

Newton Bridge Rd Rezone

760 Newton Bridge Rd
Athens, 30607
Clarke County Georgia

Industrial to Mixed Density Residential (RM-1) Rezone Request
120.25 Total Acres, Tax Parcels: 104 005, 104 005A, 104 006, & 112 006

March 28, 2025

Rezone Request

The intent of this rezone request is to modify the currently approved zoning of the property from I-Industrial to RM-1 Mixed Density residential.

Project Description

This project is being designed for a new construction, row-house style and detached craftsman homes being offered for purchase. We would like to offer an affordable and environmentally friendly housing option to satisfy a need within the Athens community. The proposed development does not intend to cater to the student housing supply of the universities and colleges of Athens due to its distance from campus.

This development will consist of three-bedroom type homes that include a total of 350 front doors (1050 beds), with a maximum allowed in RM-1 being 1924 beds. The variety will include traditional homes, with historically rich architectural detail and classical colors. The development will also include an attractive amenity package with a clubhouse and pool. This community will no doubt be unique to the current market base in Athens, and we are excited to be able to offer this concept of minimalist living in a tight-knit communal setting with an environmentally sensitive approach.

This will be a fee-simple development with approximately 184 townhomes and 166 single-family detached homes with a Homeowners Association to manage all common space areas. The development is planned to begin pre-sales in Spring 2027.

The Development

The Site

The site is made up of four separate tax parcels; parcels 104 005, 104 005A, 104 006, & 112 006. All parcels front Newton Bridge Road for approximately 2900 linear feet.

The property contains 2 Georgia Power easements. It is mostly wooded, with the North Oconee River located at the rear of the property and one stream that is in the southwestern portion of the property, between Industrial Drive and Newton Bridge Road. The properties has approximately 31 acres of wetlands and approximately 32 acres within the 100-year floodplain.

The concept plan that accompanies this narrative illustrates a total of 350 units (front doors) with 1050

beds that would be served by ACC sanitary sewer & water.

The site plan is designed with characteristics that provide the workforce and first-time homebuyers an option for affordable housing for purchase. The community has designated green spaces with incorporated amenities to highlight the natural environment; the residential components include 3-bedroom townhomes and single family detached homes featuring traditional color schemes and sound architectural detail while allowing for individual creativity on the exterior of each home in the form of planters, minor landscaping, and decorating. Sidewalks and individual porches throughout the development encourage connectivity and a sense of community. On-street parking with low-level streetlights will be utilized due to the mid-density environment having division breaks of 2" caliber trees.

The project will be constructed with attractive entrances, curb & gutter streets designed to public standards, and 4' wide sidewalks throughout. Handicap ramps and slopes will be installed by the developer at all crosswalk locations throughout the development. All utilities will be underground. Landscaping throughout the development will include a variety of carefully selected green spaces and hardscapes to complement the architecture, including street trees that will be installed throughout the development.

The project development and buildings will be constructed in three phases over a roughly 4-year period. As the homes are being completed, sales may begin.

Buildings

Each structure will be designed to have all units exit at the front or an alley and allow the feel of a more traditional neighborhood. The **exterior materials of the homes** will include a variety of smooth hardi plank, stone, or brick applications, asphalt shingles & metal roofs, vinyl windows, raked soffits, smooth columns, slab foundations and multiple elevations. The units will have front stoops with a small space allowing room for container gardening. The units will vary in size from around 1,600 SF to around 2,200 SF. The architectural styles of the homes will carry Craftsmen Style feel and be rich in historical and traditional detail. All buildings in the development will be stick-built on-site.

Sewer Supply System

The developer plans to utilize an existing sanitary sewer main near the property to convey the development's wastewater to Athens-Clarke County's wastewater treatment plant. It is the intent of the developer to install a gravity sanitary sewer system within the development to convey all wastewater to existing Athens Clarke County lines that exist along a tributary of North Oconee River near the back portion of the site. There is no plan to use onsite septic systems for the developments. Below is the estimate demand that will be generated by the development:

No. of lots = 350 @ 400 GPD
Total Flow = 140,000 GPD = 97.2 g
Peaking Factor = 2.5
Estimated Total Peak Flow = 243 GPM

Water Supply

A county water main-line exists in the right-of-way of Newton Bridge Road and along the right-of-way of Industrial Drive. New water mains will be extended into the development from the western portion of the property and conveyed throughout the development. The water system within the project will be designed to form a “loop” to provide enhanced water quality and flow.

No. of lots = 350

Peak Day = $1.8 * 350 * 0.3 = 189$ GPM

Peak Day = $3.25 * 350 * 0.3 = 342$ GPM

Surface Water Drainage

Concrete curb & gutter, county-approved infrastructure, and the grassed and natural topography will be employed to collect and divert stormwater to the proposed storm-water management facilities. Post-development run-off will be maintained at predevelopment rates for the required multi-year storm events. The proposed storm-water management plan will be analyzed and designed to accommodate the requirements of Athens-Clarke County stormwater regulations, including Runoff Reduction Volume (RRv), Water Quality Volume (WQv), Channel Protection Volume (CPv), and detention volumes. To meet those regulations, this will be accomplished by a series of ponds and other Best Management Practices throughout the site.

Access

The development will be accessed from two entrances off Newton Bridge Road.

Traffic Impact

Trip Generation Analysis

Independent Variable	Weighted Trip Generation Rate		Avg Vehicle Trip Ends		Total Trips/Day (x)
"Average Vehicle Trip Ends vs."	"Average Rate"				
Avg. Daily Weekend	2.42	x	350	=	847
Avg. Daily Weekday	3.44	x	350	=	1204
Peak A.M. Weekday	0.48	x	350	=	168
Peak P.M. Weekday	0.58	x	350	=	203
Peak Hour Weekend	0.56	x	350	=	196

A traffic impact study was provided to analyze the two entrances at Newton Bridge Road. Refer to the traffic impact study for recommendations.

Anticipated Schedule

The petitioners plan to complete the zoning efforts on the subject property by May 2025. The Preliminary Plat of the development will be submitted by June 2025, and the infrastructure construction plans will be approved by September 2025. Construction of the project infrastructure will commence immediately upon approval of these plans. The infrastructure and building construction will require approximately 1-2 year to complete. The total build-out of the project is anticipated to be completed by Spring 2027.

Maintenance of Common Areas

The developer will account for adequate monetary reserves to maintain, control, and ensure common areas including but not limited to community facilities, and storm water management facilities within the project until construction and sales are 80% complete which at that time a Homeowners Association will take over maintenance of the common areas and landscape maintenance.

Buffers

No additional buffers have been added. Roughly half of the site is classified as wetlands or is in the 100-year floodplain creating a natural buffer around much of the property. The adjacent properties are all zoned Industrial.

Utilities

All utilities are proposed to be underground. Any overhead services that currently exist will be rerouted within the appropriate utility corridor acceptable to Clarke County and the affected utility company, with the exception of the power and transmission lines. The proposed utilities are power, water, telephone, cable TV, and internet access.

The design consultant has reviewed the required dimensions, capacities, and volumes related to required waterline and sewer-line extensions and has determined that (a) the proposed waterline extensions will supply adequate fire flows and pressures and domestic water demands, and (b) the proposed sanitary sewer line extensions will satisfy the wastewater demands.

Sidewalks

Concrete sidewalks will be constructed throughout the project.

Public & Semi-public Areas

Water & sewer easements as well as some drainage easements will be dedicated to Athens Clarke County as required. Easements for power, telephone, cable TV, and gas will be dedicated as required for specific utility construction.

Outdoor Lighting

Light fixtures on metal poles will be installed to illuminate the development for safety and security. These light standards will be oriented inward, down and away from any neighboring residential areas.

Code Compliance

The development will be constructed in compliance with all applicable county codes and design guidelines, with the following conditions:

1. We offer this layout as a non-binding site plan with the condition we maintain the general conformance of the proposed layout and road alignments, with the flexibility to make some adjustments, capping the total bedroom count at 1150 (1924 bedrooms allowed per RM-1 zoning).
2. We will also offer as a condition that no apartments may be constructed on the property. Only fee simple townhomes and single family detached housing.

Garbage Collection

Garbage collection will be handled by a private contract service. One or two dumpster locations with handicap accessible parking will be utilized within the development.

ZONING IMPACT ANALYSIS

(Newton Bridge Development – I to RM-1)

1. How the proposed rezoning will conform to the Future Land Use Map, the general plans for the physical development of Athens-Clarke County, and any master plan or portion thereof adopted by the Mayor and Commission.

The requested zoning is a change to the future land use map for this property, however the proposed zoning is an acceptable classification and use per Athens Clarke County zoning regulations. The Future Land Use Map shows the property split between Rural and Employment.

2. The proposed rezoning will not adversely affect the balance of land uses in Athens-Clarke County.

The requested zoning will not affect the balance of uses in Athens-Clarke County. This zoning is currently allowed. Both the property and adjacent property being zoned Industrial, and surrounding properties being zoned RS-15, RS-5, and CG, rezoning this property to RM-1 could serve as a buffer between the Industrial, Commercial, and Single Family zonings.

3. Public facility elements of the Comprehensive Plan and how the proposed change will affect the provision of the services anticipated in the plan?

The current zoning request does not negatively affect the provision of services for the plan.

4. The proposed use meets all objective criteria set forth for that use provided in the zoning ordinance and conforms to the purpose and intent of the comprehensive plan and all of its elements?

The design and proposed use of this project is intended to be consistent with the RM-1 zoning ordinance requirements, to maximize the benefits to the local area and the proposed community. It is the intent of the developer to follow the included concept plan as much as feasibly possible along with consideration and input from ACC.

5. The existing land use pattern surrounding the property in issue.

The existing land use surrounding the property is a mix of mostly residential single-family, industrial, & general business. This zoning request allows for a nice transition of use and density between the general business, industrial, and single family residential zoned properties.

6. The possible creation of an isolated district unrelated to adjacent and nearby districts?

This zoning request does not create an isolated district of unrelated use or density relative to the adjacent and nearby districts. There are RM-1 zoned properties along Kathwood Drive, behind the C-G tracts across Newton Bridge Road.

7. The population density pattern and possible increase or over-taxing of the load on public facilities including, but not limited to, schools, utilities, and streets?

This zoning request does not overload the use of public facilities and falls within the design guidelines and metrics allowed for the area.

8. The cost of the Unified Government and other governmental entities in providing, improving, increasing or maintaining public utilities, schools, streets and other public safety measures?

This zoning request does not increase the cost to government entities for public utilities, schools, streets, & safety but either improves upon those and/or allows a tax revenue that would over and above sustain any impact of the future land use.

9. The possible impact on the environment, including but not limited to, drainage, soil erosion and sedimentation, flooding, air quality and water quantity?

The project would not have a negative impact on the environment. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented during the duration of the construction process and post-construction BMPs will be provided to provide runoff-reduction and water-quality for the project.

10. Whether the proposed zoning amendment will be a deterrent to the value or improvement of development of adjacent property in accordance with existing regulations?

The proposed zoning would have a positive impact and increase the value of both current and future developments on any adjacent property. It will be a solid addition to the future revenue for the commercial businesses in the area as well as continuing to satisfy the growing housing needs of the Athens area, as the majority of the adjacent industrial zoned properties remain undeveloped. It will also be unique in its architectural design and aesthetically attractive.

11. Whether there are substantial reasons why the property cannot be used in accordance with existing zoning; provided, however, evidence that the economic value of the property, as currently zoned, is less than its economic value if rezoned as requested will not alone constitute a significant detriment?

The current property has continued to sit undeveloped for years due to the industrial zoning of the property and the amount of property in wetlands and the 100-year floodplain. The large Powerline easements also create big obstacles for Industrial development. The location and traffic are not ideal for most general business uses in the C-G zone, and the balance of the property is not large enough to satisfy a traditional family neighborhood development. The current actual use of this property is undeveloped.

12. The aesthetic effect of existing and future use of the property as it relates to the surrounding area?

The aesthetic effect of the existing land use is either undeveloped land or a few industrial structures. The aesthetic effect of the future land use will promote and create a positive value to the area. It will be new and rich in architectural detail.

13. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal?

The conditions of the area are primed for additional multifamily housing growth (not student). A lot of the adjacent properties are in the employment district on the future land use map. This development will help support future businesses that are established in the area. The current zoning request helps to act as a buffer from the industrial zoned property, while increasing the number of residents to support future businesses without the use of apartments.