

HALL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
STAFF REPORT

**Applicant** ..... Carroll Daniel Construction

**Request** ..... **Variance to Article 8** | Site development standards

**Proposed Use** ..... Commercial addition

**Size** ..... 4.58± acres

**Zoning** ..... Heavy Industrial (I-2)

**Location** ..... **1161 Candler Road** | Tax parcel 15035 000056

**Commission District** ..... Three

**County Commission Date** ..... July 9, 2026

**Staff Recommendation** ..... **Denial**, as no hardship exists pursuant to the criteria of 11.1.1.D.11.

**Record Number**..... HVAR26-0018

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

1. The property shall be developed in accordance with the site plans dated April 6, 2026, and April 22, 2026, and as described in the project narrative dated May 6, 2026, modified as necessary for compliance with conditions herein and development standards enforced at the time of site plan approval.

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The following should be considered as variances to the Unified Development Code of Hall County, and shall warrant further determination by the Board should it choose to approve the submitted narrative and site plan:

- **Section 8.1.3.B.1 – Parking Lot Landscaping** – Frontage landscaping must be provided between any parking lot and any street frontage unless the parking area is screened from the street by a building or other means; required landscape strips must be 10 feet deep for commercial and industrial properties
  - Proposed: An alternative planting area is proposed in the southeast corner and is sufficient to accommodate the required number of trees.

- **Section 8.5. – Open Space** – Minimum required open space for non-residential is 20 percent of the gross lot area.
  - 11.7% open space is proposed compared to the existing 12.2%

**Summary Analysis**

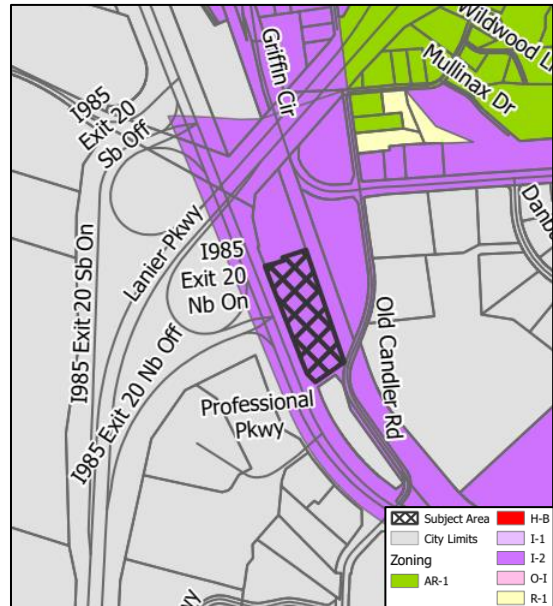
The applicant has submitted a variance request to Article 8 to vary the site development standards on a 4.58± acre tract zoned Heavy Industrial (I-2).

According to the Hall County Tax Assessor records, the property is currently developed with a 103,606 square foot industrial building constructed in 1998. The site has held an active business license for Lanier Cold Storage, operating as a refrigerated warehousing and storage facility, since April 1, 2014.

The subject property was previously combined with the adjoining parcel at 1155 Candler Road; however, it was formally subdivided into two independent parcels on April 17, 2014. Over the years, the property has received 6 separate variance approvals in 1977, 1989, 1995, twice in 1997, and 2014, which collectively allowed the current building configuration on both parcels to encroach into the required setbacks.

The surrounding properties are zoned and developed as outlined below:

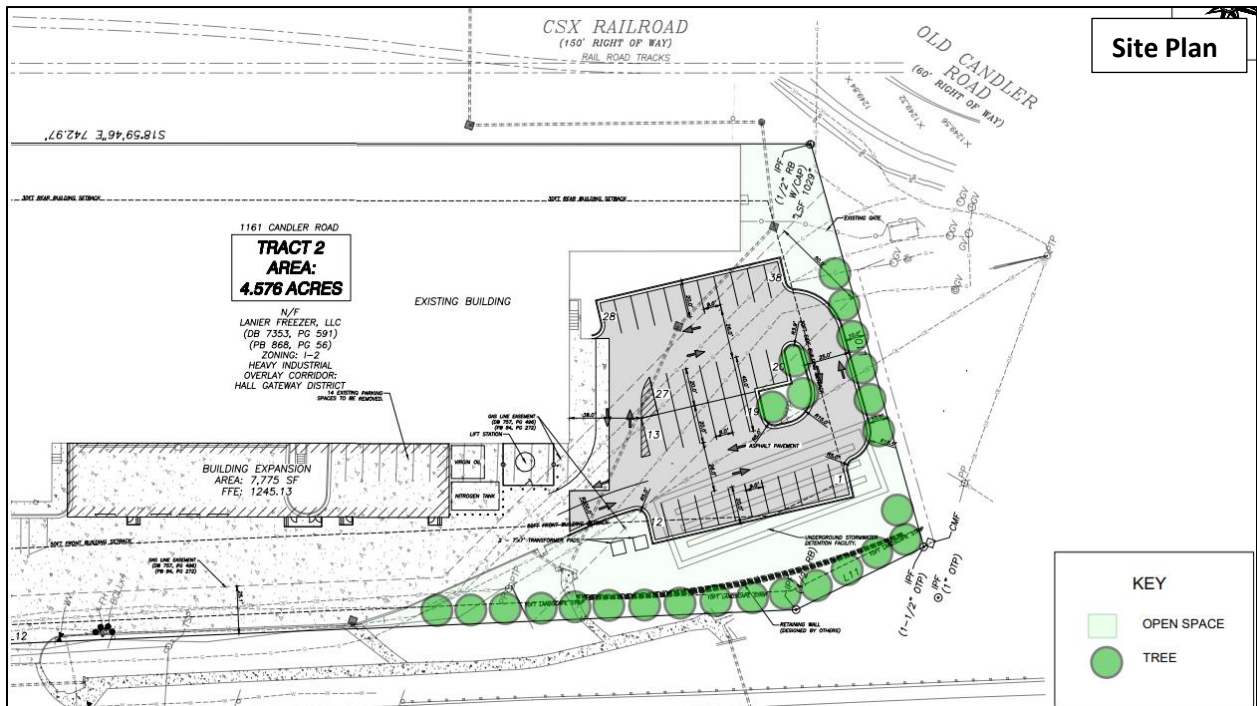
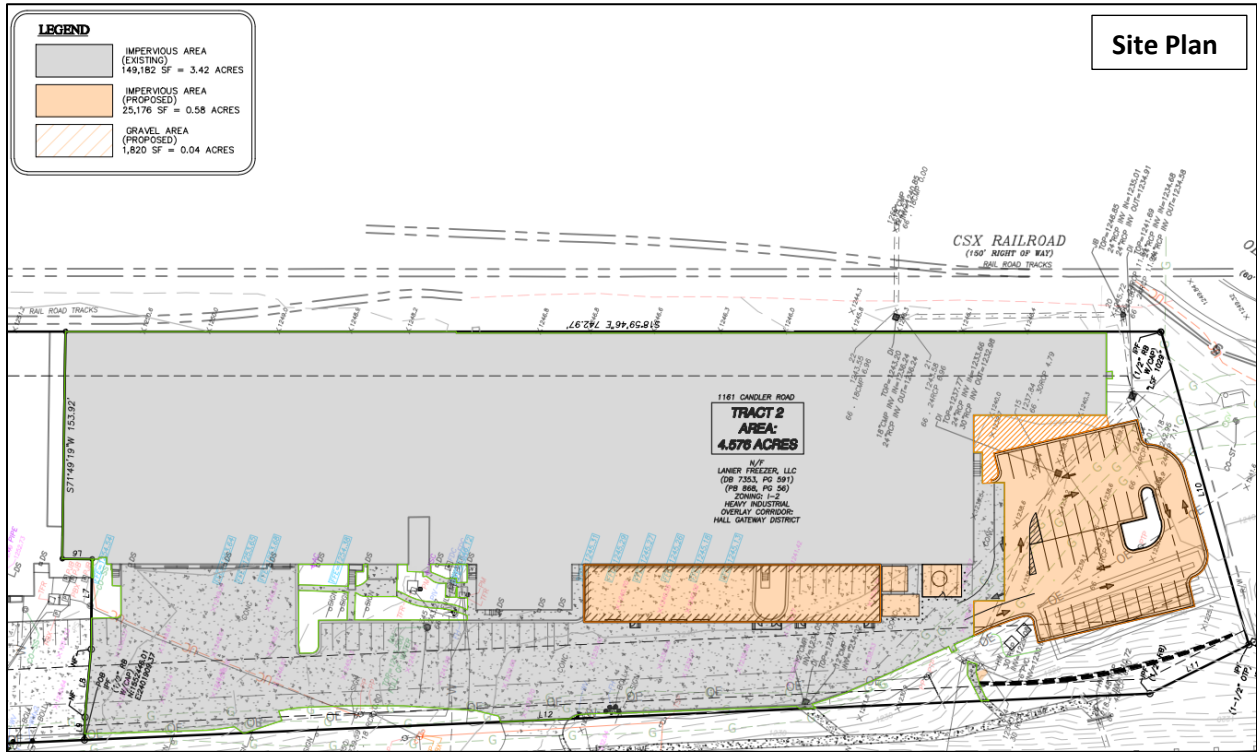
- North: Heavy Industrial (I-2): Poultry processing facility
- East: Railroad Right-of-Way; Heavy Industrial (I-2): Chemical manufacturing facility;
- South: City of Gainesville Heavy Industrial (H-1): undeveloped
- West: I-985 right-of-way; City of Gainesville Planned Unit Development (PUD)



Per the submitted narrative, the applicant proposes an addition to the existing building for an employee breakroom and additional industrial space, along with converting a gravel area to an asphalt parking lot. The site was developed in 1998, prior to current zoning standards including the Gateway Corridor Overlay District and updated landscaping and open-space requirements. The property currently contains 24,219 square feet of open space and minimal landscaping, including a sparsely vegetated area in the southern corner of the property.

The Unified Development Code (UDC) requires that non-residential properties provide 20 percent open space. The site does not meet this standard, and the proposed improvements would further reduce open space by approximately 0.02 acres, an impact of approximately 0.5 percent of the total site area. The landscaping requirements also cannot be fully met due to the placement of the parking lot along the frontage; however, the site plan identifies a planting area in the southeast corner capable of accommodating the required number of trees as an alternative location.

Water service and sanitary sewer service are provided by the City of Gainesville as confirmed in an email from Nick Swafford, City of Gainesville Permitting Services and GIS Manager, dated June 12, 2026.



**(A) Zoning Analysis**

The Commission may grant variances in individual cases of unnecessary hardship upon a finding of the board that:

- 1. There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular lot in question because of its size, shape, or topography (the hardship must relate to the physical character of the lot and not to a personal or economic hardship); **The original building was constructed in 1998 and has expanded over time. This proposed expansion has been designed to remain in full compliance with the required front yard setback of the Heavy Industrial zoning district. However, the decision to further reduced the open space of the site and not meet the landscaping standards is not due to any physical characteristics of the lot; it results from the intensity of development on the site. The site is essentially being overbuilt beyond what the ordinance designated industrial property to accommodate.**
- 2. The application of the requirements of this UDC to this particular piece of property would create an unusual hardship; **No unusual hardship would be created if the requirements of this UDC are applied to this particular piece of property. The choice to expand the existing development footprint is a choice of the property owner and the variance requests are not tied to a hardship associated with extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular lot in question.**
- 3. Such conditions are peculiar to the property involved and are not common to other properties in the neighborhood; **The subject property is similar in size and shape to surrounding properties. No conditions are peculiar to the particular piece of property involved. The challenges in meeting open space and landscaping standards are not unique and arise solely from the proposed intensity of development.**
- 4. Such conditions are not the result of any actions of the property owner; **The size and shape, of the lot are not the result of any actions of the property owner; however, the lack of compliant open space and landscaping is directly attributable to the owner’s proposed expansion and the cumulative development footprint on the site. These conditions do not meet the requirement that the hardship must not be self-created.**
- 5. Relief, if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good or impair the purposes and intent of this UDC; provided, however, that no variance may be granted for a use of land or building or structure that is prohibited by this UDC or for a Conditional Use Permit which has been denied by the Planning Commission; **Relief, if granted, would not appear to cause substantial detriment to the public good or impair the purposes and intent of this UDC. However, because none of the hardship criteria are met, the request does not justify a variance under the standards of the ordinance**

**Development Support and Constraints**

**Hall County Environmental Health**

In a memorandum dated June 9, 2026, the Hall County Environmental Health Department stated “No comment. Public sewer.”

**Georgia Department of Transportation**

In an email dated June 9, 2026, Christopher Hash, P.E. D1 Traffic Operations Supervisor, stated “Minor impacts expected to the State Route system, coordination required.”

**Hall County Public Works and Utilities**

In a memorandum dated June 10, 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 that meets stormwater thresholds for impervious surfaces and/or disturbed acreage.

**Traffic:**

All access is from SR 60. A GDOT permit or traffic signal permit revision may be required.

**Utilities:**

No comment. Property is located in Gainesville sewer district.

**Hall County Fire Marshal**

In an email dated June 3, 2026, John Hornick, NPQ Fire Service Plans Examiner 1, stated, “The Hall County Fire Marshal’s Office has no comments as proposed.”