

**HALL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

Applicant K2P Land Partners, LLC

Request **Rezone** | from Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1)
to Light Industrial (I-1)

Proposed Use Industrial park

Size 194.10± acres

Zoning **Current:** Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) |
Proposed: Light Industrial (I-1)

Location **5401 Old Winder Highway** | Tax Parcel 15039A
000007 (pt)

Commission District One

Planning Commission Date August 4, 2025
June 16, 2025

Staff Recommendation **Denial**, as the proposed development is not
consistent with the “Regional Activity Nodes
and Corridors” future land use designation in
the Comprehensive Plan.

Record Number.....HZON25-0022

Planning Commission Recommendation**Denial**

Vote: 5-0

Excerpts from the minutes of the August 4, 2025 meeting

Motion: *A motion to remove from the table was made by Frank Sosebee and seconded by Stan Hunt.*
Vote: 5-0

Applicant’s Presentation:

Katie Greenway, Planning and Zoning Administrator, presented a summary of the request.

Steve Gilliam, 340 Jesse Jewel Parkway, Gainesville, presented the request. The applicant is requesting to rezone a 194.10± acre portion of a tract from Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) to Light Industrial (I-1) to allow for an industrial park consisting of 1,719,640 square feet of light industrial warehouse space with trailer parking and employee parking spaces. The subject parcel is bordered by State Route 211/Old

Winder Highway to the west. The site is currently undeveloped and wooded with streams and tributaries, as well as areas throughout the property which have been designated to be within the County Studied and FEMA flood zones. A concurrent request has been submitted to rezone the remainder of the subject parcel, 84.30± acres, to Residential Multi-Family (R-MF) to allow a proposed 700 unit residential development consisting of apartments and townhomes with various amenity features (HZON25-0021).

Public Forum:

Elizabeth Stephens, 5540 Ridgemoor Drive, Braselton, spoke in opposition and distributed a handout to the Board. Ms. Stephens stated she wants “smart growth” for the county. Concerns raised were that warehouses do not reflect the current residential character of the area, an increase in traffic, reduction of surrounding property values, an increase in pollution and waste in County landfills, and the distance of the warehouses to the interstate.

Phil Davis, 5429 Pleasant Hill Lane, Braselton, spoke in opposition. He states that there are currently many vacant warehouses around the county not being utilized, so there is no need for more. Additionally, he states that the proposed development is not in alignment with the character of the area and encourages the Planning Commission not to consider approval of the project until the 211 widening is complete.

Korey Anderson, 5179 Stately Oaks Drive, Flowery Branch, spoke in opposition. Mr. Anderson stated many Hall County residents do not want any more warehouses in the County. Mr. Anderson stated the traffic study done by the applicant shows the negative impact to the area.

Jill Cooper, 5125 Old Winder Highway, Braselton, spoke in opposition. Concerns raised were that the road widening project will not have enough of an impact to reduce the traffic this development will bring and roads will become less safe due to the amount of semi-trucks on the roadway.

Helen Palmer Davis, spoke in opposition. Concerns raised were that the proposed warehouses would be located in an area that is primarily residential and this conflicts with the community’s character. She also stated that the proposed development would increase traffic.

Rebuttal

The applicant explained that the road-widening project would begin after the roundabout is completed for the proposed development and does not believe traffic will be impacted as much as discussed.

Motion: A motion to deny was made by Frank Sosebee and seconded by Shannon Davidson and Stan Hunt. Vote: 5-0

Excerpts from the minutes of the June 16, 2025 meeting

Applicant’s Presentation:

Vamsee Polamarasetty, Planner, stated the applicant has requested to table to the August 4, 2025 meeting.

Motion: A motion to table to August 4, 2025 was made by Frank Sosebee and seconded by Stan Hunt and Shannon Davidson. Vote: 4-0 (Varner absent)

Staff recommends DENIAL of the applicant's request.

The following are variances requested by the applicant, and shall warrant determination by the Board should it choose to approve the submitted narrative and site plan:

1. 8.6.5 – Temporary signs:
 - a. A total of one additional sign per street frontage, which may be either of the following, is allowed for the duration of a temporary event:
 - One non-illuminated temporary sign, flag or banner, not exceeding 6 square feet in area nor 4 feet in height in a single-family residential zoning district and not exceeding 32 square feet in area nor 12 feet in height in a multifamily or nonresidential zoning district;
 - Signage is limited to a total of 60 days a calendar year for the same business or organization. The duration of the temporary event may not last longer than 15 consecutive days and must not take place more frequently than four times in any calendar year for the same business or organization. Any four such events must be separated by at least 30 consecutive days.
 - i. The applicant proposes off-site temporary sales and marketing signs not exceeding 32 square feet per sign face and 8 feet in height along the frontage of Old Winder Highway. The number of signs nor length of time are specified.
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Summary Analysis

The applicant is requesting to rezone a 194.10± acre portion of a tract from Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) to Light Industrial (I-1) to allow for an industrial park consisting of 1,719,640 square feet of light industrial warehouse space with trailer parking and employee parking spaces.

The subject parcel is bordered by State Route 211/Old Winder Highway to the west. The site is currently undeveloped and wooded with streams and tributaries, as well as areas throughout the property which have been designated to be within the County Studied and FEMA flood zones. A concurrent request has been submitted to rezone the remainder of the subject parcel, 84.30± acres, to Residential Multi-Family (R-MF) to allow a proposed 700 unit residential development consisting of apartments and townhomes with various amenity features (HZON25-0021).

The surrounding properties are zoned and developed as outlined below:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| North: | Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) – Developed with single-family residences and undeveloped parcels. |
| East: | Planned Commercial Development (PCD) – Road Atlanta Raceway |

- South: Planned Residential Development (PRD) – Reveille master-planned development, currently undeveloped.
- West: Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) – Developed with single-family residences and undeveloped parcels.

The proposed development includes four to five buildings: Building 1 measures 1,001,000 square feet with an option to split into two buildings each consisting of 500,000 square feet each, Buildings 2 and 3 measure 301,000 square feet each, and Building 4 measures 116,640 square feet. Each building is surrounded by employee and truck parking. The applicant proposes 120 acres – or 60% of the site – to be set aside for open space, and a transitional buffer of 50 feet is included along the north and east boundaries of the subject area where adjacent to residential uses.

Per the narrative, the proposed use is to be limited to a light-industrial warehouse development. End users of the development are not specified in the application. Entry monument signage and internal directional signage will comply with the Hall County Unified Development Code (UDC); however, sales and marketing signage is proposed along Old Winder Highway which is not allowed within the UDC and is identified as an exception above.

Water service will be provided by the City of Gainesville Department of Water Resources as confirmed by an availability letter dated April 24, 2025. Sanitary sewer services will be provided by Hall County as confirmed by an availability letter dated May 6, 2025.

Per the submitted site plan and narrative, the development will be accessed by a new road constructed off Old Winder Highway, which will simultaneously serve the proposed industrial development as well as an adjacent proposed residential development to the west (HZON25-0021) as well as the future mixed-use development to the south. The access is located approximately midway between Pleasant Hill Lane and Ridgemoor Drive with a proposed right turn lane out of the development. The traffic impact study (excerpt below) references the future widening of SR 211 and a multi-lane roundabout at the intersection of the new development; the roundabout is not shown on the site plan; however, an existing and future conditions concept plan was provided depicting how the entrance will be designed prior to and after the future multi-lane roundabout.

Per the submitted traffic impact study conducted by NV5 and updated on June 3, 2025, the following improvements are recommended:

“While the proposed site access would operate satisfactorily as an R-Cut, the addition of 936 heavy trucks per day to the highway from the development present a safety concern for slow-moving, U-turning trucks movement bound for I-85 along SR 211. Instead, a multilane roundabout would operate better at the proposed driveway allowing the large vehicles to safely exit the site while maintaining traffic flow along the highway. Since the widening project is still several years away, the multi-lane roundabout could be initially constructed as a single-lane roundabout until the GDOT project is completed.”

Based on the future land use plan, staff finds the requested rezoning *is not consistent* with the Hall County Comprehensive Plan and the future land use designation of Regional Activity Nodes and Corridors. These are areas that either bring visitors from the region or can support future development with a regional draw. New development in these areas should include a combination of retail, office,

civic, and residential uses that can contribute to a live-work-play environment. This range of development types may not always be at the same intensity across the county: new development needs to be scaled in the context of the area's infrastructure capacity. New development should also emphasize high-quality building and site design, including dedicated open/civic space, walkability, and a sense of place. Where there is residential development, a maximum density of up to 16 dwellings per acre may be permitted at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners.

On June 2, 2025, Hall County staff received Development of Regional Impact (DRI) review findings from Adam Hazell, Planning Director with Georgia Regional Commission (GRMC). These findings determined that the project does not present any potential adverse interjurisdictional impacts. One comment was provided by Carol Flaute, Senior Community Planner with The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, which states: "The stream that flows through the project site is a tributary of the Mulberry River, upstream of a municipal water intake for the Town of Braselton. Additionally, the reach of the Mulberry River into which the tributary flows is listed by the Georgia EPD as "not supporting" due to fecal coliform bacteria and impacts on the macroinvertebrate community (EPD 2024 Integrated 305(b)/303(d) List). Please ensure that the project is designed to minimize disruption to the existing streams, including minimizing erosion and controlling stormwater runoff to avoid degradation of downstream water quality. Low impact design measures like bioswales, rain gardens, and/or other green infrastructure are encouraged."

Zoning Analysis

When considering a zoning amendment to the zoning maps, the Planning Commission must study the need and justification for the change based on a determination of the facts applicable to the particular case, and the following general lines of inquiry must be considered:

- a) Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use, development and zoning of adjacent and nearby property; **The proposed rezoning is not suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property. The surrounding area consists of a variety of land uses which include residential, agricultural and commercial uses.**
- b) Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property; **The proposed rezoning to Light Industrial may adversely affect nearby residential properties including the proposed multi-family residential development to the west of the subject development and the future mixed-use development to the south.**
- c) Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned; **The property has reasonable economic use as currently zoned, however, the applicant cannot develop the property as proposed without approval by the Board of Commissioners.**
- d) Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, schools, police protection, fire protection, public health facilities or emergency medical service; **If approved, the use is not anticipated to cause an excessive or burdensome use of the existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, schools, police protection, fire protection, public facilities, or emergency medical service. Per the submitted traffic study, the addition of traffic from the proposed mixed-use site is expected to increase delay only marginally at the two studies intersection, allowing them to continue operating similarly to no-build conditions; however, the proposed**

use in not consistent with the County's vision for this area as reflected in the Comprehensive Plan.

- e) Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the future land use plan for the physical development of the area; **The proposed use is not consistent with the intent of the Regional Activity Nodes and Corridors future land use designation in the Comprehensive Plan.**
- f) The extent to which property values are diminished by the existing zoning restrictions; **Staff is unable to determine the extent to which property values are affected by the existing zoning restrictions.**
- g) The extent to which the destruction of the subject property's value under the existing zoning promotes the health, safety, morals or general welfare of the public; **Staff is unable to comment on the impact of property values without a full market analysis. Multiple factors impact property values including construction types, proposed uses, and maintenance. Often it is difficult to determine the effect of a development on adjacent properties until the development is completed.**
- h) The relative gain to the public as compared to the hardship imposed upon the individual property owner; **Staff has not identified a hardship imposed on the property owner as the property is currently zoned.**
- i) The length of time the property has been vacant as zoned considered in the context of land development in the area in the vicinity of the property. **The property is currently undeveloped and forested.**
- j) Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use or development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal; **Staff is not aware of any changing conditions affecting the use or development of the property.**
- k) Whether the change would create an isolated district unrelated to the surrounding districts; **The proposed zoning is Light Industrial (I-1). The property is surrounded by residentially-zoned property to the north, west, south, and Road Atlanta race track to the east. The change would create an isolated district unrelated to the surrounding developments and districts.**
- l) Whether the present zoning district boundaries are illogically drawn in relation to existing conditions in the area; **There is no evidence that the present zoning district boundaries are illogically drawn.**
- m) Whether the change requested is out of scale with the needs of the county as a whole or the immediate neighborhood; **The request may be considered out of scale with the needs of the immediate neighborhood as the surrounding area is zoned for commercial and residential uses, and the proposed use is not supported by the Hall County Comprehensive Plan.**
- n) Whether it is impossible to find adequate sites for the proposed use in districts permitting such use and already appropriately zoned; **There are other properties within the County that support light industrial uses based on the Future Land Use Map and existing zoning map.**

- o) Whether the need for rezoning could be handled instead by a variance request to the Planning Commission; **The request could not be handled alternatively as a variance.**
- p) Whether there would be an ecological or pollution impact resulting from major modifications to the land if the request is granted; **Any land disturbance activities on the property shall be required to go through the land development permitting process, and as a result are subject to local, state, and federal regulations. As a result, there are no anticipated ecological or pollution impacts resulting from any modification to the land if the request is granted.**
- q) Whether there is reasonable evidence based upon existing and anticipated land use that would indicate a mistake was made in the original zoning of the property; **There is no indication that a mistake was made in the original zoning.**

11.2.6.E - Submission requirements

1. Any person or persons requesting a change in the official zoning map or use subject to approval of the County Commission must file an application with a plat or map of the property attached thereto, together with payment of such fees set forth in this Sec 11.2. to cover administrative and advertising costs, in the Planning and Zoning Department office. Such person or persons or their authorized agent must appear in person at the public hearing held to consider the district change. **The proposal meets the requirement. The applicant has paid the appropriate fees and understands that someone must be present at both the Hall County Planning Commission meeting and the voting meeting of the Hall County Board of Commissioners.**
2. All applications for a change of zoning classification or use subject to approval of the County Commission must include:
 - a. A narrative statement identifying the existing and proposed use of the property and addressing each of the criteria set forth in this Sec. 11.2. **The proposal provides a narrative outlining the intent of the development; however, the applicant has not prepared a response to each of the criteria listed in 11.2.6.E.2.**
 - b. A site plan drawn to scale designating the area covered by the application and identifying existing and proposed buildings and uses, adjacent existing land uses, zoning on contiguous parcels, including those across an abutting public right-of-way, and any other significant site improvements proposed to accommodate the proposed use or buffer adjacent uses, etc., or a plat of the subject property where no specific land use is proposed. In cases where only a plat or map is provided and no land use is proposed, the Planning Commission and County Commission may evaluate the application based on the most intense possible land use permitted in the proposed district. **The proposal meets the requirement.**
 - c. For any application for a slow rate land treatment system as defined in 7.6.9.D.1, additional requirements apply. **This standard is not applicable to the applicant's request.**
 - d. For any application proposing the development of 100 or more residential dwelling units, a traffic impact study must be submitted prior to consideration of the application by the County

Commission. At the applicant's expense, the traffic impact study must be prepared by a professional engineer in accordance with requirements established by the Hall County Engineering Department. The Engineering Department must review the traffic impact study and forward any comments to the County Commission. **The applicant submitted a traffic study conducted by NV5 update on June 3, 2025, which includes the following recommendations:**

“While the proposed site access would operate satisfactorily as an R-Cut, the addition of 936 heavy trucks per day to the highway from the development present a safety concern for slow-moving, U-turning trucks movement bound for I-85 along SR 211. Instead, a multilane roundabout would operate better at the proposed driveway allowing the large vehicles to safely exit the site while maintaining traffic flow along the highway. Since the widening project is still several years away, the multi-lane roundabout could be initially constructed as a single-lane roundabout until the GDOT project is completed. Other than improvements at the proposed access to SR 211, no changes to the surrounding intersections are necessary to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.”

Development Support and Constraints

Hall County Environmental Health

In an email dated May 13, 2025, Emily McGahee stated, “No comment. Public sewer.”

Georgia Department of Transportation

In an email dated May 28, 2025, Nakia Nembhard, GDOT Civil Engineer 3, stated that GDOT coordination is required.

Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization

In an email dated May 15, 2025, Joseph Boyd, MPO Director, provided the following comment:

“This parcel is along State route 211/Old Winder Hwy, which is scheduled to be widened (GH-025/PI 0007233) beginning in FY2029. Right-of-way authorization begins on 7/28/2026. Applicant should coordinate with GDOT District 1 on those impacts.”

Hall County Public Works and Utilities

In a memo dated May 16, 2025, Bill Nash, Director of Public Works and Utilities, provided the following comments:

Engineering:

This site may require a stormwater management report should the site plan indicate the proposed development meets stormwater thresholds for impervious surfaces and/or disturbed acreage. Show stream buffer and impervious setback from wrested vegetation no centerline of stream.

Traffic:

GDOT comments required. GDOT approval and permit required for proposed Old Winder Hwy (SR 211) access.

We have a questions regarding proposed parkway. This should be discussed with County Engineering. Additional comments may be necessary.

Utilities

Hall County sanitary sewer runs through the site.

Hall County Fire Marshal

In an email dated May 14, 2025, John Hornick, NPQ Fire Service Plans Examiner 1, stated, "Hall County Fire Marshal's Office will require the following code requirements below to be applied to the proposed industrial development.

International Fire Code D104.2 Buildings exceeding 62,000 square feet in area.

Buildings or facilities having a gross building area of more than 62,000 square feet shall be provided with two separate and *approved* fire apparatus access roads.

International Fire Code D104.3 Remoteness.

Where two fire apparatus access roads are required, they shall be placed a distance apart equal to not less than one-half of the length of the maximum overall diagonal dimension of the property or area to be served, measured in a straight line between accesses.

Each building shall be required to have its own fire pump to provide support to the fire protection system that will be installed.

International Fire Code 510.1 Emergency responder radio coverage in new buildings.

New buildings shall have *approved* radio coverage for emergency responders within the building based on the existing coverage levels of the public safety communication systems utilized by the jurisdiction, measured at the exterior of the building.

The requirements mentioned above are not all inclusive, additional requirements/modifications may be required during the development review process."