

Preliminary Proposal for 9407 Jericho Road

Meritage Homes proposes to develop a new infill community by redeveloping the existing Calvary Church Site, located at 9407 Jericho Road in the Northmont Neighborhood. The site is located within a half-mile radius of Amaya Station, numerous parks and schools, and retail service. The proposed project includes approximately 74 three-story townhomes on approximately 3.5 acres for a density of 21.2 dwelling units per acre.

The site currently maintains a general plan designation of “Urban Residential,” which allows for a density of 7-10 dwelling units per acre. A General Plan Amendment is required to change the designation of the property to “Multiple Unit Residential”, to allow for a density of 18-23 dwelling units per acre, which is consistent with the general plan designations of existing uses to the west and south. A corresponding Zone Change from R1 to R3 will also be required. The proposed change allows for a graduated transition between the existing for-rent apartments to the south and for-sale single-family detached homes to the north by providing for-sale attached townhomes. This type of housing, sometimes referred to as “Missing Middle” housing, offers a diverse housing choice that is compatible with traditional neighborhoods while responding to shifting demographics and the lack of affordability for younger households and first-time homebuyers. This type of housing also addresses the increasing demand for walkability to transit, parks, schools, and local-serving retail.

The proposed community will provide new for-sale housing with a range of home sizes and price points, all within FHA loan limits, to appeal to a variety of homebuyers and household types. Homes consist of 1200-1800 square feet, two to four bedrooms, and an attached two-car garage. This housing type offers new opportunities for homeownership to teachers, police officers, firefighters, nurses, and other middle-income workers who play an important role in the success of the City of La Mesa. Homes will be designed with a traditional architectural character to complement the existing neighborhood. Homes will also be all-electric with rooftop solar and triple-certified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for energy efficiency, water efficiency, and indoor air quality.

The community’s location offers convenient freeway access and walkability to parks, schools, retail, and mass transit in a supply-constrained sub-market. The nearby Amaya Station, located a half-mile away, is served by the Green Line and the Orange Line, two of four lines in San Diego’s Trolley system. These lines provide direct access to major destinations such as the Petco Park, Gaslamp Quarter, Little Italy, Seaport Village, Old Town San Diego, Mission Valley Center, San Diego State University, and numerous employment centers. Development of higher-density housing near transit is critical to the long-term success of high-quality transit by supporting sustainable levels of ridership. Walkability to transit, parks, schools, and retail services also plays an important role in reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions to help mitigate climate change.

Although the property was not identified as one of the 14 opportunity sites in the recently adopted Housing Element update, this newly proposed project provides an opportunity to assist the City of La Mesa in fulfilling the remaining 1,013 Above Moderate Units required by the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and would demonstrate La Mesa’s effort to provide much-needed workforce housing that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and close to transit.