



## PLANNING & ZONING STAFF REPORT

AX-21-002

Meeting Date January 24, 2022

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### GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>Petition Number:</b>	AX-21-002
<b>Applicant:</b>	GBG 2 Lithonia Group, LLC
<b>Owners:</b>	Charles M. Bettis and J. Ed Seagraves
<b>Project Location:</b>	1724 Rogers Lake Rd (Parcel ID 16 157 05 003)
<b>City Council District:</b>	District 1
<b>Acreage:</b>	19.68 acres
<b>Existing Zoning:</b>	Light Industrial (M – DeKalb County)
<b>Proposed Zoning:</b>	Light Industrial (M – City of Stonecrest)
<b>Comprehensive Plan Character Area Designation:</b>	Light Industrial (DeKalb County 2035 Future Land Use Map)
<b>Proposed Development/Request:</b>	The applicant is requesting to annex into the City of Stonecrest for the purpose of development a Gravel Parking Lot. As part of this annexation the subject property would be rezoned to Light Industrial (M – City of Stonecrest) and would be designated on the Stonecrest Future Land Use Map as Light Industrial Character area.
<b>Staff Recommendations:</b>	Approval
<b>Planning Commission Recommendation</b>	Approval

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

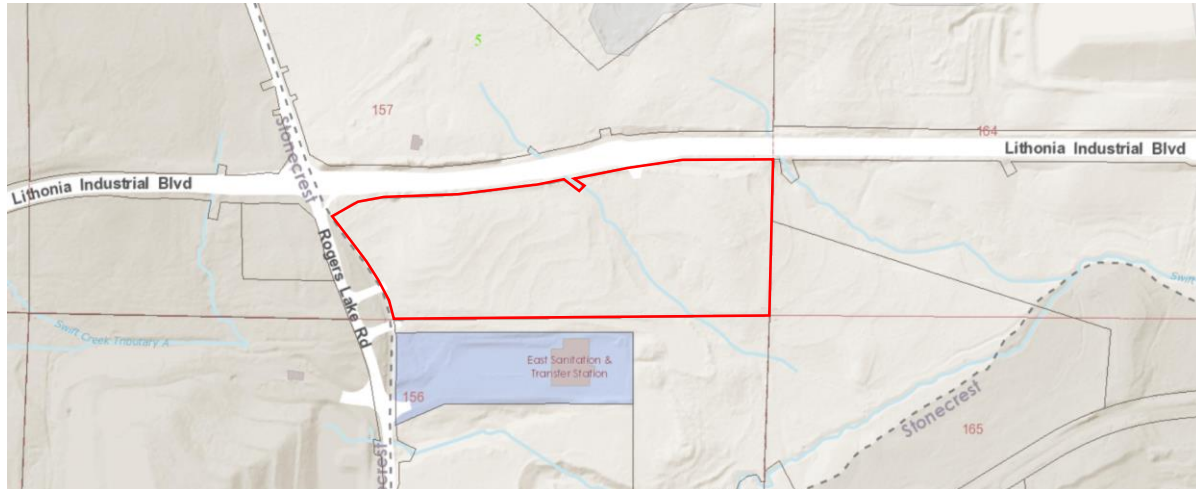
**Location.** The subject property is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Rogers Lake Road and Lithonia Industrial Boulevard, on the north side of the city. It is currently undeveloped and wooded with a stream running through the middle of the parcel. The surrounding area is industrial, with a landfill located west of the site and a county sanitation and transfer station to the south.



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### Location map, AX-21-002



The subject property and all surrounding parcels are zoned industrial, either in DeKalb County or City of Stonecrest. The property to the south is heavy industrial (M-2) while all the other parcels are zoned light industrial (M). The future land use map for DeKalb County shows this property as Light Industrial.

The city boundary is located along the western side of the subject property and meets the one-eight contiguous area requirement for the 100 percent annexation method as allowed under state law by Article 2 of Chapter 36, Title 36, of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,

### Background

GBG 2 Lithonia Group would like to build a gravel parking lot pursuant to Section 6.1.3 of the Stonecrest Zoning Ordinance, which was recently revised per TMOD-21-012 by the City Council on November 22, 2021. The county zoning code does not allow gravel parking for trucks thus the desire for the annexation. The applicant and their legal counsel met with city staff and Councilman Jimmy Clanton on October 5, 2021 for a pre-application meeting. It was made clear at the meeting that city was in the process of updating their parking requirements and that the applicant would need to meet these requirements to the letter and construct a “model” gravel parking per the new standards if the annexation was approved.

The new parking lot would include a ten foot high opaque corrugated metal fence and two rows of evergreen trees or bushes. The surface of the lot would be 10-inch graded aggregate base of granite stone and stone dust, and would meet all state stormwater requirements. The applicant has offered to have security cameras providing coverage for all entrances and exits, one from Rogers Lake Road and one from Lithonia Industrial Boulevard. Both entrances will be gated. No traffic improvements will be required to the property as existing curb cuts exist on both roads. The proposed use is for parking only, no repair operations or other businesses will be allowed on site. As per TMOD-21-012, the site will be inspected annually to ensure proper maintenance of the aggregate base and storm water facilities.





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### Public Participation

A community planning information meeting was held on November 30 at 6 PM when the proposed annexation was discussed. The meeting was hosted by the City on Zoom and broadcasted on YouTube. Merits of the case that were brought up include:

- The fact that the applicant GBG 2 Lithonia Group already operates a gravel parking lot in the city and its well maintained and constructed.
- The surrounding area is totally industrial with no potential impacts on residential uses.
- The parking lot would expand the city's commercial tax base benefiting the city's budget

Opposition to the case included:

- The potential impact on environment, removing trees on an undeveloped lot, and possible contamination to the stream running through the site from runoff.
- Additional truck traffic and impact on local road conditions.
- Fears that the site would not be maintained as required by the code.

### **STANDARDS OF ANNEXATION REVIEW**

An annexation request includes both a comprehensive plan amendment and a rezoning. Section 7.3.4 of the Zoning Ordinances lists seven factors to be considered in a technical review of a comprehensive plan amendment and Section 7.3.5 of the Stonecrest Zoning Ordinance list eight factors to be considered in a technical review of a zoning case. The two sets of factors are basically identical with the exception that in reviewing a rezoning, decision makers need to consider the conformity with the policies and intent of the comprehensive plan. Each of the eight rezoning standards for review are listed with staff analysis below.

#### **A. Whether the proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the comprehensive plan.**

The subject property is located within the Light Industrial character area of the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan, in keeping with the surrounding uses and current zoning, and in similar fashion the proposed land use designation on the Stonecrest Future Land Use Plan would be Light Industrial. The economic policies of the city's plan encourage the attraction of and recruitment of new businesses (Goal ED-1), and the goals and policies for industrial uses call for locating industrial development away from environmentally sensitive areas, minimizing the encroaching effect of industrial development and expansion in areas already developed for industrial uses with existing public infrastructure, and the encourage development of vacant industrial land (Goal LU-8).

The Light Industrial character area intends to identify areas that are appropriate for industrial type uses. The location of these areas shall preserve the appeal and appearance of residential and



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commercial areas from the prospective intrusion of light industrial land uses. These areas consist of areas used in low intensity manufacturing, including wholesale trade, and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, vibration, air pollution or other nuisance characteristics.

The proposed light industrial use is keeping with existing character and use of the area, the city's zoning map, and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and its Future Land Use Map.

**B. Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property or properties.**

The area surrounding the site is industrial, and the proposed use is in keeping with the existing development of adjacent and nearby properties.

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

The zoning is essentially remaining the same, and so it does have economic use. The applicant is seeking to come into Stonecrest to allow the building of a gravel parking lot, which is currently not allowed in DeKalb County's Light Industrial (M) zoning, but is in the City's Light Industrial (M) zoning.

**D. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property or properties.**

The proposed zoning proposal is not anticipated to have a negative impact on the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby properties.

**E. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property, which gives supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal.**

The city has recently revised its requirements for gravel parking lots, and the applicant is willing to meet

**F. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect historic buildings, sites, districts, or archaeological resources.**

There are currently no identified historic buildings, sites, districts, or archaeological resources on the subject property.



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**G. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use that will or could cause excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools.**

Due to the low impact nature of the intended use, which contains no housing or requires any water or sewer hookups. The proposal will not cause an excessive or burdensome on utilities or have any demands on schools. Roads access to the property is already designed for truck traffic, and no transportation improvements are necessary to accommodate the use.

**H. Whether the zoning proposal adversely impacts the environment or surrounding natural resources.**

If the proposed use is designed and maintained as required by city and state regulations, the use should not have adverse impact on the environment or surrounding resources.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant meets all the criteria for approval. Therefore, staff recommends **APPROVAL** of **AX-21-002**, **rezoning the property to M-Light Industrial, and amending the Stonecrest Future Land Use Map to designate the property as Light Industrial.**

Attachments:

1 – AX-21-002 Application