

OFS REDEVELOPMENT GWINNETT VILLAGE CID



6305 Crescent Drive

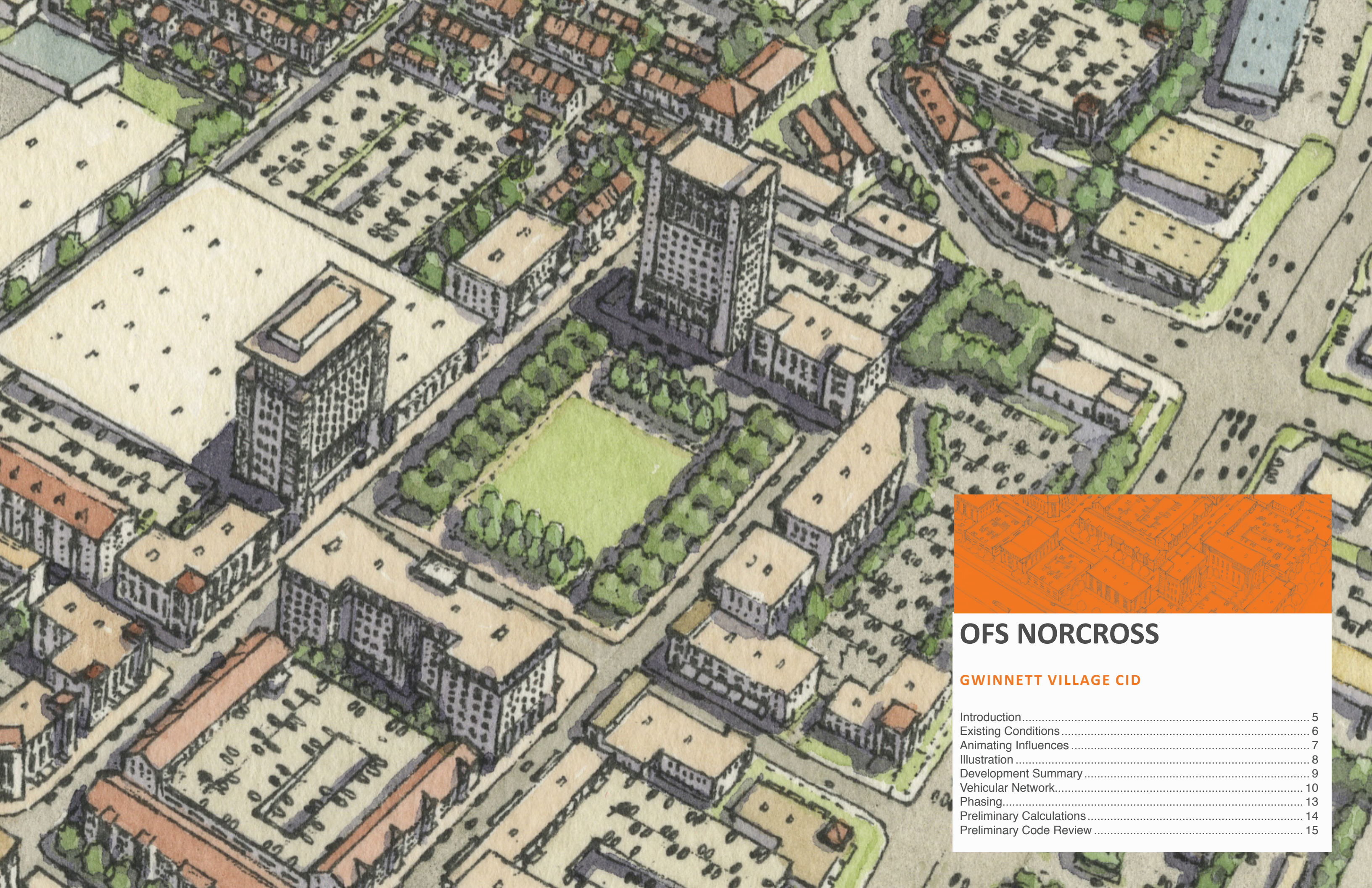
Norcross, Georgia

Draft Report

22 April 2011

Prepared for:
Gwinnett Village C.I.D.

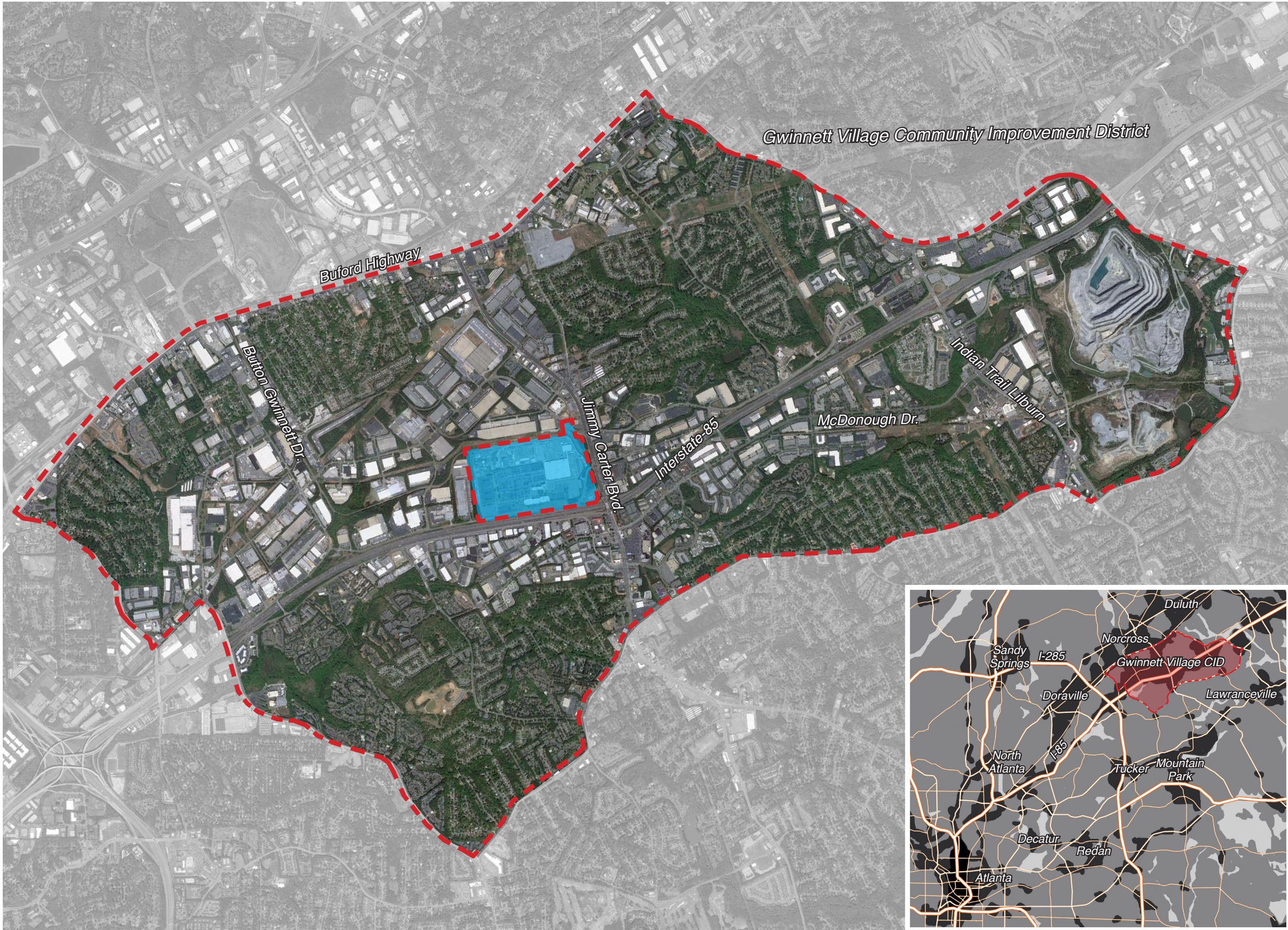
Prepared by:
Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company



OFS NORCROSS

GWINNETT VILLAGE CID

Introduction.....	5
Existing Conditions.....	6
Animating Influences.....	7
Illustration.....	8
Development Summary.....	9
Vehicular Network.....	10
Phasing.....	13
Preliminary Calculations.....	14
Preliminary Code Review.....	15



In March of 2011 Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District (Village CID) and Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) worked with OFS to review redevelopment scenarios for the one hundred seventy-five acre OFS fiber optics manufacturing facility located at 6305 Crescent Drive in Norcross, Georgia. A two-day intensive work session was held in Atlanta and input was gathered from OFS and Village CID about development goals and constraints for the site. Macauley+Schmit LLC provided input on the local market conditions and advised on development strategy and use mix. The deliverable results of the study include:

- An initial character sketch master plan of the selected redevelopment scenario;
- a perspective rendering of the development;
- preliminary area calculations; and
- a Preliminary Code Review.

The Village CID is a special benefit district supported by commercial area property owners. The CID provides vision and leadership that has become a catalyst of change for southern Gwinnett County. The OFS site is at the center of the Village CID and represents one of its largest redevelopment opportunities. The site is within both a Tax Allocation District and an Opportunity Zone, making it eligible for a range of public redevelopment incentives.

The OFS site is strategically located to play a significant role in helping Gwinnett County grapple with the results of decades of explosive growth. Gwinnett currently has the highest average commute time in the region (30.8 minutes each way) and the 18th highest in the nation. A dense employment center on this site would bolster the local economy and bring a greater variety jobs closer to Gwinnett's neighborhoods. A proposed light rail system would stop at the OFS site near Jimmy Carter Boulevard. It will provide park-and-ride opportunities for nearby residents and TOD-supported residential and office development on site with a quick connection to downtown Atlanta. In combination with the light rail, Class A office space would support higher end job growth. A light rail station on this site would help manage the increased traffic in the I-85 corridor.

The OFS site represents a significant opportunity to create a center for the Jimmy Carter Boulevard area and CID as a whole: a sustainable, pedestrian and transit-oriented, regional center. This center would be a major stride forward in managing growth: past, present, and well into the future.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The primary activity corridor for the OFS site is Jimmy Carter Boulevard which provides access to light industrial areas predominantly occupied by logistics and distribution facilities. Some out of date and under performing strip and big box retail exists along Jimmy Carter Boulevard. The region has an overabundance of retail, much of which is struggling, and any new retail development will depend upon creating a destination draw rather than relying on exposure to through traffic.

The site is currently under utilized by OFS with more than half of the existing structures and parking vacant. Approximately 90% of the site is covered with impervious surface. Concrete slabs under the warehouses and covering the open areas to the west of the site are exceedingly thick, ranging from 16 inches to several feet in places.

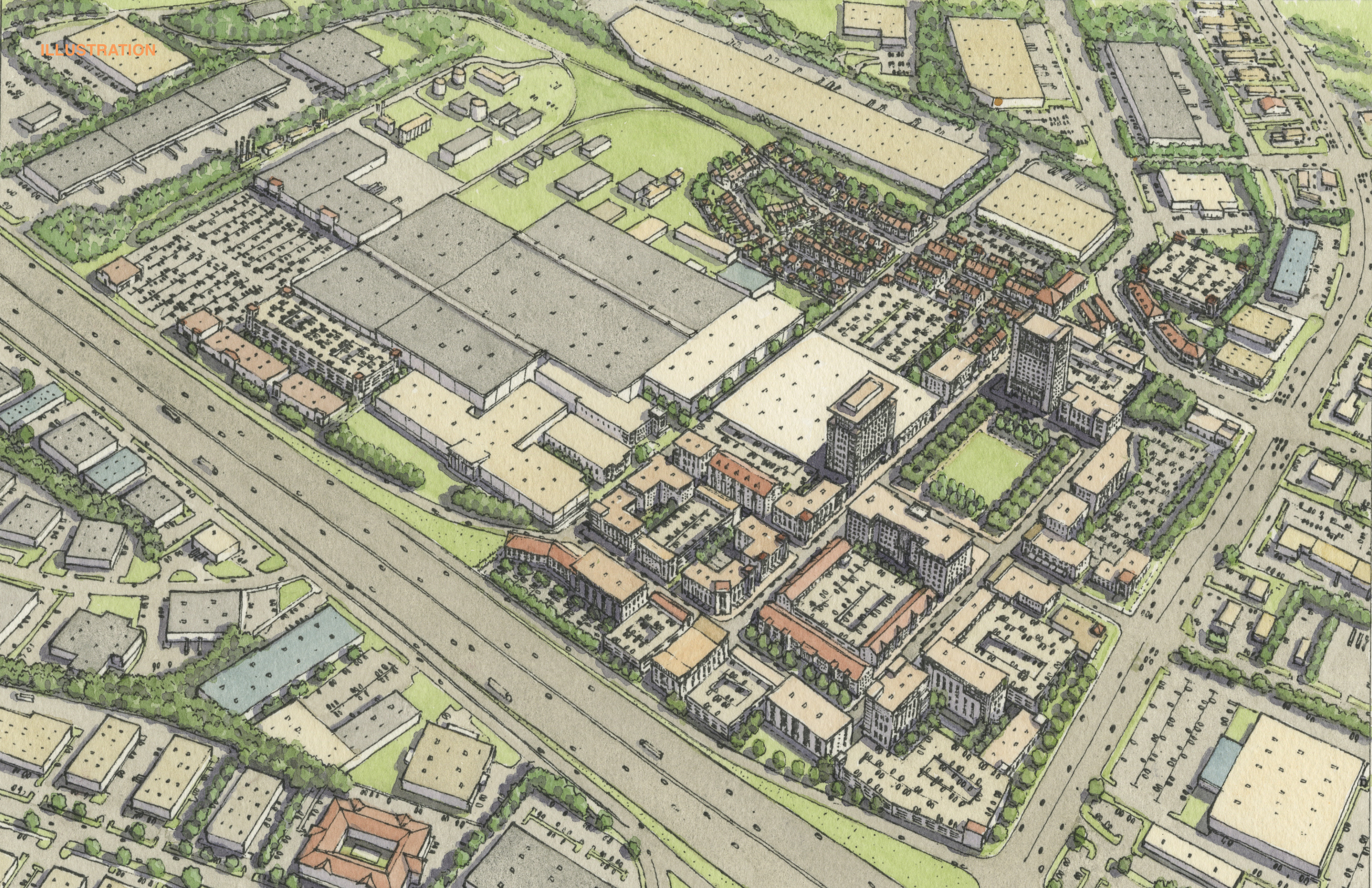
The 5 story tower in the center (*3) must remain as a fiber optics production facility for the foreseeable future. This tower represents several hundred million dollars of investment in equipment. In addition to the tower, utility and equipment areas to the northwest must remain to support the fiber optics production. OFS maintains several industrial gasses in the utility area. As with any operating industrial site, further study and coordination of site and existing operations should be evaluated to determine impact.

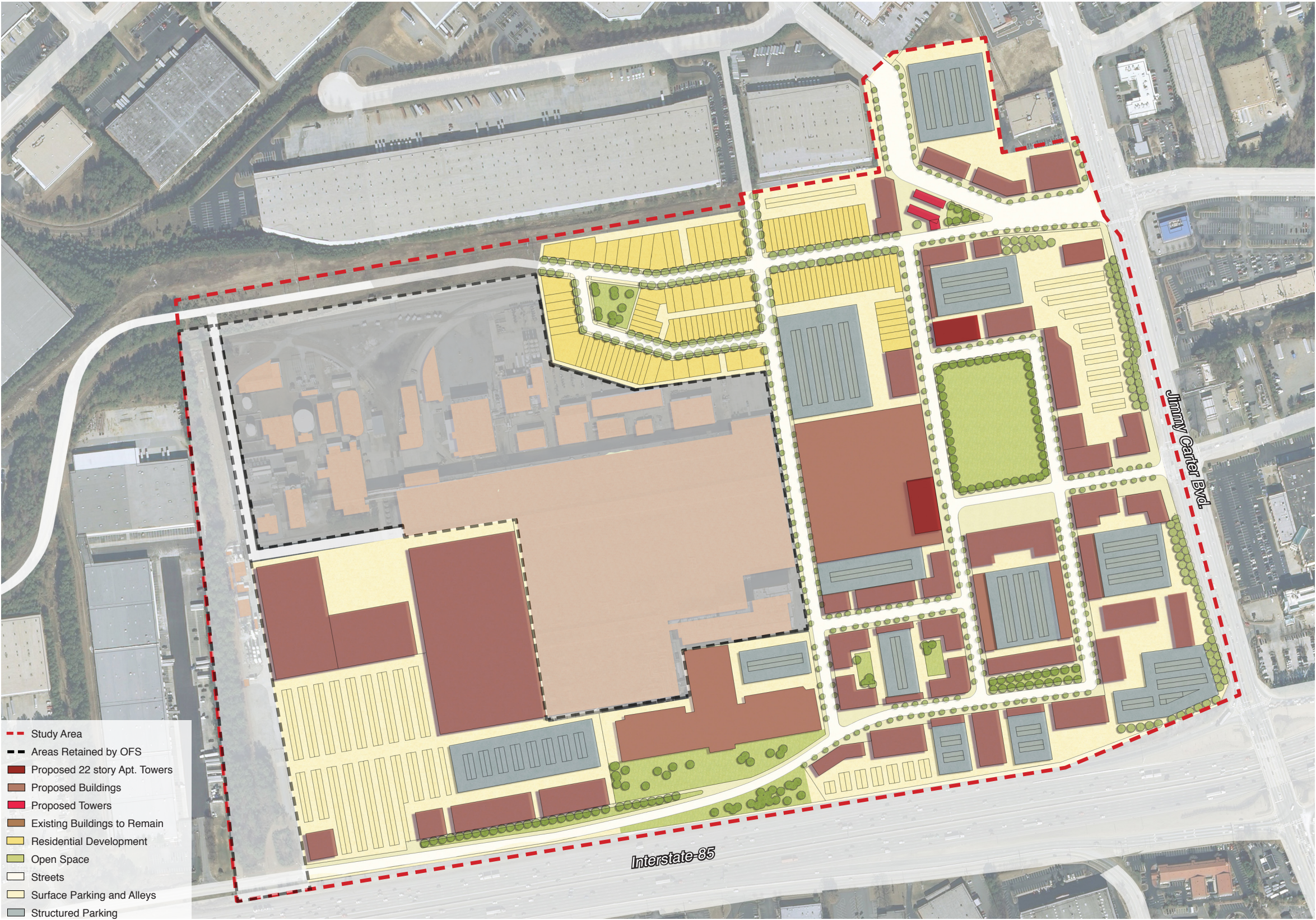
The County maintained Westside Police Precinct (#4) is located at the southeast corner of the site. This precinct could be better accommodated within the redeveloped site and this corner area made available for higher and better uses. A former rail spur (#1) owned by OFS ran along the northern edge of the site, although the tracks have been removed. The spur is being considered for inclusion in a proposed light rail line that would run from the Doraville MARTA station to Gwinnett Place Mall to the Gwinnett Center (Arena). A rail station has been proposed for the OFS site to serve this new transit line. A gas line also runs along the northern edge of the site (#6) and limits what can be built there.





ILLUSTRATION





DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

The OFS site has significant strategic assets. Exposure along I-85 at the southern edge of the site is an asset for office buildings, hotels, and other uses that need visibility. In addition to the OFS property itself, the police precinct at the southeastern corner of the site is ripe for redevelopment to a higher and better use. The eastern most section of the OFS warehouses is a recently built wide span structure. It is an adaptive reuse opportunity that could be filled with programs to activate the core of the site. A light rail line and station have been proposed for the northern side of the site. When implemented, this station will help catalyze the redevelopment of the northern site section as a transit oriented neighborhood. These three assets: the I-85 exposure, the adaptive reuse opportunity, and the light rail station are the foot holds from which redevelopment momentum can be generated. The Conceptual Master Plan builds on these strengths in proposing:

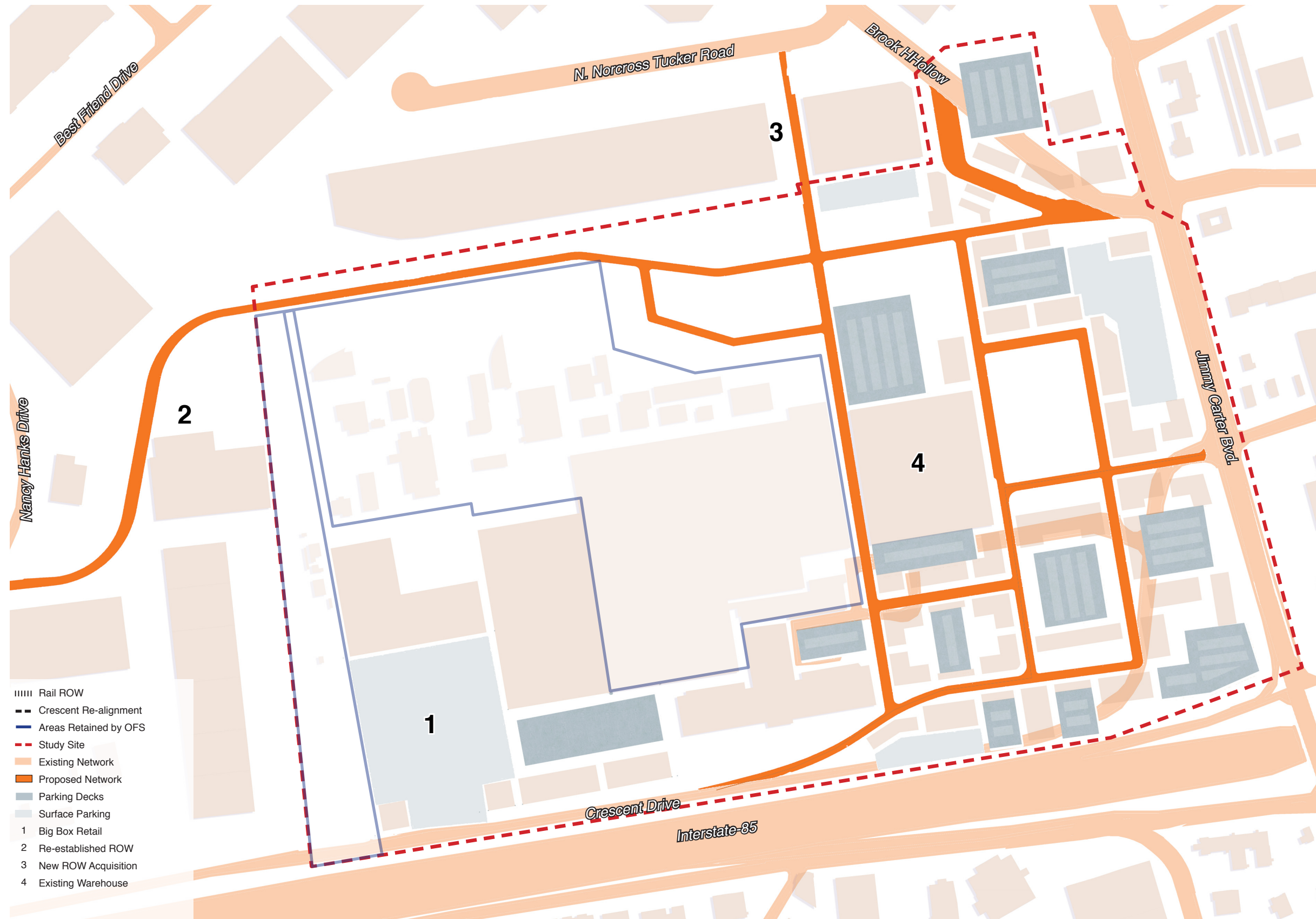
- 1,300,00 SF of New Office
- 850,000 SF of New Retail
- 1,000 New Apartment Units
- 800 New Hotel Rooms
- 25 New Town Homes
- 300,000 SF of New Exposition/ Education Space
- 300,000 SF of Refurbished Office Space
- 20,035 LF of New Road
- 4.8 Acres of New Parks and Greens

VEHICULAR NETWORK

The site has a number of access and egress challenges. A new diverging diamond intersection is planned for the Jimmy Carter Boulevard/ I-85 interchange that will prevent any additional site access from Jimmy Carter Boulevard. The road network to the north and west of the site has poor connectivity and an irregular layout. As the OFS site is redeveloped into a regional center, there will be greater need for access in, out, and through the site. Better access will require additional property acquisitions from adjacent owners to complete the network. The Conceptual Plan proposes re-establishing the old rail spur right-of-way running along the north side of the site and out to Nancy Hanks Drive (#2). This new combined right of way will support both a rail line and a new two-way street that will provide for freight delivery when the retail center to the south is developed (#1). An additional connection is proposed that extends between the two warehouses to the west to connect into N. Norcross Tucker Road (#3). This connection would serve as a critical alternative route out to Jimmy Carter Boulevard during peak traffic hours, and would be especially important for event traffic if the existing warehouse to the east of the site (#4) is adapted for convention use.

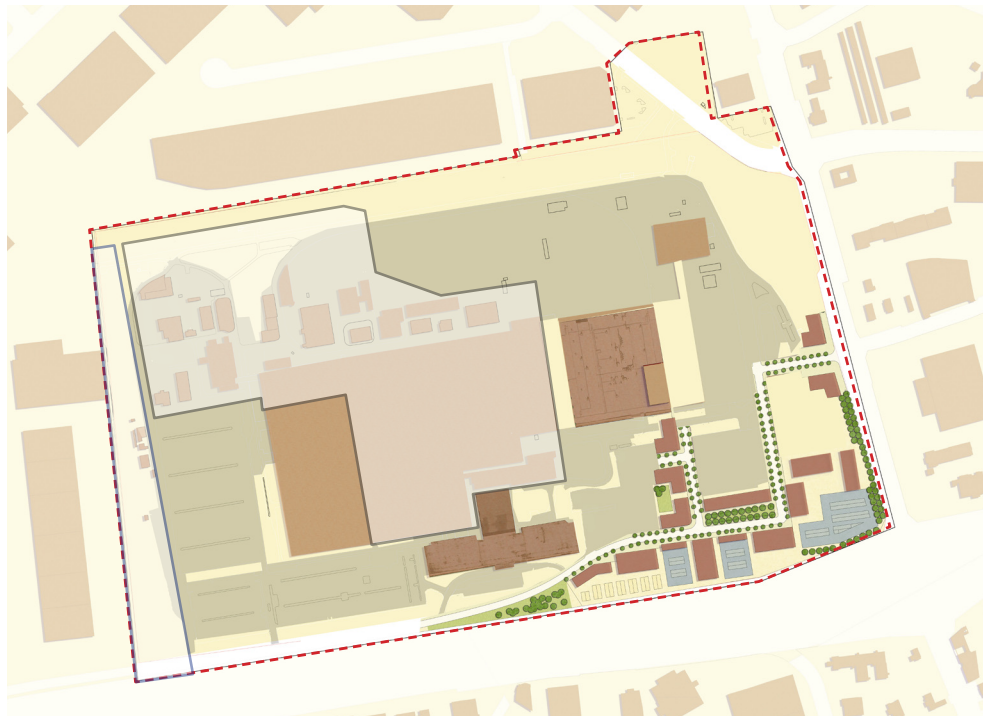
The redevelopment of Crescent Drive must balance the needs of through traffic with the need for establishing a sense of destination in the new development. The Conceptual Plan proposes redeveloping Crescent as a three-lane road without parallel parking that makes right angle turns through the grid-block pattern. This higher speed but angled configuration would allow good traffic flow while also emphasizing a sense of arrival in a defined place rather than an open raceway. In addition to the careful redevelopment of Crescent Drive, efforts can be made to better establish Crescent as the local entry way to the development and the Brook Hollow/ Carter intersection as a through traffic route. The proposed Brook Hollow/ Carter intersection redevelopment will allow better traffic flow to Best Friend Road and along the new rail/ street corridor at the north of the site. Both of these routes connect through to Nancy Hanks Drive back to Crescent Drive.

Parking management is critical to this development scheme. Though OFS does not currently create much parking demand, the remaining industrial and office facility requires nearly 1000 parking spaces by code even after it is pared by redevelopment. This scheme envisions a future Transit Oriented Development strategy where high density housing and workplace would be mixed along with park and ride for nearby residents. In order to achieve this, a combination of structured parking and shared parking strategies are required.

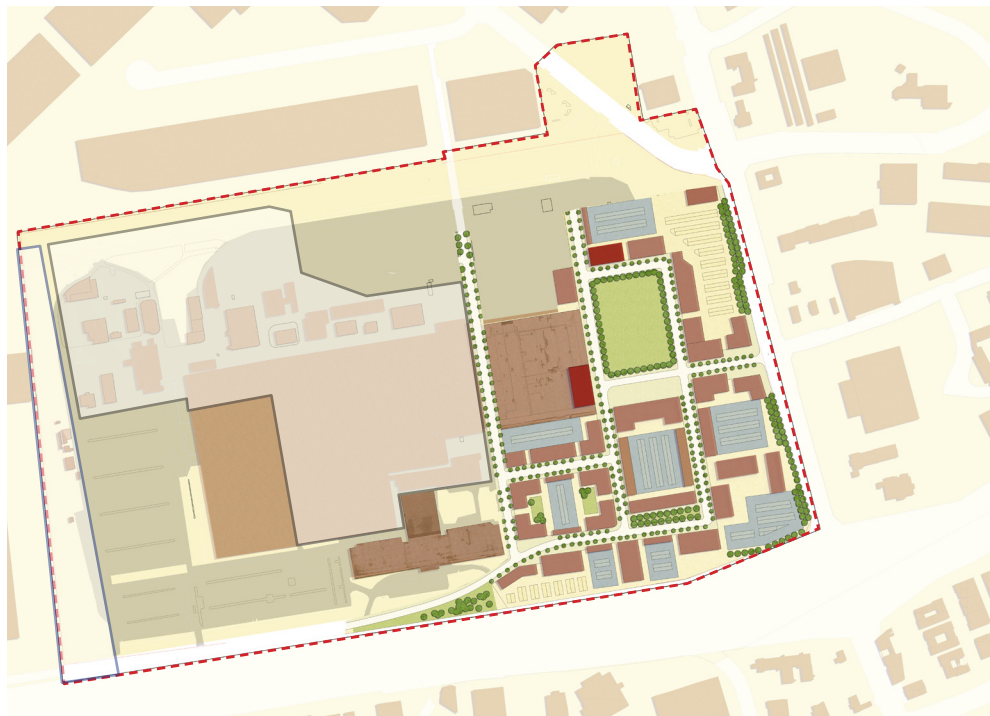




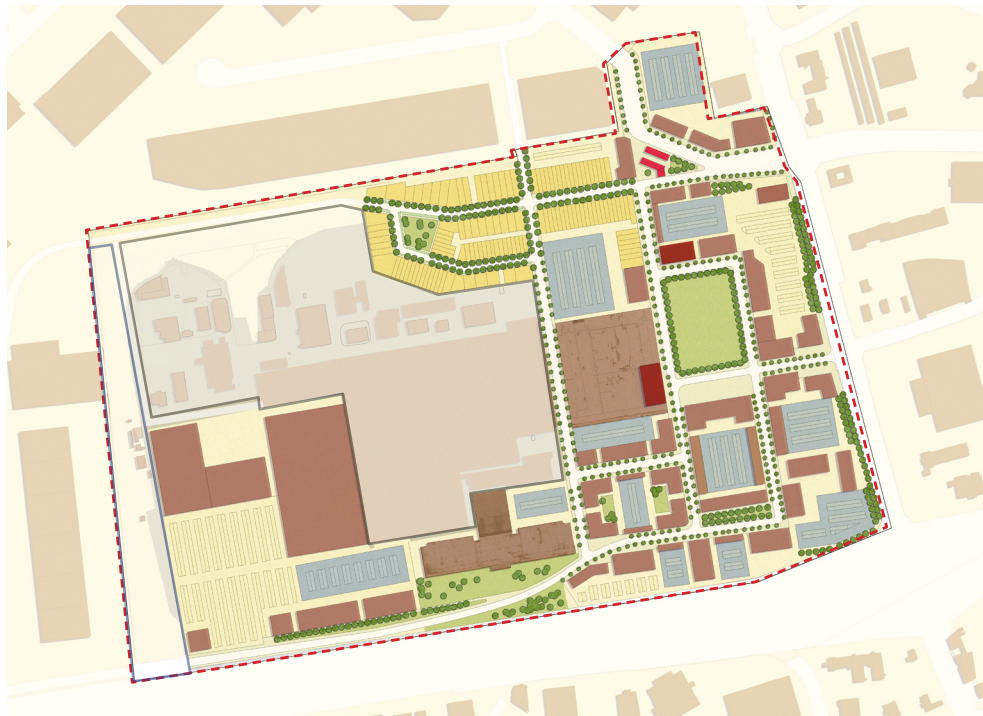
Existing Conditions: The site is currently under utilized by OFS with less than half of the existing structures and parking occupied. Most of the site is covered in impervious materials.



Phase I: Office, hotel, and neighborhood retail uses are oriented towards the I-85 frontage.



Phase II: A large public green is established and office, apartment, and retail uses surround it.



Phase III: A light rail station provides a basis for a neighborhood retail center and housing.

Phase I builds on the existing assets provided by I-85, the police substation site, and the reuse of the vacant OFS warehouse while beginning to define a pedestrian-oriented site interior. In the Conceptual Plan, initial development orients towards I-85 taking advantage of the regional exposure this frontage provides. Office and hotel uses are recommended for this area. One block in from the frontage exposure, office with ground floor retail is recommended. As this phase builds out, a sense of place will be established to supplement the I-85 exposure frontage as an activating influence for development. In addition to development along I-85, the first phase should establish a presence along Jimmy Carter and signify the entry at Crescent with coordinated mixed-use buildings. OFS retains use of their office building, but could consider relocation to other office space to be developed on this site.

The first bay of the warehouse structure facing the Crescent Drive entrance is demolished and a new facade installed to make room for the large public green proposed for phase II. The warehouse is also separated from the OFS facility by cutting a corridor between the two buildings and running a street through it. Potential uses for the newly isolated facility include an education center for life-long learning and international education, a high-tech center, a health and wellness facility, arts and culture space, and convention space. This space is capped by a hotel tower associated with the warehouse uses and public green. The large amount of existing surface parking around this warehouse allows early occupancy without having to first build a parking deck.

Phase II fully develops the public green with enclosing buildings. The grand, formal public space is critical to the CID's goal of creating a pedestrian-oriented destination within this otherwise industrial and strip commercial corridor and may include programmed spaces such as an amphitheater or seasonal ice skating rink. A second hotel is added along the eastern edge of the public green and north and western edges are lined with residential and office buildings.

Phase III expands development to the harder to reach portions of the site. A big box retail center is proposed for the south end of the site where it is too disconnected from the pedestrian-oriented environment to successfully support mixed-use programs, and will be too far back into the site to function as typical arterial or highway-oriented chain retail. Retail development here will most likely need to have some destination theme: an international market or other unique draw that is less reliant on the immediacy of access to compete.

The proposed light rail creates a strong asset on which to develop a smaller scaled neighborhood center to complement the larger urban center at the public green. The center is established by the redevelopment of Brook Hollow Road as it comes into the intersection with Jimmy Carter Boulevard. This redevelopment will allow better traffic flow and creates a triangular public square for the rail station with convenience retail for transit users.



SUMMARY	TL SF RETAIL	TL APT UNITS	TL HOTEL KEYS	TL SF Office	TL PARKING NEEDED
	685,000	836,000	800	1,300,000	8,287

MIXED USE	FLOORS	FOOT PRINT	OFFICE FLOORS	OFFICE AREA	RETAIL FLRS	RETAIL AREA	APT FLOORS	APT UNITS	PARKING NEEDED
M1	6	15,000	5	75,000	1	15,000	0	0	195
M2	6	15,000	5	75,000	1	15,000	0	0	195
M3	6	15,000	5	75,000	1	15,000	0	0	195
M4	6	15,000	5	75,000	1	15,000	0	0	195
M5	6	15,000	2	30,000	0	0	4	55	169
M7	6	15,000	5	75,000	1	15,000	0	0	195
M8	6	13,000	5	65,000	1	13,000	0	0	169
M9	2	19,000	0	0	1	19,000	1	17	92
M10	4	27,000	3	81,000	1	27,000	0	0	243
M11	5	25,000	0	0	0	0	5	114	227
M12	5	17,000	4	68,000	1	17,000	0	0	187
M13	6	15,600	0	0	0	0	6	85	93,600
TOTALS		206,600		619,000		151,000		271	2,062

RETAIL	FLOORS	AREA	PARKING NEEDED
R1	1	100,000	300
R2	1	60,000	180
R3	1	273,800	822
R4	1	10,000	30
R5	1	10,000	30
R6	1	30,000	90
R7	1	20,000	60
R8	1	4,000	12
R9	1	4,000	12
R10	1	20,000	60
R11	1	3,600	11
R12	1	3,300	10
R13	1	13,000	39
R14	6	2,300	7
R15	6	12,000	36
R16	1	13,000	39
R17	1	10,000	30
R18	1	8,000	24
R19	1	18,000	54
R20	1	12,000	36
R21	1	15,000	45
R22	1	10,000	30
R23	1	12,000	36
R24	1	21,000	63
TOTALS		685,000	2,057

OFFICE	FLOORS	FOOT PRINT	TL AREA	PARKING NEEDED
O1	2	145,500	291,000	582
O2	3	10,000	30,000	60
O3	6	20,000	120,000	240
O4	6	20,000	120,000	240
O5	6	20,000	120,000	240
TOTALS		215,500	681,000	1,362

HOTEL	FLOORS	FOOT PRINT	KEYS	PARKING NEEDED
H1	10	44,000	440	440
H2	10	36,000	360	360
TOTALS		80,000	800	800

APARTMENTS	FLOORS	foot print area	APTS	PARKING NEEDED
A1	22	19,000	380	570
A2	22	15,000	300	450
A3	6	8,000	44	65
TOTALS		42,000	724	1,085

EXHIBITION	FLOORS	AREA	PARKING NEEDED
EX3	1	230,000	920
TOTALS		230,000	920

A mixed-use development must be compact to produce a vibrant pedestrian realm. Conventional Suburban Development (CSD) codes spread out neighborhoods by emphasizing separation of buildings and uses as a primary means of organization. One property owner is protected from another by the assurance that no building will be too close, and any shift in use will be masked by a buffer zone. In contrast, the more compact urbanism generated by Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) codes put a greater emphasis on design standards to create cohesive environments. Rather than allow a building to have any form or style as long as it is far away from other buildings, TND codes protect property owners by setting basic standards for the shape and look of buildings so that they are compatible and able to maintain closer adjacencies. Design controls thus enable more compact environments by ensuring a cohesive public realm.

Buffers and Setbacks: Gwinnett County’s existing codes rely heavily on buffer zones between properties of different uses. This site should be excluded from all buffer requirements and should default to the requirements of life safety building codes for setbacks in the high-density areas and to a shallow setback of 5 to 12 feet in the lower density residential area.

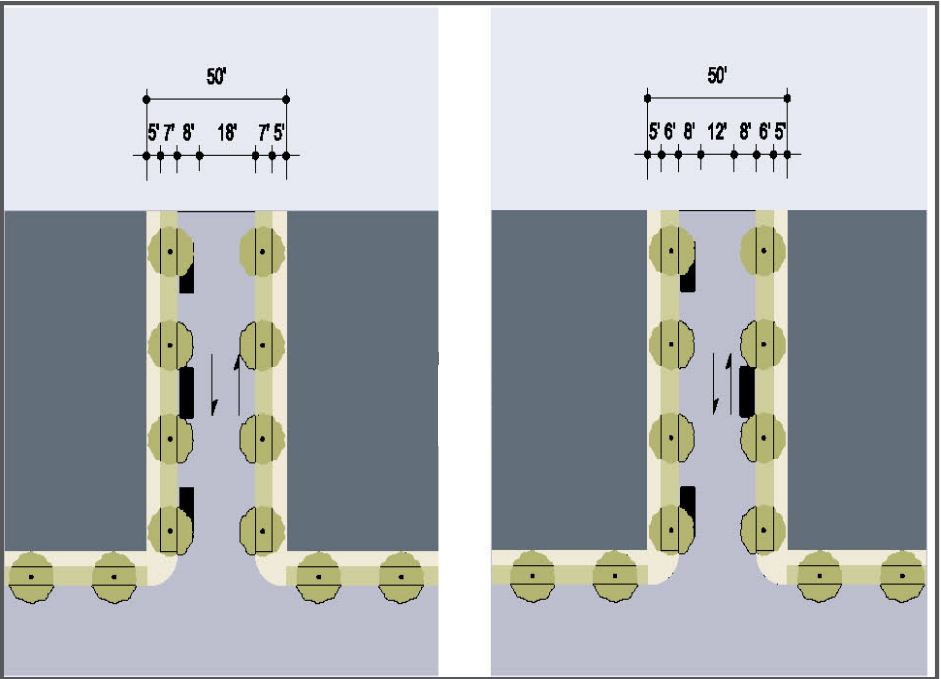
Streets: Street widths influence traffic behavior: people tend to drive slow on narrow streets and fast on wide streets. Pedestrian-oriented developments require narrow and calm streets to be safe and inviting. Traffic flow within the proposed development does not warrant making any travel lane wider than eleven feet and the majority of streets that are local traffic can have ten foot travel lanes. These travel lane widths are already allowed by Gwinnett County’s development regulations although clarification should be made that the gutter width is included in the travel lane rather than in addition to it. On interior streets it is recommended that the nine foot minimum depth for on-street parallel parking be reduced to eight feet, and that the gutter width be included in the parking space depth. The resulting streets should thus be a minimum of twenty feet from inside of curb to inside of curb plus eight feet additional for each side on which parrallel parking is allowed. This is a reduction from the twenty two plus nine for parking feet currently required by the County. These recommended widths have been utilized in many TND developments and have been time-tested to balance traffic needs with active street life. While Gwinnett County’s existing requirements are only a few feet more than these ideal narrow widths, every inch of reduction counts when it comes to calming traffic and supporting walkability. In addition to being narrow as possible, the street best fosters active use when its section is as vertical in proportion as possible. Buildings should be required to build as close to the front property line as is feasible. The Conceptual Plan proposes five foot setbacks from the property for all buildings. The ten foot front yard setback currently required by Gwinnett County is too large a minimum to apply to all building types in a regional center

development. A setback line also states only a minimum distance required, not a maximum distance. A better approach in a TND is to regulate by “build to” rather than setback requirement which mandates that all buildings must line up to form a cohesive street wall. Right of Way requirements also affect the street section and Gwinnett County’s current minimum ROW requirement is forty four feet, which is fine for two way streets, but one way street ROWs should be allowed to be as narrow as thirty three ft.

Parking: Compact, mixed-use communities consider parking across the entire development rather than on each property in isolation. Requirements specifying amounts of off-street parking should be replaced with requirements that sufficient parking is provided in the immediate area (within 800 feet of a property) to balance the needs of all property uses. Residential, retail, office, and events all have different peak load times as well and provisions should be made for reducing requirements based on shared parking assumptions.

Lot Sizes: Gwinnett County’s mixed-use development regulations require single family lots to be a minimum of fourty feet wide but set no minimum requirement for lot size. Thirty feet is a standard width in many historic cities like New Orleans and Charleston and should be allowable in Gwinnett. Thirty wide single-family lots are particularly useful for transitioning between large lot suburban homes and town center attached homes. The narrow and compact detached housing on thirty ft lots blends well with both attached and detached housing.

Exclusionary Requirements: Some of Gwinnett County’s zoning ordinances appear to be responding to a desire to exclude low-end development rather than create a high quality environment. The two acre minimum lot size requirement for hotels seems to have no reason other than to exclude small and thus potentially low-end hotels. In a high end development as is proposed for this site, there is no correlation between hotel size and quality. Many boutique hotel operators regularly maintain high quality hotels on lots much smaller than two acres. It is recommended that the minimum lot size requirement for hotels be lifted and instead to let life-safety, setback, and parking requirements dictate the size of hotel lots. Town homes are particularly valuable for a regional center development such as is proposed in the Concept Plan. There are several requirements placed on town homes that are unnecessarily onerous. Gwinnett County requires that town homes have three parking spaces per unit at least one of which is in a garage, while typically larger single family homes have only two spaces required and no garage requirement. Two Parking spaces per unit should be sufficient for this development and a garage is not always necessary, especially when the parking is provided in the rear off of an alley. It is recommended that the garage and third parking space requirements be lifted from town homes.



Typical local street configurations in a Traditional Neighborhood Development

REQUIRED PARKING (See Table 10)				SHARED PARKING FACTOR	
	T2 T3	T4	T5 T6	Function	Function
RESIDENTIAL	2.0 / dwelling	1.5 / dwelling	1.0 / dwelling	RESIDENTIAL	RESIDENTIAL
LODGING	1.0 / bedroom	1.0 / bedroom	1.0 / bedroom	LODGING	LODGING
OFFICE	3.0 / 1000 sq. ft.	3.0 / 1000 sq. ft.	2.0 / 1000 sq. ft.	OFFICE	OFFICE
RETAIL	4.0 / 1000 sq. ft.	4.0 / 1000 sq. ft.	3.0 / 1000 sq. ft.	RETAIL	RETAIL
CIVIC	To be determined by Warrant				
OTHER	To be determined by Warrant				

This Required Paking Table produces the Effective Parking needed for each site involved in sharing. Conversely, if the Sharing Factor is used as a multiplier, it indicates the amount of building allowed on each site given the parking available.

