

# A BRIGHT FUTURE: SHADY LANE MOBILE HOME PARK DEVELOPMENT



PREPARED FOR:



Town of Lyons  
432 5th Avenue, Lyons, CO, 80540

DATE :

May 15, 2020

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For my capstone project I investigated the affordable housing challenges for the Town of Lyons (the Town). The importance of affordable housing to the Town was clear to me after reviewing multiple planning efforts led by the Town, all of which contained recommendations to prioritize affordable housing. However, the Town is limited in developable area for new construction and this led me to explore options outside of the Town limits. The Shady Lane Mobile Home Park just outside of the Town is one of the few remaining naturally affordable housing options in the area. The community is home to approximately 30 to 40 residents and seasonal summer workers who live there during there when they return to work in the local stone quarries. However this community is at risk of disappearing with the potential future sale of the property that will certainly lead to development and likely displacement. Based on the recent trend across Boulder County, this could result in a few large single family residents replacing the existing community and the affordable housing options. Across Boulder County real estate prices have climbed significantly and the affordable housing stock is increasingly disappearing in the Town for multiple reasons including: Increased demand from new residents seeking the unique, small town appeal of the Town; unique topography that limits developable area; and the destruction of a majority of the affordable housing from a flood disaster in 2013.

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## MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMENDATIONS

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### ■ ■ ■ ■ THE SHADY LANE MOBILE HOME PARK PARCEL CAN SUPPORT INCREASED HOUSING CAPACITY

**Finding:** At over six acres, the Shady Lane Mobile Home Park can be developed to better utilize the existing space, which currently contains only 14 units.

**Recommendation:** Multi-family housing can provide housing options for the existing community and the workforce for the planned commercial development. Single-family housing can provide affordability through accessory dwelling units (ADU's) that will be constructed along with each individual residence.

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### ■ ■ ■ ■ PHASED DEVELOPMENT CAN LIMIT DISPLACEMENT

**Finding:** Phased development is key to limiting displacement and allows the existing community to remain in place.

**Recommendation:** The three phase development allows the developer to begin with critical infrastructure and commercial development to support the future housing. Three zoning districts are recommended to accommodate the spatial site constraints aligns with the following phasing:

Phase I – Gateway Business District - Commercial development would minimally impact the existing residences and provide the required infrastructure improvements to the site for water and sewer service.

Phase II – Shady Lane Neighborhood (multi-family) – The multi-family development is split into two stages, first with construction of a cottage courtyard followed by a multi-family development with duplexes and a fourplex.

Phase III – Shady Lane Neighborhood (single-family + ADU's) - This phase completes the residential development with four single-family homes, including an ADU.

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#### ■ ■ ■ ■ AFFORDABLE HOUSING CAN RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT COST SAVINGS IN WATER RIGHTS

Finding: A recently signed agreement with the City of Longmont for the use of water rights can provide a future developer with a significant savings in water rights if affordable housing is developed.

Recommendation: The developer can benefit from the utilization of the Lake McIntosh Reservoir Company water rights for the construction of affordable housing and significant cost savings.

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#### ■ ■ ■ ■ COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IS NECESSARY TO GENERATE REVENUE TO THE TOWN

Finding: A preliminary market analysis shows an increase of annual tax revenue increase for the Town from the proposed commercial development and a net surplus generated by the increased employment.

Recommendation: Commercial space is necessary to generate economic development, provide jobs for the Town, and support the residential housing development.

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#### ■ ■ ■ ■ ALIGNMENT WITH TOWN'S LONG TERM PLANNING FOR A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Finding: Town planning documents from 2010 to 2016 recommends commercial use of retail and light industrial operations and support affordable housing options.

Recommendation: The proposed development aligns with the Town's past and current planning efforts with a mixed-use development.

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### FINAL THOUGHTS

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In summary the proposed development at the Shady Lane Mobile Home Park parcel fills the need for increasing affordable housing options for the Town while providing economic opportunity. Since the 2013 flood the Town has not recovered from the significant housing loss and the displaced residents have not returned. The Shady Lane Neighborhood would provide 24 units of diverse housing options progressing the Town's affordable housing goals. This would be a major step forward for the Town to protect its vulnerable low-income population and provide equitable opportunities for existing and new residents. The Gateway Business District would provide economic development for the Town through tax revenue and job creation.

While there is an anticipated financial cost to the Town for the residential development these costs must be weighed against the multiple benefits provided by increased housing. Aside from the previously mentioned benefits to bring back displaced residents and support the existing community, benefits such as increased tax revenue, housing for local workforce, stabilization of housing values, stimulation of other economic investments in a neighborhood, and an injection of new energy and life into the Town must be considered. The effects of these benefits can ultimately result in a better quality of life and positive financial benefits to the Town.

CONSIDERATIONS

While this vision is supported by the major stakeholders including the current property owner, the Town, and Boulder County, the impact of displacement to the current community requires additional consideration. The deep affordability offered by the existing mobile homes is at risk and the full impact of displacement requires further examination. Additionally housing options to preserve the seasonal stone quarry workforce housing, a critical industry to the Town, were not explored in this project and will need further assessment.

PLAN OVERVIEW

