

City of Sugar Hill  
Planning Staff Report  
RZ 19-004



DATE: January 28, 2020  
TO: Mayor and City Council  
FROM: Planning Director *VA*  
SUBJECT: Rezoning RZ-19-004, 4359 Woodward Mill Road

RECOMMENDED ACTION

**Approval of rezoning to Residential Multi-Family District (RM) with the following conditions:**

1. Maximum lot coverage shall be 100% for fee-simple townhome lots. The maximum number of townhomes shall be 88 units with no single building containing more than 8 units.
2. All streets, alleys, sidewalks, common area landscaping and storm water infrastructure shall be privately owned and maintained by the homeowners' association (HOA). A copy of the deed dedicating said infrastructure to the HOA and recorded covenants specifying maintenance of the infrastructure shall be provided to the city prior to approval of the final plat.
3. Project access improvements such as a dedicated left-turn, traffic circle or mini roundabout shall be provided on Woodward Mill Road at the developer's expense. Design shall be in accordance with Gwinnett County design standards or GDOT Design Policy Manual as appropriate.
4. Each dwelling unit shall have a minimum two-car garage. Each rear-loaded townhome shall have a driveway no less than 20' in length as measured from the edge of the alley to the exterior of the garage door. Each front-loaded townhome shall have a driveway no less than 20' in length as measured from the edge of the street to the exterior of the garage door. Subject to approval by Gwinnett County Fire Marshal.
5. Alley widths shall be minimum 16' and maximum 22'.
6. Striping for a total quantity of 32 on-street parking stalls shall be provided. Parallel parking stalls shall be a minimum of 9'x22'. Street design shall be subject to approval by the city manager.
7. Except in designated on-street parking stalls, overnight on-street parking shall be prohibited. Notices shall be posted in the subdivision and recorded in the covenants. The HOA shall be solely responsible for enforcement.
8. Covenants shall stipulate that no more than 10% of the total number of dwelling units can be leased at any one time. Notice shall be recorded in the covenants.

9. Developer shall install a masonry entrance feature and a minimum 20' wide landscaped berm a minimum of three feet high at its apex along the project's Woodward Mill and Buford Highway frontage and contained within an easement to be maintained by the HOA, as recorded in the covenants. Landscape plan and masonry entrance feature to be approved by the city manager prior to issuance of any permits.
10. Exterior materials and architectural detail of each attached/detached dwelling shall resemble the elevations attached as Exhibit 2. Building height shall not exceed 35' or three stories.
11. Zoning buffer shall be reduced to a 35' enhanced landscape buffer. Said buffer shall consist of at least a staggered row of evergreen and semi-evergreen trees and shrubs native or adapted to the area. Trees shall be 6' tall at time of planting. Plantings shall be arranged to provide an effective visual screen of at least 20' in height at maturity. Buffer must not contain more than 1/3 of a single species and must be shown on a landscape plan to be approved by the city manager prior to receiving any permits. Developer shall install the landscaping prior to the first certificate of occupancy issued for a dwelling in the subdivision.
12. The developer shall disclose to all future owners the following statement by recording on the final plat and deed records: Neighboring or adjacent properties are zoned or developed for light manufacturing (LM) uses. These existing uses and other permitted uses in the LM zoning category may produce undesirable views, odor, dust, vibration, and noise.
13. At least three natural gas appliances shall be installed within each unit prior to certificate of occupancy.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

*The Planning Commission held a scheduled public hearing on January 21, 2020. Applicant representative Chris McCrary and Stan Howington spoke on behalf of this request. Citizens and guest who spoke were Kevin Hyde representing MTI Baths Inc, and Aaron Brown. Public input included concerns with buffers, traffic issues and road conditions.*

*Planning Commission recommends approval of rezoning to Residential Multi-Family District (RM) with conditions as presented.*

#### **ISSUE**

The City of Sugar Hill has received an application dated October 7, 2019, from Stan Howington requesting to rezone ± 12.4102 acres of land at 4359 Woodward Mill Road from Light Manufacturing (LM) to Residential Multi-Family District (RM).

## DISCUSSION

- Applicant submitted an updated overall site plan along with plans showing alternative project access improvements including a left-turn lane, mini roundabout and single lane traffic circle on Woodward Mill Rd. The revised concept plans appear to be responsive to concerns voiced by area residents and representatives of MTI pertaining to traffic congestion and safety, arrangement of buildings and landscaping along the subject property's northwest property line.
- There is a growing amount of residential development in the area and the latest comprehensive plan updated the character area map and now shows this location as being in a maturing neighborhood district.
- The current zoning (LM) does not fit the maturing neighborhood character.
- RM zoning will allow more appropriate transitional development between existing residential uses and more recent higher intensity development or existing institutional, heavy commercial and light manufacturing uses.
- High traffic volume and speed on Woodward Mill Road necessitates the incorporation of traffic calming measures at the project entrance.
- Careful attention to the architecture in terms of materials, mass & scale are important to the integrity of the existing neighborhoods.

## BACKGROUND

Applicant/Owner: Stan Howington

Existing Zoning: Light Manufacturing District (LM).

Request(s): Residential Multi-Family District (RM).

Purpose: 88 Single-Family Attached Townhomes.

Property Size: ± 12.4102 acres

Location: Tax Parcel Id Number: 7-256-010

Public Notice: Letters to adjoining owners via USPS regular mail on 10-30-19 and 12-23-2019.  
Sign posted on property 10-30-19  
Ad in legal section of Gwinnett Daily Post on 10-30-19, 11-20-19, 1-1-2020 and 1-22-2020.

Public Comments: Neighboring resident supports mini roundabout, concerned about impact associated with buffer reduction (1/16/20).

Representatives from MTI concerned about impact to their operations. They run three shifts 4:30am to 12:00am and are worried about having to answer complaints from new neighbors (11/22/19).

## FINDINGS OF FACT

### Adjacent zoning:

- RM to the northeast, Northmark subdivision under construction.
- HM1 to the northwest, MTI on North Price Road.
- R-75 to the southwest, unincorporated Gwinnett County.

The applicant's letter of intent states 48 units will have rear loaded garages and 40 will be front loaded garages. Floor plans are to range from 2,000 to 2,300 square feet. Several pocket parks and an amenity area are shown. The site plan indicates the amenity area "to be determined" while the submitted elevations show it to be developed with a pavilion. The building elevations show one plan as being three story, while the Sugar Hill zoning ordinance allows only two stories in this zoning district.

Variance request # 1. The applicant requests to reduce the required 50-foot buffer between single-family residential and residential multi-family to a 30-foot replanted buffer.

Variance request # 2. The applicant requests relief from the requirement (Article 4, Section 406) "Attached front entry garage doors shall be recessed from the building line a distance of at least ¼ the depth of the principal building and shall be no more than 9 feet in width". The submitted plans show a 16-foot wide garage door and the door is not recessed.

## ZONING ANALYSIS

**1. Will the rezoning requested permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property?**

*Yes.* The RM zoning classification permits a wide selection of residential uses compatible with most of the neighboring residential properties. However, the neighboring property to the north is currently zoned and used for light manufacturing operations which creates the potential for noise, fumes and vibration to negatively impact the new residents.

**2. Will the rezoning requested adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby properties?**

*Yes,* going from a light manufacturing zoning classification to a residential zoning classification will impose a zoning buffer between two dissimilar zoning districts on adjacent property owned by MTI. This could hinder MTI's ability to expand or redevelop their facilities in the future.

**3. Does the property for which the rezoning is requested have a reasonable economic use as currently zoned?**

*Yes.*

**4. Will the rezoning requested create an overcrowding condition with respect to the existing streets, transportation facilities, or schools?**

*Yes,* concerns over traffic safety and congestion have been reported for this part of Woodward Mill Rd. The county is studying the SR13 and Woodward Mill Rd

intersection for plans to install left turn signals at northbound, eastbound & westbound approaches. This development will likely exacerbate existing congestion without appropriate access improvements such as a traffic circle, mini roundabout or left-turn lane at the project entrance.

Planning staff from Gwinnett County Public Schools tell us that school capacity is satisfactory. Sugar Hill Elementary has the least room for growth in the Lanier cluster. Written notification to the school board is required as a standard part of residential subdivision (number of units, type of housing, number of bedrooms, phasing of the project).

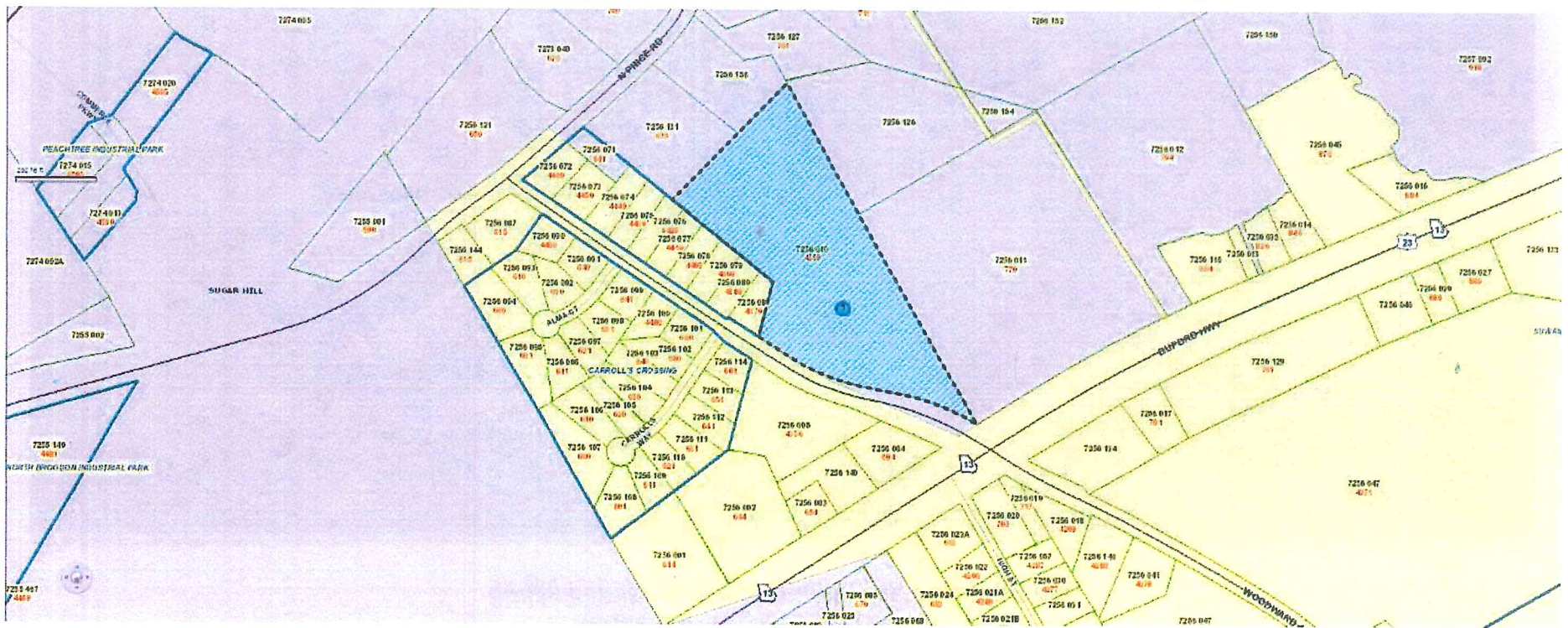
**5. *Does the rezoning requested conform to the Sugar Hill Land Use Plan?***

*Yes.*

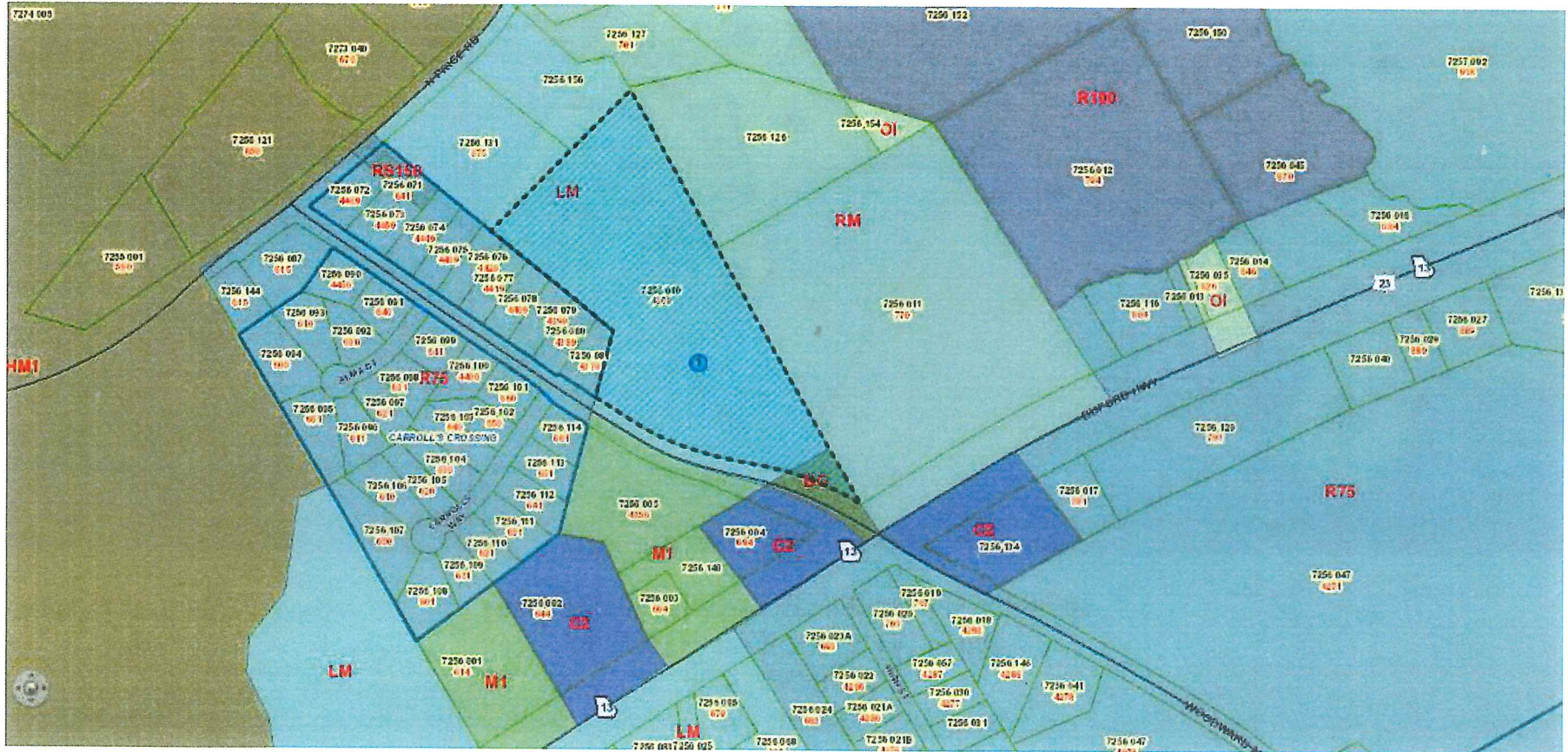
**6. *Are there other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which would give support to an approval or disapproval of the rezoning request?***

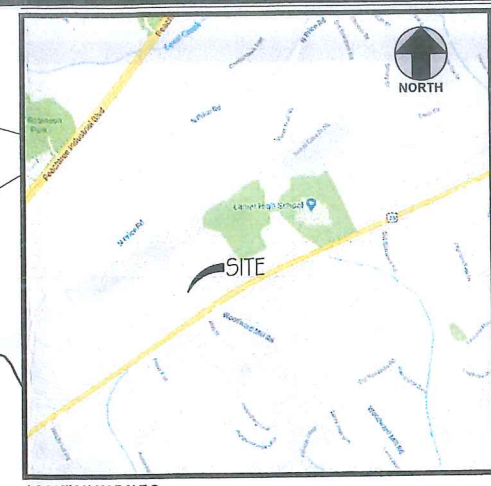
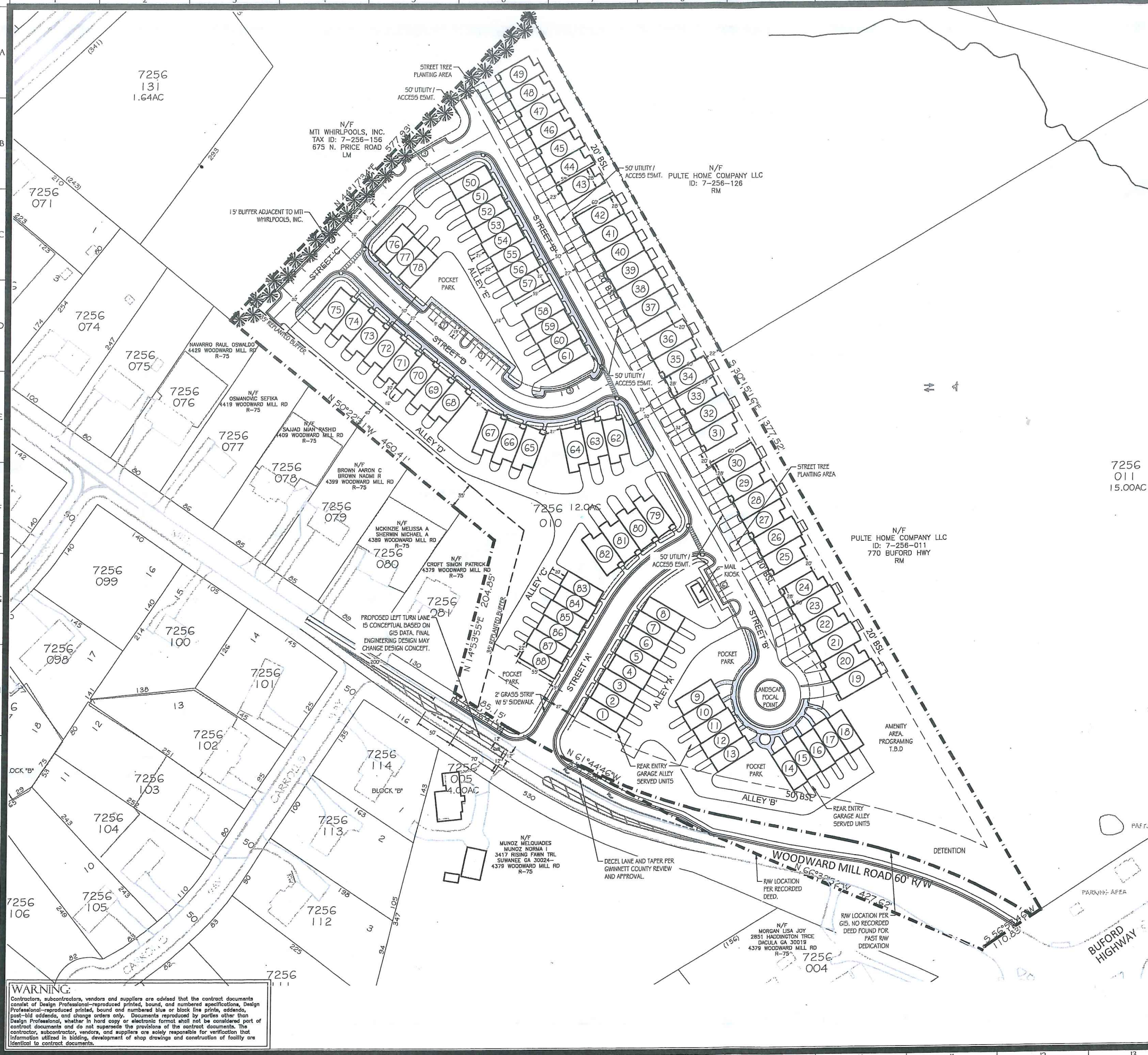
*Yes.* The Buford Highway Corridor Study indicates there is a need for mid-range single family residential housing along Buford Highway and this project appropriately fills that need.

RZ-19-004  
Stan Howington  
Request to rezone from LM to RM  
Single Family attached townhome development



RZ-19-004  
Stan Howington  
Request to rezone from LM to RM  
Single Family attached townhome development



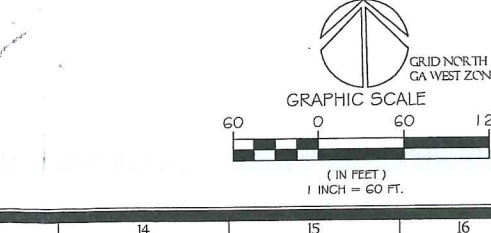


LOCATION MAP N.T.S.

- NOTES:**
- OWNER: CARL HOWINGTON C/O STAN HOWINGTON  
704 DOGWOOD CIRCLE  
NORCROSS, GA 30071  
STANHOWINGTON@CHPROPERTIES.NET  
678-758-3825
  - DESIGNER: MCFARLAND-DYER & ASSOCIATES  
2174 SILVER PEAK PARKWAY  
SUWANEE, GA 30024  
CHRIS MCCRARY  
770-932-6550
  - SITE AREA = 12.4102 ACRES PER WARRANTY DEED
  - SITE AREA = 11.26 ACRES PER GIS RIGHT OF WAY LOCATION
  - ZONING = LM CITY OF SUGAR HILL LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
  - PROPOSED USE = ATTACHED TOWNHOMES (48% REAR LOAD GARAGES, 40% FRONT LOADED GARAGES)
  - MAXIMUM DENSITY ALLOWED = 8 UNITS PER ACRE
  - MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT NOT TO EXCEED 35'
  - DENSITY PROVIDED = 88 UNITS / 12.4102 ACRES = 7.01 UNITS PER ACRE PER WARRANTY DEED DATA
  - DENSITY PROVIDED = 88 UNITS / 11.26 ACRES = 7.8 UNITS PER ACRE PER GIS DATA
  - SETBACKS:  
WOODWARD MILL FRONT SETBACK = 45'  
INTERNAL FRONT ENTRY GARAGE UNITS = 20'  
INTERNAL REAR ENTRY GARAGE UNITS 0'  
SIDE = 10'  
REAR = 20'
  - ALL PROPOSED UTILITIES WILL BE UNDERGROUND.
  - 5' WIDE SIDEWALKS WITH 3' PLANTING STRIP SHALL BE LOCATED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INTERIOR SUBDIVISION ROADS.
  - ROADS SHALL BE 27' FROM BACK OF CURB TO BACK OF CURB WITH A 50' WIDE UTILITY / ACCESS EASEMENT.
  - ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BACK OF CURB UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.
  - ALL WORK SHALL CONFORM TO CITY OF SUGAR HILL STANDARDS.
  - ALL ROADS IN SUBDIVISION SHALL BE PRIVATE. THERE WILL BE A 50' WIDE (MIN) UTILITY AND ACCESS EASEMENT ON ALL PRIVATE DRIVES.
  - WATER AND SEWER SERVICES PROVIDED BY GWINNETT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES (CDDWR).
  - THERE ARE NO 100-YEAR FLOODPLAINS, LAKES, PONDS OR OTHER WATER COURSES ON THE SUBJECT SITE.

7256 011  
15.00AC

DATE	DESCRIPTION
8-27-2019	CONCEPT SITE PLAN
9-26-2019	SUBMITTAL
12-19-2019	REVISED CONCEPT



**WARNING:**  
Contractors, subcontractors, vendors and suppliers are advised that the contract documents consist of Design Professional-reproduced printed, bound, and numbered specifications, Design Professional-reproduced printed, bound and numbered blue or black line prints, addenda, post-bid addenda, and change orders only. Documents reproduced by parties other than Design Professional, whether in hard copy or electronic format shall not be considered part of contract documents and do not supersede the provisions of the contract documents. The contractor, subcontractor, vendor, and supplier are solely responsible for verification that information utilized in bidding, development of shop drawings and construction of facility are identical to contract documents.



OWNER:  
NORCROSS BUILDERS INC.  
704 DOGWOOD CIRCLE  
NORCROSS, GA 30071

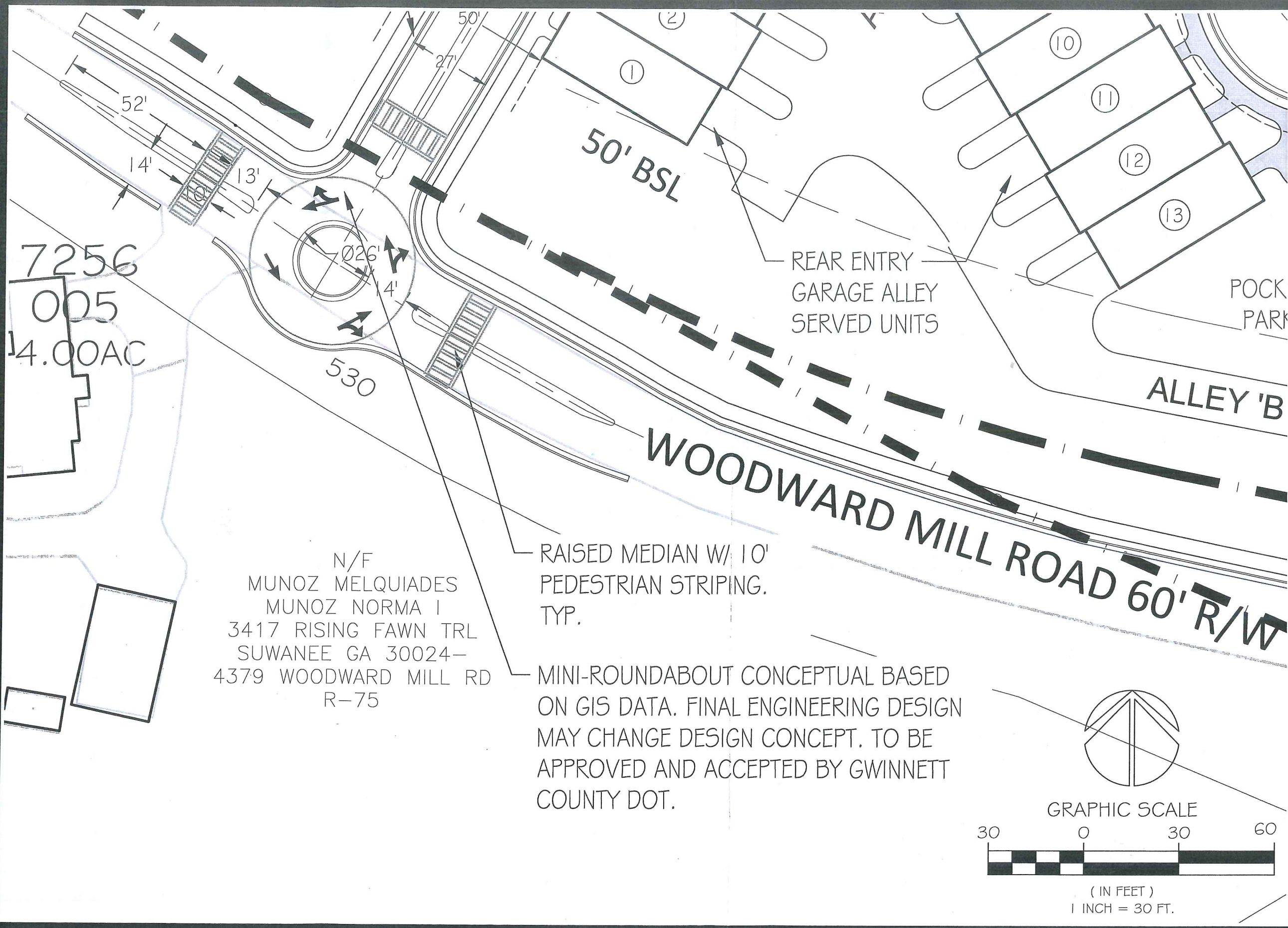
PROJECT:  
WOODWARD MILL RD.  
& BUFORD HWY.  
CONCEPT PLAN

1350 WOODWARD MILL RD.  
GWINNETT COUNTY, GA

JOB NO: 19-0618  
DRAWN BY: CSM  
CHECKED BY: TBD  
COPYRIGHT 2018  
MCFARLAND-DYER & ASSOCIATES, INC.

CONCEPT  
PLAN  
C-1.0





7256  
005  
14.00AC

N/F  
MUNOZ MELQUIADES  
MUNOZ NORMA I  
3417 RISING FAWN TRL  
SUWANEE GA 30024-  
4379 WOODWARD MILL RD  
R-75

RAISED MEDIAN W/ 10'  
PEDESTRIAN STRIPING.  
TYP.

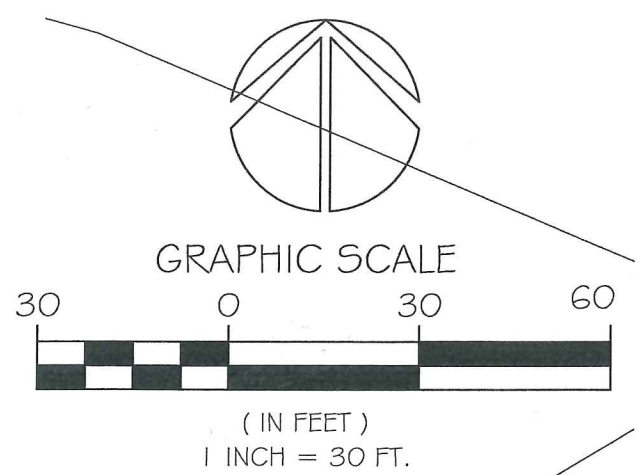
MINI-ROUNDAABOUT CONCEPTUAL BASED  
ON GIS DATA. FINAL ENGINEERING DESIGN  
MAY CHANGE DESIGN CONCEPT. TO BE  
APPROVED AND ACCEPTED BY GWINNETT  
COUNTY DOT.

REAR ENTRY  
GARAGE ALLEY  
SERVED UNITS

POCK  
PARK

ALLEY 'B'

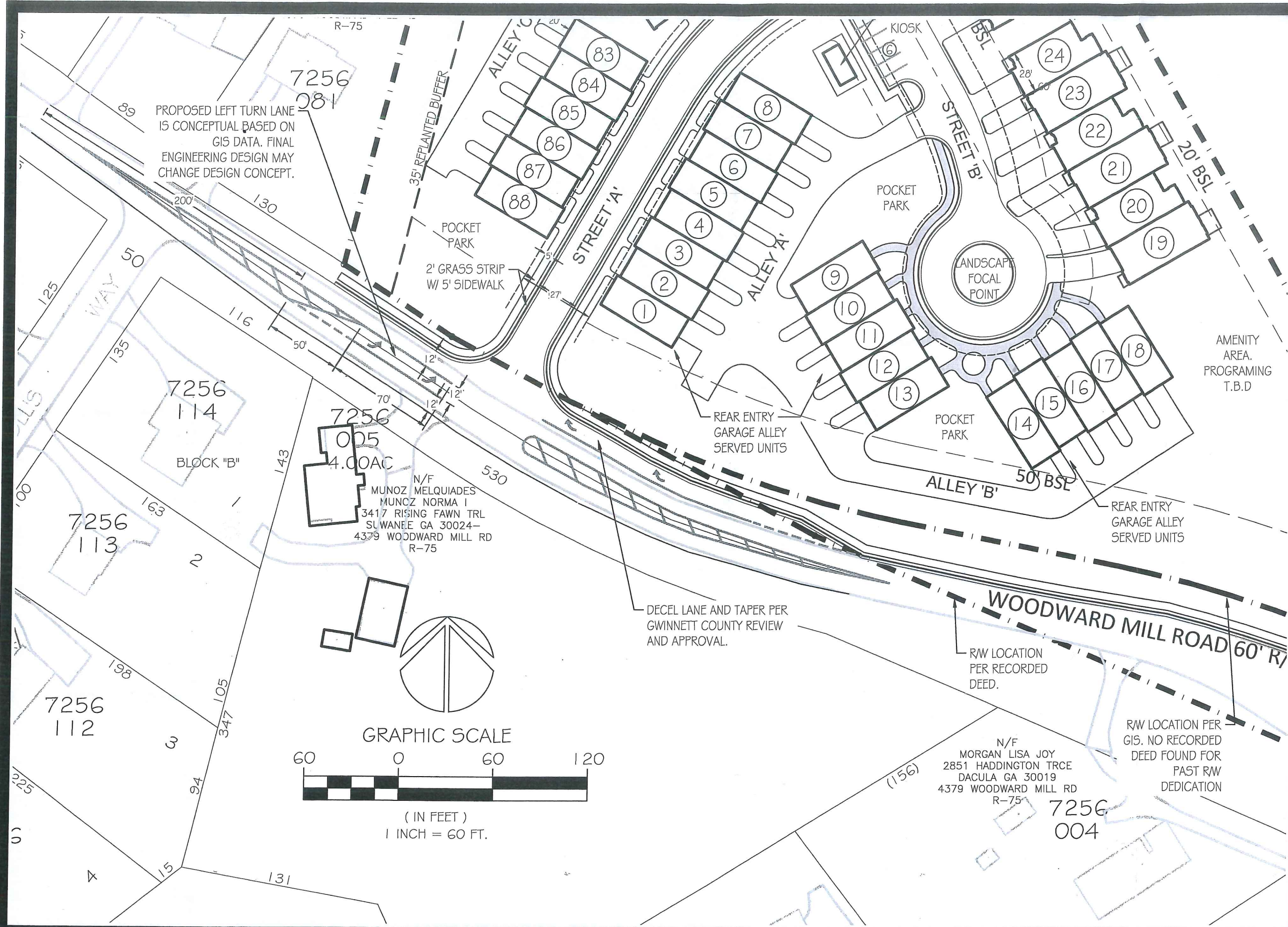
WOODWARD MILL ROAD 60' R/W



**MDA**  
McFARLAND-DYER  
& ASSOCIATES, INC.  
4174 SILVER PEAK PARKWAY  
SUWANEE, GEORGIA 30024  
PHONE (770) 932-6550  
FAX (770) 932-6551  
WWW.GOMDA.NET

PROJECT:  
  
WOODWARD  
MILL  
RD.  
BUFORD  
HWY.  
TOWNHOMES

MINI  
ROUND  
ABOUT  
EXHIBIT



**MDA**

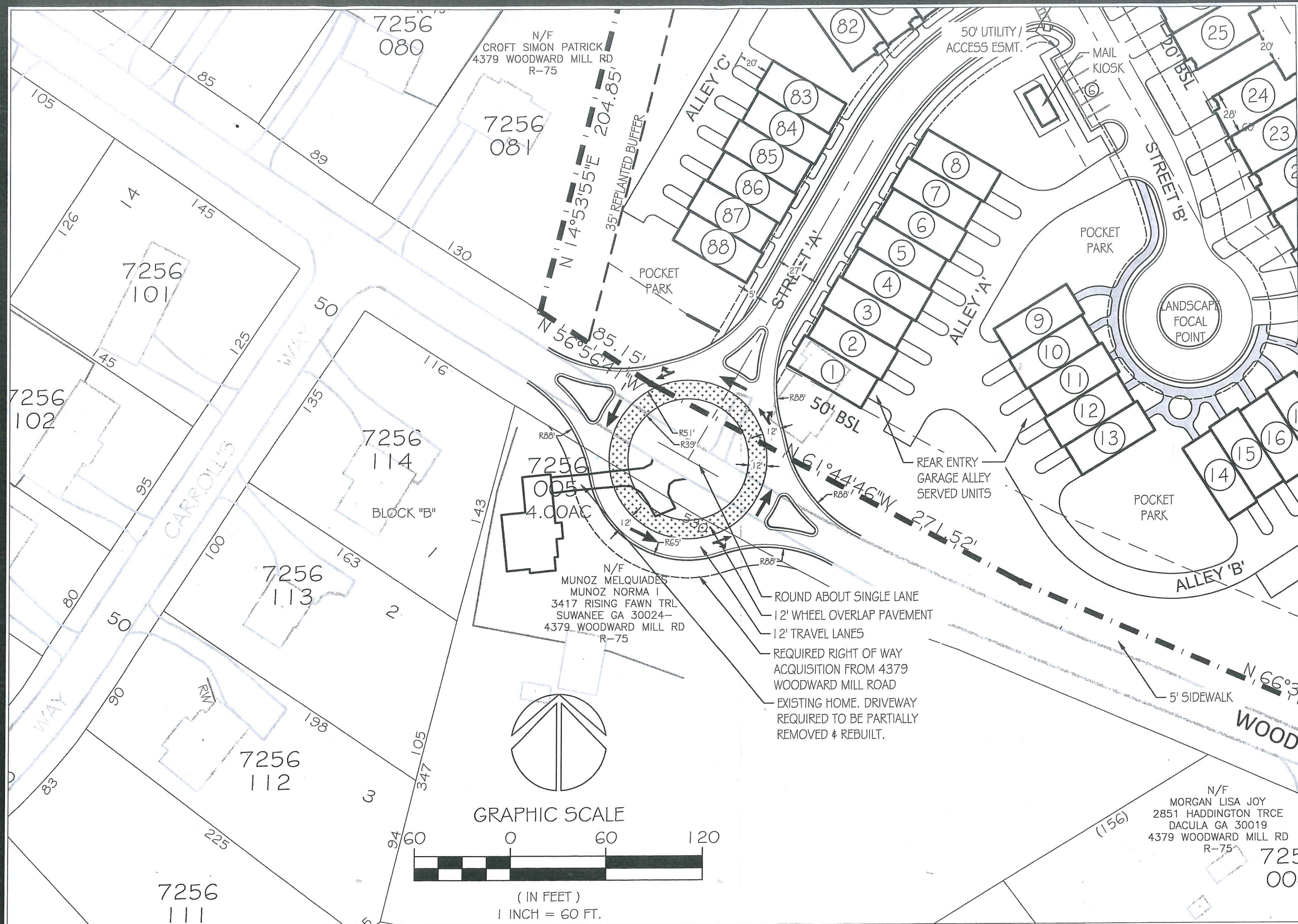
McFARLAND-DYER & ASSOCIATES, INC.

4174 SILVER PEAK PARKWAY  
SUWANEE, GEORGIA 30024  
PHONE (770) 932-6550  
FAX (770) 932-6551  
WWW.GOMDA.NET

**PROJECT:**

WOODWARD MILL RD. BUFORD HWY. TOWNHOMES

**LEFT TURN LANE EXHIBIT**



**MDA**

McFARLAND-DYER & ASSOCIATES, INC.

4174 SILVER PEAK PARKWAY  
SUWANEE, GEORGIA 30024  
PHONE (770) 932-6550  
FAX (770) 932-6551  
WWW.COMDA.NET

**PROJECT:**

WOODWARD  
MILL  
RD.  
BUFORD  
HWY.  
TOWNHOMES

**FULL  
ROUND  
ABOUT  
EXHIBIT**



WOODWARD MILL RD. &  
BUFORD HIGHWAY  
TOWNHOME ELEVATIONS

$\frac{1}{A2}$  TWO-STORY REAR GARAGE

NORCROSS BUILDERS, INC.



Exhibit 2 # 1 of 2



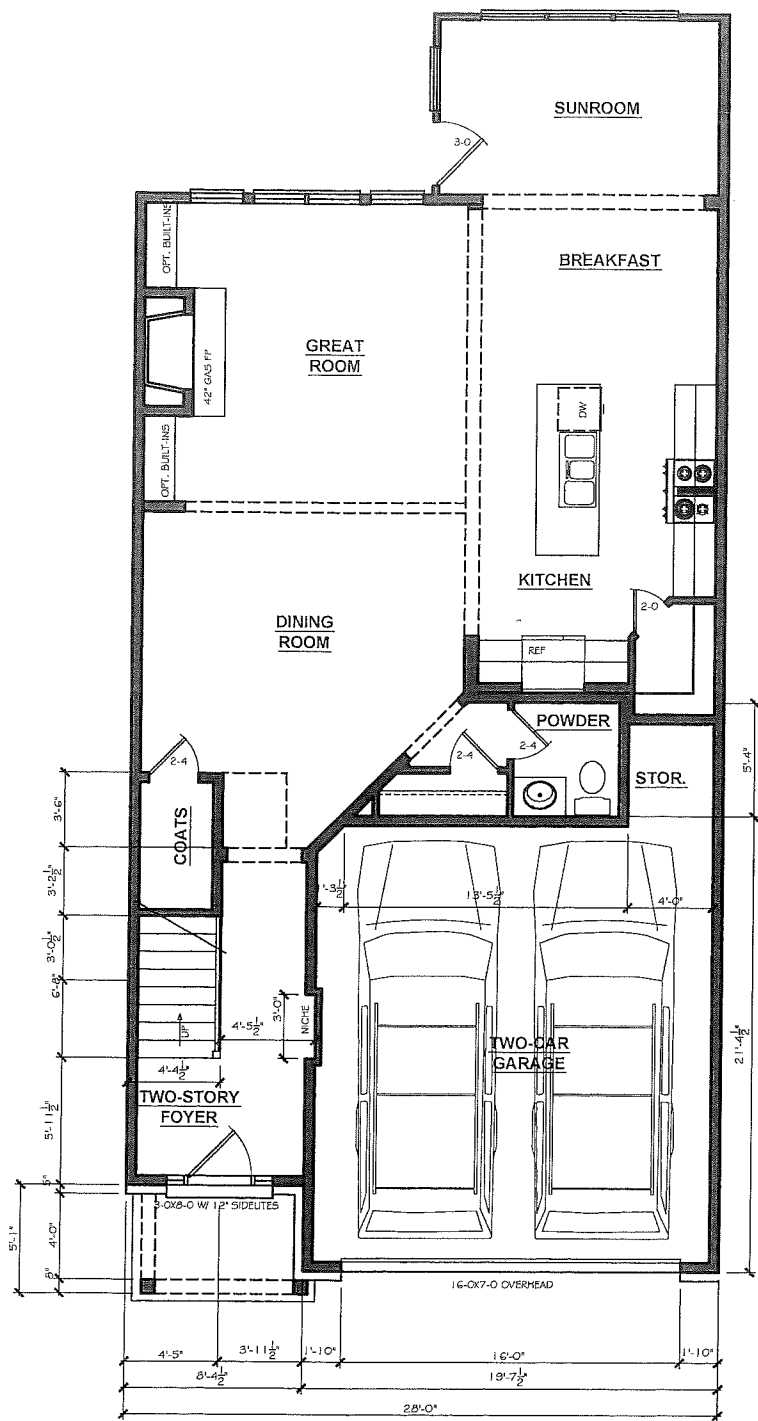
WOODWARD MILL RD. &  
BUFORD HIGHWAY  
TOWNHOME ELEVATIONS

1  
A3 THREE-STORY REAR GARAGE

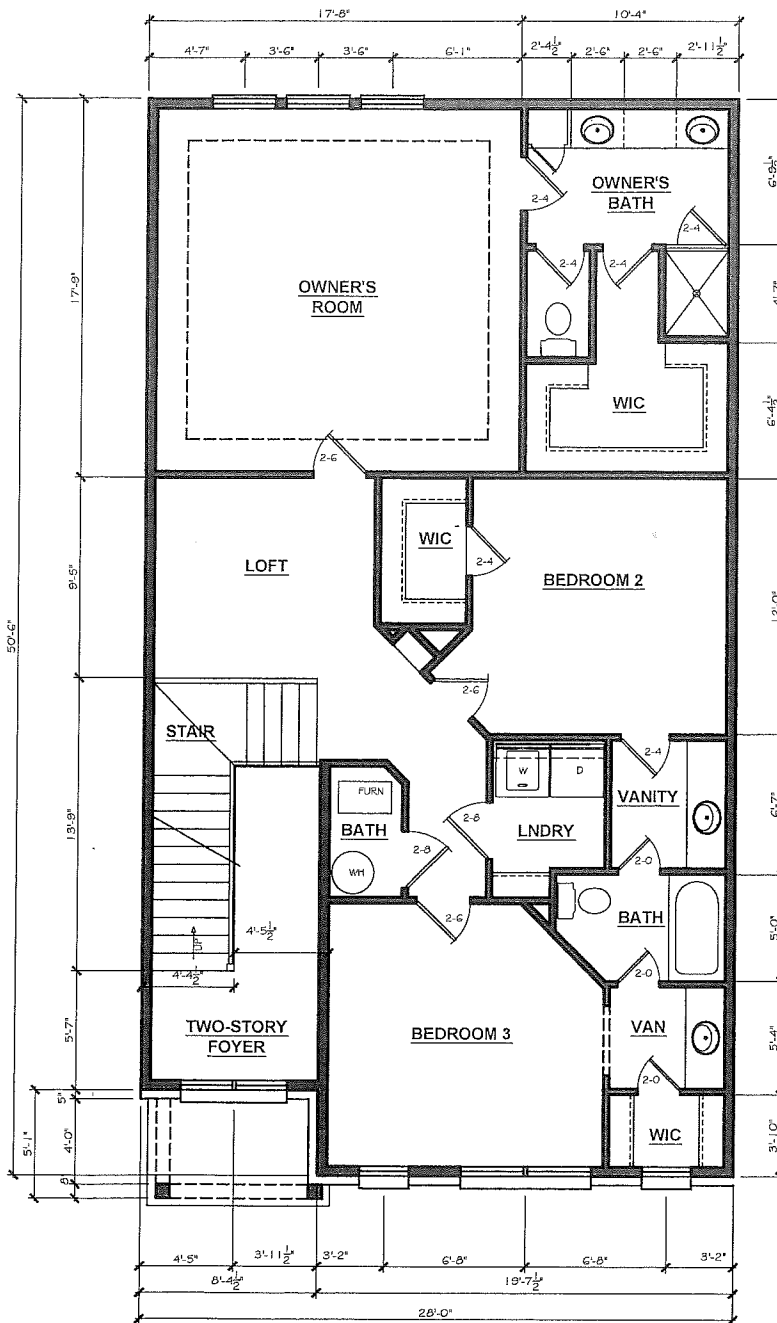
NORCROSS BUILDERS, INC.



Exhibit 2 #2 of 2



1  
A2 FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

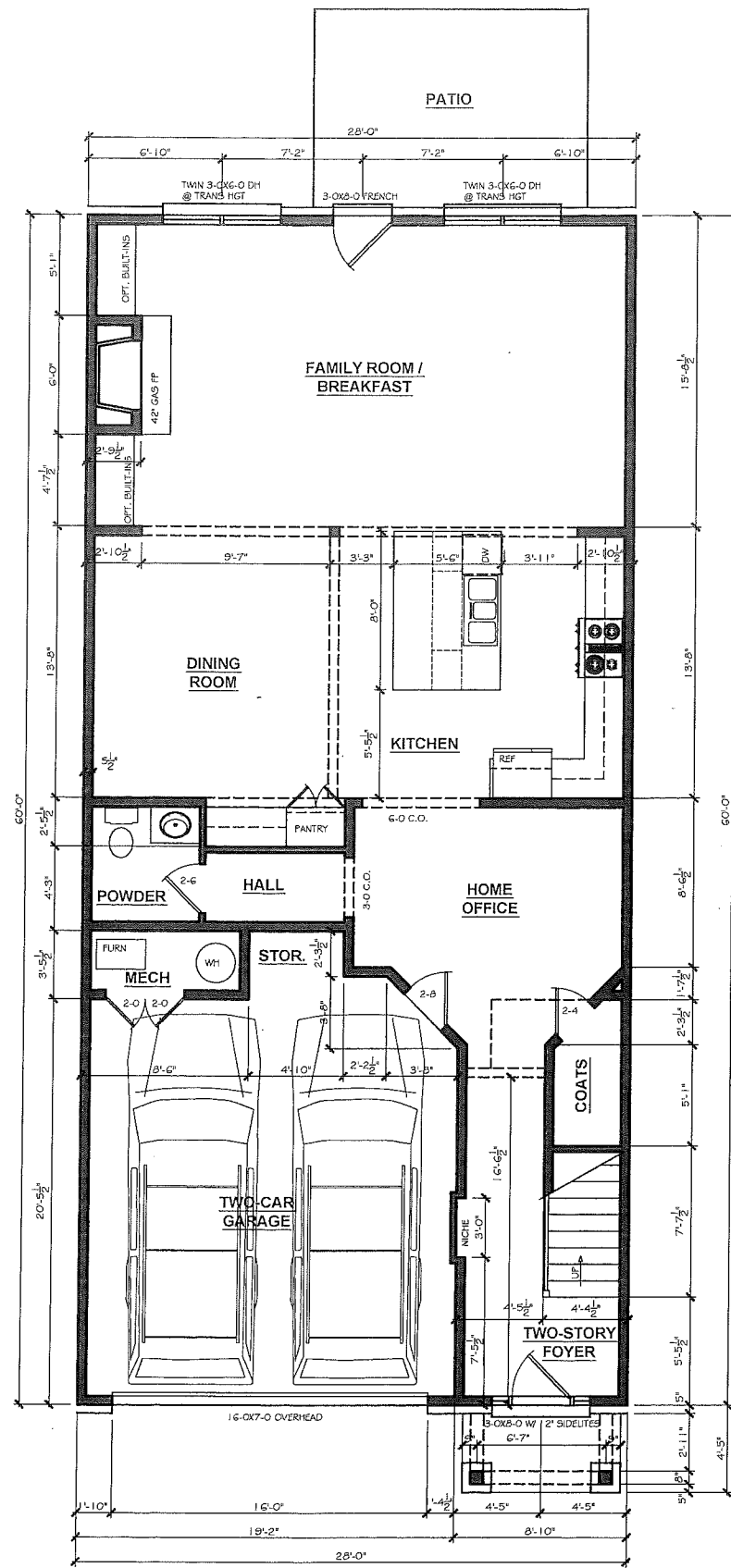


1  
A2 SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

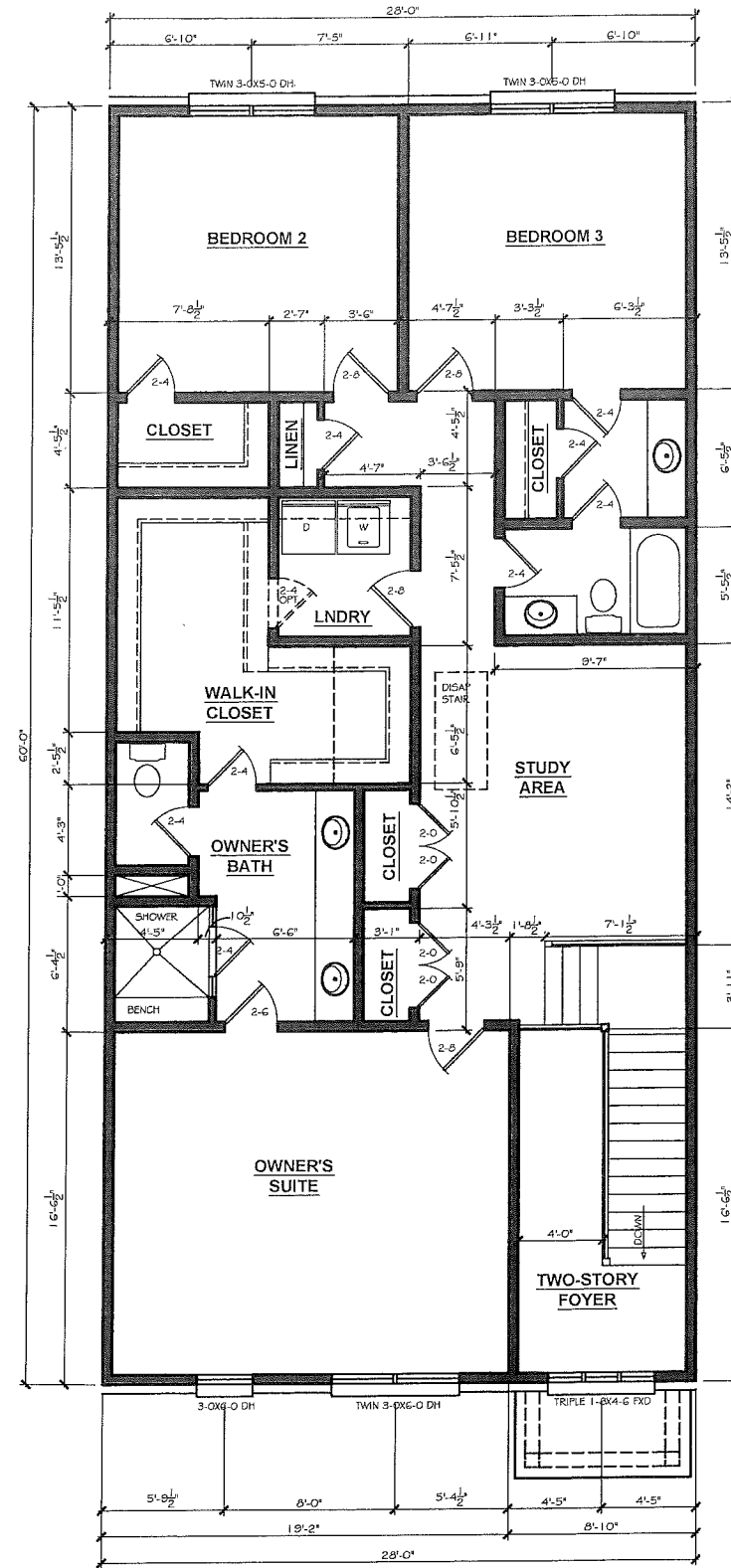
WOODWARD MILL RD. &  
BUFORD HIGHWAY  
TOWNHOME PLANS

PROPOSED FRONT GARAGE PLAN

NORCROSS BUILDERS, INC.



1  
A2 FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

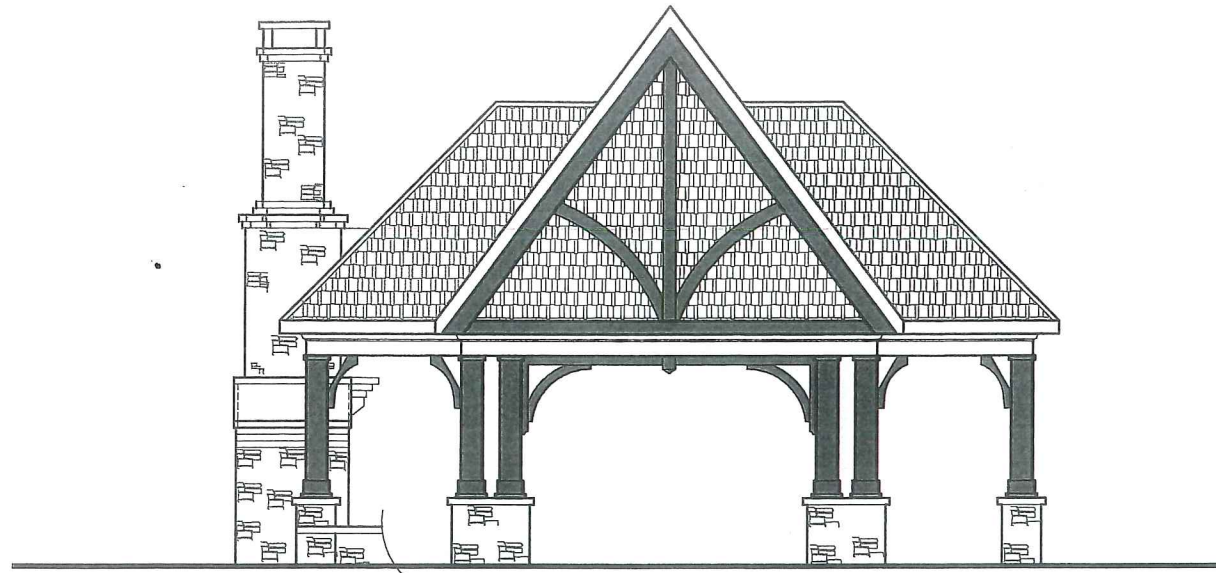


1  
A2 SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

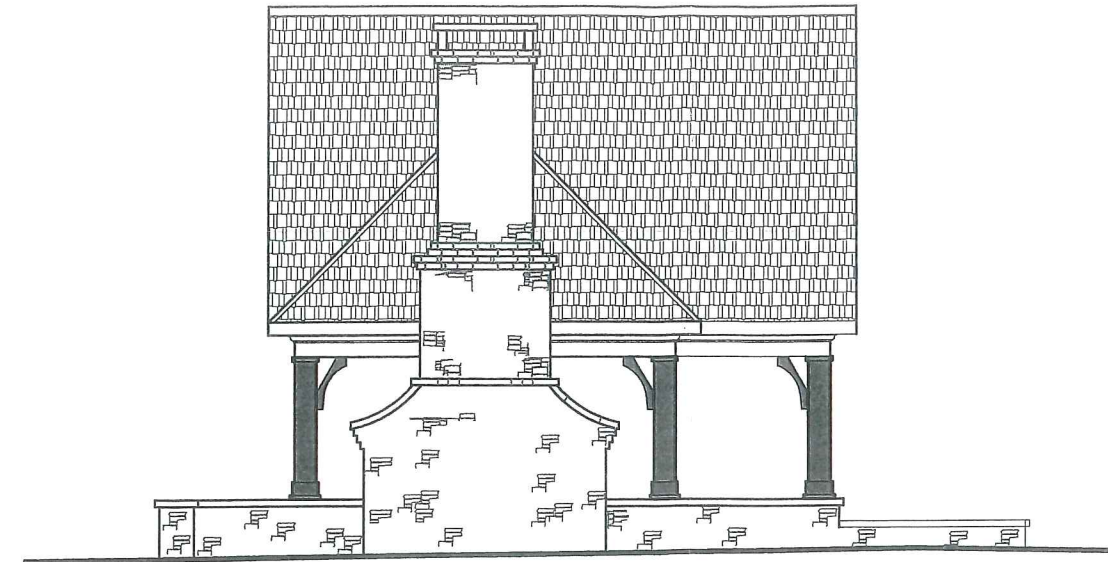
WOODWARD MILL RD. &  
BUFORD HIGHWAY  
TOWNHOME PLANS

PROPOSED FRONT GARAGE PLAN

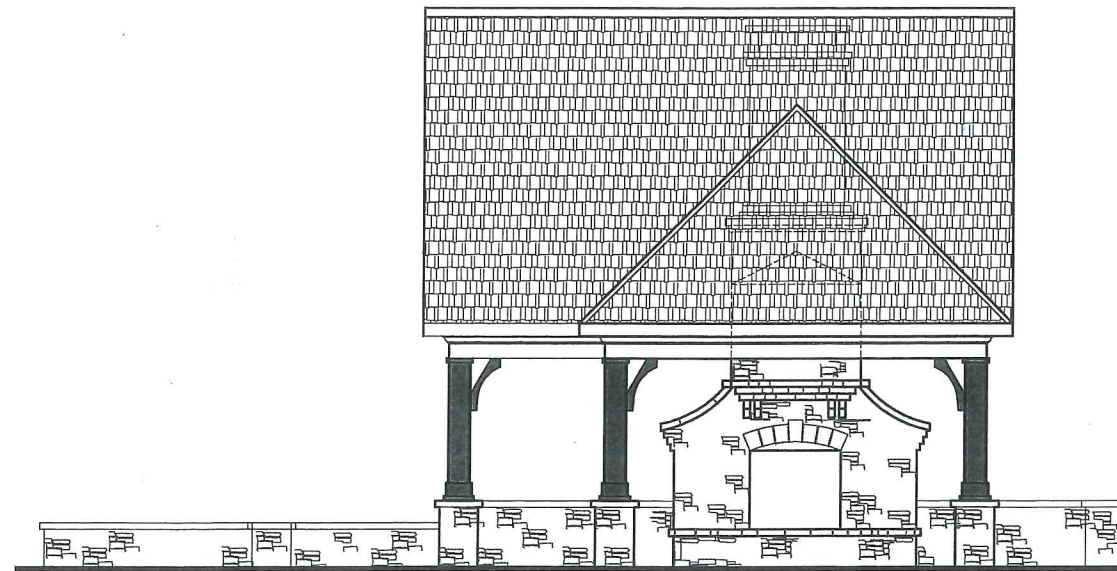
NORCROSS BUILDERS, INC.



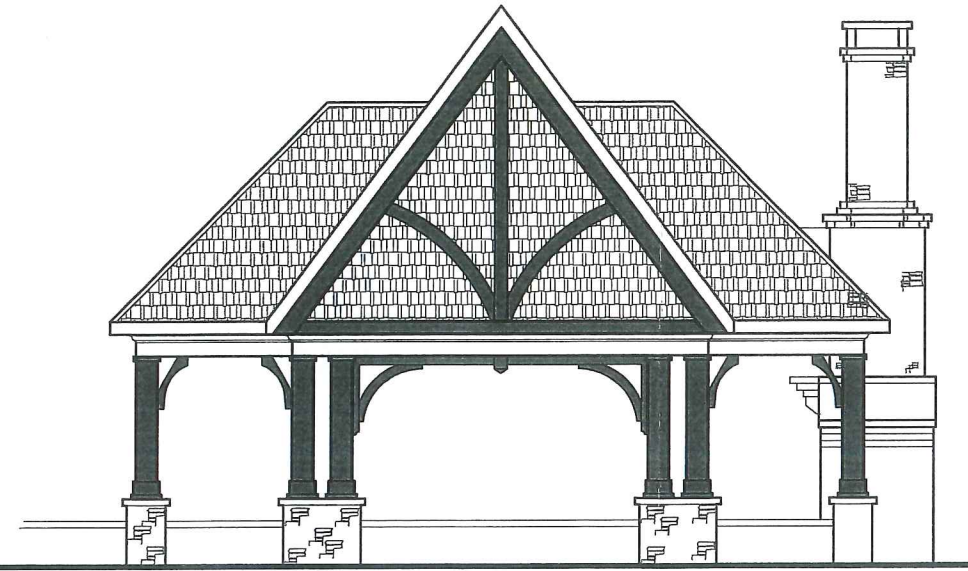
2 REAR ELEVATION  
A4



1 RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION  
A4



4 LEFT SIDE ELEVATION  
A4



3 FRONT ELEVATION  
A4

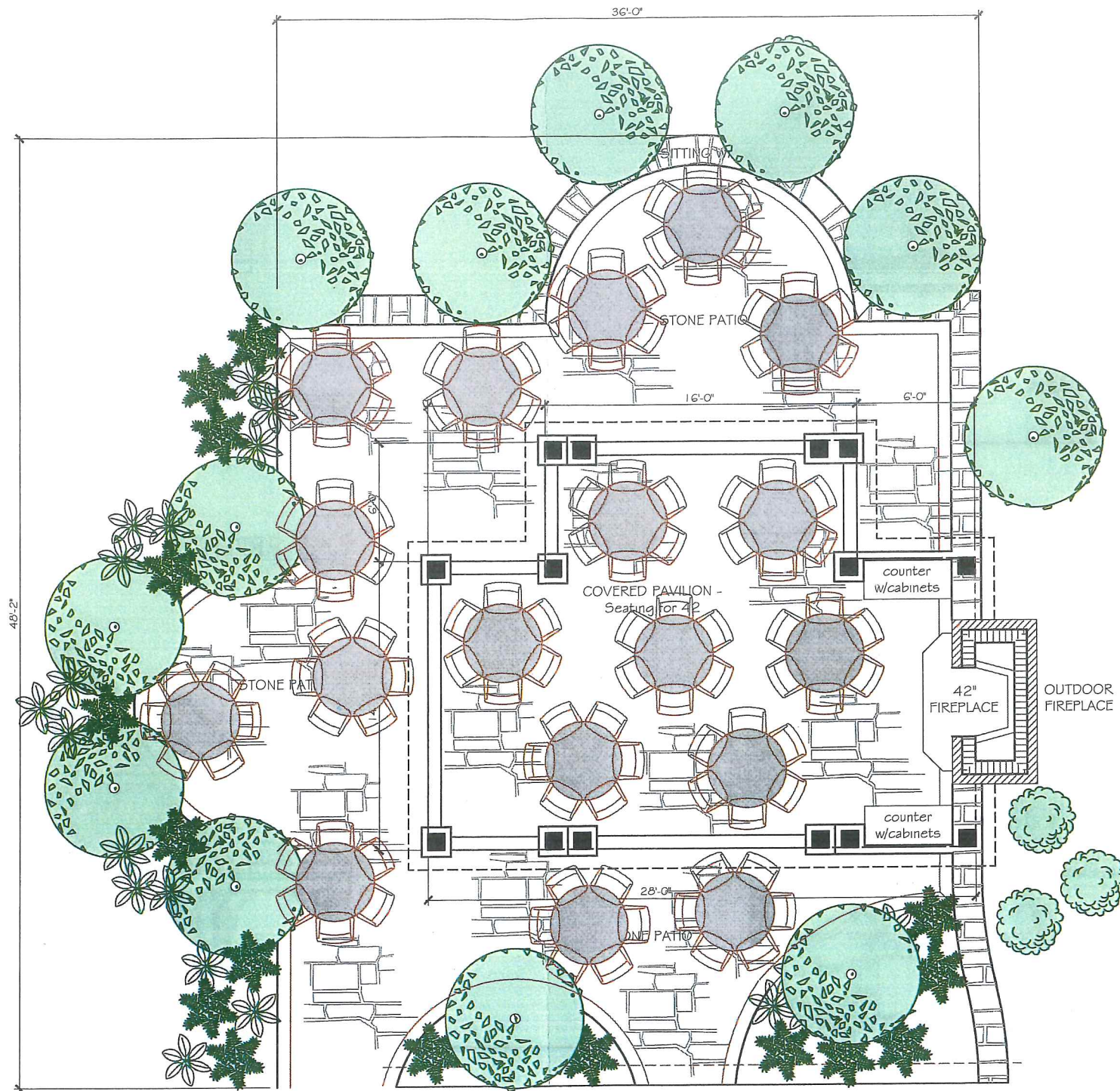
## PROPOSED PAVILION AMENITY

WOODWARD MILL RD. &  
BUFORD HIGHWAY  
TOWNHOME ELEVATIONS

NORCROSS BUILDERS, INC.







PROPOSED PAVILION AMENITY PLAN

WOODWARD MILL RD. &  
 BUFORD HIGHWAY  
 TOWNHOME ELEVATIONS

NORCROSS BUILDERS, INC.

