



Executive Director
Joleen Reece

December 20, 2022

Mike Murray, Planning Manager
City of Kelso Building and Planning Department
203 South Pacific Ave. Kelso, WA 98626

Mr. Murray,

I am writing today to request the City of Kelso consider granting a reduction to the minimum off-street parking requirement for an upcoming Kelso Housing Authority (KHA) development project from a 1.5 parking stalls per dwelling unit ratio to a one (1) stall per unit ratio. Blue Thistle Villa, the new 32-unit multifamily project proposed at 1104 Walnut Street in Kelso, WA, is a three-story walk-up building consisting of 9 one-bedroom, 12 two-bedroom, and 11 three-bedroom units across two buildings, serving general low-income individuals and families with children in the local community.

Per Section 17.22.110 of the Kelso Municipal Code, the required minimum parking amount for special cases involving new residential developments shall be determined by the City, provided documentation of required parking for the proposed use as determined by other comparable jurisdictions. Per Section 19.78.100 of the Longview Municipal Code, a multifamily development of six or more dwelling units is required to provide one parking space for each studio, one-bedroom or two-bedroom unit and one and one-half spaces for each three-or-more-bedroom unit. Under this minimum parking requirement, the unit mix proposed for Blue Thistle would necessitate a minimum of 38 off-street parking stalls, or a 1.2 stall to dwelling unit ratio.

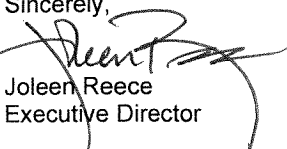
KHA is committed to providing a minimum 1:1 parking ratio, resulting in at least 32 stalls to accommodate residents. Any surplus parking spaces above this baseline will be allocated to visitors and staff, who will also be able to utilize the ample street parking in the immediate area. Considering this project is still in the early design phases, the count highlighted in the table below reflects what we're able to provide at this time, but is subject to change pending potential site evolutions.

Users	Stalls Provided
Residents	32
Visitors	5
Staff	3

There are a number of additional project features that factor into our request for a parking reduction, including direct proximity to transit services. Under RCW 36.70A.620, affordable housing projects that meet certain transit reliability requirements are eligible for a minimum residential parking requirement of 0.75 spaces per unit. While the nearby RiverCities Transit stop does not currently meet the frequent service requirement of the state statute, increased demand from residents of Blue Thistle Villa may encourage the transit agency to improve frequency along the route in the future. Transit dependency is common among residents of existing KHA properties, reflected in a recent internal audit of private vehicle ownership that found only 62% of residents own at least one vehicle. Lastly, Blue Thistle Villa is located directly across Walnut St. from the KHA main office, allowing property management staff a convenient option for parking off-site.

Considering the information provided above, KHA is confident that a one (1) parking stall per dwelling unit ratio will effectively meet the resident parking needs at Blue Thistle. Thank you for your time and please feel free to contact me at (360)423-3490 ext. 201 or jreece@kelsohousing.org with any questions.

Sincerely,


Joleen Reece
Executive Director

