

Valley-Wide

Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health. Our Priority!

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Dear Members of the Planning Commission-

Thank you for the opportunity to address the commission and respectfully request a variance for the former Alamosa County Courthouse property located at 702 4<sup>th</sup> Street in Alamosa, CO. My employer, Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc., is currently under contract to purchase the property in an effort to develop it into a mixture of business space, medical offices, and other occupancy types that will, in our opinion, enhance the Central Business District (CBD) in alignment with the City's long-term plan for the downtown area. For us to successfully develop the property, we will require a variance for the off-street parking requirements that would normally be required under the Uniform Development Code (UDC).

First, allow me to provide more information on why Valley-Wide is interested in developing the property. Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc. recently merged with Southeast Health Group, a community mental health center based primarily in the lower Arkansas Valley. Due to the merger, Valley-Wide inherited several service lines that we did not provide prior to the merger, which necessitated a capital expansion to house those services. Our CEO, Dr. Jania Arnoldi, is actively involved in the Economic Development and Downtown Committees, and identified the old courthouse property as a potential place for those services. Jania sees this project as a win-win for both Valley-Wide and the City of Alamosa. As the commission knows, the property has been vacant since the county moved to the new Justice Center property in 2017. We believe that we are one of the few organizations in the area that has the resources, personnel, vision and values to repurpose this historic landmark into a beneficial and complimentary piece of the Central Business District.

The first argument for the Commission to grant a variance is that any application of the UDC as adopted would make this property worthless for any of the occupancies the City would like to see comprise the CBD. Even business space, which has one of the lowest requirements in the code, would require 60 off-street parking spaces. The property at 702 4<sup>th</sup> Street faces unique physical constraints that limit the availability of sufficient parking space. The existing structure was constructed during an era when parking demands were not as significant as they are today. As a result, there is limited space on the property to accommodate the required number of parking spots without compromising the building's historical character or useable square footage.

We do not believe that, by granting the variance, the completed project will result in substantial detriment to the public good or impairing the intent and purpose of the UDC. On the contrary, we believe that granting a parking variance for 702 4<sup>th</sup> Street aligns with the City of Alamosa's goals of promoting urban density and walkability. By reducing the emphasis on parking space requirements, the property can be repurposed to accommodate a mix of uses that prioritize pedestrian-oriented design and encourage a vibrant, accessible streetscape. This approach contributes to a more sustainable and livable community. Lastly, we would like the Commission to understand that there are multiple forms of transportation that prospective clients and patients could utilize to come to the facility, which do not require parking. These would include medical transportation services such as Medride and SLV Transportation, as well as Valley-Wide's own in-house transportation, Valley-Wide Ride. Valley-Wide Ride has provided over 2,300 rides across our service area since the beginning of 2023. All these different forms of alternate transportation should reduce the parking expectations for the building. In addition, there are several public parking facilities within a reasonable walking distance of the property. The

availability of these nearby parking options ensures that the limited on-site parking will not unduly burden the neighborhood.

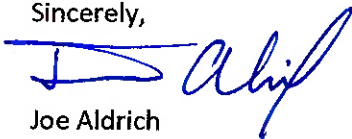
We inherently understand that, while some relief may be in order, staff, visitors, customers, patients and other individuals utilizing the facility will need some parking. We know that one of the occupancy types that we are planning is some medical office building space. The parking requirements for medical office buildings, per the UDC, is one space per 150 square feet. After doing research, we learned that the City of Alamosa has some of the strictest parking requirements for medical office buildings for municipalities of Alamosa's size and character. I have compiled a table below showing some nearby municipalities and their requirements for parking.

Durango	1 space per 300 sf
La Junta	1 space per 200 sf
Salida	1 space per 400 sf
Pagosa Springs	1 space per 300 sf
Buena Vista	1 space per 250 sf
Leadville	1 space per 500 sf
Monte Vista	1 space per 300 sf
Canon City	1 space per 300 sf

As you can see, the current parking requirement for medical office buildings is not in-line with those other municipalities. I have acted as a construction manager on nearly 100,000 square feet of medical office building space spread across southern Colorado, including clinics in five of the municipalities. I am also the Director of Facilities for Valley-Wide Health Systems and deal with facilities issues post-occupancy, including parking congestion. It is my professional opinion that parking is sufficient with the 300 square feet per space required in some of these other municipalities.

In closing, I want to thank the Planning Commission for their consideration in this matter. We are excited to reach viability and move forward to the next stages of this exciting project.

Sincerely,



Joe Aldrich