



# NewBridges

Immigrant Resource Center

*Connecting cultures, building community*

October 19, 2017

To the Harrisonburg City Council members:

I have known Pastors Juan Carlos and Wendy Malvaez for well over 5 years. Pastor Juan Carlos served on the NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center Board of Directors and was also involved in meetings of Pastors who discussed how to bring important information to their congregations regarding community building efforts. Pastor Wendy has worked in the community as a social worker and listened deeply to the stories of immigrant persons who have experienced trauma and extremely stressful circumstances.

The faith community of Manantial de Vida has become a safe space for persons to share their experience and experience much needed support. In my role at NewBridges IRC, I hear from persons who regularly attend MDV and who have also been connected by the Pastors to our services. It is very obvious to me that the MDV congregants deeply respect their Pastors and feel deeply committed to their shared faith community.

As with all City planning and zoning, I understand the need that our government has for careful consideration of special requests. Your approval of this new facility would send a clear message that the wellbeing of young immigrant families of multiple generations is supported by the City of Harrisonburg. As a resident of the City and a service provider to immigrant families, I support the efforts of MDV to build a new facility on the property near Mt Clinton Pike.

Thank you for considering their request.

Sincerely,

Alicia Horst  
Executive Director