

## Winslow Park – Master Plan Narrative

11/26/2024

<b>Applicant:</b>	W&A Engineering, Georgia for D.R. Horton, Inc. and Walton
<b>Location:</b>	4500 Atlanta Hwy
<b>Tax Parcel:</b>	044 025
<b>Size:</b>	200 Acres approximately
<b>Current Use:</b>	Vacant /Undeveloped
<b>Current Zoning:</b>	RS-5, RM-2 and CG (PD)
<b>Proposed Zoning:</b>	RS-5, RM-2 and CG (PD)
<b>Current FLU:</b>	Traditional Neighborhood
<b>Proposed FLU:</b>	Traditional Neighborhood

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this submittal is to amend the existing / approved Planned Development (PD) which consists of 200.50 acres located at 4500 Atlanta Hwy in Athens-Clarke County (ACC) Georgia. The changes being requested of the existing PD are intended to be more in alignment with the demands of the housing market and will result in the construction of a more diverse mix of housing than previously requested and approved.

### **Development History**

The planned development was originally approved by Athens-Clarke County (ACC) in June 2007 and would be developed by Vintage Communities. Despite the anticipation and desire for the development to be completed, factors including the economy resulted in the development not being completed by Vintage Communities, but rather placed on the market. In March 2014, Walton Development purchased the property and requested to amend the Planned Development, to make it more attractive to the current market conditions. The result was an amended PD which focused on the single family and commercial components. That PD was approved by the Mayor and Commission in May of 2016. Since that approval, approximately 7.4 acres of the commercial area located in the southeastern corner was subdivided and rezoned to remove it from the PD. Walton Development and D.R. Horton have established a partnership to develop the residential element according to the submitted site plan, while leaving the remaining commercial section unchanged from the previously approved PD as depicted on the included commercial exhibit.

### **Project Description/Land Use Summary**

The property is currently zoned as follows:

- 40.34 acres as RM-2(PD) (Residential Multi-Family-Planned Development)
- 158.75 acres as RS-5(PD) (Residential Single Family-Planned Development)
- 1.41 acres as CG-(PD) (Commercial General – Planned Development)

### Comprehensive Plan Compatibility

The 2023 Comprehensive Plan recommends the following policies which support the approval of the proposed request.

- Increase the amount of and provide access to affordable housing.
- Increase the supply and variety of quality housing units, at multiple price points, in multiple locations, to suit the needs of a variety of households.
- Create nodal development tied to transportation, healthcare, schools, jobs, workforce, and housing.
- Promote intra- and inter-connectivity within and between neighborhoods while discouraging cul-de-sac development.

The approval of this reinitiation of a previously approved PD will provide a significant number of new housing units. The location, near a major employer and in an area where growth has been and continues to be anticipated, supports the approval of this request.

### Future Land Use Map Compatibility

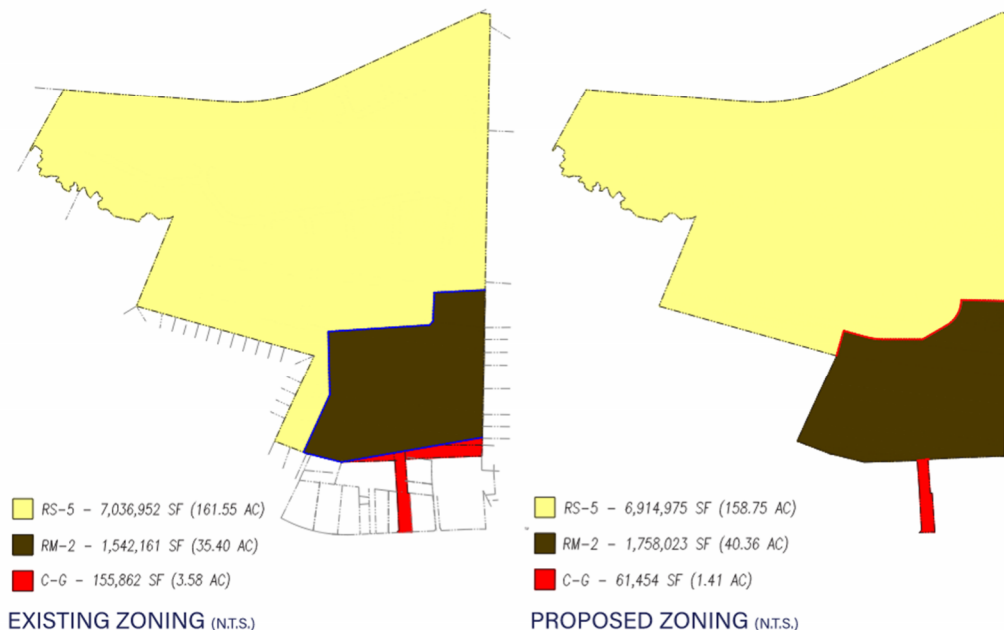
The Future Land Use Map indicates that the subject property is currently designated as Mixed Density Residential and General Business. This request will not require an amendment to the approved future land use map.

### Zoning Map Compatibility

Below is an exhibit comparing the existing zoning district to the proposed. The major differences between the two are, the small strip of RS-5 along the lower western edge of the property being converted to RM-2 and a clean up of some remnant commercial CG zoning along the property border with the future Hyundai site.

## **WINSLOW PARK ZONING EXHIBIT**

4500 ATLANTA HIGHWAY, ATHENS, GA



### **Utilities**

Current public services, including physical facilities and staff are sufficient to support the proposed development. The proposed development will require public water and sanitary sewer services. According to a letter dated May 30, 2024, from Athens Clarke County Public Utilities Department there is currently both water and sanitary sewer capacity available to serve the demands of the proposed development.

The developer is aware of the municipalities' desire for this project to provide access to public sewer to the neighboring project. The developer has offered the following statement in response to this request:

*"D.R. Horton is committed to continuing conversations with the adjacent project developer regarding their need to connect to gravity sewer on this property. DR has a prior business relationship with this entity and has interest in maintaining that relationship for the sake of future business. That said, the current proposed routing option is too conceptual for D.R. to make commitments too. This is due to several factors that could have impact on our project such as tree canopy loss, stormwater conflicts and environmental impacts, particularly impacts to wetlands. Additional engineering study and plan development will be needed prior to any potential agreement being reached."*

### **Solid Waste**

Residential solid-waste collection will be provided by a licensed provider. Individual lot owners will be responsible for establishing their own service, with the multi-family units service provided by the property managers in compliance with the Dumpster Service requirements found in Sec 5-2-16 (a) (1) of the Athens Clarke County Code of Ordinances.

### **Tree Canopy Cover**

To provide an appropriate amount of tree canopy cover across the entire development the following requirements are proposed. In place of individual regulations of each zone, the applicant is requesting that the requirements for the site be regulated as a whole. A total required percentage for conservation and total canopy has been generated based on the individual zone's requirements per their acreages as a percentage of the total project area. This results in a conserved canopy requirement of 17.12% and a total canopy requirement of 42.37%. Because this application is seeking a waiver from the requirement to provide conserved canopy on individual lots, it is also proffering that the minimum total canopy be increased from 42.37% to 45%. See the waiver section and Tree Management Plan for additional information. This additional proffered percentage of total canopy equals 5.22 acres.

### **Stormwater Management**

The Winslow Park Planned Development will comply with all state and local stormwater regulations.

The 25-foot State Waters Buffer, and the 75-foot ACC Environmental Areas Buffer shall remain undisturbed, except in the case of a stream crossing for roads or utilities.

Stormwater Management shall be designed to protect the watershed from pollution and erosion. In addition, the stormwater management for Winslow Park shall protect downstream properties from flooding. The stormwater management design shall be in accordance with the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual and all ACC regulations.

As outlined in the section "Bedgood Lake Dam", Walton is completing upgrades on Bedgood Lake Dam. An engineering evaluation of the existing freeboard capacity of Bedgood Lake shall be performed in order to determine the best method for stormwater management.

Final details and design of stormwater structures will be completed during the site development/civil design phase of the project. The general locations of stormwater facilities depicted on the submitted site plans are accurate as of the date of this submittal but may need to be moved to accommodate the final grading, soil conditions, or other factors that could impact feasibility. The required stormwater concept meeting was held on June 4, 2024 with Public Works staff.

### **Bedgood Lake Dam**

The existing dam on Bedgood Lake is a Category I dam which had safety deficiencies when the current owner purchased the property. An Emergency Action Plan and an Operations and Maintenance Plan have been completed in accordance with the Georgia Safe Dams Act. In 2023 the lake was drawn down as recommended by the engineer of record, to maintain the lake in anticipation of repairs being performed within two years.

The Developer and their engineer shall coordinate with ACC PW stormwater staff during the civil design phase to assess the possibility of lowering the dam height below 25 feet from its current height of 28.9 feet.

During the land development permitting phase, the developer and their engineer will determine the freeboard and storage capacity of the lake in its current state and after a height reduction to determine if it can provide a portion of the stormwater flood control for the Winslow Park development.

### **Phasing Plan**

The complete phasing strategy for this project is under development. It is currently understood that stormwater and utility infrastructure are likely to be a large portion of the first phase. This includes the main road into the project, the rerouting of the public sewer from the southern portion of the site to the across the creek, and the rehabilitation of the dam and lake for managing stormwater. It is likely that the developer will want to try and capture some ability to bring homes online as part of this first phase. This could potentially include part of the townhomes and the most southern sections of single family. Given the overall size of the project and limitations to mass grading, the project will require a minimum of four phases, assuming approval of the waiver to increase disturbance limits to 50 AC per permit. Details for the phasing will be made clear at the preliminary plat phase of this project.

### Design Guidelines

The design guidelines for Winslow Park have been included in this submittal. The package of required elevations for the proposed single-family, townhome, cottage, and casita units will constitute a menu of floorplans for each pod from which the builder may choose. All units as submitted comply with Sec-9-25-8 design guidelines for single family residences.

Public street and sidewalk design will be in accordance with all applicable ACC ordinances and TPW's Technical Standards, and the roadway design speed shall be 25 mph.

### Traffic

A Traffic Impact analysis was produced as part of the preliminary rezoning submission. Since that time the plan has changed to produce a slight decrease in single family units and a moderate increase in multi-family units. Based on the findings of the original TIA we do not believe that these changes will result in a material change to the findings. It is understood that a traffic signal is likely going to be required at the main project intersection and that a signal warrant analysis will be required during the plan development phase of the project.

Below are the findings from the original trip generation:

ITE Code	Land Use	Unit Count	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
				Entry	Exit	Total	Entry	Exit	Total
210	Single-Family Detached Housing	421	3970	74	221	295	249	147	396
215	Single-Family Attached Housing	219	1577	26	79	105	74	51	125
220	Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) Not Close to Rail Transit (220)	238	1604	23	72	95	76	45	121
<b>Total</b>		<b>878</b>	<b>7,151</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>642</b>

Based on the findings of the Traffic Impact Study the following actions are recommended:

- Prepare a Traffic Engineering Report with a Warrant Analysis for the SR 10/US 78/Atlanta Highway at Site Driveway intersection to determine if the installation of a traffic signal is justified. This work would be performed as part of the plan development phase of the project.
- Athens-Clarke County should perform a signal optimization study for the SR 10/US 78/Atlanta Highway corridor from Jennings Mill Road to Cleveland Road once GDOT Project PI 122890 is completed and the Georgia Square Mall redevelopment is nearing buildout.
- Athens-Clarke County to consider sponsoring a project to improve the operations of the SR 10/US 78/Atlanta Highway at SR 10/US 78/Monroe Highway/Tall Tree Road intersection.

### Public Transportation

The Developer and Engineer have spoken with A-CC Transit. The A-CC Transit System does not currently extend to the proposed development. The Developer agrees to coordinate with A-CC Transit throughout the design and site development process to identify the appropriate location and design of any future transit stops at the site.

### Architecture

The proposed project contains five (5) general product offerings. There are two (2) multi-family options, and three (3) single family options.

The two multi-family options which are contained within “Pod A” are

- 1) Apartments which are made up of two different building types
- 2) The “Casitas” which are also made up of two different building types

The three single-family options are:

- 3) Pod B Townhomes which are shown primarily with rear entry / ally loaded garages which are roughly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the total units with the remainder being front loaded.
- 4) Pod C Single family homes.
- 5) Pod C Single family cottages (located in the northwestern section of the project). These units are smaller than the typical single-family unit, allowing for a lower price point.

See the architectural packet for additional information.

### Multi-family Building Orientation

The majority of the single-family townhomes and multi-family casitas are designed with rear-loading garages accessed from alleyways, allowing the front of the units to face shared greenspaces. This orientation offers several benefits to residents. First, it creates a pedestrian-focused community space at the front of the units, free from pedestrian and vehicular interactions. This design is particularly advantageous for young families, as it provides a safer area for children to play. Unlike traditional backyards, which are often isolated, the connected green spaces encourage greater community interaction.

Replacing streets with alleyways and green spaces also reduces the public infrastructure required to serve these residences. The alleys and green spaces are maintained by the development association, lowering maintenance costs for the municipality. Additionally, the reduction in infrastructure cuts overall land development costs, making home prices and rents more affordable.

This design minimizes impervious surfaces, which reduces stormwater runoff and mitigates the heat island effect. To ensure the benefits of traditional streets are not lost, the project includes a **commitment to planting one tree for every 30 feet of unit facing greenspace length within the RM-2 zone**. While this is half the density required for public streets—where trees are planted on both sides—it aligns with the goals of this development, which aims to maintain open grassy areas for play. Planting two trees per 30 feet, as per standard street requirements, would eventually shade out these grassy areas, limiting their functionality for recreation.

The green spaces are designed to maximize usable space by positioning sidewalks along the outer edges, except for one section of the Casitas. This layout ensures a minimum greenspace width of 20 feet at its narrowest point, expanding to as much as 44 feet in the widest areas.

Visitors and delivery personnel have flexible parking options. They can park in the driveways at the rear of the units and access homes through the garage entry, or they can park off-site and utilize the greenspace sidewalk network to reach the units

### Density

The applicant is requesting the ability to transfer density between the RM-2 and RS-5 zones to meet the density requirement for the Townhomes (Attached Single). There is enough area within the RM-2 limits to support the multi-family (Apartments and Casitas) which requires 21.88 AC. The remaining balance of RM-2 land (18.45 AC) is not sufficient to also support the townhomes in Pod B which require a total of 36 AC. The additional needed land (17.55 AC) can be transferred from the RS-5 area since there is a significant amount of unused density within that Pod (89.22 AC). The density standard for both the RM-2 and RS-5 zones is the same at 6 lots per acre.

Pod	Product Type	Density Requirements	Area Required for Proposed Density	Provided Acreage
A	Multi-family	24 Beds Per Acre	21.88 AC	19.78 AC
B	Attached Single	6 Lots Per Acre	36 AC	20.55 AC
C	Detached Single	6 Lots Per Acre	69.17 AC	158.39 AC
			<b>127.05 AC</b>	<b>198.72 AC</b>

RM-2 Area	40.33 AC
RS-5 Area	158.39 AC

## **Requested Waiver of Ordinance Standards**

### **1. 9-25-8-c-1 (a),(b). Residential Design Standards for RM Zones, Orientation Requirements**

**&**

### **2. 9-26-3-(B) Dedicated public streets required.**

Most of the interior units in the RM district will consist of alley-loaded homes facing a common green. The orientation of these units conflicts with the site design standards requiring frontage on public streets. Instead of public streets, the common greens will be located within dedicated common spaces, which will include the necessary access and utility easements typically found in a public right-of-way. Additionally, the applicant has committed to planting one tree per 30 linear feet of the center green's length. This approach preserves the intent of the code by creating a neighborly residential environment. According to the proposed layout, no unit's front façade will face the rear façade of another unit. For additional information see the "Multi-family Building Orientation Section" in this report.

### **3. 9-25-8-c-3 Allow block lengths greater than 500 feet, and block sizes greater than 3 acres.**

The site's topography and environmental constraints limit the developable area to specific locations, necessitating concentrated lot layouts to achieve moderate density. The proposed plan makes significant efforts to address the code requirements. For instance, green space breaks have been incorporated into the single-family detached portion (Pod C) of the plan. The maximum proposed block dimension is 823 feet, located in the northwest corner of the property, and the largest block area is 4.5 acres. While the Pod B plan does not strictly meet the technical standards due to block separations being less than 50 feet in alleyways and center greens, it aligns with the intent of creating walkable, appropriately scaled blocks. See the "Winslow Park Block Exhibit" attached to this report detailing the areas of compliance and deviation within the plan.

### **4. Sec. 9-26-2-(A)6-d. (2) land disturbing activity shall be limited by permit to a maximum amount of 25 acres total disturbed acreage**

The applicant is requesting relief from the current limitations to allow for a maximum of 50 acres of land disturbance per permit. Several reasons support this request.

First, the size of the project area. The disturbance area within the RS-5 portion of the site could reach up to 130 acres. A project of this size requires a comprehensive approach to achieve balanced earthwork. Efficient operations depend on areas of cut and fill working in harmony, however these areas are often separated, making coordination difficult, if not impossible, under the current 25-acre limitation. In some cases, temporary retaining walls may be needed to bring road networks to grade efficiently if the phased area does not allow for simultaneous grading of surrounding future lots. In other cases, large stockpiles might need to be generated which force material to be moved multiple times under separate mobilizations. The more mobilizations, the more cost.

Additionally, managing stormwater for projects of this scale is severely hindered by the existing area restrictions. The site relies on creating a cohesive stormwater management system that integrates with the existing lake. Positioning the land to function within this framework may require working beyond a 25-acre cap. While runoff reduction will be managed throughout the site and as close to the treated impervious areas as possible, it will be necessary to route larger stormwater flows to the



existing lake via gravity storm drains. Allowing the site to be disturbed and graded strategically would prevent excavation and installation of overly deep storm drain networks.

Similar to the challenges of managing stormwater are the challenges to installing road networks and utility infrastructure. This project plans to comply with A-CC's roadway horizontal and vertical geometry requirements and to implement gravity sanitary sewer throughout the site. These efforts will require simultaneous work over large areas and will be overly complicated if forced to conform to the current disturbance limitation. Such complications lead to increases in site development costs. Similar to the installation of storm drain and roadway geometry, allowing the site to be disturbed and graded strategically would prevent deep excavation and overly deep sanitary sewer networks.

The current disturbance limitation also impacts project phasing. For this property, the restriction could double the number of phases required to complete the project. This inevitably leads to unnecessary additional mobilizations, prolonged total site disturbance time, and delays in bringing products to market. Such delays increase the risk of missing favorable market conditions for consumption.

Overall, the most significant impact of these limitations is the increase in development costs, which are invariably passed on to the end user. This results in higher housing costs, a direct contradiction to the community's need for obtainable housing.

**5. 9-26-4-(B) Required on-street parking reduction from 108 to 42 in Pod B and 208 to 130 in Pod C.**

The narrow lot widths in this development limit opportunities for on-street parking. Additionally, many of the Pod B townhomes face green spaces, further reducing the availability of on-street parking. However, all units in these areas will meet the minimum off-street parking requirements and, in many cases, will provide additional parking within their driveways. Combined with the available on-street parking, this should help address visitor and delivery parking needs.

**6. 9-25-8(B)-9 Each unit, whether attached or detached, must be built on a lot that is at least the square footage of the unit constructed on the lot or the lot must be 150 percent of the footprint of the unit constructed on the lot, whichever is greater.**

The applicant is requesting relief from this standard for the Pod B attached single-family units. The townhome lots have been intentionally designed to be smaller to provide larger common areas adjacent to the units. This approach creates shared open spaces instead of divided private yards, fostering greater community interaction within the development. Additionally, this design helps maintain the neighborhood's appearance, as these areas will be managed by the development association rather than individual property owners.

**7. 8-7-15 Tree Canopy Cover Table 1 Requirements for 35% conserved canopy on individual RS-5 lots:**

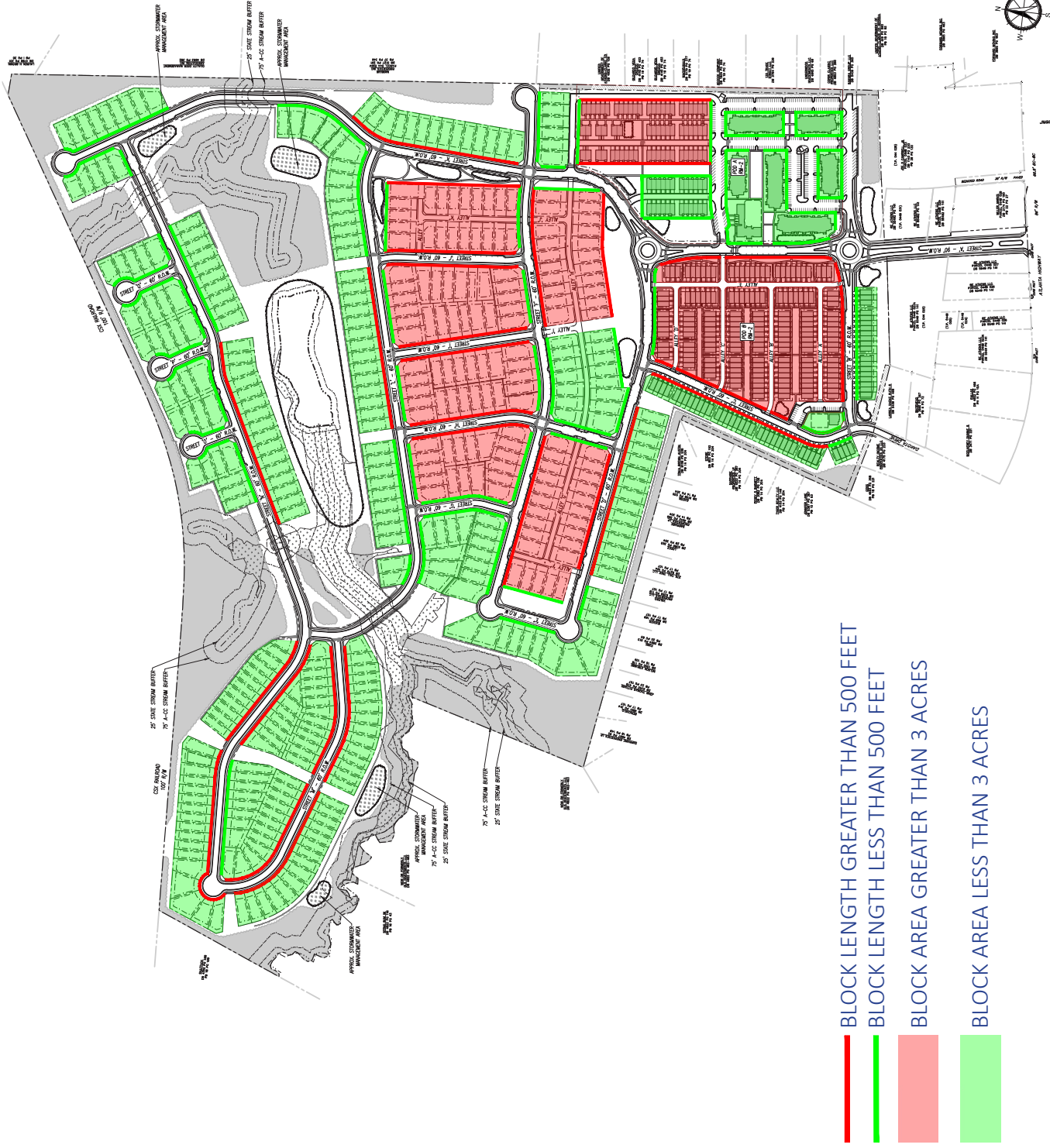
The applicant is requesting relief from the requirement to meet conserved canopy standards on individual lots within the RS-5 zone. The site's topographical challenges necessitate extensive grading in the single-family section to comply with technical standards for road and utility design. This issue is further exacerbated by the dense nature of the development, which leaves little space between lots to accommodate grade adjustments. To offset this request, the applicant proposes increasing the minimum total conserved and planted canopy for the entire site from 42.37% to 45%, resulting in an additional 5.22 acres of canopy coverage.

# WINSLOW PARK BLOCK EXHIBIT

4500 ATLANTA HIGHWAY, ATHENS, GA



W&A  
ENGINEERING



- BLOCK LENGTH GREATER THAN 500 FEET
- BLOCK LENGTH LESS THAN 500 FEET
- BLOCK AREA GREATER THAN 3 ACRES
- BLOCK AREA LESS THAN 3 ACRES

## STATEMENT OF REQUEST AND LEGAL OBJECTIONS

Walton is the owner of the subject property located at 4500 Atlanta Highway Athens-Clarke County, Georgia.

The request is aligned with the general goals, policies and objectives identified in the Comprehensive Plan and is in keeping with the current Future Land Development Map. This request is an amendment to the residential portions of the existing Planned Development and does not represent a significant departure from the intent of the existing plan.

Under these circumstances, a denial of the Request in question would be unlawful, arbitrary, capricious, irrational and a manifest abuse of discretion; all in violation of the Fifth Amendment and Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, and Article I, Section I, Paragraph I and Article I, Section III, Paragraph I of the Constitution of the State of Georgia.

Denial of the Request would discriminate unfairly between the Appellant and others similarly situated, in violation of the Fifth Amendment and Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, and Article I, Section I, Paragraph I and Article I, Section III, Paragraph I of the Constitution of the State of Georgia.

Denial of the Request would amount to a taking of property, in violation of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, and Article I, Section I, Paragraph I, and Article I, Section III, Paragraph I of the Constitution of the State of Georgia.

For these reasons, we respectfully request Approval of this request. We also wish to preserve our rights for constitutional challenge if the case of a vote of denial to the request.

This 26th day of November 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Haines, PLA