

# Mixed-use project to extend Town Center

The City of Suwanee Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is poised to enter into contract with developer Terwilliger-Pappas to create a \$46 million mixed-use multifamily/retail building at Chicago Street and Buford Highway adjacent to Town Center. The proposed development on an approximately 3.5-acre tract is expected to feature a five-story structure with 10,000 square feet of street-level commercial/retail/restaurant space and 235 high-end apartments. The project also is expected to include a parking garage around which the mixed-use structure will be built.

“The City of Suwanee DDA is pursuing an exciting public-private partnership that will extend our incredible Town Center,” says Mayor Jimmy Burnette. “This project will bring more residents, commercial opportunities, and energy to Town Center’s vibrant ‘live, work, play’ lifestyle. This will be a win for all of us.”

The contract is expected to stipulate that Suwanee’s DDA will receive \$600,000 in cash for the 3.5-acre property plus ownership, at no additional cost, of the 10,000 square feet of commercial/retail space. The approximately 3.5-acre property being purchased by Terwilliger-Pappas was acquired over time for \$497,000.

This upcoming project was featured in October at Partnership Gwinnett’s annual Redevelopment Forum. Jimmy Bagnon, division executive with Terwilliger-Pappas, presented at the forum, which showcases exciting projects and the region’s vision for redevelopment.

The primarily one- and two-bedroom residences that are part of the project are expected to appeal to professional millennials and empty-nesters and would further the City’s efforts to be a lifelong community. “We fully expect that these apartments will set the bar for quality in Gwinnett County,” says Suwanee’s Downtown

and Business Development Manager Adam Edge, “and that lease rates will exceed those of any similar existing Gwinnett County development. Studies have shown that Town Center has some of the highest property values in the county. We believe that this project will not just contribute to, but enhance, Town Center’s value.”

The new development will have a similar look and feel to the current Town Center area and will employ first-class building materials and architecture and offer top-quality amenities. City Manager Marty Allen notes that previous master plans, dating back to the 2002 Old Town Master Plan and including the recently completed 2015 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan Update, which provided several public input opportunities, have created a vision for this property that includes mixed-use and multifamily units and complements the existing Town Center.



Developed from 2003-2009, Suwanee Town Center has won numerous planning awards, including the prestigious Atlanta Regional Commission's Development of Excellence Award in 2009.

"We have a proven track record with Town Center of master planning our vision and then working with the private sector to implement that vision," says Allen. "People are always asking when we're going to extend Town Center. We're confident that this project will add depth and energy that not only physically extends Town Center but also further enhances the Town Center experience. We're pleased that Terwilliger-Pappas is as committed to quality development as is the City of Suwanee."

The project, adds Allen, addresses several goals in the 20/20 Vision strategic plan, including extending Town Center, ensuring lifetime housing, and promoting a mixture of housing types.

With the local economy rebounding and plans for reconstruction of Buford Highway moving forward, the City has received increased interest recently in creating a compatible, high-quality development around Town Center. In June, the Suwanee DDA issued a request for proposals for development of the Chicago Avenue tract. Three proposals were received, and the DDA visited two representative sites as part of the proposal assessment process before selecting Terwilliger-Pappas.

**Elements of the Terwilliger-Pappas proposal include:**

- a single, five-story, mixed-use building wrapped around structured parking
- 10,000 square feet of commercial/retail/restaurant space fronting Buford Highway
- compatibility with Town Center's look and form
- about 520 structured public and private parking spaces, some of which may be used for community events
- 235 upscale apartments
- residential units that are constructed in a manner that may allow for conversion to condominiums in the future
- predominantly one- and two-bedroom units
- anticipated monthly average residential rent of \$1,568.



Atlanta-based Terwilliger-Pappas specializes in Class A multifamily and mixed-use projects. Terwilliger-Pappas principals have developed more than 300,000 multifamily homes and executed more than \$1 billion in completed projects. The company, which anticipates investing about \$46 million in the Town Center project, currently has projects underway in Atlanta, Charlotte, Raleigh, and Nashville. Construction on the Town Center project, to be developed under Terwilliger-Pappas' Solis brand, will likely begin sometime late in 2016 and will take 20 or more months to complete.

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