

**HALL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

Applicant Ramar Land Corporation

Request Rezone from Agricultural Residential-IV
(AR-IV) to Planned Industrial District (PID)

Proposed Use Truck terminal, maintenance shop and office

Size 28.27± acres

Zoning AR-IV

Location On the north side of Athens Highway
approximately 1,165 feet from its
intersection with A L Mangum Road;
a.k.a. 3401 Athens Highway; Tax Parcel
15014 000034.

Commission District Three

County Commission Date June 20, 2022

Staff Recommendation **Approval, with conditions**

Planning Commission Recommendation: Approval, with conditions
Vote: 4-0 (Varner Absent)

Conditions:

1. *The subject property shall be subject to the conditions of zoning approved on January 27, 2022 for the application of the same name and listed below:*
 1. *The development shall conform substantially with the proposed narrative, site plan, and variances below. Building layout and orientation may shift, but the maximum thresholds and uses outlined in the project narrative and on the site plan shall apply.*
 - a. *Allow exterior walls of the buildings to be pre-engineered metal building, EIFS, and stucco. Front and 50 feet along both sides of office shall be EIFS or stucco. Maintenance shop front shall be EIFS or stucco.*
 - b. *Allow standing seam or architectural metal roof panels on all building structures except for gas canopy, with colors approved by the Planning Director.*

- c. *Roof-top HVAC units shall be installed with screening along front of building and side adjacent to elementary school.*
 - d. *Allow a primary pylon sign, at main entrance into the property, with dimensions of what maximum sq. ft. the code will allow, based upon the projected maximum build-out of 2300,000 SF.*
 - e. *Allow the pylon sign to use of the "Halo" or back-lit type.*
 - f. *Allow the use of LED exterior lighting, whether pole mounted or attached the building or structures.*
 - g. *Allow a 30' front building setback from property line.*
 - h. *Employee parking areas will meet Gateway Corridor Overlay landscape requirements.*
 - i. *Allow more than 125 percent of the minimum allowable parking spaces.*
 - j. *Applicant shall install a 12' high composite wall approximately 5-10 feet off western boundary, adjacent to Sugar Hill Elementary, to extend to the rear of the property until it reaches the creek.*
 - k. *A 50' buffer shall be placed along the exterior boundaries, except for the side pf property facing Athens Highway.*
2. *All future development shall be subject to all standards set forth by the Gateway Corridor Overlay District; no variances to these standards shall be approved, unless approved by the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners.*
 3. *All access off Athens Highway shall be approved and permitted by GDOT.*
 4. *Any outdoor storage shall be screened in accordance with §17.260.020 of the Official Code of Hall County.*
 5. *All mechanical services shall be conducted within a garage bay.*
 6. *Elevations depicting the proposed building shall be submitted to the Planning Department for approval of the director during the Development Review process. No building permit shall be issued for the development without the approval of said elevations.*
 7. *All conditions of zoning be made a part of any plat recorded for this property.*
 8. *All previous conditions of zoning shall apply except as specifically modified in this approval.*

Applicant Proposal

The applicant is requesting to rezone the subject property from Agricultural-ResidentialIV (AR-IV) to Planned Industrial Development (PID) for the purpose of developing a truck terminal on the property. The 28.27± acre property is to be developed in combination with a 36.33 acre PID parcel to the west, which was approved for an amendment to a previous PID zoning by the Hall County Board of Commissioners on January 27, 2022.

The applicant's narrative states that the proposed uses are permitted within the Light Industrial zoning classification, specifically: truck terminals, "flex-space" multi-tenant uses (business requiring a varied square foot mix of office and warehouse space), the conditional use of additional parking on other than the principal lot. The site plan depicts a T-shaped building square

foot inside, a maintenance shop and truck washing area that does not list the square footage, an area identified for gas, and substantial parking areas.

Specifically, there are 175 proposed tractor parking spaces, 222 proposed employee parking spaces, 249 loading bays, and 320 trailer parking spaces.

The proposed development will specifically exclude the following uses:

- A. Bus stations.
- B. Drive-in theaters
- C. Junk yards
- D. Service stations E. Group day care home.
- F. Adult establishments.
- G. Astrologers
- H. Clairvoyants
- I. Fortune tellers
- J. Palmists
- K. Phrenologists
- L. Other similar or related occupations licensed by the Board of Commissioners

The proposed building site development standards are as follows:

- Minimum Lot Area: 15,000 square feet (if subdivided)
- Maximum Impervious Area: 80% of lot
- Maximum Building 400,000 square footage
- Maximum Building Height: 50'-0
- Minimum Lot Frontage: 100'-0 (if subdivided)
- Front Building Setback (Interior Street): 30'-0
- Front Building Setback (U.S 129): 75'-0 from centerline or 50'-0 from the property line, whichever is greater
- Building & Buffer Setback for side & rear of outside boundaries: 25'-0
- Parking Ratio: Based upon user design needs but not to exceed maximum impervious area as noted above.

The subject property also falls within the Gateway Corridors Overlay District (GCOD) which is supplemental to the underlying zoning district classification. The GCOD governs non-residential property development standards. The applicant has proposed the following development standards for this property:

- A. Allow exterior walls of the buildings to be pre-engineered metal building, EIFS, and stucco. Front and 50 feet along both sides of office shall be EIFS or stucco. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 H.

- B. Allow standing seam or architectural metal roof panels on all building structures except for gas canopy, with colors approved by the Planning Director. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 H
- C. Roof-top HVAC units to be installed with screening along front of building. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 D
- D. Allow a primary monument sign, at main entrance into the property, with dimension of what maximum square footage the code will allow, based upon the project maximum build-out of 230,000 square feet. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.060
- E. Allow the monument sign to use a “halo” or back-lit type of illumination. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 F
- F. Allot the use of LED exterior lighting, whether pole mounted or attached to the building or structures. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 F
- G. Allow 30 foot front building setback from property line. See Title 17, Ch. 17.240.010
- H. Employee parking areas will meet Gateway Corridor Overlay landscape requirements.
- I. Allow more than 125% of the minimum allowable parking spaces. See Title 17, Ch. 17.240.010
- J. A 50 foot buffer shall be placed along the exterior boundaries abutting residentially zoned properties.

Finally, the applicant’s narrative notes that the attached site plan is a conceptual design and that the number of buildings, building dimensions, and building and street layout may need to be adjusted to meet the specific user requirements. However, the Permitted Uses, Exclusions, and Development Standards shall not change without further board approval.

History and Existing Land Uses

The subject property consists of 28.27± acres and is zoned Agricultural-Residential-IV (AR-IV). The property is undeveloped and mostly wooded. Adjacent properties to the east and north are also zoned AR-IV, and developed with single family residences or mobile homes. To the west are two tracts, totaling 36.33 acres that will be developed in conjunction with the subject parcel. Further west are two large tracts – tax parcels 15023 000041 and 15023 000084 –owned and utilized by Hall County Government for the Hall County Landfill and other municipal uses.

On January 27, 2022 the Board of Commissioners voted to approve an amendment to a previously approved Planned Industrial Development for a proposed truck terminal, repair garage, and office space. This was approved with the following conditions:

1. *The development shall conform substantially with the proposed narrative, site plan, and variances below. Building layout and orientation may shift, but the maximum thresholds and uses outlined in the project narrative and on the site plan shall apply.*
 - a. *Allow exterior walls of the buildings to be pre-engineered metal building, EIFS, and stucco. Front and 50 feet along both sides of office shall be EIFS or stucco. Maintenance shop front shall be EIFS or stucco.*

- b. *Allow standing seam or architectural metal roof panels on all building structures except for gas canopy, with colors approved by the Planning Director.*
 - c. *Roof-top HVAC units shall be installed with screening along front of building and side adjacent to elementary school.*
 - d. *Allow a primary pylon sign, at main entrance into the property, with dimensions of what maximum sq. ft. the code will allow, based upon the projected maximum build-out of 2300,000 SF.*
 - e. *Allow the pylon sign to use of the "Halo" or back-lit type.*
 - f. *Allow the use of LED exterior lighting, whether pole mounted or attached the building or structures.*
 - g. *Allow a 30' front building setback from property line.*
 - h. *Employee parking areas will meet Gateway Corridor Overlay landscape requirements.*
 - i. *Allow more than 125 percent of the minimum allowable parking spaces.*
 - j. *Applicant shall install a 12' high composite wall approximately 5-10 feet off western boundary to extend to the rear of the property until it reaches the creek.*
 - k. *A 50' buffer shall be placed along the exterior boundaries, except for the side pf property facing Athens Highway.*
2. *All future development shall be subject to all standards set forth by the Gateway Corridor Overlay District; no variances to these standards shall be approved, unless approved by the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners.*
 3. *All access off Athens Highway shall be approved and permitted by GDOT.*
 4. *Any outdoor storage shall be screened in accordance with §17.260.020 of the Official Code of Hall County.*
 5. *All mechanical services shall be conducted within a garage bay.*
 6. *Elevations depicting the proposed building shall be submitted to the Planning Department for approval of the director during the Development Review process. No building permit shall be issued for the development without the approval of said elevations.*
 7. *All conditions of zoning be made a part of any plat recorded for this property.*

The subject property also falls within the Gateway Corridors Overlay District (GCOD), which is supplemental to the underlying zoning district classification. The GCOD governs non-residential property development standards.

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation

The subject property is located within a "Mixed-use" corridor according to the Future Land Use Designation. The primary future land uses within this type of corridor are for retail, office, higher density residential (including multi-family), civic uses, and open/park spaces. Developments within this corridor should be low-impact industrial or higherdensity residential only where the same is found on adjacent properties.

The proposed use is **consistent** with the Comprehensive Plan.

Development Support and Constraints

Hall County Environmental Health

In an email dated May 31, 2022 Emily McGahee stated that the development “Must meet all Environmental Health commercial septic system permitting requirements if able to be permitted by Environmental Health. Non-domestic wastewater treatment and disposal may be required to be permitted through EPD. Further determination will be made during the civil plan review process. A detailed business plan and detailed waste stream analysis (including flow) 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 may be required after review of business plan.”

Hall County Fire Services

In a letter dated June 1, 2022 Lieutenant John Hornick provided the following comments:

- 1) Fire apparatus accessibility must meet IFC minimum standards.
- 2) Fire hydrants will be required inside development.
- 3) Electronic controlled access gate(s) will require a Knox override switch for Fire Department access.
- 4) Required: onsite fire hydrants and fire protection system will be supported by a dedicated fire line complete with fire vault. See Gainesville Water FireVault Detail.

Per Hall County GIS, the subject property is located approximately 5.0 miles from Hall County Fire Station #1, located at 2460 Athens Highway. There is a fire hydrants shown on Hall County GIS in the western corner of the subject parcel, along Athens Highway.

Hall County Public Works and Utilities

In a memorandum dated June 2, 2022 from Srikanth Yamala, Director of Public Works and Utilities, the following comments were provided:

Engineering

The 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.

Avoid impacts to FEMA and Hall County flood plain.

Traffic

Driveway must be permitted through GDOT.

Utilities

Sewer is unavailable; Septic System required.

Hall County Tax Assessors

In an email dated May 17, 2021 Erika Vargas with the Tax Assessors office stated that this property is under the conservation covenant which started in 2021. Ms. Vargas states that the applicants reached out to their office and are aware that the rezoning will not breach the covenant but a change in use will.

Water Service

Per Hall County GIS, there is access to public water along Athens Highway.

Georgia Department of Transportation

In an email dated June 1, 2022, Parker Niebauer, District 1 Traffic Operations Supervisor stated that this project will require GDOT coordination.

Proposed Development Standards:

Standard	Proposed	Official Code of Hall County	
Min Lot Area:	15,000 sq. ft.	15,000 sq. ft. (§17.240.010)	
Max Impervious Area:	80%	80% of lot area (§17.240.110)	
Max Building	400,000 sq. ft.	80% of lot area (§17.240.110)	
Max Building Height	50 ft.	≤ three stories (§17.420.050.H.1.B)	
Min Lot Frontage:	100 ft. (if subdivided)	150 feet (§16.50.040)	
Front Building Setback (interior street):	30 feet	NA	
Front Building Setback (US129):	75 feet from c/l or 50 feet from property line,	100 feet from centerline of arterial road (§17.240.040)	
	whichever is greater		
Exterior Buffer:	25 feet	50 feet (§17.420.050.C.2.C)	
Parking Ratio:	Based upon user design needs but not to exceed maximum impervious area as noted above.	Office, office building or studio	3.5 spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (§17.250.20A)
		Warehousing	1 space for each 2 employees (§17.250.20A)

		Industrial uses	1.6 spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (§17.250.20A)
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Zoning Analysis

- The proposed use for the property as a truck terminal, maintenance shop, and office space is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan designation of a Mixeduse Corridor as there is an existing industrial use on an adjacent parcel.
- Per §17.180.090.B.2 of the Official Code of Hall County “The development controls for the district shall be detailed (lot coverage, setbacks, building heights, lot sizes, etc.). If standards are not specifically proposed, then the applicable standards in the light industrial (I-I) district, together with the screening and buffer requirements, shall apply.”
 - The applicant has provided proposed development standards, which have been listed above. For any standards that are not provided the requirements of the Official Code of Hall County shall apply, as outlined above.
- §17.250.020A of the Official Code of Hall County lists the following minimum parking standards for the development:
 - Office, office building or studio:
 - 3.5 spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (§17.250.20A)
 - Warehousing:
 - 1 space for each 2 employees (§17.250.20A)
 - Industrial uses:
 - 1.6 spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (§17.250.20A)
- The applicant has proposed specific maximums for different parking types on the site. Specifically, there are 175 tractor parking spaces, 222 employee parking spaces, 249 loading bays, and 320 trailer parking spaces, but no information has been provided as to how those standards have been determined.
- The GCOD provides guidelines for non-residential property development. The guidelines apply to both permitted uses and development standards.
 - Within the GCOD, the following uses are prohibited: adult entertainment, junk yards, and billboard signs.
 - Uses subject to the approval of the Hall County Board of Commissioners include: self-storage warehouses, vehicle sales lots (new or used), automobile repair and maintenance, commercial outdoor recreation, car wash, and outdoor storage.
 - The applicant has requested the approval of automobile repair and maintenance for the subject parcel.
- Per §17.420.050.C.2.c, where an industrial zoning district abuts property zoned for residential or agricultural uses, the minimum width shall be 50 feet.

- The applicant has proposed a 50 foot exterior buffer along all property lines with the exception of the front along Athens Highway. ▀ This **meets** the standard.
- Per §17.420.050.D.2.a, a ten-foot wide landscape strip is required along each street frontage, continuous along the frontage except for perpendicular crossings for driveways and utilities.
 - This is not depicted on the applicant's submitted site plan; it is **unable to be determined** if this standard is met.
- Per §17.420.050.D.3, in addition to general perimeter landscaping and required buffers, if a loading or service area is located within 50 feet of a side or rear lot line abutting property that is residentially zoned or used for residential purposes, or public or institutional use, then the loading or service areas shall be surrounded by either a six feet high masonry screening wall, or a six feet high solid wooden fence, placed on the inside of the landscaped buffer required in section 17.420.050.C.
 - This is not depicted on the applicant's submitted site plan; it is **unable to be determined** if this standard is met.
- Per §17.420.050.E.2, all parking areas shall be paved with asphalt or concrete (or other pervious materials approved by the director).
 - The site plan states that all parking areas will be concrete pavement. This **meets** the standard.
- Per §17.420.050.E.4.A, each parking area over 50 spaces shall include landscaped islands within the parking area equivalent to not less than five to ten percent with planning director discretion of the total paved area of the parking lot.

The applicant is proposing to only do this in the employee parking lot. This **does not** meet the GCOD standard.
- Per §17.420.050.H.2, building materials for all four sides of a new building are restricted to the following: brick, stone, and glass or glass block. Up to 50% of the surface area of each side may be stucco, and up to 50% of the surface area of each side of a principal building may be split-face block/concrete masonry unit. *Concrete block, painted concrete block, tilt-up and pre-cast concrete are not allowed.*
 - The applicant is requesting the following variances from this standard:
 - ▀ Allow exterior walls of the buildings to be pre-engineered metal building, EIFS, and stucco. Front and 50 feet along both sides of office shall be EIFS or stucco.
- Metal buildings are not permitted within the GCOD. This **does not** meet the standard.
- Per §17.420.050.H.3, roof materials for pitched roofs shall be limited to architectural grade composition shingles, natural slate, natural terra cotta, natural wood shake, or factory finished metal with standing seams.
 - The applicant is requesting approval for standing seam or architectural metal roof panels, with colors approved by the Planning Director. This **meets** the GCOD standard,
- Per §17.420.050.4.b, rooftop mechanical equipment, including HVAC and utility equipment shall be screened from adjacent streets, sidewalks, residential, public and institutional uses. Screening shall consist of parapet walls or an opaque enclosure around the equipment that is constructed of one of the materials used on the primary facade of

the principal structure ○ The applicant is requesting roof-top HVAC units to be installed with screening along the front of the building.

- There is potential that the rooftop mechanical equipment may still be visible from the adjoining properties. This **does not** meet the GCOD standard.

- Per §17.420.050.F.1 outdoor lighting shall be provided on all public streets and parking lots.
 - No lighting is proposed on the site plan or in the narrative; it is **unable to be determined** if this condition is met.
- Per §17.420.050.F.4.a/b, internally illuminated signs, automatic changeable copy signs, and externally mounted neon signs are prohibited. Signs may be illuminated with external lighting fixtures provided that fixtures are directed downward and away from streets and adjacent property and public streets. All lighting shall have recessed luminaires, or be semi-cutoff luminary fixtures.

The applicant is requesting a variance from the GCOD architectural standards in order to utilize internal illumination and halo style lighting. This **does not** meet GCOD standards.

- §17.420.060.1 Monument signs establishes requirements for monument signs, and allows one ground mounted monument sign to be permitted per lot. The maximum sign area and height will be based on the standards set forth in this section and are listed below:

Gross floor area of buildings	Maximum sign area	Maximum sign height
0—10,000 sq. ft.	32 sq. ft. (each side)	8 ft. above street grade
10,001—50,000 sq. ft.	48 sq. ft. (each side)	8 ft. above street grade
50,001—100,000 sq. ft.	64 sq. ft. (each side)	10 ft. above street grade
Over 100,000 sq. ft.	96 sq. ft. (each side)	12 ft. above street grade

- The applicant is requesting one internally illuminated sign monument sign at the main entrance for the development based on an estimated 230,000 square feet of building-out. This **meets** GCOD standards in sign area, but **does not meet** if internally illuminated.

Variations Requested:

- a. Allow exterior walls of the buildings to be pre-engineered metal building, EIFS, and stucco. Front and 50 feet along both sides of office shall be EIFS or stucco. Maintenance shop front shall be EIFS or stucco. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 H
- b. Allow standing seam or architectural metal roof panels on all building structures except for gas canopy, with colors approved by the Planning Director. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 H
- c. Roof-top HVAC units shall be installed with screening along front of building. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 D

- d. Allow a primary pylon sign, at main entrance into the Property, with dimensions of what maximum sq. ft. the code will allow, based upon the projected maximum buildout of 230,000 square feet. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.060
- e. Allow the pylon sign to use of the "Halo" or back-lit type. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 F
- f. Allow the use of LED exterior lighting, whether pole mounted or attached the building or structures. See Title 17, Ch. 17.420.050 F
- g. Allow 30' front building setback from property line. See Title 17, Ch. 17.240.01 O
- h. Employee parking areas will meet Gateway Corridor Overlay landscape requirements.
- i. Allow more than 125 percent of the minimum allowable parking spaces. See Title 17, Ch. 17.240.010
- j. A 50' buffer shall be placed along the exterior boundaries abutting residential zoned properties.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the applicant's request with the following conditions:

- 1. The subject property shall be subject to the conditions of zoning approved on January 27, 2022 for the application of the same name and listed below:
- 1. The development shall conform substantially with the proposed narrative, site plan, and variances below. Building layout and orientation may shift, but the maximum thresholds and uses outlined in the project narrative and on the site plan shall apply.
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 - d. Allow a primary pylon sign, at main entrance into the property, with dimensions of what maximum sq. ft. the code will allow, based upon the projected maximum build-out of 2300,000 SF.
 - e. Allow the pylon sign to use of the "Halo" or back-lit type.
 - f. Allow the use of LED exterior lighting, whether pole mounted or attached the building or structures.

- g. Allow a 30' front building setback from property line.
 - h. Employee parking areas will meet Gateway Corridor Overlay landscape requirements.
 - i. Allow more than 125 percent of the minimum allowable parking spaces.
 - j. Applicant shall install a 12' high composite wall approximately 5-10 feet off western boundary to extend to the rear of the property until it reaches the creek.
 - k. A 50' buffer shall be placed along the exterior boundaries, except for the side pf property facing Athens Highway.
2. All future development shall be subject to all standards set forth by the Gateway Corridor Overlay District; no variances to these standards shall be approved, unless approved by the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners.
 3. All access off Athens Highway shall be approved and permitted by GDOT.
 4. Any outdoor storage shall be screened in accordance with §17.260.020 of the Official Code of Hall County.
 5. All mechanical services shall be conducted within a garage bay.
 6. Elevations depicting the proposed building shall be submitted to the Planning Department for approval of the director during the Development Review process. No building permit shall be issued for the development without the approval of said elevations.
 7. All conditions of zoning be made a part of any plat recorded for this property.
 8. All previous conditions of zoning shall apply except as specifically modified in this approval.

Excerpts from the minutes of the June 20, 2022 meeting

Applicant's Presentation:

Randi Doveton, Planning Director, presented a summary of the request.

Tyler Smith, 340 Jesse Jewell Parkway, Gainesville, presented the request. The applicant stated that tract three needed to be integrated for parking and to allow the development to be improved over a larger footprint. The applicant stated that this will not increase traffic flow. The applicant stated that they would like verbiage of the wall on the western bound to be specified as on the west bound of tract one, neighboring the school.

Stan Richards, 600 Gillam Road, Wilmington, Ohio, presented the request. The applicant stated that entrance access will not change at all. The applicant stated that the only change is the fuel island, which will be even with the shop area to have eyes on it at all times.

Public Forum:

Trey Davis, 4290 Salvage, spoke in favor. Favored kept terminals, maintenance, and landscaping.

Planning Commission Comments:

Mr. Braswell requested clarification from Mr. Smith on the request to modify a staff condition.

Motion: A motion to approve, with conditions was made by Mr. Hunt and seconded by Mr. Bell. Vote: 4-0 (Varner absent)

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5. *All mechanical services shall be conducted within a garage bay.*
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