

**BEFORE THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
OF THE INCORPORATED COUNTY OF LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO**

Case No. SIT-2026-0083, a request for Site Plan adoption for the construction of a 37,277 square-foot, two-story medical facility on the approximately 1.64-acre property addressed as 401 Trinity Drive, Los Alamos, New Mexico and is zoned General Commercial (GC).

ORDER ON APPLICATION SIT-2026-0083

NOW COMES, the Planning and Zoning Commission (“Commission”) of the Incorporated County of Los Alamos (“County”), that hereby finds as follows:

I. FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission finds as follows:

1. On June 10, 2026, Christus Health (“Applicant”), submitted an application (“Application”) for Site Plan approval for the construction of a 37,277 square-foot, two-story medical facility on the approximately 1.64-acre property located at 401 Trinity Drive, Los Alamos, New Mexico (Property”), zoned General Commercial (GC). *See* PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT by Danyelle Valdez, Planning Manager (hereafter “CDD Staff Report”), Attachment A.

2. The Application was assigned case number SIT-2026-0083. *Id.*

3. A quorum of the Commission was present at the public hearing held on August 12, 2026¹. The public hearing was open to the receipt of evidence and testimony given under oath, of which was subject to cross-examination in accordance with Section 16-72(f)(5) of the County Development Code².

¹ The Video for this hearing is available at [August 12, 2026, Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting \(granicus.com\)](#). All citations to testimony are from this video and is in Hour:Minute:Second format.

² Available at [Municode Chapter 16](#).



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083

4. Present for the Applicant was Eric Cornelous, Santa Fe Engineering, 1599 St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Brian Long, Medesign Architecture Group, 443 Nottoway Court, League City, Texas, 77573, on behalf of Property owner Christus Health.

5. Present for the Community Development Department (“CDD”) was Danyelle Valdez, Planning Manager (“CDD Staff Valdez”), who’s experience and education includes a bachelor’s degree in business administration and twelve (12) years of experience in Real Estate Development, Project Management, Planning and Land Use, and Elias Isaacson, Community Development Director.

6. Barbara Phelps, 705 Camino Cereza, Los Alamos, New Mexico provided testimony in support of this Application.

7. Andrew Phelps, 705 Camino Cereza, Los Alamos, New Mexico provided testimony in support of this Application.

8. Evidence received by the Commission at the public hearing included: 1) CDD Staff Report (Attachment A); 2) Public Notices (Attachment B); 3) Application Packet (Attachment C); and 4) public hearing presentation, questioning, testimony from Applicant, CDD Staff Valdez, and CDD Director Isaacson.

9. The Property is approximately 1.64 acres in size, and is located between Trinity Drive and DP Road, immediately southeast of the Trinity Drive/Central Avenue roundabout within the Los Alamos townsite. The Property was formerly occupied by the Knights of Columbus and consisted of two (2) parcels addressed as 401 Trinity Drive and 104 DP Road. The parcels have been consolidated into a single lot with the assigned address of 401 Trinity Drive. The Property is currently vacant and suitable for redevelopment. *See CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, Page 16; see also Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez starting at 00:15:06.*

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083

10. Applicant attended a pre-application meeting which was held on June 4, 2026, in accordance with Section 16-72(b)(2) of the County Development Code. *See* CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, page 17.

11. Based on the CDD Staff Report, the Application was distributed to the Interdepartmental Review Committee (“IDRC”) on July 7, 2026, with comments due by July 17, 2026. IDRC recommended that the Application proceed to the Commission, subject to the following departmental conditions:

- **Department of Public Utilities (“DPU”)**: The Applicant must provide a joint utility trench cross-section showing an approved staggered layout consistent with the applicable DPU Construction Standards Drawing; identify the proposed gas-line size and physical location of the gas meter; revise the fire hydrant and hydrant-leg details to conform to the applicable Los Alamos County standard detail; and provide a connection detail for the existing sewer manhole.
- **Public Works** requires completion of a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for the proposed development. A NMDOT certified TIA must be provided to the County prior to application for any associated construction permits, any subsequent modification to the proposed driveways or ingress and egress configuration may require additional traffic analysis or review by Public Works. The final design documents shall incorporate all improvements and design features required by the TIA and Los Alamos County Public Works and NMDOT. All off-site improvements within Trinity Drive require approval from Los Alamos County Department of Public Works, as well as the applicable NMDOT approvals and permits. Work within County rights-of-way shall require County excavation and traffic-control permits. The Applicant shall also dedicate any

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083

rights-of-way necessary to accommodate the required improvements. The following items must be completed by the Applicant prior to issuance of the applicable construction or building permits:

- Submit a drainage assessment demonstrating that the proposed development will not increase off-site flows beyond existing conditions. The assessment shall include pre- and post-development 100-year storm flows, supporting calculations and methodology, and confirmation that the existing and proposed stormwater systems have adequate capacity to convey post-development flows.
- Identify the new on-site storm sewer system as privately owned and maintained and specify that the associated manhole covers shall be marked accordingly.
- Replace the existing storm drainpipe traversing the Property and adjust its installation depth to accommodate the significantly higher proposed grades. The replacement shall be coordinated with Public Works and addressed in the drainage assessment.
- Depict the proposed stormwater flow patterns on the grading and drainage plan.
- **Fire Marshal's Office** requested that the plans clearly identify the fire apparatus access road and demonstrate compliance with applicable International Fire Code requirements, including minimum unobstructed widths, access to all portions of the building, apparatus turning radii, hose-access distances, hydrant and fire department connection locations, and the location of the post indicator valve.
- **Environmental Services** reviewed and accepted the revised drawings that include locating the collection area along the eastern portion of the Property to align with the proposed driveway access from DP Rd.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083

- **Planning Division.** As a condition of approval, the Applicant shall submit a parking analysis identifying and validating the applicable parking requirements for the facility in accordance with Section 16-28 of the County Development Code, including the provisions governing unlisted uses.

See CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, pages 20-22; *see also* Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez starting at 00:18:25, Testimony of Applicant at 00:37:31.

12. As provided in the CDD Staff Report and testimony of CDD Staff Valdez, notice of the public hearing was published in accordance with Section 16-72(c) of the County Development Code, as notice was published in the *Los Alamos Daily Post* on July 23, 2026, notice of the public hearing was mailed to the owners of real property within three hundred (300) feet of the Property on July 23, 2026, and the notice was posted at the Property on July 28, 2026. *See* CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, Page 22; *see also* Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez starting at 00:22:36.

13. As the Application is a request for the approval of a Site Plan as required pursuant to Section 16-74(i) of the County Development Code, the Commission finds the applicable review criteria for the Commission, in determining whether to approve, approve with conditions, or to deny the Application (*see* § 16-69(b)(2)), is the review criteria found in Section 16-74(i)(4) of the County Development Code.

14. The Commission, having received testimony and evidence of the Applicant and CDD, finds that the Applicant has met its burden and has demonstrated that the Application meets the requirements of Section 16-74(i)(4). The Commission, in support of this finding, provides the following:

- a) As to review criterion (a) of Section 16-74(i)(4) of the County Development Code, the Commission finds that it was demonstrated by the testimony and evidence provided by CDD

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083

Staff Valdez and by Applicant that the development of the Property substantially conforms to the intent and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted County policies and plans. The Comprehensive Plan supports infill development on underutilized parcels within the existing townsite where public infrastructure, roadways, and services are already available, and supports the retention and expansion of community services that reduce the need for residents to travel outside the County for essential needs. The Property is a vacant commercial parcel located along the Trinity Drive corridor, an arterial route identified in County plans as a primary commercial and gateway corridor. Development of the Property places a health care facility within an established commercial area served by existing water, sewer, gas, electric, storm drainage, roadway, transit, and pedestrian infrastructure, avoiding extension of new public infrastructure into undeveloped areas. The proposal is also consistent with the 2019 Economic Vitality Strategic Plan and the County's Strategic Leadership Plan, both of which identify access to health care services and community quality of life as key contributors to workforce attraction and retention and to overall community vitality. The addition of local emergency department capacity directly advances these objectives by providing emergency medical services within the community. The Site Plan further supports Comprehensive Plan goals related to walkability and corridor character through frontage improvements, sidewalk connections, and landscape along Trinity Drive and DP Road. *See* CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, pages 22-23, Application, Attachment C, page 36; *see also* Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez at 00:20:08.

b. Regarding review criterion (b) found in Section 16-74(i)(4) of the County Development Code, the Commission finds that the Property is not within an approved Master Plan. *See* CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, page 23, Application, Attachment C, page 36; *see also* Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez at 00:20:34.

***PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083***

c. As to review of criterion (c) of Section 16-74(i)(4) of the County Development Code, the Commission finds that the Property is not within an approved PD Zone District. *See* Application, Attachment C, page 37, CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, Page 23; *see also* Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez at 00:20:45.

d. As to criterion (d) of Section 16-74(i)(4) of the County Development Code, the Commission finds that it was demonstrated by the testimony and evidence provided by CDD Staff Valdez and Applicant that the Site Plan is in conformance with all applicable provisions of the County Development Code and other adopted County regulations. The proposed development is located within the GC zoning district, where medical and health care facilities are a permitted use. The Site Plan demonstrates compliance with the applicable dimensional and site development standards of the GC zoning district, including building placement, setbacks, height, lot coverage, site access, circulation, pedestrian connectivity, landscaping, and outdoor lighting. Proposed lot coverage is twenty-seven (27%) percent. The Property provides 10,822 square feet of landscaped area, exceeding the required 5,240 square feet, together with the required twenty-two (22) trees and one hundred eight (108) shrubs and required parking lot screening. A photometric plan was also submitted demonstrating compliance with Chapter 16, Division 6, Outdoor Lighting. The Application materials, including the Site Plan, architectural elevations, grading and drainage plans, utility plans, landscape and lighting plans, and supporting technical information, were reviewed through the County's IDRC process. Additional technical requirements related to construction detailing, utility connections, fire protection, drainage, and other permit-level requirements will be addressed through the applicable construction plan and building permit review processes. Subject to the conditions of approval requiring resolution of the outstanding parking and technical requirements, the proposed Site Plan will conform to the applicable provisions of the County

***PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083***

Development Code and other adopted County regulations. *See* Application, Attachment C, page 37; CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, pages 23-24; *see also* Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez at 00:21:01.

e. As to criterion (e) of Section 16-74(i)(4) of the County Development Code, the Commission finds that it was demonstrated by the testimony and evidence provided by CDD Staff Valdez and Applicant that the public services and facilities required to serve the proposed development have adequate capacity and would conform with the requirements of the County's construction standards. The Property is located within an area of the townsite where public water, sanitary sewer, natural gas, electric, communications, storm drainage, roadway, and pedestrian infrastructure are existing and fully built out. The existing public infrastructure systems have adequate capacity to serve the proposed development, and that the identified burdens on those systems have been or will be mitigated in compliance with the County's construction standards through the conditions and through subsequent construction permitting. *See* CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, page 25; Application, Attachment C, page 37, *see also* Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez at 00:21:30.

f. As to review criterion (f) of Section 16-74(i)(4) of the County Development Code, the Commission finds that it was demonstrated by the testimony and evidence provided by CDD Staff Valdez and Applicant that the Site Plan mitigates any significant adverse impacts to properties within the vicinity to the maximum extent practicable. The proposed Site Plan has been designed to minimize potential adverse impacts to surrounding properties to the maximum extent practicable through site layout, building placement, circulation design, screening, and landscaping. The Property is a vacant parcel surrounded by existing commercial development along an established arterial corridor, and the proposed two-story building at a maximum parapet height of

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083

36 feet is consistent in scale with surrounding commercial development. Emergency vehicle and ambulance access has been separated from general patient and visitor circulation to reduce conflicts on Property and at the public street. Landscape area is provided at double the required minimum, and parking lot screening and perimeter landscaping are provided to buffer the parking area from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way. Site lighting has been designed for compliance with the County's outdoor lighting standards, limiting light trespass onto adjacent properties. Traffic and access impacts will be further evaluated through the TIA required by Public Works and NMDOT, which will confirm the adequacy of the proposed access points, the Trinity Drive right-turn deceleration lane, and any additional operational improvements needed at the Trinity Drive and DP Road intersection. Drainage impacts will be addressed through the required drainage assessment demonstrating that post-development flows do not exceed existing off-site conditions. Refuse collection has been relocated and revised in coordination with Environmental Services to establish a one-way collection route and to avoid conflicts with the Property and adjacent traffic. Based on the proposed design and mitigation measures incorporated into the Site Plan, the development has been designed to minimize potential impacts to neighboring properties and the surrounding area to the maximum extent practicable. *See CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, pages 25-26; Application, Attachment C, page 38; see also Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez at 00:21:53.*

g. As to review criterion (g) of Section 16-74(i)(4) of the County Development Code, the Commission finds that it was demonstrated by the testimony and evidence provided by CDD Staff Valdez and Applicant that this criterion requiring that provisions be made to serve the development with tot lots and/or neighborhood parks in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan

***PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083***

is not applicable to commercial developments. *See* CDD Staff Report, Attachment A, page 26; Application, Attachment C, page 38; *see also* Testimony of CDD Staff Valdez at 00:22:17.

II. ORDER

The Commission, pursuant to Section 16-72(f)(5)(c)(3), by a unanimous vote, hereby finds that the Applicant has sufficiently demonstrated that the request for Site Plan approval meets all requirements, and after full hearing and consideration, **hereby Approves Application SIT-2026-0083 subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Prior to submitting any associated permit applications, the Applicant shall revise the applicable drawing sheets to: (1) provide a joint utility trench cross-section showing an approved staggered layout consistent with the applicable Department of Public Utilities Construction Standards Drawing; (2) identify the size of the proposed gas line and the physical location of the gas meter; (3) revise the fire hydrant and hydrant-leg details to conform to the applicable Los Alamos County standard detail; and (4) provide a connection detail for the existing sewer manhole. The corrected drawing sheets shall be submitted directly to the Department of Public Utilities for final review and verification.**
- 2. Prior to submitting any associated permit applications, the Applicant shall revise the plans to address Fire Marshal requirements, including citation of the currently adopted 2021 International Fire Code; provision of compliant aerial fire apparatus access or, where approved by the Fire Code Official, a Class I standpipe meeting the exception to IFC Section D105.1; and relocation or addition of a fire hydrant to provide adequate coverage at the north entrance. Revised plans shall be submitted to the Fire Marshal for final review and approval.**
- 3. Prior to applying for building permits, the Applicant shall submit a corrected parking analysis for review and approval by the Community Development Department. The analysis shall identify and substantiate the applicable parking requirements for each use within the facility in accordance with Section 16-28 of the County Development Code, including the provisions governing unlisted uses, and shall demonstrate compliance with the minimum off-street parking requirements.**
- 4. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the Applicant shall submit a drainage assessment demonstrating that the proposed development will not increase off-site stormwater flows beyond existing conditions. The assessment shall include pre- and post-development 100-year storm-flow calculations, supporting methodology, and documentation demonstrating that the existing and proposed stormwater systems can adequately convey post-development flows. The assessment shall also address replacement of the existing storm drainpipe traversing the Property and adjustment of its installation depth, in coordination with the Los Alamos County Public Works Department.**

***PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SIT-2026-0083***

- 5. The Applicant shall obtain all required NMDOT and Los Alamos County permits and approvals for off-site improvements and any work within public rights-of-way and shall dedicate all necessary rights-of-way for required off-site roadway and pedestrian improvements, including sidewalks. Prior to submitting any building permit application, the Applicant shall submit a final TIA that has been reviewed and approved by both NMDOT and Los Alamos County. All transportation, access, circulation, roadway, pedestrian, and mitigation improvements required by the approved TIA and applicable agency approvals shall be incorporated into the final construction and permit plans.**

APPROVED on this date: 8/26/2026

Karen Easton

Karen Easton, Chair of the Planning & Zoning
Commission