



MEMORANDUM

Date: April 17, 2026

To: Board of Supervisors, Lafayette County, Mississippi
c/o Joel Hollowell, Director of Development Services

From: Slaughter & Willingham, PLLC

Re: Rezoning Request – I-2 (Heavy Industrial) to I-1 (Light Industrial)
Parcels along County Road 166

This memorandum evaluates the proposal in relation to the Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan, existing zoning framework, and applicable Mississippi legal standards.

Rezoning Request Summary

The applicant requests rezoning of certain unoccupied and unimproved properties along County Road 166 from I-2 (Heavy Industrial) to I-1 (Light Industrial). The property is part of the Max Mipp Industrial Park, owned by Lafayette County and the Lafayette County Economic Development District. The application is predicated on a change in the neighborhood's character. The application does not assert or demonstrate a mistake in the original zoning classification.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan establishes a long-term framework for growth, infrastructure investment, and land use compatibility. The Future Land Use Map designates the subject property for heavy industrial use.

The Comprehensive Plan presented Goals and Objectives to address:

- A limited supply of industrial land; and
- A need to designate additional industrial areas with access to transportation and utilities.

The Plan specifically directed industrial development along the Old Highway 7 (CR 101) and CR 166 corridors in the Max Hipp Industrial Park near existing industrial development. The subject property lies along CR 166, which remains one of the County's primary industrial corridors.

The existing I-2 zoning implements the Comprehensive Plan by concentrating higher-intensity industrial uses in appropriate locations with infrastructure for transportation access, water, sewer, and electrical utilities, and thereby preserving other areas from incompatible encroachment. The I-2 zoning designation is the most flexible zoning designation for industrial uses in Lafayette County, accommodating the full range of light and heavy industrial land uses.

The proposed rezoning to I-1 would reduce allowable industrial intensity along this designated corridor. Such an alteration would reduce the acreage of property available for heavy industry in the county, limiting flexibility for economic development, without creating a suitable replacement alternative or assessing the need for heavy industry in the future. As such, it represents a modification of the Comprehensive Plan's economic development and industrial land-use plan. Such modifications represent changes to established public policy and should be fully supported with appropriate planning, assessments, and stakeholder engagement.

Change in Character

Development patterns along this corridor have followed the Comprehensive Plan. Infrastructure improvements extending CR 166 west toward Highway 6 were contemplated by the Comprehensive Plan and have been implemented to support industrial growth. Current improvements are underway for the shoulders adjacent to existing industrial land use. These improvements are consistent with long-term capital planning and do not represent new or unanticipated conditions. Industrial land use remains aligned with transportation and infrastructure investments, reinforcing rather than altering this character. The record does not demonstrate that current conditions differ materially from those existing at the time the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance were adopted.

Character of Development

The CR 166 corridor functions as a unified, linear development corridor anchored by industrial uses near Old Highway 7 and transitioning to agricultural, vacant, and low-density residential uses further west. Industrial development extends approximately 3,500

feet from CR 101 (Old Highway 7) to the first roundabout, followed by approximately 1,650 feet of vacant property zoned for industrial use. Beyond the industrial park, low-density residential development and vacant land are sporadically dispersed along approximately 9,600 feet of the corridor to the second roundabout at CR 102.

South of the intersection of CR 166 and CR 102, adjacent development consists of low-density residential uses extending approximately 2,250 feet to the entrance of Quail Creek Drive. Established neighborhoods—including Quail Creek, Fawn Cove, Whitetail, and Wishing Tree Lane—extend eastward toward the Faulkner Farm and the industrial park. These neighborhoods are oriented away from CR 166 and do not provide direct access to it. They are appropriately zoned for residential use and have developed in accordance with the original Lafayette County Zoning Ordinance and Map. Agricultural land and zoning immediately east of the industrial park provide buffering between these residential areas and industrial uses, limiting their influence on development along CR 166.

Additional residential neighborhoods are located east of the industrial park across CR 101 (Old Highway 7), which serves as a clear boundary separating predominantly residential development to the east from non-residential uses to the west. These include Oxmoor, Northpointe, and the future Lamar Lakes development. With the exception of Lamar Lakes, which was rezoned from agricultural to residential in 2025, these areas were under development and zoned for residential use by the original Lafayette County Zoning Ordinance. Their development has remained consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance and does not affect the character of the CR 166 corridor.

Development along CR 166 reflects a continuous corridor with land uses primarily designed to aid access to the industrial park. The residential development beyond the corridor does not define the corridor's overall character between CR 101 and CR 102.

Application and Supporting Documentation

The application relies on generalized assertions rather than site-specific, measurable evidence of change. The change in character is presented as a transition to a “dense residential corridor.” It references Regents School and Magnolia Montessori School, each approximately 1 mile from the subject property, as well as nearby homes and residential zoning.

However, the application does not include maps or data to support this with clear and convincing evidence. Specifically:

- No mapping or data demonstrates residential density or extent of growth since the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance were adopted;
- No rezonings are documented or analyzed;
- The record does not document an impact to schools or residential uses in the broader vicinity; and

Based on the submitted materials, there is no clear evidence of a substantial change in neighborhood character.


Findings

Based on the record:

1. The existing I-2 zoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
2. The CR 166 corridor functions as a unified linear corridor and constitutes the relevant neighborhood for evaluating change in character.
3. The property is located along an appropriately zoned segment of this corridor.
4. Development patterns have followed the Comprehensive Plan.
5. Infrastructure investments in the corridor were planned and implemented to support industrial development and do not constitute evidence of changed conditions.
6. The applicant has not provided clear and convincing evidence of a substantial change in neighborhood character along the corridor.
7. Claims of residential encroachment and prior rezonings are not supported by sufficient documentation. Residential neighborhoods are oriented away from the corridor, and do not establish a dominant residential pattern along CR-166.

Conclusion

Development in this corridor has remained consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's framework for industrial land use. The record does not demonstrate the substantial change in the character of the CR-166 corridor that would support rezoning. Changes along the corridor have supported the original I-2 Industrial zoning classification. Where the evidence is conflicting or does not clearly establish a substantial change in character, the matter is fairly debatable, and the governing body may deny the request without acting arbitrarily, capriciously, or unreasonably.


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