

**HALL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
STAFF REPORT**

Applicant Made for More Ministries, LLC

Request **Special Use**

Proposed Use Group home

Size 3.80± acres

Zoning Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1)

Location **4337 Mountain View Road** | Tax Parcel 08041
001004 (pt)

Commission District Two

County Commission Date April 21, 2026

Staff Recommendation **Denial**, as the proposed use is not consistent
with the residential nature of the surrounding
properties.

Record Number.....HZCU26-0011

Staff recommends DENIAL of the applicant’s request. However, if the Commission chooses to approve this request, staff recommends the following conditions:

1. A minimum of one parking space per resident and staff member shall be provided on-site and maintained on the property for the duration of the use. All parking shall meet all applicable UDC standards.
2. No variances or development exceptions are granted as part of this request that are not explicitly granted by Board approval. The development shall be compliant with the Unified Development Code of Hall County.
3. All conditions of zoning shall be made a part of any plats or construction plans created for the property.

Summary Analysis

The applicant is requesting approval of a Special Use for a group home, on a 3.80± acre tract zoned Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1).

The subject property is currently developed with a 4,963 square foot single-family residence constructed in 2000, and a 1,520 square foot guest house built in 2001 (RES2001-00589).

The surrounding properties are zoned and developed as outlined below:

- North: Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) – Single-family residences
- East: Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) – Single-family residences and vacant lots
- South: Residential 1 (R-1) – Holiday Heights Subdivision
- West: Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) – Single-family residences



The existing primary residence and guest house previously operated as a short-term rental accommodating up to 20 people between the two structures from 2019 through part of 2025. On October 27, 2025, the property was sold to the current owners. On February 12, 2026, staff received notice from a nearby property owner that the subject property was being operated as a group home for 20 women (HENF26-0174). After further investigation, staff determined that approval of a Special Use for a group home by the Board of Commissioners would be required. The property owners were directed by the Planning, Building and Fire Departments to limit occupancy of the primary residence to no more than 5 individuals to meet the requirements of a “community residence,” which is a permitted use in the AR-1 zoning district. If the Special Use for the group home is approved and all planning, building and life safety requirements are met, at that point operation of the group home can commence. According to the property owner, this condition to reduce occupancy to 5 individuals was met on March 23, 2026.

Per the submitted narrative and site plan, the proposed group home is intended to accommodate a total of 30 women. The principal single-family residence would house 20 occupants, while the guest house is proposed to house an additional 10 occupants. Made for More Ministries proposes to operate a residential recovery program on the site, providing a 12-month supervised living environment focused on stability, accountability, and personal development. The program offers routine, mentorship, life-skills training, and recovery-focused support in a non-medical, non-correctional residential setting.

The submitted site plan identifies a total of 17 parking spaces to serve the facility; however, the current parking lot configuration requires vehicles to back out directly into a public road which is prohibited per UDC Section 8.1.4.C.1. To prevent parking in the road or on pervious surfaces, the number of parking spaces required should be equivalent to the number of residents and staff.



Based on the future land-use plan, staff finds the request *is not consistent* with the Comprehensive Plan and future land use designation of Lakeside Residential. The Lakeside Residential character area is intended to preserve established lake-oriented neighborhoods and support low- to moderate-density permanent or vacation residential development. These areas typically exhibit residential densities ranging from 0.75 to 8 dwelling units per acre and are characterized by traditional single-family development patterns similar to those found along and adjacent to Lake Lanier. The proposed group home represents an institutional-type residential use that is not aligned with the intended residential character or development pattern of the surrounding neighborhood.

History of Approved Group Homes:

Currently, one group home, located at 5238 L J Martin Drive, has been approved to operate within an Agricultural Residential (AR-1) zoning district in unincorporated Hall County. This facility is approved for up to 12 residents as an adult assisted living home. In addition, three other properties have been rezoned specifically for the purpose of operating group homes and are zoned Planned Residential Development (PRD), Planned Commercial Development (PCD), and Office Institutional (O-I).

Zoning Analysis

When considering an application for a special use, the 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 special use for a group home is not suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby properties which are developed with and occupied as single-family residences.**
- b) Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property; **The institutional nature of the proposed group home may adversely affect adjacent or nearby properties. The intensity of the use is significantly higher than that of a typical single-family residence, with up to 30 occupants on a continual basis. This elevated level**

of occupancy is expected to generate increased vehicular and pedestrian activity, which may negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood.

- c) Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has reasonable economic use as currently zoned; **Yes, the property has reasonable economic use as currently zoned, Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1); however, a “group home” requires Special use 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; **The proposed 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.**
- 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 Lakeside Residential future land use designation as the group home does not align with the residential character or development pattern of nearby and adjacent parcels.**
- 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 diminished 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 value 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 subject property is zoned Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1). The site has been developed with a single-family residence since 2000 and guest house since 2001.**
- 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; **There are no known changing conditions affecting the use or development of the property.**
- k) Whether the change would create an isolated district unrelated to the surrounding districts; **This question is not applicable as there are no proposed changes to the zoning classification.**

- 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 out of scale with the needs of the immediate neighborhood as the proposed size of the group home does not align with the single-family residential character or development pattern of nearby and adjacent parcels.**
- n) Whether it is impossible to find adequate sites for the proposed use in districts permitting such use and already appropriately zoned; **Group homes require County Commission approval in the AR-1 zoning district. There is not a zoning district where a group home is permitted by right.**
- 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 adhere to the land development permitting process, and as a result, are subject to local, state, and federal regulations. There should not be an ecological or pollution impact 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 the Hall County Board of Commissioners' meeting.**
2. All applications for a change of zoning classification or use subject to approval of the Planning 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. **This standard is not applicable to the applicant's request.**

Development Support and Constraints

Hall County Environmental Health

In an email dated March 25, 2026, Emily McGahee stated "Must meet all Environmental Health commercial septic system permitting requirements. Further determination will be made during the civil plan review process. A detailed business plan must be submitted to Hall County Environmental Health for review. Additional items, including, but not limited to: recorded plat, soil evaluation, and septic system installation/modification may be required after review of business plan. The current septic records on file with Environmental Health indicate a 5 bedroom septic system for the main house and a 2 bedroom septic system for the guest house. Please be advised that any proposed use utilizing an onsite sewage management system for sewage disposal in which 20 or more people are served per day must be submitted to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Environmental Protection Division (EPD) for a UIC/NDSS permitting review. Please note that BOC approval does not imply approval from other county departments."

Georgia Department of Transportation

In an email dated March 16, 2026, Christopher Hash, D1 Traffic Operations Supervisor, stated "Off system, no impacts to the state route expected."

Hall County Public Works and Utilities

In a memorandum dated March 26, 2026, Jorge Gomez, 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.

Traffic:

This proposal does not impact or increase traffic volumes.

Utilities:

No comment. This property is not in the Hall County service district.

Hall County Fire Marshal

In an email dated March 19, 2026, John Hornick, NPQ Fire Service Plans Examiner 1, provided the following comments:

1. Applicant requests Occupancy for 20 occupants inside the main house and 10 occupants in the guest house. If approved both occupancies will be required to meet all applicable NFPA 101 Life Safety Code and International Fire Code requirements and must adhere to state minimum fire safety standards, primarily enforced by the Georgia Safety Fire Commissioner.
2. The Hall County Fire Marshal's Office has determined through the International Building Code 2024 edition that the main house with 20 occupants would be classified as a Residential Group R-2 dormitory: A building or space in a building in which group sleeping accommodations are provided for more than 16 persons who are not members of the same family in one room, or a series of closely associated rooms, under joint occupancy and single management, with or without meals, but without individual cooking facilities.
3. According to Life Safety Code 2024 edition dormitories would be required to meet all applicable requirements of Chapter 28 including the installation of an electrically supervised automatic sprinkler system.
4. The Hall County Fire Marshal's Office has determined the Guest house with 10 occupants would be classified as a Residential Group R-3 lodging house with five or fewer guestrooms: Residential Group R-3 occupancies where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature and not classified as group R-1, R-2, R-4, or I.
5. According to Life Safety Code 2024 edition lodging houses would be required to meet all applicable requirements of Chapter 26 including the installation of an approved automatic sprinkler system in accordance with life safety code section 26.3.6.2.
6. If approved engineered site development and architectural plans will be required for review and approval to bring the site and structures into compliance with fire code.

Hall County Business License

In an email dated March 16, 2026, Brandi Smith, Business License Director, stated "Will require a business license."