

Homestead

A MIXED-USE COMMUNITY



MASTER PLANNED DEVELOPMENT REPORT

29 January 2021
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-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. Homestead has been designed around a gridded street system to provide access to numerous housing types, common of neighborhoods prior to WW2. The variety of housing types will include single-family residences and townhomes, but also housing types commonly referred to as the “missing middle”. The incorporation of missing middle housing types provides attainable housing options seamlessly embedded within the fabric of the neighborhood.

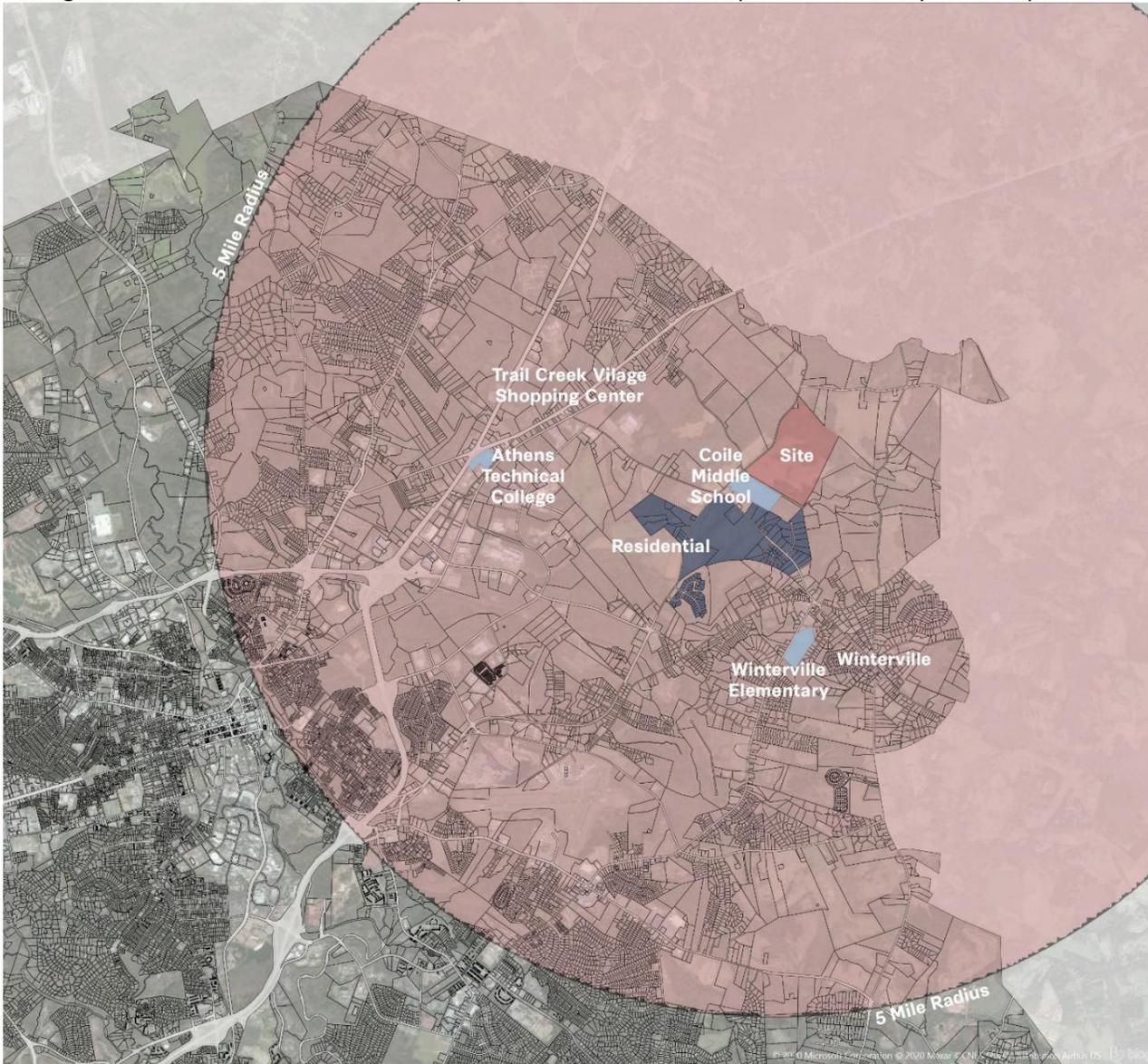


Figure 1. Conceptual Site Plan

Since the conclusion of the previous reviews, the development has been redesigned to accommodate several of the concerns raised by Planning Department staff and Planning Commission members. Several of these changes include reducing the scope of the project, reducing the total number of multifamily types and units, and eliminating the commercial portion of the development. These changes are reflected throughout the below sections to illustrate the overall reduction of the intensity of the development.

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 Moores Grove Road and roughly 7-miles away from downtown Athens. The total acreage that is to be included with this request is 233.02 acres. The parcel is currently a mix of pastureland and



forest. There is a ~1.3-acre lake in the center of the property and various unimproved dirt roads.

ZONING

The existing zoning classification of the subject tract is Agricultural Residential (AR). The zoning of the abutting properties is a mix of Agricultural Residential (AR), Employment Office (E-O), and Employment Industrial (E-I)

except for 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.

Taking into consideration the feedback from Planning Department staff and Planning Commission members, the proposed zoning will solely be single-family residential (RS-8). The development has been scaled back to reflect the concerns of density and use intensity by eliminating the commercial areas and reducing number of dwelling units, thus decreasing projected traffic counts and utility infrastructure demands.



Figure 3. Current Zoning Map – 1-mile radius

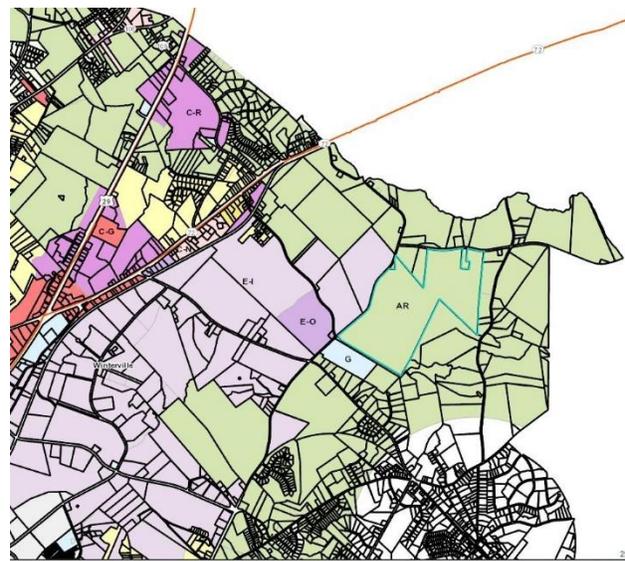


Figure 4. Current Zoning Map – 2-mile radius

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. The proposed Future Land Use designation is *Traditional Neighborhood*. The change in designation is in better harmony with the proposed uses in the *Traditional Neighborhood* designation which allows for medium density with the inclusion of duplexes, townhomes and smaller lots. The proposed configuration of the develop mirrors the intent of this designation as the design includes elements of connectivity, encourages multimodal transportation, and walkability.

The proposed change to the Future Land Use Map designation from *Rural* to *Traditional Neighborhood* could be deemed as an impactful request; however, an argument could be made that the change is warranted. This particular site is situated near local industry (Olympic, West Hancock Industrial, Spring Valley), a rapidly growing

development node (Kroger Market Place, Athens Tech), and public schooling (Coile Middle School, Winterville Elementary) which provides a unique opportunity to make a strategic change in the future land use map. The size and scope of Homestead is not typical but also not completely foreign for Athens. In reviewing the Future Land Use Map, around HWY 129, 441, 29 and 72 there are smaller lot subdivisions and commercial nodes that are not truly rural and support the requested amendment. Around the border of the City of Winterville and along the connecting corridors, there again are denser, smaller lot subdivisions. While none of these developments are of the same scale as the proposal, there is still a trend of subdivisions within the green belt.

Ideally, development patterns should conform and follow the Future Land Use map and the substantial work put into developing the map. Given the current lack of housing options in Athens, and the lack of available land for by-right development of this type, it is worth re-considering the particular limits of a green belt perimeter approaching 20-year maturity.

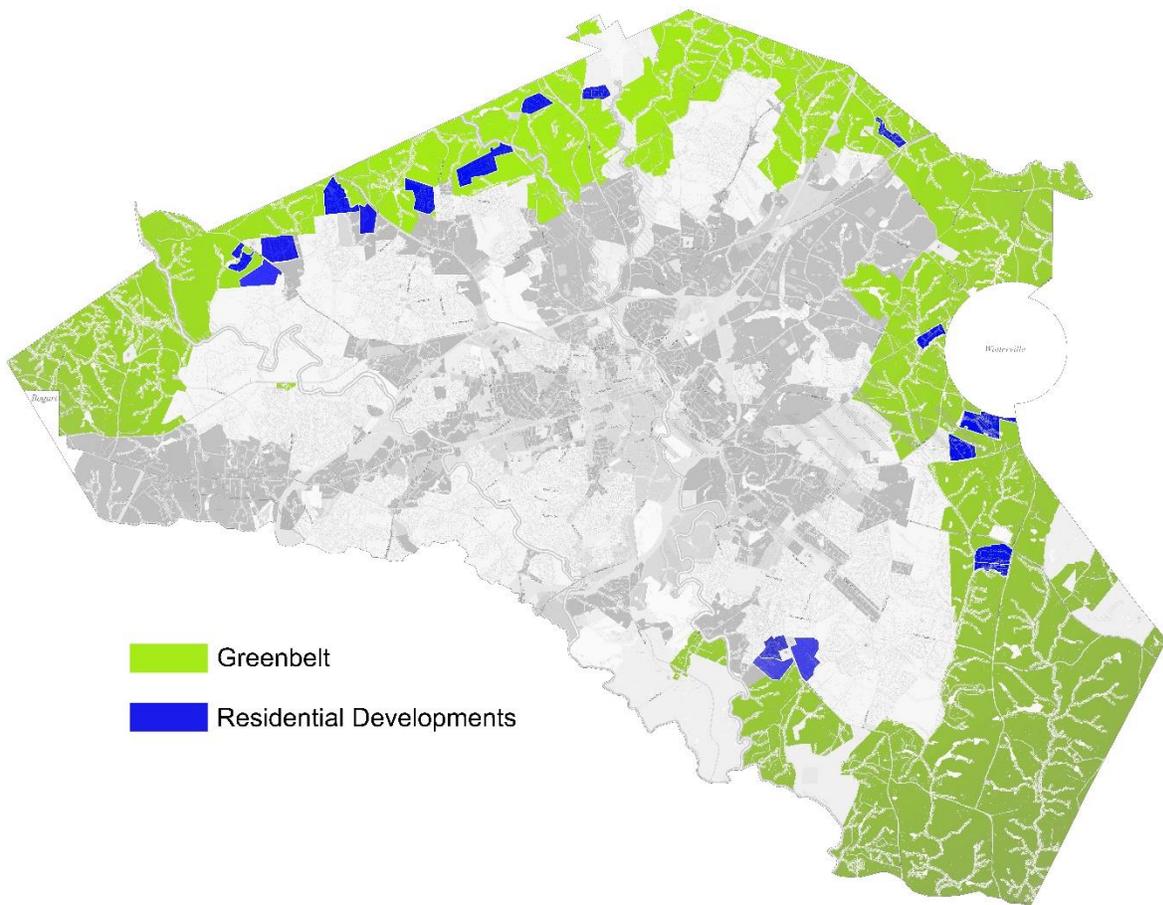


Figure 5. The A-CC “greenbelt” (green) and Existing Planned Developments within the greenbelt (blue)

PROPOSED USE

The original proposal included a commercial center and higher density multi-family structures. Given the feedback from the previous submittals, the development and uses have been reduced in an effort to comply with

the comments from the previous meetings with the proposed use being reduced to only residential.

Homestead is designed as an inclusive residential neighborhood that aims to provide a variety of housing types that allow for the opportunity of diversified ownership. The intention within the development is to seamlessly blend various housing types into one cohesive neighborhood. To achieve this, the mixture of housing types will include walk-up apartments, duplex, quadraplex, townhomes, bungalow court homes, and stacked manor house units woven into single-family attached and detached units that offer both alley or front-loading garage options. Of these unit types, several have been designed to function as small-scale garden apartment-style units and courtyard communities that are aimed at sharing a common open space to help foster and build a greater sense of community.

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 provide a trail system connecting the open spaces to the sidewalk network. The total open space conserved is approximately 45% or 105 acres of the tract. [AR1] The proposed zoning for the development will be Single-Family Residential (RS-8). Given the location of the tract and the proximity to the Employment-Industrial Districts, a development of this scale would be beneficial in supplying attainable 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 attainable housing for the workforce within proximity to places of employment. The blending of housing types within the neighborhood enables the developer to offer units at various prices to allow market entry of attainable workforce housing.

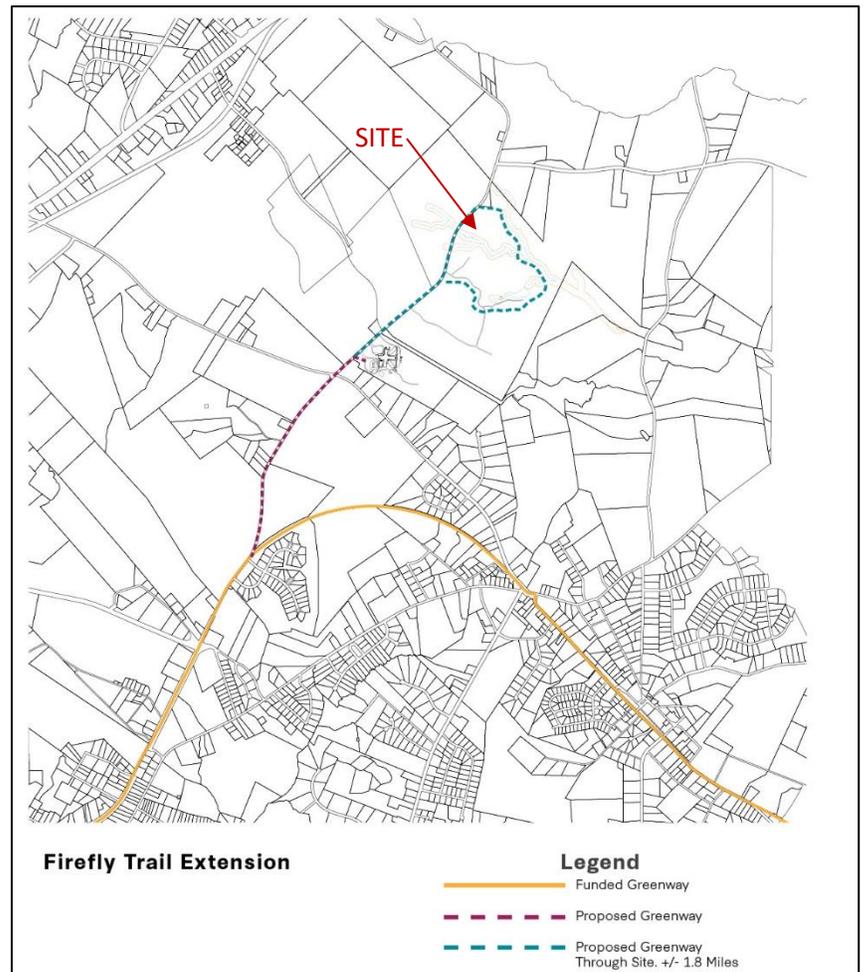


Figure 6. Proposed Firefly Trail Extension to Coile Middle School and Homestead

During the preliminary review, the Staff Report requested clarification on the density for the mixed density units within the RS-8 development. The multifamily component of the development has been significantly reduced and is

being counted as a dwelling unit i.e. a duplex on one lot is being counted as two dwelling units. Thus, the density across the entire development will be 3.61 dwelling units per acre which is below the allowable 3.8 units per acre allowed in the RS-8 zone. These lots with the higher density, multifamily units are located towards the interior of the development, buffering the neighboring properties from the denser pockets of the site.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

This development fills a void in attainable workforce housing in Athens while providing varied, high quality, 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)

ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS

The goal of Homestead is to create a well-designed development that is an attainable and inclusive community. Some of the key elements that make such a development are working with land constraints, affordability, proximity to essential services, and walkability while creating a sense of place and community. During the previous review discussions, it was mentioned that the overall development was desirable; however, the site location needed to be changed.

Given the feedback from previous public hearings, market research was conducted to assess the location of the development. Currently, there are a total of two properties in Athens-Clarke County that are over 50 acres listed on the Georgia Multiple Listing Service (GAMLS). One of the two is the subject property. The other is located at 1360 Newton Bridge Rd and is zoned Agricultural Residential (AR). This property abuts the northern portion of the Industrial (I) pocket between Newton Bridge Road and HWY 441. The closest school is Fowler Drive Elementary School which is 2.8 miles. The middle and high school options are 6.5 and 7 miles away, respectfully, with the middle school being Coile Middle School. While the proximity from that site to job opportunities is minimal, the distance to essential services, such as a grocery store, is quite far. The closest grocery store is Bell's on Hawthorne Ave which is 8 miles away. Additionally, A-CC Public Utilities are greater distances from the site with sewer lines stopping at Vincent Drive. The potential for extending services would be costly as they would also need to cross the North Oconee River.

Homestead and the Newton Bridge property are similar in that both lie within the green belt and have the future development designation of *Rural*. Per the Future Land Use map established 20+ years ago, development within the green belt is not desirable. The original intention of the green belt was to foster the development of infill housing. This goal has been largely achieved. The majority of the remaining undeveloped infill lots typically require a zoning action in order to develop as there are size and shape constraints, challenging topography, and environmental areas. These types of challenges usually result in higher development costs which lead to a higher price per square foot which limits and/or eliminates affordability, should the zoning action be approved. The population of the county is increasing and will continue to increase based on the population trends from the latest Census report. With this increase comes the continued and growing need for housing which will lead to portions of the green belt being developed based out of necessity and available land.

Homestead seeks to address all of the good development guidelines as the subject property is in close proximity to schools, essential services, and jobs while offering elements of attainability and creating a sense of place. The development seeks to work with the site constraints and use the environmental areas as green, recreational spaces for residents to enjoy. Homestead is also designed in such a way that it is vehicle and pedestrian friendly by offering wider sidewalks and wide grassed verges giving a larger distance separation between the two, which speaks to the walkability of the community.

ABOUT THE DEVELOPERS

Heather and Johnny Tumlin have been involved in real estate and development for 30 years with projects in both Georgia and Florida. Heather is a third-generation real estate professional while Johnny develops both commercial and residential properties. Over the years, there have been several large projects that have been of similar scope as the present application. Within Georgia, the Tumlin's have completed several developments that have required lift station approval and installation. In Gwinnett County these projects are Indian Shoals, Jones Philips, Great Rivers, and Avington. In Dekalb, the projects have been Belmont and Ashton.

The intent with developing this particular site is largely to do with the market demand in the County in addition to already owning the property. There have been several studies done by reputable agencies as well as the County itself that speak to a housing shortage. This development aims to not only provide more units but also address other concerns of attainability and work force housing.

BUILDING TYPOLOGIES

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.

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. Roughly 70% of the development will be single-family residences. There will be two different types of detached single-family residences which will be distinguishable by front loaded or alley loaded garages. Additionally, there will be an attached single-family building type to further add diversity of unit offerings as well as varying price points. There will also be duplex, walkup quadplexes units that will be 19% of the total unit types. Walkup apartments will be 6% of the development totals, while corner manor houses will be 4%. These figures are further illustrated on the site plan in the unit matrix. Within the site there are 47 corner lots that can be used either for single-family building types, duplexes or corner manor houses. The maximum units listed in the matrix expresses the most units possible given any scenario. For example, if there were to be 47 duplexes, the maximum single-family lots could only be 479 as the 47 corner lots would be used for multifamily and not single-family units. The use of various structures and densities is to allow for the blending of market rate housing with attainable housing for the workforce within one inclusive 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 by reducing the number of driveways and allowing access to 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 and safer 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.

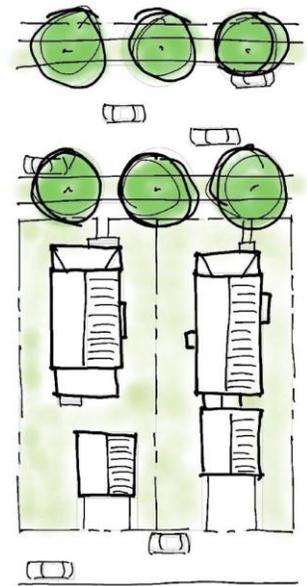


Figure 8. Single-Family Detached Alley Loaded, Representative Architecture & Plan

Single-Family Detached Front Loaded

The single-family detached front-loaded houses will be architecturally similar to the alley loaded lots but differ with the placement of the garage. These buildings will have three to four bedrooms and will be located 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.

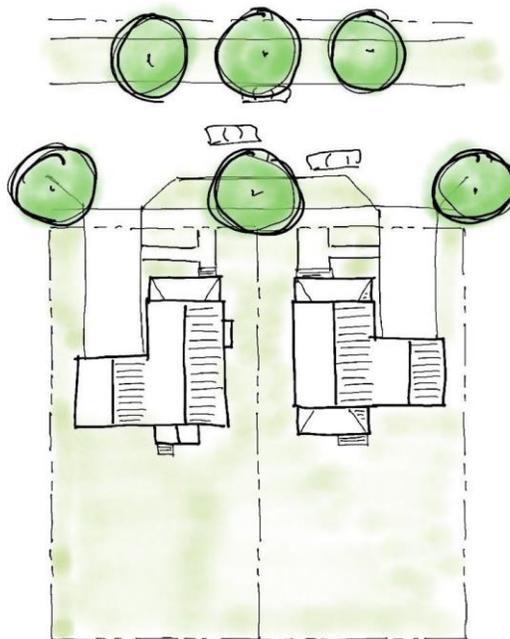


Figure 9. Single-Family Detached Front Loaded, Representative Architecture & Plan

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 SF to 1,200 SF 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, on large greenways, and between single-family units and duplexes.

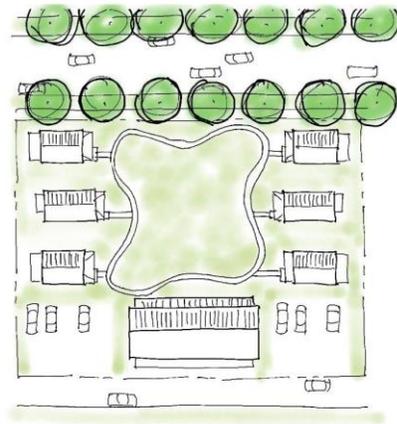


Figure 10. Bungalow Court Homes, Representative Architecture & Plan

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 two bedrooms per unit and be two stories in height. 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.

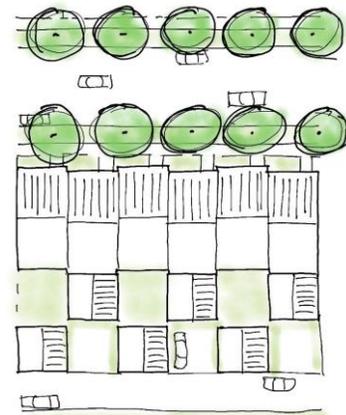


Figure 11. Single-Family Attached Townhomes, Representative Architecture & Plan

Duplex / Walk-up Four-Plex

The duplex and four-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 and four-plex building types will be used throughout the development and will contain one, two-, or three-bedrooms units. 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.

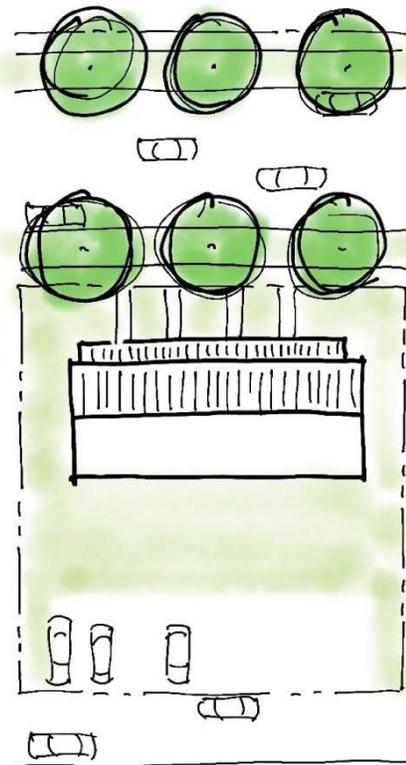


Figure 12. Duplex, Four-Plex, Six-Plex, Representative Architecture & Plan

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. The corner manor homes will be two and three stories [AR2] 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.

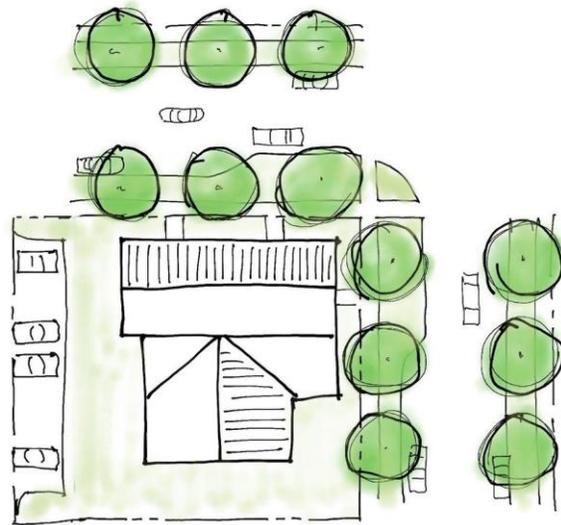


Figure 13. Corner Manor Homes, Representative Architecture & Plan

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, and Walk-Up Apartments. 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	526.0	5,008	395	99	296	526	331	195
Apartment 220	DU	252.0	1,676	129	26	103	156	102	55
Resd. Condo/Townhouse 230	DU	45.0	261	20	3	16	23	16	8
TOTAL TRIPS:			6,945	543	128	415	706	449	257

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 has been completed and submitted to A-CC Transportation and Engineering. Preliminary findings recommend that the first phase of the development should be accompanied by a right turn “pass thru” lane installed at the intersection of Voyles/Old Elberton/Moores Grove/Spring Valley in order to provide acceptable Levels of Service at peak hours of traffic. For subsequent phases, or as determined by A-CC Transportation Engineers, a roundabout or traffic signal should be installed at the intersection to ensure acceptable levels of services. Four other adjacent intersections in the vicinity of the project were also analyzed and should operate at acceptable levels of service at a full build-out of the project. The applicant and traffic engineers will complete the TIA and submit for evaluation with A-CC Transportation & Public Works.

The subject parcel includes a future minor collector, as illustrated in the Transportation Corridor Concept Map. Homestead divides the existing property into two parcels by creating a subdivision line at the narrowest point of the existing tract. The site plan allows for a future connection to the remaining parcel and route for the future minor collector has been illustrated on the site plan.

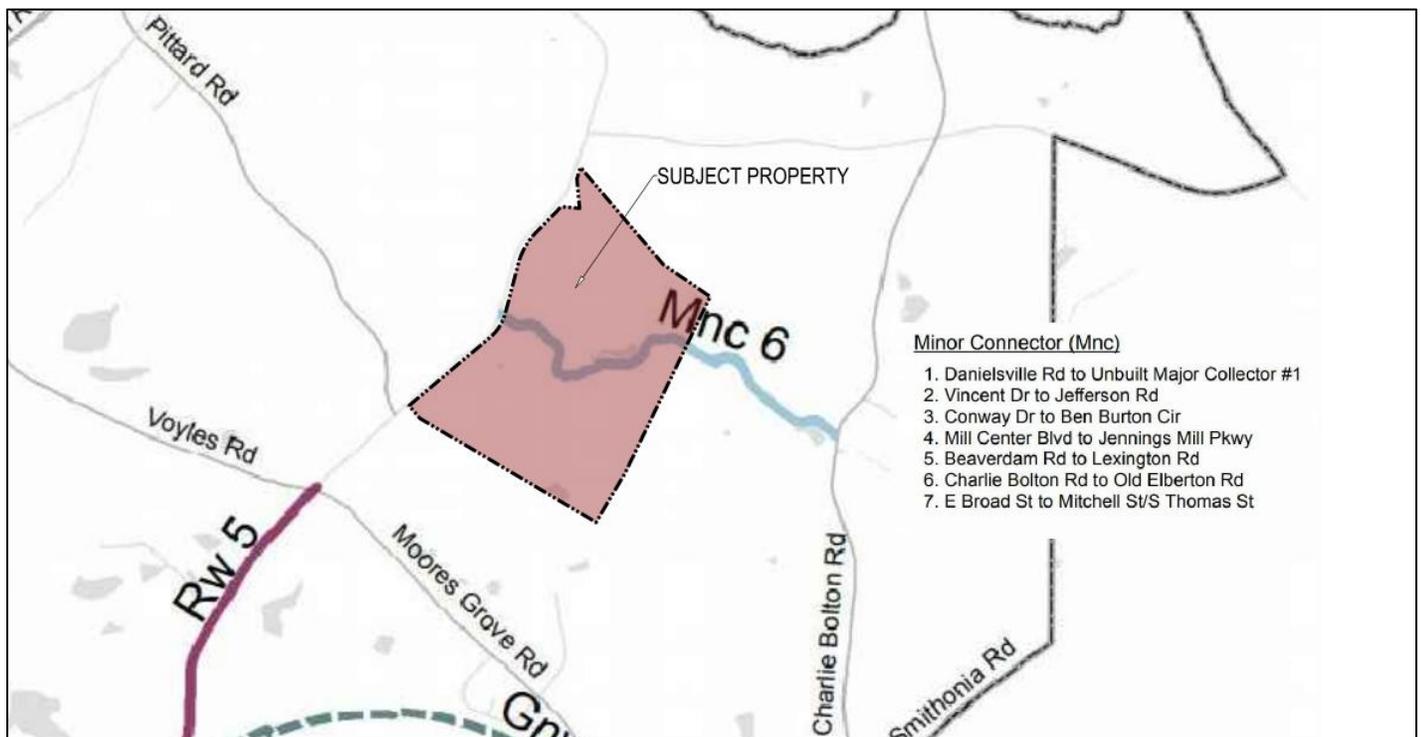


Figure 15. Transportation Corridor Concept Map

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 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. A-CC Transit was contacted regarding the updated site plan and found that no additional transit amenities would be required.

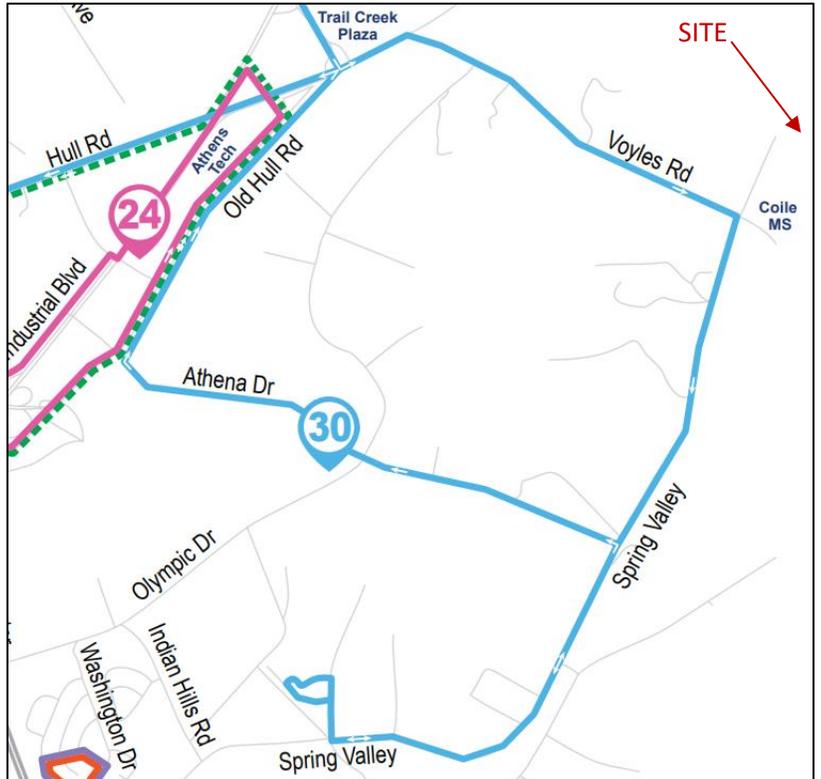


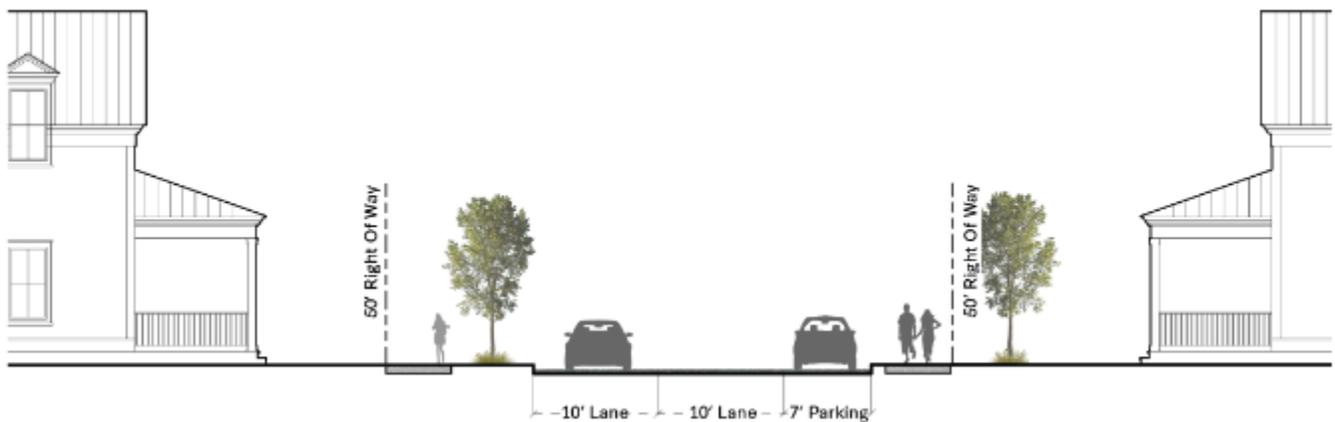
Figure 16. A-CC Transit Map

STREETSCAPE

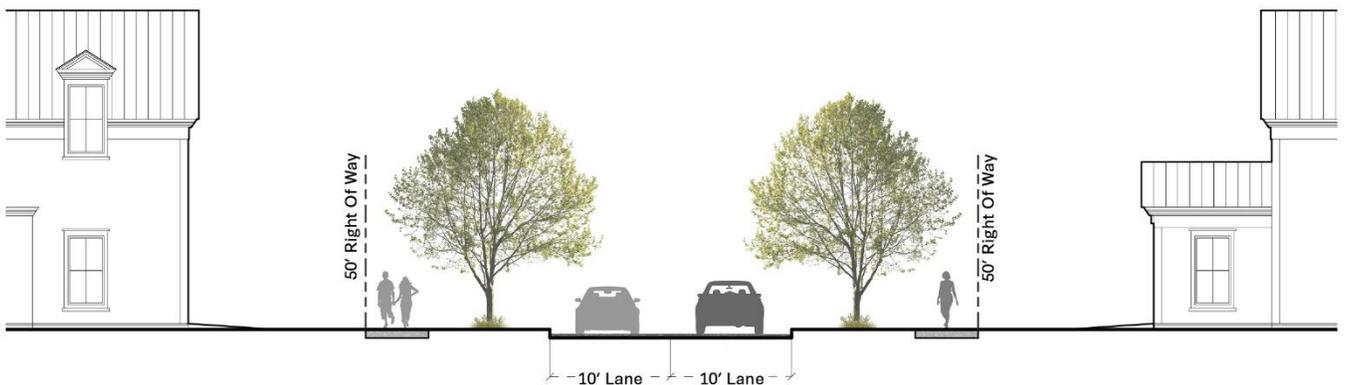
All streets within the development will contain sidewalks on both sides of the street separated by a verge planted with street trees planted at 30-foot intervals. Trees planted between the curb and the sidewalk foster slower vehicular speeds and enhance pedestrian safety. The streetscapes include sidewalks 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.

Residential Streets

This street section offers 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. Street trees adjacent to the on-street parking will be located outside of the right-of way to allow the sidewalk to be immediately adjacent to the parking.



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.

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 296,280 GPD.

Water is proposed to connect to an existing 8-inch watermain located within the Old Elberton Road Right-of-Way.

In order to provide sewer service for the project, a pump station and force main line are proposed to pump sewer to the closest existing sewer manhole near Coile Middle School. A lift station consultant has modeled the proposed sewer demand of the project as well as the downstream system to ensure the existing system is able to carry the project capacity. Additionally, A-CC currently has plans to upgrade the existing sewer lines on Voyles Road as its current capacity cannot support demand from the vacant industrial lots northeast of Voyles Road.

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. 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 45% of the site will be open space, including 42 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. Preliminary phase lines are illustrated below.

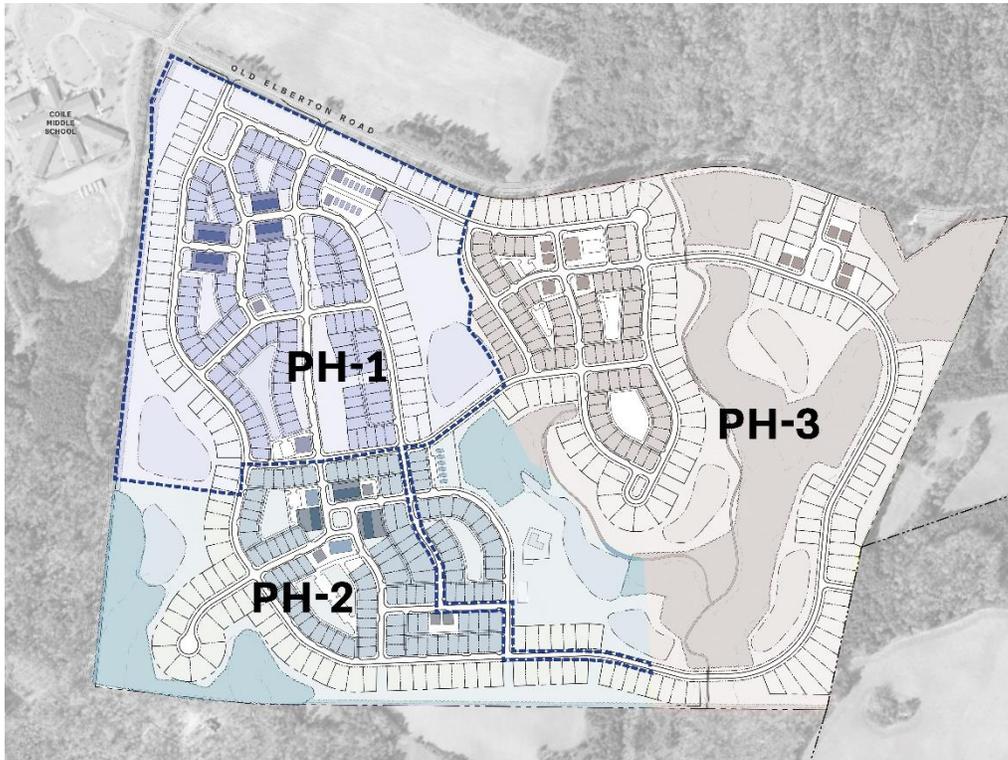


Figure 15. Phasing Plan

DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT

Due to the scope of the proposed develop, a Development of Regional Impacts (DRI) review has been conducted as Homestead exceeds the thresholds. The report finds that the development does speak to many of the Regional Plan's recommended development standards by encouraging multi-modal transportation, walkability, and a true mixing of uses. The proposed housing options also exceeds the Regional Plan's goal of diversifying housing types. While the design earned several accolades, the Regional Commission did take issue with the location of the proposed development as both the Regional Plan and A-CC Future Land Use Map designate this area for rural uses. Additionally, the concern was raised about creating an island effect with regards to transit.

Since the conclusion of the Regional Commission's review, the proposed development has been redesigned to account for some of the concerns raised. One of the items that has been addressed is volume of units. There has been a significant reduction the number of lots and units for the proposed site. The development has also been redesigned to only be a residential development, thus eliminating the commercial element. The majority of the development will be single-family residential units with a sprinkling of various multifamily units throughout the site. The construction boundaries have also been reduced to eliminating the previously proposed lots across the creek on the northern side of the property.

WAIVERS FROM A-CC DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. Section 9-7-2 Maximum Lot Coverage. A waiver is requested to modify the maximum allowable lot coverage in the RS-8 districts. The maximum required lot coverage for the district is 45%. 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 105 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 areas about large, lush greenspaces that is intended to be treated as a communal to further development a sense of community.
2. Section 9-7-2 Minimum Lot Size. A waiver is requested to modify the minimum lot size in the RS-8 districts which is 8,000 SF. The lots around the edges of the property, abutting the residential zones, will meet the ordinance requirement. The denser core falls short of the 8,000 SF requirement. Along the property boundaries of the property are several environmental areas and open greenspace that serve as a buffer between the development and the neighboring parcels. Additionally, the smaller lot sizes allow for entry level homes and units that will add to the workforce housing options in the county.
3. Section 9-7-2 Duplex and Multifamily Dwellings. A waiver is requested to allow for attached duplexes and multi-family units to be permissible in the RS-8 district. The number multifamily units has significantly been reduced from the previous submittals. Multifamily units only account for roughly 30% of the project units. This design aims to seamlessly blend multifamily and single-family dwellings while still offering attainable housing for working families. 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 9-15-15 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 attainable 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.
5. Section 9-25-8-B-4 Direct Primary Access from Public Street and Sidewalk. One of the building typologies within Homestead is the detached single-family alley fed units. Of these units, there are a few that do not have direct road frontage access and are accessed via an alley and communal green space. These units are located in the center of the development off the main roadway. From the roadway there is a lush greenway proposed that ends at the front of the alley fed unit lots. These units are intended to provide greater building diversity as well as a community garden feel for the residence. The green space will serve as play areas for children, community picnic areas, and block party spaces for neighbors to congregate. Including these multifunctional green spaces is essential for helping to foster a sense of community within the development.
6. Section 9-26-2-A-6-d-2 Limited Land Disturbance Activity. In its design intent, the commonly referred to "mass grading ordinance" does limit the short-sided and needless clearing of land to optimize

construction costs. In practice, this ordinance severely limits the feasibility of single-family development of almost any type and the terminology “mass-grading” is slightly misleading in its implication of vast cleared forests, whereas from a technical perspective, it means that at no location across a developed site (10 acres in this case), may the contractor disturb soil beyond 15 feet from the right-of-way. Even if a grading plan is able to achieve this standard across a 10-acre site, a single instance requiring a fill slope extending 20 feet from the right-of-way, would qualify the project as “mass-grading”. Simply put, this standard is impossible to meet on this site, as it is in many other single-family development projects. It is for this reason that this waiver is almost always requested.

This 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.

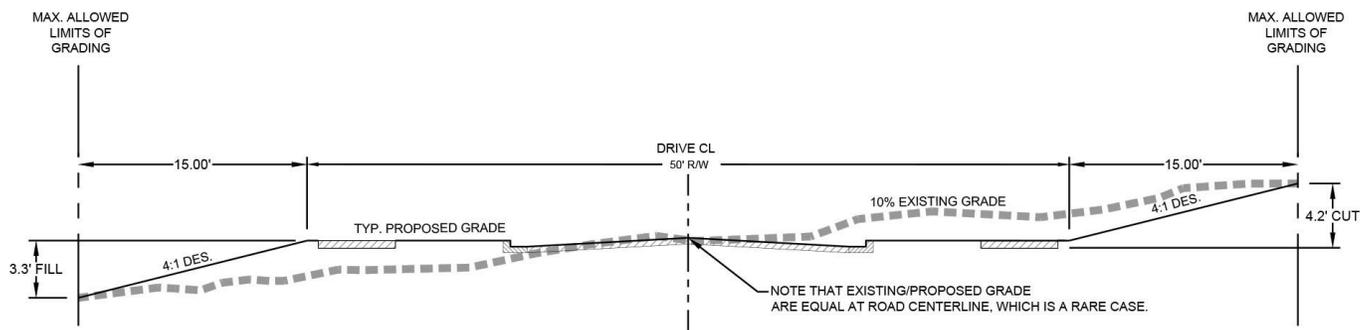


Figure 3. Grading Exhibit with 10% cross grade.

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

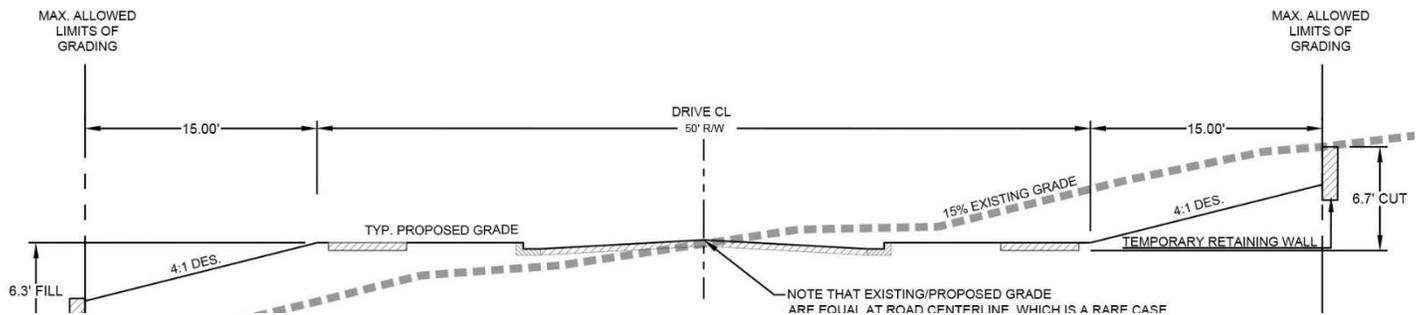


Figure 4. Grading Exhibit with 15% cross grade is representative of the existing topography on this site.

conditions to the recently built stormwater conveyance infrastructure and water quality treatment facilities.

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.