



LAWRENCEVILLE

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REZONING / SPECIAL USE PERMIT / BUFFER REDUCTION

CASE NUMBERS: RZC2025-00066, SUP2025-00105, &
BFR2025-00001

APPLICANT: MAJA RADOVIC PERMITS 1, INC.

OWNER(S): AWNY GORBAN

LOCATION(S): 417 BUFORD DRIVE

PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER(S): R5176 062

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE: 2.31 ACRES

CURRENT ZONING: BG (GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT) & RS-150
(SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT)

PROPOSED ZONING: BG (GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT)

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: OUTDOOR AUTO SALES / VEHICLE STORAGE LOT

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **DENIAL**

VICINITY MAP





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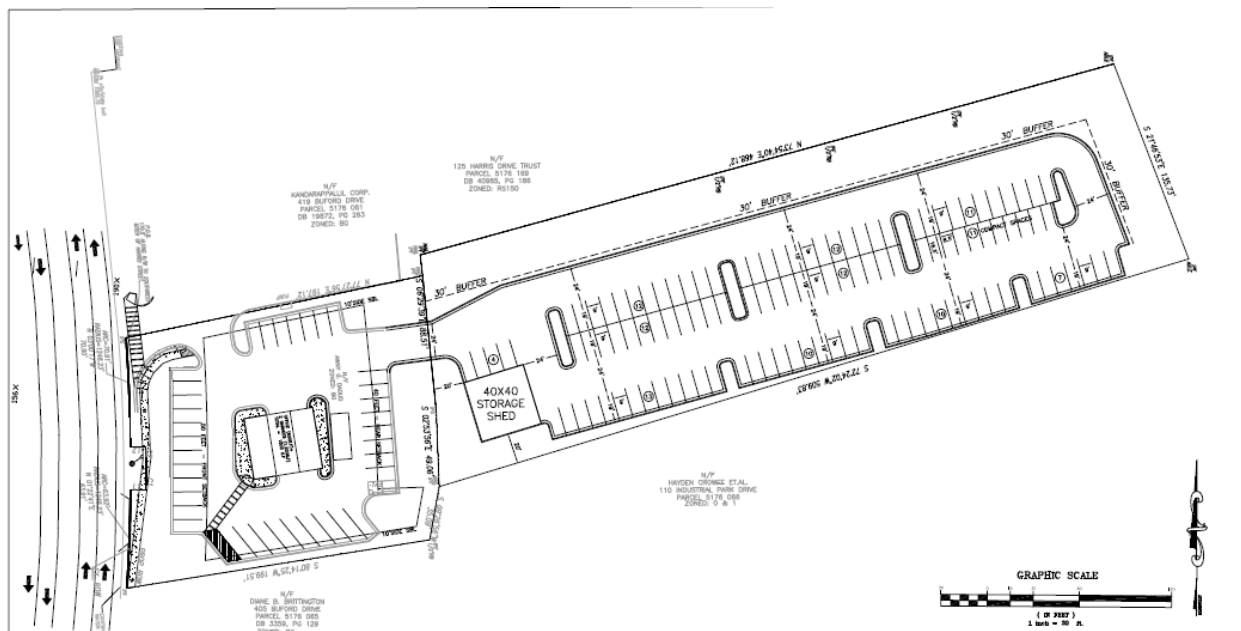
ZONING HISTORY

The subject property has been split zoned BG (General Business District) & RS-150 (Single-Family Residential District) since 1960, which is earliest zoning record on file for the City. A Special Use Permit for a used car lot was granted for the portion of the property zoned BG on April 6, 2009, per case number SU-08-11. Following this, a request to rezone the entirety of the subject property to BG for its use as a used car lot was denied by City Council on November 8, 2014 (see RZ-14-17).

PROJECT SUMMARY

The applicant requests a rezoning of the subject property from BG (General Business District) & RS-150 (Single-Family Residential District) to BG (General Business District), a Special Use Permit to allow an Automobile, Truck or Vehicle Storage Lot (excl. junk/wrecked vehicles), and a reduction of the required zoning buffer from 75 feet to 30 feet. The subject property is located at 417 Buford Drive and encompasses approximately 2.31 acres; it is located on the eastern right-of-way of Buford Drive, between its intersections with Industrial Park Drive and Harris Drive.

CONCEPT PLAN





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EXISTING CONDITIONS

Since late 2023, several modifications were made to the rear portions of the subject property without the necessary permits and/or the appropriate zoning classification. These changes include:

- Grading/clearing without a Land Development Permit
- Installation of gravel for use as a parking surface
- Outdoor storage – vehicle storage
- Encroachment into the undisturbed 75' buffer along the northern property line

Although the front portion of the subject property along Buford Drive is zoned BG (General Business District) and has a Special Use Permit approved for outdoor auto sales (and by extension, vehicle storage), this approval does not extend to the rear part of the property currently zoned RS-150 (Single-Family Residential District). Note that while there is currently not an undisturbed buffer for the RS-150 portion of the property, any encroachments into this area must be addressed if the requested BG zoning is to be approved.

On April 21, 2025, four code enforcement cases were opened for these zoning violations and notices of violation were provided to the current tenant and the property owner. The code cases are as follows:

- 1. CEU2025-15082** – Violation of Subdivision & Development Regulations – Grading/clearing an area greater than 5,000 square feet without a Land Development Permit is prohibited.
- 2. CEU2025-15091** - Violation of Zoning Ordinance, Article 5 – Parking, Section 503 Paving of Surfaces, Parts A. & D. Parking of any vehicle on a non-approved hard surface (gravel) is prohibited. Gravel is only permitted in LM & HM zoning districts with approval of a Special Use Permit.
- 3. CEU2025-15092** – Violation of Zoning Ordinance, Article 4 – Buffers, Section 401 Standards for Permanent Buffers, Parts 2-6. Disturbance of required 75' buffer between RS-150 and BG zoning districts is prohibited.



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4. **CEU2025-15093** – Violation of Zoning Ordinance, Article 2 – Supplementary Regulations, Section 200.3.6 Automobile, Truck, or Vehicle Storage Lot and Section 200.3.55 Outdoor Storage – Industrial. Vehicle (Outdoor) Storage is only permitted in HM districts or BG, HSB, and LM districts with a Special Use Permit. Such storage is not permitted adjacent to residential properties and must be screened from the public right-of-way.

The violations were assigned a compliance date of May 9, 2025, on which date Code Enforcement will follow up with an investigation inspection of the property.

Approval of the zoning request would not sufficiently address these violations. Several actions would need to occur to bring the property into compliance. At a minimum, the gravel must be removed, all buffer encroachments must cease and such areas must be replanted, and a Land Development Permit must be acquired for all land disturbance activities. Likewise, if City Council opts to deny the request, actions must be taken to bring the subject property into compliance with RS-150 standards; that is, all gravel and vehicles must be removed from the rear portion of the property immediately.



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ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The applicant proposes an extension of the existing used car lot to the rear portion of the subject property, including 114 paved asphalt vehicle storage spaces, a 40' by 40' (1,600 square feet) storage shed, and an underground stormwater management facility. The proposal is intended to increase the amount of car inventory space available for the existing used car lot. Due to the narrow shape of the property and its adjacency to existing RS-150 single-family lots to the north and east, the applicant requests a buffer reduction from 75' to 30' to ensure that there is adequate room to maneuver and store the vehicles.

The proposal was reviewed according to the following standards of the zoning ordinance:

Article 1 Districts, Section 102.13 BG – General Business District, B. Lot Development Standards

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Min. Lot Area	20,000 sq. ft.	100,624 sq. ft.	N/A
Min. Lot Width	100 ft.	162.95 ft.	N/A
Max. Building Height	35 feet	35 feet	N/A
Min. Front Yard Setback	50 feet	50 feet	N/A
Min. Side Yard Setback	10 feet	10 feet	N/A
Min. Rear Yard Setback	10 feet	10 feet	N/A
Impervious Surface Coverage	95%	64%	N/A

Article 1 Districts, Section 103.2 Use Table

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Outdoor Auto Sales	BG- Special Use Permit	BG- Special Use Permit	Denial
Vehicle Storage Lot	BG- Special Use Permit	BG- Special Use Permit	Denial



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Article 2 Supplementary Regulations, Section 200.3.6 – Automobile, Truck, or Vehicle Storage Lot (Other Than Impound Lot)

See section 200.3.55 Outdoor Storage (Industrial)

Article 2 Supplementary Regulations, Section 200.3.8 – Automobile Sales or Auction and Related Service (Used or New Car Outdoor Sales Lot)

- A. No used car lots are permitted within 100 feet of any residential property.*
- B. No lots smaller than 25,000 square feet.*
- C. All buildings must have a permanent foundation. Architectural exterior treatments must consist of brick, or stone.*
- D. The building must be at least 1,000 square feet.*
- E. No metal building facades; and*
- F. A 15-foot landscape buffer shall be provided fronting the street.*

Article 2 Supplementary Regulations, Section 200.3.55 – Outdoor Storage (Industrial)

- A. Outdoor storage of items, equipment, materials, and supplies which are not offered for sale, but which are normally appurtenant to a permitted use, provided that such storage meets the following requirements:*
 - 1. Such property is not directly adjacent to a residential property.*
 - 2. Such property is not located within the boundary of the geographical area of the Lawrenceville Downtown Development Authority.*
 - 3. Storage shall be in the rear or side yard, except where any part of the property is adjacent to, or the storage is visible within a distance of two hundred and fifty (250) feet from, Pike Street, Five Forks-Trickum Road, Scenic Highway, Lawrenceville Highway, Buford Drive (Hwy. 20), Hurricane Shoals Road, Lawrenceville Suwanee Road, Sugarloaf Parkway, Grayson Highway, or Gwinnett Drive, in which case all items shall be stored in a rear yard only.*
 - 4. Stored items shall be screened by a solid opaque fence at least six (6) feet height, by landscaping creating a complete visual buffer, or by a combination*



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of fencing and landscaping, and no item shall be placed at a height exceeding that of the screening fence or landscaping materials; and

- 5.** *Under no circumstances shall an owner or occupant of any property store any junk, scrap metal, rags, paper, or abandoned, wrecked, junked or scrap material, or any part thereof, outdoors.*

Article 4 Buffers, Section 403 – Buffers Table

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
BG / RS-150	75 ft	30 ft	Denial
BG / ON	0 ft	0 ft	N/A
BG / BG	0 ft	0 ft	N/A
BG / LM	0 ft	0 ft	N/A

Article 5 Parking, Section 508 – Number of Off-Street Parking Spaces Required, Table 5-3: Number of Off-Street Parking Spaces Required

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Automobile Sales and Related Service	1 parking space per 500 SF GFA (5 spaces)	1 parking space per 64 SF GFA (36 spaces)	N/A

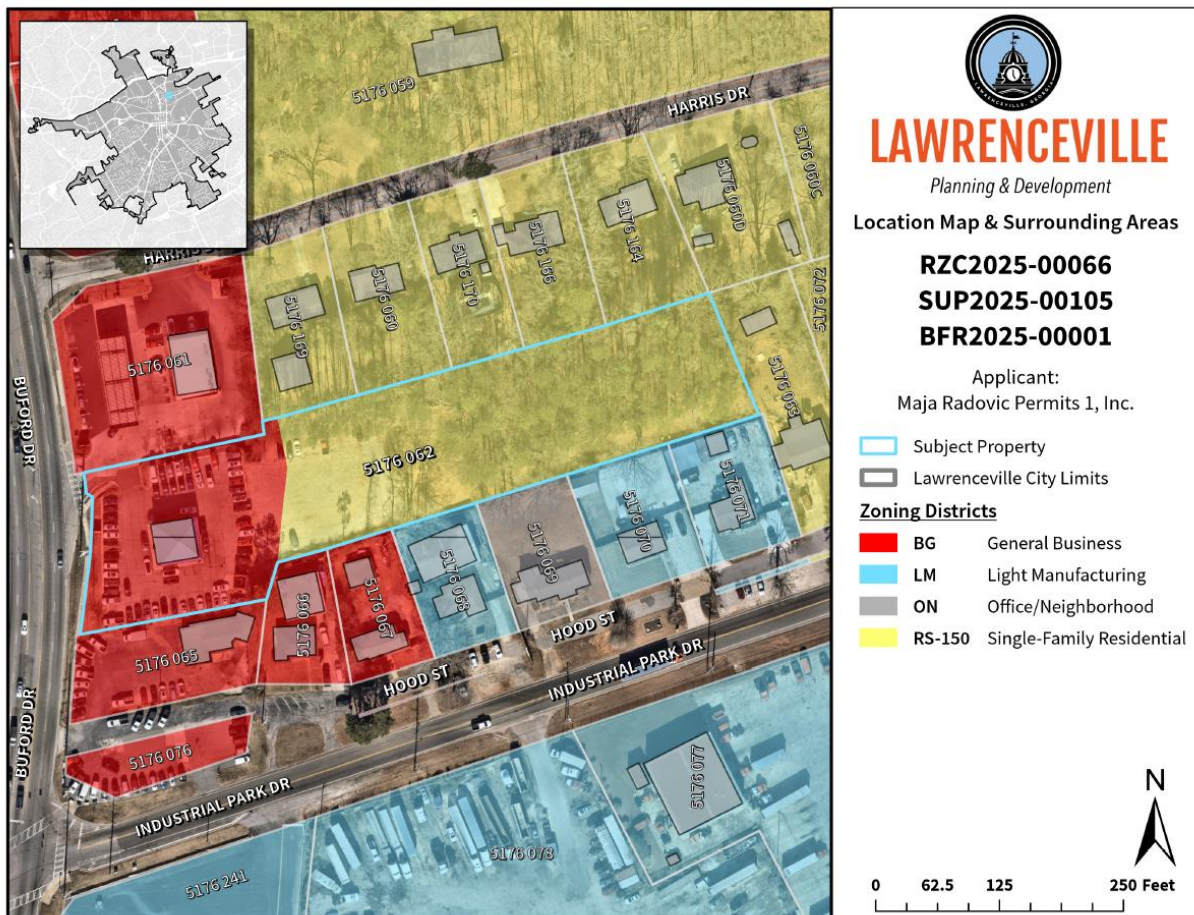
As outlined above, the supplementary regulations pertaining to outdoor auto sales (Article 2, Section 200.3.8) and industrial outdoor storage (Article 2, Section 200.3.55) strictly limit such uses for locations that are either directly adjacent to or within a certain distance of residential properties. The subject property is directly adjacent to existing residential; therefore, approval of the proposed rezoning would necessitate a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that removes or otherwise modifies these requirements.



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CITY OF LAWRENCEVILLE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP



SURROUNDING ZONING AND USE

The subject property is surrounded with a variety of commercial, light industrial, and residential uses and zoning districts. The properties immediately to the north and south of the subject property along Buford Drive are both zoned BG and are used as a convenience store with fuel pumps and a used car lot. Similarly, the properties across the right of way of Buford Drive are also zoned BG and are used as a used car lot and a bail bondsman. Moving eastward, the narrow rear portion of the property is directly adjacent to lots also zoned RS-150 with single-family dwellings to the immediate north and east. To the south, the subject property



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borders lots zoned BG, LM (Light Manufacturing District), and ON (Office Neighborhood District); these properties were subject a city-wide rezoning in 2020 and are used for a variety of small commercial offices in former single-family residential dwellings. The wider area is comprised of light industrial uses and zoning districts to the east and south, predominantly commercial zoning and uses along Buford Drive, and single-family uses and zoning as one moves west towards the Grizzly Parkway corridor.

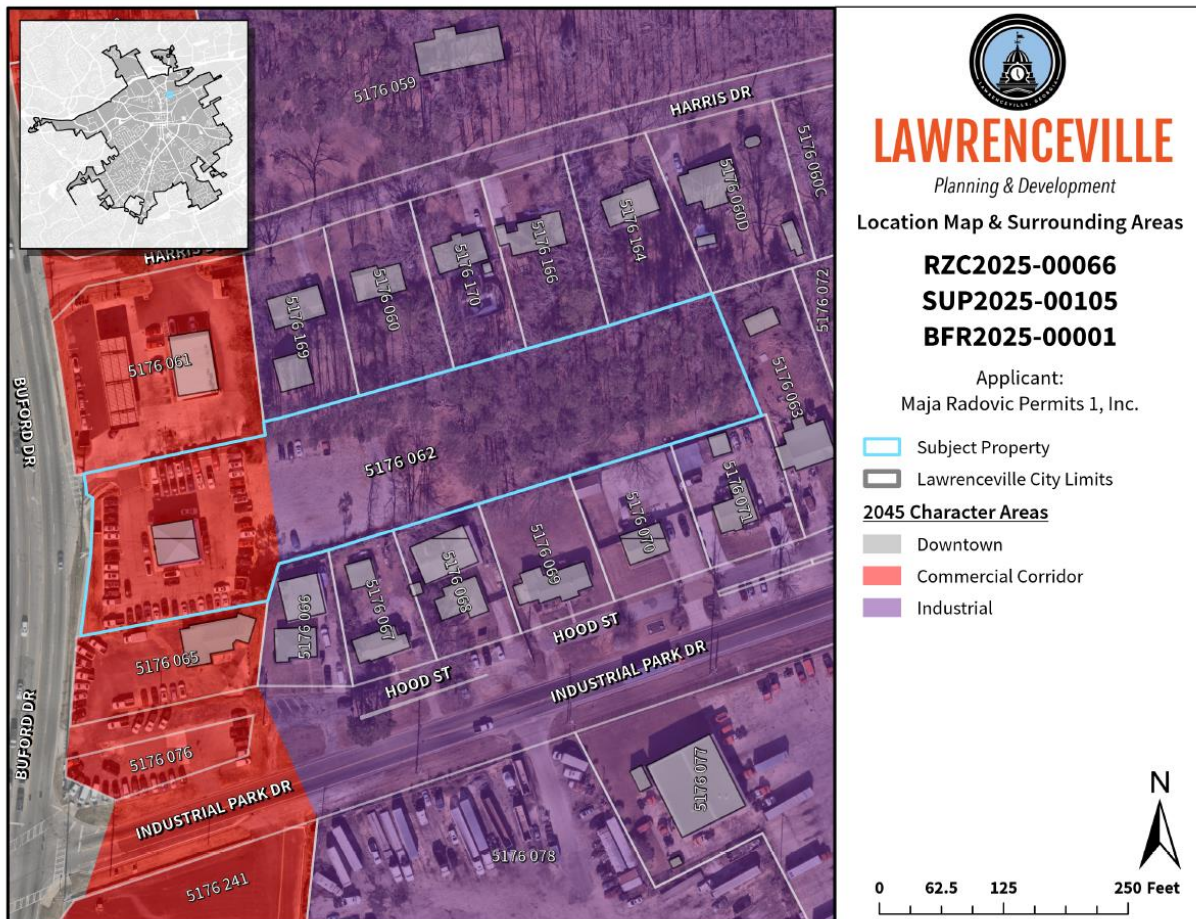
An extension of a used car lot at the subject property may be considered generally compatible with the predominantly commercial character along Buford Drive and the industrial nature of the greater area; however, the site's direct adjacency to existing single-family residential properties to the north and east raises significant concerns regarding compatibility and potential impacts, which should be carefully weighed when considering approval.



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LAWRENCEVILLE 2045 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP



2045 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2045 Comprehensive Plan and Future Development Map indicates the property lies within the multiple character areas; the BG part of the property along Buford Drive is located within the Commercial Corridor character area while the RS-150 portion in the rear is located within the Industrial character area. The Commercial Corridor character area is defined as such:

The commercial corridor character area corresponds to a major road corridor into the city. It is intended to accommodate large-scale commercial uses that serve the traveling public via automobiles. These uses include, but are not



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limited to: 'big box' retail stores, car dealerships, car washes, and large corporate offices. All such uses require careful site planning to ensure interconnectivity and compliance with applicable parking, lighting, landscaping, and signage standards. Commercial corridors are typically less pedestrian-oriented than neighborhood and community centers.

The Industrial character area is defined as such:

The industrial character area leverages both its location along SR 316 and the growing distribution and technology industries. This area supports a variety of job/work types with a focus on skilled jobs and attracting high-tech businesses in Class A office space and modern light industrial facilities.

The proposed rezoning to extend the used car lot partially aligns with the 2045 Comprehensive Plan, as the portion of the property fronting Buford Drive falls within the Commercial Corridor character area, which supports auto-oriented uses like car dealerships; however, the rear portion of the property lies within the Industrial character area, which emphasizes high-tech and modern light industrial development, making the extension of a used car lot potentially inconsistent with long-term goals for that area.



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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

While the proposal reflects certain aspects of compatibility with the surrounding commercial and light industrial corridor along and around the Buford Drive corridor, several critical factors weigh strongly against approval:

- City Council previously denied a nearly identical request in 2014 (RZ-14-17) to rezone the RS-150 portion of the site to BG for its use as a used car lot. The circumstances surrounding the site and its adjacency to single-family homes remain largely unchanged, and approval of the current request would represent a significant deviation from that precedent without compelling justification.
- The rear portion of the property is directly adjacent to existing RS-150 lots with single-family dwellings. The proposal would introduce outdoor vehicle storage, a commercial use with higher noise and visual impact, in close proximity to these residences, creating clear compatibility issues. The requested buffer reduction from 75 feet to 30 feet would further exacerbate those impacts.
- Current supplementary zoning regulations prohibit vehicle storage and auto sales near residential properties; approval of this request would require a text amendment that addresses its inconsistency with current standards.
- The property has an active history of unpermitted site modifications and code violations—including grading, gravel surfacing, and outdoor vehicle storage—within the RS-150 portion. Approval of the rezoning would effectively legitimize these unauthorized actions and undermine the City's zoning enforcement authority.

Given the precedent against a similar rezoning request, the potential impact on nearby single-family properties, a partial misalignment with the future land use plan, and active zoning violations, staff finds that the proposal fails to meet key zoning and planning criteria. Therefore, the Planning and Development Department recommends **DENIAL** of the rezoning requests.



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CITY OF LAWRENCEVILLE DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

No comment

PUBLIC WORKS

No comment

ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

Lawrenceville Power serves this property.

GAS DEPARTMENT

Lawrenceville Gas serves this property.

DAMAGE PREVENTION DEPARTMENT

No comment

CODE ENFORCEMENT

No comment

STREET AND SANITATION DEPARTMENT

No comment



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STATE CODE 36-67-3 (FMR.) REVIEW STANDARDS:

- 1. Whether a zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property;**

The proposed zoning would allow for a use that is generally compatible with the commercial and light industrial development along Buford Drive; however, its proximity to adjacent single-family residential properties to the north and east raises concerns about suitability and potential land use conflicts.

- 2. Whether a zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property;**

The proposed zoning could adversely affect the use and enjoyment of adjacent single-family residential properties due to increased noise, traffic, and visual impacts associated with the expansion of a used car lot.

- 3. Whether the property to be affected by a zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned;**

The property has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned, with the BG-zoned portion already supporting a used car lot. However, the RS-150 portion of the property lacks direct road frontage and is therefore effectively landlocked, which significantly limits its development potential and diminishes its reasonable economic use under the current zoning.

- 4. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools;**

The project will induce demand on public facilities in the form of traffic, utilities, and stormwater runoff. However, the effects of this demand can be mitigated through zoning conditions, consistent monitoring of outcomes, and active planning efforts moving forward.



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5. Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Plan;

The zoning proposal is partially in conformity with the Comprehensive Plan, as the front portion of the property lies within the Commercial Corridor character area that supports auto-oriented uses, but the rear portion falls within the Industrial character area, where a used car lot may not align with the long-term vision for high-tech and light industrial development.

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 zoning proposal;

Yes, the property's history of code violations and its adjacency to single-family residential uses—along with City Council's prior denial of a similar request in 2014—present strong grounds for disapproval of the zoning proposal despite the commercial character of the Buford Drive corridor.