius standards. The project is wood-frame construction with a special emphasis on reducing overall embodied carbon within the construction of the building.

Alignment with City Goals & Reciprocal Benefits for PUD Zoning Relief

The proposed development will put these hard-to-develop parcels to their highest and best use for the City of Hopkins:

- Growing the City's annual taxable capacity by ~\$10MM,
- Providing an influx of neighborhood resident-customers to support businesses in Downtown Hopkins, and

- Increasing housing variety and creating a welcoming public realm that facilitates social interactions and increases community resilience
- Enhancing the experience for transit riders and pedestrians by extending the continuity of Mainstreet's urban fabric
- Providing 4 new units of affordable housing at 60% of AMI for at least 25 years

Support Multi-Modal Transportation

The abundance of amenities and quality transit make the location ideally suited for a car-light lifestyle. To that end, the building will be equipped with Bike Hub amenity spaces that include 1.1 bike spots per apartment, bike repair & wash stations, and bike trailers for shared use. There will also be 2 EV charging stalls. We will also engage with HourCar to be a companion multifamily site to the planned HourCar location at Dow Towers.

Parking is reduced from typical city standards. Given the location of this site for transit options, inclusion of bike amenities and car-share, this is an ideal location for multi-modal transit. The transit options will reduce the reliance on vehicles and give residents an opportunity to save the cost of owning a vehicle. Relief from the parking standards is requested based on the nature of the development and the support of transit options. A remote parking area is provided. The site on N. 6th is small and narrow. We have proposed a layout that maximizes parking. Although some buffer is required on the north side, this buffer would eliminate 6 stalls. The property to the north is currently a parking lot and should not be adversely affected by the lack of a buffer. Two tree-islands would be required. Relief is requested as we are trying to alleviate some neighborhood concern around parking and removal of the tree-islands allows additional parking. Given the size of the overall lot, the islands would also be extremely problematic to provide snow removal.

Sustainability

The proposed concept will exceed the **City of Hopkins' Sustainable Building Policy** and be the first project to be built under the new Policy. The project will be designed, built and certified to the Phius Core building standard. Phius (Passive House Institute of the U.S.) is the pinnacle of high-performance building standards for energy efficiency, indoor air quality, occupant comfort and acoustical performance. Phius certified buildings also achieve DOE Zero Energy Ready status and Energy Star certification.

When completed, the new apartment homes will be 3rd-party tested and verified as the most energy efficient, healthy housing in Minnesota.

Sustainability: In order to meet the Phius standard, the project needs to meet a certain threshold of window glazing and performance and thus we are requesting Relief on the north and west sides. To meet the cost implications of the PHius standard we also need to meet a minimum threshold of area and units and thus we are requesting relief on the south and east setbacks. The south setback on Main Street is consistent with the historic

development pattern. The site layout is also consistent with the neighboring property which has zero setback.

The size, shape, and grading of the site make the sites undevelopable under the existing RX-D zoning requirements. As such, Footprint Development is seeking the zoning relief summarized in the table below

Regulation		Rationale
FRONT STREET SETBACK	7.5 ft. min, 15 ft. max. 3 ft. proposed on south side.	Project feasibility.
NON-FRONT STREET SETBACK	5 ft. min., 25 ft. max 0.5 ft. proposed on east side.	Site condition and Project feasibility: note that the property is not a true rectangle and the East property line is at an angle to the building. Thus the setback is .5' at a minimum on the SE corner but increases to 5' 2' on the NE corner.
IMPERVIOUS SITE COVERAGE	70% max. 74.5% proposed on 501 Mainstreet Site; and 89.3% proposed on 6th Avenue site.	Project feasibility – partially driven by the desire increase surface parking
TRANSPARENCY: NON-FRONT FACADES	18% min, measured per story; Average of 11% on North, 12% on West	Project feasibility and Sustainability goals – optimizing glazing ratios is a central to passive house design. Plius certification is not feasible without reductions to the North Facade glazing requirements
GROUND STORY ELEVATION	The ground story must be between 18 in. and 30 in. above grade. 12 in. proposed.	The City's elevation requirement and urban design goals for the site are in tension with ADA accessibility requirements. The proposed 12 in. elevation on Mainstreet eliminates the need for substantial and costly ramping that would impair urban form & sustainability project goals.
OFF-STREET PARKING – MOTOR VEHICULAR MINIMUMS & MAXIMUMS	49 stalls are required. 30 stalls proposed.	Project feasibility
LOCATION OF OFF-STREET PARKING	Required residential off-street parking must be located on the same lot as the building or use they serve. Proposal includes off-site parking	Project feasibility: The sites are small and scattered, and problematic to develop without flexibility to adjust the location of the parking.
PARKING LOT TREES & LOW SALT DESIGN CHECKLIST	4 canopy trees are required on the 6 th Avenue site. 2 are proposed.	<p>There is a tension between the shared goals of adding canopy trees, maximizing the number of parking stalls, and adhering to Low Salt Design best practices as articulated by the City.</p> <p>The proposed design maximizes the number of parking stalls. It also minimizes difficult-to-plow curb contouring which will result in less snow/ice buildup and reduce salt use during winter months.</p> <p>Complying with the tree requirements would eliminate 2 parking stalls.</p>
PARKING LOT NORTH BUFFER	Required buffer to the north zoning district of 5'	Maximize parking opportunities. The north property is currently a parking lot.