

**Illinois Association of Seventh-day Adventists  
Maranatha Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Church  
Property Address: 555 Redwood Road, Aurora, Illinois as a Church**

## **Qualifying Statement of the**

### **General Description of the Subject Property and Intended Use for Religious Purposes**

The Subject Property, located at 555 Redwood Road, is zoned B-2(C), Business District-General Retail with a Conditional Use Planned Development. The Subject Property was originally operated by Old National Bank as one of its branch banks.

Applicant, Illinois Association of Seventh-day Adventists (Illinois Association), is the contract purchaser for the Subject Property. The Illinois Association is the wholly owned subsidiary of the Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (Illinois Conference). The primary purpose of the Illinois Association is to purchase and manage the properties used by Seventh-day Adventist congregations in Illinois. The Illinois Conference serves the needs of its members through approximately 120 congregations in Illinois. The Illinois Association purchases church properties with the local Seventh-day Adventists congregation who will occupy, use and maintain church property for its religious activities.

The Subject Property will be occupied and used by the Maranatha Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Church (Maranatha), a congregation of approximately 100 members. Since 2015 Maranatha has conducted religious services and programs in rented facilities on Randall Road in Aurora. The steady growth of the congregation has led to the decision to purchase the Subject Property and convert it for use as a church.

The proposed changes to the Subject Property will be within the interior of the existing building. The interior consists of a large, open lobby area that is typically found in traditional bank branch buildings. As illustrated with the drawing submitted with the Application, this open area, along with elimination of the teller area, on the east side of the building, allows for the creation of a sanctuary, while existing offices, located on the south end of the existing building, can be repurposed into meeting rooms and offices. A hallway is planned for the west side, that is, streetside, of the building, where there will be smaller rooms and enlarged bathrooms created.

No outside modifications are anticipated at this time. However, the drive-thru on the north end of the building could possibly allow for expansion of the building. If so, further study and review would be needed, and application for appropriate authority to create an enclosed structure that is incorporated in the existing building.

The Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath is Saturday. It is typical for a Seventh-day Adventist congregation to hold worship services and study classes on Saturday morning from 9:30 am through Noon. Often, post-worship meetings and activities will take place Saturday afternoon. Other traditional meeting times include Wednesday and Friday evenings, when there are smaller gatherings for worship and prayer. Otherwise, the Subject Property would be available during the week for congregation members and staff for the work of the church and fellowship meetings.

The Application is for use of the building as a Seventh-day Adventist church for the Maranatha congregation, including the usual types of religious activities: religious worship services, religious instruction, fellowship, church meetings, and evangelism. The Seventh-day Adventist and the Maranatha congregation are not social service agencies, and the only use of the Subject Property is for the religious activities of the congregation. There are no plans to operate a daycare service at the Subject Property.

**The Subject Property satisfies the City's standards as follows:**

- a) The public health, safety, morals, comfort or general welfare;

The use of the Subject Property as a church will not be unreasonably detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare of the neighborhood.

- b) The use and enjoyment of other property already established or permitted in the general Area;

The use of the Subject Property as a church will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted.

The usage of the Subject Property for church meetings during the week, small gatherings on Wednesday and Thursday, and worship on Saturday will be less intense of a use when compared to the previous use of the Subject Property as a branch bank with usual and customary banking hours. By comparison, Old National Bank's current branch banks in Aurora are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, Saturday 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, and 24/7 for ATMs.

- c) Property values within the neighborhood;

The purchase contract is the result of an arms-length negotiation with the owner, who purchased the property from Old National Bank, and reflects the current fair market value for surrounding property.

The use of the Subject Property for a church should not affect property values in the neighborhood.

The surrounding neighborhood property, includes a variety of uses, including single and multi-unit residential, commercial, and the Salvation Army across the street to the west. Also, the Westminster Presbyterian Church is approximately two blocks south of the Subject Property.

- d) The normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses established or permitted within their respective existing zoning districts;

The Subject Property is located in a mixed use, mature, neighborhood. All the surrounding properties are developed. The repurposing of the existing building for church use will not affect the existing uses and is evidence that the surrounding property is valuable for their current use, and if need be, for new uses.

- e) Utilities, access roads, drainage and/or other necessary facilities;

Adequate infrastructure has been built into the Subject Property and surrounding properties with the initial development of the area.

The proposed use of the Subject Property as a church will not impose any new infrastructure requirements, nor burdens on the existing infrastructure.

- f) Ingress and egress as it relates to traffic congestion in the public streets;

The use of the Subject Property will not increase traffic congestion and is likely to decrease traffic congestion in comparison to the Subject Property's prior use as a bank with operating hours six days a week and 24/7 ATM use.

The same entrance and exit pattern will be maintained with the Subject Property.

The south access, closest to the main entrance of the Subject Property's building, allows for both ingress and egress. The north access to Redwood Road was mostly an egress point due to the drive-thru service provided by the prior bank use and location of the drive-thru ATM towards the northeast corner of the Subject Property. Since the drive-thru will not be used for church related activities it could serve as an additional parking area, with the logical traffic pattern of dropping people off at the main entrance on the south side of the building and driving to a parking space and proceeding to a marked parking space or the drive-thru area.

- g) The applicable regulations of the zoning district in which the subject property is proposed to be or is located; and,

The Subject Property is zoned B-2(C), Business District-General Retail with a Conditional Use Planned Development.

- h) A bullet point list of any variances, modifications or exceptions that you are seeking from the City's Codes and Ordinances.

Conditional Use for a church as a Religious Institution in the B-2(C) zoning classification. This is based on a review of the Aurora Zoning Code requirement that religious institutions must be located on an arterial or major collector street. See, 104.2-1.2E. Subject to confirmation, it is believed that Redwood Road is classified by Aurora as a minor arterial street.

If it is determined the Subject Property does not comply with any other aspects of the Zoning Code the Applicant will need to include these to secure a Conditional Use, variance or other exception allowed.