

## **OLYMPUS PINES, LLC**

### **STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION**

**Revised: September 30, 2024**

Please accept the following as a Statement of Justification in support of the submitted special use permit (SUP) and special exception application to allow the redevelopment of 9917 Fairfax Boulevard with vehicle service use, to be operated as a Tommy's Express car wash. This Statement of Justification is submitted in conjunction with the General Development Plan/Special Use Permit Plat, prepared by Kimley-Horn dated June 5, 2023, as revised through September 12, 2024, and other submitted supporting materials. The contents of this Statement of Justification address the approval considerations for special use permits and special exceptions, as set forth in Sections 6.7.7, and 6.17.7 of the City of Fairfax Zoning Ordinance (the "Zoning Ordinance").

The Applicant is the contract purchaser of approximately 1.15 acres located in the City of Fairfax. The property consists of one (1) tax parcel identified among the City of Fairfax's tax assessment records as 48-3-13-001 (the "Subject Property"). The Subject Property is zoned CR (Commercial Retail) and is developed with the two existing structures including a restaurant and retail building constructed in the 1970's. According to the City's real estate assessment records, the existing buildings include approximately 4,735 square feet of floor area. The property is located on the south side of Fairfax Boulevard, one of the City's primary commercial thoroughfares. It is surrounded by commercial uses along Fairfax Boulevard to the north, east and west. Fairfax High School is located across Lion Run to the south.

### **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The Applicant requests SUP approval to redevelop the Subject Property with a Tommy's Express car wash. The proposed car wash building consists of approximately 4,553 square feet, and will include a highly efficient, single-lane tunnel that is designed to process up to 200 vehicles per hour, at maximum capacity. However, based on its experience at other locations, the Applicant anticipates a peak volume of approximately 50 – 75 vehicles per hour at this location. Unlike older car washes in the region, no hand-drying or finishing by employees will place on site, resulting in a much more efficient operation. For patrons who wish to hand dry or vacuum their vehicles after exiting the tunnel, the Applicant is providing fourteen (14) self-serve vacuum stations on the east side of the site. These stations, which are common among more modern car wash facilities, provide patrons with an opportunity to finish cleaning their vehicles away from the access points without conflicting with other vehicles entering or departing the site. The vacuum stations will include mufflers designed to mitigate noise impacts on adjacent properties, however as noted above, the surrounding area is developed entirely with either commercial or institutional uses. Based on the Applicant's experience at other locations, approximately 25% of customers utilize the self-serve vacuum stations. The car wash will be staffed by a maximum of 4 – 5 employees on site at any given time, and will operate between the hours of 7:00 am to 8:00 pm.

The Subject Property is ideally suited for the proposed use given its location along one of the City's primary commercial corridors. Access to the car wash is provided via two curb cuts on

Fairfax Boulevard, that correspond with the locations of the two existing curb cuts on the Subject Property. While the Applicant has evaluated the feasibility of combining the two into a single access point at the suggestion of staff, the Applicant has determined that the two proposed limited-access curb cuts provide an optimal circulation pattern by eliminating conflicts that would arise from a single point of access. The western curb cut will be limited to right-in ingress only, and the eastern curb cut is restricted to right-out egress only. Upon entering the site, patrons will enter one of three queuing lanes provided along the west side of the car wash building. The significant number of stacking spaces provided in the three lanes will ensure that vehicles do not back up into traffic along Fairfax Boulevard. Customers who have registered for a membership with Tommy's Express will utilize the outer lanes, where license plate scanning technology will be utilized to open the gates into the tunnel load zone. Customers who have not registered will utilize the inner lane where an employee or auto teller device will allow them to purchase a wash. Upon exiting the car wash tunnel, patrons will either exit the site via the egress-only access on Fairfax Boulevard, or pull into one of the self-serve vacuum station spaces on the east side of the building.

In addition to the 14 self-serve vacuum stations, five (5) additional standard parking spaces, plus one ADA accessible parking space, are provided on site. These spaces will serve as employee parking for the 4 – 5 employees who will be on site at any given time. While the Zoning Ordinance does not currently specify a parking requirement for car wash uses, the 1 space per employee rate was determined in coordination with the Zoning Administrator.

The proposed development will result in a significant improvement to stormwater management, given that no such infrastructure exists on site today. The car wash will include water reclamation technology that is designed to purify and recycle the water used by the car wash. In addition, the Applicant will pursue LEED Certification for the building. Additionally, the Applicant has worked closely with staff during the application process to maximize the extent of tree preservation and new plantings on site. The Applicant's proposal therefore demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainability.

## SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION

The proposed SUP fulfills each of the approved considerations set forth in Section 6.7.7 of the Zoning Ordinance.

- A. The proposed car wash use is in substantial conformance with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan (the "Plan"). The Plan's Future Land Use Map designates the Subject Property and all of the adjacent commercial properties along Fairfax Boulevard as the Commercial Corridor Place Type, which supports a wide variety of commercial uses. The use is compatible with adjacent and surrounding uses along Fairfax Boulevard, which include retail and restaurant uses, medical offices, and automobile-oriented retail establishments. As noted above, the Subject Property is very well-suited for the use, given that patrons traveling along Fairfax Boulevard will have convenient access to the car wash.

- B. Except as modified by the requested special exceptions, the proposed redevelopment will comply with all other applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.
- C. The proposed use will have no adverse impact on the health or safety of persons residing or working in the surrounding area. The character of the surrounding area is predominantly commercial, with the exception of the institutional use (Fairfax High School) to the south. In other jurisdictions, the Applicant has partnered with local schools, community groups, and other organizations to host fundraisers for such groups. The Subject Property's proximity to Fairfax High School provides an opportunity for such partnerships here, and the Applicant looks forward to working with the community and Fairfax High. The use will have no impact on nearby residential uses, but will provide a new car wash option for City residents and travelers along Fairfax Boulevard. The car wash will employ highly efficient technology, circulation patterns, and will provide ample stacking spaces in excess of Zoning Ordinance requirements to ensure that the use does not impact traffic operations along Fairfax Boulevard.
- D. The use will have no adverse impact on public welfare, property and/or improvements in the neighborhood. The redevelopment will upgrade the streetscape along Fairfax Boulevard, introduce modern stormwater management and water reclamation facilities where none exist today, and provide an additional car wash option for the City.

## SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

In conjunction with the requested SUP, the Applicant requests approval of the following special exceptions:

1. A special exception is hereby requested to allow the outdoor self-serve vacuum stations, and modify the requirement in Section 3.5.4.J of the Zoning Ordinance that all service operations associated with the car wash be conducted within an enclosed building.

The self-serve vacuum stations described above will be located outdoors on the east side of the proposed car wash building. These stations have become a common part of modern car wash operations. They provide a customer convenience by allowing customers to clean the interior of their vehicles on-site in an efficient manner that does not result in vehicle back-ups exiting the facility. Through coordination with the Zoning Administrator, it has been determined that the self-serve vacuum facilities require a special exception to modify the use standards set forth in Section 3.5.4.J of the Zoning Ordinance. The request meets the criteria for approval set forth in Section 6.17.7. Approval of the request will ensure the same general level of land use compatibility as the otherwise applicable standards. The proposed use remains in conformance with the Commercial Corridor place type designation

described in the Comprehensive Plan, and the proposed vacuum stations have become a common component of car wash and other vehicle service uses throughout the region. The stations will not adversely impact adjacent land uses or the physical character of uses in the vicinity. They will be located on the east side of the property, and will not be prominently viewed from Fairfax Boulevard. The stations will be turned off at the close of business each day. The stations will be an accessory component of the principal car wash use, which is a commercial use compatible with the surrounding area and consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Finally, the request is not driven by an economic hardship, but rather to provide a convenience for future patrons of the car wash. Because the request fulfills the criteria of Section 6.17.7, approval of the special exception is appropriate.

2. A special exception is hereby requested to allow a modification of the street tree requirements set forth in Section 4.5.6 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Section 4.5.6.B requires street trees to be planted no more than 15 feet from the back of curb. The Applicant is proposing to install a 5' landscape strip and a 10' wide sidewalk along Fairfax Boulevard. Due to the presence of below grade utilities beneath the landscape strip, and the need to maintain adequate sight distance at the egress point, the Applicant is proposing to plant the required street trees along the back of sidewalk. As a result, it is not possible to provide the trees within 15' of the back of curb. However, the number of provided street trees is consistent with the requirements, and the Applicant is supplementing the required street trees with a row of shrubs along the frontage. The proposed landscaping meets the intent of the street tree requirement, and approval of the requested special exception is therefore appropriate.

3. A special exception is hereby requested to waive the requirement to install a fence within the required TY3 transitional yard along the southern and western property lines as required by Section 4.5.7.C of the Zoning Ordinance.

Section 4.5.7.C requires a TY3 transitional yard around the perimeter of all parking lots adjacent to residential zoned property, which includes the Fairfax High School property to the south and west. These property lines are currently occupied by existing vegetation, and the topography is such that the Subject Property is significantly lower than the adjacent property. Accordingly, the installation of a fence or wall along the lot line would: 1) require the removal of existing vegetation to construct; and 2) not provide effective screening given the topographic conditions. In lieu of installing the fence or wall, the Applicant is providing additional plantings along the property lines as identified on Sheet 5 of the SUP Plat.

The Applicant's proposal is an opportunity to redevelop the Subject Property with a modern, efficient and attractive community-serving car wash use at a location that is appropriate given the character of the surrounding area and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.