

## TOWN COUNCIL

### STAFF REPORT

#### Growth Management Department



|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>MEETING DATE:</b>    | November 14, 2023  |
| <b>PROJECT:</b>         | Consideration of the Intent to Annex Application of Mosaic Development, LLC's One Hundred Percent (100%) Annexation Petition to Annex Certain Real Property Contiguous to the Town of Bluffton's Corporate Boundaries Consisting of a Total of 7.76 Acres, More or Less, Located North-East of the Intersection of Bluffton Parkway and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and Bearing Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600 029 000 0002 0000 |
| <b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b> | Kevin Icard, AICP, Director of Growth Management   |

**REQUEST:** Town Staff requests that Town Council consider the following:

1. Acceptance of Mosaic Development, LLC's One Hundred Percent (100%) Annexation Petition to Annex Certain Real Property Contiguous to the Town of Bluffton's Corporate Boundaries Consisting of a Total of 7.76 Acres, More or Less, Located North-East of the Intersection of Bluffton Parkway and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170), and Bearing Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600 029 000 0002 0000; and
2. Referral of the request to the Town of Bluffton Negotiating Committee if deemed necessary.

**INTRODUCTION:** On September 11, 2023, in accordance with Section 5-3-150 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina and the *Town of Bluffton Annexation Policy and Procedure Manual* ("Annexation Manual") Mosaic Development, LLC submitted a 100% Annexation Petition Application (Attachment 2) for one parcel totaling 7.76 acres located at 3147 Okatie Highway (the "Property") which is adjacent to properties associated with the Buckwalter Crossroads Master Plan located in the Town of Bluffton's municipal boundary (Attachment 2).

Pursuant to the Annexation Manual, the Applicant requests the Property's incorporation into the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development ("Buckwalter PUD"), Concept Plan and Development Agreement as part of the Buckwalter Commons Land Use Tract, the most permissive land use designation which allows a broad mix of residential and commercial uses, as well as additional development rights totaling one hundred and four (104) Residential Dwelling Units. Should Town Council vote to accept the petition, the Applicant will be required to submit revised application

packages for the concurrent Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Zoning Map Amendment, Buckwalter Development Agreement Amendment, and Buckwalter Concept Plan Amendment.

Per the revision to the Annexation Manual approved by Town Council Resolution on December 8, 2020, the initial step in the public review process is an initial briefing, or “intent to annex”, to Town Council for general discussion of the request and its associated applications such as the appropriate zoning classification and possible negotiation items. At the conclusion of the discussion, Town Council takes action to accept or decline to accept the proposed Annexation Petition by majority vote.

In the event Town Council accepts the petition, additional action by majority vote is necessary to either refer or forgo the referral of request to the Town of Bluffton Negotiating Committee if deemed necessary.

**BACKGROUND:** The Property contains approximately 7.76 acres located within Unincorporated Beaufort County as shown on the Aerial Location Map (Attachment 3). The Property currently has approximately eight (8) manufactured homes.

The Property is currently zoned as Rural (T2R), as shown on the Zoning Map (Attachment 4) which allows a very limited mix of residential and commercial uses such as:

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Single Family Residential                  | 11. Lodging: Inn (up to 24 rooms) |
| 2. Family Compound                            | 12. Mining & Resource Extraction  |
| 3. Group Home                                 | 13. Gasoline Service Stations     |
| 4. Home Business                              | 14. Civic                         |
| 5. Cottage Industry                           | 15. Church                        |
| 6. General Retail 3,500 SF or Less            | 16. Agriculture                   |
| 7. Gas Station/Fuel Sales                     | 17. Recreation                    |
| 8. Animal Services: Kennel                    | 18. Education                     |
| 9. Day Care: Family Home (up to 8 clients)    | 19. Safety                        |
| 10. Lodging: Short-Term Housing Rental (STHR) | 20. Public Assembly               |
|   | 21. Infrastructure                |
|   | 22. Transportation                |
|   | 23. Communications                |

The Rural (T2R) Zone is intended to preserve the rural character of Beaufort County. This Zone applies to areas that consist of sparsely settled lands in an open or cultivated state. It may include large lot residential, farms where animals are raised or crops are grown, parks, woodland, grasslands, trails, and open space areas. The T2 Rural Zone implements the Comprehensive Plan goals of preserving the rural character of portions of Beaufort County.

A Comparison of Current Beaufort County and Proposed Town of Bluffton Zoning District Land Uses is provided as Attachment 5.

The immediately adjacent properties vary as to jurisdiction and zoning as follows:

| Direction | Jurisdiction     | Zoning District | Current Information and Use   |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|---|
| North     | Beaufort County  | Rural (T2R)     | Cornelius Bush (Et Al) - 3131 Okatie Highway - Single Family Residence - Parcel ID: R600-029-000-0003-0000                          |
|           | Beaufort County  | Rural (T2R)     | Margaret Richardson, Heirs of Jessie Bush – 3148 Okatie Highway – Vacant - Parcel ID: R600-029-000-1738-0000                        |
| South     | Town of Bluffton | Buckwalter PUD  | Parcel 8C, LLC; Tom Zinn - Okatie Highway - Undeveloped – Buckwalter Crossroads Master Plan - Parcel ID: R610-029-000-0610-0000     |
|           | Town of Bluffton | Buckwalter PUD  | Parcel 8C, LLC; Tom Zinn – Bluffton Parkway - Undeveloped – Buckwalter Crossroads Master Plan - Parcel ID: R610-029-000-1708-0000   |
|           | Town of Bluffton | Buckwalter PUD  | Parcel 8C, LLC; Tom Zinn – Buckwalter Parkway - Undeveloped – Buckwalter Crossroads Master Plan - Parcel ID: R610-029-000-1710-0000 |
| East      | Beaufort County  | Rural (T2R)     | Jesse Bush Sr. (Heirs Of) - Bufflehead Lane – Undeveloped - Parcel ID: R600-029-000-0144-0000                                       |
| West      | Beaufort County  | Right of Way    | South Carolina Department of Transportation – SC Highway 170 (Okatie Highway)   |

The adjacent properties to the south establishes the required contiguity for annexation as it is within the Town of Bluffton’s Municipal Boundary which are zoned as Buckwalter PUD and designated as Buckwalter Commons Land Use Tract pursuant to the Buckwalter Development Agreement and Concept Plan, as amended, and are part of the Buckwalter Crossroads Master Plan.

The Applicant intends to construct a 104 unit multi-family development on the Property and will seek an amendment to the Buckwalter Crossroads Master Plan to add the subject property. Pursuant to Section 4.2.13.F of the Unified Development Ordinance, 20% of the units, equaling approximately 21 units, as affordable/workforce housing as defined by the Town to provide housing for residents having family incomes of up to 80% & 100%, respectively, of the area median income (“AMI”). As such, affordable/workforce housing is targeted for teachers, police, firefighters, librarians, and other government workers.

The Applicant will also seek incentives pursuant to the Economic Development Incentive Program Ordinance adopted by Town Council on September 12, 2023. The Property is adjacent to an Incentive Area identified in Section 6-145(a)(3) of the Program located at the intersection of SC Hwy 170 and Bluffton Parkway. The Project’s inclusion of affordable/workforce housing may, subject to final determination at a later date, meet the eligibility criteria identified in Section 6-145(a)(5) which includes affordable housing development (Attachment 6).

The Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan Map 8.3 – Future Land Use (Attachment 7) shows the Property is designated as Suburban Living which is defined as:

*The Suburban Living category is intended to include low-density single-family neighborhoods. Much of this category includes portions of large Planned Unit Developments that are under active construction or are built-out. Allowable density is up to three dwelling units per acre and must be at least one dwelling unit per acre. Community amenities such as trails, parks, and centralized swimming pools are encouraged.*

To permit the uses allowed within the Buckwalter Commons Land Use Tract and the utilization of the requested additional 104 Residential Dwelling Units development rights on the Property, the future land use designation will need to be changed to Neighborhood Center or Activity Corridor which are defined as:

1. The **Neighborhood Center** category is intended to guide emerging neighborhood-focused retail clusters throughout the community. These centers, such as Buckwalter Place, provide the opportunity for residents to be within walking distance of grocers, restaurants, retailers, and medical offices. These centers help establish neighborhood identity and are best served when supported by a mix of middle housing and single-family residences within walking or biking distance. These centers are best designed to provide automobile access within a pedestrian-oriented environment. Inclusion of public green space is encouraged.

*Neighborhood centers are based on the same foundation as the Town Center, to create a pedestrian-oriented environment, but the overall design is open for interpretation / adaptation to localized design guidance. Plentiful pedestrian connections ensure long-term health of the neighborhood and anchors the community around the public spaces within the neighborhood center. While neighborhood-serving commercial uses are predominant within the designation, appropriately scaled commercial office space is encouraged to strengthen the mix of uses within the overall community.*

*Development within the district is pedestrian scaled. Buildings up to three stories are appropriate so long as they are properly buffered and screened from any lower intensity uses in the area. Out-lot parcel development should address the street, and parking should be consolidated to the greatest extent possible to enhance the pedestrian environment.*

2. The **Activity Corridor** category includes a mix of high-intensity commercial uses. This category is applied to large portions of the US 278 corridor, near the northern municipal boundary of Bluffton. The corridor includes a mix of regional serving retail uses such as automobile dealerships, wholesale clubs, retail outlets, and department stores, local retail establishments, restaurants, medical offices, and hotels.

*This category is generally automobile oriented. Access is limited along US 278 as the corridor is a six-lane divided highway with dedicated turn lanes and signalized intersections. Sidewalks are not present along most roadways and developments within the district. As this district is surrounded by residential uses additional connections will be established, where feasible, to allow pedestrian access to the commercial uses within the category.*

*Development within the category currently consists of a variety of commercial offices, medical offices, and single-story box retail structures with varying façade treatments. Large retail boxes are set back from the street and include large surface parking lots with outparcel developments. Infill development of high-density housing is highly encouraged within this land use category. Access management along the corridor continues to be a priority as infill development occurs. Any residential infill development is highly encouraged to provide pedestrian connections to surrounding commercial developments to improve overall mobility within the category.*

*To support the economic diversification goals of Bluffton, this land use category may be used for light, unobtrusive, small-scale manufacturing and assembly. These uses should blend with the character of other uses within the district, and should not include heavy freight traffic, outdoor storage and should not impact adjacent uses.*

Lastly, the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan Figure 7.7 – Growth Framework (Attachment 8) shows the Property within a Village Place Type Assembly which the Unified Development Ordinance, Section 6.1.2.C defines as:

*Located in highly developed areas or those areas to be developed, a Village consists of a single center surrounded by compact, complete, and connected neighborhoods providing support for a mixed-use area with moderate intensity. The mixed-use development occurs at the intersection of larger neighborhoods and along corridors connecting multiple neighborhoods.*

**SCHEDULE:** The proposed schedule for the applications is provided as Attachment 9.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Presentation
2. Revised Annexation Application Submittal
3. Aerial Map
4. Zoning Map
5. Land Use Comparison
6. Economic Development Incentive
7. Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan Map 8.3 – Future Land Use
8. Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan Map 8.5 – Growth Framework

9. Draft Schedule

10. Proposed Motion