

Memorandum

TO: City of Dacula Planning Commission /
City of Dacula Mayor and City Council

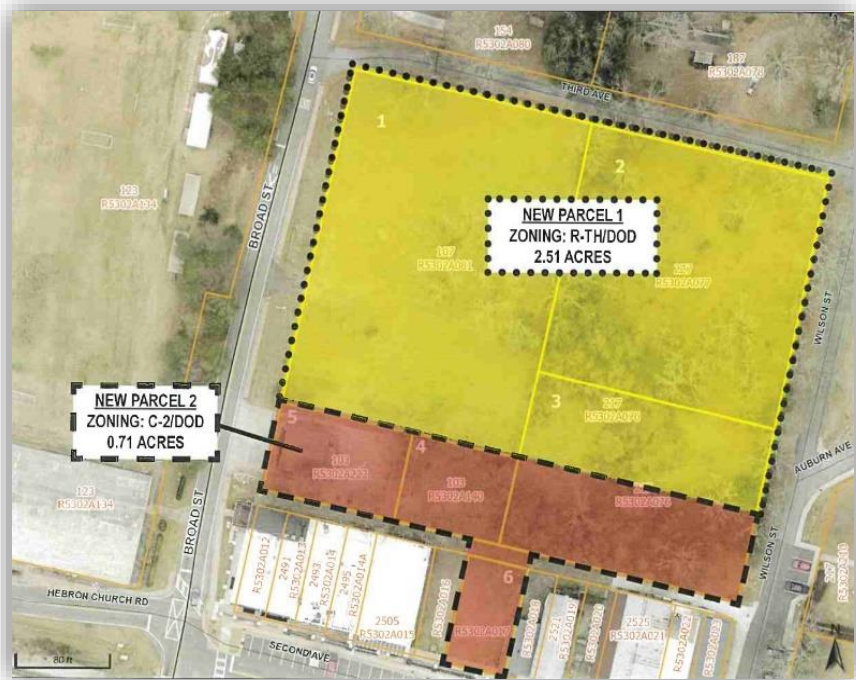
FROM: Hayes Taylor, City Planner

DATE: October 27, 2025 (*Amended October 29, 2025*)

CASES: **2025-CD-RZ-03, 2025-CD-RZ-04 & 2025-CD-VAR-01**

Executive Summary

The Applicant, Hayley Todd on behalf of PEC+, has submitted two applications to rezone five (5) parcels within the Downtown Overlay District from R-1200 DOD, O-I DOD, and C-1 DOD to R-TH DOD and C-2 DOD. Several concurrent Variances are requested in the applications. Six (6) existing parcels would be recombined to create a ±3.28-acre project site to develop a proposed split zoned 40-unit rowhouse community, and pedestrian-scale retail master development.



Property and Surrounding Land Use Information						
Addresses	103 Broad St.	103 Broad St.	107 Broad St.	217 Wilson St.	227 Wilson St.	Second Ave.
Parcel ID #	R5302A222	R530A140	5302A081	R5301A076	R5302A077	5302A017
Current Zoning	C-1 <i>DOD</i>	C-1 <i>DOD</i>	R-1200 <i>DOD</i>	O-I <i>DOD</i>	O-I <i>DOD</i>	C-2 <i>DOD</i>
Proposed Zoning	C-2 <i>DOD</i>	C-2 <i>DOD</i>	R-TH <i>DOD</i>	C-2 <i>DOD</i> / R-TH <i>DOD</i>	R-TH <i>DOD</i>	C-2 <i>DOD</i>
Current Development	Existing Retail, Undeveloped, and City Park					
2050 Comprehensive Plan Character Area	Dacula Downtown					
Streets	Broad Street, Third Avenue, Second Avenue, and Wilson Street are maintained by the City of Dacula					
Surrounding Neighborhood						
North	R-1200 <i>DOD</i> (Single-Family Residential, <i>Downtown Overlay District</i>)					
South	C-2 <i>DOD</i> (General Commercial District, <i>Downtown Overlay District</i>)					
East	C-1 <i>DOD</i> (Neighborhood Commercial District, <i>Downtown Overlay District</i>) & PARK (City Park, <i>Downtown Overlay District</i>)					
West	GOV <i>DOD</i> (Government Facility, <i>Downtown Overlay District</i>)					
Recommendation						
Staff	Approval with staff conditions.					

Existing Land Use and Zoning

The subject property totals ±3.28 acres and is located northeast of the Broad St. and Second Ave. intersection. The north-eastern most portion of the site abuts the Third Ave. and Wilson St. intersection.

The proposed split-zone development is comprised of six (6) parcels with varying zoning classifications and uses. 103 Broad St. is zoned C-1 *DOD* (Neighborhood Commercial District, *Downtown Overlay District*). The property currently contains a legal nonconforming commercial building that has hosted a

variety of businesses in recent years. 107 Broad St. is zoned R-1200 *DOD* (Single-Family Residential District, *Downtown Overlay District*) and is currently undeveloped. 217 Wilson St. and 227 Wilson St. are zoned O-I *DOD* (Office-Institutional District, *Downtown Overlay District*). 217 Wilson St contains an extension of Old Mill Park and contains forty (40) off-street surface parking spaces for common use. 227 Wilson St. has remained vacant since 2007.

The project site is surrounded by a variety of zoning districts such as C-1 *DOD* (Neighborhood Commercial District, *Downtown Overlay District*), C-2 *DOD* (General Business District, *Downtown Overlay District*), GOV (Government Facility), PARK (City Park, *Downtown Overlay District*), and R-1200 *DOD* (Single-Family Residential, *Downtown Overlay District*). Nearby uses include multiple restaurants, a medical office, a park, an educational institution, a rehabilitation center, and a variety of retail and office uses. The Second Ave. commercial strip to the south is zoned C-2 *DOD* (General Commercial District, *Downtown Overlay District*).

The entirety of the site falls within the Downtown Overlay District (DOD). The Overlay, ratified in 2024, imposes site standards and design guidelines on properties within its boundaries to facilitate development and revitalization that is compatible with a traditional, walkable downtown. The adjacent pre-World War II Second Ave. commercial area is the basis for the downtown standards.

The Proposed Development

Site Plan

The applicant is seeking to construct a split-zoned 40-unit rowhouse neighborhood, and two (2) additional commercial units on a ± 3.28 -acre assemblage north of Second Ave. (pictured to the right).

The proposed site plan shows two (2) rowhouse neighborhood ingress/egress points, on Wilson St. and Third Ave. from the ± 2.51 -acre R-TH tract. The rowhouse would face public right-of-way or the proposed interior common open space. The current site plan depicts internal sidewalks, but does not show complete internal connectivity. The mail kiosk and common space are accessible by internal sidewalks that connect rowhouse to the public street. Elevations have not been provided by



the Applicant for the proposed housing product.

The proposed ± 0.77 -acre retail tract would be redeveloped for 5,600 SF of additional commercial retail space, and roughly 1,100 SF of existing commercial space located on Broad Street, across from Dacula High School. The application materials show roughly 22,900 SF of civic space. The delineated civic space includes a publicly accessible privately maintained pedestrian path that connects the residential facing courtyard, the retail component, and the Second Ave. Plaza.

The submitted site plan shows thirteen (13) street parking spaces along Broad Street and Third Avenue, thirty (30) off-street parking spaces for commercial businesses, and two (2) off-street parking spaces per rowhouse. The proposed street-parking along Wilson St. is shown within the residential tract, outside of City right-of-way. On-street parking along Broad St. is proposed within City right-of-way.

Records show that the subject property contains steep topography. The City owned Wilson St. extension of Old Mill Park, and the Second Ave. alley have experienced consistent washout of the gravel parking lot. Increasing the impervious surface would increase stormwater runoff from the site and as such, would require infrastructure improvement.

Analysis

To accommodate the proposed project, the Applicant requests the following:

1. The rezoning of parcels 5302A081, R5302A077, and the northern portion of parcel 5302A076 from R-1200 *DOD*, O-I *DOD*, Park *DOD* to R-TH *DOD*.
2. The rezoning of parcels R530A140, R5302A222 and the southern portion of parcel 5302A076 C-1 *DOD* and Park *DOD* to C-2 *DOD*.
3. A variance to Appendix B, Article 9, Section 917 D.1.c. to allow front loaded off-street.
4. A variance to Appendix B, Article 9, Section 917 D.1.f. to allow two curb cuts within 300 feet.
5. A variance to Appendix B, Article 9, Section 917 H. Table 5, to waive the requirement for a build-to-zone on the east side of the proposed commercial unit accessible from Wilson Street.

Rezoning Request

The subject property is located within the Downtown Overlay District, with a variety of uses bordering the property. The requested rezoning of the ± 2.51 -acre assemblage from the existing zoning districts to R-TH *DOD* (Residential Townhome District, *Downtown Overlay District*) for the development of a front-loaded rowhouse

community. The rezoning request could be considered compatible with nearby residential, commercial, and institutional uses. The parcel's central location within the old town Dacula area allows for amenity-

oriented development, providing future residents with easy access to educational, healthcare, and consumer opportunities.

The applicant additionally requests the rezoning of the remaining ± 0.71 -acre from the current zoning districts to C-2 *DOD* (General Business District, *Downtown Overlay District*). To the south, the old downtown Dacula strip dating back to 1800s along Second Avenue, directly abuts the assemblage. The submitted concept plan is similar to the site design of the existing downtown Dacula, and would be consistent with Second Ave.'s current built-form. The internal pedestrian extension and proposed plaza fronting Second Ave. would tie into the existing pedestrian traffic, providing a natural extension of retail space. The proposed pedestrian path, plaza and courtyard further conform to the objectives of the Downtown Overlay District, and meet the 15% civic space requirement for redevelopments above 3-acres.

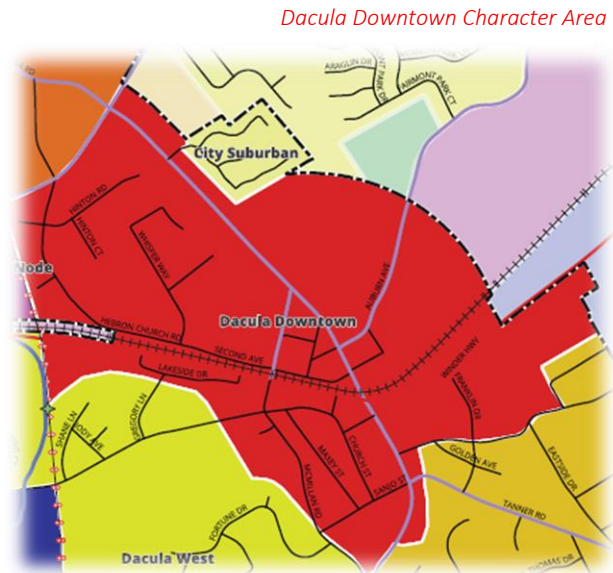
Variance Requests

The applicant additionally requests two-curb cuts within 300 ft, the waiving of the build-to-zone, and front-loaded off-street parking. The subject property's topography would likely prevent the inter-parcel access between the rowhouse neighborhood and the proposed commercial units. Thus, decreasing the feasibility of the commercial units, should an additional curb cut not be allowed.

The submitted concept plan complies with the intent and purpose of the DOD. The proposed internal pedestrian path and orientation of the new commercial units away from the right-of-way lends itself to the front loading of the shared parking area along Wilson St. These circumstances and the requested variances could serve to promote the goal of downtown redevelopment. Given the hardship derived from the topography and the nature of the unique pedestrian site design, staff recommends approval of the requested variances.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency

The proposed development falls within the Dacula Downtown Character Area (City of Dacula 2050 Comprehensive Plan pg. 59). The Dacula Downtown character area land use and zoning considerations call for a mix of “retail, office, and residential” developments that conform with “a downtown character” (pg. 61). The character area description emphasizes the need for a livable, walkable city center with higher densities as appropriate. The Dacula Downtown Land Use & Zoning Considerations further emphasizes the desire for community gathering spaces and pedestrian walkways. Although the requested R-TH designation is not specifically called for in the Guidance for Rezoning table (pg 69), the submitted application could be considered consistent with the character area description, given the pedestrian oriented site plan, inclusion of civic space, and the extension of the downtown development pattern.



Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the rezoning of four (4) parcels north of Second Avenue and to the east of Dacula High School (R5302A077, R530A140, R5302A222 and R5302A017) from R-1200 DOD, O-I DOD, and C-1 DOD to R-TH DOD and C-2 DOD. Staff further recommends the approval of the concurrent Variance requests from the Downtown Overlay District to accommodate the proposed development.

The Department notes the Planning Commission recommended denial, which carried 3-0, for the subject rezoning requests and the associated variances at the October 27, 2025, Planning Commission Public Hearing.

The analysis of the application should be made based upon the “Standards Governing Exercise of the Zoning Power” as stated in Section 1702 of The 2000 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Dacula.

1. Whether the proposed rezoning and variances will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of an adjacent and nearby property?

With the proper conditions, the proposed rezoning and variances could be considered consistent with the adjacent and nearby commercial uses along Second Ave., Dacula High School and the

residences along Third Ave. The proposed rezoning would extend the old town development pattern present along Second Ave.; and would provide transition from commercial to the proposed residential use; and would provide for redevelopment as described in the Comprehensive Plan and Urban Redevelopment Plan.

2. Whether the proposed rezoning and variances will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby properties?

If approved, the recommended conditions would help mitigate any negative impacts on current and future residences.

3. Whether the property to be affected by the proposed rezoning and variances has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned?

Yes, the property has reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

4. Whether the proposed rezoning and variances will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools?

The proposed use is not expected to create excessive or burdensome use for utilities, existing streets, transportation facilities, or schools. The existing stormwater infrastructure downstream of the site will need to be improved to support the increase in impervious surface and stormwater runoff. The site plan shows streetscape improvements to address the additional pedestrian and on-street parking needs. The proposed conditions would require stormwater and streetscape improvements to address the increased infrastructure burden.

5. Whether the proposed rezoning and variances request is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Land Use Plan?

The subject parcel is within the Dacula Downtown Character Area of the City of Dacula's Future Land Use Map. The principal object of the character area is to "decrease vehicular traffic by providing access to trails, sidewalks, and public transport" while facilitating local employment opportunities, proximal to residences in a traditional downtown development pattern (Dacula 2050 Comprehensive Plan pg. 61). Furthermore, the character area policies call for the balance of housing and employment opportunities (pg. 61). The proposed site plan would place called for housing units proximal to additional employment opportunities and resources.

6. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the proposed rezoning and variances?

The proposed development may further the goals of the Downtown Overlay District (DOD), the Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP), and the designated Downtown Dacula character area. The submitted project could be considered to comply with objectives 3, 4, and 5 of the URP, which call for sidewalks/trails, infill housing, and the provision of communal civic space. The URP references the area surrounding the project as the "Second Avenue District," stating that it is primed for "walkable commercial, mixed-use revitalization" on a grid like development pattern

(*Urban Redevelopment Plan*, pg 4). The primary goal of the DOD is to facilitate consistent quality architectural design and a development pattern consistent with pre-World War II town centers. Although the applicant has not submitted elevations for the project, which require additional administrative review, the proposed site design complies with the intent of the DOD.

Recommended Conditions

Land Use and Concept Plan

1. The property shall be developed in accordance with the conceptual site plan prepared by Planners & Engineers Collaborative+, Inc. submitted November 6, 2025, and with the provided zoning conditions. Any substantial deviation from the approved conceptual plan and/or remaining conditions of zoning shall be resubmitted to the City Council for consideration. The City Administrator shall determine what constitutes substantial deviation.
2. No outdoor storage shall be permitted on site.
3. No drive-thru or gas station uses shall be permitted.
4. The developer shall submit the Final Plat to the City of Dacula prior to the issuance of any building permits.
5. The developer shall provide a pedestrian access easement, connecting the public sidewalk, the Second Avenue Plaza, the interior frontage of the proposed retail buildings, and the civic courtyard.
6. Pedestrian access easements shall be provided for sidewalks within private property lines. Sidewalk and on-street parking spaces on private property shall be maintained by the property owner and remain publicly accessible.
7. The proposed retail building contained within “New Parcel #2” with vehicular access to Wilson St may front the pedestrian path in place of the right-of-way. The build to line shall be measured from the internal pedestrian path in place of the sidewalk on Wilson St. to allow for right-of-way fronting off-street parking.

Architectural Design

8. The architectural designs should comply with Downtown Overlay District standards. The proposed elevation, building materials, and colors shall be approved by the Planning & Development Department prior to building permit issuance.
9. A concept plan for proposed Second Avenue plaza and the pedestrian connection extending to the residential parcel shall be submitted to the Planning & Development Department for review and comply with the following standards:
 - a. The pedestrian connection to Second Avenue shall visually resemble the sidewalk along Second Avenue, be a combination of brick and concrete, and be a minimum of six (6)

feet wide.

- b. The concept plan shall include a lighting plan. Lighting shall be directed towards the ground, away from residences. The pedestrian connection shall contain bollard lights, or another pathway lighting option. Lighting alternatives are subject to the approval of the Planning & Development Department.
- c. The plaza shall provide seating, and shade for pedestrians. The pedestrian seating shall include but is not limited to six (6) shaded commercial grade pedestrian benches, two (2) commercial grade picnic tables and corresponding seating, one (1) commercial grade bicycle rack and three (3) trash receptacles in compliance with the examples shown Article 9, Section 917.F.4 of the Zoning Resolution.
- d. The plaza shall contain permanent, commercial grade shade structure. Shade structures may include umbrellas, shade sails, extended awnings, single or multi-panel canopies, and pergolas capable of providing shade for at least eight (8) people.
- e. The landscape plans for the Second Ave. plaza, pedestrian path, and civic courtyard connection shall extend the tree canopy with native trees and vegetation. At minimum, the plaza and pedestrian connection shall include eight (8) additional understory trees.
- f. The plaza shall contain a public art feature, or an alternative central public amenity. The public art feature must be approved by City Council prior to construction.
- g. The civic courtyard shall contain a native specimen tree at the center. The tree must be a minimum of 3 inch DBH and eight (8) feet in height at the time of planting.
- h. The pedestrian plaza must be publicly accessible and maintained by the private property owner.

Landscape and Parking

- 10. Each townhome building shall have landscape features to include, but not necessarily limited to flowerbeds, a minimum of one (1) under story decorative tree, evergreen understory plantings and the like. Subject to review and approval by the City Administrator or his/her designee.
- 11. External street trees shall be of one or a combination of the following species:
 - i. American Hornbeam
 - ii. Bloodgood Japanese Maple
 - iii. Carolina Silverbell
 - iv. Eastern Redbud
 - v. Georgia Oak
 - vi. North Red Oak

- vii. Nuttall Oak
 - viii. Red Maple
 - ix. Shumard Oak
 - x. Southern Sugar Maple
 - xi. Sweet Bay Magnolia
 - xii. American Sycamore
12. A maximum of eighteen (18) front-loaded surface level parking spaces are permitted along Wilson St. "New Parcel #2."
 13. The Wilson St. parking lot shall be shielded from view from the right-of-way by native understory trees or shrubs.
 14. Gravel parking areas shall be prohibited. All parking surfaces shall comply with Article 6, Section 6.6.4 of the Development Regulations and Section D.3.a. of the Downtown Overlay District.

Transportation and Infrastructure

15. All streetlights, area lights, and pedestrian walkway lights must be towards the ground. If the fixtures outlined Section 917.F of the Downtown Overlay District are unavailable, alternatives are subject to the City Administrator's approval.
16. The developer shall provide adequate sidewalk connection from the interior retail buildings to the pedestrian path.
17. The developer shall improve the City owned alleyway behind the Second Ave. buildings. The stormwater improvements shall prevent runoff from draining onto the alleyway. All improvements must be reviewed by the Planning & Development Department.
18. The alleyway improvements are the responsibility of the developer. Maintenance will be the responsibility of the City after improvements have been fully constructed and approved by the City Engineer.
19. The developer must analyze, improve, and reconstruct the downstream stormwater pipe and structure connections from the southeastern corner of the proposed parcel #2 near Wilson St. - south to Second Ave. and at the connection bordering the proposed plaza. The developer shall dedicate stormwater access easements to the City at each connection improvement. All connection improvements must be reviewed by the Planning & Development Department.
20. The developer shall provide six (6) foot wide sidewalks along the entirety of the property frontage of 3rd Avenue, and Wilson Street in compliance with Section 917.C.3.b.1 of Article 9 of the Downtown Overlay District.

21. The developer shall provide eight (8) foot wide sidewalks along the entirety of the property frontage of Broad Street, in compliance with Section 917.C.2.b.1 of Article 9 of the Downtown Overlay District.
22. Parallel parking and external streets must be high back curb. Roll off curb is permitted for internal drives. Roll off curb is not permitted for the internal drive stubs.
23. Internal street light service fees and maintenance are the responsibility of the mandatory property owner's association.
24. Prior to the issuance of a Development Permit, the developer must satisfy City of Dacula requirements. The Developer shall also provide a traffic impact study, as required by Article 4 of the Development Regulations. Subject to final approval by the City of Dacula, the developer shall make any improvements required by the submitted traffic impact study.

Sign and Advertisement

25. No tents, canopies, temporary banners, streamers or roping decorated with flags, tinsel, or other similar material shall be displayed, hung, or strung on the site without appropriate permit(s). No decorative balloons or hot-air balloons shall be displayed on the site.
26. Live human advertisements shall be prohibited within the subject area. This includes, but is not limited to, sign spinners, twirlers, dancers, clowns, and / or other similar temporary advertising methods commonly provided by costumed or animated humans.
27. Per Section 917.J.3 of the Downtown Overlay District, blinking, exposed neon, electronic messaging, scrolling, portable, and inflatable signage shall be prohibited.

Development Phasing

28. The public plaza, pedestrian path, and the civic courtyard shall be completed no later than the time of issuance of the 10th Certificate of Occupancy for the residential neighborhood.