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December 30, 2022

Mr. Larry Forester, Chairman  
Lexington-Fayette Urban County Planning Commission  
200 East Main Street  
Lexington, KY 40507

RE: 5354 and 5380 Athens-Boonesboro Road  
PLN-MAR-22-00023: Application for Zone Change and Conditional Use Permit  
PLN-MJDP-22-00073: Preliminary Development Plan

Dear Chairman Forester,

In response to requests for additional information from the Commission and Staff, iVCP Athens South LLC submits this letter to supplement our justification letters submitted on October 31, 2022 and November 9, 2022 regarding the application for a zone change, a conditional use permit and preliminary development plan for a portion of property known as 5354 and 5380 Athens-Boonesboro Road, Lexington, Kentucky.

## **Economic Impact**

The Applicant, in consultation with Commonwealth Economics, has completed an analysis of the direct and indirect economic impact of the development proposed with the requested zone change and conditional use permit, the results of which are summarized below. These economic impacts include the planned medical office building and commercial outparcels included in the zone change request, as well as the soccer stadium site and training facility.

The stadium site is projected to provide an economic impact of 30 full-time staff positions as part of the executive team and front office with an average annual salary of \$75,000, resulting in excess of \$2.2 million annually in direct salaries. There would be an additional 7-10 full-time training and medical staff as part of the training facility with an average annual salary of \$120,000. The stadium and training facility will also serve as the home of our professional men's and women's teams, each containing a roster of approximately 25 professionals and a related coaching staff for each respective team of 5-8 individuals, including operations staff. Total approximate payroll for each team will be in excess of \$1 million annually in direct labor income impact.

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For the medical office building and commercial outparcels, Applicant is projecting approximately 194 direct and indirect jobs produced on the site with an annual labor income projection of \$9.8 million. The jobs produced from these sites include medical professionals, executive positions, service professionals and general retail.

Overall, the development permitted by the zone change and conditional use permit is projected to result in approximately 300 jobs created, with total annual salary projections of over \$16 million, resulting in excess of \$30 million in overall economic impact to the community. This is in addition to the total projected investment on the site of over \$40 million and related construction jobs that will be generated during the development phase once the zone change and conditional use permit is approved. Moreover, the economic impact numbers cited above do not take into consideration any economic impact of the contiguous areas that are not a part of the zone change and conditional use request.

The proposed development presents an exceptional opportunity to create an athletic complex and venue that will be an economic and cultural asset to the community. Pairing the location of the soccer stadium and training facility next to the soccer fields to the south will result in an attractive location for local and regional soccer tournaments. Such tournaments draw visitors from other counties and states to Lexington. These visitors stay at hotels, eat in restaurants and spend their dollars in our community. Applicant's consultants have projected that tournaments at the site will generate in excess of \$1.5 million annually in new spending on hotels and restaurants alone from visitors from outside of Lexington.

### **Minimizing the Impact**

The Applicant's choice of site location for the soccer stadium, nestled directly at the corner of I-75 and its on-ramp from Athens-Boonesboro Road and next to the training facility and new soccer fields, is designed to minimize the impact the stadium may have on the surrounding agricultural areas, the few residential houses in the area and the viewsheds along Athens-Boonesboro Rd and I-75. The nearest property used for agricultural lies approximately 1,810 feet away from the stadium and is buffered by the approximately 75 acres on which soccer fields are located and the nearest residential property lies approximately 1,790 feet to the east and is also buffered by approximately 35 acres of existing commercially zoned property. Both the agricultural and residential properties have a substantial amount existing trees and vegetation along their property boundaries. The existing vegetation combined with the rolling hill topography of the area, will make it unlikely that the stadium will be able to be seen to any significant degree from these properties.

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Stadium lighting is being designed so there will be no spillover of light from the stadium to any agriculture and residential areas in the vicinity. The stadium will utilize LED lighting with fixtures with internal TIR optics and an external visor to direct light toward the interior of the stadium. Lighting in the parking areas will be subject to the newly revised requirements of the zoning ordinance, which were specifically designed to bring lighting lower and to reduce spillover light. Furthermore the area is already subject to existing light sources. The stadium will be directly adjacent to I-75 and its on-ramp, which has substantial lighting, and to its east side there are gas stations with bright lighting.

The impact of any noise from the stadium on the agriculture and residential areas in the vicinity will be minimal. The area is already subject to noise from the Interstate and Athens-Boonesboro Rd., which will mute any additional noise created by the stadium. The Applicant has purposely designed the stadium in a horseshoe shape with the open-end oriented toward I-75, such that sound will be projected toward the interstate and away from other areas. Similar to the lighting, stadium speakers will be directed to project sound into the stadium.

A stadium, by its nature, is not an high intensity use. It is used intermittently for events for short periods of time. Stadiums are not inherently at odds with residential or agricultural uses. There are many stadiums, both larger and smaller than the one proposed here, that peacefully co-exist and operate in the middle of residential neighborhoods in Lexington, such as the various high school stadiums, the Legends' stadium, and UK's football, soccer and baseball stadiums. Proximity to other uses, in and of itself, does not render the requested conditional use inappropriate.

Due to its location, the proposed stadium will not significantly affect the viewsheds along Athens-Boonesboro Rd. or I-75. The on-ramp to I-75 and I-75 itself are at a lower elevation and there are significant hills, rock outcrops, berms and foliage that will block the view of the stadium from cars traveling on the interstate. Similarly, the topography of Athens-Boonesboro Rd., the distance of the site from the road, and the hills and foliage between the two, will shield views of the stadium from the vast majority of the Athens-Boonsboro Rd. corridor. To the extent that the stadium may be visible on occasional stretches, the stadium will be attractive and will contribute to creating the impression of a vibrant and diverse community for visitors arriving to Lexington at this location.

**Compliance with Conditional Use Requirements of Section 8-20(d).**

Applicant understands that in accordance with the zoning ordinance the conditional use permit will be subject to the required conditions set forth in Section 8-20(d)(1)-(3) and Applicant is prepared to abide by those conditions. Specifically with respect to Sec. 8-20(d)(2), requiring that

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an illuminated scoreboard not be visible from any street for a distance of 1,000 feet from the structure, Applicant submits that the only street within a 1,000 feet of the scoreboard would be I-75 and its on-ramp, and that the topography of the site and interstate make it highly unlikely a scoreboard would be visible from the interstate. In the event it is needed, Applicant is prepared to provide additional screening to ensure that the visibility of any such scoreboard is in compliance with Section 8-20(d)(2).

The Applicant thanks you for your consideration of its zone change and condition use permit request.

Very truly yours,

STITES AND HARBISON, PLLC



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