

## **REGIONAL REVIEW FINDING**

Atlanta Regional Commission • 229 Peachtree Street NE | Suite 100 | Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • ph: 404.463.3100 fax: 404.463.3205 • atlantaregional.org

**DATE**: August 23, 2023

TO: Chairman Alfred John, Forysth County Commission
ATTN TO: Leslie Silas, Planning Manager, Forsyth County

Miles Alexander, COO, Addante Basicard Commission

FROM: Mike Alexander, COO, Atlanta Regional Commission

**RE:** Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Review

ARC has completed a regional review of the below DRI. ARC reviewed the DRI's relationship to regional plans, goals and policies – and impacts it may have on the activities, plans, goals and policies of other local jurisdictions as well as state, federal and other agencies. This final report does not address whether the DRI is or is not in the best interest of the host local government.

Name of Proposal: 2023 The Gathering at South Forsyth DRI 3967

**Submitting Local Government**: Forsyth County

<u>Description</u>: A DRI review of a proposal to build a mixed-use development with 2,400 residential units, 500 hotel rooms, 1,000,000 SF of office space, 600,000 SF of retail, a 20,000-seat arena, a 90,000 SF community center/ice rink and a 15,000 SF fire station on an 84-acre site at the intersection of Union Hill Road and Georgia 400 in Forsyth County.

#### **Comments:**

#### **Key Comments**

The Atlanta Region's Plan assigns the Regional Employment Corridor growth management designation to the project site. The project is not aligned with the Regional Employment Corridor stated need for more "accessible public greenspace...which affects the overall aesthetics and quality of life for residents and workers."

The project is aligned with Regional Employment Corridor growth policies which support the addition of housing and retail to employment-focused areas.

The project includes a very robust mix of uses including residential, office, retail, entertainment, and recreation on a compact site which is highly supportive of regional placemaking and multi-modal transportation policies.

The project is expected to generate a total of 47,366 daily new vehicular trips; roadway/intersection improvements are proposed to mitigate the impact of these trips.

The project is located within the Big Creek Water Supply Watershed, which is a small (less than 100 square mile) public water supply watershed as defined by the Georgia DNR Part 5 Minimum Planning Criteria. The project will need to conform to Forsyth County's water supply watershed requirements.

The corners of three structures, a parking structure, an apartment building and the proposed fire/police substation, all come to the edge of the 75-foot stream buffer setback. Any intrusion into the setback or buffers may require variances.

The project is located within the McFarland – Stoney Point LCI Study area and is consistent with the LCI's designation of the location for mixed use regional development. Relevant LCI study recommendations for the area, particularly those related to the creation of transit options, should be carefully considered and incorporated in the project.

A total of 8,780 parking spaces are proposed utilizing a shared parking system which is substantially less than the 19,120 space that potentially could be allowed and is strongly supportive of regional transportation policies.

The project includes an extensive internal sidewalk network and the provision of a 12-ft wide segment of the Big Creek Greenway along the Ronald Reagan Boulevard frontage which are supportive of regional altmode transportation policies.

The project will preserve a significant area of stream buffer greenspace along the northern edge of the site which is supportive of regional environmental and stormwater policies. Retention of additional greenspace and trees would further support these policies and provide heat island mitigation/urban cooling functions for the surrounding area which are becoming more critical as climate concerns increase. Site sensitive clearing and nestling of new structures into the existing landscape, rather than clearcutting and grading the entire site, would further support regional environmental policies.

The project does not appear to include bicycle parking spaces or EV charging spaces; provision of adequate numbers of both would be supportive of regional multi-modal transportation policies.

The South Forsyth CID submitted comments including the need to develop appropriate streetscape designs along the project frontages, conduct additional study of transit options to reduce the project's major traffic impact, and coordinate with the County on the optimal near and long-term connections of the project to the Big Creek Greenway.

Scientific Games, the County's second largest employer, is located directly across the Union Hill overpass from project site and submitted comments about the project's traffic impact of the traffic. The comments address Union Hill Road safety, SR 400 exit considerations, employee access, and potential transit options.

#### **General**

The Atlanta Region's Plan, developed by ARC in close coordination with partner local governments, is intended to broadly guide regional development in the 12-county metro region to ensure that required infrastructure and resources are in place to support continued economic development and prosperity. The Plan assigns a relevant growth management category designation with accompanying policy recommendations to all areas in the region. This DRI site is designated Regional Employment Corridor; corresponding policy recommendations are provided at the end of these comments.

The project is located within the McFarland – Stoney Point LCI Study area. The LCI calls for a mixed use regional development at this location so the project is consistent with the LCI study. Relevant LCI study recommendations for the area, particularly those related to the creation of transit options, should be carefully considered and incorporated in the project. The project is also located near the second most dense node in the County, Halycon. There may be opportunities for linking the two developments at some point to provide a more coherent secondary development node for the County.

#### **Transportation and Mobility Comments**

ARC's Transportation Access and Mobility Group comments are attached.

The project is expected to generate a total of 47,366 daily new vehicular trips. Significant roadway/intersection improvements are identified to reduce the impact of these new trips on surrounding roadways.

The project does not appear to include bicycle parking spaces and EV charging spaces; provision of adequate numbers of both would be supportive of regional multi-modal transportation policies.

A total of 8,780 parking spaces are proposed utilizing a shared parking system which is substantially less than the 19,120 space that potentially could be allowed and is strongly supportive of regional transportation policies.

Care should be taken to ensure that the development promotes an interconnected, functional, clearly marked and comfortable pedestrian experience on all streets, paths, entrances, and parking areas. To the maximum extent possible, new driveways and intersection corners where pedestrians will cross should be constructed with minimal curb radii to reduce speeds of turning vehicles and decrease crossing distances for pedestrians.

#### **ARC Natural Resource Group Comments**

ARC's Natural Resource Group Comments are attached. The proposed project property is located entirely within the Big Creek Water Supply Watershed, which is a small (less than 100 square mile) public water supply watershed as defined by the Georgia DNR Part 5 Minimum Planning Criteria. It is a public water

supply source for the City of Roswell. The proposed project is more than seven miles upstream of the City of Roswell Intake.

Under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, all development in a public water supply watershed is subject to the DNR Water Supply Watershed Minimum Criteria (Chapter 391–3–16–.01, Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds) unless alternate criteria are developed and adopted by the jurisdiction and then approved by Georgia EPD and DCA. Alternate criteria were developed for this watershed through the Big Creek Watershed Study which was completed in December 2000 and had participation from all jurisdictions then existing in the watershed, including Forsyth County. The Study included proposed alternative protection measures to the DNR Part 5 Water Supply Watershed Criteria, including structural and non–structural control measures. It is our understanding that Forsyth County has adopted protection requirements consistent with those proposed in the Study and that DCA has accepted those requirements in lieu of the Part 5 minimum criteria. This project will need to conform to Forsyth County's water supply watershed requirements.

The USGS coverage for the project area shows no blue line streams on the project property. The project site plan shows one stream running north-south along the northeastern and eastern edges of the property. The site plan shows and identifies the Forsyth County 50-foot buffer and 75-foot impervious setback and the 25-foot State Erosion and Sedimentation Act buffer on the entire length of the stream on the property. No intrusions into the buffers are shown, but corners of three structures, a parking structure, an apartment building and the proposed fire/police substation, all come to the edge of the 75-foot setback. Any intrusion into the setback or buffers may require variances. Any other streams on the property may also be subject to the Forsyth County Stream Buffer Ordinance and the 25-foot State Erosion and Sedimentation Act buffer. Any unmapped waters of the state on the property will also be subject to the 25-foot State Erosion and Sedimentation Act buffer.

#### **Other Environmental Comments**

About half of the site is currently wooded and provides meaningful heat island mitigation/urban cooling functions for the surrounding area which are becoming more critical as climate concerns increase. The project will preserve a significant area of stream buffer greenspace along the northern edge of the site which is supportive of regional environmental and stormwater policies. Retention of some additional forested greenspace and utilization of site sensitive clearing and nestling of new structures into the existing landscape, rather than clearcutting and grading the entire site, would further support regional environmental policies.

The project can support The Atlanta Region's Plan in general by incorporating other aspects of regional policy, including green infrastructure and/or low-impact design, e.g., pervious pavers, rain gardens, vegetated swales, etc., in the project's substantial parking areas and site driveways, and as part of any improvements to site frontages.

#### South Forsyth Community Improvement District (CID) Comments

The project falls within the South Forsyth CID which submitted the attached comments related to the CID's Vision and Goals, Branding, Landscaping and Beautification, Transit, Union Hill SR 400 Bridge Aesthetics, and the Big Greek Greenway Extension. These comments include the need to develop appropriate streetscape designs along the project frontages, conduct additional study of transit options to reduce the project's major traffic impact, and coordinate with the COunty on the optimal near and long-term connections of the project to the Big Creek Greenway.

#### **Scientific Games Comments**

Scientific Games is the second largest employer in Forsyth County with over 1300 employees located at their production and technology center directly across the Union Hill overpass from the proposed development site. The company submitted the attached comments which address their concerns about the impact of the traffic that will be generated by the project on their employees, visitors, suppliers and overall business. The comments specifically recommended: 1. Partially removing the Union Hill concrete divider and creating a new turn lane to allow for direct left–hand access to both of our entrances to reduce the risk caused by the current traffic design; 2. The current traffic design be improved to allow for clearer wayfinding and direction to drivers existing northbound and for south bound access to 400, particularly at Exit 12; 3. Consider the impact of additional employees returning to work which may not have been captured in the Transportation Study; and 4. Include a commitment to public transit, dedicated ride sharing drop-off/pick-up areas and safe access for pedestrian, bicycle and other alternative modes of transportation to accommodate and support future growth and job access in the area.

#### Unified Growth Policy Considerations: Regional Employment Corridor

According to the Atlanta Region's Plan, Regional Employment Corridors represent the densest development outside of the Region Core. Regional Employment Corridors connect several Regional Centers with the Region Core via existing capacity transportation facilities. These areas contain a large share of the region's jobs in a relatively small land area. These areas are also increasing in both housing and job density and are experiencing increased redevelopment and new uses in traditionally employment–focused areas. There is a lack of accessible public greenspace within Regional Employment Corridors, which affects the overall aesthetics and quality of life for residents and workers.

The intensity and land use of this proposed project partially aligns with The Atlanta Region's Plan's recommendations for Regional Employment Corridors. The project's provision of housing and retail adjacent to existing employment and retail centers is consistent with regional policies. The removal of much of the site's existing wooded area is not supportive of regional environmental policies and the need to provide public greenspace in Regional Employment Corridors. The project could be more supportive of regional policies by preserving more of the wooded site and providing some degree of public access to these areas. Forsyth County staff and leadership, along with the applicant team, should collaborate closely to ensure optimal sensitivity to the needs of nearby local governments, stakeholders, and natural systems.

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

ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY

CITY OF ALPHARETTA
CITY OF BUFORD
CHEROKEE COUNTY

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE
GEORGIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

GEORGIA CONSERVANCY CITY OF MILTON CITY OF SUWANEE NORTH FULTON CID GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

CITY OF CUMMING
CITY OF ROSWELL
CITY OF SUGAR HILL
CITY OF JOHNS CREEK

For questions, please contact Donald Shockey at (470) 378-1531 or <a href="mailto:dshockey@atlantaregional.org">dshockey@atlantaregional.org</a>. This finding will be published to the ARC review website located at <a href="http://atlantaregional.org/plan-reviews">http://atlantaregional.org/plan-reviews</a>.





#### **Developments of Regional Impact**

**DRI Home** Tier Map **View Submissions** <u>Apply</u> **Login** 

#### **DRI #3967**

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT Initial DRI Information**

This form is to be completed by the city or county government to provide basic project information that will allow the RDC to determine if the project appears to meet or exceed applicable DRI thresholds. Refer to both the Rules for the DRI Process and the DRI Tiers and Thresholds for more information.

#### **Local Government Information**

Submitting Local Government: Forsyth Individual completing form: Leslie Silas

Telephone: 770-205-4568

E-mail: Idsilas@forsythco.com

\*Note: The local government representative completing this form is responsible for the accuracy of the information contained herein. If a project is to be located in more than one jurisdiction and, in total, the project meets or exceeds a DRI threshold, the local government in which the largest portion of the project is to be located is responsible for initiating the DRI review process.

#### **Proposed Project Information**

Name of Proposed Project: The Gathering at South Forsyth

Is the proposed project (not selected) Yes No

entirely located within your

Location (Street Address, Bounded by Georgia Highway 400, Ronald Reagan Boulevard and Union Hill Road GPS Coordinates, or Legal Land Lot Description):

Brief Description of Project: Approximately 84 acres of mixed-use with 2,400 residential units, 500 hotel rooms,

1,000,000 sq. ft. of office space, 600,000 sq. ft. of retail, a 20,000-seat arena, a

90,000 sq. ft. community center/ice rink and a 15,000 sq. ft. fire station

Development Type:			
(not selected)		Hotels	OWastewater Treatment Facilities
Office		Mixed Use	Petroleum Storage Facilities
Commercial		Airports	OWater Supply Intakes/Reservoirs
Wholesale & Distribution		OAttractions & Recreational Facilities	Ontermodal Terminals
OHospitals and Health Care	Facilities	Post-Secondary Schools	Truck Stops
OHousing		Waste Handling Facilities	Any other development types
Olndustrial		Quarries, Asphalt & Cement Plants	
If other development type, de	escribe:		
Project Size (# of units, floor Approxima area, etc.): 600,000 s		ately 2,400 residential units, 500 hotel re	ooms, 1,000,000 sq. ft. of office space,
Developer:	Gathering	South Forsyth, LLC	
Mailing Address:	PO Box 12	249	
Address 2:			
	City:Alpha	retta State: GA Zip:30009	
Telephone:	470-222-0	944	
Email:	gatheringa	atsouthforsyth@gmail.com	
Is property owner different from developer/applicant?	(not sel	ected) Yes No	
If ves, property owner:			

local government's jurisdiction?		
If no, in what additional jurisdictions is the project located?		
Is the current proposal a continuation or expansion of a previous DRI?		
If yes, provide the following information:	Project Name: Project ID:	
The initial action being requested of the local government for this project:	Sewer	
Is this project a phase or part of a larger overall project?		
If yes, what percent of the overall project does this project/phase represent?		
	This project/phase: 2033 Overall project: 2033	
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DRI Site Map | Contact





#### **Developments of Regional Impact**

**DRI Home** 

Tier Map

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#### **DRI #3967**

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT Additional DRI Information**

This form is to be completed by the city or county government to provide information needed by the RDC for its review of the proposed DRI. Refer to both the Rules for the DRI Process and the DRI Tiers and Thresholds for more information.

#### **Local Government Information**

Submitting Local Government: Forsyth

Individual completing form: Leslie Silas Telephone: 770-205-4568

Email: Idsilas@forsythco.com

#### **Project Information**

Name of Proposed Project: The Gathering at South Forsyth

DRI ID Number: 3967

Developer/Applicant: Gathering South Forsyth, LLC

Telephone: 470-222-0944

Email(s): gatheringatsouthforsyth@gmail.com

#### **Additional Information Requested**

Has the RDC identified any additional information

required in order to proceed with the official regional review process? (If no,

(not selected) Yes No

proceed to Economic Impacts.)

If yes, has that additional information been provided

(not selected) Yes No to your RDC and, if

applicable, GRTA?

If no, the official review process can not start until this additional information is provided.

#### **Economic Development**

Estimated Value at Build-Out:

Approximately \$2,900,000,000

Estimated annual local tax revenues (i.e., property tax, sales tax) likely to be generated by the proposed

Approximately \$14,000,000 County and \$28,000,000 State

development: Is the regional work force sufficient to fill the demand

(not selected) Yes No created by the proposed

project?

Will this development (not selected) Yes No displace any existing uses?

If yes, please describe (including number of units, square feet, etc):

#### Water Supply

Name of water supply provider for this site:

Forsyth County Department of Water & Sewer

What is the estimated water supply demand to be generated by the project, measured in Millions of Gallons Per Day (MGD)?	2.07	
Is sufficient water supply capacity available to serve the proposed project?	(not selected) Yes No	
If no, describe any plans to e	expand the existing water supply capacity:	
Is a water line extension required to serve this project?	○(not selected) Yes No	
If yes, how much additional	line (in miles) will be required?	
	Wastewater Disposal	
Name of wastewater treatment provider for this site:	Forsyth County Department of Water & Sewer	
What is the estimated sewage flow to be generated by the project, measured in Millions of Gallons Per Day (MGD)?	1.39	
Is sufficient wastewater treatment capacity available to serve this proposed project?	O(not selected) Yes No	
If no, describe any plans to e	expand existing wastewater treatment capacity:	
Is a sewer line extension required to serve this project?	○(not selected) Yes No	
If yes, how much additional li	ine (in miles) will be required?	
	Land Transportation	
How much traffic volume is expected to be generated by the proposed development, in peak hour vehicle trips per day? (If only an alternative measure of volume is available, please provide.)	47,366 net daily trips, 2,650 AM peak hour trips, 3,176 PM peak hour trips	
Has a traffic study been performed to determine whether or not transportation or access improvements will be needed to serve this project?	○(not selected)®Yes®No	
Are transportation improvements needed to serve this project?	O(not selected) Yes No	
If yes, please describe below	r:Refer to the Traffic Study prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates	
	Solid Waste Disposal	
How much solid waste is the	•	
project expected to generate annually (in tons)?	41,500	
Is sufficient landfill capacity available to serve this proposed project?	(not selected) Yes No	
If no, describe any plans to expand existing landfill capacity:		
Will any hazardous waste be generated by the development?	○(not selected) Yes No	
If yes, please explain:		
Stormwater Management		
What percentage of the site	74%	
is projected to be		

impervious surface once the

proposed development has been constructed? Describe any measures proposed (such as buffers, detention or retention ponds, pervious parking areas) to mitigate the Describe any measures proposed (such as buriers, detention or retention ponds, pervious parking areas) to mitigate in project's impacts on stormwater management: On-site stormwater controls meeting local and state requirements. This may include the combination of several components (pervious paving, infiltration fields, bioretention areas, or other components) providing runoff reduction (if infiltration rates allow), channel protection and overbank flooding protection per the code requirements. Detention shall be provided within wet detention pond strategically located throughout the site and along Ronald Reagan Boulevard. **Environmental Quality** Is the development located within, or likely to affect any of the following: 1. Water supply (not selected) Yes No watersheds? 2. Significant groundwater O(not selected) Yes No recharge areas? 3. Wetlands? (not selected) Yes No 4. Protected mountains? (not selected) Yes No 5. Protected river corridors? (not selected) Yes No 6. Floodplains? (not selected) Yes No (not selected) Yes No 7. Historic resources? 8. Other environmentally (not selected) Yes No sensitive resources? If you answered yes to any question above, describe how the identified resource(s) may be affected:
Wetlands are limited to bed and bank wetlands along the tributary to the north of the project. No impacts to US
Jurisdictional Waters will result from the project. All vicinity streams and associated buffers (local and state) will be field determined and located. No encroachments to the buffer areas are planned. Back to Top

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**DRI Site Map | Contact** 

# THE GATHERING AT SOUTH FORSYTH DRI Forsyth County Natural Resources Department Review Comments

### August 15, 2023

While ARC and the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District have no regulatory or review authority over this project, the Natural Resources Group has identified County and State regulations that could apply to this property. Other regulations may also apply that we have not identified.

#### Water Supply Watershed Protection

The proposed project property is located entirely within the Big Creek Water Supply Watershed, which is a small (less than 100 square mile) public water supply watershed as defined by the Georgia DNR Part 5 Minimum Planning Criteria. It is a public water supply source for the City of Roswell. The proposed project is more than seven miles upstream of the City of Roswell Intake.

Under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, all development in a public water supply watershed is subject to the DNR Water Supply Watershed Minimum Criteria (Chapter 391-3-16-.01, Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds) unless alternate criteria are developed and adopted by the jurisdiction and then approved by Georgia EPD and DCA. Alternate criteria were developed for this watershed through the Big Creek Watershed Study which was completed in December 2000 and had participation from all jurisdictions then existing in the watershed, including Forsyth County. The Study included proposed alternative protection measures to the DNR Part 5 Water Supply Watershed Criteria, including structural and non-structural control measures. It is our understanding that Forsyth County has adopted protection requirements consistent with those proposed in the Study and that DCA has accepted those requirements in lieu of the Part 5 minimum criteria. This project will need to conform to Forsyth County's water supply watershed requirements.

The project site is also in the Chattahoochee Corridor watershed, but it is not within the Chattahoochee River Corridor. The Chattahoochee River watershed is a large water supply watershed (over 100 square miles), as defined under the Part 5 Criteria. In large water supply watersheds without a water supply reservoir, the only applicable Part 5 requirements are restrictions on hazardous waste handling, storage and disposal within seven miles upstream of a public water supply intake. This property is more than seven miles upstream of any public water supply intake.

#### **Stream Buffer Protection**

The USGS coverage for the project area shows no blue line streams on the project property. The project site plan shows one stream running north-south along the northeastern and eastern edges of the property. The site plan shows and identifies the Forsyth County 50-foot buffer and 75-foot impervious setback and the 25-foot State Erosion and Sedimentation Act buffer on the entire length of the stream on the property. No intrusions into the buffers are shown, but corners of three structures, a parking structure, an apartment building and the proposed fire/police substation, all come to the edge of the 75-foot setback. Any intrusion into the setback or buffers may require variances. Any other streams on the property may also be subject to the Forsyth County Stream Buffer Ordinance and the 25-foot State Erosion and Sedimentation Act buffer. Any unmapped waters of the state on the property will also be subject to the 25-foot State Erosion and Sedimentation Act buffer.

#### **Storm Water/Water Quality**

The project should adequately address the impacts of the proposed development on stormwater runoff and downstream water quality.

During the planning phase, the stormwater management system (system) should meet the requirements of the local jurisdiction's post-construction (or post-development) stormwater management ordinance. The system should be designed to prevent increased flood damage, streambank channel erosion, habitat degradation and water quality degradation, and enhance and promote the public health, safety and general welfare. The system design should also be in accordance with the applicable sections of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (<a href="www.georgiastormwater.com">www.georgiastormwater.com</a>) such as design standards, calculations, formulas, and methods. Where possible, the project should use stormwater better site design practices included in the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual, Volume 2, Section 2.3.

During construction, the project should conform to the relevant state and federal erosion and sedimentation control requirements.



### Comments on 2023 The Gathering at South Forsyth DRI 3967

**To:** Donald Shockey, ARC, <u>dshockey@atlantaregional.org</u>

From: Jon Antoine, Executive Director, South Forsyth Community Improvement

District, administrator@soforsythcid.com

Date: August 8, 2023

**Subject:** 2023 The Gathering At South Forsyth DRI 3967 - Preliminary Report and

Comments Request

#### Comments:

The South Forsyth Community Improvement District has reviewed the 2023 The Gathering At South Forsyth DRI 3967 - Preliminary Report. A development of this scale will have substantial effects within and beyond the CID area and presents an exciting opportunity for South Forsyth.

The SFCID recently completed the <u>South Forsyth Community Improvement District</u> <u>Transportation Master Plan</u> (2022), which contains some content and recommendations relevant to the Gathering at South Forsyth, as follows:

- 1. **Vision and Goals** The CID's Transportation Master Plan includes the following vision and goals for the CID area.
  - a. Vision: The South Forsyth Community Improvement District will be a beautiful, pedestrian-friendly area with a sense of place.
  - b. Goals:
    - i. Enhance aesthetics
    - ii. Install a branding palette
    - iii. Provide better connectivity
    - iv. Relieve congestion
- 2. **District Branding** The CID's plan recommends a timeless, sophisticated, and attractive brand consistent with Forsyth County's Forsyth character area and depicted on pages 12-13 of the plan. Attached is the CID's branding guide for reference.
- 3. Landscaping and Beautification The CID's plan also recommends landscaping and beautification improvements along McGinnis Ferry Road, which is not immediately along the DRI site but just on the other side of the Union Hill Road at Ronald Reagan Boulevard/McGinnis Ferry intersection. Therefore, the CID recommends promoting a similar streetscaping style between the DRI site and the CID's recommended branding for landscaping and beautification. Attached is a copy of our corridor streetscaping plans for reference.



- 4. **Transit** The CID's plan considered the potential for transit to accommodate and support future growth and job access in the area. Specifically, the plan recommends a Mobility on Demand Feasibility Study to determine the service area and operating model for an on-demand transit service. With the size of this development, consideration of future transit service may become more pressing to promote access and reduce future vehicular traffic congestion.
- 5. **SR 400 at Union Hill Bridge Fencing Replacement** The CID's plan recommends replacing the fencing on the SR 400 at Union Hill bridge to provide a more aesthetically pleasing appearance and contribute to a sense of place within the CID. This improvement is close to the DRI location and would improve the appearance of the development location as seen from SR 400 and Union Hill Road.
- 6. **Big Creek Greenway Extension** The CID's plan recommends a Big Creek Greenway Extension as an off-road bicycle and pedestrian path facility (project 13, page 11 of the plan). The DRI site plan shows this segment of the Big Creek Greenway running directly adjacent to Ronald Reagan Boulevard on the existing sidewalk. This is not necessarily at odds with the CID's plan since there is already a sidewalk in that location, but the CID's plan also recommends a segment of the trail to the south, separated from the roadway.

The SFCID recommends that the DRI applicant review the CID's plan and coordinate with the CID regarding improvements along Ronald Reagan Boulevard, Union Hill Road, and GA 400. For example, while not specifically called out in the CID's plan, streetscaping improvements such as landscaping, streetlights, benches, and sidewalk improvements along Ronald Reagan Boulevard would enhance the appearance of this segment of the roadway, including the pedestrian experience, and would provide consistency with the nearby Halcyon development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for consideration of these suggestions.



### Comments on 2023 The Gathering at South Forsyth DRI 3967

**To:** Donald Shockey, ARC, <u>dshockey@atlantaregional.org</u>

From: Jon Antoine, Executive Director, South Forsyth Community Improvement

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- 2. **District Branding** The CID's plan recommends a timeless, sophisticated, and attractive brand consistent with Forsyth County's Forsyth character area and depicted on pages 12-13 of the plan. Attached is the CID's branding guide for reference.
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- 4. **Transit** The CID's plan considered the potential for transit to accommodate and support future growth and job access in the area. Specifically, the plan recommends a Mobility on Demand Feasibility Study to determine the service area and operating model for an on-demand transit service. With the size of this development, consideration of future transit service may become more pressing to promote access and reduce future vehicular traffic congestion.
- 5. **SR 400 at Union Hill Bridge Fencing Replacement** The CID's plan recommends replacing the fencing on the SR 400 at Union Hill bridge to provide a more aesthetically pleasing appearance and contribute to a sense of place within the CID. This improvement is close to the DRI location and would improve the appearance of the development location as seen from SR 400 and Union Hill Road.
- 6. **Big Creek Greenway Extension** The CID's plan recommends a Big Creek Greenway Extension as an off-road bicycle and pedestrian path facility (project 13, page 11 of the plan). The DRI site plan shows this segment of the Big Creek Greenway running directly adjacent to Ronald Reagan Boulevard on the existing sidewalk. This is not necessarily at odds with the CID's plan since there is already a sidewalk in that location, but the CID's plan also recommends a segment of the trail to the south, separated from the roadway.

The SFCID recommends that the DRI applicant review the CID's plan and coordinate with the CID regarding improvements along Ronald Reagan Boulevard, Union Hill Road, and GA 400. For example, while not specifically called out in the CID's plan, streetscaping improvements such as landscaping, streetlights, benches, and sidewalk improvements along Ronald Reagan Boulevard would enhance the appearance of this segment of the roadway, including the pedestrian experience, and would provide consistency with the nearby Halcyon development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for consideration of these suggestions.



regional impact + local relevance

### **Development of Regional Impact**

### **Assessment of Consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan**

#### **DRI INFORMATION**

DRI Number #3967

**DRI Title** The Gathering at South Forsyth

**County** Fulton County

City (if applicable) N/A

Address / Location North of Ronald Reagan Boulevard, south of SR 400, and east of Union Hill Road

**Proposed Development Type:** 

A DRI review of a proposal to build a mixed-use development with 2,400 residential units, 500 hotel rooms, 1,000,000 SF of office space, 600,000 SF of retail, a 20,000-seat arena, a 90,000 SF community center/ice rink and a 15,000 SF fire station on an 84-acre site at the intersection of Union Hill Road and Georgia 400 in Forsyth

County.

**Build Out: 2033** 

Review Process EXPEDITED

NON-EXPEDITED

#### **REVIEW INFORMATION**

**Prepared by** ARC Transportation Access and Mobility Division

Staff Lead Reginald James

**Copied** Marquitrice Mangham

Date August 9, 2023

#### **TRAFFIC STUDY**

Prepared by Kimley-Horn

**Date** July 3, 2023

### REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROJECTS

01.	Did the traffic analysis incorporate all projects contained in the current version of the fiscally
	constrained RTP which are within the study area or along major transportation corridors connecting the study area with adjacent jurisdictions?
	XES (provide the regional plan referenced and the page number of the traffic study where relevant projects are identified)
A	A list of programmed and planned projects are found on pages 21-22 in the traffic study.
	☐ NO (provide comments below)
(	Click here to provide comments.
REGIO	NAL NETWORKS
02.	Will the development site be directly served by any roadways identified as Regional Thoroughfares?
	A Regional Thoroughfare is a major transportation corridor that serves multiple ways of traveling, including walking, bicycling, driving, and riding transit. It connects people and goods to important places in metropolitan Atlanta. A Regional Thoroughfare's operations should be managed through application of special traffic control strategies and suitable land development guidelines in order to maintain travel efficiency, reliability, and safety for all users. In light of the special function that Regional Thoroughfares serve in supporting cross-regional and interjurisdictional mobility and access, the network receives priority consideration for infrastructure investment in the Metro Atlanta region. Any access points between the development and a Regional Thoroughfare, combined with the development's on-site circulation patterns, must be designed with the goal of preserving the highest possible level of capacity and safety for all users of the roadway.
	⊠ NO
	YES (identify the roadways and existing/proposed access points)
	No site driveway provides access via a road identified as a Regional Thoroughfare.

#### 03. Will the development site be directly served by any roadways identified as Regional Truck Routes?

A Regional Truck Route is a freeway, state route or other roadway which serves as a critical link for the movement of goods to, from and within the Region by connecting airports, intermodal/multimodal facilities, distribution and warehousing centers and manufacturing clusters with the rest of the state and nation. These facilities often serve a key mobility and access function for other users as well, including drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users. A Regional Truck Route's operations should be managed through application of special traffic control strategies and suitable land development guidelines in order to maintain travel efficiency, reliability, and safety for all users. In light of the special function that Regional Truck Routes serve in supporting cross-regional and interjurisdictional mobility and access, the network receives priority consideration for infrastructure investment in the Metro Atlanta region. Any access points between the development and a Regional Truck Route, combined with the development's on-site circulation patterns, must be designed with the goal of preserving the highest possible level of capacity and safety for all users of the roadway.

X	NO
	YES (identify the roadways and existing/proposed access points)
	No site driveway provides access via a road identified as a Regional Truck Route.

# 04. If the development site is within one mile of an existing rail service, provide information on accessibility conditions.

Access between major developments and transit services provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce congestion. If a transit service is available nearby, but walking or bicycling between the development site and the nearest station is a challenge, the applicable local government(s) is encouraged to make the route a funding priority for future walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements.

$\boxtimes$	NOT APPLICABLE (nearest station more than one mile away)	
	RAIL SERVICE WITHIN ONE MILE (provide additional information below)	
	Operator / Rail Line	
	Nearest Station	Click here to enter name of operator and rail line
	Distance*	☐ Within or adjacent to the development site (0.10 mile or less)
		0.10 to 0.50 mile
		0.50 to 1.00 mile
	Walking Access*	Sidewalks and crosswalks provide sufficient connectivity

	Sidewalk and crosswalk network is incomplete
	Not applicable (accessing the site by walking is not consistent with the type of development proposed)
	Click here to provide comments.
Bicycling Access*	Dedicated paths, lanes or cycle tracks provide sufficient connectivity
	☐ Low volume and/or low speed streets provide connectivity
	☐ Route follows high volume and/or high speed streets
	Not applicable (accessing the site by bicycling is not consistent with the type of development proposed)
Transit Connectivity	Fixed route transit agency bus service available to rail station
	Private shuttle or circulator available to rail station
	No services available to rail station
	Not applicable (accessing the site by transit is not consistent with the type of development proposed)
	Click here to provide comments.

<sup>\*</sup> Following the most direct feasible walking or bicycling route to the nearest point on the development site

05. If there is currently no rail transit service within one mile of the development site, is nearby rail service planned in the fiscally constrained RTP?

Access between major developments and transit services provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce traffic congestion. If a transit agency operates within the jurisdiction and expansion plans are being considered in the general vicinity of the development site, the agency should give consideration to how the site can be best served during the evaluation of alignments and station locations. Proactive negotiations with the development team and local government(s) are encouraged to determine whether right-of-way within the site should be identified and protected for potential future service. If direct service to the site is not feasible or cost effective, the transit agency and local government(s) are encouraged to ensure good walking and bicycling access accessibility is provided between the development and the future rail line. These improvements should be considered fundamental components of the overall transit expansion project, with improvements completed concurrent with or prior to the transit service being brought online.

	NOT APPLICABLE (rail service already exists)
	NOT APPLICABLE (accessing the site by transit is not consistent with the type of development proposed)
$\boxtimes$	NO (no plans exist to provide rail service in the general vicinity)
	YES (provide additional information on the timeframe of the expansion project below)
	CST planned within TIP period
	CST planned within first portion of long range period
	CST planned near end of plan horizon

Click here to provide comments.

06. If the development site is within one mile of fixed route bus services (including any privately operated shuttles or circulators open to the general public), provide information on walking and bicycling accessibility conditions.

Access between major developments and transit services provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce congestion. If a transit service is available nearby, but walking or bicycling between the development site and the nearest station is a challenge, the applicable local government(s) is encouraged to make the connection a funding priority for future walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements.

	NOT APPLICABLE (nearest bus, shuttle or circulator stop more than one mile away)  SERVICE WITHIN ONE MILE (provide additional information below)		
	Operator(s)	MARTA	
	Bus Route(s)	143	
	Distance*	Within or adjacent to the development site (0.10 mile or less)	
		☑ 0.10 to 0.50 mile	
		0.50 to 1.00 mile	
	Walking Access*	Sidewalks and crosswalks provide sufficient connectivity	
		Sidewalk and crosswalk network is incomplete	
		Not applicable (accessing the site by walking is not consistent with the type of development proposed)	
		Gaps in the pedestrian network along McGinnis Ferry Road are planned to be closed with the construction of the programmed roadway projects per the traffic study, pg. 15.	
	Bicycling Access*	Dedicated paths, lanes or cycle tracks provide sufficient connectivity	
		Low volume and/or low speed streets provide sufficient connectivity	
		Route uses high volume and/or high speed streets	
		Not applicable (accessing the site by bicycling is not consistent with the type of development proposed)	

07.	Does a transit agency which provides rail and/or fixed route bus service operate anywhere within
	the jurisdiction in which the development site is located?

Access between major developments and transit services provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce traffic congestion. If a transit agency operates within the jurisdiction and a comprehensive operations plan update is undertaken, the agency should give consideration to serving the site during the evaluation of future routes, bus stops and transfer facilities. If the nature of the development is amenable to access by transit, walking or bicycling, but direct service to the site is not feasible or cost effective, the transit agency and local government(s) should ensure good walking and bicycling access accessibility is provided between the development and any routes within a one mile radius. The applicable local government(s) is encouraged to make these connections a funding priority for future walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements.

	NO
	YES
MAI	RTA

08. If the development site is within one mile of an existing multi-use path or trail, provide information on accessibility conditions.

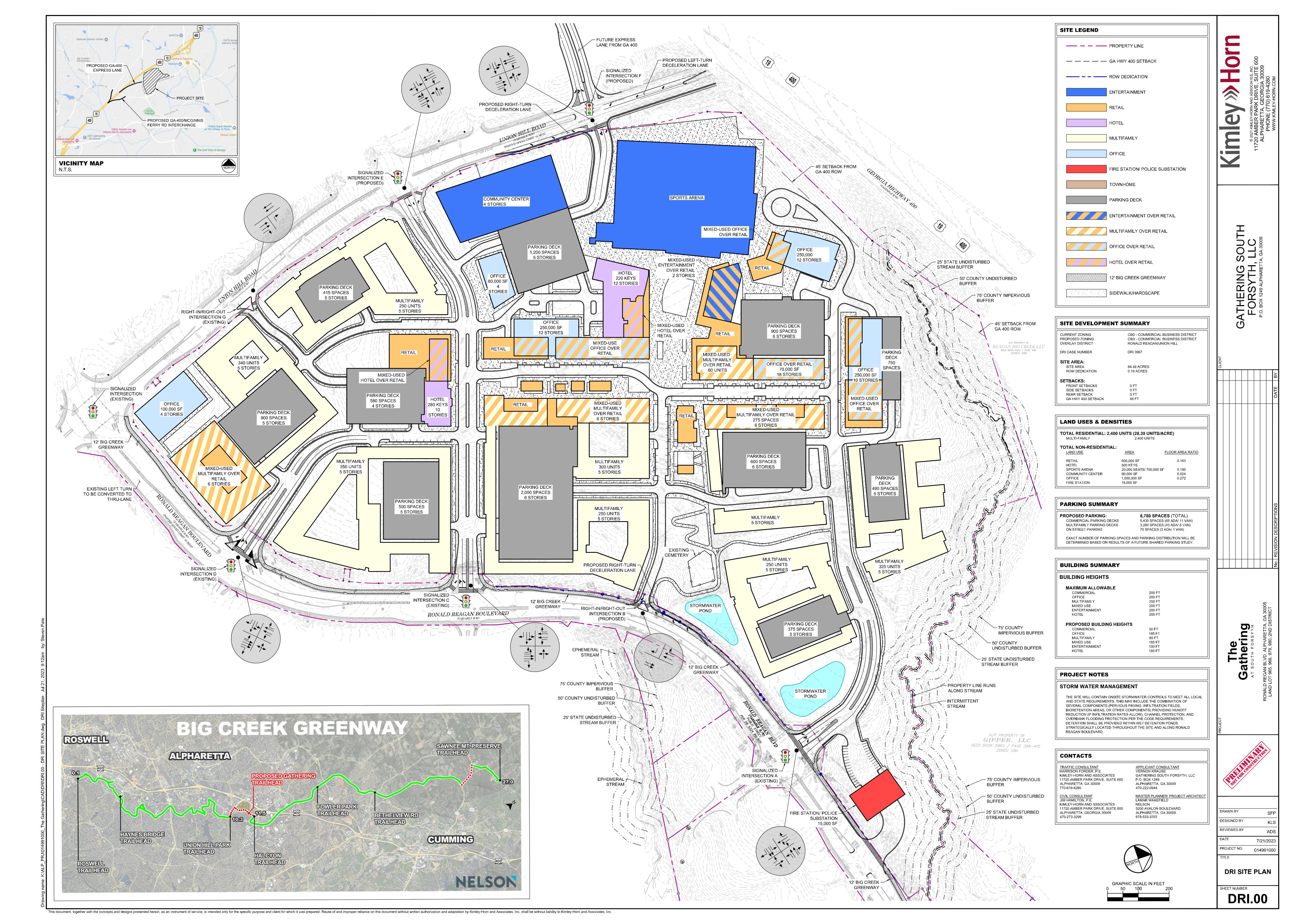
Access between major developments and walking/bicycling facilities provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce traffic congestion. If connectivity with a regionally significant path or trail is available nearby, but walking or bicycling between the development site and those facilities is a challenge, the applicable local government(s) is encouraged to make the route a funding priority for future walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements.

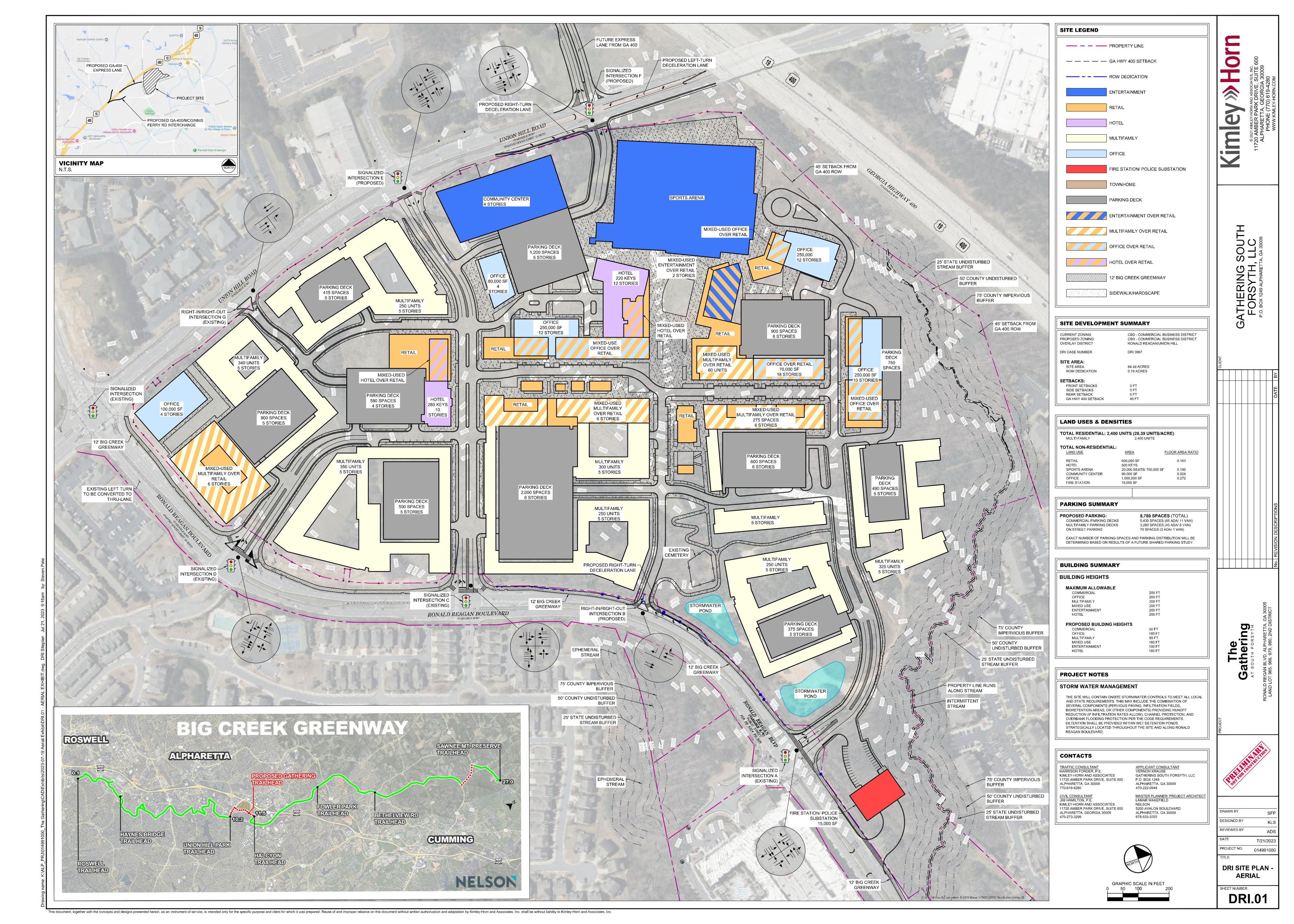
	NOT APPLICABLE (nearest path or trail more than one mile away)		
$\boxtimes$	YES (provide additional information below)		
	Name of facility	Big Creek Greenway	
	Distance	☐ Within or adjacent to development site (0.10 mile or less)	
		0.50 to 1.00 mile	
	Walking Access*	Sidewalks and crosswalks provide connectivity	
		Sidewalk and crosswalk network is incomplete	
		Not applicable (accessing the site by walking is not consistent with the type of development proposed)	
	Bicycling Access*	Dedicated lanes or cycle tracks provide connectivity	
		Low volume and/or low speed streets provide connectivity	

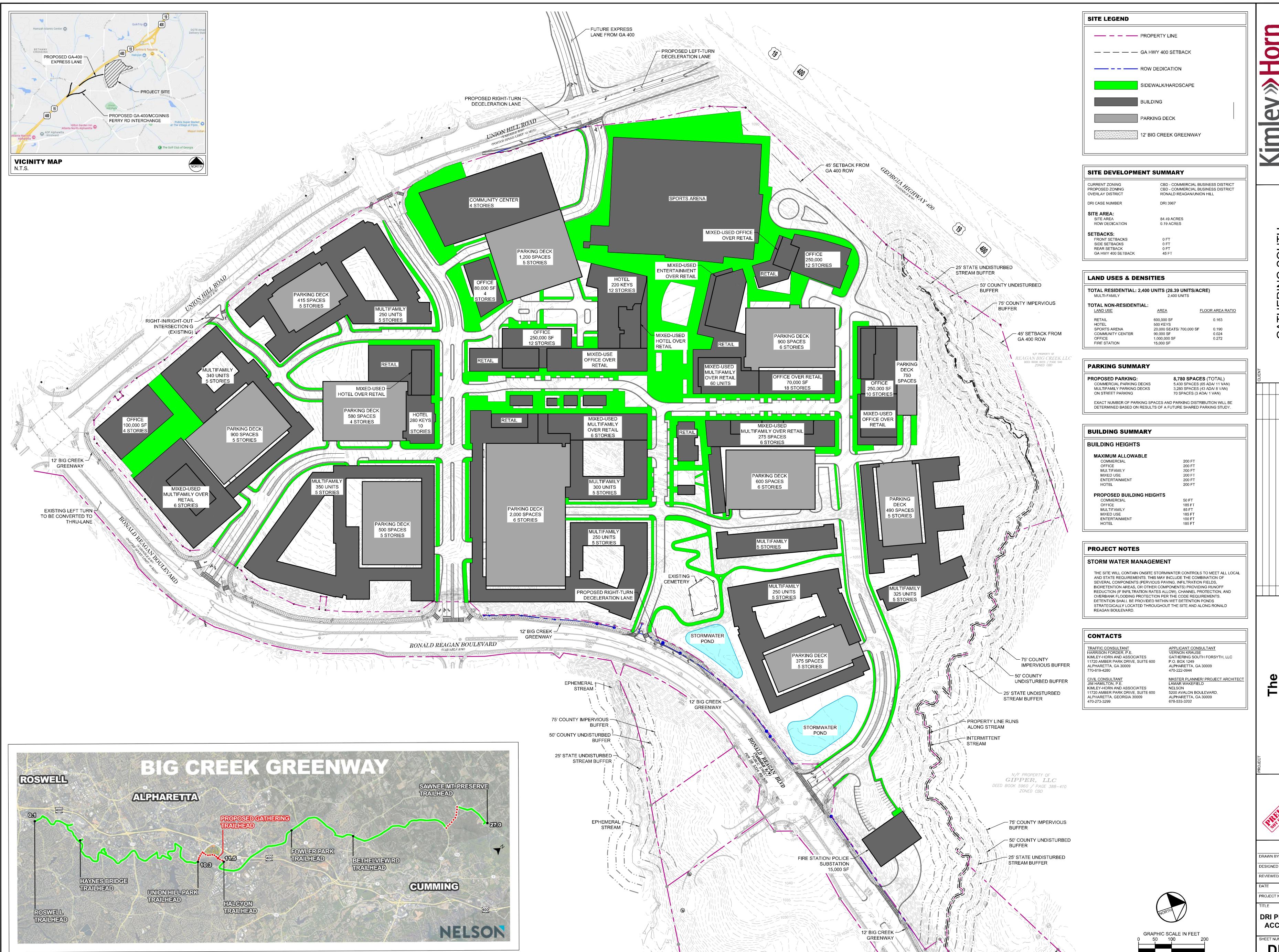
	Route uses high volume and/or high speed streets
	Not applicable (accessing the site by bicycling is not consistent with the type of development proposed
,	Following the most direct feasible walking or bicycling route to the nearest point on the development site
OTHER TRA	NSPORTATION DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS
	s the site plan provide for the construction of publicly accessible local road or drive aisle sections with adjacent parcels?
art	e ability for drivers and bus routes to move between developments without using the adjacent erial or collector roadway networks can save time and reduce congestion. Such opportunities ould be considered and proactively incorporated into development site plans whenever possible.
	YES (connections to adjacent parcels are planned as part of the development)
	YES (stub outs will make future connections possible when adjacent parcels redevelop)
	NO (the site plan precludes future connections with adjacent parcels when they redevelop)
	OTHER ( Please explain)
	the site plan enable pedestrians and bicyclists to move between destinations within the elopment site safely and conveniently?
rel pla de	e ability for walkers and bicyclists to move within the site safely and conveniently reduces iance on vehicular trips, which has congestion reduction and health benefits. Development site ans should incorporate well designed and direct sidewalk connections between all key stinations. To the extent practical, bicycle lanes or multiuse paths are encouraged for large reage sites and where high volumes of bicyclists and pedestrians are possible.
	YES (sidewalks provided on all key walking routes and both sides of roads whenever practical and bicyclists should have no major issues navigating the street network)
	PARTIAL (some walking and bicycling facilities are provided, but connections are not comprehensive and/or direct)
	NO (walking and bicycling facilities within the site are limited or nonexistent)
	NOT APPLICABLE (the nature of the development does not lend itself to internal walking and bicycling trips)
	OTHER ( Please explain)

	es the site plan provide the ability to construct publicly accessible bicycling and walking nections with adjacent parcels which may be redeveloped in the future?
re op	te ability for walkers and bicyclists to move between developments safely and conveniently duces reliance on vehicular trips, which has congestion reduction and health benefits. Such apportunities should be considered and proactively incorporated into development site plans thenever possible.
	YES (connections to adjacent parcels are planned as part of the development)
	YES (stub outs will make future connections possible when adjacent parcels redevelop)
	NO (the development site plan does not enable walking or bicycling to/from adjacent parcels)
	NO (the site plan precludes future connections with adjacent parcels when they redevelop)
	NOT APPLICABLE (adjacent parcels are not likely to develop or redevelop in the near future)
	NOT APPLICABLE (the nature of the development or adjacent parcels does not lend itself to interparcel walking and bicycling trips)
Th of ar se	de network?  The ability for delivery and service vehicles to efficiently enter and exit major developments is sten key to their economic success. So is the ability of visitors and customers being able to move ound safely and pleasantly within the site. To the extent practical, truck movements should be gregated by minimizing the number of conflict points with publicly accessible internal roadways, dewalks, paths and other facilities.
	YES (truck routes to serve destinations within the site are clearly delineated, provide ample space for queuing and turning around, and are separated from other users to the extent practical)
	PARTIAL (while one or more truck routes are also used by motorists and/or interface with primary walking and bicycling routes, the site plan mitigates the potential for conflict adequately)
	NO (one or more truck routes serving the site conflict directly with routes likely to be used heavily by pedestrians, bicyclists and/or motorists)
	NOT APPLICABLE (the nature of the development will not generate a wide variety of users and/or very low truck volumes, so the potential for conflict is negligible)
<u>OMME</u>	NDATIONS
	the transportation network recommendations outlined in the traffic study appear to be feasible n a constructability standpoint?
	UNKNOWN (additional study is necessary)

	YES (based on information made available through the review process; does not represent a thorough engineering / financial analysis)
	NO (see comments below)
	Click here to enter text.
14.	Is ARC aware of any issues with the development proposal which may result in it being opposed by one or more local governments, agencies or stakeholder groups?
	NO (based on information shared with ARC staff prior to or during the review process; does not reflect the outcome of an extensive stakeholder engagement process)
	YES (see comments below)
	Click here to enter text.
15.	ARC offers the following additional comments for consideration by the development team and/or the applicable local government(s):
	None at this time.







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NO. REVISION DESCRIPTIONS

Gathering
AT SOUTH FORSYTH

RIJI JANSTRUTTON

DRAWN BY
DESIGNED BY
KLS
REVIEWED BY
ADS
DATE
7/21/2023
PROJECT NO. 014991000
TITLE
DRI PEDESTRIAN

ACCESS PLAN

SHEET NUMBER

DRI 02

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