NATIVITY of MARY
CATHOLIC CHURCH

9900 LYNDALE AVE. S.
BLOOMINGTON, MN 55420
(952)881-8671

Division of City Planning
1800 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington, MN 55431

Re: Real Estate Equities, Inc. and Daniel Wixon Public Hearing January 15, 2026

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

The undersigned are representatives of Nativity of Mary Catholic Church and School located at 9900 Lyndale Avenue South, Bloomington, MN 55420. We were surprised to receive a Notice of Public Hearing for such a significant project with about 10 days to prepare. Specifically, we did not receive it until about January 5. Given the shortness of the notice and the holidays we have not had adequate time to study and prepare.

The Nativity of Mary campus has a parish and an elementary school. The parish serves about 1200 families with a busy church schedule not only on the weekends but also during the week. We have weekend Masses on Saturday evening and two on Sunday morning serving about 1100 persons every weekend. We also have parish activities on the weekends, such as the St. Vincent de Paul free food giveaway, weddings, and other activities. During the week we have daily Mass, faith formation activities during the day and evening, meetings of the parish council, finance council, and other groups. All of these activities generate considerable traffic.

The school is part of the campus and has an enrollment of about 330 students, preschool through eighth grade. The student drop-off and pick-up times for school are about 9:00-9:30 am and 3:50-4:20 pm. The students arrive and depart via 7-10 buses at the South Parking Lot, or via parents or others that pick them up at the North Parking Lot. As you can imagine, there is considerable congestion onto and off Lyndale Avenue during those peak periods.

Recently, the 98th Street Transit Station was constructed. Since that time, we have noticed a substantial increase in foot traffic to and from the transit station to Bus Stop #10031 on Lyndale. Many persons will cut across the northwest corner of our property to access or exit the transit station. It appears to us that the connectivity between the bus stop and transit station is not working as the sidewalks are not sufficient for persons to connect with Lyndale which is causing safety issues and concerns for us. For example, on three occasions we needed the Bloomington Police to deal with interactions with transit foot traffic who were disruptive to our campus.

The Proposal

The Wixon proposal is for a 180-unit affordable apartment building located directly across Lyndale Avenue from the Nativity of Mary campus. It will require: (1) A Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change the designation of 9955 Lyndale from General Business to High Density

Residential; (2) Rezoning from B-2 and R-1 to RM-50 (D) High-Density Residential Planned Development; (3) Preliminary and Final Development Plans for a four-story, 180-unit, multifamily residential building; and (4) A Preliminary and Final Plat to combine six parcels of land into one. To approve the City must find, among other things, that the proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance; that all deviations from City Code "are in the public interest"; that the proposal "will not create an excessive burden" on City streets and other public facilities or utilities; and that it "will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or otherwise harm the public health, safety, and welfare." City Code 21.501.02, (b) and (d)(1)-(2) and (5)-(6).

Nativity of Mary Concerns

We have three concerns with the proposal. First, the proposal is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. To make it consistent will require substantial changes to those documents. There is no showing on how the proposal will benefit the surrounding neighborhood. For example, the Lyndale Avenue Retrofit Plan envisions a connected, walkable, and dynamic boulevard. Currently, the public sidewalks are inadequate to support foot-traffic connectivity for the Lyndale area south of 98th/Lyndale.

Second, we are concerned that the proposal will create an excessive burden on 99th Street and its sidewalks, disrupt access to our property, and create traffic congestion on Lyndale Avenue. Further, the project as proposed will be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood. Specifically, there is no connectivity for foot traffic from the transit station to the proposed apartment building. We believe this will create a safety issue. Currently, transit customers cut across our property to walk between the I-35w & 98th Street Station and Lyndale Avenue Bus Stop #10031. The project will add significant foot traffic between the transit station and the proposed apartment building. This will result in vehicle/foot traffic conflicts on Lyndale and 99th Street. Based on our observation, the existing sidewalks are inadequate to meet the additional need.

We believe the project as proposed will cause significant traffic congestion issues and resulting safety issues. The combined effect of the additional foot traffic and vehicle traffic will cause conflicts as vehicles attempt to navigate the complexities of vehicles attempting lane changes, turning into or out of the apartment building or Nativity of Mary Church and School, and foot traffic crossing Lyndale to go to the apartment building or Lyndale bus stop. And it does not help that the Lyndale entrances to the project and the school via 99th are very close together. We question whether the change in setback of the project from Lyndale is reduced from 40 to 19 feet is in the public interest given these concerns.

These potential risks would be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood. We suggest the City orders a traffic congestion and foot-traffic connectivity study to determine the impact of the project and what mitigation could be done. This could include improvements to the sidewalks on 99th/Lyndale, a signal light and crosswalk at 99th/Lyndale, and a City fence along the East sidewalk abutting Lyndale.

Third, we are concerned that construction of the project, especially the excavation may have adverse environmental effects to the groundwater and soil vapor contamination in the area. We

understand from our working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) that the Lyndale Avenue Corridor, which includes this project, is part of a superfund site. The MPCA has been studying the contamination for decades and believes it is moving in a southwest direction toward the Minnesota River. The plume may affect the Wixon property. A study should be made to determine whether this presents any limitations on the development of this property and the surrounding properties including the Nativity of Mary property.

We're also concerned about stormwater management of the project and whether it involves the use of our retention pond. We cannot find anything that shows we deeded this property to the City.

Conclusion

It would have been easier if a neighborhood meeting was conducted on these issues and then aired and resolved. We believe our concerns should be studied before the Planning Commission and City Council take action. There is plenty of time to do so before the April deadline.
The City has the authority to order special studies to consider the transit connectivity, traffic congestion, storm water management, and the environmental impact of the project. We believe a third-party review of these issues is warranted given the size, scope, and potential impact of the project. Code 21.501.02 (f)(5).

We urge the City to order the studies proposed.

Sincerely,

Rev. William D. Duffert

Rev. William D. Duffert
Pastor, Nativity of Mary Parish

Christopher Dietzen,
Trustee, Nativity of Mary Parish