

# Virginia Peninsula Association of REALTORS®

The Voice for Real Estate™ on the Virginia Peninsula



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September 30, 2020

Mr. Terry O'Neill, Director Office of Community Development  
City of Hampton  
22 Lincoln Street  
Hampton, Virginia 23669

**RE: Amendments to Residential Mixed-Use  
Development**

Dear Terry:

The Virginia Peninsula Association of REALTORS® (VPAR) is pleased to support the proposed amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance regarding residential mixed-use development. We very much appreciate the ongoing collaboration that the Association shares with the City on a variety of issues and programs.

Regarding the proposed amendments to the Residential Mixed-Use language, the City's continued focus on stakeholder engagement was demonstrated by your recent outreach to VPAR Member and Hampton REALTOR® Peggy Todd, a member of our Public Policy Committee and a member of the Hampton Neighborhood Commission, as well as to Susan Gaston, our Chief Advocacy Officer. It is this ongoing mutual, collegial effort and relationship of trust and shared input that we believe are the foundations for the good policies that stem from Hampton.

VPAR has had a long-standing position to support local housing and land use policies that provide enhanced opportunities for safe, quality housing, as well as supporting policies that create a diverse housing stock at a variety of price points. Whether it is through improving mixed-use development that will support a "Work here/Live here" model, or through increased density options, or both, we know that having a broad range of housing stock is important for creating both an attractive economic development climate and a vibrant quality of life in Hampton and throughout the region.

For the purpose of the proposed amendments under consideration, we offer the following points:

- The designated Urban Development Areas (UDAs) of Downtown, Coliseum Central, Buckroe and Phoebus all will benefit from increased density and higher quality residential development using the by-right zoning classification.
- By-right development streamlines the permitting process and reduces the costs of development and redevelopment, which are project-centric savings proffered to the developer that in turn are passed on to the purchaser, making housing in those areas more affordable and allowing the developer to have more predictability in the permitting and financial processes.
- By allowing increased density via special use permits in other areas of the City, the City is sending a signal to developers that Hampton is open to increasing housing opportunities, and that Hampton is focused on quality housing communities that will enhance and diversify the City's housing stock.

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- The amendments bolster the notion that “a rising tide lifts all boats,” creating an environment where quality construction and sustainable developments will be more profitable and offer a higher return on investment than properties that are lower in quality, which may struggle for residents and investors. Where there is one quality community, others will follow in order to meet market demands and retain an attractive ROI.
- The proposed amendments support transit-oriented development where housing options are located near transit hubs and pedestrian-friendly communities.
- The proposed amendments will yield housing developments that preserve open space, save on infrastructure costs and yield more per-acre tax revenue to the City, all of which align with smart growth practices.

Again, the Association is pleased to provide our support to the proposed language, which we believe align with our decades-long support of establishing a housing stock that provides a variety of housing options, at a variety of prices. The amendments align with our long-standing adherence to the principles of Smart Growth, where density and quality matter, creating communities that are cost-effective for the developer, and affordable to the purchasers.

Thank you for your ongoing outreach efforts and engagement on this and so many issues, and know that we appreciate our good connections and solid relationships with you, your staff and the decision makers within the City. It is a pleasure to work with and partner with you in efforts to make Hampton and the Peninsula a wonderful community that we all call home.

Warmest regards,

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Lindsay Pennington Jackson

President