

Hall County P&Z

Received

December 5, 2023



DLBP LLC
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Atlanta
GA 30339
United States

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Katie Greenway
Principal Planner
Hall County, GA
2875 Browns Bridge Road
Gainesville, GA 30504

December 5, 2023

Dear Ms. Greenway

Thank you so very much for all of the assistance with our rezoning request for 4363 Sardis Road. As part of following up on your email of November 21, 2023, DLBP is pleased to share the following updates:

1. Elevations: We have included photo elevations which show homes in a different County but with homes of similar design and facades. Please note, Hall County requirements for setbacks, etc. will be adhered to.
2. Typical lot layouts are shown, as prepared by DGM Land Planners. There are four typical lot layouts, due to varying sizes.
3. The 50' buffer is shown on the latest site-plan to be completely outside of the lots.
4. The site-plan has been amended, to show homes within the setbacks.
5. The 75' stream buffer is shown to comply with open space requirements.
6. The cluster mailbox is shown to be outside of the 50' buffer.
7. There is now one entrance sign, which is shown on the site-plan.
8. The open space amount is now 32.8%, comprising 13.7 acres, and exceeds the 30% PRD requirement.
9. The pathways are to be paved.
10. The traffic study is completed and part of the submittal.
11. The campaign contribution form has been submitted.
12. The applicant has come to an annexation agreement of the site with the City of Gainesville for public sanitary sewer from The City of Gainesville Water and Sewer Department, via force main from Walnut Grove Way. The sewer extension will be paid for by the developer, and then dedicated to the City of Gainesville

Water and Sewer Department. A force main is necessary, due to topographic changes from the low point (1,200') of the development to the high point (1,300') near Sardis, Price, and Short Roads. The force main, by its nature, will prevent any other tie-ins, and thus, would not open other parcels for development, nor public sewer access, but will only serve the development at 4363 Sardis Road.

Yours sincerely,

Artagus Newell
Director of Planning

Devynn Glanz, Dominic Lawson.

DLBP LLC is a Delaware limited liability company
Registered for business in the State of Georgia.

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PLANNING STATEMENT

Rezoning Plat
4363 Sardis Road
Hall County, Georgia Land Lot 75, 10th District, 20th Section

prepared for:
Grace of Georgia Developments, LLC
78 Lindbergh Drive NE, Unit 100
Atlanta, Georgia 30305

DGM
LAND PLANNING
CONSULTANTS, INC.
1635 Old Hwy 41
SUITE 112-314
KENNESAW, GA 30152
770-514-9006
DGMLPC.COM

Site Data
Total Site Area: 41.71 AC
Present Zoning: AR-III
Proposed Zoning: PRD
Total Lots Shown: 125
Overall Density: 2.99 UN/AC
Open Space Provided: 13.7 AC (32.8% of total site area)
Minimum Lot Size: 4,848 SF *(Lot 121)
Average Lot Size: 7,019 SF
Minimum Lot Width Shown: 50'
Building Setbacks:
front: 25'
side: 5'
rear: 20'

Lot Size Breakdown:	
Qty:	Size:
3	4000-5000 SF
44	5000- 6000 SF
16	6000-7000 SF
14	7000-8000 SF
48	8000+ SF

Scale: 1" = 100'
November 30, 2023

Scale: 1" = 40'
Typical Lot

General Notes:
1. Boundary and topography from Hall County GIS.
2. According to Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) #1319C0175G, April 4, 2018, no portion of this site contains floodplain.
3. No cemeteries are known to exist on site.
4. Streams and/or wetlands are to be determined.
5. No archeological or architectural landmarks are known to exist on site.
6. No utility easements exist on site.
7. Stormwater management and water quality structures are conceptual in nature and will be revised based on hydrologic study.

Project: 4363 SARDIS ROAD, GAINESVILLE, GA 30506

Date: DECEMBER 05, 2023

Client: GRACE OF GEORGIA DEVELOPMENTS LLC

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CONTENTS

A. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	3
B. INTRODUCTION	5
C. THE SITE	6
Surrounding Area	7
Schools	8
Emergency Services	8
Utilities	9
D. THE PROPOSAL	9
Rationale	10
E. PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT	13
Community Engagement	13
F. ANALYSIS	16
Compatibility with Hall 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan	17
Traffic Impact Assessments	17
Stormwater	18

B. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. This Planning Statement is the Summary of Intent for the rezoning application to the Hall County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners (the “Council” or the “Commission”) regarding a proposal for a Planned Residential Development at 4363 Sardis Road, Gainesville, GA 30506 (the “Site” or “Property”), with associated access, parking, landscaping, and site infrastructure, for which the applicant is seeking a rezoning to Planned Residential Development (PRD). The detailed application was developed with consideration of the Hall County 2040 and 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map, and feedback from the surrounding Hall County and Gainesville community.
2. Sardis Park is a proposed planned residential development community that will bring full-time residents, families and communities together in a location that allows them to escape the hustle and bustle of the city life, while still enjoying Hall County’s excellent schools, healthcare infrastructure, and access to Lake Lanier and the nearby north Georgia Mountains.
3. The proposed community directly supports a growing need for housing among Hall County’s growing population, which grew by approximately 84% between 2010 and 2022¹ with a 41% projected growth rate by 2050².
4. Within the Hall County market, home prices appreciated 21.1% in 2022, with low unemployment and high job growth fueling demand for housing. This has put pressure for new development on the county and its communities of Braselton, Buford, Flowery Branch, Gainesville, Gillsville, Lula, Oakwood, and Clermont. As Hall County’s population grows, housing stock and choice must also expand to meet increased demand.
5. The proposal consists of 125 single-family homes for sale at an average price point of \$465,000. City of Gainesville sewer will be extended as a force main to the site from Walnut Grove Way.

¹ [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

² Atlanta Regional Commission

6. On November 06, 2023, a community engagement event was held where 98 letters were sent out to residents within 1,000 feet of the property. Eight people, comprising representatives from adjacent neighborhoods, attended a community engagement event. Two emails and one phone call were received about the proposal. The community attendees expressed interest in the proposal, understanding the potential benefits the development could bring to their community.
7. The proposal will be designed and operated through a strategic partnership of Grace of Georgia Developments LLC (the “applicant”) and a development firm. The primary applicant, Grace of Georgia Developments LLC, is an Atlanta-based company with passion towards delivering skillfully planned and beautiful developments that integrate seamlessly within existing communities.
8. The proposal for PRD is designed to Grace of Georgia Developments LLC’s highest standards to establish a high-quality, attractive, and close-knit environment and community for residents. Sardis Park will include single-family detached residences with private yards situated within a community development that features a pond, walking trail, and parks.
9. The housing materials include cedar shake, wood, brick, stone, and other materials that comply with Hall County’s regulations. Vinyl will not be used.
10. This rezoning application includes considerations of the proposed development concept and its compatibility with existing planning, zoning, and land use objectives as well as its estimated impact on the surrounding community and services, traffic, landscaping and ecology, and stormwater management.

INTRODUCTION

11. This Planning Statement is the Summary of Intent for the rezoning application of 4363 Sardis Road, Gainesville, GA 30506, from single-family agricultural-residential (AR-III) to Planned Residential Development (PRD) zoning.
12. The applicant wishes to deliver a nature-oriented single-family detached subdivision that provides a sense of place away from the busy city centers.
13. The partially wooded Site features a pond and is located approximately eight miles northwest of downtown Gainesville with Lake Lanier and the north Georgia mountains close by. These existing features are indicated on the site plan (figure 1).
14. The proposed PRD community will include 125 units with a pond as a water feature, porous paved woodland walking trail that compliments the water feature, and parks.
15. The master plan will encourage nature-oriented design with 32.8% open space at 13.7 acres and a density of 2.99 units per acre. All homes will include garages and a private yard.

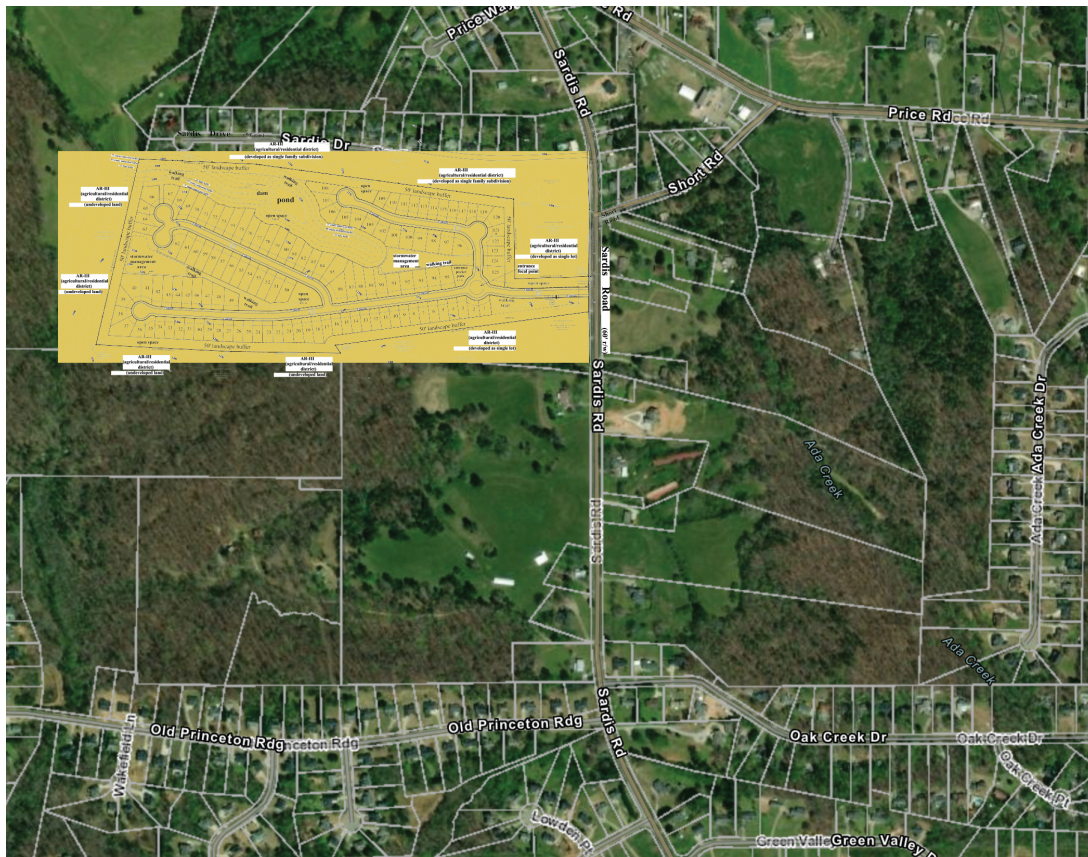


Figure 1: Sardis Park Site Aerial Plan

- c. The Site is currently zoned for agricultural-residential district (AR-III, single-detached dwellings, single-family manufactured homes, industrialized dwelling units, Class A), which would allow at least a 30,000 square feet lot size and one unit per acre with up to 41 homes without any rezoning approval being required.
- d. The Site falls within the “lake area residential” future development guide category.
- e. The Site is currently accessed directly via Sardis Road, which is a “major collector” roadway.
- f. A small approximately half acre pond is located in the northwest portion of the parcel.



Figure 3: Approximately half acre pond

- g. The applicant will comply with all county requirements as stated in the municipal code.

Surrounding Area

17. The surrounding area is generally residential in character and semi-rural in nature. Less than two miles away, the new Treesort “resort-style” multifamily community is in pre-leasing. To the north and east there are single-family detached residential properties within the Sardis Heights neighborhood, which is classified as R3-Residential and zoned AR-III. To the west there is a 107.34-acre rural tract of land classified as V5-

Conservation Use and zoned AR-III. South adjacent is property classified as R3-Residential, zoned AR-III, single-family detached.



Figure 4: Images of surrounding area and homes

Schools

18. Nearby schools include:

- a. Chestatee High School (1.9 miles from the Site);
 - i. Number of students enrolled in the 2021-2022 school year: 1,266³
- b. Chestatee (Academy) Middle School (2.7 miles from the Site); and
 - i. Number of students enrolled in the 2021-2022 school year: 904⁴
- c. Lanier Elementary School (2.6 miles from the Site)
 - i. Number of students enrolled in the 2021-2022 school year: 478⁵.

Emergency Services

19. The Site is within the Hall County Fire District HCFD 3. The nearest fire department is circa 10 miles from the Site (470 Crescent Dr, Gainesville, GA 30501).
20. The Site is in the Hall County Police Precinct Area. The nearest police station is the Hall County Police Headquarters at 2859 Browns Bridge Rd, Gainesville, GA 30504 (circa 9.9 miles from the Site).

³ [National Center for Education Statistics](#)

⁴ [National Center for Education Statistics](#)

⁵ [National Center for Education Statistics](#)

21. A new medical center is also planned within the vicinity as part of a proposed 200,000 square foot medical park⁶.

Utilities

22. The Site currently has access to water along Sardis Road.

23. There is no existing sewage network to the Site. However, Hall County and the City of Gainesville officials have confirmed the following:

- a. The applicant has come to an annexation agreement of the site with the City of Gainesville for public sanitary sewer from the City of Gainesville Water and Sewer Department, via force main from Walnut Grove Way.
- b. The sewer extension will be paid for by the developer, and then dedicated to the City of Gainesville Water and Sewer Department. A force main is necessary, due to topographic changes from the low point (1,200') of the development to the high point (1,300') near Sardis, Price, and Short Roads. The force main, by its nature, will prevent any other tie-ins, and thus, would not open other parcels for development, nor public sewer access, but will only serve the development at 4363 Sardis Road.

24. The Site also has electricity available.

D. THE PROPOSAL

25. Sardis Park will consist of 125 high-quality, single-family homes. Homes will feature a backyard, patios, and garages.

26. Sardis Park's master plan includes 13.7 acres of green space, comprising roughly 32.8% of the total plan area. This green space will feature walking trails, a pond, and parks. The entire Site will also be laid out to allow for and encourage appreciation of nature and open space, ensuring all residents can enjoy happy, healthy, and active lifestyles.

27. Originally, the planning application and site plan had below 30% open space. The applicant aims to provide a high-quality subdivision that appreciates green space and

⁶ [Northeast Georgia Health System](#)

considers the counties' and community's preferences. Therefore, the applicant increased open space to the 32.8%.

28. In order to reflect the property's woodland style, as well as reduce environmental impact of the development, the master plan features new tree plantings throughout the development and along the trail network.
29. The housing materials will comply with Hall County regulations and may include cedar shake, wood, brick, and stone, among other materials allowable via the Hall County design standards. Vinyl will not be used.
30. The proposal requires rezoning from the existing designation, AR-III, to a PRD designation.
31. Hours of construction operation will be Monday through Saturday from approximately 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM.
32. There is one sign located near the entrance of the property in accordance with Hall County's design standards.
33. Though lighting is not yet finalized, all lighting will comply with Hall County's design standards.

Rationale

34. As the result of extensive site investigation, due diligence, and community discussion, the applicant firmly believes that 4363 Sardis Road is an appropriate location for a single-family residential neighborhood. The due diligence investigation has determined that a rezoning of the property from AR-III to PRD can be beneficial towards the community.
35. After researching various plots of available land, 4363 Sardis Road was identified as the most feasible location due to the high job and population growth in the desired area.
36. Sardis Park responds to a changing and growing market and population dynamic within the broader Atlanta Metropolitan area.

37. The region's familial population is also growing rapidly. In 2016, approximately 72% of Hall County households consisted of families⁷. By 2022 households grew to 82% with the number of familial households totaling just over 50,000⁸.
38. Hall County's growth forecast is approximately 63.5%, bringing the county's total population to over 328,058.

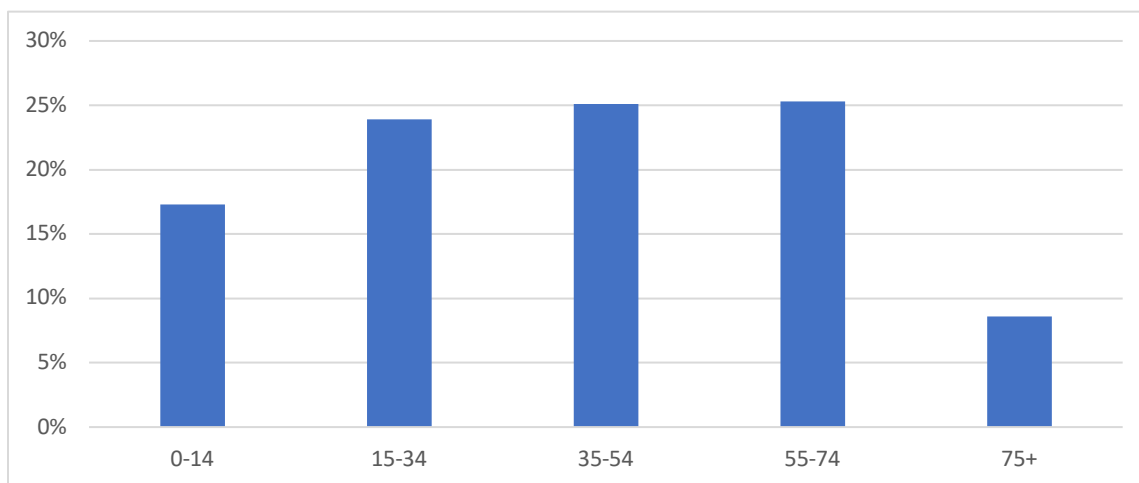


Figure 5: Age Cohort Distribution within 5 Miles of the Site

39. Sardis Park will provide suitable homes for families who wish to live comfortably in a community away from the major cities. This neighborhood adds a sense of place that allows residents to connect and form a community with one another, while providing a vacation-style permanent home.
40. The proposed unit count efficiently utilizes the developable area within the property while preserving 32.8% of the land area for green space, recreation areas, and a trail network. It also promotes a sense of community connection and neighborliness.
41. Sardis Park will activate the Property and provide a peaceful and comforting atmosphere that can be enjoyed by the community.
42. The property is located near retail, dining, services, places of worship, and community facilities, therefore supporting active lifestyles among residents while also enabling them to stay engaged within the community (figure 6).

⁷ [ARC](#)

⁸ [Census Reporter](#)

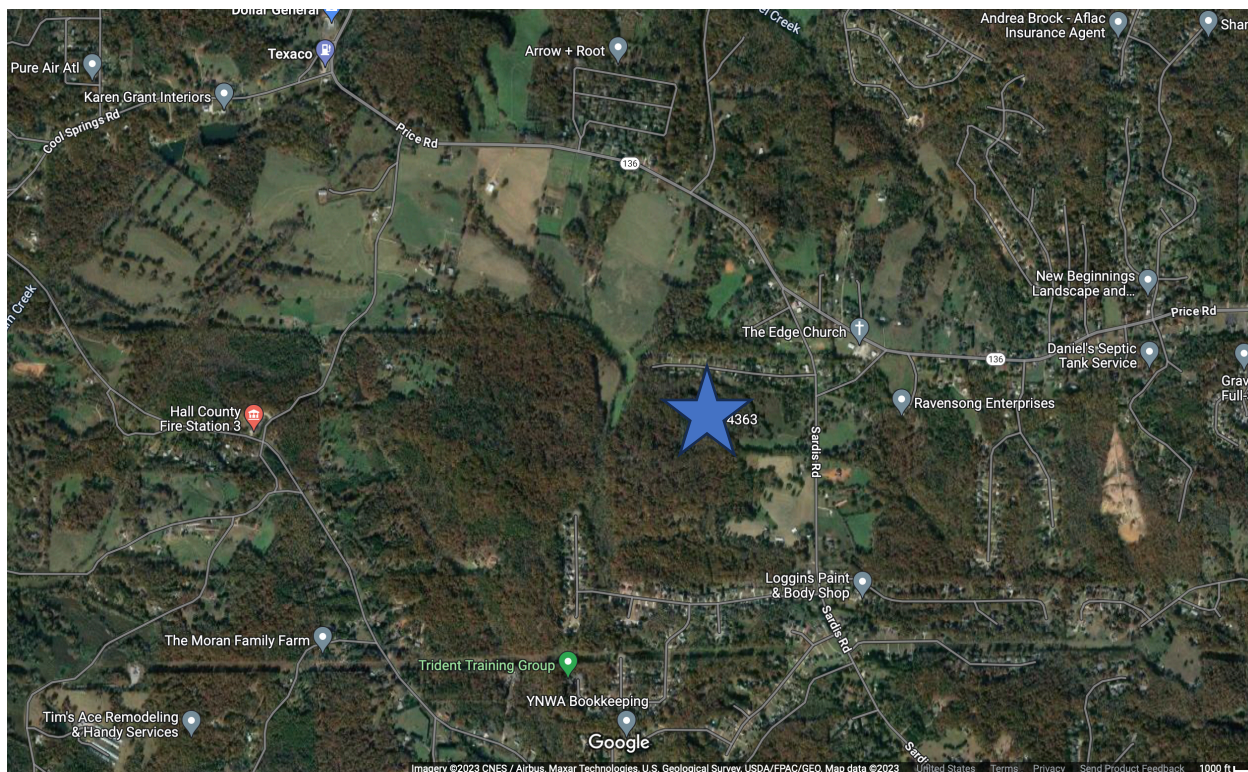


Figure 6: Surrounding Area of 4363 Sardis Rd

43. After much research and analysis, the applicant believes that 125 units is the best option to provide the residents with a high quality of living, sense of place, stormwater and sewer management, and sense of connection within Hall County.
44. As the population of Hall County continues to grow, the demand for housing continues to increase. Therefore, the applicant believes that the conversion of zoning from AR-III to PRD is the most feasible option to balance the need for housing with the need to reduce environmental impact.
45. PRD is allowed in the Residential future land use categories throughout Hall County. The Residential future land use category, which applies to most other single-family residential areas within the county, allows two-units to an acre. The applicant is proposing 2.99 units to an acre, similar to nearby rezoning cases that requested PRD at 3.37 units per acre (3824/30/42 Price Rd, Gainesville, GA 30517). The applicant is able to serve the needs of the Gainesville Hall County community by offering a housing product that cannot be accommodated in nearby future land use designations.
46. The Site follows the overall character and intent of the Residential future land use designation by:

- a. Setting aside open space;
- b. Maintaining and creating connections between natural features (ie: the pond and trees via walking paths);
- c. Including community parks;
- d. And the inclusion and addition of public water and force main sewer.

E. PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

47. An engagement program was initiated to:

- a. Understand the detailed requirements of PRD developers in order to design a development plan that meets those requirements and also to gain evidence of why this Site is suitable and needed for such a development;
- b. Engage with Hall County Officers so that they have knowledge and awareness of the project if they are approached by constituents or other members of the public;
- c. Present the plan to elected representatives; and
- d. Identify and present the plan to local community interest groups via a community engagement event at a time and day when residents are available.

Community Engagement

48. Community engagement is a critical component of any development plan, and the applicant intends to connect with the community at various stages of the project.

Ahead of submitting this application, the applicant engaged the community by:

- a. Sending written notifications on October 30, 2023, to 98 local neighbors within 1,000 square feet of the perimeter of Sardis Park to invite them to a community engagement event;
- b. Hosting a community engagement event on November 06, 2023, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at Murrayville Branch of the Hall County Library system;
- c. Concurrently with this, launching a website on October 31, 2023 (<https://www.dlbp.us/sardis-road>) with information about the proposal and an opportunity to comment on the proposal; and

- d. Analyzing comments and identifying how to amend the plan to incorporate the ideas and reflect the feedback received.
- e. Additional community engagement details are included in the Appendix.



Figures 7, 8, 9,10: Photos of consultation event

Comments at the Community Engagement Open House:

49. Eight people, comprising representatives from all adjacent neighborhoods, attended the community engagement open house on November 06, 2023. Almost every person adjacent to the property and most effected by the proposal appeared at the event. The attendees of the open house showed interest in the proposal. Even though they are reluctant towards growth, they understand the need for housing and the benefits that the proposal could serve for their community. Overall, the community attendees

expressed their interest in the process and wanted to stay involved in the rezoning process.

50. District 4 Commissioner Powell was also invited to the event but was unable to attend.

51. Several attendees adjacent to the site were concerned about their privacy. The applicant took this feedback into consideration and opted to add a contingency requiring that residents in Sardis Park cannot build on the 50-foot buffer zones requirement.

52. Many residents expressed interest and excitement at the prospect of sewer being extended to Sardis Park, near their properties.

Comments submitted through the website by local residents:

Comment	Action
“Not looking forward to this and will do my best to fight it’s completion.” (Submission via our website)	Though the concerned neighbor submitted this response on our website anonymously before the community engagement event, we emphasized that this proposal is for a high-quality community that will benefit both the potential residents of Sardis Park and the surrounding community with the addition of high-quality homes and public sewer access.
“Concerns with walking trail coming off the road; fencing around property? walking trail next to our property” The neighbor is worried about unwanted people accessing the development with the walking trail starting from the road. (Submission via a notecard at the community engagement event)	To address the neighbor’s concerns, we adjusted the site plan so the walking trail will be accessed via the North side of Sardis Road.
“Dedicated buffer instead of on the lots” The neighbor was concerned about the residents expanding onto the 50-foot buffer, since his property is adjacent. (Submission via a notecard at the community engagement event).	The lots are no longer in the 50-foot buffers.

F. ANALYSIS

Compatibility with Hall County 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan

53. This planned residential development aligns with the goals for the 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan. The main considerations for the proposal are:

- The Community Vision
 - Social and Economic Development (SED);
 - Development Patterns (DP); and
 - Resource Conservation (RC).

Development Patterns (DP)

54. DP Goal 2: *“Maintain greenspace in new development.”*

- a. This proposal maintains 32.8% greenspace, while integrating the space as a recreational area for the residents through pocket and entrance parks, a pond feature, and a walking trail.

55. DP Goal 3: *“Protect and enhance established neighborhoods.”*

- a. This proposal makes sure to provide the necessary buffers and sense of place that easily integrates this proposal into the surrounding community.
- b. The proposal will supply high-quality homes with the addition of public sewer, which will enhance the proposed community and surrounding neighborhoods.

56. DP Goal 5.2: *“Discuss and coordinate housing-related needs and initiatives with the City of Gainesville, Habitat for Humanity, and other public and private stakeholders to maximize the use of financial and staff resources.”*

- a. After much due diligence, research on Hall County’s growth and development patterns, and coordination with Hall County planning staff the applicant identified PRD as the most beneficial opportunity for this Site.
- b. The addition of public sewer also provides a positive environmental impact compared to septic, since sewer can withstand excess water from rain, storms, and utility usage.

Resource Conservation (RC)

57. RC Goal I: “Protect water resources and improve water quality.”

- a. This proposal will protect the on-site pond to utilize as an aesthetic water feature.

Traffic Impact Study

58. Kimley Horn was engaged to produce a traffic study for Sardis Park. Kimley Horn conducted traffic counts on October 25, 2023, while school was in session, to analyze the potential traffic impacts of Sardis Park and associated vehicular traffic. The west side of Sardis Road and south of Short Road were studied in detail.

59. A more in-depth and detailed traffic study was conducted on November 10, 2023.

60. The findings concluded that the Site is predicted to accumulate 1,238 total daily traffic with 619 inbound trips and 619 outbound trips. The traffic study indicates that, during peak AM hour, the development will only generate 24 inbound trips and 67 outbound trips. During the PM hour, the development will generate only 77 inbound trips and 46 outbound trips.

61. The study found that it was unnecessary for any additional off-site improvements. However, a southbound right-turn deceleration lane along Sardis Road entering the development is recommended.

2: Project Trip Generation Summary											
Land Use	Density	ITE Code	Daily Traffic			AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
			Total	Enter	Exit	Total	Enter	Exit	Total	Enter	Exit
Single-Family Detached Housing	125 units	210	1,238	619	619	91	24	67	123	77	46
Total Gross Trips			1,238	619	619	91	24	67	123	77	46
<i>Mixed-Use Reduction</i>			-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0
<i>Alternative Mode Reduction</i>			-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0
<i>Pass-by Reduction</i>			-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0
Total Net New Trips			1,238	619	619	91	24	67	123	77	46

Figure 11: Project Trip Generation Summary

Stormwater

62. The site plan has been designed to meet and exceed all stormwater requirements, including attenuating stormwater runoff through the use of two distributed detention areas which are shown on the site plan. Developing the Site for PRD in accordance with the site plan ensures that there are no adverse stormwater impacts.
63. The developer will take the necessary actions to mitigate stormwater runoff, which include:
 - a. Providing stormwater detention/retention areas;
 - b. Minimizing impermeable surfaces; and
 - c. Planting vegetation and trees.