Statement of Public Benefits

The Emerson will provide significant public benefits, as described below.

A. **Provision of Affordable Housing.** The Emerson represents a unique opportunity to provide a true mixed-income building to the Evanston community. The core concept of the development is to combine affordable housing for low-income persons and housing for the “missing middle” with market-rate housing in a top-quality development. The Emerson will provide the following affordable housing benefits:

1) **Low-Income Households:** Twenty percent (20%) of the units will be reserved for persons whose incomes are at or below 50% of area median income (AMI). The Emerson will exceed the Low Income Household requirements of Evanston’s Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, Evanston City Code Section 5-7-6 B (Ordinance). The number of low-income household units meets the Ordinance’s minimum 20% requirement of affordable units for a “publicly financed” development, and it exceeds the income target of 60% AMI by reserving the units for persons at just 50% AMI.

2) **Middle Income Households:** Ten percent (10%) of the units will be reserved for persons whose incomes are on the low end of the range for Middle Income Households as defined by the Ordinance. The Emerson will house persons earning between 80% - 120% of AMI, a group known as the “missing middle.” These households have incomes that are too high to qualify for public housing assistance but too low to afford market-rate rents. The lack of housing for the “missing middle” in Evanston is becoming more acute as new developments are oriented toward high-income households. This is particularly true in downtown Evanston. The rent paid by these “missing middle” households will not cover the full cost of developing and operating the building and will be underwritten by the Applicant, Housing Authority of Cook County. The goal will be to rent these units to as many households at the 80% AMI income level as possible, recognizing that the timing of vacancies may not always coincide with ready renters at the 80% AMI level. No units will be rented to persons with incomes above 120% AMI.

B. **Senior Housing.** The Emerson will be age restricted to persons 55 years of age or older. This is a segment of the population that needs housing in Evanston, particularly affordable housing. The Emerson will provide 168 units of new, top quality apartment units in a prime location adjacent to downtown. This is a perfect environment for senior living with many amenities for seniors within close proximity to their place of residence. The 20% affordable units and 10% “missing middle” units will provide a particular benefit to seniors.

C. **Architectural Design.** The Applicant has directed The Emerson design team to achieve excellence in architectural design. High-quality exterior building materials and the modulation of massing and form will combine to anchor the corner and provide a landmark for the neighborhood. HACC and the project architects intend to make the building one of the most attractive new buildings in Evanston. The building’s design, site design, and provision of open space all affect the building’s contribution to the neighborhood’s aesthetic character. The location of the building is such that it will be visible to a significant portion of the public, and an attractive building will be an amenity. HACC and the Project Team feel that architectural design is a major strength of the project and an amenity.
D. **Provision of Open Space, Landscaping and Streetscaping.** The Emerson will provide significant open space on the perimeter of the property along Emerson Street and Sherman Avenue. Passersby and residents of the surrounding neighborhood will be welcome to enjoy the benches, water feature, and gardens, making The Emerson a neighborhood gathering place. The green space will promote interaction between the mixed-income residents of The Emerson and the broader community. Existing buildings to the east, south and west, have very little green space between the buildings and the public right-of-way, and the Emerson will improve the sense of open space on the block. Public rights of way will be enhanced with landscaping along Emerson Street and Sherman Avenue through street tree planting and public sidewalk improvements.

E. **Provision of Public Art.** The design of the open space/gardens along Emerson Street and Sherman Avenue will include art elements, such as the water feature and floating bench. The design of these semi-public spaces will go beyond utilitarian design to include artistic expression.

F. **Widening of the Emerson Street and Sherman Avenue Sidewalks.** In the DAPR review process, City staff requested that the sidewalks along both Emerson Street and Sherman Avenue be widened, and the Applicant has agreed to this.

G. **Enhanced Public Safety.** Security cameras will be installed on the building to monitor the property, public ways, and surrounding area. Recordings from the cameras will be made available to the Evanston Police Department to enhance public safety and law enforcement.

H. **Transit-Oriented Development.** The Emerson is designed to be a transit-oriented development that relies more on public transportation, walking and biking, and less on automobile use. Only 15 net additional parking spaces will be provided, all of which will be in a garage below the building. The Emerson has made arrangements to lease surplus parking spaces at other property 0.2 miles away rather than building additional parking. This has contributed to the high-quality architectural design of the building and has helped designers save site area for green space along the public streets, which represents a public benefit.

I. **Sustainable Design and Development.** The Emerson will utilize these advanced techniques for sustainable design and development: a) high-efficiency heating/cooling/ventilation system; b) high thermal rating windows; and c) use of recycled building products wherever possible. The building will, at a minimum, meet Evanston’s LEED Silver standard.

J. **Section 3/MBE and Evanston Employment.** The Applicant and general contractor are firmly committed to not only meeting Section 3 and MBE/WBE goals, but exceeding them. The Applicant will work with the General Contractor to enlist Evanston subcontractors and job applicants.

K. **Bird Friendly Design.** The Applicant and project architect have incorporated a significant number of bird-friendly design techniques.

L. **Sustainability.** The Applicant and the project architect will, at a minimum, meet the City of Evanston’s LEED requirements.

M. **Sidewalks.** As part of site redevelopment, sidewalks will be realigned and widened to improve pedestrian access. Existing pavement at the intersection creates confusion for pedestrians; the pavement includes narrow pathways from the sidewalk to the road and trashcans. These bits of cement will be removed, and the new sidewalk will establish a comfortable and even flow between nearby properties and the intersection.
N. Elimination of Surface Parking. The proposed building and landscaping areas will replace an underutilized surface parking lot, thereby eliminating one urban heat island and reducing the opportunity for the impervious surface to collect potentially harmful chemicals from car exhaust, tires, and leaking automobile systems.

O. Employment for Residents of Evanston. Employment for Residents of Evanston. HACC has engaged James McHugh Construction Co. to serve as lead contractor. McHugh will ensure that the development sets a goal of hiring Evanston residents and businesses to the extent commercially reasonable.

P. Employment for People who Receive Assistance. HACC will ensure that the construction, operation, and maintenance of the development provides employment opportunities for low and very low income persons. The development will create no fewer than five new jobs. Although some of the jobs will relate to construction, many of the jobs will be permanent or long term. HACC will conform to the requirements of Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968. For additional information see:

https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/documents/19580_SECTION3.PDF