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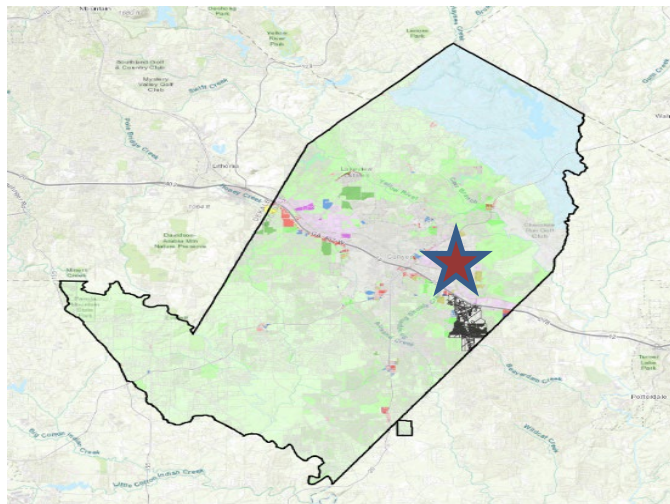


DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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**PLANNING COMMISSION AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ROCKDALE COUNTY PLANNING STAFF REPORT**

FLU Case Number: FLU2025-02
REZ Case Number: REZ2025-01
Address: 2567 NE Gees Mill Road, 2567 NE Gees Mill Road, NE Gees Mill Road, and NE McCart Road
Tax Parcel IDs: 0910010007A, 0910010007, 0910010032, 0910010008
Site Area: 49.08 acres
Current Zoning: A-R (Agricultural-Residential District)
Existing Conditions: Two single-family residences and wooded
FLU Request: To amend the Future Land Use Map Category of parcels 0910010032, 0910010007A, and 0910010007 from Technology Park to Medium Density Residential to allow for an 85-lot, single-family residential subdivision.
REZ Request: To rezone 49.08 acres from A-R (Agricultural-Residential District) to CRS (Collaborative Residential Subdivision District) to allow the property to be developed with an 81-lot, single-family residential subdivision.
Applicant: Tyler Lasser / Blue River Development c/o LJA Engineering
Owners: Lakeshore Trust Inc, Petra McCandless, Mrs. Ned E. Freeman (Estate) c/o Jack and Kit Rowe, and XEBO LLC.
Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions
PC Hearing Date: June 12, 2025
BOC Hearing Date: June 26, 2025



ZONING HISTORY

The subject site is an assemblage of four parcels (091001007A, 0910010007, 0910010032, 0910010008) associated with the address of 2567 NE Gees Mill Road. The parcels are zoned A-R (Agricultural-Residential District).

EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

The subject site is a 49.08-acre property along Gees Mill Road. Sidewalks are not present along the property's road frontage. Per the Rockdale County Stormwater Map, there are riverine, freshwater forested/shrub wetlands, and floodplain along the eastern and southern boundaries of the property. A creek, Naked Creek, runs along the southern property line. Aside from two single-family homes, the property is largely undeveloped and heavily wooded.

SURROUNDING USE AND ZONING

The subject site is surrounded by residential uses. The following is a summary of surrounding uses and zoning:

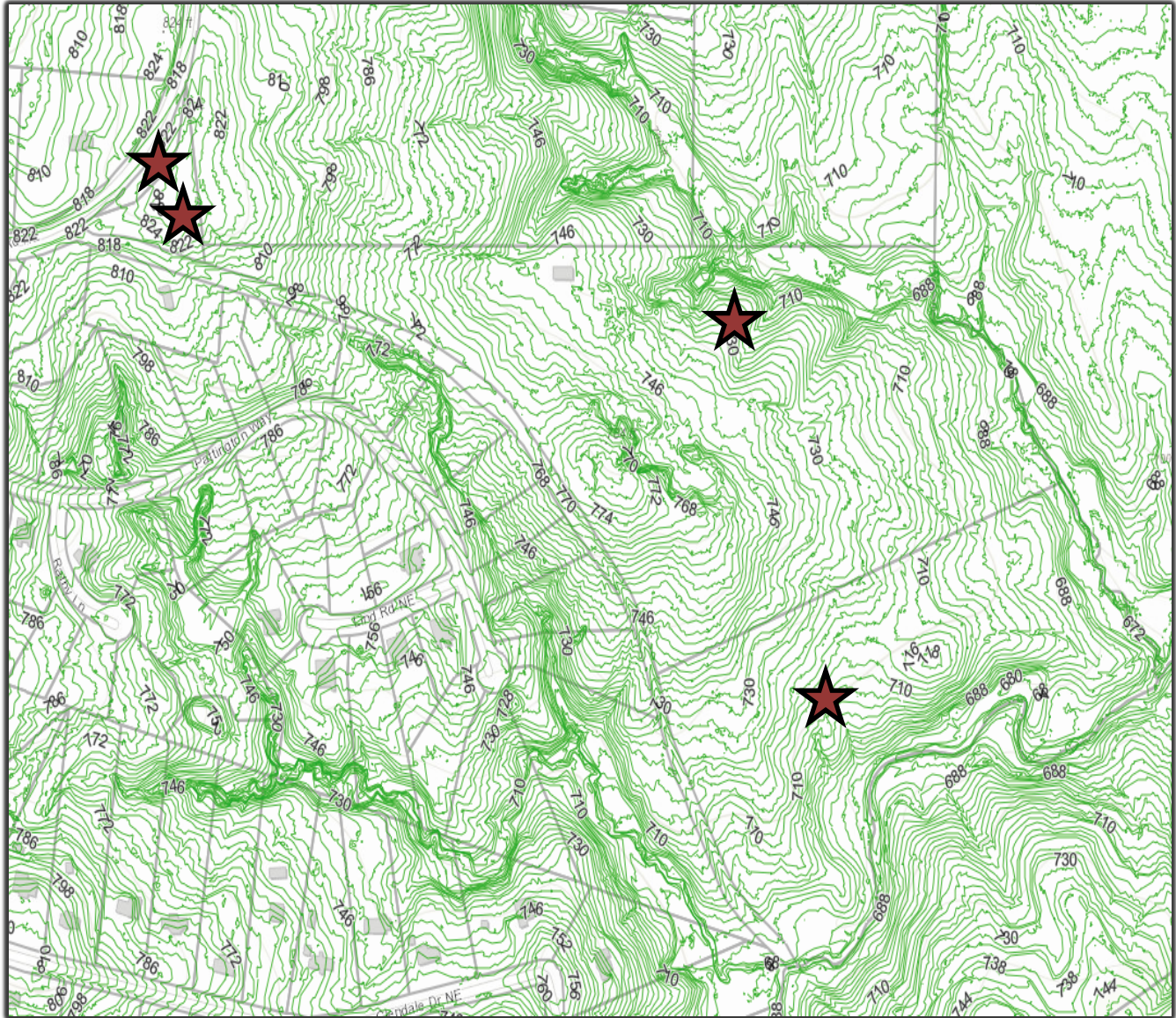
ADJACENT ZONING AND CURRENT LAND USE			
Direction	Address	Zoning District	Current Land Use
North	NE Gees Mill Road	A-R	Undeveloped/Wooded
	2857 NE Gees Mill Road	A-R	Single-Family Residence
West	2550 NE Gees Mill Road	R-1	Single-Family Residence
	2589 NE Gees Mill Road	A-R	Single-Family Residence
	Point Royal Subdivision	R-1	Single-Family Residences
South	300 NE McCart Road	R-1	Single-Family Residence
East	2945 NE Gees Mill Road	A-R	Single-Family Residence

ZONING MAP



-  AR - Agricultural Residential District
-  R1 - Single-Family Residential District

CONTOUR MAP



AERIAL MAP



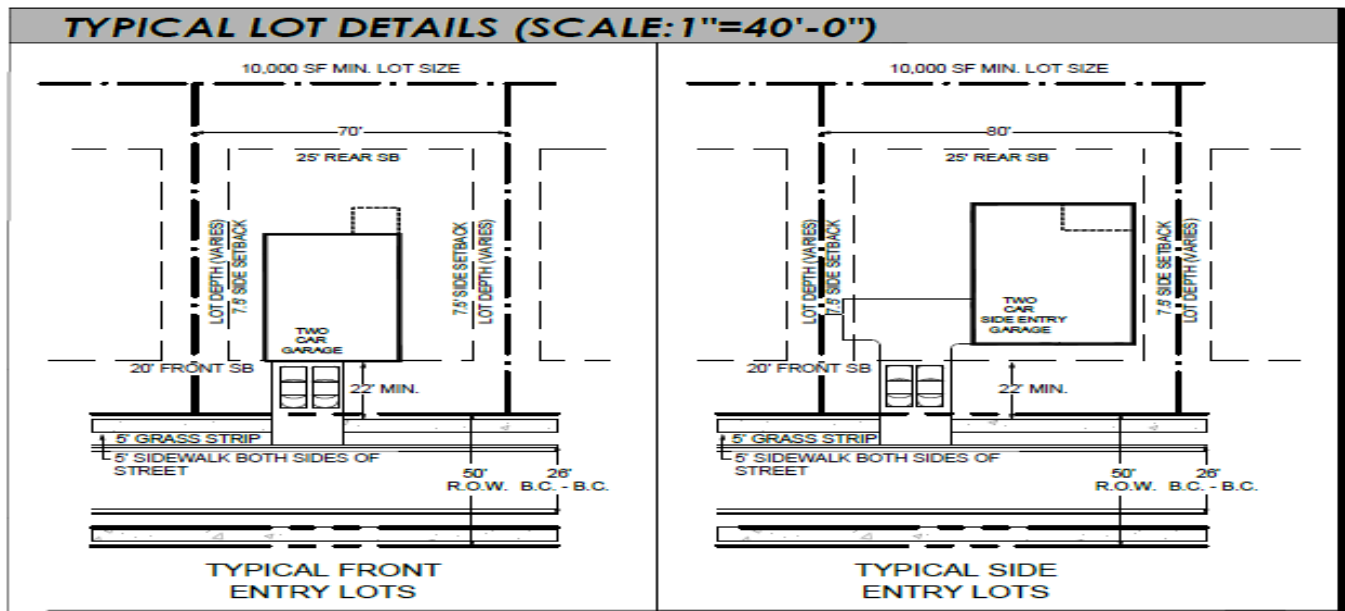
PROJECT SUMMARY

The applicant is requesting a future land use amendment and rezoning for the subject property associated with the address of 2567 NE Gees Mill Road. The project includes the following:

- A request to amend the Future Land Use Map of parcels 0910010032, 0910010007A, and 0910010007 from Technology Park to Medium Density Residential.
- A request to rezone parcels 0910010032, 0910010007A, 0910010007, and 0910010008 from A-R (Agricultural-Residential) to CRS (Collaborative Residential Subdivision) for the development of an 81-lot, single-family residential subdivision.

The site plan includes the following elements:

- **81** single-family residential lots (10,000 SF)
- 54 Front Entry Lots
- 27 Side Entry Lots
- Unit prices starting in the low \$400,000
- 16.2 acres of total green space
 - 14.7 acres of conservation space
 - 1.5 acres of open space
- 348 total parking spaces
 - 324 residential parking spaces provided
 - 21 amenity parking spaces
 - 3 handicap parking spaces in amenity parking areas



ROCKDALE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

	primary conservation space)	acres of primary conservation space)	
Minimum Lot Size	10,000 SF	10,000 SF	YES
Minimum Lot Width	70 Feet	70 Feet	YES
Front Setback	20 Feet (alternating staggered five-foot min. setbacks)	20 Feet (alternating staggered five-foot min. setbacks)	YES
Rear Setback	25 Feet	25 Feet	YES
Side Setback	7.5 Feet	7.5 Feet	YES
Transitional Buffer (Adjacent to A-R)	20 Feet - undisturbed	20 Feet – graded where necessary and replanted with berm	YES
Transitional Buffer (Adjacent to R-1)	20 Feet – undisturbed	20-foot-wide landscape strip	YES*
Residential Parking	Two-car garage (162 spaces)	Two-car garage & driveway with two spaces (324 spaces)	YES
Guest Parking	1 parking space per six lots (13.5 spaces)	21 spaces	YES
Handicap-Accessible Parking	1 handicap parking space per 1-25 required spaces	3 spaces	YES

***A 20-FOOT-WIDE UNDISTURBED LANDSCAPE BUFFER IS REQUIRED, NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE LANDSCAPE STRIP.**

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AGENCY REVIEW

In addition to the above-mentioned development standards, the applicant must meet all other UDO requirements related to infrastructure improvements. Internal and External agency comments are attached and provided below.

Fire

The proposed layout with the appropriate road width, fire hydrant spacing and no parking signage is acceptable. (The layout allows for complete access around the building which is a benefit in the event of an emergency).

If traffic calming devices are required by another department, applicants will have to coordinate device specs with Fire personnel.

Board of Education

Zoned for HTE: Projection 806	Current 762	Capacity 760
Zoned for CMS: Projection 952	Current 932	Capacity 1242

Zoned for RCHS: Projection 1435 Current 1382 Capacity 1500
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This subdivision currently will not negatively impact the high school and the middle school.

However, it will certainly impact the elementary school negatively which is at 100% capacity at this time. This subdivision may cause mobile units to be added to this school site.

Stormwater Department

Based on the submitted rezoning documents, there are existing State Waters, Wetlands, and Rockdale County Future flood plain requirements that must be adhered to by Federal, State and County ordinances.

Tree protection must be adhered to as it relates to the Stormwater Management Department for Land Disturbance Permitting.

All Conservation areas dedicated to the County will need BOC approval.

ARTICLE IV – STREAM BUFFER PROTECTION Sec. 310 – 103 Land development stream buffer requirements.

(a) All land development activities, including subdivisions of land and platting activities governed by chapter 302 of the UDO, shall meet the following buffer and setback requirements unless otherwise exempted in this article:

(1) An undisturbed natural vegetative buffer shall be maintained for 50 feet, measured horizontally, on both banks (as applicable) of the stream as measured from the top of the stream bank.

(2) An additional setback shall be maintained for 25 feet, measured horizontally, beyond the undisturbed natural vegetative buffer, in which all impervious cover shall be prohibited. Grading, filling and earthmoving shall be minimized within the setback.

(3) No septic tanks or septic tank drain fields shall be permitted within the buffer or the setback.

(b) Any land development activity within a buffer established hereunder or any impervious cover within a setback established hereunder is prohibited unless a variance is granted pursuant to section 310-105.

CHAPTER 324 – ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CRITERIA

Sec. 324-2. - Protection of wetlands.

(a) *Purpose and intent.* Pursuant to O.C.G.A. [12-2-8](#) and the DNR, environmental protection division's Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria chapter 391-3-16, this section establishes regulations to promote the wise use of wetlands and protect them from alterations that will significantly affect or reduce their primary functions for water quality, floodplain and erosion control, groundwater recharge, aesthetic natural areas and wildlife habitat areas.

(b) *Wetlands development permit requirements.* No activity or use, except those identified in subsection (c), shall be allowed in the wetlands without issuance of a local development permit. Local permits will be issued only if the proposed use is in compliance with the requirements of the underlying zoning district and this section. Furthermore, if the area of proposed development is located within 100 feet of the wetlands boundaries, as established by Figure IV-2 of the

Rockdale County Comprehensive Land Use Plan, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers delineation is required under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. If wetlands are altered or degraded, mitigation to offset losses may be required as a condition of a Section 404 permit. Local development permits will not be issued until after any necessary Section 404 permits have been secured.

CHAPTER 328 – Buffers, landscaping, and Tree Protection

Sec. 328-15. - Authority, findings, purpose and intent.

(a) *Authority.* This article is enacted pursuant to the county's exclusive planning authority granted by the Constitution of the State of Georgia, including but not limited to Ga. Const. art. IX, § II, para. IV, and Ga. Const. art. IX, § II, para. III, as well as authority granted by the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, including but not limited to O.C.G.A. § [36-70-3](#), as well as 1977 Ga. Laws, page 2817, as amended, and 1969 Ga. Laws, page 3639, as amended, and the general police powers of the county and other authority provided by federal, state and local laws applicable to this article.

(b) *Findings, purpose, and intent.* It is the intent of this article to provide standards for landscaping and for the preservation and replacement of trees as part of the land development and building construction process in unincorporated areas of the county. The county finds that the existence of adequate tree cover and landscaping in the county directly affects the public health, safety and welfare to comprehensively address these concerns through the adoption of the regulations in this article. The purpose and intent of the board of commissioners in enacting this article are as follows:

- (1) To protect the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of the county, and to implement the policies and objectives of the comprehensive plan through the enactment of a comprehensive ordinance governing tree preservation and replacement in the county.
- (2) To require landscaping and the preservation and replacement of trees in certain areas within the county in order to ensure the continued health of its citizens through improved air and water quality.
- (3) To provide developers and others active in the county with the appropriate guidance to better ensure proper tree preservation and replacement in the course of the land development process in the county.
- (4) To preserve property values in the county by maintaining a safe, aesthetically pleasing environment.
- (5) To reduce flooding of county rivers and streams by planting trees and other vegetation so as to aid in slowing the rate of stormwater runoff.
- (6) To reduce soil erosion in the county by planting trees and other vegetation so as to aid in prevention of soil loss through stormwater runoff and flooding and to promote stormwater infiltration.
- (7) To reduce noise and glare on adjacent properties from properties that have been extensively developed.
- (8) To conserve energy by cooling surrounding air temperatures through the existence of adequate shade trees.
- (9) To provide improved atmospheric quality by reducing airborne particulates and carbon monoxide and by increasing oxygen through adequate tree cover.

(10) To promote the saving of trees in nodes throughout a development, rather than as individual trees scattered over a development or around the periphery of a development.

(11) To prevent clear-cutting and mass grading of land that results in the loss of mature trees, and to ensure appropriate replanting when tree loss does occur.

Sec. 328-25. - Requirements for other developments.

(a) Each new development not covered by [section 328-24](#) shall prepare a landscape and tree protection and replacement plan showing compliance with this section.

(b) The tree protection and replacement plan must, at a minimum, protect or plant 15 units per acre of trees on the land being developed. The tree density calculations shall not utilize trees within required buffers in determining for the overall density factor, existing density factor, or replacement density factor. All new development with eight (8) or more parking spaces, or expanded development that results in eight (8) or more parking spaces, shall provide interior landscaping.

(c) Rockdale County has given priority to the retention and placement of trees in frontage planting strips and parking lot planting islands. Trees retained or placed in these areas may be used to meet the tree density factor for a project. However, if the tree density factor is met with trees saved or planted in other areas, the tree location guidelines outlined below must still be performed with additional tree plantings.

(d) *Required landscape strips and re-vegetated buffers.* Landscape strips shall meet the minimum depth requirements as indicated in the following table. Trees may be planted in groups rather than in a single line. Adjoining residential zoning districts, evergreen trees shall be saved or planted in such density or spacing as to provide an eight-foot-tall visual barrier within two years of planting. Required landscaping strips shall not be encroached upon by parking space, driveway surfaces or storm water detention facilities except when complying with requirements below. Driveway crossings may traverse such strip as near to a perpendicular alignment as practical. Signs may be located in the required landscape strip.

CHAPTER 320 – FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION

Sec. 320-1. - Introduction.

(a) It is hereby determined that:

(1) The flood hazard areas of Rockdale County, GA are subject to periodic inundation which may result in loss of life and property, health and safety hazards, disruption of commerce and governmental services, extraordinary public expenditures for flood relief and protection, and impairment of the tax base, all of which adversely affect the public health, safety and general welfare.

(2) Flood hazard areas can serve important stormwater management, water quality, streambank protection, stream corridor protection, wetland preservation and ecological purposes when permanently protected as undisturbed or minimally disturbed areas.

(3) Effective floodplain management and flood hazard protection activities can:

a. Protect human life and health,

- b. Minimize damage to private property,
- c. Minimize damage to public facilities and infrastructure such as water and gas mains, electricity, telephone and sewer lines, streets and bridges located in floodplains, and
- d. Minimize expenditure of public money for costly flood control projects associated with flooding and generally undertaken at the expense of the public.

(b) Article IX, Section II of the Constitution of the State of Georgia and Section 36-1-20(a) of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated have delegated the responsibility to local governmental units to adopt regulations designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of its citizenry. Therefore, Rockdale County, GA, does ordain this chapter and establishes this set of floodplain management and flood hazard reduction provisions for the purpose of regulating the use of flood hazard areas. It is determined that the regulation of flood hazard areas and the prevention of flood damage are in the public interest and will minimize threats to public health and safety, as well as to private and public property.

Transportation

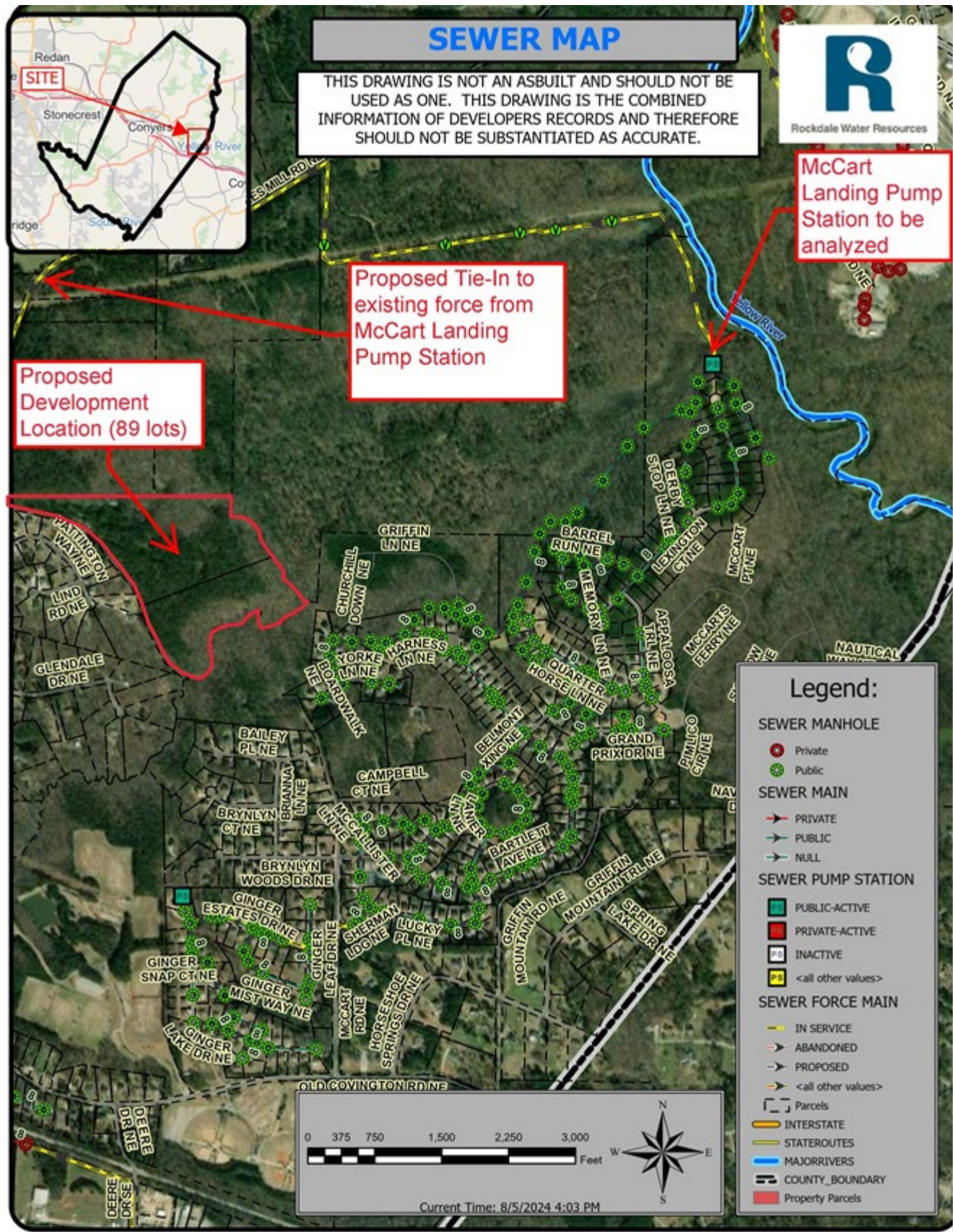
Regarding the latest plan, a deceleration lane is needed for the construction of this subdivision.

Gees Mill has a posted speed limit of 45 mph. For this speed and type of development, deceleration lane will have a minimum length of 175' plus a 100' taper.

I see no streetlights for the project. A street light layout is required for the newly built subdivision and shall conform to all standards in code and design.

Water/Sewer Department

There is water and sewer available at the project site. The developer or representative will need to perform a downstream analysis to determine the capacity of the existing sewer system to accept the proposed flow. Due to the site elevations, the project will need an onsite pump station. I have been in contact with the developer's engineering consultant regarding the downstream sewer analysis. The analysis is ongoing, and I have not received the results at this time. The developer will be responsible for sewer system improvements identified in the analysis. (see attached map of adjacent sewer system). 6/4/25 - **A downstream sewer analysis was received and approved by the Water and Sewer Department.**



EVALUATION OF THE FUTURE LAND USE REQUEST

Sec. 238-4(g)(2) Standards for review of comprehensive plan amendments

When considering an application to amend the future land use map, the Board of Commissioners, the Planning Commission, and the Planning & Development Department shall consider the following:

A. Whether a proposed future land use map amendment would result in a future land use classification that is more consistent with the text and policies of the comprehensive plan than the current classification of the property on the future land use map.

The applicant is requesting a future land use amendment from Technology Park to Medium Density Residential for parcels 0910010032, 091001007A, and 0910010007. The parcels are bordered by properties to the north with a Technology Park designation and to the south with a Medium Density Residential designation. A future land use of Medium Density Residential would be consistent with the properties to the south as well as the properties to the north which, despite a future land use designation of Technology Park, are either developed with single-family residences or are vacant.

B. Whether the proposed amendment would result in a land use that is more compatible with the current and future land use of adjacent and nearby property.

Staff believe that the request to amend the future land use map to allow a single-family residential subdivision would be compatible with surrounding uses, as the site is near other existing residential land uses, including residential subdivisions, single-family residential lots, and undeveloped, wooded properties. The undeveloped property directly to the north of the subject property will likely not be developed as its future land use suggests, as it is located between properties developed with single-family homes.

C. Whether the proposed amendment would result in more efficient use of publicly financed community facilities and infrastructure.

The proposed residential development has access to water and sewer mains; however, the applicant will be required to provide results of a downstream analysis to determine if the existing sewer system can accommodate the proposed flow. The project will have an impact on transportation facilities, although the development's size did not warrant a traffic impact study. A 175' deceleration lane with 100' taper and streetlights are needed. The elementary school in that area will be impacted as the school is currently at maximum capacity.

D. The extent to which the proposed amendment would increase adverse impacts on the natural environment, especially water quality, green space preservation and air quality.

The proposed residential development will not likely increase adverse impacts on the natural environment, though no significant or sensitive greenspace is being preserved from this development.

E. Whether the proposed amendment would reduce dependence on the automobile

The proposed amendment would not reduce dependence on the automobile. The area is not considered walkable as there are no sidewalks along Gees Mill Road and no businesses within reasonable walking distance.

F. The extent to which the proposed amendment would increase adverse impacts on historic or cultural resources.

There are no known historic or cultural resources in the vicinity of this property; therefore, no adverse impacts are anticipated.

G. If an amendment would affect only a single parcel, whether it should be made part of an area-wide review of future land use that includes review of future land use for the subject parcel and other surrounding property.

A map amendment would to Medium Density Residential would be compatible with the surrounding properties in the area that have the same future land use designation.

H. The degree to which the proposed amendment would have adverse impacts on land in adjacent municipalities and local governments.

This development may have an impact on the City of Conyers as the property is in proximity to City limits. Impacts would primarily be in the form of an increase in vehicles on the road.

I. Whether the proposed amendment would result in any negative impacts on the public water supply and wastewater collection and treatment systems or would conflict with adopted long-term water and sewer plans.

If all land development and stormwater regulations are designed and permitted in accordance with the code requirements, the amendment will not affect the public water supply, though results have not yet been made available from the downstream analysis.

EVALUATION OF THE REZONING REQUEST

When considering an application to amend the current zoning designation of a property, the Board of Commissioners, the Planning Commission, and the Planning & Development Department shall consider the following standards as described in Section 238-4(G1) of the UDO:

A. Is the zoning proposal permitted as a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property?

The subject site is surrounded by R-1 (Single-Family Residential) and A-R (Agricultural-Residential) zoned properties. The A-R zoned property to the north is currently wooded and undeveloped while the R-1 zoned subdivision to the south, Point Royal, is developed with single-family residential homes that were constructed from 2008 to 2022. As such, there is a precedent for single-family residential homes in the surrounding area. However, the single-family homes in Point Royal are on larger lots ranging from 30,000 SF to over an acre, and a 20-foot-wide landscape strip or undisturbed transitional buffer would likely not be sufficient screening between the two subdivisions. The code may need to be amended to increase this buffer. Furthermore, it is unclear how 2589 NE Gees Mill Road, 2536 NE Pattington Way, 2540 NE Pattington Way, and 2544 NE Pattington Way will be appropriately buffered. These properties directly abut McCart Road NE, which is proposed to be used for entry into the subdivision.

B. Will the zoning proposal adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property?

The existing uses of adjacent or nearby properties would likely not be adversely impacted by the zoning change. Allowing the rezoning from A-R (Agricultural-Residential) to CRS (Collaborative Residential Uses) for a single-family residential subdivision would be consistent with existing residential uses in the area; however, the properties in the Point Royal subdivision to the south may be adversely impacted by the proposed development as no significant screening measures are indicated on the site plan, and it is unclear how the minimum required transitional buffer will be implemented adjacent to the entire subdivision.

C. Will the property to be affected by the zoning proposal have a reasonable economic use as currently zoned?

The property has reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

D. Will the zoning proposal result in a use which will or could cause excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation, facilities, utilities, or schools?

The proposed residential development will be served by public water and sewer; however, sewer system improvements may be needed, depending on the results of the downstream analysis. Any necessary improvements will be the developer's responsibility. The project will have an impact on transportation facilities and traffic patterns, due to the introduction of 96 homes to the area. The development will have

an impact on the Rockdale County school system as the Elementary School is at maximum capacity, and mobile units would need to be added to accommodate the new students.

E. Is the zoning proposal in conformity with the Future Land Use Map and the policy intent of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan?

Concurrent to the rezoning request, the applicant is requesting to amend the Future Land Use Map of three parcels, 0910010032, 091001007A, and 0910010007, from Technology Park to Medium Density Residential. Staff believe that Medium Density Residential would be appropriate future land use in this location, as it would be consistent with adjacent uses.

F. 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?

Staff believe that a rezoning of the property from R-1 (Single-Family Residential) to CRS (Collaborative Residential Subdivision) would be consistent with surrounding residential communities; however, more information is needed regarding the downstream analysis for the sewer system, the Elementary School being at maximum capacity, and the buffering of adjacent residential properties abutting McCart Road NE. Furthermore, the intent of the CRS zoning district is to preserve sensitive natural resources, encourage the protection of passive outdoor recreation, encourage design flexibility for innovative development projects, and create a sense of place that is attractive. No significant or ecologically sensitive green spaces are being preserved, as construction is currently not allowed in the stream buffer. The submitted site plan does not offer adequate spaces for passive recreation, as pocket parks in locations that are not central to the development end up being underutilized. The development does not have any unique elements that would allow the project to be considered innovative, nor does it create a sense of place. Therefore, staff recommend denial of the proposal.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on staff's evaluation of the request, and the standards governing exercise of zoning power, the Department of Planning and Development recommends **Approval with Conditions** of amending the Future Land Use Plan from Technology Park to Medium Density Residential and of rezoning the property from A-R (Agricultural-Residential) to CRS (Collaborative Residential Subdivision) for an 81-lot, single-family residential subdivision. Should the application be approved, staff recommend the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall abide by all applicable standards of the Unified Development Ordinance for the CRS Zoning District, unless otherwise specified in these conditions or through approval of a variance by the Zoning Board of Appeals.
2. Buildings shall consist of brick, stone, cementitious siding or real (lath and portland) stucco from ground to eaves, with brick, stone, cedar shake, real stucco, painted wood siding or cementitious siding to be used as accents. Metal siding, vinyl siding, metal canopies and exposed standard concrete block are prohibited. Soffits may be constructed of vinyl.
3. Should the Future Land Use and Rezoning applications be approved, the applicant shall submit a combination plat to the Department of Planning and Development to combine the parcels.
4. The development shall provide a 20-foot-wide natural undisturbed buffer adjacent to all residentially zoned properties. Buffers shall be replanted where sparsely vegetated and shall be subject to the review and approval of the Director of Planning and Development.
5. A five-foot-wide sidewalk shall be constructed on one side of the streets.
6. All utilities shall be placed underground.
7. All grassed areas on dwelling lots shall be sodded.
8. Natural vegetation shall remain on the property until the issuance of a development permit.