

Lindsey Hill

Frequently Asked Questions

(Version Date: February 5, 2019)

Q: Are you building student housing? If not, how can we be sure that this won't turn into student housing?

A: The apartments at Lindsey Hill are designed for the audience we want to serve: from early career professionals to seniors. The apartments don't include the features found in student housing projects, such as four and five bedrooms surrounding a common living/dining/kitchen area, massive swimming pool, volleyball courts, clubhouse, tanning booths, and resort-style amenities.

Working with input from City officials and the City's legal department, we've included language in the PDD ordinance to discourage student housing, including:

- Landlord may not lease to tenants that are 22 or under unless that individual either: (a) lives with a parent, guardian, or spouse over the age of 22; or (b) has a five year prior credit, rental, or property ownership history (and to allow for early career professionals, the individual may have three year credit, rental, or property ownership history and full-time employment)
- No "rent by the bedroom"
- No Purpose Built Student Housing (as defined by City Code)
- The named tenant must actually occupy the unit (parents can't lease for their kids)
- No subleasing

(For details, please see Section 1.1.B of the PDD Standards Book)

Q: We've been told that you're building only one-bedroom apartments. Is that true? What apartments will you have for someone looking to downsize out of a larger home nearby or for a family?

A: Lindsey Hill will have a traditional mix of one, two, and three bedroom apartments. About 25-30% of the apartments will include two or three bedrooms. Additionally, the one-bedroom apartments will come in a variety of sizes, and some will include bonus rooms that can be used for a TV room, study, craft/hobby room, etc.

Q: Does the Lindsey Hill project include a hotel?

Based on feedback from the community, the developers have decided not to include a hotel as a project element at Lindsey Hill. Lindsey Hill will not have a hotel.

Q: Will Lindsey Hill have enough parking?

A: Yes—and it's very important to the success of the project itself and to the City that the project has the correct amount of parking (what's called "right-sized parking"). Measured against the standards set forth in the newly-adopted Code SMTX, Lindsey Hill will have about 100 more parking spaces than what is now required for mixed-use projects that currently can be built within the City. Parking standards under Code SMTX for non-mixed-use developments were created with suburban projects in mind, where reliance on cars for virtually everything is necessary. By contrast, Lindsey Hill is a walkable project located at the edge of Downtown where many daily needs—including grocery shopping—can be accomplished by walking. Nevertheless, the project will have an amount of parking that is similar to that which Code SMTX requires for suburban projects.

To be sure we have the proper amount of parking, we went through a two-step process:

- (1) First, we asked our architects (a San Antonio-based firm that has successfully designed mixed-use projects all over the world) to include in their design a parking garage that properly supports the demands of our mixed-use project.
- (2) Second, to double-check our architect's findings (and at the City's specific request), we hired a nationally recognized third-party parking consultant to challenge or confirm our architect's recommendations.
 - Using the **Urban Land Institute's Shared Parking Model**, a model that has been in use for 15+ years around the world and is universally embraced and endorsed by, among others, the **Urban Land Institute**, the **US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**, the **American Planning Association (APA)**, the **National Parking Association (NPA)**, and the **International Parking Institute's Green Parking Council**, the parking consultant determined what amount of parking would be "right-sized" for Lindsey Hill.
 - The consultant confirmed that if parking is built in the manner recommended by our architects, Lindsey Hill will be properly parked and the project will not create a parking problem for surrounding streets and neighborhoods.

Q: Some people have expressed concern that Lindsey Hill will generate a lot of traffic on roads that sometimes already seem congested. Will the project add a substantial amount of traffic?

A: The City required that we hire a third-party traffic engineer to perform a Traffic Impact Analysis. The engineer performed that analysis using the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Trip Generation Manual*, a national standards manual embraced by the City.

- The engineer reports that while the project will add some vehicles to the roadway network, the amount of vehicles that will be added can be absorbed comfortably with almost no changes to existing conditions.

In our experience, when people express concerns about traffic, their concerns typically break down into two categories: (1) traffic volume; and (2) traffic speed and resulting safety issues.

Traffic Volume:

- **Nearby major roadways**—In the main, there will be no noticeable "level of service" differences (that means how well traffic functions) on the major roadways near the property. Wait times at intersections are generally differences averaging from only a fraction-of-a-second to a couple of seconds.
- **Walkability**—Lindsey Hill is designed as a walkable/bikeable community. Many major employers are only blocks away from the project site and most daily needs can be reached on foot (e.g., HEB is about two blocks away, many restaurants, shopping, and entertainment venues are within a short walk). That means that those resident trips that in other developments might only occur by car often will occur at Lindsey Hill on foot.
- **Trips spread out during the course of a day**—Some people fret that 184 apartments and 30 condo units translates into a "massive additional load of traffic on the streets." That statement suggests that all travelers would be coming and going from Lindsey Hill at exactly the same time each day. That, of course, is not how things work in the real world. Those trips are spread out over the course of the day—in the same way that happens currently in the neighborhoods (and that's why there aren't traffic jams in the neighborhood now). Existing rush-hour traffic will continue, but it won't be noticeably different due to Lindsey Hill.

Speeding and Safety:

The City is requiring a number of street upgrades around the site that are intended to slow traffic and create a safer pedestrian environment. The populations that the project most focuses on—millennials and empty nesters/older adults—are generally not the types of people known for speeding.

Q: Is Lindsey Hill subject to any architectural controls?

A: Lindsey Hill is subject to extensive and very specific architectural controls (described in detail in the PDD Standards Book). First and foremost, we have committed to a basic conceptual design that must be substantially similar to those images that are found in our PDD Standards Book (those images also are on our website). Any material deviation from that conceptual design requires City Council approval. Additionally, there are architectural standards pertaining to building materials, building façade variety (to prevent cumbersome, monolithic structures), building scale and heights, building setbacks and stepbacks, and landscape and streetscape standards. All of those design standards are meant to create a project that is visually attractive, pedestrian-scaled, and complementary to surrounding properties.

The surrounding historic neighborhoods contain a rich stock of housing and architectural styles representing the many different eras in which the city grew. Those styles include, among others, Victorian, Craftsman, Neo-classical, Italianate, Ranch, Cape Cod, Midcentury Modern, Bungalow, etc. The architectural style of Lindsey Hill buildings will harmonize in a respectful way with the other styles in the historic neighborhood.

(For additional information on these architectural and design standards, see Sections 5.1 – 5.13 of the PDD Standards Book)

Q: Some people feel that the different uses proposed for the property are “too many uses.” Why isn’t there simply a single use?

A: Lindsey Hill will be primarily residential in use, character, and design. The single largest component of the project will be apartment homes—a mixture of rental apartments and for sale condos. Lindsey Hill also will include a limited amount of retail space and, under special circumstances, a limited amount of office space. **[It’s important to note that the hotel element has been removed from the project—thus one category of use no longer is included.]**

Lindsey Hill is located on a large site (almost 5 acres covering two full city blocks) near the center of town. It has no more different uses (it actually has fewer uses) than what you ordinarily might encounter at or near a town center.

Lindsey Hill also is a mixed-use project, meaning that its complementary parts are designed to serve, support, and be enjoyed by one another.

Q: Some people I talk to say that Lindsey Hill is a comfortable size that is compatible with surrounding uses, while others suggest that it is “too tall” or “too dense.” Why isn’t it smaller?

A: Lindsey Hill’s design is most affected by two important project goals: (1) “design up, not out, and invite in” in order to protect, showcase, and share the site’s extraordinary natural features—including irreplaceable legacy tree stands and the site’s unique topography; and (2) making the parking garage invisible.

- In order to protect the legacy tree stands and to showcase the site’s natural assets in a way that will be used actively by Lindsey Hill residents, guests, and neighbors, we’re

building on about 60% of the total site. That's possible only if we can develop the balance of the site in the manner described in our PDD application.

- There are two traditional ways of providing parking for a project of this type. The first way is to build a large, freestanding garage that is visible from the street and is readily identifiable as a garage structure. Structures of this kind tend to be imposing and not particularly aesthetically appealing--but they are far less expensive to build. The second way is to hide the parking garage by wrapping the other building improvements around the garage, making the garage invisible. This second way is more complicated and is significantly more costly. But for the quality of development that we want to bring to the community, this second way of building a garage is the responsible and preferable way to go.
- To support the additional costs of providing so much open space and building a wrapped garage while assuring an economically sustainable project, we need a minimum base level of density over which to spread the costs.

The height of buildings at Lindsey Hill will vary by street frontage, with the more urban mixed-use and multifamily frontages, Hutchison and Moore, experiencing slightly taller structures. Along Burleson Street, height steps up from about two and a half stories (the existing gymnasium building will remain at the corner of Burleson and Blanco) to three stories, and then to four stories. When the building gets to Moore Street, a fifth floor is tucked in below such that the building's roof line does not increase at that point. Along Burleson, building heights are the same size as or just one story taller than most homes in the historic district (which range from one to three stories).

On the Moore Street and Hutchison Street sides of Lindsey Hill, because of dramatic site slope declines at the Lindsey Hill site, an additional story also is tucked below the same roof line as the structures behind. Because of that site condition, the fifth "tucked below" story doesn't raise overall height in any material way. Additionally, along Hutchison and Moore Streets, existing zoning for most properties across from Lindsey Hill already permits four story structures.

Finally, it's also important to note that the San Marcos CISD, on behalf of the citizens of San Marcos, sold the Lamar Annex site as a development parcel and, in doing so, required payment of a hefty purchase price. That price only makes sense if the property can be developed to an appropriate density.

Q: Poet's Corner is described as being available for public use. What does that mean?

A: Poet's Corner will be available to members of the public in the same manner and to the same extent that it is available to residents and guests of Lindsey Hill. Hours of operation and terms and conditions of use are regulated by the property owner. No different use can be made of Poet's Corner without a revision to the PDD, which would mean going through the PDD process once again and obtaining City approval.

Q: Is Lindsey Hill formally in any historic district?

A: Lindsey Hill is not in any historic district. There is one historic district adjacent to the project: the Lindsey-Rogers Historic District, located to the north side of the project site, across Burleson Street. There are other historic districts located a block or two away. Lindsey Hill is designed with a keen awareness of and sensitivity to the neighborhoods it touches—most specifically the historic neighborhoods and downtown. It is intended to serve as a point of intersection and transition weaving these distinct neighborhoods together.

Additionally, recognizing the sensitivity to protecting San Marcos' historic neighborhoods, we've studied parallel situations in Texas (San Antonio; Waco; Georgetown), and we've visited and experienced some of America's most beloved historic cities (New Orleans, Savannah, Charleston, and Richmond). In each case, we've observed that historic neighborhoods are living, dynamic, and organic, and are benefitted by the presence of elements (both residential and commercial) that projects like Lindsey Hill bring to the table. These elements add to the strength, stability, and quality of life of historic neighborhoods.

Q: Prior developers have come in promising all sorts of things, but when their projects were built, those projects weren't consistent with what the community was told. How do we know this situation will be different?

A: We have worked very hard to make the PDD process a collaborative one, and to come up with a guidebook (the PDD Standards Book) that is enforceable. To that end:

- We initially spent 13 months meeting with and learning from city leaders (elected and appointed), economic development officials, neighborhood association leaders, community activists, frontline neighbors, key neighborhood stakeholders, and others. We've logged countless hours in city offices and in private homes sitting around kitchen tables and in parlors sharing vision, exchanging ideas, and answering questions;
- We originally hosted two public question and answer sessions;
- After the second public meeting, we setup a website (www.lindseyhilltx.com) in order to make it easier for people to get information about the project. The website includes the entire PDD Standards Book, which is both the roadmap and rulebook that the development must follow;
- We've responded to direct individual requests for more information and/or clarification that we've received from people who attended the public question and answer sessions;
- Since our initial presentation to P&Z in April, 2016, we have spent many more months meeting with stakeholders (both those who initially expressed concerns about or opposition to our project and those who supported our project) to be certain we craft a project that reflects the goals, aspirations, and desires of the community;
- After we updated the plan for Lindsey Hill based on the community feedback we received, we introduced the revised plan to the community in numerous small parlor conversations, plus in larger presentations to various local organizations including Rotary, Lions Club, Four Rivers Association of Realtors, etc. We then had another open, community-wide public question and answer session (with notice posted in the newspaper) as well as an open workshop session (again, with notice posted in the newspaper) to answer questions from P&Z, City Council, and the community at large;
- We completely redesigned and updated the Lindsey Hill website to make it more user-friendly, to provide detail on the new project, and to add as much additional information as possible based on various questions we received.
- As of February, 2019, we have spent about ten months working with City Staff and the recently-formed City Council Subcommittee to clarify and tighten the project's limitations as defined within the PDD Standards Book. As often as possible, we try to update the website to add more detail and to make sure that the information on our website follows any PDD Standards Book modifications that have been requested by City Staff and the City Council Subcommittee;
- By going through the PDD process, we are agreeing to terms and conditions that follow the project itself, bind all owners of the property, and are strictly enforceable by the City. Unless the project goes through the PDD/rezoning application process all over again, the project won't be able to do anything that is outside of the rules and regulations of the PDD Standards Book.

Q: I'm nervous about flooding and drainage issues. Will Lindsey Hill make an existing problem worse?

A: Lindsey Hill will not add to or create a flooding problem. Lindsey Hill will use modern rainwater management techniques to slow water flows, reduce runoff pollutants, and capture some water on-site. While the existing school buildings currently deposit all storm water on the surface, with much of that water then flowing directly into city streets, buildings at Lindsey Hill will route storm water through bioswales and bioretention basins. Those modern storm water management techniques are designed to collect, filter, and slow water, which then will flow directly into storm sewer systems, further reducing the potential for flooding.

Lindsey Hill will add less than one acre of additional impervious coverage and some of that impervious cover will include semi-pervious paving materials or rooftop gardens. In the main, the new structures at Lindsey Hill will sit exactly in the locations where existing buildings or paved surfaces exist.

Most importantly, however, Lindsey Hill is being built in a previously developed location rather than consuming raw, undeveloped land that is a critical part of Central Texas' storm water management system. The experts universally agree that building in previously developed areas is a far superior way for cities to grow if they want to reduce the potential for flooding. Thinking about it differently, if the future Lindsey Hill residents were instead forced to live in suburban locations, it would take hundreds of acres to accommodate their requirements for roads, driveways, rooftops, patios, sidewalks, etc.

Q: We've heard a lot of different things about your project. Sometimes it's hard to separate fact from fiction. Where can we get the straight story?

A: The easiest starting point for getting to know Lindsey Hill is through our website, which provides a substantial amount of detail about the elements and goals of the project.

You also are most welcome to contact us directly, as others already have done. If you have additional questions, please email us using the "Contact" link on the project's website: www.lindseyhilltx.com.

Your support.

We ask for your support. We hope the citizens of San Marcos give us the privilege to serve this community. Lindsey Hill represents an opportunity for all of us, working together, to create something truly extraordinary—something that will bring additional prominence and prestige to San Marcos.

We'd be honored to serve you.