

Executive Summary

This feasibility study examines the potential development options for the properties located at 1508-1512 N Alston Ave and 804 Lee St, covering a total area of approximately 22,577 square feet (0.519 acres) in Durham, North Carolina. The study is based on our interpretations of the Durham Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and outlines various development possibilities, including residential and multi-unit configurations.

The properties are zoned RU-M and RU-5(2) and fall within the Urban Development Tier. The base residential density allows for 12 units per acre, potentially accommodating 6 units on the combined site without a development plan. With the affordable housing bonus and a development plan, the density can increase to 40 units per acre, potentially accommodating 18-20 units.

The first development option proposes the construction of an 18-unit apartment building with 6 affordable units, utilizing the affordable housing bonus. The second option involves the development of 12 townhouse-style condominiums, with 3 units designated as affordable. The average unit size is approximately 2,295 square feet, and additional units may be possible with further adjustments.

To maximize the development potential of the site, a significant recommendation is to consider rezoning the Lee Street parcel to RU-M (Residential Urban Multifamily) and/or recombining it with the Alston parcel. Given that the RU-M zoning already exists on part of the site under the same ownership, the conditions might be favorable for a successful rezoning application.

It is also important to determine the requirements for right-of-way improvements, such as trees, sidewalks, and road widening, if applicable. Environmental concerns necessitate further research and verification to determine the width and configuration of project boundary buffers, tree coverage, and other environmental factors. While there do not appear to be any riparian buffers, wetlands, or floodplains, the owner should obtain a boundary and design survey from a licensed surveyor or civil engineer and consult the City of Durham to determine all potential site characteristics affecting the project.

Consultation with the City of Durham and a civil engineer is crucial to determine if right-of-way dedication is needed and to identify the exact and final area of the site. This includes discovering any existing easements and locating underground utilities. Due diligence should be completed to locate existing utilities, determine the feasibility and/or development charges required to upgrade any infrastructure, and establish responsibility for these costs (whether city or owner).

Stormwater management is a significant consideration for the proposed developments. It is recommended to consult a civil engineer and/or the City of Durham to identify treatment thresholds (if required) and necessary stormwater control measures (SCMs) or best management practices (BMPs).

Parking minimums have been eliminated for the Urban Tier, so this project does not require off-street parking based on district standards.

The site appears eligible for the affordable housing bonus, which allows for increased density and reduced dimensional standards to incorporate additional affordable units. Further consultation with the City of Durham and other professionals, such as civil engineers and architects, is necessary to fully explore this option.

This study provides a preliminary assessment of the site’s development potential, highlighting feasible options for increasing residential density while incorporating affordable housing. The analysis underscores the importance of complying with local regulations and engaging in due diligence to ensure successful project execution.



Disclaimer

This architectural feasibility study has been prepared by Good Work Architects, PLLC (GWA) for informational purposes only. The information contained herein is based on our interpretations of the Durham Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) as of the date of this study. It is important to note that the contents of this study have not been reviewed or approved by the City of Durham or any other governing body.

Due Diligence: The owner, buyer, contractor, and/or developer are strongly advised to conduct their own due diligence and consult with appropriate professionals, including but not limited to, legal counsel, city planners, and other relevant authorities to verify and validate the information provided in this study.

Limitations: This study is based on the information available and the interpretations made at the time of preparation. Additional UDO requirements and/or City requirements not reflected in this study may be applicable. It is the responsibility of the owner, buyer, contractor, and/or developer to ensure compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

No Guarantees: GWA makes no guarantees, representations, or warranties, express or implied, regarding the accuracy, completeness, or reliability of the information contained in this study. Any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the risk of the owner, buyer, contractor, and/or developer.

Liability: GWA shall have no liability for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided, nor for any decisions made or actions taken based on the information contained in this study. The owner, buyer, contractor, and/or developer assume full responsibility for any outcomes resulting from the use of this study.

Scope of Work: The interpretations and analyses provided in this study are limited to the scope of work agreed upon and do not constitute a comprehensive review of all potential development constraints or opportunities.

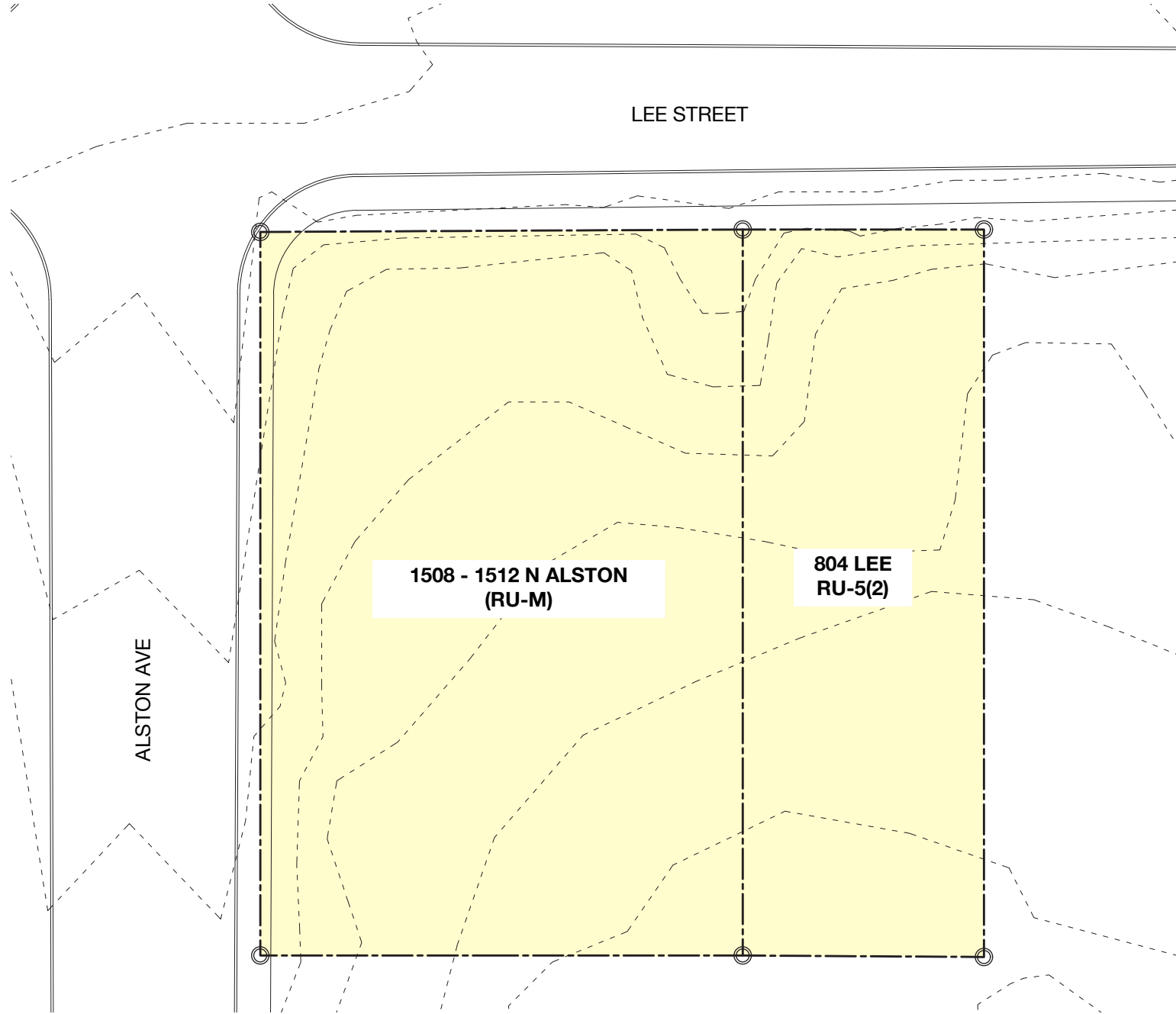
Changes in Regulations: The UDO and other relevant regulations are subject to change. GWA is not responsible for updating this study to reflect any changes in laws, regulations, or policies that may occur after the date of this study.

By accepting and utilizing this study, the owner, agent, buyer, contractor, and/or developer acknowledge and agree to the terms of this disclaimer and release GWA from any and all claims, liabilities, and damages arising out of or in connection with the use of the information contained herein.



ZONING SUMMARY

Address	1508-1512 N Alston Ave 804 Lee St
PIN	0831398547 0831399518
Site Area	15,025 sqft (0.345 acre) 7532 sqft (0.1739 acre)
Combined Site Area	22,577 (0.519 acre)
Zip Code	27701
Zoning	RU-M RU-5(2)
Development Tier	Urban
Site Uses Allowed	see next page
Max. Height	see next page
Open Space	see next page
Project Boundary Buffer	15'-0" to 20'-0"
Base Site Denisty	12 units per acre 12 x .519 = 6 units total
Development Plan Density	40 units per acre 40 x .519 = 20 units total
Affordable Housing Bonus	see page 8



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DURHAM UDO: RESIDENTIAL URBAN (RU) DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

6.4.1. Development Standards

A. Dimensional Standards

1. All residential development in the RU Districts shall meet the standards in the table below. For illustrations, lot dimensions, and required yards for each housing type, see Sec. 7.1, Housing Types.

Dimensional Standard	RU-5		RU-5(2)		RU-M		
	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max. without a Development Plan	Max. with a Development Plan (see paragraph 3.5.6)
Residential Density (units per acre)							
Project under Four Acres	—	8.0	—	8.0	—	12.0	40.0
Project Four Acres or Greater	6.0	8.0	6.0	8.0	8.0	12.0	40.0
Small Lot Option	—	12.0	—	12.0	—	12.0	40.0
Open Space (% of gross area) ¹	5	—	5	—	6	—	
Area and Width Requirements	See Sec. 7.1, Housing Types						
Height ²							
Stories (visual articulation)	—	3	—	3	—	5	
Feet		40		40		60	

1 Please see Sec. 12.5, Recreation Lands, for additional requirements that may apply.

2 Height is, or may be, further limited when using the small lot option, the reduced pole width flag lot option, infill standards, a neighborhood protection overlay, or by a local historic district.

2. Maximum density can increase in accordance with paragraph 6.4.3, Residential Density, and/or Sec. 6.6, Affordable Housing Bonus. Other than these options, the maximum density shall not be exceeded even though the use of an alternative housing type may impose smaller lot size requirements.
3. If the project in the RU-M District is on at least a four-acre lot, the maximum height can be increased up to 7 stories through the issuance of a minor special use permit. In no event shall the structure be more than 80 feet in height.

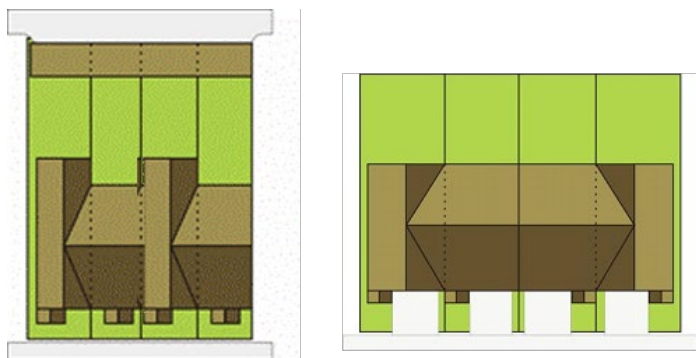
6.4.2. Permitted Housing Types

Residential uses allowed pursuant to Sec. 5.1, Use Table, shall be limited to the housing types permitted in accordance with the following table. For illustrations, lot dimensions, and required yards for each housing type, see Sec. 7.1, Housing Types.

Housing Type	RU-5	RU-5(2)	RU-M
Single-Family Detached	✓	✓	✓
Zero Lot Line House	✓	✓	✓
Traditional House	✓	✓	✓
Attached House	✓	✓	✓
Duplex	✓	✓	✓
Townhouse	✓ ^{1,2}	✓	✓
Detached Rowhouse	✓ ^{1,2}	✓	✓
Multiplex	✓ ²	✓ ²	✓
Apartment			✓
1 Cluster subdivision only, see Sec. 6.7.			
2 Only pursuant to paragraph 6.4.3B, Thoroughfare Density Bonus.			



DURHAM UDO: TOWNHOUSE STANDARDS



A. Description
A townhouse is a building made up of three or more attached dwelling units (except where otherwise allowed), where each unit is on an individual lot and the units are lined up in a row and share side walls.

B. Development Standards

1. A townhouse shall be permitted in accordance with the table below.

Townhouse Standards	Suburban	Urban and Compact Neighborhood
Yards (min. feet)		
Street Yard	25 ^{1,2}	12 ¹
Street Yard with Front Vehicular Access (from ROW)	25 ^{1,3}	20 ¹
Street Yard with Rear Vehicular Access (from alley)	5	5
Street Yard (Cluster Subdivision)	0	0
Rear Yard ⁴	20	20
Rear Yard (Cluster Subdivision) ⁴	0	0
<div>1 Yard modifications can be required pursuant to a Neighborhood Protection Overlay, or through application of infill regulations (Sec. 6.8, Infill Development in Residential Districts).</div> <div>2 Yards can be reduced to as little as 12 feet if the structures are located interior to a project and do not front on a street classified as a collector or greater.</div> <div>3 Front vehicular access can be reduced to as little as 20 feet if the structures are located interior to a project and do not front on a street classified as a collector or greater.</div> <div>4 The rear yard shall be measured from the property line forming the boundary of the development site.</div>		

2. Building configurations shall consist of at least three units except as follows:

- a. In the Urban Tier, a maximum of 50% of the buildings can consist of two units.
- b. In the Suburban Tier, a maximum of 25% of the buildings can consist of two units.

C. Access

Where an improved and maintained alley is provided, all vehicular access shall be taken from the alley.

Commentary: It is recommended that preliminary site design also considers emergency access and rescue requirements of the Building Code for townhouses.

D. Location of Common Recreation Facilities

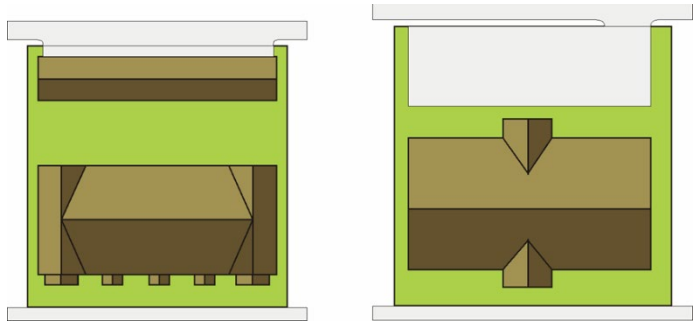
Common recreation areas, such as a clubhouse, swimming pool, and/or tennis, volleyball, or basketball courts, shall be oriented internally or along major roadways, and away from residential development on neighboring properties. All such facilities shall be visible from and have substantial access to a street.

Commentary:

Traditional townhouse developments, often designed as fee simple projects for sale, typically consist of a single row of units facing a right of way, with either front or rear access. Regulations vary by jurisdiction, but generally encourage developers to connect townhouse units individually to utilities from the right of way. This can create difficult or illegal arrangements on tight sites with double-loaded driveways or where not all units face a right of way. Practical, legal, and financial issues arise from access easements for utilities and cost-sharing for utility work that crosses property lines. This situation has given rise to a new typology, which I refer to as “condos-shaped-like-townhouses.” These developments are often categorized by municipalities as “apartments” and by building codes (and attorneys) as condominiums, yet they look and feel like townhouses. For this site, a double row of townhouses is unlikely, so the option we present consists of apartments that are sold as condominiums.



DURHAM UDO: APARTMENT STANDARDS



A. Description

An apartment is a multifamily housing type on a single tract or parcel of land containing five or more units. Apartments can vary in height; the individual units can be attached or detached and located on separate floors or side-by-side and can be attached or detached.

B. Development Standards

Apartments shall be permitted in accordance with the table below.

Apartment Standards		Suburban	Urban and Compact Neighborhood
Lot Dimensions			
Lot Width (min. feet)		75	75
Yards (min. feet)			
Street Yard ¹		25	5
Street Yard with Rear Vehicular Access (from alley)		5	5
Side Yard		8	8
Rear Yard		25	20
Distance between Building and Parking Lot (min. feet)		12	0
Building Separation (min. feet)		10	10
1 Yard modifications may be required pursuant to a Neighborhood Protection Overlay, or through application of infill regulations (Sec. 6.8, Infill Development in Residential Districts).			

development standards for apartments. these apply to all options included in the version of this study dated May 27, 2024



DURHAM UDO: AFFORDABLE HOUSING BONUS

6.6.1. General Requirements

- A. The bonus can be utilized at the time of site plan or subdivision for new projects subject to the additional regulations of this section.
- B. All of the affordable housing dwelling units shall be located within the overall project boundary.
- C. Affordable units shall be incorporated throughout the project, and shall not be distinguishable from market-rate units through location, grouping, unit size, interior finishes, or exterior design.
- D. **Dimensional Standards**

The following reductions are allowed in order to incorporate the additional dwelling units.

1. Lot Dimensions

a. **Single-family and Two-family lots in RU-5, RU-5(2), and the Small Lot Option**

Minimum lot area and width requirements can be reduced by a maximum of 20%.

b. **All other Residential Development**

Minimum lot area and width requirements can be reduced by a maximum of 35%.

2. Yard Requirements

a. **Single-family and Two-family lots in RU-5, RU-5(2), and the Small Lot Option**

Minimum yard requirements can be reduced by a maximum of 20%.

b. **All other Residential Development**

Minimum yard requirements can be reduced by a maximum of 35%.

3. Required Compliance with Infill Standards

Regardless of the lot and yard dimensional allowances above, infill standards per Sec. 6.8, Infill Development in Residential Districts, shall apply to all residential development that is applicable under that section.

- E. Regardless of the lot and yard dimensional allowances above, infill standards per Sec. 6.8, Infill Development in Residential Districts, shall apply to all residential development that is applicable under that section.
- F. In single-family and duplex developments, required minimum lot area, lot width, and yard requirements can be reduced up to 20% in order to incorporate the additional units.
- G. Projects utilizing the affordable housing bonuses shall not be exempt from a traffic impact analysis (TIA) if required pursuant to Sec. 3.3, Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA).
- H. Units added through this program shall not increase the amount of open space otherwise required for the project.
- I. Compliance and reporting shall be pursuant to the City’s adopted Affordable Housing Bonus Policies & Procedures, as amended.
- J. Compliance measures can be required at the time of approval, including but not limited to contracts, restrictive covenants, deed restrictions, and stipulated penalties.
- K. All affordable dwelling units proposed within the project shall be provided prior to, or concurrently with, any bonus units.

Commentary:

This site appears to be eligible to take advantage of the Affordable Housing Bonus. Further input from the City of Durham and your other consultants, such as civil engineers and architects is required to further explore the feasibility of this option.



DURHAM UDO: URBAN TIER STANDARDS

6.6.3. Suburban and Urban Tiers

A. Applicable Zoning Districts

- 1. The bonus program can be utilized in any zoning district where residences are permitted.
- 2. The program shall not permit housing types not already permitted within the zoning district.

B. Minimum Number of Units Required

Projects must commit to providing affordable housing dwelling units in the amount of at least 15% of the maximum number of units permitted with the base density.

Example #2: If the zoning of a five-acre project allows 60 units/acre, then 300 dwelling units are permitted. To qualify for a density bonus, at least 45 of the 300 dwelling units shall qualify as affordable housing dwelling units.

C. Residential Density

- 1. For the purpose of calculating the bonus residential density within projects utilizing the affordable housing bonus, the “base density” is the maximum density allowed in the zoning district prior to applying any potential bonuses, and multiplied by the gross acreage of the tract of land, including all areas typically excluded from density calculations in Article 8, Environmental Protection. The resulting number shall be rounded down to the nearest whole number.
- 2. For each affordable housing dwelling unit that is constructed, a bonus of two additional dwelling units can be constructed beyond the base density.

Example #3: The project is in the Urban Tier, and 15% (i.e., 45 units) of the 300 maximum units qualify as affordable housing dwelling units affordable. Thus, an additional 90 dwelling units are allowed above the maximum 300 units, totaling 390 dwelling units.

D. Height

When the affordable housing bonus is utilized, an additional one story or 15 feet of height, whichever is less, shall be allowed.

Commentary:

Example Affordable Housing Bonus as it applies to this site:

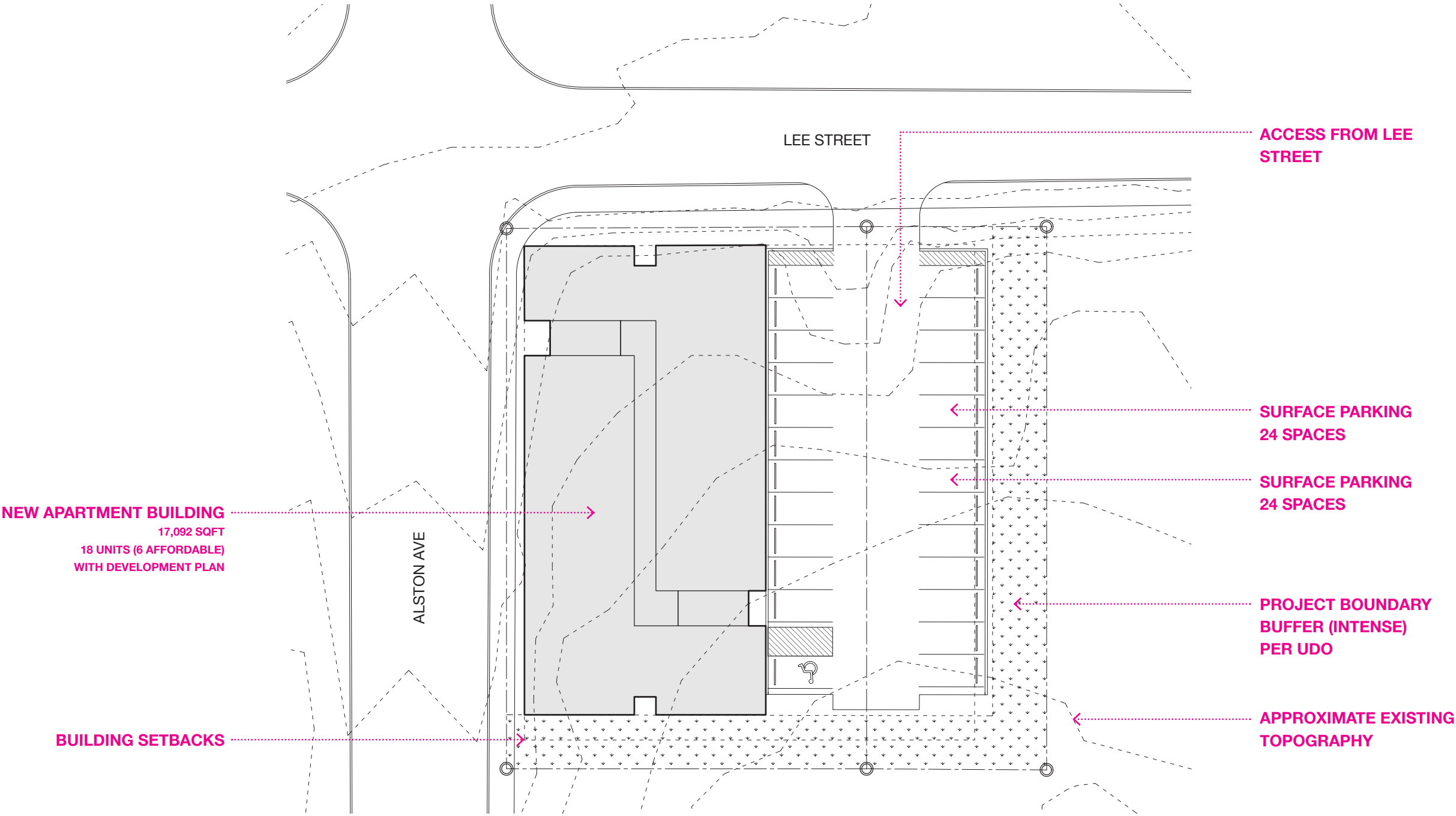
0.519 acre x 12 units per acre without a development plan = 6 units (base density)*
100% x 6 units = 6 affordable units
6 units x 2 (bonus factor) = 12 additional units beyond base density
6 affordable units + 12 additional units = **18 total units** °

* Table 6.4.1 states a maximum of 12 units per acre is allowed without a development plan.
° Table 6.4.1 states a maximum of 40 units per acre is allowed with a development plan.

See UDO 3.5.6 for more information on Development Plans.



APARTMENT BUILDING OPTION

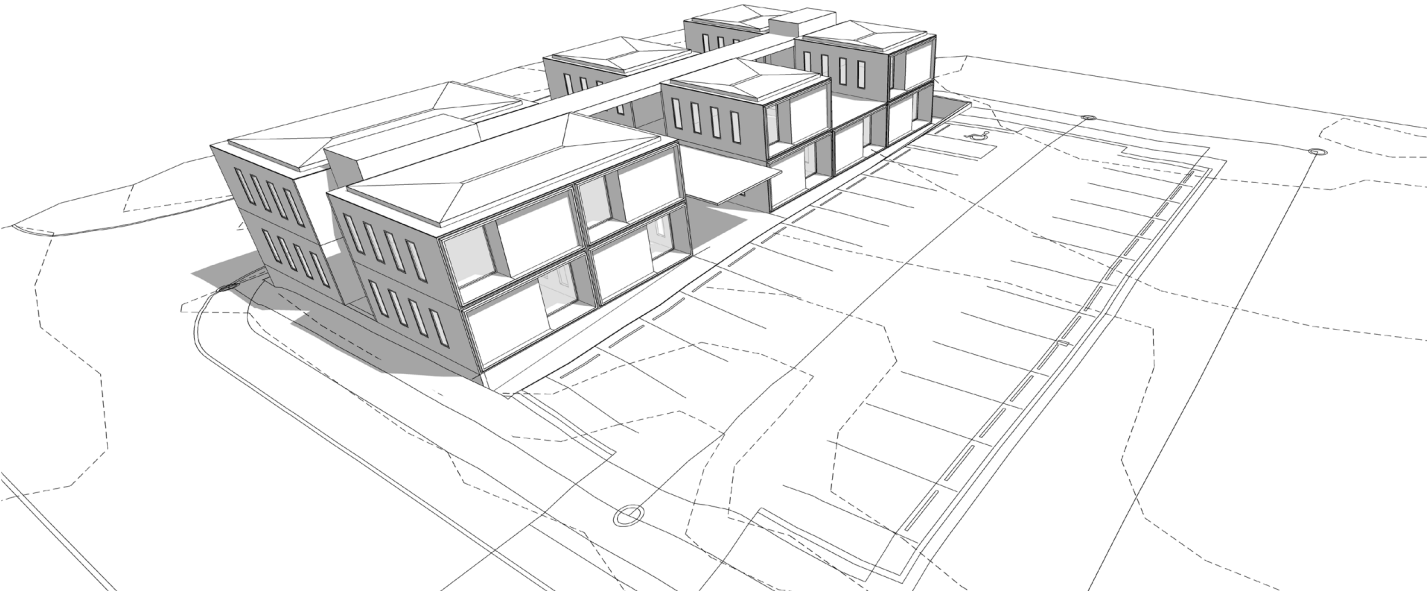
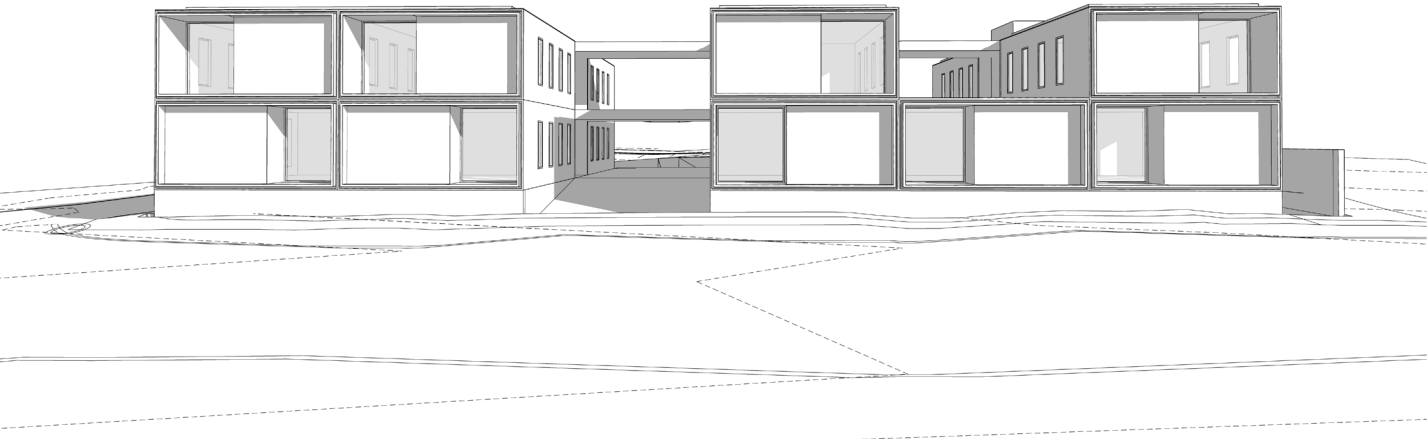
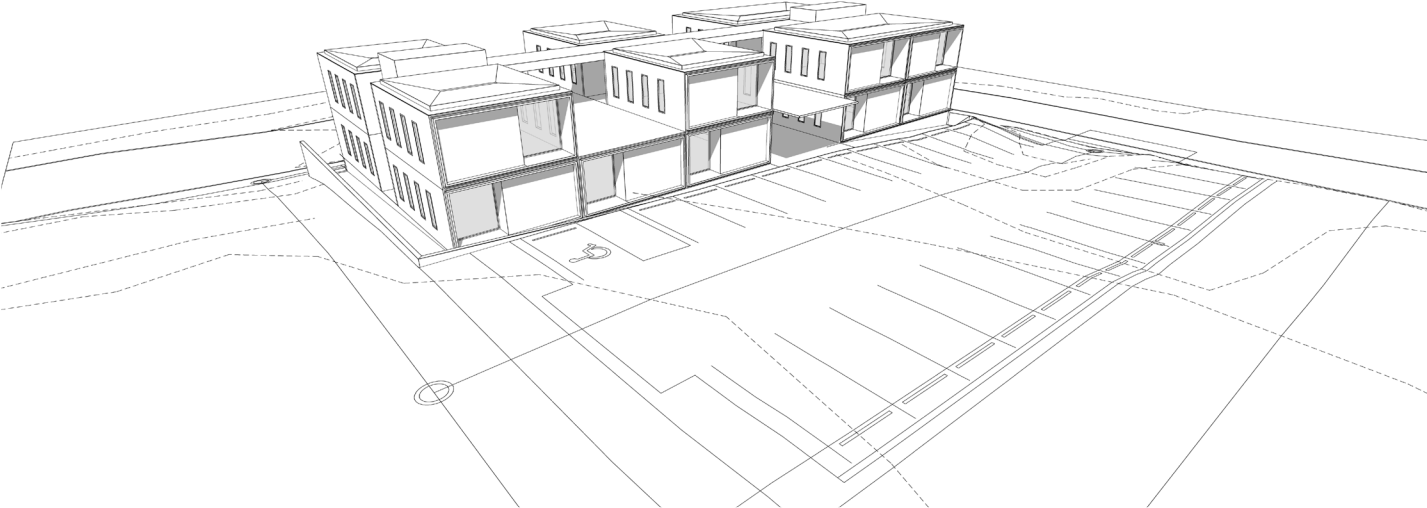
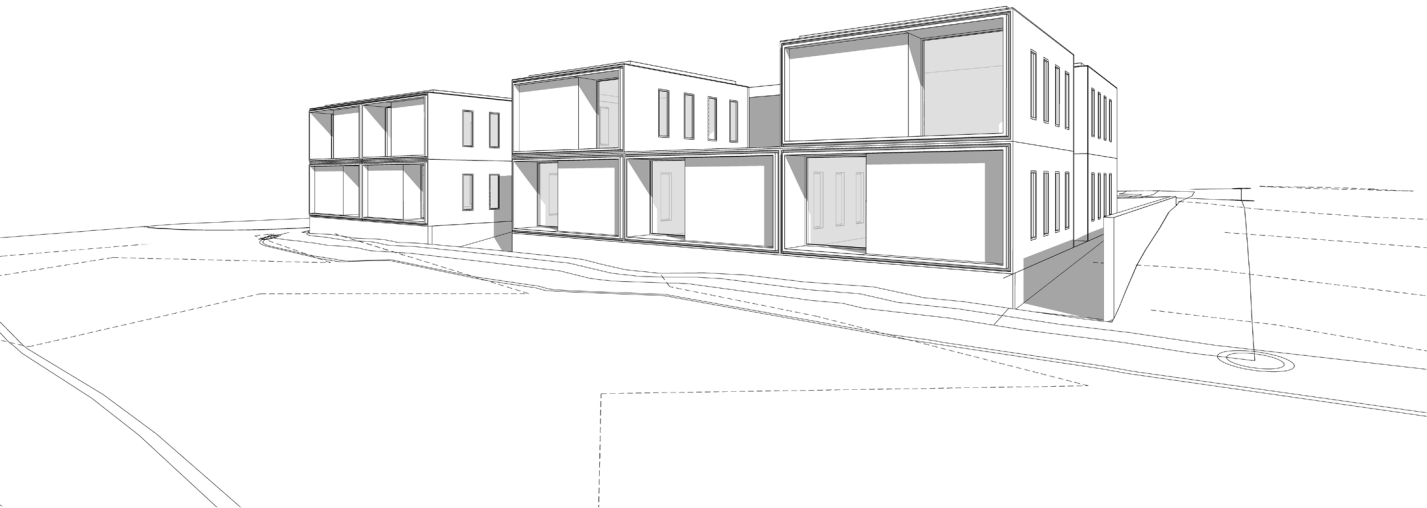


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APARTMENT BUILDING OPTION



TOWNHOUSE (CONDOMINIUM) OPTION

RECOMBINED LOTS
REAR LOT IS REZONED TO RU-M
TO MATCH ALSTON LOT AS PART
OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

UP TO TWO CAR GARAGE

STREET SIDE ENTRANCE

NEW APARTMENT BUILDING
27,547 SQFT
12 UNITS (3 AFFORDABLE)
WITH DEVELOPMENT PLAN
AVERAGE UNIT SIZE = 2,295 SQFT
ADDITIONAL UNITS MAY BE POSSIBLE

BUILDING SETBACKS

ACCESS FROM LEE
STREET

REAR SIDE ENTRANCE

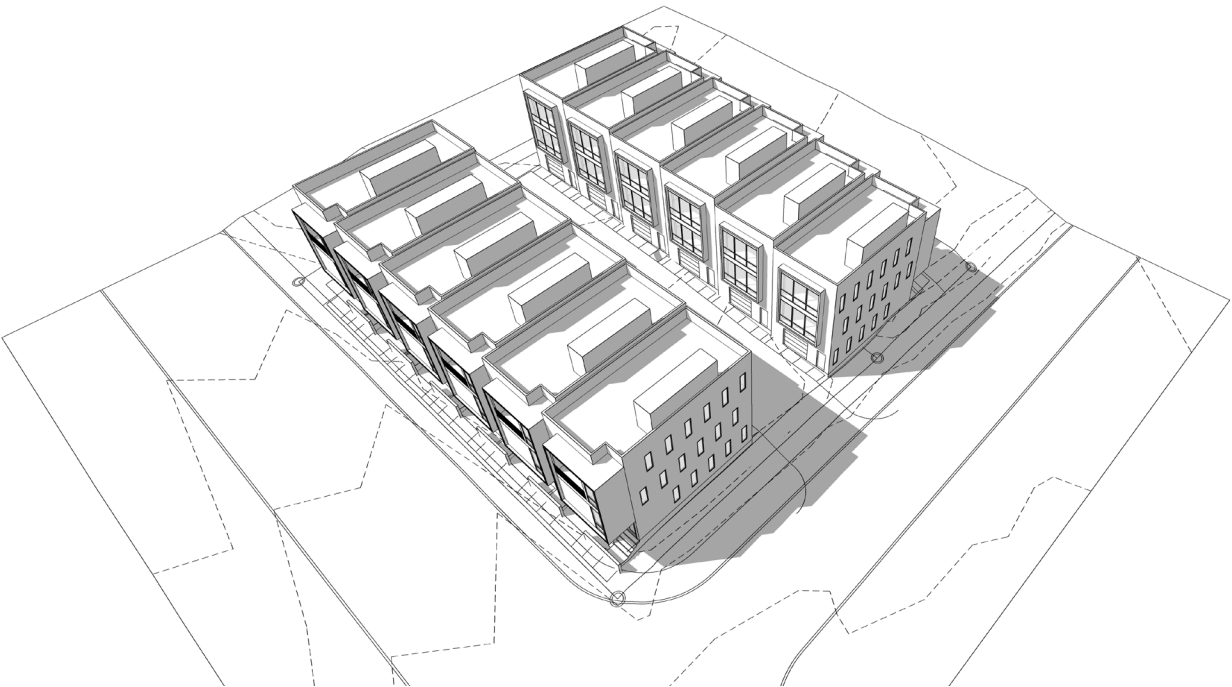
REAR UNITS FACE
PLANTED BUFFER

PROJECT BOUNDARY
BUFFER (INTENSE)
PER UDO

APPROXIMATE EXISTING
TOPOGRAPHY



TOWNHOUSE (CONDOMINIUM) OPTION



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