

Avenida Senior Living - Colorado Springs

Project Description

September 2021

Avenida Senior Living (Applicant) proposes to construct the Avenida Senior Living project, a 160-unit market-rate senior (age-restricted) community for “active adults” seeking a lifestyle option not currently available in Colorado Springs.

Location

The 6.06-acre site is located at the north-west corner of Grand Cordera Parkway and Happy Meadows Trail. The site platted as Lot 1 of Briargate Crossing Filing No. 3A.

Site Characteristics

The Site is vacant land that lies in a mixed-use area of Colorado Springs. Grand Cordera Parkway will provide primary community access, while a secondary (private) drive will be located opposite Happy Meadows Trail.

Surrounding Uses

The surrounding uses are variable in nature. On the south are business centers comprising of dental and medical offices, to the west is a Child Care Center, to the east are single family homes, and to the north is currently vacant land with plans for multi-family and commercial uses.

Proposed Development

The proposed development is planned as an age-restricted 160-unit market-rate senior community. The four level Apartment Building will feature a mix of 160 one and two-bedroom homes.

The proposed senior apartment building is S-shaped and will wrap around two large courtyards that will include recreation amenities and landscaping. On the east elevation, a cantilevered porte-cochere will identify the building entry and a large two-story lobby. Apartment homes are planned on each of the four levels of the building and will be accessible via elevators and conditioned hallway corridors.

The project will be served by a shared indoor clubhouse facility (approximately 10,250 sf) located in the main building, and various indoor and outdoor resort-style amenities. Interior amenities include: a boutique hotel style lobby entry; on-site management offices; gathering great room; bistro; fitness and yoga studios; private dining room; creative arts studio; game rooms and flexible meeting space and library area. Exterior amenities include outdoor grilling; pool; walking paths; lounge areas, and resident gardens.

The “great room” will be approximately 1,300 sf. of lounge area and gathering space. The room will consist of a grand fireplace with soft seating conversation area, big screen TV, dining tables and chairs. The space has multiple uses including catered events, special holiday events and the occasional Sunday Brunch. It is often used as a casual gathering space for various resident clubs (book club, church group, cards etc.) and is typically occupied throughout the day.

The “dining room” is an enhanced version of a dining room in a private home. It is intended to provide an intimate space for smaller groups who prefer a more private experience. It is available all day and is often also used as a conference room for resident committees and special interest groups. Residential style appliances are built in for the residents to use. Families take advantage of this room to reserve the space and host family birthday dinners, thanksgiving meals, Christmas brunch, etc. The private dining room will range from 600 sf. The dining room also serves as a demonstration kitchen for visiting chefs who teach various types of meal preparation.

The “bistro” becomes the heartbeat of the community just like the kitchen is in a single-family home. It is where residents come down in the morning for continental breakfast, chat, watch the news, read the paper, and plan their day’s activities. The room is approximately 1,000 SF and includes comfortable seating with dining tables (2 top and 4 top) as well as a “community table” and a very large serving island with stools.

The bistro’s custom cabinetry and back-counters include beverage dispensers of coffee and juices and small appliances that are used all day by the resident. A display refrigerator is included in the Bistro. Snacks might include, water, meal replacement bars, yogurts, bananas, apples, muffins, etc. depending on the resident’s preferences. The Bistro is enjoyed all day and night by the residents.

There will be two “studios” - one for strength and cardio fitness (approx. 650 sf) and one for group classes (approx. 720 sf) for yoga, chair aerobics, and dance classes.

There will be a dedicated “tele-med office” of roughly 300 sf with room for an exam table and room for family members to join the discussion.

The “library” area is an intimate quiet room where residents bring their books from home. Typically, there is soft seating for reading and a game table for puzzles and cards in typically 250-350 SF.

Apartment Homes

Homes are planned in a mix of 104 one-bedroom (65% of units) and 56 two-bedroom (35% of units). Home floor plans will consist of one-bedroom/one-bath (600-905sf), two- bedroom/two-bath (1,040-1,350 sf). Each apartment home will be accessible through interior air-conditioned hallways and will include a full kitchen, living space, private washer/dryer, storage closets, bedrooms, bathrooms, and outdoor patio/balcony and dens in selected homes.

Amenities

There will be over 25,000 sf of highly developed exterior amenity space that will include a pool, spa, outdoor kitchen with grills, a game lawn, patio dining area, and a fire pit.

The west facing pool courtyard is designed with a swimming pool, sun lounge area, and an outdoor fire ring seating area. Seasonal recreation activities will be available, including a spa, and patio area with an outdoor kitchen. The east-facing garden courtyard will feature a planter garden with al fresco dining space, natural landscape with a curvilinear circuit walkway, ornamental sculpture and accent landscape plantings. The space will be used by residents for various activities, including relaxation, dog walking, and garden strolls.

Design Concept

The Avenida CO Springs Senior Living Community will provide the senior residents with a fresh take on a “Mountain Lodge” concept. The body of the building is a combination of taupe stone veneer, mocha siding and other earthy accent tones. Horizontal and vertical elements on each of the elevations create architectural interest and reduce the overall visual mass of the structure. The design language includes a vocabulary of traditional materials such as stone veneer and fiber cement siding balanced by light and dark color palettes.

The main entry, accessible from Grand Cordera Parkway, is identified by a cantilevered porte-cochere, a large two-story lobby, and the use of decorative paving in the arrival area. Residents can enjoy views of the city and surrounding area from the roof-top terrace. The exterior design and materials influence the interior environment as well. The large windows in the common areas create bright, open living areas that encourage activity. All building-attached mechanical equipment will be screened from public view.

Landscape Concept

The proposed landscape will feature Colorado-native and / or Colorado acclimated, low water-use ornamental plant selections providing year-round color, texture and interest. Where possible native / local materials will be utilized within hardscape areas reflecting the Colorado landscape and complimenting the building architecture. Grand Cordera is anchored by an alee of trees, along the sidewalk, providing a strong character along the street. Additional trees are placed within parking islands / medians creating ample shade and meeting the Briargate and City Standards. Gathering areas and site programmatic elements, such as pool/pool deck, shuffle board, outdoor grill stations, raised garden beds and seating areas, are incorporated into the courtyards and entry.

Fencing/Walls:

Both courtyards will include fencing to provide additional definition of space and safety. A variety of enhanced landscape walls will be utilized throughout the site for grade retention, space definition, screening and privacy.

Refuse Collection:

Two trash rooms are planned on the ground level, inside the north and south wings of the building and will house refuse and recycling bins. On the day of collection, the bins will be rolled out of the building, and onto the concrete aprons immediately outside the rooms. After the refuse is collected by the waste management, the Avenida staff will return the containers to the trash rooms. An additional on-site exterior trash and recycling enclosure will provide space for maintenance refuse, large recycling boxes and similar items.

Access and Circulation:

The proposed site will have the main access from Grand Cordera Parkway and a secondary access off Happy Meadow Trail (both pedestrian and vehicular). Additional walks / paths have been incorporated into the landscape plans providing easy access to building and site amenities.

Parking:

The project includes 208 off-street parking spaces. The ratio of parking spaces provided is 1.3.

The proposed parking supply of 208 spaces is ample and appropriate for the project, because it will be age-restricted to senior 55 years of age and over and occupied with a population that has fewer drivers and a lower rate of vehicle ownership compared to conventional (family) multi-family communities. The reduced parking demand of age-restricted communities is also the result of both reduced household sizes and residents who no longer drive vehicles.

The project's proposed parking ratio is consistent with parking ratios in similar age-restricted multi-family projects in the City and region (Walker Parking Needs Analysis included). The parking ratio for the project (1.3 spaces per unit) is consistent with the parking ratio for Avenida's comparable age-restricted multi-family projects nationwide which has actual car ownership of 0.86 cars/unit.

Employees

The project will be staffed by up to five (5) full-time employees, including an executive director, leasing specialist, assistant manager, maintenance and resident enrichment director (see below) providing a "one of kind" living experience for our residents.

The community wellness program is conducted by an on-site Resident Enrichment Director who implements the developer's trademarked "Avenida Life" program called "5 to Thrive" which consists of daily activities related to the 5 pillars of wellness. Based on a holistic approach to wellness, there is a robust schedule of daily activities and programs available to the resident at no charge. Each activity relates to one of the 5 pillars of wellness: physical fitness; emotional wellbeing; spiritual awareness; financial security; and social engagement.

Grading

The site will be graded in a single phase with its finished main level sitting approximately 3-4 feet below Grand Cordera Parkway at the entrance. The site will drain to the south and west via surface conveyance and be collected by inlets and pipe and outfall into existing storm sewer pipe in the private drive opposite Happy Meadows Trail. The flow is then conveyed to an existing detention pond located west of the site.

Phasing and Construction

The project will be graded in a single phase and will take approximately 18-20 months to complete construction. Construction will include minor over-excavation & grading, utilities, foundations, and slab-on-grade activities. Vertical construction will consist of a Type V, four-story, wood-framed structures with elements of siding and masonry architectural details.

Project Ownership and Management

The project will be owned and managed by Avenida Partners. Since 2008, Avenida Partners has focused on serving the senior population with dynamic, active adult (55+), award winning communities in Tennessee, Colorado, Illinois, Oklahoma, and California. Founded in 1991, Avenida Partners undertakes unique, niche development projects that require an expert blend of architectural, aesthetic, and practical solutions. Avenida’s efforts have primarily focused on developing premier residential communities in established and desirable, yet underserved markets. Avenida’s for-sale and for-rent residential projects have included Type I high-rise, urban Type V condominiums and apartments, and conventional horizontal subdivisions.

Age Restricted Senior Multifamily

The entire community will be developed under the Federal Regulations for age-restricted communities outlined in the Housing for Older Persons Act of 1995. This law requires that a head of the household is of 55 years of age or older must reside in each unit; the owner/operator provides an annual report confirming at least one resident in each unit is 55 years of age or older; the facility also offers housekeeping, recreational and socialization activities to its residents; the facility offers a private space for residents to meet with medical professionals; the facility has both attached and detached dwelling units and multi-unit buildings; and, the facility includes indoor amenities such as a library, fitness and yoga studios, great room, private dining room, creative arts studio, meeting space, and laundry facilities; and outdoor amenities such as a pool, spa, outdoor lounge area, landscaped courtyards, gardens, and walking path.

Zoning Designation

The Property is currently zoned Planned Business Center (PBC), and under Section 7.3.202 of the City Code of Colorado Springs, Colorado (the “Code”), a multi-family dwellings are a conditional use in the PBC zoning district. While obtaining an approved development plan and building permit for the Project will not require a rezoning of the property, it required a major amendment to the existing concept plan (“CPA”) which was approved, and the approval of a conditional use development plan (“CUDP”).

Entitlement Request

The current property owner, High Valley Land Co. has processed a CPA and subdivision Plat, while the applicant, Avenida Senior Living, is requesting approval of a CUP, Development Plan and Non-Use Variance for the development and operation of a 160-unit active adult (55+) senior apartment community (Avenida Senior Living) on a 6.06- acre site located at Northwest corner of the intersection of Grand Cordera Parkway and Happy Meadows Trail just south of the intersection with Briargate Parkway.

Justification

The Property is currently zoned Planned Business Center (PBC), and under Section 7.3.202 of the City Code of Colorado Springs, Colorado (the “Code”), multi-family dwellings are a conditional use in the PBC zoning district. The amended concept plan, which was approved in September of 2021, supports all uses in the PBC zone district. Multifamily housing with a conditional use permit is consistent with the uses allowed in the concept plan. The proposed age restricted senior apartments are designated as a multifamily use and as such are consistent with zoning and would fit well with the surrounding residential, retail and office uses. Of note, including other multi-family and assisted living communities to the south and north along the western edge of Grand Cordera Parkway. Therefore, we request support and approval of the Conditional Use for Multifamily in the PBC zone.

The non-use variance request for reduced parking is well within the parking standards for similar age restricted properties. It still reflects the provision of significantly more parking than evidence based analysis recommends (see attached Walker Parking Needs Analysis dated August 2021). Therefore, we request support and approval of the Non Use Variance for reduced parking for 55+ age restricted senior housing.

Development Plan Review Criteria

1. Will the project design be harmonious with the surrounding land uses and neighborhood?

Yes, the proposed active adult multifamily development fits well into the existing neighborhood fabric of other residential, retail and office uses.

2. Will the proposed development overburden the capacities of existing streets, utilities, parks, schools and other public facilities? **No, the proposed use has a reduced burden on existing infrastructure and public facilities, our senior residents have fewer cars, drive less and during off peak hours. Additionally we have programed many on-site amenities, there is less need for our residents to travel to existing parks, plus our residents do not generate school aged children.**

3. Will the structures be located to minimize the impact of their use and bulk on adjacent properties? **Yes, we have sited our building with appropriate setbacks and perimeter landscaping to minimize its impact to adjacent properties.**

4. Will landscaping, berms, fences and/or walls be provided to buffer the site from undesirable views, noise, lighting or other off-site negative influences and to buffer adjacent properties from the negative influences that may be created by the proposed development? **Yes, we have planned extensively through proper siting, accounted for landscaping, walls and buffers to reduce the impact on adjacent properties and vice versa.**

5. Will vehicular access from the project to the streets outside the project be combined, limited, located, designed and controlled to channel traffic to and from such areas conveniently and safely and in such a manner which minimizes traffic friction, noise and pollution and promotes free traffic flow without excessive interruption? **Yes, we have planned for a primary limited right-in / right-out access drive off Grand Cordera and a secondary access which combines with other sites to use the existing private access drive opposite Happy Meadows Trail to control vehicular movements on and off the property with limited interruption.**

6. Will all the streets and drives provide logical, safe and convenient vehicular access to the facilities within the project? **Yes, access has been planned for convenient and safe access to and from the site.**

7. Will streets and drives within the project area be connected to streets outside the project area in such a way that discourages their use by through traffic? **Yes**

8. Will adequately sized parking areas be located throughout the project to provide safe and convenient access to specific facilities? **Yes, we have planned to adequately park the project to provide for safe and convenient access. Parking is provided across the site along less impactful singular drive aisle connecting to multiple building access points.**

9. Will safe and convenient provision for the access and movement of handicapped persons and parking of vehicles for the handicapped be accommodated in the project design? **Yes, accessibility will be considered for safe access and movement on site. Accessible paths have been designated on the plans between the building, public way, and accessible parking stalls.**

10. Will the design of streets, drives and parking areas within the project result in a minimum of area devoted to asphalt? **Yes**

11. Will pedestrian walkways be functionally separated from vehicular traffic and landscaped to accomplish this? **Yes**

12. Does the design encourage the preservation of significant natural features such as healthy vegetation, drainage channels, steep slopes and rock outcroppings? Are these significant natural features incorporated into the project design? **Yes, the site has been planned to work with the natural topography and planned for proper drainage. There are no other significant natural features to incorporate in the design.**