

DATE: NOVEMBER 8, 2019

ARC REVIEW CODE: V1910281

TO: MAYOR NANCY HARRIS, City of Duluth  
ATTN TO: BILL AIKEN, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, City of Duluth  
FROM: Douglas R. Hooker, Executive Director, ARC



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Original on file

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has completed regional review of the following proposal. Below is the ARC finding. The Atlanta Regional Commission reviewed the proposed project with regard to conflicts to regional plans, goals, and policies and impacts it might have on the activities, plans, goals, and policies of other local jurisdictions and state, federal, and other agencies.

**Name of Proposal:** RC-19-01D Encore  
**Submitting Local Government:** City of Duluth

<b>Review Type:</b> Metro River	<b>Date Opened:</b> October 28, 2019	<b>Date Closed:</b> November 8, 2019
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**FINDING:** ARC staff has completed the review of the application for a MRPA Certificate for this proposed project in the Chattahoochee River Corridor. ARC's finding is that the proposed project is consistent with the Chattahoochee Corridor Plan.

**Additional Comments:** External comments were received from the Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development. Those comments are attached to the ARC Finding document.

#### THE FOLLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES RECEIVED NOTICE OF THIS REVIEW:

ARC LAND USE PLANNING  
CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERKEEPER  
GWINNETT COUNTY

ARC ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING  
GEORGIA CONSERVANCY  
FULTON COUNTY

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE/CRNRA  
CITY OF JOHNS CREEK

If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Greg Giuffrida at (470) 378-1531. This finding will be published to the ARC website at: <http://www.atlantaregional.org/landuse>.

November 7, 2019

Greg Giuffrida  
Plan Review Technician, Community Development Group  
Atlanta Regional Commission  
229 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 100  
Atlanta, GA 30303

Re: Application for a Metropolitan River Protection Act (MRPA) Certificate RC19-01D - Encore by Ashton Woods Residential Development on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard in Duluth, Georgia

The Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development has reviewed the Regional Review Notification prepared by ARC regarding the proposed residential development located within the City of Duluth, Georgia. The proposed development consists of an approximately 188 acre site located near the intersection of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Rogers Bridge Road. The site is currently a golf course and is located within the Chattahoochee River Corridor.

#### **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The applicant proposes to develop a 188 acre site in land lots 243 through 246 of the seventh district. It will consist of 126 townhomes, 450 apartment units, 395 single-family lots and 10,000 square feet (2 acres assumed at 5,000 sf per acre) of commercial space. The property is located in an "Established Suburb" Regional Area as defined by ARC. The site is currently zoned C-2 (General Business District) which is, "...intended primarily for a wide variety of businesses and services that benefit from close proximity to each other, that require a location accessible to large numbers of people, and that serve a substantial portion of the community" (pg 2-13 Sec 205.03 Duluth, Georgia Unified Development Code).

According to the Official Zoning Map of Gwinnett County, the unincorporated portions of the County adjacent to the proposed development are zoned R-100 (Single Family Residence District) which is intended primarily for single-family detached residences and related uses. The other unincorporated properties abutting Peachtree Industrial Boulevard near the site are zoned M-1 (Light Industry District) and R-75 (Single Family Residence District).

#### **COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING PLANS**

According to the City of Duluth Comprehensive Plan 2040 Update, the site is located within the Chattahoochee Residential District. The Chattahoochee Residential District is comprised of existing neighborhoods and large tracts of land that have large lot residential potential. This character area seeks to provide accessibility for vehicular traffic, provide estate style executive housing, and highlight/preserve the river's natural amenities. The district is broken down into four tiers of development intensity depending on their proximity to the river and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard; this development would include all four. It is important to note that the Plan specifically states that, "apartments are inappropriate and should be prohibited within this Character Area. Apartments should be located closer to activity nodes where the City desires to increase density, such as Downtown" (pg 50-51 Forwarduluth 2040 Comprehensive Plan). The plan states that the character area should be single family in nature with single family detached homes and townhomes.



The Gwinnett 2040 Unified Plan Future Development Map classifies the unincorporated area bordering the site as being located within the Community Mixed-Use character area. The Community Mixed-Use character area is described as, "intended for activity nodes and connecting areas along major corridors... Future development and redevelopment should focus on making these corridors more pedestrian oriented with intensity focused on specific nodes. The section of the corridors between higher intensity nodes should redevelop as lighter intensity mixed-use centers with lower residential densities or commercial uses integrating high quality aesthetics and site design." (p.296 Gwinnett 2040 Unified Plan). The proposed development does not match the intended use in its entirety but the commercial portion and increased building intensity, especially adjacent to the unincorporated area, does. Since some of the denser townhouse components in the proposed development abut the unincorporated area discussed above (see site plan page 11 of the submission packet), this could be considered a reasonable transition to less dense single-family development in the east of the proposed development area.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

The property contains several tributary streams of the Chattahoochee River. Streams and floodplain traverse the site. The plan does not currently show buffer or impervious surface setbacks for the Chattahoochee River or the tributary streams meandering throughout the site.

This property contains a portion of the future Chattahoochee River Greenway route as identified in the Gwinnett County Open Space and Greenway Master Plan and the Gwinnett Trails Comprehensive Master Plan. It is also part of the Chattahoochee River Greenway Study currently being led by the ARC.

Gwinnett County Department of Community Services recommends that the developers of Ashton Woods Homes work with ARC and the City of Duluth to construct a public trail within the existing trail easement that parallels the Chattahoochee River. It is recommended that the minimum width for the trail is ten feet wide and designed for bikes and pedestrians. The trail will need to be paved or built out of other sustainable material. Connections to the development's internal trail system should be provided. Gwinnett County is committed to the conservation, protection, and enhancement of the water quality in our streams and lakes. Due to the potential impacts of the proposed residential development on the Chattahoochee River Corridor, we strongly suggest that conditions of zoning should be included requiring full buffers along all waterways meandering along and throughout the subject property.

Gwinnett County appreciates the opportunity to comment on this proposed development, and sincerely hopes that these comments will be given full consideration as the review process moves forward. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding Gwinnett County's position on this issue.

Best regards,



Dan Reuter, Deputy Director  
Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development