Revised 9/4/26

ALBEMARLE COUNTY PLANNING
STAFF REPORT SUMMARY

Project Name: ZMA-2025-00010 Airport Road Commercial	**Staff:** J.T. Newberry, Senior Planner II
Planning Commission Public Hearing: September 8, 2026	**Board of Supervisors Public Hearing:** TBD
Owner: Airport Auto Investments, LLC; Airport Auto Investments Phase 3, LLC (rep. by Andrew Baldwin)	**Applicant**: Kendra Moon, PE, and Anna Lou Bernstein; Line and Grade
Acreage: 7.62 acres	**Rezone from:** R-1 Residential and Highway Commercial (HC) to Highway Commercial (HC) with proffers.
TMPs: 032A0-01-0B-001A0, 032A0-01-0B-00200, 032A0-01-0B-00300, 032A0-01-0B-00400, 03200-00-00-020D0, and 03200-00-00-020E0	**By-right uses:** R-1 Residential – residential uses (1 unit/acre); Highway Commercial – commercial and service; residential by special use permit (15 units/acre).
School Districts: Baker-Butler Elementary, Lakeside Middle, and Albemarle High School	**Location:** Northwest of the intersection of Airport Rd. and Seminole Trail (Rt. 29), south of Airport Acres Rd, including 3524 Airport Acres Rd. and 3548 Airport Acres Rd.
Magisterial District: Rio	**Proffers**: Yes
Proposal: Commercial development within two development blocks, including a modification to commercial buffer/screening requirements adjacent to residential (SE-2025-00024).	**Requested # of Dwelling Units:** None.
DA (Development Area): Places 29 Master Plan – Hollymead	**Comp. Plan Designations:** Neighborhood Residential – primarily residential at 3-6 units/acre and small-scale neighborhood retail/institutional uses; Neighborhood Mixed Use – mixed-use up to 18 units/acre and neighborhood retail/institutional/office uses;
Character of Property: Primarily wooded, containing one single-family residence, parking associated with auto repair use, and a small amount of storage area associated with adjacent auto repair use.	**Use of Surrounding Properties:** A mix of residential and non-residential uses, including single-family detached units, auto repair, auto sales, retail, and automobile service station/convenience store with car wash.
Positive Aspects: 1. Proposal is consistent with the primary or secondary land uses on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for Neighborhood Residential and Neighborhood Mixed Use. 2. Provides an interconnection that enhances the overall transportation network between US 29, Airport Acres, and Airport Road.	**Concerns:** 1. No concerns identified at this time.
RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of ZMA-2025-00010 with associated proffers.	

STAFF PERSON: J.T. Newberry, Senior Planner II
PLANNING COMMISSION: September 8, 2026
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: To be scheduled

CHARACTER OF THE AREA

The subject properties are situated between Airport Acres Road and Airport Road. Four of the parcels are located within Airport Acres subdivision, currently zoned R-1 Residential, and total approximately 6.1 acres. The two remaining parcels (Parcels 20D and 20E) total 1.52 acres and are currently zoned HC Highway Commercial. The existing HC parcels are associated with an existing auto repair business on Airport Road. The R1 parcels contain one single-family detached dwelling (3548 Airport Acres Rd.). The structure at 3524 Airport Acres Rd. is no longer used as a residence. Airport Road forms the southern boundary of the project area. A variety of commercial uses are located on the southern side of Airport Road, including a bank, retail sales (currently a hot tub store), and an auto repair shop. (Attachment 1-Location Map)

The Airport Acres residential subdivision lies north of the area, which is zoned R1 and currently contains a total of 40 single-family dwellings. A variety of commercial uses lie to the east, including motor vehicle sales, retail sales (currently a tobacco store and U-Haul rental), an auto repair shop, and a gas station/convenience store. West of the subject properties are single-family detached residential uses. The southern end of North Fork, including Lewis and Clark Drive and its intersection with Airport Road, is located just beyond these residences.

PLANNING AND ZONING HISTORY

There have been several prior actions related to the subject properties.

SUB-0005	Clover's Airport Acres subdivision was approved in 1959 to create a 21 residential lots ranging in size from 0.76 acres to 3.28 acres, served by an internal street (Airport Acres Road) accept as a public road in 1978.
ZMA199600018	A rezoning was approved for Parcels 20D and 20E from R-1 to Highway Commercial to allow the use of the property for automobile, truck repair shop. The original site plan for an automobile repair shop (now Airport Auto) was approved in 1981 and was located on Parcel 40 (not included in the current application).
ZMA200300009	A rezoning amended the proffers of ZMA199600018 to allow stand-alone parking for Airport Auto and a separate entrance to the parking area from Airport Road. A proffered application plan included a conceptual layout of the parking area. This rezoning was approved simultaneously with SP20030006 to allow stand-alone parking. Approved stand-alone parking area on Parcels 20D and 20E to resolve zoning violations associated with parking vehicles awaiting repair on parcels not included in the site plan approval.

SPECIFICS OF THE PROPOSAL

The application proposes to rezone all R1 and HC parcels to HC Highway Commercial, including amending the proffers associated with the properties already zoned HC (Parcels 20D and 20E). Details of the request are found in Attachments 2 (Narrative), Attachment 3 (Concept Plan), and Attachment 4 (Proffers). Figure 1 below depicts the concept plan.

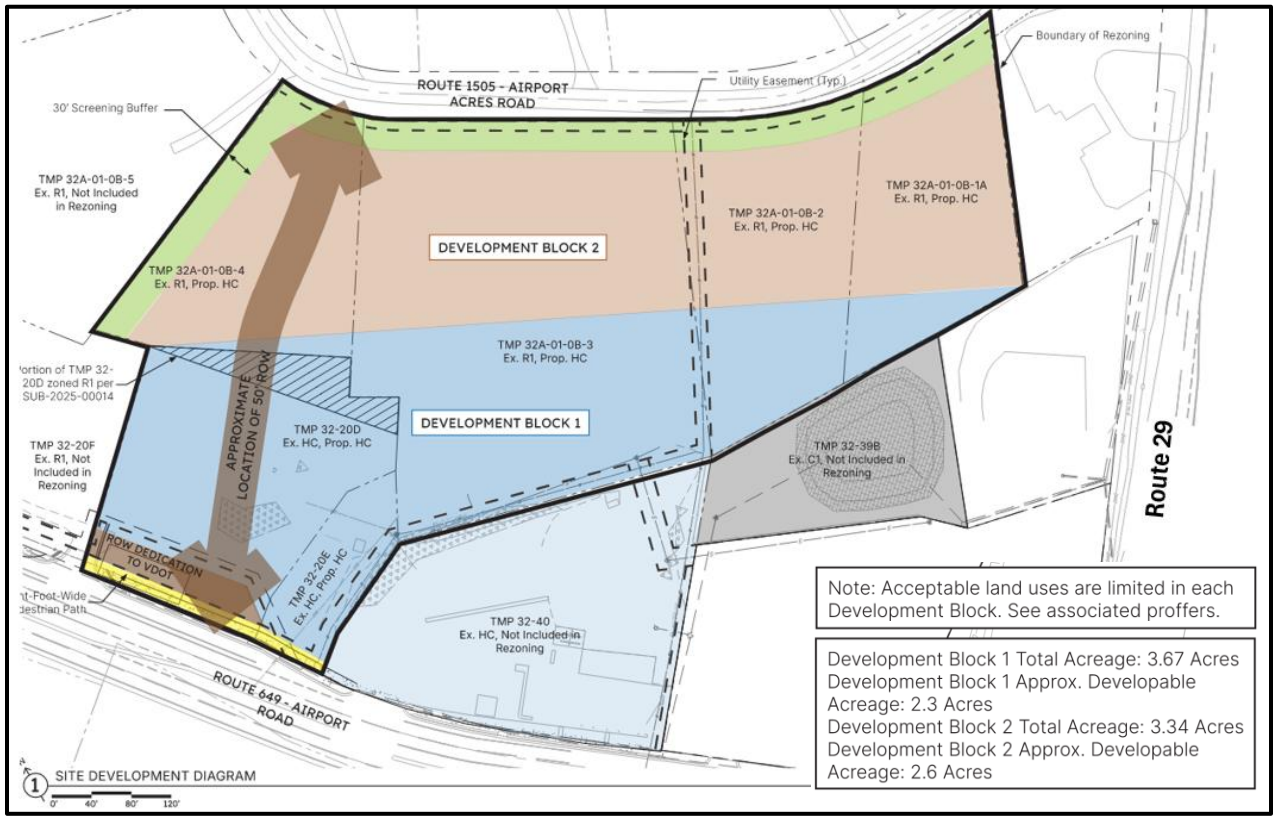

Figure 1: The applicant's proposed conceptual plan (see Attachment 3).

The proposed conceptual plan divides the subject properties into two similarly sized development blocks identified as Block 1 and Block 2. Although both blocks are proposed to receive HC zoning, the proffers provided by the applicant limit the development and use of each block according to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Proposed features of each block are described below:

Block 1*(blue on Figure 1)*

- This block is approximately 3.67 acres and contains an estimated developable acreage of 2.3 acres and is located closest to Airport Road and existing commercially zoned properties.
- Development of this block would be subject to the area and bulk regulations of the HC zoning district (e.g. height, setbacks, minimum street frontage, etc.).
- Uses would be limited to those listed as permitted by-right and by special use permit as shown in the first column of the Future Use Table included in the proffers.
- 30' Buffer and screening would be provided to residential property to the west.

Block 2 *(brown on Figure 1)*

- This block is approximately 3.34 acres and contains an estimated developable acreage of 2.6 acres and is located closest to Airport Acres existing residential lots.

- Development of this block would be subject to the area and bulk regulations of the HC zoning district and subject to the building height and building footprint regulations offered by the applicant.
- Uses would be limited to those listed as permitted by-right and by special use permit as shown in the second column of the Future Use Table included in the proffers.
- 30' buffer and screening would be provided along the northern property line adjacent to Airport Acres Road. Buffer/screening is not required adjacent to roads by the ordinance.
- 30' buffer and screening would be provided along the western property line that includes an 8 foot wide Class A trail.

PROFFERS

The applicant proposes several proffers to mitigate impacts of the proposed development as summarized below:

1. Site Development-The site would be developed in general accord with the concept plan to include the following elements:
    a. A 30' Screening Buffer- An additional 10-feet of buffer, in addition to the ordinance required 20-feet, for a total of a 30-foot-wide screening buffer along the northern property line. Planting details are specified in the proffer.
    b. A 30' Screening Buffer- An additional 10-feet of buffer, in addition to the ordinance required 20-feet, for a total of a 30-foot-wide screening buffer along the western property line in Block 2, to include an 8'-wide pedestrian path. Planting details are specified in the proffer.
    c. Dedication of Right of Way- Dedication of a 50' of right of way for a public road interconnection between Airport Acres and Airport Road.
    d. Pedestrian Path- a minimum 8 foot wide pedestrian path shall be constructed along the frontage of TMPs 32-20D and 32-20E to tie into existing pedestrian infrastructure
2. Building Height-Buildings would be limited to 3-stories in height in Block 2.
3. Building Footprint-Buildings in Block 2 would be limited to footprints of 20,000 square feet each.
4. Uses in Block 1-Uses that would not be permitted include those that are likely to generate significant vehicle trips, such as car washes and drive-through windows.
5. Uses in Block 2- Uses that would not be permitted include those that are likely to generate significant vehicle trips, such as car washes, automobile service station, and drive-through windows, as well as uses that are less likely to be compatible with the surrounding residential area. Examples of these types of uses in Block 2 include auto repair, storage yard, and temporary construction headquarters.

COMMUNITY MEETING

Two community meetings related to the application were held at the Places29 North Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The first meeting was held on September 11, 2025, which focused on a proposal for a one-story self-storage facility. A second community was held on July 9, 2026, based on the scope of changes and integration of additional parcels.

Approximately five residents from the Airport Acres subdivision attended the second community meeting. The applicant shared details about the proposed rezoning and also answered questions from attendees. Comment and discussion focused on the proposed interconnection between Airport Acres Road and Airport Road, including concerns about introducing commercial traffic into a residential community, as well as the use of the interconnection as a cut through. Other concerns were raised about appropriate building heights near residential uses.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The initial rezoning application was received in July 2025, with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan effective at the time. AC44 became effective January 1, 2026. Certain recommendations of the Places29 Master Plan remain applicable. Because of the timing and scope of changes to the application, staff has focused primarily AC44 consolidated Land Use Categories and the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) in the analysis below.

AC44

As shown in Figure 3 below, the FLUM contains two Land Use categories for this area – Neighborhood Residential and Neighborhood Mixed Use. The majority of the acreage (6.1 acres) included within the project area is designated Neighborhood Residential and portions along Airport Road are designated Neighborhood Mixed Use. The categories are substantially the same as the previous land use designations of the Places 29 Master Plan. Therefore, staff has provided only the AC44 summaries of the categories below.

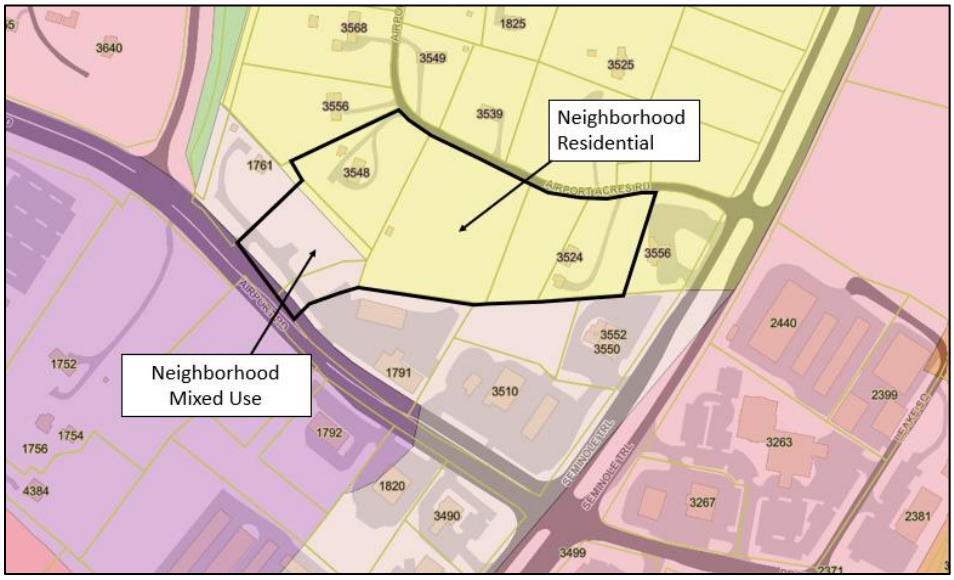

Figure 3: Land Use Categories on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for ZMA-2025-00010

Neighborhood Residential
Primarily residential
3-6 units/acre
Small-scale neighborhood retail/institutional

Neighborhood Mixed Use
Mixed-use
Up to 18 units/acre
Neighborhood retail/institutional/office

Neighborhood-scale non-residential uses such as schools and childcare, commercial, retail, religious assembly, and institutional uses may be appropriate in Neighborhood Residential and Neighborhood Mixed use areas. As a secondary land use, auto-commercial uses, office/research and development, and light industrial uses may be appropriate in Neighborhood Mixed Use areas. Typically, land use categories are considered in the context of the entire contiguous designation, not at the individual parcel level.

The concept plan establishes Block 1 and Block 2, with less intense commercial uses to be located within the block designated Neighborhood Residential and additional commercial activity located in the Neighborhood Mixed Use area adjacent to Airport Road. Staff believes that the proposed non-residential uses, at a neighborhood scale, are appropriate within this area of the broader Neighborhood Residential designated area. The applicant has also retained the special use permit use to allow the

potential of R15 Residential in the future. If the properties were to pursue R15, a special use permit would be required.

Activity Centers are also included in AC44, replacing centers previously recommended in the Places 29 Master Plan. Activity centers encourage projects to develop at the higher end of the densities and intensities ranges established by the underlying Land Use Categories. The subject properties are not located within an Activity Center. However, they are adjacent to the Hollymead Town Center Regional Center (see Figure 4 below).

Nevertheless, the subject properties are included within the overall study area for the County's first Activity Center plan, which will focus on the Hollymead Town Center Area.

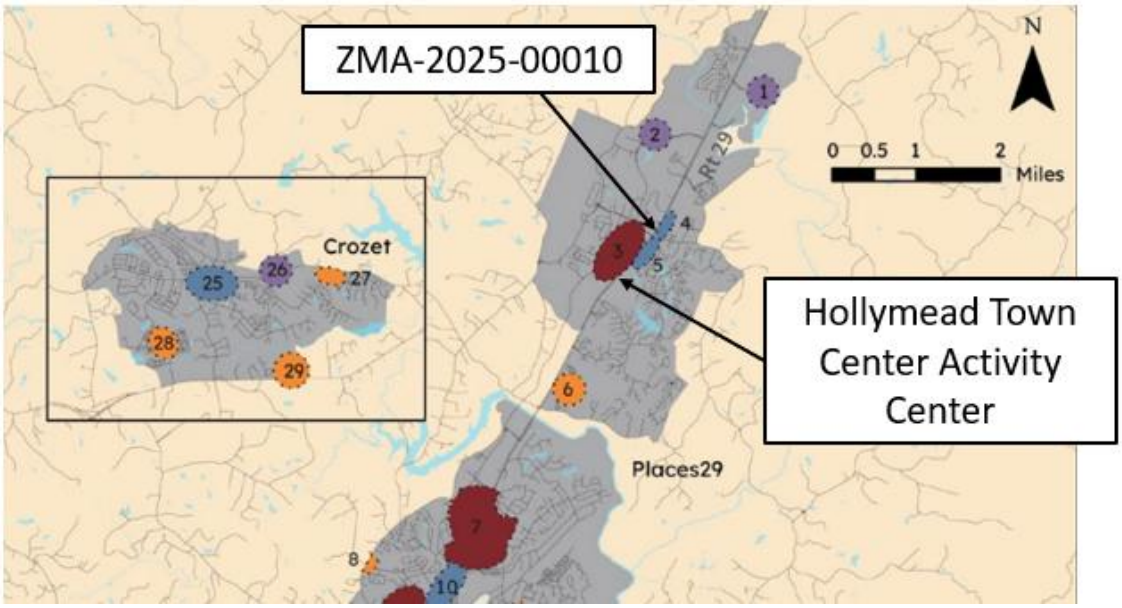

Figure 4: Map of Regional, Employment, Community, and Local Centers under AC44

While the rezoning proposes HC Zoning, the applicant has prohibited a number of uses that are inconsistent with neighborhood-scale non-residential. Staff believes the application appropriately responds to both the land use categories, especially given its proximity to the Hollymead Town Center Activity Center.

Both the Neighborhood Residential and Neighborhood Mixed Use land use categories provide guidance on the desired form of development. The table in Figure 5 summarizes how the proposal, compares to the recommended building form:

Location[1]	Regulation	Proposed	AC44 Recommendations
Block 2 (Neighborhood Residential)	Building Height	Maximum of 3 stories	1-3 stories
	Building Footprint	Maximum of 20,000 sq. ft.	Typically less than 20,000 sq. ft.
Block 1 (Neighborhood Mixed Use)	Building Height	Maximum 65'	1-3 stories
	Building Footprint	Not regulated	Typically less than 25,000 sq. ft.

Figure 5: Proposed Building Height and Footprint for Block vs. Recommendation of Neighborhood Residential

[1] The block numbers shown in Figure 5 have been corrected from the staff report originally published on 9/1/26. The revised staff report was re-published on 9/4/26.

Overall, staff believes the scope and scale of this proposal, given the concept plan and limitation on land uses, limits on built form, and additional buffering, allow this proposal to be consistent with land use categories recommendation for land uses and desired form.

Transportation
The Comprehensive Plan recommends interconnections within the Development Areas to increase the efficiency and connectivity of the transportation network. The Places29 Master Plan strongly encourages interconnections, such as the one proposed between Airport Road and US 29. AC44-Community Design Guidelines recommend connecting streets within and between developments so pedestrians can easily bike or walk to many destinations, traffic has alternative routes, and car trips are reduced in number and length. Other objectives include:

> *Development Areas Transportation Objective 2: Improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and connectivity to support future land use policies and support safe, comfortable, and convenient walking travel for people of all ages and abilities.*
>
> *Development Areas Transportation Objective 4: Increase the efficiency and connectivity of the transportation network.*

The proposed concept plan includes a public interconnection meeting these objectives of the comprehensive plan for vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians.

ZONING ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

Relationship between the application and the intent and purposes of the requested zoning district:

The purpose and intent of the Highway Commercial zoning district is to:

- Permit development of commercial establishments, other than shopping centers, primarily oriented to highway locations rather than to central business concentrations.
- Be established on major highways within the urban area and communities in the comprehensive plan.
- Be for the purpose of limiting sprawling strip commercial development by providing sites with adequate frontage and depth to permit controlled access to public streets.

The proposal is adjacent to Airport Road, which is a major highway, with adequate depth and frontage. Staff believes the project meets the purpose and intent of the HC district.

Anticipated impact on public facilities and services:

Transportation:
The proposed rezoning includes properties that front on both Airport Road and Airport Acres Road. Airport Road is an urban collector road, four land road. The typical section abutting the site consists of two lanes westbound, with a dedicated bike lane, and a sidewalk. There are two entrances with curb cuts into the site. A right turn lane begins approaching Lewis and Clark Drive. On the northern side, Airport Acres is a two-lane rural local subdivision road with no pedestrian or bike facilities.

The site is located within close proximity (approximately 500+') to the intersection of US 29, Airport Road, and Profitt Road. That intersection was analyzed with both the US29 Corridor Study completed by VDOT in 2023 and more recently with the North Pointe rezoning traffic impact analysis (TIA). The intersection currently has both significant operational and safety challenges. Transportation improvements will be provided by the developer of North Pointe and the North Fork development will be providing monetary contributions to improve US 29. Additional improvements will be made to the US 29 corridor in the future.

VDOT planned improvements include the extension of Berkmar Drive to Airport Road and a roundabout at Airport Road and Innovation Drive, which are planned to start construction in Summer 2028. The project will complete Berkmar Drive, which runs parallel with Route 29 (Seminole Trail) and will provide an alternate route of travel for local and regional traffic. The project will help reduce traffic delays and congestion for both commuters, local traffic, and airport-destined traffic.

The concept plan proposes a public road interconnection between Airport Acres Road and Airport Road, which would provide an alternative for local traffic to avoid US29 by allowing access to Berkmar Drive. An 8-foot-wide Class A trail and a sidewalk will be provided with the new interconnection road. The applicant has worked very closely with VDOT to confirm the feasibility of the interconnection. The applicant provided data to VDOT to ensure the proposed connection did not negatively impact the design and capacity of the planned roundabout at Airport Road and Berkmar Drive Extended.

Staff believes the proposed interconnection between Airport Road and Airport Acres Road will provide a beneficial segment to the road network and provide an alternative route for Airport Acres' residents to enter and exit the subdivision. The multi-use path planned with this project will also improve multimodal connectivity in the area.

VDOT has no objection to the proposal. The approximation of the interconnection's location as shown on the conceptual plan provides the necessary flexibility to construct the entrance where it will not interfere with the roundabout project. Based on the final design of the interconnection, a spacing exception from VDOT may still be required. Staff believes the interconnection will help alleviate any traffic generated from the proposed development.

Schools:
No residential units are proposed with this rezoning. Therefore, no impacts to schools are anticipated.

Fire Rescue:
Albemarle County Fire Rescue has reviewed this rezoning application and has no objections at this time. Code requirements for items such as street and travelway widths, turning radius, and the necessity of secondary emergency fire access routes will be addressed at the site planning and/or subdivision stage, as well as other items such as adequate access and water availability. These elements will have to meet Fire Rescue requirements before those plans can be approved by the County.

Utilities:
This project is in the Albemarle County Service Authority (ACSA) water and sewer service jurisdictional area. ACSA and the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority (RWSA) have no objections to this project at this time. A utilities construction plan will be required, subject to ACSA and RWSA approval, prior to the approval of site plans and/or subdivision plans by the County at the site development stage of these properties.

Anticipated impact on environmental, cultural, and historic resources:
There are no known cultural or historic resources on these parcels. The site is located on the Airport Road Entrance Corridor and subject to the Architectural Review Board. There are managed steep slopes within the project area, and any disturbance of those slopes will be reviewed by the County Engineering staff during the development phase of the project. Any increase in stormwater runoff will be reviewed by Engineering staff during the development phase. Any stormwater facilities will be designed in accordance with the Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) regulations administered by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Anticipated impact on nearby and surrounding properties:
Based on the scope and scale of this proposal, no adverse impacts to surrounding properties is expected. Properties to the east and south are all zoned commercial. Properties to the north and west are zoned residential. The zoning ordinance requires a minimum 20' buffer to residential properties, along with a 50' setback for structures to residential districts. In addition, the proposed concept plan provides for an increase in the minimum buffer from 20' to 30', has proposed to limit building heights to 3 stories, and limit the building footprint to 20,000 square feet adjacent to residential properties. The proposed interconnection is located within close proximity to US29, limiting its impact on the majority of lots within Airport Acres. Staff believes potential impacts have been appropriately mitigated with adequate ordinance and concept plan elements.

Public need and justification for the change:
The County's growth management policy encourages new commercial development in the designated Development Areas, where infrastructure and services are provided, rather than in the Rural Areas. Staff believes the increase in density is in an appropriate location.

SE-2025-00024
The applicant has requested a special exception in conjunction with the rezoning request. The Planning Commission is not required to act on the special exception but any comments related to the request will be shared with the Board of Supervisors.

County Code §18-21.7(c) prohibits construction activity within commercial zoning districts, including grading or clearing of vegetation, closer than 20 feet to any residential or rural areas district. This is not required adjacent to roads so no special exception is needed where the buffer is proposed along the northern property line with Airport Acres Road.

However, this prohibition may be waived by the Board of Supervisors by special exception upon consideration of whether:

(i) the developer or subdivider demonstrates that grading or clearing is necessary or would result in an improved site design;
(ii) minimum screening requirements will be satisfied; and
(iii) existing landscaping in excess of minimum requirements is substantially restored.

The applicant has requested a special exception to waive this requirement in two locations to allow the required buffer to be disturbed for grading and replanting of vegetative screening within the 20 foot buffer but will ultimately provide an increased 30 foot buffer along these property lines. As depicted in Figure 6 on the following page, the applicant has submitted justification to waive this prohibition in the two locations as depicted:

1. The use buffer on the western edge TMP 32A-1-B-4 along its boundary with TMP 32A-1-B-5, which is currently a vegetated buffer of evergreen and deciduous trees.
2. The use buffer on the western edge of TMP 32-20D along its boundary with TMP 32-20F, which is currently unvegetated.

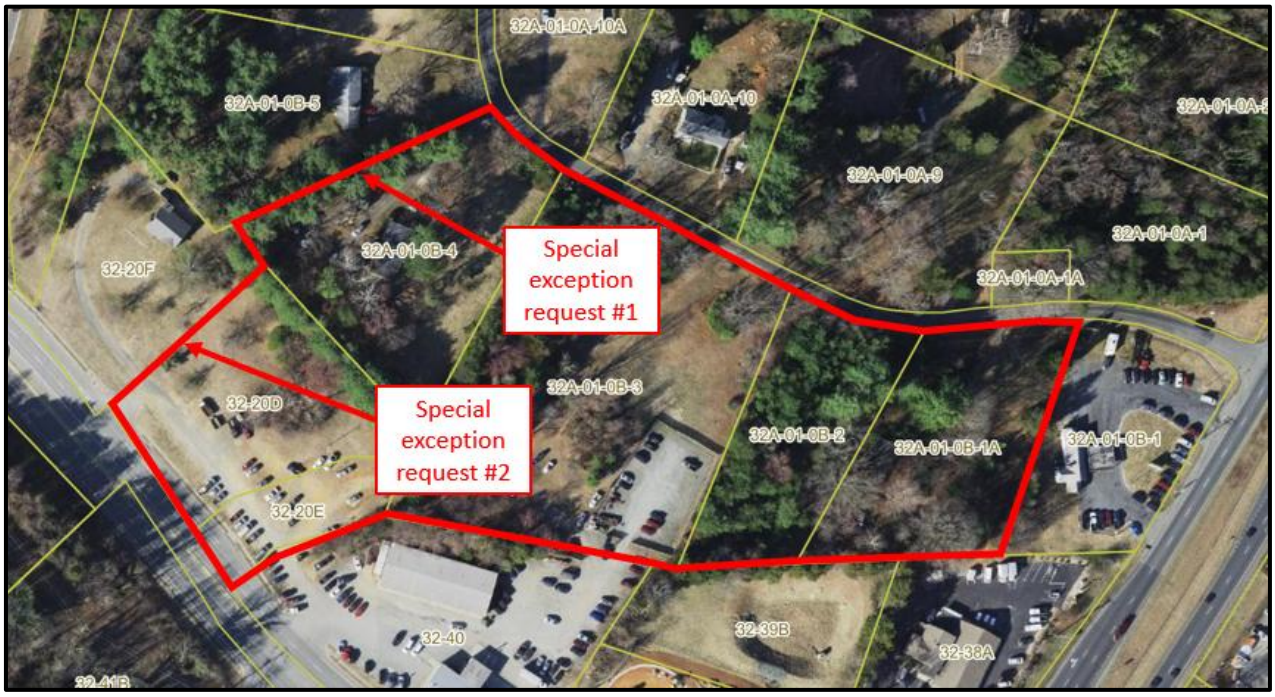

Figure 6: Special Exception Requests to Allow Construction Activity Closer than 20 feet of a Residential District.

Disturbance of the 20' buffer is necessary to allow for construction of the proposed interconnection, including an 8 foot wide Class A trail. Once constructed, residentially-zoned parcel (Parcel 20F) would need to obtain access from the proposed interconnection.

Staff believes the features of the layout will result in improved site design and satisfy the criteria for granting the special exception along the western edge of the development in both locations. The minimum screening requirements would not only be met, but they would be exceeded in this case. The depth of the buffer would be increased from 20 feet to a 30 foot screening buffer, which would substantially restore landscaping along this boundary.

Staff believes the applicant has provided sufficient justification to allow construction activity within the 20 foot use buffer required by County Code §18-21.7(c) in both locations.

SUMMARY

Staff have identified the following positive aspects of this request:

1. Proposal is consistent with the recommended primary or secondary land uses in the Neighborhood Density and Neighborhood Mixed Use categories of the future land use plan.
2. Provides an interconnection that enhances the overall transportation network.

Staff have not identified any concerns with this request at this time.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of ZMA-2025-00010 Airport Road Commercial with associated proffers.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach 1 – ZMA-2025-00010 Airport Road Commercial – Location Map
Attach 2 – ZMA-2025-00010 Airport Road Commercial – Applicant Narrative

Attach 3 – ZMA-2025-00010 Airport Road Commercial – Proposed Conceptual Plan (last revised July 17, 2026)
Attach 4 – ZMA-2025-00010 Airport Road Commercial – Proposed Proffers (last revised July 17, 2026)
Attach 5 – ZMA-2025-00010 Airport Road Commercial – Applicant Special Exception Request (dated July 17, 2026)