

**CLEMSON HOME CENTER
A PROPOSED COMMERCIAL PLANNED DEVELOPMENT REQUEST
BY PARAMOUNT DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ISSAQUEENA TRAIL AND HWY 123**

FACT SHEET

Docket & File #: R-08-03

Applicant: Paramount Development Corporation

Property Owners: George Davenport and Tiger Paw Development

Property Location: Northeast corner of the intersection of Issaqueena Trail and Highway 123

Property Size: 19.59 acres

PIN: 4064-14-24-6243 and part of 4064-14-34-8733 as shown on the boundary survey.

Request: To rezone the parcel from PD, Planned Development (Hwy 123, Issaqueena Trail Residential/Commercial Planned Development) to PD, Planned Development (Clemson Home Center Planned Development)

Current Zoning: PD, Planned Development (Hwy 123, Issaqueena Trail Residential/Commercial Planned Development)

Current Land Use: Undeveloped tract.

Adjacent Land Uses:

North

- Multi-Household Residential [Zoned PD] --- Preston Pointe
- Undeveloped Commercial Parcel [Zoned PD]

South

- Highway 123 Road R-O-W

East

- Undeveloped Residential Parcel [Zoned PD]

West

- Issaqueena Trail Road R-O-W
- Single-family — Ashley Estates subdivision [Zoned R-20]
- Undeveloped Land [Zoned R-20]

CONFORMITY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND THE IMPACT OF THE AMENDMENT ON THE ELEMENTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- 1. What is the relationship of this request to the 2014 Comprehensive Plan?**
- 2. Does the request support or violate the plan?**

Vision: The vision statement of the City reads: “The City of Clemson is a university town that provides a strong sense of community and a high quality of life for its residents. University students add to its diversity and vitality. The City is dedicated to providing a quality living environment for all its residents by ensuring a balanced, compatible, and healthy mix of residential and commercial development, while preserving and improving its natural resources, and promotes its image as a desirable, visually attractive, safe, and economically stable residential community. The City actively seeks cooperation with its neighbors to ensure the fulfillment of its vision.”

Goals and Objectives: The goals and objectives of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan that pertain to the rezoning request are listed below.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Goal 2. Protect, maintain, and enhance City’s urban forest resources which include trees on public and private properties.

Objective 2.1. Maximize the amenity value of the City’s abundant natural resources in planning and development decisions.

Strategy 2.1.1. Ensure that the planting of new trees and retention of existing trees is part of land development activities in the city.

Objective 2.2. Preserve existing trees and forests.

Goal 3. Protect the physical environment and enhance the character, quality and livability of the city by preserving the natural environment as an integral part of the development process.

Objective 3.1. Maintain and enhance habitat diversity for wildlife.

Strategy 3.1.2. Promote preservation of natural areas in new developments.

Objective 3.2. Promote and preserve wildlife habitat in backyards, parks, and public spaces.

Goal 4. Maintain quality and quantity of surface water.

Objective 4.1. Preserve and enhance the existing network of lake and stream watersheds and their aquatic habitats.

Strategy 4.1.2. Preserve and protect the quality of surface water resources from impacts of development.

Objective 4.2. Support water conservation and encourage measures to reduce water supply demands.

Strategy 4.2.2. Promote drought-tolerant and native species in private and public landscaping projects.

Strategy 4.3.3. Preserve and enhance buffer areas around water bodies to mitigate environmental and visual impact from adjacent uses and activities.

Goal 5. Increase or maintain quality and quantity of groundwater supplies.

Strategy 5.1.3. Encourage creative methods that slow and absorb stormwater in new developments.

Goal 6. Promote pollution prevention practices to achieve sustainable use of natural resources and protect the environment and human health.

Strategy 6.1.1. Promote public transit, cycling and pedestrian movement as alternatives to automobile transportation.

Strategy 6.1.3. Promote and encourage green development practices.

Goal 9. Enhance the quality of life through the preservation of scenic and natural resources.

Objective 9.1. Preserve and enhance visible topographic and other features that contribute to the City's scenic character.

Strategy 9.1.2. Promote conservation buffers around water resources.

Objective 9.3. Ensure that the design of new developments complements and enhances the city's unique character.

ECONOMIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Goal 1. Make the City an attractive environment for economic development by maintaining and improving the quality of life in the City.

Objective 1.3. Encourage sustainable development.

Goal 4. Promote a balance between the City's commercial and residential property tax revenues that will encourage enhanced quality of life for City residents and businesses.

Objective 4.1. Develop policies that promote sustainable levels of growth while also effecting balance between the cost of services and funding sources.

Strategy 4.1.3. Evaluate the effectiveness of existing incentives that encourage infill and redevelopment of land in designated areas to help strengthen tax base of areas with existing public services and infrastructure.

Objective 4.2. Develop annexation and growth plans to address new development at the City's edge and infill development within the City.

Strategy 4.2.1. Designate areas that are appropriate for infill development, such as underutilized commercial parcels on existing commercial corridors.

Strategy 4.2.5. Develop new zoning and land use standards that will ensure smart growth in potential annexation areas as well as infill and redevelopment areas

Objective 6.2. Encourage infill and/or redevelopment of existing commercial sites along commercial corridors.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Goal 1. Improve vehicular and pedestrian access in and around Clemson.

Objective 1.2. Improve traffic flow by reducing congestion on the major corridors serving the City and through traffic on neighborhood streets.

Objective 1.3. Improve pedestrian safety throughout the city.

LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Goal 1. Maintain and enhance the character and quality of life in residential areas.

Objective 1.2. Ensure that all development is compatible with the scale, historic character, and adjacent uses in the area.

Objective 1.4. Protect the quality of life in existing neighborhoods.

Strategy 2.1.2. Revise PD district regulations to promote mixed-use development and “smart growth” designs while reducing the “up-front” requirements and increasing opportunities for public involvement.

Strategy 2.1.3. Create standards that encourage transit oriented development as a method of encouraging the use of public transit.

Objective 2.3. Encourage preservation of open space and environmentally responsible development

Goal 5. Ensure that the City is well served by attractive commercial districts in appropriate locations that meet the day-to-day needs of its residents and visitors.

Objective 5.1. Provide a broad range of convenient shopping venues

Strategy 5.1.1. Locate primary shopping areas on major arterials and transit routes, including Highways 123, 76, and 93 north of Highway 123 intersection.

Goal 6. Maximize the benefits derived from the City’s investment in community facilities and infrastructure.

Objective 6.1. Enhance land use policies that promote efficient use of public infrastructure.

Strategy 6.1.1. Establish and maintain zoning districts consistent with availability of public infrastructure/services.

Objective 6.3. Update existing City Ordinances to promote efficient use of public infrastructure.

Goal 8. Achieve a sustainable balance between the development activities, preservation of natural resources, and open space in the City.

Objective 8.1. Ensure that local ordinances reflect a high priority for environmental concerns.

Objective 8.2. Establish a unified open space and greenways network that connects city parks, areas adjacent to the lake, floodplains, and areas along selected highway corridors and bicycle and pedestrian ways.

Objective 8.3. Encourage preservation of existing trees and forests.

Objective 8.4. Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater supplies.

Objective 8.7. Preserve and enhance scenic qualities along major roadways and gateways to the City.

Goal 9. Promote sustainable growth management practices.

3. Are the uses permitted by the proposed change appropriate in this area?

The proposed plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan 2014 and with the established zoning in the area. The proposed Planned Development imposes more stringent standards than does the current Planned Development.

4. Are there adequate roads and other public services, or can they be provided to serve the needs of development likely to take place as a result of this change? Is the development in accord with any existing or proposed plans for providing water and/or sewer to the area?

Water and sewer service for this project can be provided by the City of Clemson. The City's Utilities and Engineering Departments have met with the applicant and apprised him of the upgrades necessary to meet both City and DHEC standards. Staff does not anticipate any unusual problems in this regard

CATS has reviewed the plans and has no problems with the proposed layout. It should be noted that service is not currently available to this site, but the layout is appropriate should funding and/or routes allow the expansion in the future.

The Department of Public Works has reviewed the plans and has not issues at this time.

The City Police and Fire services do not anticipate problems in serving this project as it is contiguous to the existing City limits.

5. Is the site in a flood-prone area based on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps?

This property is shown as Flood Zone: X "Areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain" on Map Number: 45077C0383D, Effective Date: April 16, 2008.

6.a. How much vacant land currently exists in this location, as well as citywide, which is zoned PD, Planned Development?

N/A

6. b. Are there any special circumstances, which may make a substantial part of such vacant land unavailable for development?

N/A

7. What does the Zoning Ordinance say about the basis for approving rezoning requests?

According to Sections 19-803 (4) and (5) of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission review shall include a determination of whether the proposed amendment is in conformity with the Comprehensive Plan and evaluation of the impact of the amendment on elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Commission shall file with City Council its report and recommendation on the proposed amendment within thirty (30) days after review of the proposed amendment. The time for review may be extended by vote of City Council. If the Planning Commission fails to submit a report within the prescribed time, it shall be deemed to have recommended approval of the proposed amendment.

8. How does the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Generalized Future Land Use System address this area?

This area is designated as Commercial on the Generalized Future Land Use Map (Map IX-4) of the Comprehensive Plan 2014.

9. What is the minimum size required for the establishment of a new zoning district?

The Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum of 2 contiguous acres for the rezoning of this property to a planned development (Sec. 19-314 (c) 1. Minimum site area)

The tract proposed for this Planned Development is 19.59 acres in size.

STAFF REPORT:

Staff has worked with the applicant, Paramount Development Corporation, to prepare the final ordinance and supporting documentation for the Clemson Home Center Planned Development. The following is a summary of the main issues previously discussed by the Planning Commission and the applicant.

- The size of the home improvement center has been reduced to 111,348 square feet building footprint with a total square footage of 137,916 including the Garden Center. This represents approximately a 20,000 sq. ft. reduction from the original footprint discussed with the Commission.
- Sprague and Sprague Consulting Engineers prepared a traffic impact study for this project. The study was done in September after the University's fall semester began so as to capture the full impacts of the student traffic in the counts used to formulate the study's findings. A PDF copy of this report was posted online along with the other documents and exhibits. A bound copy was also provided for public review at the Planning Department office. A second copy was given to the City Engineer for his review and comment. The major recommendations of the study were as follows:
 - o Acceleration/deceleration lanes need to be constructed at the intersection of Issaqueena Trail and Tramlaw Court to allow traffic entering and exiting the site to queue of the way of through traffic on Issaqueena Trail. The PD includes these turn lanes in the site infrastructure. They will be installed by the developer subject to SCDOT permits since Issaqueena Trail is a State road.
 - o The study recommends the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Issaqueena Trail and Tramlaw Court. The City plans to work with the developer to install a mast-arm signal at this location, consistent with the style used in other places in the City.

- o As with the traffic impact study conducted for the Patrick Square Planned Development, this study addresses the need for improvements at the Hwy 123 interchange by the year 2012. The applicant is meeting with SCDOT to discuss this issue, as well as, the process for acquiring approval of the proposed improvements proposed as part of the PD. The City will work with both developers and DOT to resolve these issues as the traffic patterns evolve over the life of these projects.
 - o The study recommends that the intersection at Cambridge Drive and Issaqueena Trail will need to either be signalized by the year 2012 or turn lanes added to accommodate the overall increase in traffic largely generated by a housing project under development in Pickens County. The City intends to work with the County to resolve this situation, likely seeking funding support for this work.
 - o The proposed right-in and right-out configuration for the proposed second entrance onto Issaqueena Trail was found to be an appropriate design solution.
- The number of parking spaces was calculated using cross-easement parking across the entire site, including the out-parcels fronting along Issaqueena Trail.
 - The proposed buffers expand both the depth and quality of the materials proposed as compared with the buffers specified in the original Hwy 123, Issaqueena Trail PD. Along Hwy 123, these buffer areas will remain undisturbed except as noted for the construction of the stormwater retention pond. If any tree is found to be damaged or diseased within this area, it can be removed if that condition is verified by a certified Arborist. It shall be replaced by an upper-story tree of the same species as the one removed to help promote a healthy and sustainable growth.
 - A berm has been added along Issaqueena Trail as an interim screen to minimize views of the construction of the home improvement center. The berm will be maintained until the out-parcels are developed. The berm will be retained permanently for any portion of the buffer along Issaqueena Trail where a vehicular use directly abuts the 35' setback. The berm may be removed if a building is placed adjacent to the 35' setback/buffer.
 - A landscaped tree-lined boulevard has been added flanking either side of the second entrance between the two out-parcels. The boulevard will be extended through the larger parcel adding additional trees in the main parking area. Additional landscaping has been provided throughout the site.
 - Additional trees have been added to the sidewalks in front of and to the northern side of the home improvement center as requested by the Planning Commission.
 - The building façade for the home improvement center has been enhanced with brick elements to break-up the expanse of the building's length. The primary material will be a stucco treatment. These materials will be continued around to the back of the building to present a finished look where visible on Hwy 123 after the removal of trees for the stormwater pond's construction.
 - The height of the fence enclosing the garden center has been lowered from 20' to 11' 3" along the front of the building. This gives this portion of the garden center a more 'pedestrian scale' while still allowing the higher fence along the back as a security measure.
 - A cross-section and grading plan for the proposed stormwater detention pond have been provided. The landscape plans include a decorative black metal fence to provide security around the pond and in areas where steep slopes create potential safety concerns. A combination of fast growing and long-term materials are provided on the plan to provide an interim solution to the screening issues for the area where the existing tree cover will be lost due to the construction of the pond.

- Sidewalks and pedestrian walks have been added along Issaqueena Trail and through the entire project. Marked walkways have also been added to connect this project to the existing development in the original PD, Preston Pointe.
- “Night sky” compatible lighting will be used throughout the project along with language governing the hours of operation. Other than approved security lighting and decorative lighting in landscaped areas, all exterior lighting shall be turned off between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. All deliveries are required to be made while the lights are still on. The loading bay was moved to the Hwy 123 side of the building to minimize noise concerns raised by adjacent neighborhoods. The bays will be screened and buffered which should further minimize noise impacts. A recycling collection area is also planned for the rear of the building and is also screened by targeted landscaping.
- Design standards that relate to the regulations adopted for the Patrick Square PD and in several of the City’s architectural overlays are proposed for the out-parcels along Issaqueena Trail. These standards will require a minimum of 40% of the building facades to be built along the 35’ setback from Issaqueena Trail and/or the 8’ setback along the tree-lined entrance between Areas II & III. These standards include specific requirements that these buildings be designed to give the feel of a streetscape where the building were built over time rather than a single exterior appearance typical to a strip shopping center. These standards cover materials, requirements for finished entrances on both sides of the building, connections to sidewalks, color schemes, percentages of windows on a façade, and building signage. There are also standards addressing sidewalk sales, dumpster screening, and landscaping within these Areas.
- The list of allowable uses has been refined. Auto leasing & sales, service station, service shop, cafeteria, theatre, bowling alley, billiard parlor, “adult” book store, or other place of recreation or amusement are not allowable uses in this PD. No fast food restaurants with drive-through elements are permitted. Other restaurants are allowed. A convenience store with gas islands is allowable only in Area II (outparcel closest to the Hwy 123 intersection), but the gas islands just be internal to the site and screened from view from the streets/exterior property. Likewise, a financial institution with drive-through elements is allowed, but those elements cannot be placed on the Issaqueena Trail façade. Specific standards have been developed for both.
- Two monument signs are proposed at the main entrances. The one at the intersection of Issaqueena Trail and Tramlaw Court will be a multi-tenant sign no bigger than 120 sq ft. The maximum height of this sign is 10’ (5’ lower than the current allowance). The second sign will be an entry feature containing only the development name, a maximum of 32 sq ft in size. It will be located at the entrance between Areas II & III and will be indirectly illuminated. A reservation for a third sign is included that will be a maximum of 32 square feet of which 16 sq ft may be used for changeable copy. This sign shall only be permitted if a convenience store is located in Area II to allow low-key advertising of fuel prices. Landscaping will be placed around all signage as shown on the Landscape plan.

STAFF COMMENTS:

In reviewing the request to change the zoning for this property, staff considered several significant points. They are:

- The plans, exhibits, and documents for the Clemson Home Center Planned Development have been reviewed by the various City departments (Police, CATS, Engineering, Public Works, and Utilities). Both Engineering and Utilities have approved the plans with the notation their approval is of the general site plans only. Specific construction documents and approvals are required before any site work can begin. The Police approved with no notations. CATS approved the site plan, but future service is dependent on funding issues. Public Works has approved the plans as well.
- The Planning and Codes Administration staff has reviewed these documents in great detail. We feel the language addresses the necessary issues in a reasonable manner.
- Staff has discussed the recommendations of the traffic study with both the City Administrator and the City Engineer. Ben Rankin noted on his comments that the construction of the turn lanes will require coordination between the developer, the City, and SCDOT. The City will work with the developer to install the traffic signal as recommended at the intersection of Tramlaw Court and Issaqueena Trail since the City is interested in upgrading this light to a mast-arm design consistent with others in the City. The City will work with Pickens County to resolve concerns at the Cambridge Drive intersection. Similarly, Issaqueena Trail and Hwy 123 are both State roads, so the City will work with SCDOT to address concerns about the Hwy 123 interchange.
- There is adequate capacity for all necessary utilities to serve this project. Letters have been provided by the various companies or departments involved.
- The developer has wrapped the building with the same materials and provided additional landscaping to minimize the visual impact from 123 after the retention pond is constructed. A decorative metal fence and plantings will help minimize the view as newer upper-story trees begin to fill in the gaps.
- This property is currently zoned Planned Development, with these particular parcels designated for commercial use. While the larger of the parcels currently allows no buildings over 100,000 sq ft, the current language does not limit the scope of construction to one building on this parcel. The proposed home improvement center is planned with an 111,348 square foot building footprint with a total square footage of 137,916 including the Garden Center. Under this proposal, that would be the only building constructed on that portion of the PD, resulting in a substantially lower overall build-out of this property than is currently allowable under the original planned development. A multiple building development with a total sq footage exceeding 138,000 sq ft would be permitted under the current PD with no additional conditions.
- Further, the proposed Clemson Home Center PD ordinance contains more exacting requirements for stormwater management, landscaping, architectural design, lighting ('Night Sky'), signage, and buffers than the original PD. A good example of this is the proposed height for buildings in Areas II & III is limited to 30', a 20' reduction from the current allowance. The proposed design standards are similar to the ones adopted for Patrick Square and some of the City's architectural overlays.
- The requirements for parking have also been reduced by the recombination of the parcels into a single site allowing cross-easement parking that assures ample parking for the entire development while minimizing unnecessary impervious surface.

- Finally, the proposed PD addresses several issues of concern to adjacent properties not currently covered in the original ordinance, specifically, controls on the hours of operation, the location of the delivery bays, and improvements to the Tramlaw intersection.
- One of the factors generally considered in a rezoning petition is the availability of other property already zoned in a similar manner. With the redevelopment of the Ole Norms property into the Tillman Village development, the plans for the Clemson Grande on the site of the old Holiday Inn, and the pending construction of an assisted living complex on the undeveloped commercial land adjacent to Ingles, there aren't any larger commercially zoned tracts left in the City. The Patrick Square Planned Development is under construction to the south of the Hwy 123 interchange, including a large commercial 'town center'. Further, this tract is immediately contiguous to Hwy 123 allowing for much of the traffic it will generate to be funneled onto a highway designed to accommodate that type of traffic.
- The Hwy 123/East Clemson corridor is the City's main remaining growth corridor as identified by the City of Clemson's Comprehensive Plan 2014 (See Map IX-6). Clemson has an unusually high level of 'build-out' meaning there is not a lot of undeveloped land left in our current corporate limits. This situation is further complicated by the fact Clemson is virtually landlocked by the University, the lake, and the two adjacent towns. The land contained in the Hwy 123, Issaqueena Trail Planned Development is the last tract that can be annexed into Clemson on the northern side of Hwy 123 due to a court ordered line giving that portion of the corridor to the Town of Central. This request is consistent with the City's long-term growth strategies as outline in that document.
- The developer has expressed willingness to petition the City to rename Tramlaw Court if this remains a concern.

Based on a review of these factors, staff feels the proposed Clemson Home Center Planned Development provides greater protection to the community as a whole and to the surrounding neighborhoods in particular than do the current standards.