



**NOTICE OF DECISION**

**PURSUANT TO RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 19.60.080 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE CITY OF RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL, ON JUNE 18, 2024, PASSED ORDINANCE 2024-21 REZONING APPROXIMATELY 26.3 ACRES OF LAND FROM AGRICULTURE (AG) TO MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL SMALL LOTS (R-2S) (CITY FILE NO. Z2024-101):**

**DESCRIPTION  
OF ACTION:**

Rezoning approximately 26.3 acres of land from Agriculture (AG) to Medium Density Residential Small Lots (R-2S).

**SEPA REVIEW:**

Pursuant to WAC 197-11-800(6)(C) the rezone application is exempt from SEPA review.

**APPROVED:**

The rezone application is approved.

**PROJECT LOCATION:**

1251 Bermuda Rd Peach Tree Estates II

**APPEALS:**

Appeals to the above described action may be made to the Benton County Superior Court by any Party of Record. Appeals must be filed within 21 days of issuance of this notice, which is June 25, 2024.

Mike Stevens,  
Planning Manager

June 25, 2024

Date

**WHEN RECORDED RETURN TO:**

Richland City Clerk's Office  
625 Swift Boulevard, MS-05  
Richland, WA 99352

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-21**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND, WASHINGTON, AMENDING TITLE 23: ZONING REGULATIONS OF THE RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE AND THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY TO CHANGE THE ZONING ON 26.3 ACRES FROM AGRICULTURE (AG) TO MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL SMALL LOTS (R-2S); SAID PROPERTY BEING IDENTIFIED AS PORTIONS OF ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS 134982010595005 AND 134982000005007, AND ADOPTING THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE RICHLAND HEARING EXAMINER AS THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL.**

**WHEREAS**, on April 8, 2024, the Richland Hearing Examiner held a duly advertised open-record public hearing to consider a petition from Alex Rietmann, acting on behalf of MD&D Investments, LLC, to change the zoning of the property hereafter legally described in Section 3 and identified as portions of Assessor's Parcel Numbers 134982010595005 and 134982000005007; and

**WHEREAS**, following the April 8, 2024 open-record public hearing, the Richland Hearing Examiner issued a 10-page written recommendation to the Richland City Council that concluded with a favorable recommendation to approve the requested rezone; and

**WHEREAS**, the Richland City Council has considered the written recommendation of the Richland Hearing Examiner and the record created during the April 8, 2024 open-record public hearing; and

**WHEREAS**, as required by RMC 19.20.030, the Richland City Council conducted a closed-record decision hearing on June 4, 2024 and has considered the totality of the record.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the City of Richland as follows:

Section 1. The findings of fact and conclusions of law contained in the Richland Hearing Examiner's Report dated May 3, 2024, attached hereto as **Exhibit A** and incorporated herein by this reference, are hereby adopted as the findings and conclusions of the Richland City Council.

Section 2. It is hereby found, as an exercise of the City's police power, that the best land use classification for the land described below is Medium Density Residential Small Lot (R-2S) when consideration is given to the interests of the public.

Section 3. Said property, depicted in **Exhibit B**, attached hereto and incorporated by this reference, is more particularly described as follows:

A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER AND THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 34, TOWNSHIP 9 NORTH, RANGE 28 EAST OF THE WILLAMETTE MERIDIAN, CITY OF RICHLAND, BENTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCING AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 34 MARKED BY A 5/8 INCH REBAR WITH NO CAP, THENCE SOUTH 00°45'17" WEST ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID SECTION 34 A DISTANCE OF 2699.45 FEET TO THE WEST QUARTER CORNER OF SAID SECTION 34 MARKED BY A 1/2 INCH REBAR WITH NO CAP AND THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING;

THENCE SOUTH 00°45'21" WEST CONTINUING ALONG SAID WEST LINE A DISTANCE OF 30.02 FEET;

THENCE SOUTH 89°51'29" EAST A DISTANCE OF 438.49 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 00°08'31" EAST A DISTANCE OF 115.01 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 02°48'05" EAST A DISTANCE OF 54.06 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 00°08'31" EAST A DISTANCE OF 95.01 FEET;

THENCE SOUTH 89°51'29" EAST A DISTANCE OF 60.21 FEET;

THENCE SOUTH 66°27'51" EAST A DISTANCE OF 20.00 FEET TO A POINT ON THE ARC OF A NON TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE RIGHT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 676.07 FEET; THE RADIUS POINT OF WHICH BEARS SOUTH 66°27'51" EAST; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 35.21 FEET, WITH A DELTA ANGLE OF 02°59'02", A CHORD BEARING OF NORTH 25°01'40" EAST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 35.20 FEET;

THENCE SOUTH 63°28'49" EAST A DISTANCE OF 54.01 FEET;

THENCE SOUTH 89°51'29" EAST A DISTANCE OF 120.31 FEET TO A POINT ON THE ARC OF A NON TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE RIGHT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 517.06 FEET; THE RADIUS POINT OF WHICH BEARS SOUTH 57°32'48" EAST; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 270.49 FEET, WITH A DELTA ANGLE OF 29°58'25", A CHORD BEARING OF NORTH 47°26'25" EAST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 267.42 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 27°34'23" WEST A DISTANCE OF 159.02 FEET TO A POINT ON THE ARC OF A NON TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE LEFT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 676.07 FEET; THE RADIUS POINT OF WHICH BEARS SOUTH 27°34'23" EAST; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 37.70 FEET, WITH A DELTA ANGLE OF 03°11'43", A CHORD BEARING OF SOUTH 60°49'46" WEST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 37.70 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 30°46'06" WEST A DISTANCE OF 105.01 FEET TO A POINT ON THE ARC OF A NON TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE LEFT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 781.09 FEET; THE RADIUS POINT OF WHICH BEARS SOUTH 30°46'06" EAST; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 117.01 FEET, WITH A DELTA ANGLE OF 08°35'01", A CHORD BEARING OF SOUTH 54°56'24" WEST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 116.91 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 39°21'07" WEST A DISTANCE OF 105.01 FEET TO A POINT ON THE ARC OF A NON TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE RIGHT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 886.10 FEET; THE RADIUS POINT OF WHICH BEARS SOUTH 39°21'07" EAST; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 29.37 FEET, WITH A DELTA ANGLE OF 01°53'56", A CHORD BEARING OF NORTH 51°35'51" EAST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 29.37 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 37°27'10" WEST A DISTANCE OF 174.02 FEET TO A POINT ON THE ARC OF A NON TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE RIGHT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 1,060.12 FEET; THE RADIUS POINT OF WHICH BEARS SOUTH 37°27'10" EAST; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 372.98 FEET, WITH A DELTA ANGLE OF 20°09'31", A CHORD BEARING OF NORTH 62°37'35" EAST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 371.06 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 72°42'20" EAST A DISTANCE OF 354.69 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 17°17'39" WEST A DISTANCE OF 80.01 FEET TO A POINT ON THE ARC OF A NON TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE RIGHT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 25.00 FEET; THE RADIUS POINT OF WHICH BEARS NORTH 17°17'40" WEST; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 39.27 FEET, WITH A DELTA ANGLE OF 90°00'00", A CHORD BEARING OF NORTH 62°17'40" WEST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 35.36 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 17°17'40" WEST A DISTANCE OF 148.72 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVATURE WITH A TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE RIGHT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 173.02 FEET; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 42.58 FEET, WITH A DELTA ANGLE OF 14°06'08", A CHORD BEARING OF NORTH 10°14'36" WEST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 42.48 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 03°11'32" WEST A DISTANCE OF 61.86 FEET;

THENCE SOUTH 86°48'28" WEST A DISTANCE OF 54.01 FEET;

THENCE SOUTH 72°42'20" WEST A DISTANCE OF 444.07 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 00°45'17" EAST A DISTANCE OF 122.33 FEET;

THENCE NORTH 12°49'50" WEST A DISTANCE OF 54.01 FEET TO A POINT ON THE ARC OF A NON TANGENT CURVE TURNING TO THE RIGHT, HAVING A RADIUS OF 373.04 FEET; THE RADIUS POINT OF WHICH BEARS NORTH 12°49'50" WEST; THENCE ALONG SAID CURVE, HAVING AN ARC LENGTH OF 7.55 FEET, WITH A

DELTA ANGLE OF 01°09'35", A CHORD BEARING OF SOUTH 77°44'58" WEST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 7.55 FEET;  
THENCE NORTH 11°40'15" WEST A DISTANCE OF 108.74 FEET;  
THENCE NORTH 89°09'47" WEST A DISTANCE OF 335.60 FEET;  
THENCE NORTH 89°14'43" WEST A DISTANCE OF 179.02 FEET TO SAID WEST LINE OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 34;  
THENCE SOUTH 00°45'17" WEST ALONG SAID WEST LINE A DISTANCE OF 1,563.07 FEET TO THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING.

HAVING AN AREA OF 1,142,336 SQUARE FEET, 26.22 ACRES, MORE OR LESS.

Section 4. Said property depicted in **Exhibit B** and legally described in Section 3 herein is hereby rezoned from Agriculture (AG) to Medium Density Residential Small Lot (R-2S).

Section 5. Richland Municipal Code Title 23 and the Official Zoning Map of the City, as adopted by Section 23.08.040 of said Title, are hereby amended by amending Sectional Maps Nos. 22 and 23, which are two of a series of maps constituting said Official Zoning Map, as shown on the attached **Exhibit B**, and bearing the number and date of passage of this Ordinance, and by this reference made a part of this Ordinance and of the Official Zoning Map of the City.

Section 6. The City Clerk is directed to file with the Auditor of Benton County, Washington, a copy of this Ordinance and the attached amended Sectional Map Nos. 22 and 23, duly certified by the City Clerk as a true copy, together with **Exhibit A** (Richland Hearing Examiner's Report).

Section 7. This Ordinance shall take effect the day following its publication in the official newspaper of the City of Richland.

Section 8. Should any section or provision of this Ordinance be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, that decision shall not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole or any part thereof, other than the part so declared to be invalid.

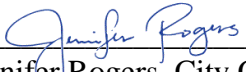
Section 9. The City Clerk and the codifiers of this Ordinance are authorized to make necessary corrections to this Ordinance, including but not limited to the correction of scrivener's errors/clerical errors, section numbering, references, or similar mistakes of form.

*This space intentionally left blank.*

**PASSED** by the City Council of the City of Richland, Washington, at a regular meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2024.

  
Theresa Richardson, Mayor

Attest:

  
Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

  
Heather Kintzley, City Attorney

First Reading: June 4, 2024  
Second Reading: June 18, 2024  
Date Published: June 23, 2024

Exhibit A - Ordinance No. 2024-21 passed 06/18/2024

Before Hearing Examiner  
Gary N. McLean

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**BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINER  
FOR THE CITY OF RICHLAND**

Regarding the Application to *Rezone* a 26+ )  
acre site from AG (Agriculture) to R-2S, )  
which is consistent with Comprehensive )  
Plan’s Medium Density Residential (MDR) )  
land use designation assigned to the area, )  
submitted by )  
  
ALEX RIETMANN, ON BEHALF THE )  
PROPERTY OWNER **MD&D INVESTMENTS,** )  
LLC, )  
  
Applicant )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

**File No. Z2024-101**

**FINDINGS OF FACT,  
CONCLUSIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATION**

**I. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION.**

The applicant, Alex Rietmann, on behalf the property owner, MD&D Investments, LLC, can meet its burden of proof to demonstrate that its requested rezone merits approval.

The site is now designated as suitable for Medium Density Residential land uses under applicable provisions of the City’s Comprehensive Plan but it is currently zoned AG (Agriculture), limiting development opportunities for the property and perpetuating a nonconformity between the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Zoning map. The pending application would rezone the site to one of two available Medium Density Residential zoning districts found in current City codes, specifically, the R-2S zone, a medium density residential zone as described in RMC 23.18.010(D).

This requested rezone does not approve any development activity on the site. As with all development proposals, City Development Regulations, including without limitation subdivision codes, will apply to any specific projects that may eventually be proposed on the site. The same applicant is pursuing a preliminary plat application for the rezone property, which is subject to a separate review and approval by the Hearing Examiner, under File No.

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL FOR PEACH  
TREE ESTATES II REZONE APPLICATION –  
FILE NO. Z2024-101**

**GARY N. MCLEAN**  
**HEARING EXAMINER FOR THE CITY OF RICHLAND**  
CITY HALL – 625 SWIFT BOULEVARD  
RICHLAND, WASHINGTON 99352

1 S2024-101. If this rezone is denied, the proposed plat would be null and void.

2 Because applicant’s only vest to zoning and development regulations in effect at the  
3 time of a complete application for a preliminary plat proposal, the applicant has assumed all  
4 risk associated with pursuing approval of a plat that is dependent on the Council’s legislative  
5 discretion to approve or deny this requested rezone. This Recommendation should not be  
6 read to create any expectation or assumption on the applicant’s part that applicable law  
7 mandates approval of their requested rezone. It does not. To the contrary, the City Council  
8 holds full discretion and authority to reach its own decisions regarding site-specific rezones.  
9 For example, in this matter, City codes include at least two zoning designations that are  
10 considered Medium Density Residential, the requested R-2S zone, and the R-2 zone, which  
11 was previously assigned to the Sienna Hills development site immediately south of the parcel  
12 addressed in this Recommendation.

13 In any event, for reasons explained below, the Hearing Examiner respectfully  
14 recommends that the City Council approve the applicant’s pending request to rezone their  
15 parcel from AG to the R-2S zoning district.

16 **II. BACKGROUND and APPLICABLE LAW.**

17 In this matter, the Hearing Examiner has jurisdiction to conduct an open record public  
18 hearing on the site-specific rezone application at issue and is directed to issue a written  
19 recommendation for consideration and final action by the Richland City Council. *See*  
20 Richland Municipal Code (RMC) 19.20.010(D)(identifies “site-specific rezones” as Type  
21 IIIA permit applications); RMC 23.70.210(A)(“The hearing examiner shall conduct an open  
22 record public hearing as required by RMC Title 19 for a Type IIIA permit application.”); and  
23 RMC 19.20.030(granting jurisdiction to Hearing Examiner to conduct public hearing and  
24 issue recommendation to City Council); RMC 19.25.110(authority for Examiner actions,  
25 including conditions of approval on applications or appeals); and RCW 35A.63.170(state  
26 statute regarding hearing examiner system).

27 The applicant bears the burden of proof to show that its application conforms to the  
28 relevant elements of the city’s development regulations and comprehensive plan, and that  
29 any significant adverse environmental impacts have been adequately addressed. RMC  
30 19.60.060.

31 Finally, Washington Courts apply three basic rules when reviewing appeals of rezone  
32 applications: (1) there is no presumption favoring the rezone request; (2) the proponent of a  
33 rezone must demonstrate that there has been a change of circumstances since the original  
34 zoning, PROVIDED if a proposed rezone implements the policies of a comprehensive plan,



1 a showing of changed circumstances is usually not required<sup>1</sup>; and (3) the rezone must have a  
2 substantial relationship to the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare. *Woods v.*  
3 *Kittitas County*, 162 Wn.2d 597 (2007), citing *Citizens for Mount Vernon*, 133 Wn.2d 861,  
4 at 875 (1997); *Parkridge v. City of Seattle*, 89 Wn.2d 454, 462 (1978).

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**III. QUESTIONS PRESENTED.**

For purposes of the pending rezone application, the central questions presented are:

A. Whether the requested rezone implements applicable policies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, and/or whether there has been a change of circumstances since the current AG (Agriculture) zoning was adopted for the site?

*Short Answer:* Yes to both. The site is already designated for Medium Density Residential uses in applicable provisions of City’s Comprehensive Plan, specifically those found in the Badger Mountain South Subarea Plan, which applies to properties where the applicant’s land is located. The rezone would effectuate that Comprehensive Plan and eliminate a nonconformity that currently exists between such Plan and city zoning maps. The requested R-2S zone is a Medium Density Residential zone that allows for various residential uses not currently available in the AG zone. The applicant is pursuing a separate application for a preliminary plat that is designed under R-2S zoning standards, and residential development is occurring on surrounding properties at a rapid pace, vividly showing a change of circumstances that supports this requested rezone. A neighboring plat, known as Peach Tree Estates, is owned by the same applicant, was approved last year with the same zoning applied to the site, and is now under development.

B. Whether the rezone bears a substantial relationship to the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare?

*Short Answer:* Yes, because the rezone is consistent with the City’s Comprehensive Plan, and any future, project-specific proposal will have to meet city development regulations, including SEPA, subdivision codes, traffic impact reviews, public infrastructure concurrency reviews, and payment of any impact fees in effect at the time of an application. Vacant, undeveloped, Residential-designated property in an area already served with newer transportation and utility infrastructure is not consistent with state and local policies that encourage residential development in designated urban growth areas, like those in the Richland City limits. The proposed rezone is an effort to expedite development potential for the site, as shown in the

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<sup>1</sup> *Save Our Rural Env't v. Snohomish County*, 99 Wn.2d 363, 370-71 (1983); *Henderson v. Kittitas County*, 124 Wn. App. 747, 754 (Div. III, 2004); *Bjarnson v. Kitsap County*, 78 Wn. App. 840, 846 (Div. III, 1995).

1 applicant’s proposed residential subdivision for the property. The current AG zoning  
2 designation applied to the site is no longer appropriate or in the public interest.

3 **IV. RECORD.**

4 Exhibits entered into evidence as part of the record, and an audio recording of the  
5 public hearing, are maintained by the City of Richland, and may be examined or reviewed by  
6 contacting the City Clerk’s Office.

7 Public notices regarding the application and public hearing were mailed, posted, and  
8 published as required by city codes prior to the public hearing, which occurred on April 8,  
9 2024. *(Staff Report, page 13; Exhibit 5, noticing materials; Testimony of Mr. Stevens).*

10 **Hearing Testimony:** Only Planning Manager, Mike Stevens, asked to present  
11 testimony under oath during the public hearing, held in person at Richland City Hall. There  
12 were no applicant representatives present through the course of the public hearing, and Staff  
13 indicated they did not know of a reason why they failed to appear at the hearing. Failure to  
14 appear for an open record public hearing is sometimes grounds to deny a pending application.  
15 However, in this instance, the Examiner finds and concludes that the application materials,  
16 Staff Report, and lack of any opposition to the requested rezone following public notices  
17 inviting comments, are reasons to move this matter forward for review and consideration by  
18 the City Council.

19 **Exhibits:** The Development Services Division Staff Report for the requested Rezone,  
20 including a recommendation of approval, was provided to the Examiner before the hearing,  
21 although it was not posted on the city’s website for public access and review until several  
22 days before the public hearing. The Staff Report, and the following Exhibits, were all  
23 accepted into the Record in their entirety without modification:

- 24 1. Application Materials for requested rezone
- 25 2. Zone Map
- 26 3. BMS Land Use Map
- 1 4. BLA2022-110, Recorded
- 2 5. Public Notices & Affidavits
- 3 6. Ordinance added to the record during public hearing, completing relevant subarea  
4 plan amendments and map modifications

5 The Examiner has visited the road network and vicinity of the proposed rezone on  
6 multiple occasions over the past few years in connection with other applications and  
7 conducted another site visit in the hours before the public hearing, and is fully advised on  
8 matters at issue herein, including without limitation adjacent developments and land uses,  
9 applicable law, application materials, and relevant comprehensive plan provisions.

10 **FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS AND  
11 RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL FOR PEACH  
12 TREE ESTATES II REZONE APPLICATION –  
13 FILE NO. Z2024-101**

14 **GARY N. MCLEAN**  
15 **HEARING EXAMINER FOR THE CITY OF RICHLAND**  
16 CITY HALL – 625 SWIFT BOULEVARD  
17 RICHLAND, WASHINGTON 99352

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**V. FINDINGS OF FACT.**

Based upon the record, the undersigned Examiner issues the following Findings of Fact.

***Application, Site Location and Conditions.***

1. In this application, the applicant and property owner, MD&D Investments, LLC, through its designated representative, Alex Rietmann, requests a rezone of property from Agriculture (AG) to R-2S, a medium density residential classification. (*Ex. 1, Application materials*). The application materials refer to the property at issue in this rezone application as “Peach Tree Estates II.”

2. Peach Tree Estates II is about a 26.3-acre site, located on portions of tax parcels 134982010595005 and 134982000005007. The purpose of this requested rezone is to enable residential development to proceed in a manner consistent with the overlying Badger Mountain South Subarea Plan Medium Density Residential (MDR) land use classification that applies to the site. The adjoining property to the east, known as Peach Tree Estates, was rezoned and subdivided under separate application processes completed last year.

3. The subject site was previously disturbed as it was part of a large apple orchard. The site is gently sloped from north to south. The surrounding area is transitioning from agricultural uses to single-family residential.

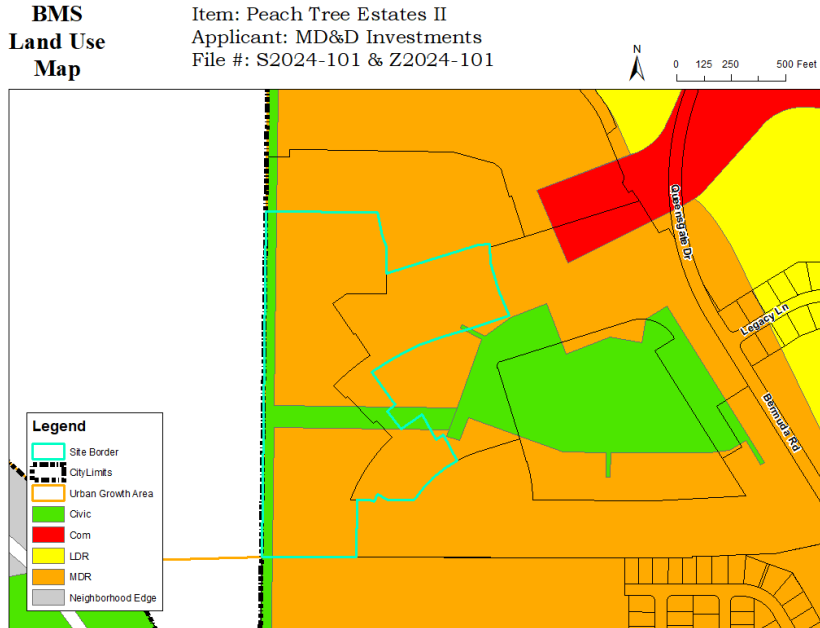
4. The Badger Mountain South Subarea Plan designates this parcel as Medium Density Residential [MDR], which could allow for 5.1 -10 dwellings per acre. The current Agricultural (AG) zone does not implement the BMS MDR land use designation. Per RMC 23.18.010, the R-2S Medium-Density Residential Small Lot zoning is intended to be applied to land that is designated MDR (5.1-10 dwellings per acre) under the City’s Comprehensive Plan, such as BMS MDR. No portion of this proposed rezone is in the Shoreline Management Program’s jurisdiction. No portion of this proposed rezone is in a Critical Aquifer Recharge Area (CARA). No other critical areas are in the vicinity of the rezone site to merit consideration.

5. The Peach Tree Estates II site, addressed in this matter, was part of an almost 1,900-acre annexation into the City of Richland that took effect in 2010, through passage of Ordinance No. 41-10, which assigned the (AG) Agriculture zoning designation to the entire northeast portion of the annexation area where Peach Tree Estates, and its neighboring Sienna Hills site, are located. (*See Ord. No. 41-10, Sec. 6, and Ex. B thereto, labeled “Zoning Designations for Annexation Area”*).

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL FOR PEACH  
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6. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map for the area is found in the Badger Mountain South Subarea Plan. The Staff Report includes an image, marked Figure 2, enlarged to show site borders for the Peach Tree Estates II property outlined in blue, a copy of which is republished below on the following page:



7. The Peach Tree Estates II property at issue in this matter is west of Bermuda Road, immediately southeast of Badger Mountain. As one might imagine, this Peach Tree Estates II site is just west of the recently approved Peach Tree Estates Preliminary Plat, approved in 2023, and not undergoing site development just west of Bermuda Road and north of the Siena Hills Phase 3 Plat, located immediate south. (*Site visits*).

8. The Staff Report and testimony from Mr. Stevens credibly established that the map shown above designates virtually all of the applicant’s property for “MDR” land uses, i.e. medium density residential uses, and that the requested R-2S zone is one of the two medium density residential zones available under City codes.

9. The rezone site was previously used as an orchard, but agricultural uses of the property have been discontinued for some time. The site is located in a part of the city that is now experiencing steady development of new homes, helping to address the housing shortage problems mentioned by Staff in recent hearing presentations.

10. There is no dispute that the property at issue is currently designated for medium density residential uses in applicable provisions of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, specifically the BMS Subarea plan that applies to the applicant’s property. This application

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL FOR PEACH TREE ESTATES II REZONE APPLICATION – FILE NO. Z2024-101**

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 CITY HALL – 625 SWIFT BOULEVARD  
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1 would eliminate the site’s nonconformity with the City’s Comp. Plan, by replacing the current  
2 AG zone with the R-2S zone. Thus, the requested rezone is consistent with and will  
implement policies in the City’s Comp. Plan.

3 11. Changed circumstances also support the requested rezone from the AG to R-2S zone.  
4 Since annexation in 2010, rapid residential development has occurred to the east and south  
5 of the rezone site. The current Agriculture zoning does not serve a useful purpose in this  
location.

6 12. The Examiner concurs with the opinion of staff and finds that the proposed R-2S  
7 zoning with its associated permitted residential land uses and types of housing, is compatible  
8 with the vicinity and that the site’s proximity to a future new school, well-built roadways,  
utilities, and recreational amenities in the area, should make the property a highly desirable  
site for future homebuyers. *(Site visits)*.

9 13. Through the public comment and hearing process, no one submitted any comments,  
10 evidence, or legal authority that would serve as a basis to seriously question or deny this  
requested rezone.

11 14. Because staff deemed the application to be consistent with the City’s Comprehensive  
12 Plan, which already designates the rezone site as suitable for medium density residential land  
13 uses, and the City’s plan was analyzed in an environmental impact statement at the time of  
14 its adoption, the pending application is categorically exempt from SEPA review as provided  
15 in WAC 197-11-800(6)(c). *(Staff Report; Official notice from record of previous rezone  
matters re: City SEPA process(es) undertaken when Comprehensive Plan, and BMS Subarea  
Plan, were adopted and amended)*.

16 15. The record does not include any evidence that the requested R-2S zone could allow  
17 for any uses that would be incompatible with surrounding uses.

18 ***Summary of Public Hearing.***

19 16. The public hearing for this matter occurred on April 8, 2024. Mr. Stevens made a  
20 brief presentation regarding the application, current site conditions, development on  
21 surrounding sites, recent changes to the BMS Subarea Plan, and how the trail amenity through  
the rezoned property will likely meander instead of following a straight line shown in some  
planning documents.

22 17. As noted above, no one appeared during the public hearing on behalf of the applicant.  
23 Accordingly, the applicant waived its opportunity to question or modify the analysis and  
24 recommendation included in the Staff Report.

25 FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS AND  
26 RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL FOR PEACH  
TREE ESTATES II REZONE APPLICATION –  
FILE NO. Z2024-101

GARY N. MCLEAN  
HEARING EXAMINER FOR THE CITY OF RICHLAND  
CITY HALL – 625 SWIFT BOULEVARD  
RICHLAND, WASHINGTON 99352

1 18. No members of the general public asked to speak during the hearing, in person, by  
2 phone or on a computer.

3 19. The Staff Report’s analysis of this application stands un rebutted. The requested  
4 rezone is consistent with land use policy goals in the City’s Comprehensive Plan. (*Staff  
5 Report, all findings and analysis regarding consistency with the BMS Subarea Plan, a part  
6 of the City’s Comp. Plan*).

7 ***Public services and utilities are adequate and readily available to serve the site.***

8 20. As part of the review process, City staff confirmed that, adequate utilities, including  
9 without limitation water, sewer, stormwater, irrigation, natural gas, and electricity, are in  
10 place and/or readily available, some with connections needed, but all with adequate capacity,  
11 to serve the parcel that is at issue in this matter. (*Staff Report, page 7*).

12 ***Consistency with City Codes and Comprehensive Plan.***

13 21. As explained elsewhere in this Recommendation, the rezone site is already designated  
14 as “MDR” i.e. medium density residential, in applicable parts of the City’s Comprehensive  
15 Plan, and the request is to eliminate the AG classification for the site and replace it with one  
16 of the City’s medium density residential zoning designations, specifically the R-2S zone.

17 22. Standing alone, the requested rezone conforms to the Comprehensive Plan, because  
18 the plan already identifies the property as suitable for medium density residential uses. There  
19 is nothing in this record to justify holding the property as an AG zoned site, as might be the  
20 case where certain unique uses are needed in the immediate area in order to best serve the  
21 public interest.

22 ***General findings.***

23 23. The requested rezone bears a substantial relationship to the public health, safety, and  
24 general welfare. The requested rezone is appropriate in the context of adjacent properties.

25 24. The Development Services Division Staff Report, prepared by City Planner, Kyle  
26 Hendricks, and summarized at the hearing by Planning Manager, Mike Stevens, includes a  
number of specific findings and explanations that establish how the underlying application  
satisfies provisions of applicable law and is consistent with the city’s Comprehensive Plan  
and zoning regulations. Except as modified in this Recommendation, all Findings contained  
in the Staff Report are incorporated herein by reference as Findings of the undersigned-  
hearing examiner.

25. Any factual matters set forth in the foregoing or following sections of this Recommendation are hereby adopted by the Hearing Examiner as findings of fact and incorporated into this section as such.

**VI. CONCLUSIONS.**

Based upon the record, and the Findings set forth above, the Examiner issues the following Conclusions:

1. The applicant met its burden to demonstrate that the requested rezone conforms to, and in fact implements objectives of, the City’s Comprehensive Plan. *Findings; Staff Report.*

2. The applicant met its burden to demonstrate that the requested rezone bears a substantial relationship to the public health, safety, or welfare.

3. The Staff Report and testimony in the record demonstrate that the proposed rezone will not require new public facilities and that there is capacity within the transportation network, the utility system, and other public services, to accommodate all uses permitted in the R-2S zone requested herein.

4. The rezoned site will not be materially detrimental to uses or property in the immediate vicinity of the subject property. In fact, the rezone will help facilitate residential development on the property, thereby implementing City goals and policies, including without limitation those that seek to provide a variety of lifestyles and housing opportunities.

5. While the pending rezone application is categorically exempt from formal SEPA review, the record demonstrates that the potential for adverse impacts is very unlikely. And, after public notices issued for the application, no one spoke or submitted any written comments opposing the pending rezone request.

6. As required by RMC 19.50.010(C), the transportation system is sufficient to accommodate the type of development envisioned with the proposed rezone. The surrounding road network is fully functional, and no transportation concurrency problems are likely to arise as a result of the rezone for the site. Development regulations, including without limitation those detailing frontage improvements, limited access, roadway improvements, impact fees, setbacks, and the like, will apply to any future project built on the site.

7. Based on the record, the applicant demonstrated its rezone application merits approval, meeting its burden of proof imposed by RMC 19.60.060.

8. Approval of this rezone will not and does not constitute, nor does it imply any

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL FOR PEACH  
TREE ESTATES II REZONE APPLICATION –  
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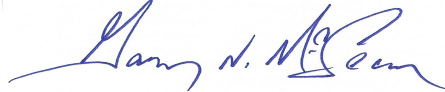
1 expectation of, approval of any permit or subsequent reviews that may be required for  
2 development or other regulated activities on the site of the subject rezone.

3 9. Any finding or other statement contained in this Recommendation that is deemed to  
4 be a Conclusion is hereby adopted as such and incorporated by reference.

5 **VII. RECOMMENDATION.**

6 Based upon the preceding Findings and Conclusions, the Hearing Examiner  
7 recommends that the Peach Tree Estates II application (File No. Z2024-101) to reclassify a  
8 26+acre site from its current AG (Agriculture) zone to a Medium Density Residential (MDR)  
9 land use designation, specifically the R-2S zoning district, which is consistent with the  
10 Comprehensive Plan's MDR land use designation assigned to the area, should be  
11 **APPROVED.**

12 ISSUED this 3<sup>rd</sup> Day of May, 2024

13 

14 \_\_\_\_\_  
15 Gary N. McLean  
16 Hearing Examiner



Exhibit B Pg 1 - Ordinance No. 2024-21 passed 06/18/2024  
Agricultural (AG) to Medium Density Residential Small Lot (R2-S)

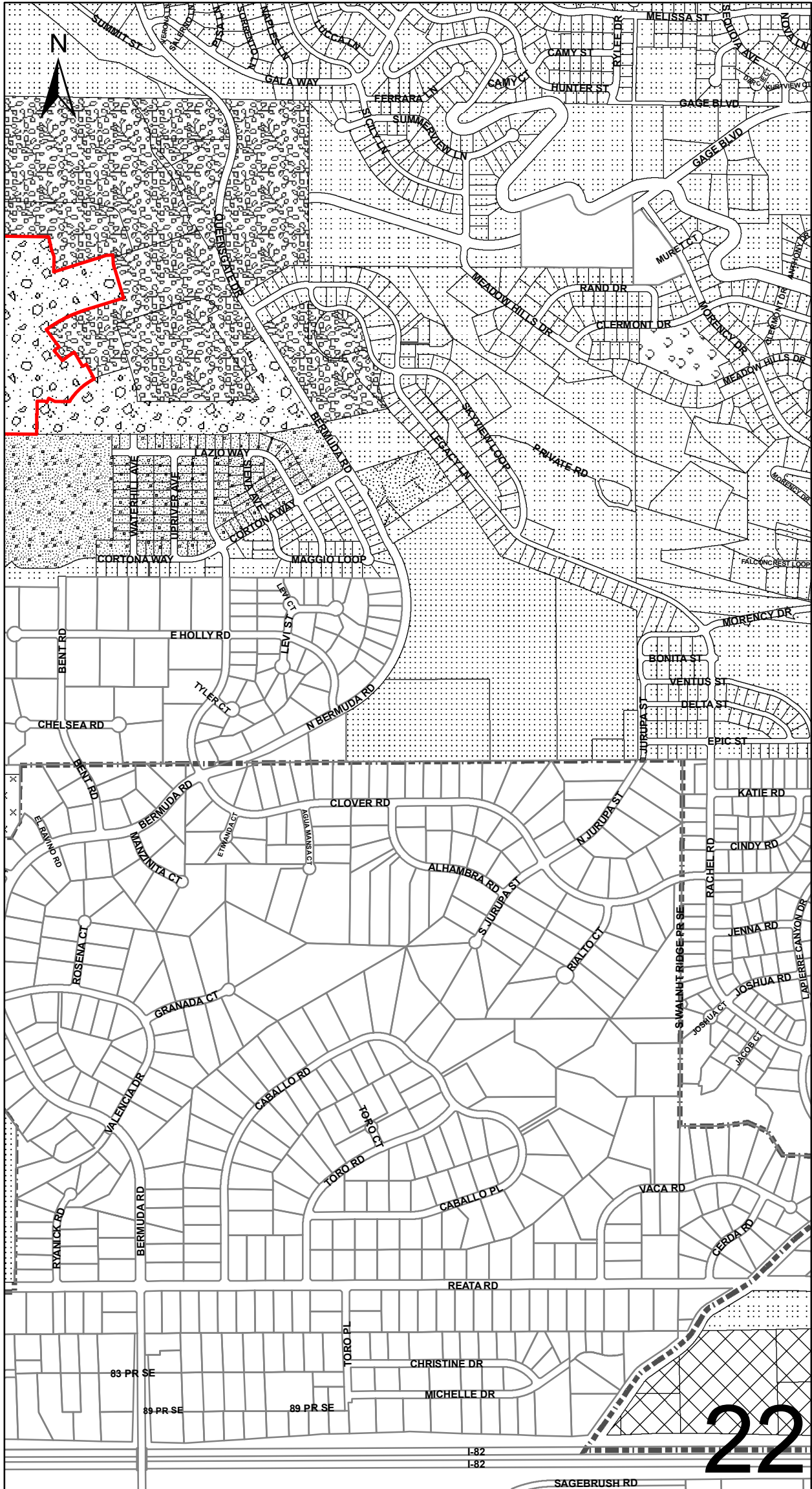


Exhibit B Pg 2 - Ordinance No. 2024-21 passed 06/18/2024  
Agricultural (AG) to Medium Density Residential Small Lot (R2-S)

