

Homestead

A MIXED-USE COMMUNITY



PRELIMINARY PLANNED DEVELOPMENT REPORT

31 JULY 2020
Athens, Georgia

INTRODUCTION

Homestead is a proposed neighborhood designed to meet the growing demand for workforce housing within Athens-Clarke County. Located adjacent to Coile Middle School, near Employment and Industrial Zoning Districts, and the regional retail district at the intersection of US 29 Hwy. N and Old Hull Rd., Homestead provides the opportunity to meet growing residential demand across a variety of housing types. Designed as a complete neighborhood, Homestead has a discernable village center with mixed-use structures surrounding a village green. The gridded street system of the neighborhood provides access to a variety of housing types, common of neighborhoods prior to WW2. The variety of housing types will include single-family detached and townhomes, but also housing types commonly referred to as the “missing middle”. The incorporation of missing middle housing types provides affordable housing options seamlessly embedded within the fabric of the neighborhood.



Figure 1. Conceptual Site Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND CURRENT USE

The development is to be constructed on a portion of a continuous tract of land fronting Old Elberton Road, just north of its intersection with Moore's Grove Road. The total acreage that is to be included with this request is 233.02 acres. The parcel is currently a mix of pastured land and forest with forested areas around the creeks. There is a ~1.3-acre lake in the center of the property and various unimproved dirt roads.

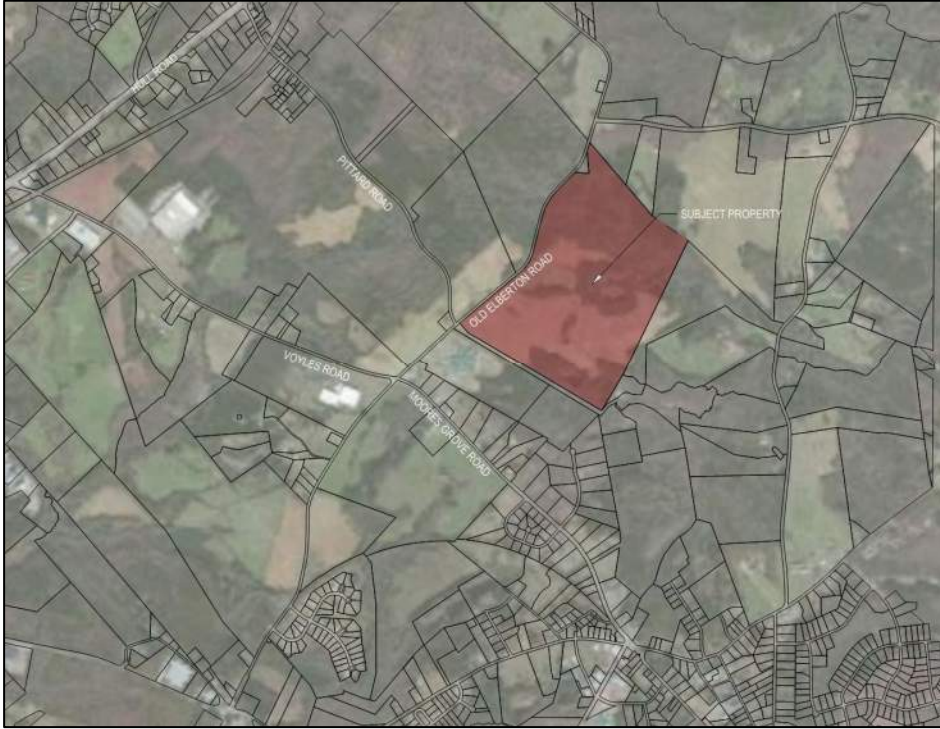


Figure 2. Aerial Image and Vicinity Map

ZONING

The existing zoning classification of the subject tract is Agricultural (AR). The zoning of the abutting properties is a mix of Agricultural (AR), Employment Office (E-O), and Employment Industrial (E-I) with the exception of Coile Middle School to the south, which is zoned Government (G). This section of E-O and E-I properties is one of two industrial use areas in Athens-Clarke County. On the west side of the E-O and E-I zoning, are properties zoned Commercial Rural (C-R), Commercial Neighborhood (C-N), Commercial General (C-G), and Single-Family Residential (RS-15 and RS-5). These zoning designations are within a 2-mile radius of the subject tract. Within a 1-mile radius is the northwestern portion of the City of Winterville. Additionally, the Commercial General (C-G) districts at the intersection of US 29 HWY N and Old Hull Rd, which houses the Kroger Shopping Center, is only 2.5 miles away from the site.



Figure 3. Current Zoning Map – 1-mile radius

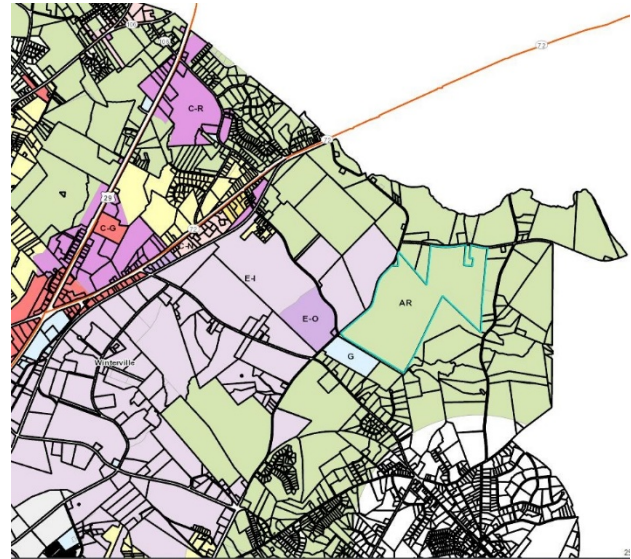


Figure 4. Current Zoning Map – 2-mile radius

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP

The A-CC Future Land Use Map designates the subject site as *Rural*. The Future Land Use Compatibility Matrix does not list RS-8 as a compatible zoning district for the future land use designation, although the C-R portion is compatible.

While there is a limited case to be made for changing the Future Land Use map from strictly considering a use and zoning perspective, there is a clear affordable housing imperative in Athens. A project of this size is unique for Athens and land available for this type of development within the current land use map is rare, if available at all. The preservation of the green belt should be guarded. At the same time, this particular site situated near local industry (Olympic, West Hancock Industrial, Spring Valley), a growing development node (Kroger Market Place, Athens Tech), and public schooling (Coile Middle School) provides a unique opportunity to make a strategic change in the future land use map. This application provides the potential to make a substantial contribution to addressing the affordability dilemma in Athens.

Further, in reviewing the Future Land Use Map, the green belt around the exterior of Athens-Clarke County contains a number of subdivisions and smaller Agricultural (AR) lots that are not compatible with the *Rural* designation. These surrounding future land uses prevent any affordable workforce housing from being constructed in close proximity to places of employment in the area, increasing traffic, and decreasing quality of life for those who work in these industrial areas, creating a necessity for a development such as this.

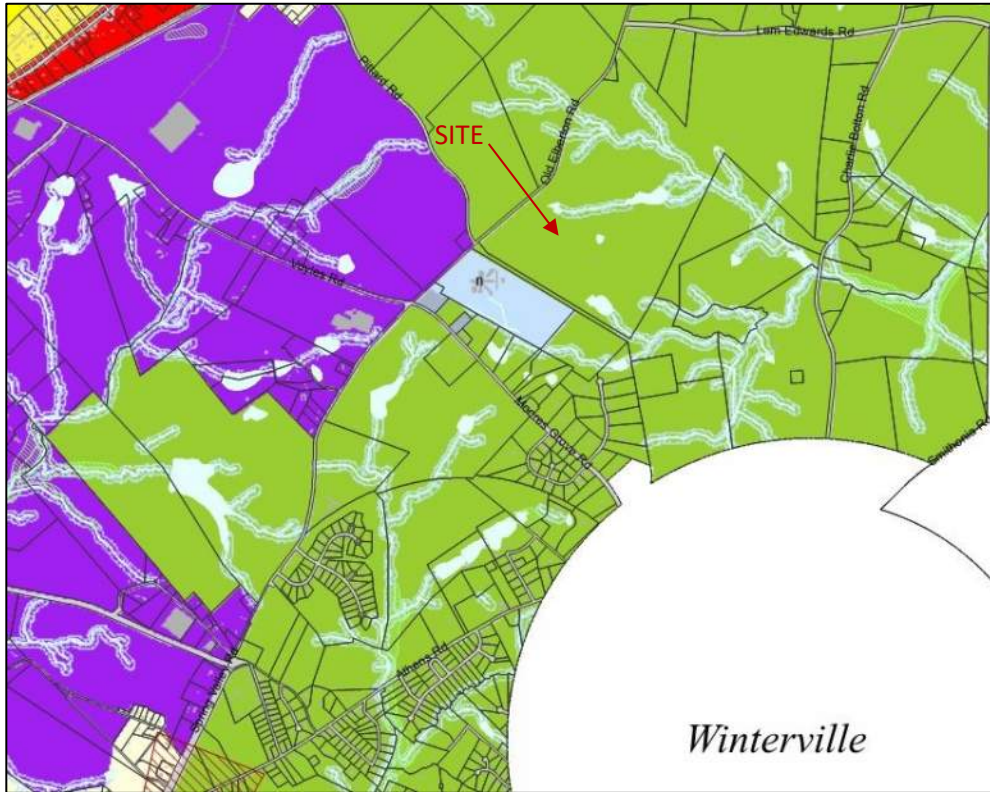
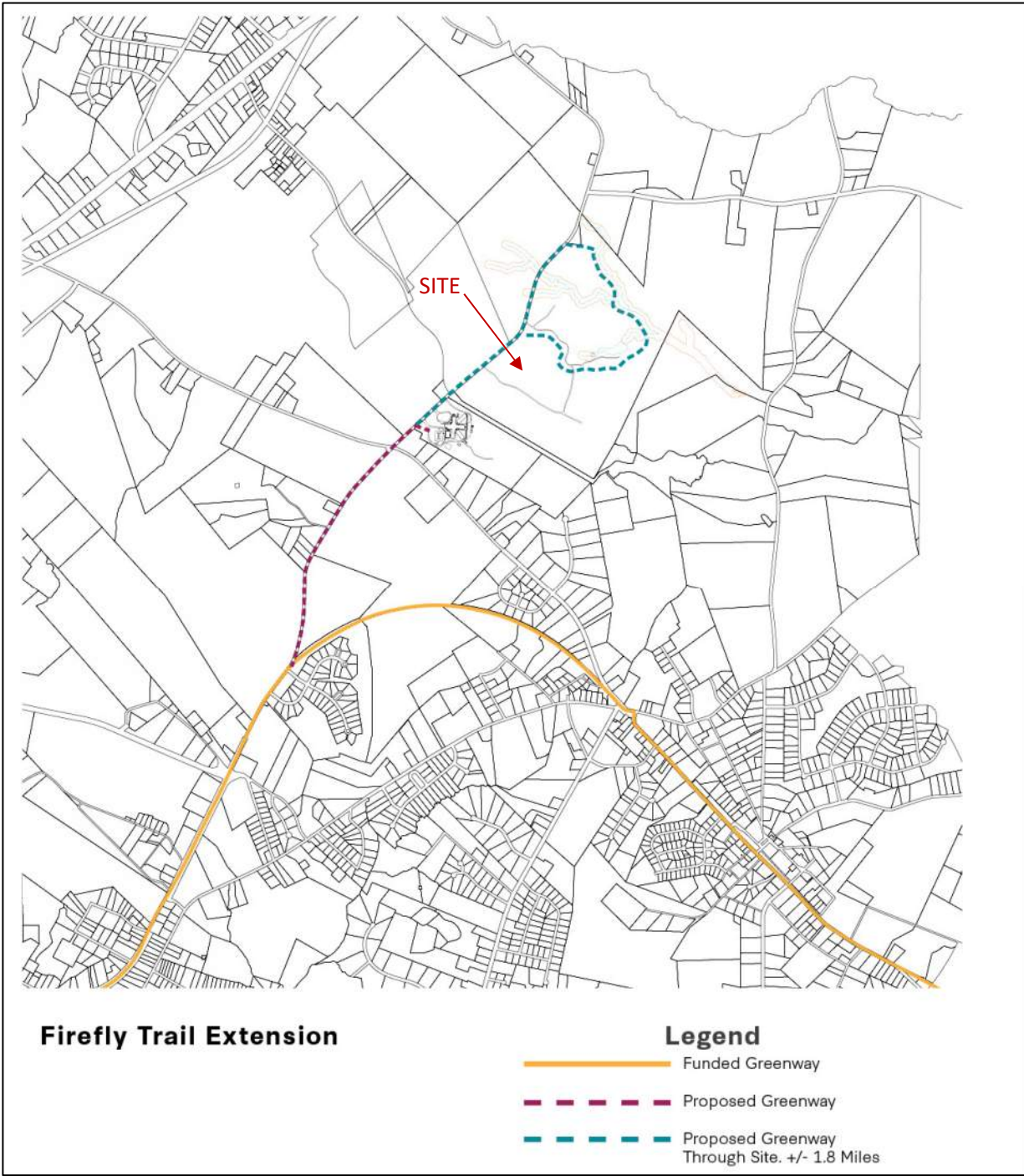


Figure 5. Future Land Use Map

PROPOSED USE

Homestead is designed as a neighborhood with a village center and a variety of housing types. The village center occupies approximately 22.77 acres and contains mixed-use structures (commercial/residential) surrounding a village green, along with residential uses contained in a variety of housing types ranging from walk-up apartments to bungalow court homes (See Building Typology). The remaining 210 +/- acres of the site will contain open spaces and single-family detached structures on fee-simple lots, with attached units such as corner manor home stacked units and interspersed at nodes and intersections.

Construction adjacent to Old Elberton Road is set back at least 125 feet from the right-of-way, providing a strip of open space along the corridor and providing a space for the future construction of a multi-use path. A variety of open spaces consisting of both active and passive recreation areas are conserved throughout the development. Walking trails and woodland paths will meander through the open spaces, providing a trail system connecting the open spaces to the sidewalk network. The total open space conserved is approximately 39% of the tract.



The proposed zoning for the tract is Commercial-Rural (C-R) in the area of the village center, and Single-Family Residential (RS-8) for the remainder of the tract. Given the location of the tract and the proximity to the Employment-Industrial Districts, a development of this scale would be beneficial in supplying housing options for both employers and employees. The abutting residentially zoned properties in the area are zoned AR and are typically larger tracts with densities of 1 unit per acre leaving those that work in the E-I and E-O zones needing to commute for work. This development aims to offer workforce housing within close proximity to places of employment



Figure 6. Proposed Zoning Overlay

The intention within the development is to seamlessly blend commercial and mixed-use living with other various housing opportunities. To achieve this, the C-R district will offer some first floor commercial with residential units above as well as a mixture of housing types such as walk-up apartments, duplex, fourplex, six-plexes, attached townhomes, bungalow court homes, and stacked manor house units. Within the RS-8 district, the previously mentioned building typologies will be woven into single-family detached units that offer both alley or front-loading garage options. Additionally, there will be a greater sprinkling of small-scale garden apartment-style units, courtyard communities, and corner manor houses that are aimed at sharing a common open space to help foster and build a greater sense of community.

The blending of various housing types within the neighborhood enables the developer to provide 20% of the units at prices meeting the criteria of workforce housing. The community will be comprised of various unit mixes across the various housing types and will be deed restricted and/or managed by a third party to ensure the apartments are used for workforce housing in perpetuity. The specific parameters related to the private/third-party agreement,

the housing mix, and workforce affordability criteria will be developed in partnership with City Planning Staff, Mayor & Commissioners and affordable housing partners.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

This development fills a void in workforce housing in Athens while providing safe, comfortable housing options for the working family. Athens-Clarke County has a commuting workforce, with approximately 2/3 of those employed in the county commuting from surrounding areas.



Source: US Census 2017

Focusing on a 5-mile radius surrounding the project site, the numbers get even worse. Only about 1/5 of those working in the area actually live in the area, whether in or outside of the county.



10,989

Work in the Selection Area

1,180

Live and Work in the Selection Area



12,442

Work in the Selection Area

2,086

Live and Work in the Selection Area

(includes those outside the county)

ARCHITECTURE

The prevalent architectural style with Homestead will be southern vernacular, blending both contemporary and traditional approaches. The number of lots and housing types will necessitate a diversity of builders and house plans to reflect the wide range housing types needed for a complete neighborhood.

BUILDING TYPOLOGIES

To create a truly diverse neighborhood with aesthetically pleasing building types and densities, the design includes various building types to be constructed throughout the development. Several of these types will be used in both the commercial and residential districts while the single-family detached units will be located solely in the RS-8 district. The intent is to create a space with various structures and densities to allow for the blending of market rate housing with affordable workforce housing within one neighborhood.

Single-Family Detached Alley Loaded

The single-family detached alley loaded homes will be layered into the middle sections of the RS-8 designated portion of the subject tract. The homes will be three to four bedrooms and two stories in height. The intent of the alley loading is to enhance the public realm and reducing the number of driveways and access the garages from the rear of the structure. The use of the alleys is critical to reducing the number of curb cuts and makes a better experience for pedestrians at the front door, while increasing the amount of on-street parking. The alley is also critical in offering means of mixing building types within a block.



Figure 7. Single-Family Detached Alley Loaded, Representative Architecture & Plan

Single-Family Detached Front Loaded

The single-family detached front-loaded houses will be similar to the alley loaded lots but differ with the placement of the garage. These buildings will have three to four bedrooms and be spread throughout the edges of the proposed development as this design requires wider lots to account for the width of the garage. The houses will be 1-½ to 2 stories in height.

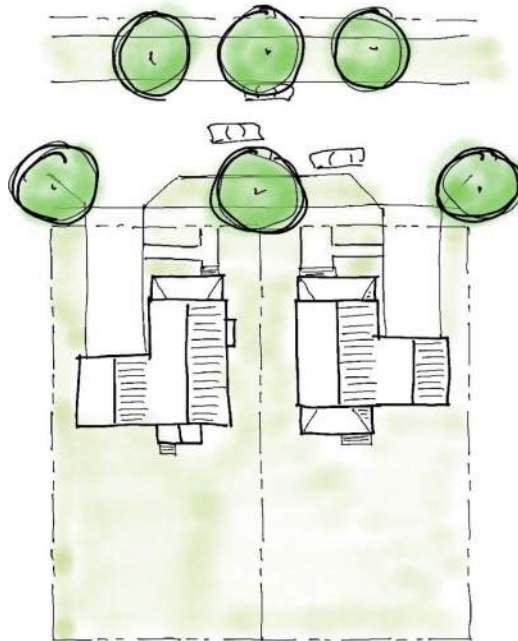


Figure 8. Single-Family Detached Front Loaded, Representative Architecture & Plan

Bungalow Court Homes

These detached structures will be clustered throughout the development with the intention of creating cottage courts within the context of the larger neighborhood. The size of the structures will vary between 700 s.f. to 1,200 s.f. and will contain one to two bedrooms to offer a variety within each bungalow court. The units will share a common open space and parking will be located to the side or rear of the court. Within the development, the bungalow courts are placed at the edges of the C-R district, on large greenways, and between single-family units and duplexes.



Figure 9. Bungalow Court Homes, Representative Architecture & Plan

Single-Family Attached Townhomes

The attached townhome building type offers single-family units with slightly higher densities and lower price points. These units will contain three or four bedrooms per unit and range from two to three stories depending on the location of the townhomes within the development. The use of townhomes within the development is to offer diversity in building types as a means of segueing between multifamily building types and the detached single-family residences.

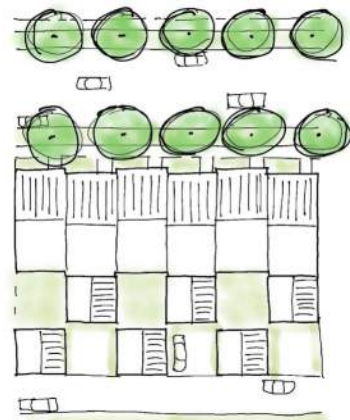


Figure 10. Single-Family Attached Townhomes, Representative Architecture & Plan

Duplex / Walk-up Four-Plex / Six-Plex

The duplex, four-plex, and six-plex building types are forms of “missing middle” housing that mass the individual units together in one building. Building codes allow these buildings types to be built with a single stair and without an elevator when ground floor units are accessible. These building types are used to scale multi-family units to fit within lower density surroundings.

Duplex, four-plex, and six-plex building types will be used throughout the development in both the RS-8 and C-R zones. When these are used in the C-R zone, the units will contain one or two bedrooms. Outside of the C-R zone, the will contain two or three bedrooms. The duplex and four-plex buildings will be two stories while the six-plex units will vary between two or three stories depending on placement within the development. These building types will be a combination of street and alley drive access in order to blend with other building types like townhomes and single-family detached alley loaded homes.

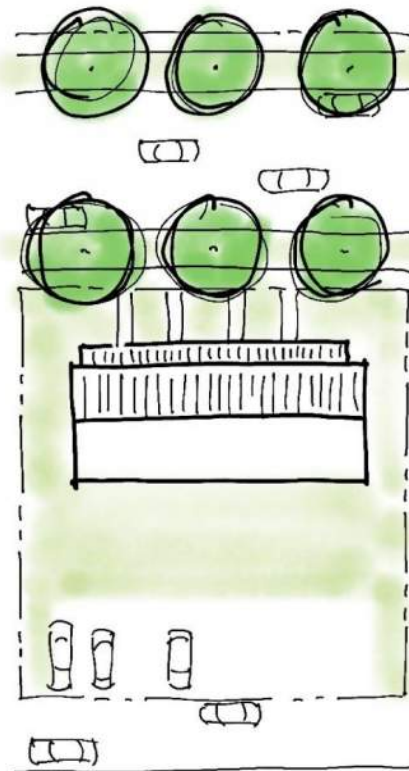


Figure 11. Duplex, Four-Plex, Six-Plex, Representative Architecture & Plan

Corner Manor Homes / Stacked Units

This is a corner, walk-up multi-family residential type that centers the units on a single open staircase towards the middle of the building. This design typically serves as the endcaps to blocks and will be used in both the RS-8 and C-R districts. The corner manor homes will vary between two and three stories and will contain 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units. These will be alley fed with either a shared parking lot and/or first floor garage parking depending on the unit type and location.

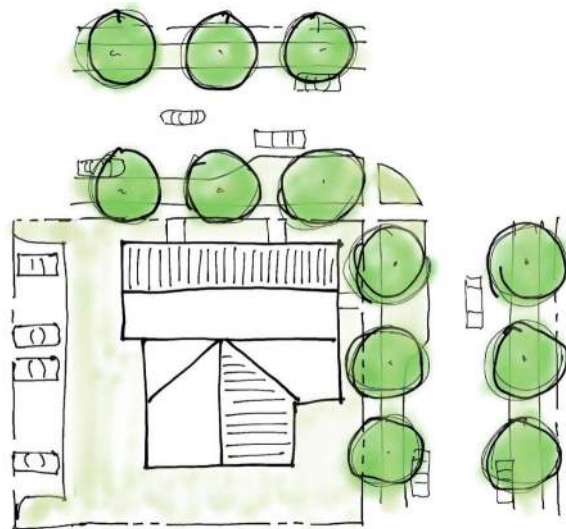


Figure 12. Corner Manor Homes, Representative Architecture & Plan

Walk-up Apartments

The walk-up apartment units will be located in the village center and contain one or two bedrooms in each unit. This building type will contain two or three stories, some being location above commercial uses surround the village green.



Figure 13. Walk-up Apartments

TRAFFIC GENERATION

The Institute of Engineers (ITE) is the industry standard source for providing trip generation information for various land uses. The trip generation analysis was prepared by referencing the ITE Trip Generation Manual (9th Edition) and selecting the land use category best representing the subject development. Development for the site entails construction of Single Family Detached (Front-Loaded), Single Family Detached (Alley Loaded), Single Family Attached, Townhouse, Duplex/Six-Plex Units, Manor Homes, Walk-Up Apartments, Residential Over Commercial and general commercial retail space. Corresponding ITE use categories were selected that best matches the proposed housing types. Per ITE Trip Generation Handbook, the expected traffic generated by the project is summarized below:

Table 1. Trip Generation Summary

Description/ITE Code	Units Type	Units	ADT 2-WAY	PEAK AM			PEAK PM		
				AM Hour	AM In	AM Out	PM Hour	PM In	PM Out
Single Family Homes 210	DU	470.0	4,474	353	88	264	470	296	174
Apartment 220	DU	80.0	532	41	8	33	50	32	17
Resd. Condo/Townhouse 230	DU	150.0	872	66	11	55	78	52	26
Resd. Condo/Townhouse 230	DU	150.0	872	66	11	55	78	52	26
Daycare Center 565	KSF2	10.0	741	122	65	57	123	58	65
General Office 710	KSF2	14.0	154	22	19	3	21	4	17
Shopping Center 820 Rate	KSF2	10.0	427	10	4	2	37	12	13
TOTAL TRIPS:			8,071	679	206	469	857	506	338

While the project would be built over several phases, the total build-out is anticipated to take over six years. The projected traffic volume is significant and necessitates a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) to understand its impact on the surrounding road infrastructure. A TIA is in progress and will be complete for the Master Plan Submittal.

Transit

The western corner of the site is approximately a 5-minute walk from city transit, specifically the bus stop at the corner of Spring Valley and Voyles Road. While there is currently not a sidewalk to this location, the developer anticipates working with A-CC Transit and A-CC Public Works to build the infrastructure necessary for the community to safely utilize transit. Route 30, the Northside Circulator operates 7-days a week and in the evenings. The route includes stops at the Kroger Marketplace and the growing development node around Athens Tech, further strengthening the case for residential housing types in this area.

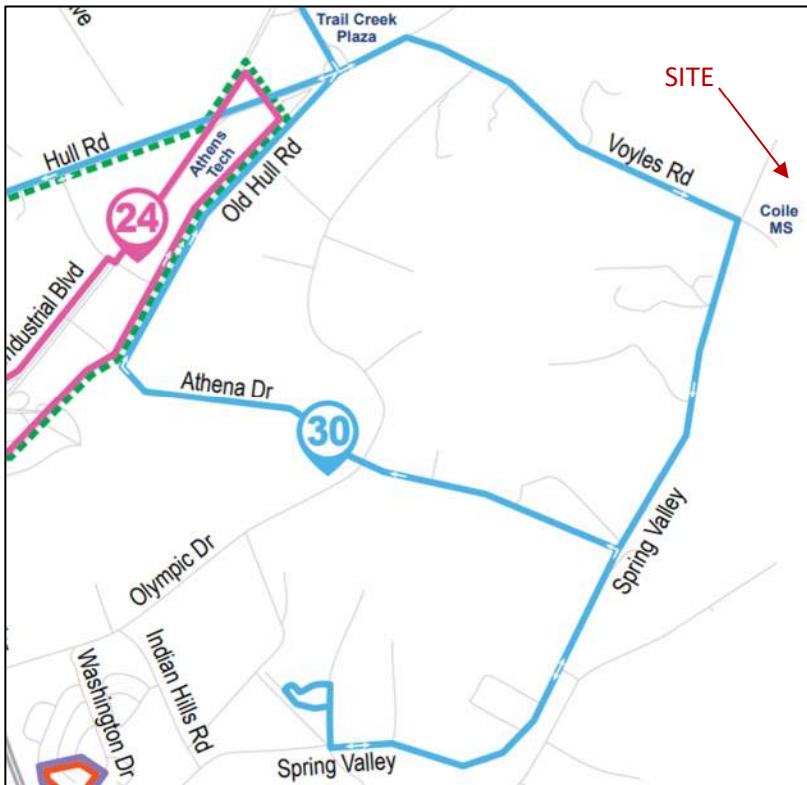


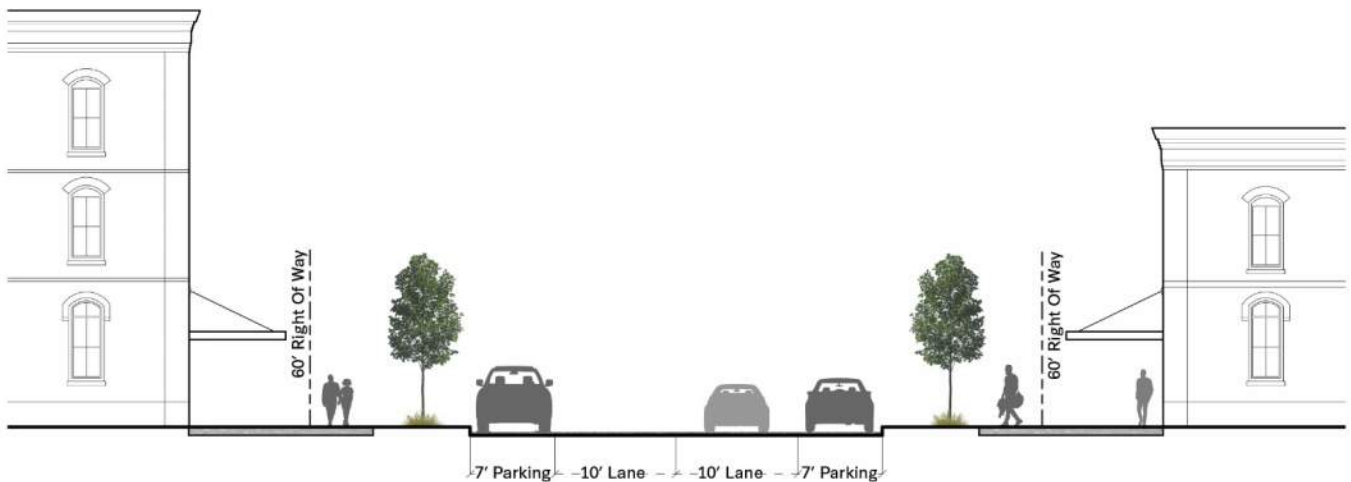
Figure 14. A-CC Transit Map

STREETSCAPE

All streets within the development will contain sidewalks on both sides of the street separated by a verge planted with street trees planted at 30-foot intervals. Trees planted between the curb and the sidewalk foster slower vehicular speeds and enhance pedestrian safety. The streetscapes include sidewalks set at the back of the right-of-way and are largely defined by trees adjacent to the roadway to provide further separation between vehicular and pedestrian spaces. Throughout the development, there will be a mixing of streetscapes to best suit the various building types that require alley or front-loaded access.

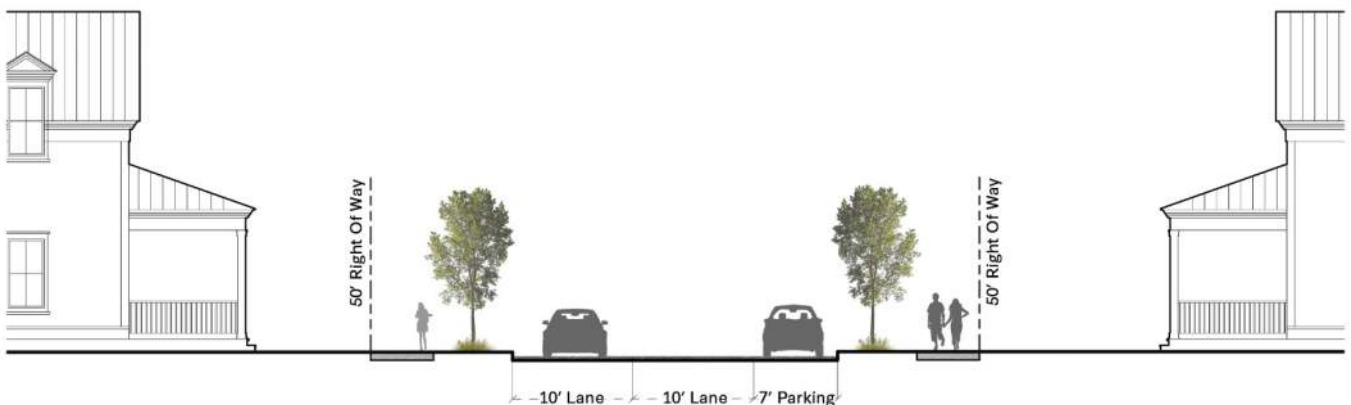
Village Center

The widest street cross-section will have a 60 foot wide right-of-way. This will include two-lane traffic with on-street parking on both sides of the street. This design will predominantly be used in the C-R zoned section of the development as well as sections of the development that contain multifamily units on both sides of the street.

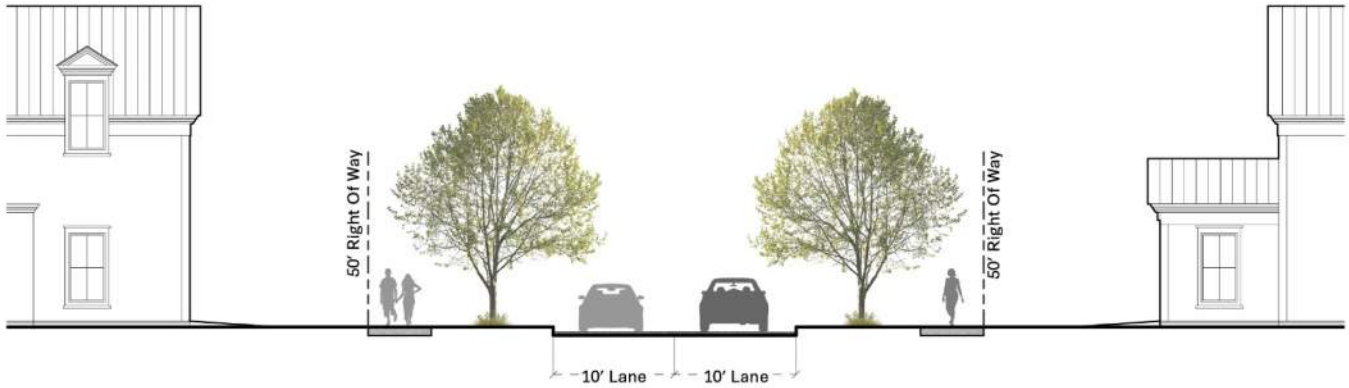


Residential Streets

This street section scales back from the previous to create a narrower street with two-way traffic and parking on one side. The street is contained within a 50-foot right-of-way and contains a sidewalk and planted verge on each side.



Narrower still is a two-lane street without on-street parking. These streets are used along the outer periphery of the neighborhood where driveways access the street directly. The street is located within a 50-foot-wide right of way with a wider planted verge than streets containing on-street parking.



VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING

The site is accessed from three points along Old Elberton Road. A connection in the SE corner of the property will be left available for future connection to an adjacent development if ever necessary. Private alleys will provide access to the rear of the narrower lots, with additional on-street parking throughout the neighborhood. Parking with the village center will be location in the rear of the structures. On-street parking is also provided along both sides of the street.

LIGHTING

Outdoor lighting will be provided in conformance with Sec. 9-19-4. Indirect and low-level, pedestrian-scale lighting will also be utilized to provide a pleasing and safe environment.

UTILITIES AND SERVICES

The proposed development will require domestic water and sanitary sewer services in addition to power, cable, and internet service. The estimated water demand for the project is approximately 302,490 GPD. Water is proposed to connect to an existing 8-inch watermain located within the Old Elberton Road Right-of-Way. The subject site is just outside of the A-CC Future Service Delivery Area but the adjacent Coile Middle School is on public sewer and the proposed tie-in manhole is located near Coile Middle School on Old Elberton Road. In order to provide sewer service for the project, a pump station and extension of the existing 8-inch public sewer line on Old Elberton Road is proposed.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND WATER QUALITY

Stormwater management for the project will be provided in accordance with the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual and will comply with Athens-Clarke County Stormwater Regulations for New Developments. Stormwater management and water quality is expected to be handled on site within a number of stormwater ponds located throughout the site. The parameters and details of these measures will be designed and engineered during site construction plan development and will be subject to the final grading, soil conditions and feasibility.

TRASH DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING

Trash and recyclables will be collected by A-CC or a licensed service provider. Dumpster enclosures will be constructed for the commercial portions of the site and will be screened from view in accordance with Section 9-25-8-G-5a. The single family and townhouse portions will have typical tip cart collection.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The subject property is split between pastured land and forest and two existing streams flow through the northern portion of the site. The FEMA Firm Panel for the site does not identify the presence of any floodplains on-site and wetlands outside the lake and creek are identified on the National Wetlands Inventory Map. Environmental impacts will consist of forest clearing for the development and a stream crossing for roadway and sewer installation. The existing site is mostly cleared pasture with wooded areas along the stream buffers. Nearly 40% of the site will be open space, including 31 acres that will be undisturbed. The developed portions of the site will be subject to A-CC robust tree management plan and therefore will result in several thousand trees to be planted in what is currently cleared pastureland. The project will also require water quality treatment for all impervious area runoff to mitigate impacts into the streams. In addition to stormwater management to improve water quality, a detailed erosion and sediment control plan will be prepared to mitigate the offsite impacts during construction.

PHASING

The development of the site will occur in phases as market conditions permit. Each phase will contain at least 20% of the units set aside for workforce housing. Preliminary phase lines are illustrated below.

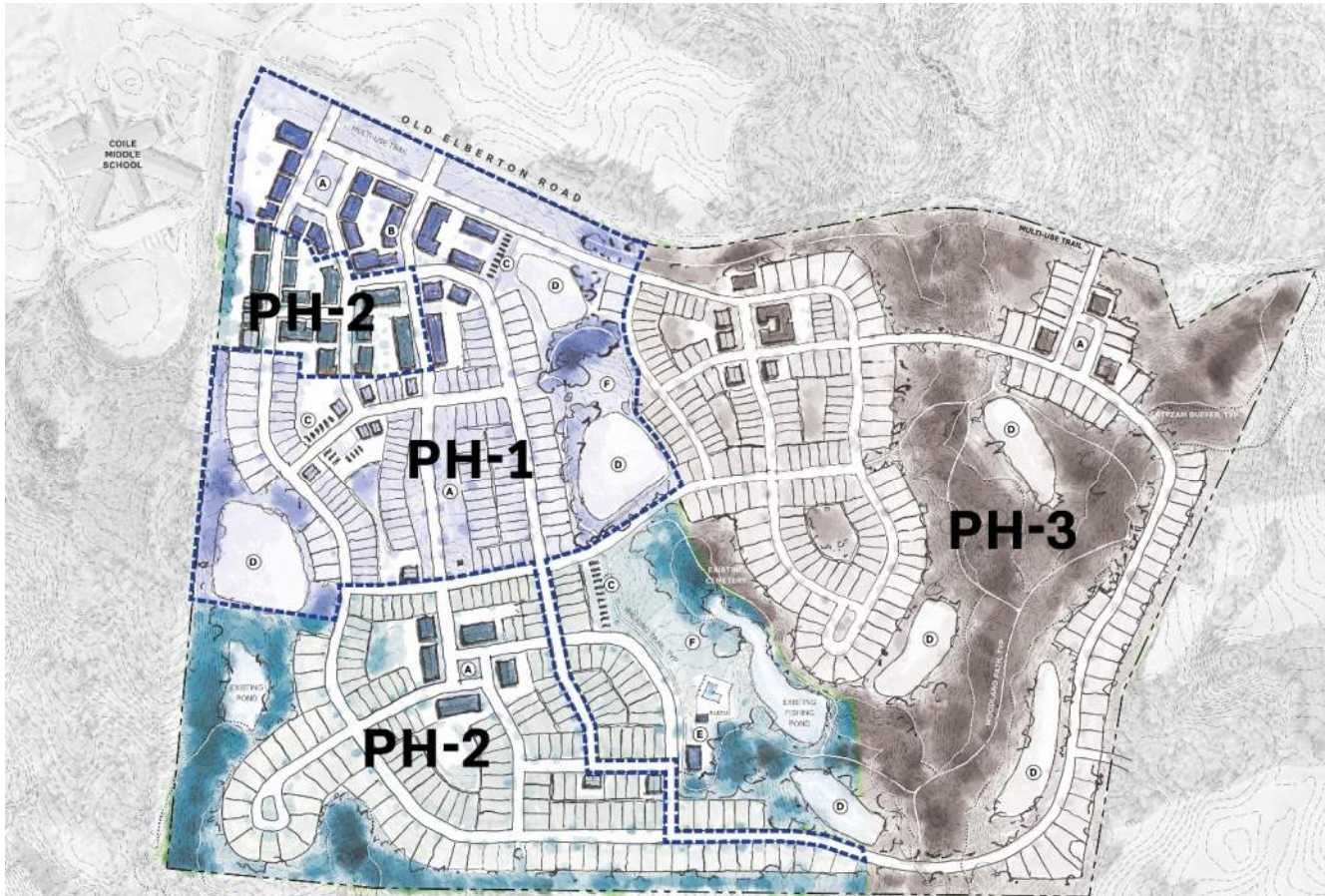


Figure 15. Phasing Plan

DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT

Due to the scope of the proposed develop, a Development of Regional Impacts (DRI) review will need to be conducted as Homestead exceeds the thresholds. The applicant will work in conjuncture with ACC Planning staff to coordinate the DRI review.

WAIVERS FROM A-CC DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. Section 8-7-15-d Minimum Total Tree Canopy Cover Requirements. While the development has two different zoning districts, the intent is to create one contiguous development that should have the conserved tree canopy reviewed as a whole versus individually by zoning classifications and tracts. The request is to waive both conserved canopy requirements for the C-R and RS-8 districts. If reviewed as individual tracts, the C-R portion must conserve 30% canopy while the RS-8 portion must have 15% conserved. The placement of the C-R portion of the property is in existing pasture lands where no existing trees are present to conserve. Additionally, the RS-8 portion of the development will be able to conserve 14% canopy. Considering the entire development as a whole, 31-acres (13.3 %) of the canopy will be conserved.
2. Section 9-7-2 and 9-10-2 Maximum Lot Coverage. A waiver is requested to modify the maximum allowable lot coverage in both the C-R and RS-8 districts. The maximum required lot coverage for both districts is 35% and 45% respectfully. Given the nature of the development, lot coverage cannot be treated on a lot by lot basis, but is rather spread across the site within the open spaces and recreation spaces. The proposal includes the development of a multi-use trail system within the 91 acres of open space throughout the tract. In an effort to create a sense of place and community, the lots are smaller creating denser pockets without requiring density waivers. This clustering and density also assist in the feasibility of offering 20% affordable housing units in perpetuity but it also comes at the cost of lot coverage.
3. Section 9-7-2 Duplex and Multifamily Dwellings. A waiver is requested to allow for duplexes and multi-family units to be permissible in the RS-8 district. To create a complete neighborhood with a commercial core, the need for stair-stepped densities and structures is crucial in creating a complete neighborhood. This design aims to seamlessly blend the commercial area with multifamily and single-family dwellings while still offering affordable workforce housing options. This development is looking to include a multitude of building types in order to better suit the workforce housing needs and address some of the missing middle housing components in Athens-Clarke County.
4. Section 9-10-2 First Floor Commercial Requirements. The development proposes that 22.77-acres of the development be zoned C-R. The buildings surrounding the village green will meet this requirement. However, having the entire area within the C-R zone meet the first-floor commercial requirements is not feasible. The intent of the development is to create an complete neighborhood with anchoring commercial spaces that offers workforce and affordable housing within a mixed-use structure. In order to have the affordable housing elements, the costs need to be offset by density which are met through the 16 beds per acre allotment allowed in the C-R district. Unfortunately, if the development were to be required to build out to the standard commercial requirements, the workforce and affordable housing model cannot be met.

- 5. Section 9-10-3 Front Yard Setback of 20'. The development is looking to create a neighborhood that shares common spaces and is walkable. The requested waiver is to allow for a zero front yard setback within the C-R district to allow for traffic to walk from the sidewalks directly into the commercial and residential spaces. The request will allow the buildings to be placed close to the street, slowing vehicular traffic, and fostering a well-proportioned streetscape.

- 6. Section 9-10-3 Landscaped Area Requirements. A waiver is requested to allow a reduction from the 65% landscape requirement on each lot within the C-R district. This are the stead be located within the common open spaces such the village green and frontage buffer along Old Elberton Hwy.

- 7. Section 9-15-15 Minimum Floor Area Requirements. Homestead offers a variety of building types. Bungalow court homes, which are a maximum of two-bedroom cottage court communities, will not meet the 1,000 heated square feet. The square footage of the bungalows will be between 700 and 1,000 square feet. The bungalow court homes are included in the development as means of offering a detached housing option as part of the affordable housing components of the development. This type of housing is key for the development as it also serves as secondary means of creating micro neighborhoods within the larger community.

- 8. Section 9-26-2-A-6-d-2 Limited Land Disturbance Activity. A waiver is being requested to extend the boundaries of land disturbing activity, following approval of a preliminary plat and prior to final plat approval, beyond the areas identified on the preliminary plat as street rights-of-way and up to 15' beyond the R/W, water and sanitary sewer easements, and stormwater management facilities.

Meeting the requirements of 9-26-2 A-6-d-(2) requires a relatively flat site with maximum slopes of less than 10% or an 8' change in grade across an 80' wide section of roadway. That is the maximum grade permitted by code and assumes essentially no change in grade at the center of the road alignment. The 233.02-acre subject site (as with most 10+ acre sites in Athens) does not feature this type of terrain, but rather has areas that exceed 15% grades. The figure below illustrates how attempting to grade a road with a cross slope greater than 10% exceeds the allowable limits of grading of the Code.

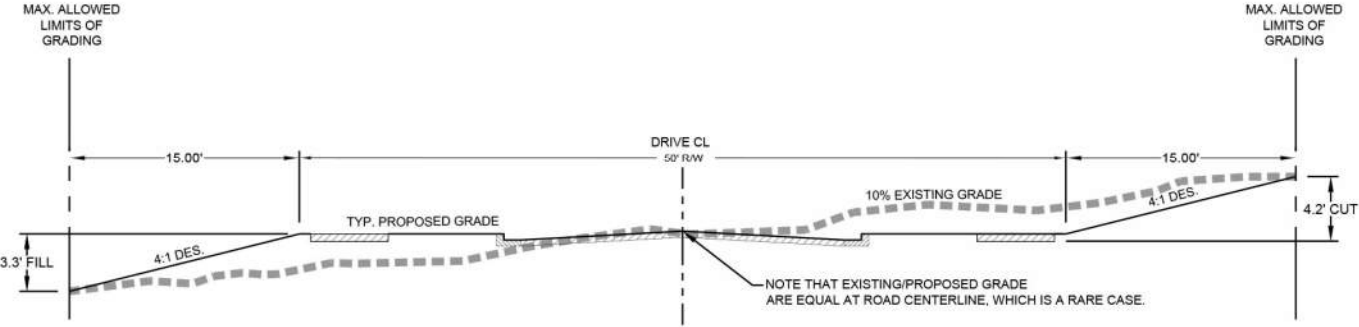


Figure 3. Grading Exhibit with 10% cross grade.

To comply with Section 9-26-2 A-6-d-(2), the grading plan would require temporary retaining walls at the edge of the right-of-way located throughout the project, to reconcile proposed grades with existing grades. After final plat, these temporary walls would need to be removed to complete the grading of the house sites. Compliance would also require significant earthmoving construction activities after final plat. The scope and scale of grading required after final plat would create adverse environmental conditions to the recently built stormwater conveyance infrastructure and water quality treatment facilities.

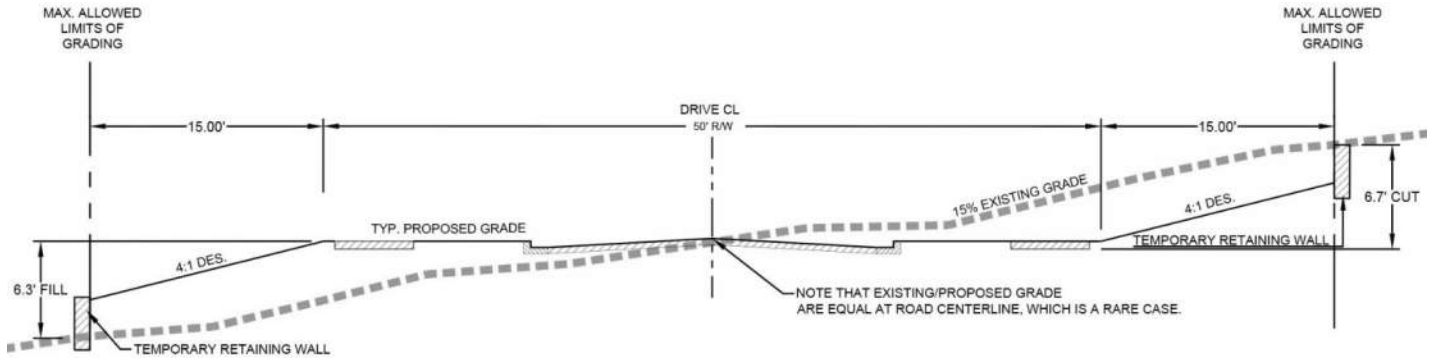


Figure 4. Grading Exhibit with 15% cross grade is representative of the existing topography on this site.

Residential lots with 50' to 60' lot widths (typical for RS zones) require adjacent street grades to be relatively flat (less than 5% desired, 7% maximum). Attempting to grade the roads to the existing terrain leads to undesirable results as shown in the photos below.



Photo 1. Steep Driveways, Eroded front yards.



Photo 2. Retaining Walls, Drainage Problems.

The proposed site plan for the development has a relatively dense concentration of narrow residential lots that have the potential to render similar outcomes as what is demonstrated in the above photos. Given these constraints, the proposed grading plan would not clear cut and grade the entire site as there are 31 acres of conserved canopy being maintained as well as 91 acres of open spaces, equating to 39% of the total site. The intention of the mass grading ordinance is to prevent cut earth from being left in perpetuity. The applicant intends to construct the project in a manner which will create a walkable, attractive streetscape in the shortest time frame possible while utilizing established best management practices for the protection of the natural resources.