



STAFF REPORT

CITY OF COLUMBUS PLAN COMMISSION (September 9, 2026 Meeting)

Docket No. / Project Title: SUB-26-48 (Timberland Springs Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat)

Staff: Andres M. Nieto

Applicant: Arbor Homes

Property Size: +/- 107 acres

Current Zoning: AP (Agriculture: Preferred)
RTc (Residential: Two-Family with commitments) Rezoning in Progress

Location: At the northeast corner of the intersection of Deaver Road and 150 West, in the City of Columbus.

Request Summary:

The applicant is requesting approval of a major subdivision preliminary plat consistent with Subdivision Control Ordinance Chapter 16.16. The proposed subdivision would create 285 lots, 7 common areas, and 1 utility parcel totaling +/- 107 acres.

Modifications:

The applicant is proposing the following modification(s) from the subdivision control ordinance design or improvement standards that would typically apply to this development:

1. Modification #1 (Bridle Way Intersection Improvements): From Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.24.060(A)(1)(b) to waive the requirement to provide sidewalk/curb ramp crossings from the adjacent intersection at Bridle Way Boulevard and 150 West.
2. Modification #2 (Length of Temporary Dead-Ends): From Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.24.030(F)(1) to allow the maximum length of temporary dead-end streets to be +/- 310 feet in length, which is 160 feet longer than the maximum permitted length of 150 feet. This modification is a "blanket request" meant to apply to any street in any future section break.
3. Modification #3 (Overhead Utility Lines): From Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.24.140(C)(2) to allow overhead utility lines to be relocated above ground along 150 West, rather than burying them underground as required by the subdivision control ordinance.

Discretionary Features:

The applicant is proposing the following feature(s) that are established by the Subdivision Control Ordinance as being subject to Plan Commission review and approval.

1. **Right-of-way Dedication & Road Improvements on 150 West**: Section 16.24.030 of the Subdivision Control Ordinance gives the Plan Commission discretion, with the recommendation from the City Engineer, over design elements and corresponding right-of-way dedication for arterial streets, such as 150 West. The applicant is proposing to dedicate the Thoroughfare Plan recommended minimum 45-foot half right-of-way (measured from the centerline), and in some places more to accommodate road improvements. Those improvements include (1) widening to a 12-foot travel lane, (2) a 2-foot curb and gutter, (3) 15 feet reserved for a future cycle track, (4) a minimum 5-foot tree lawn with street trees, and (5) a 10-foot asphalt path; all of which follow the recommendations of the Thoroughfare Plan. The applicant is proposing the right-of-way to accommodate a future cycle track but is not proposing to construct it as part of this project.

2. **Lot Access and Alleys:** The applicant is proposing 151 lots that are comparatively small and narrow, with lot sizes averaging around 4,000 square feet and lot widths averaging around 50 feet. These lots, due to their closely spaced driveways, have the potential to limit the availability of on-street parking. Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.24.055 gives the Plan Commission the discretion to require alley access when certain conditions are met. No alleys are currently proposed.

Plan Commission Process, Options, & Preliminary Staff Recommendation:

Step 1 - Modification Request(s):

The initial step in the approval process is for the Plan Commission to determine whether or not any requests for modification from the design or improvement standards of the Subdivision Control Ordinance can be supported based on the decision criteria provided. Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.32.020 indicates that the Plan Commission may grant a modification of the standards upon the determination that each provided criterion has been met. A separate motion with specific findings is recommended for each requested modification. The Plan Commission may attach conditions to any approved modification that are related to that modification and "will reasonably secure the objectives and requirements" of the Subdivision Control Ordinance (Section 16.32.030(B)).

Requested Modification #1 (Bridle Way Intersection Improvements): The applicant proposes to waive the requirement to provide sidewalk/curb ramp crossings from the adjacent intersection at Bridle Way Boulevard and 150 West. The applicant is proposing instead to extend a sidewalk on the west side of 150 West between Bridle Way Boulevard and Wrenwood Drive to a 150 West crossing at Wrenwood. Section 16.24.060(A)(1)(b) of the Subdivision Control Ordinance states that at "T" intersections, sidewalks shall extend across the through streets from at least one side of the intersection street and all street crossings shall include curb ramps.

Preliminary Staff Recommendation: Approval, all criteria have been met.

Criteria #1: The modification will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The City Engineer has expressed no concern regarding this waiver. The applicant has demonstrated how connecting sidewalks north to Wrenwood Drive will provide a safe crossing of 150 West, rather than the mid-block crossing at Bridle Way Boulevard. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #2: Adjacent property will not be adversely affected.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The applicant has demonstrated how adjacent property owners will not be adversely affected by re-directing pedestrians to Wrenwood Drive where a new sidewalk/curb ramp crossing is required to be installed. This would decrease the amount of number of pedestrian crossing locations across 150 West, which is a Minor Arterial street. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #3: The modification is justified because of exceptional topographic or other physical conditions unique to the property involved, as opposed to mere inconvenience or financial disadvantage.

Preliminary Staff Findings: 150 West is a Minor Arterial street that carries a significant amount of vehicle traffic through the community. The developer is willing to connect sidewalks on the west side of 150 West from Bridle Way Boulevard to Wrenwood Drive where a new pedestrian crossing is also required to be constructed. This would decrease the amount of mid-block crossings along a Minor Arterial street where vehicles are likely less aware of pedestrians. Because of the unique conditions on 150 West, this criterion has been met.

Criteria #4: The modification is consistent with the intent of this (the Subdivision Control Ordinance) and other applicable ordinances and the Comprehensive Plan.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The modification proposed by the applicant will provide the required pedestrian connection and safely direct pedestrians to a full intersection at Wrenwood Drive, rather than creating an additional, mid-block crossing. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #5: The modification will not conflict with the requirements of the zoning ordinance, including but not limited to lot area, lot frontage, lot width, and setback(s).

Preliminary Staff Findings: The modification proposed by the applicant will not affect any zoning ordinance requirements for the newly proposed subdivision or adjacent properties. This criterion has been met.

Requested Modification #2 (Length of Temporary Dead-Ends): The applicant proposes to allow the maximum length of a temporary dead-end street to be +/- 310 feet in length. This modification is a “blanket request” meant to apply to any street in any future section break of the subdivision. Section 16.24.030(F)(1) of the Subdivision Control Ordinance states that the maximum length of a temporary dead-end street shall be 150 feet.

Preliminary Staff Recommendation: Approval, all criteria have been met.

Criteria #1: The modification will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The City Engineer and Columbus Fire Inspector have expressed no concerns regarding the modification request or its potential detrimental effect to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. The Fire Inspector, however, has requested temporary cul-de-sacs that can meet the Fire Department’s requirements for turning around their largest fire apparatus. If the temporary turnarounds are provided, this criterion has been met.

Criteria #2: Adjacent property will not be adversely affected.

Preliminary Staff Findings: During construction of subdivisions, it is common to have temporary dead ends based on the phasing of each section of the build-out. Modifying the maximum permitted length of temporary dead-ends within the development allows the developer flexibility. These new streets are serving new lots within the subdivision and not providing access to any adjacent property. The length of a temporary dead end will, therefore, have no effect on adjacent property. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #3: The modification is justified because of exceptional topographic or other physical conditions unique to the property involved, as opposed to mere inconvenience or financial disadvantage.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The subject property has exceptional physical conditions like a regulated drain and an adjacent floodplain that make the future phasing of construction and drainage difficult to plan with temporary dead-end streets within the maximum permitted length of 150 feet. The modification request, in light of these physical conditions, is justified and this criterion has been met.

Criteria #4: The modification is consistent with the intent of this (the Subdivision Control Ordinance) and other applicable ordinances and the Comprehensive Plan.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The intent of this section of the Subdivision Control Ordinance is to provide safe turn-around spaces throughout the development, with minimal need for vehicles to drive in reverse, for residents and emergency service vehicles. The City Fire Inspector The Fire Inspector has requested temporary cul-de-sacs that can meet the Fire Department’s requirements for turning around their largest fire apparatus. If the temporary turnarounds are provided, this criterion has been met.

Criteria #5: The modification will not conflict with the requirements of the zoning ordinance, including but not limited to lot area, lot frontage, lot width, and setback(s).

Preliminary Staff Findings: This modification does not affect any of the platted lots, their driveways, or other site features regulated by the zoning ordinance. This criterion has been met.

Requested Modification #3 (Overhead Utility Lines): The applicant proposes to allow overhead utility lines to be relocated along 150 west, rather than burying them underground as required by the subdivision control ordinance. Section 16.24.140(C)(2) of the Subdivision Control Ordinance states that in the case of existing overhead utilities, should a road widening or an extension of service or other such conditions occur as a result of the subdivision and necessitate the replacement or relocation of such utilities, such replacement or relocation of such utilities, such replacement or relocation shall be underground.

Preliminary Staff Recommendation: Denial, Criteria #3 and #4 have not been met.

Criteria #1: The modification will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The overhead utilities are proposed to be relocated to an easement between the shared use path and the required landscape buffer along the rear property line of adjacent residential lots. This places the utility poles safely away from nearby traffic on 150 West. The City Engineer and other relevant utility providers have shared no concerns regarding this request's affect on the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #2: Adjacent property will not be adversely affected.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The proposed overhead electric lines will provide adjacent property owners with the same level of service that underground lines would provide. Furthermore, these overhead utility lines will be placed between the shared use path and 25-foot wide landscape buffer, safely out of the way of any adjacent residents or passing traffic. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #3: The modification is justified because of exceptional topographic or other physical conditions unique to the property involved, as opposed to mere inconvenience or financial disadvantage.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The applicant has not demonstrated how the need for this modification is justified based on exceptional topographic or other physical conditions associated with the property. This criterion has not been met.

Criteria #4: The modification is consistent with the intent of this (the Subdivision Control Ordinance) and other applicable ordinances and the Comprehensive Plan.

Preliminary Staff Findings: The relocation of overhead utility lines is intended to lessen the visual impact associated with those lines. This criterion has not been met.

Criteria #5: The modification will not conflict with the requirements of the zoning ordinance, including but not limited to lot area, lot frontage, lot width, and setback(s).

Preliminary Staff Findings: This modification does not affect any of the platted lots, their driveways, or other site features regulated by the zoning ordinance. This criterion has been met.

Step 2 - Required Revision(s):

The Plan Commission should identify any needed corrections or additions to the proposed plat that are necessary to meet the requirements of the Subdivision Control Ordinance and for which modifications have not been approved. The Plan Commission should also stipulate any changes necessary for the subdivision to comply with the Commission's determinations on those design or improvement details that are at its discretion. Any required revisions must enforce the requirements of the Subdivision Control Ordinance. Discretionary features include those specifically indicated as such by the Subdivision Control Ordinance (such as the number of lots to be served by access easement) and those for which ensuring compliance requires the case-by-case application of the requirements by the Commission (such as street names, traffic calming, or supplementary travel lanes).

Preliminary Staff Recommendation: The following required revisions should be included as part of the plat approval:

1. A detail of the temporary turnarounds to be provided where temporary dead-end streets exceed 150 feet shall be provided and be subject to the review and approval of the Fire Inspector.

2. Trees in the required through-lot landscape buffer along Deaver Road and 150 West shall be shown as two staggered rows, rather than two unstaggered rows (Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.24.160(E)(1) and Zoning Ordinance Section 8.2(D)(2)).
3. A 20-foot-wide drainage and utility easement shall be added to the north side of the Birchmeadow Drive right-of-way extending between Pinegrove Drive and the east property line.

Step 3 - Request Approval, Denial, or Continuance:

In reviewing a request for major subdivision approval, the Plan Commission shall (1) approve the request if the proposal meets the minimum standards of the Subdivision Control Ordinance, (2) deny the request if the minimum standards of the ordinance are not met and appropriate modifications are not obtained, or (3) continue the request to gather further information or otherwise as provided by the Plan Commission Rules of Procedure and Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.40.050. The Plan Commission should make, second, and vote on a motion for the approval, denial, or continuance of the request. Any motion for approval should (1) note any approved modification(s) and (2) incorporate any required revisions.

Preliminary Staff Recommendation: Approval, noting the approval of Modifications #1 & #2 above, and including the required revision listed above. Approval should be contingent upon the completion of the rezoning to RT for this property.

Current Property Information (entire subdivision site):	
Land Use:	Agriculture
Site Features:	Woods, row crops, a barn and silos
Flood Hazards:	Minimal portions of the subdivision site include 100- and 500-year floodplain (along the Strietelmeier Arm of the Denois Creek regulated drain).
Special Circumstances: (Airport Hazard Area, Wellfield Protection Area, etc.)	The Strietelmeier Arm of the Denois Creek regulated drain crosses the subject property
Vehicle Access:	150 West (Minor Arterial, Residential, Suburban) Deaver Road (Collector, Industrial, Suburban)

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use (entire subdivision site):		
	Zoning:	Land Use:
North:	AP (Agriculture: Preferred)	Agriculture
South:	I3 (Industrial: Heavy)	Former Walesboro Airfield
East:	AP (Agriculture: Preferred) RS2 (Residential: Single Family 2)	Agriculture Single Family Residential (Bethel Village Neighborhood)

West:	AP (Agriculture: Preferred) RS2 (Residential: Single Family 2) RS3 (Residential: Single Family 3) RS4 (Residential: Single Family 4)	Single Family Residential Brookside North Residential Subdivision Country Wood Farms Residential Subdivision Brookside Estates Residential Subdivision
--------------	---	---

Interdepartmental Review:	
City Engineering:	No comments.
City Utilities:	No comments.
Parks Department:	No comments.
Fire Department:	No concerns regarding the proposed length of temporary dead-ends, but temporary turn-arounds (cul-de-sacs) will be required to be installed if dead-ends are needed for longer than 90-days.
Bartholomew County REMC:	Awaiting email response regarding a discussion that happened at SRC (Melissa mentioned it but couldn't remember the details).
Public Works:	No comments.
CPD:	No comments.
BCSC:	No comments.
Drainage Board:	No comments.

History of this Location:

The relevant history of this property includes the following:

1. On April 7th, 2026, the City Council approved rezoning and annexation requests (PC-25-2 and PC-26-2) for the property. Approximately 107 acres were approved to be rezoned from AP (Agriculture: Preferred) to RTc (Residential: Two-family w/ commitments). The commitment of the rezoning was as follows: At the time of any development, a buffer that includes a 50-foot total setback, as well as a berm and landscaping, shall be provided along the north property line of the subject property where adjacent to the property at 4605 South 150 West.
2. On June 9th, 2026, the Board of Zoning Appeals approved a development standards variance request (BZA-26-44) to allow the minimum ground floor living area for the 150 proposed Arrival Series homes to be 23% rather than the required 40% minimum ground floor living area. This request did not include any conditions or commitments.

History of this Application:

The relevant history of this application includes the following:

1. The proposed preliminary plat was reviewed by the Columbus Subdivision Review Committee at its June 18, 2026 meeting. The applicant chose to continue their request to provide more time to address the technical comments shared and have the opportunity to have another round of reviews by the Subdivision Review Committee.
2. The revised preliminary plat was reviewed again by the Columbus Subdivision Review Committee at its August 20, 2026 meeting and forwarded to the Plan Commission.

Planning Consideration(s):

The following general site considerations, community planning concepts, and other facts should be considered in the review of this application:

1. The applicant is requesting preliminary plat approval to create 285 new lots with 7 common areas and 1 utility parcel over +/- 107 acres.
2. The subject property was subject to a recent approval (PC-25-2) to rezone from AP (Agriculture: Preferred) to RTc (Residential: Two-family w/ commitments). This rezoning has not been completed yet – the last step is for the applicant to complete an Administrative Subdivision to create a property line that matches the area that was rezoned. The applicant has submitted the required application to the Planning Department and it is under review.
3. The proposed subdivision will have 3 street entrances – 2 on 150 West and 1 on Deaver Road. The 2 entrances on 150 West will be extensions of Wrenwood Drive and Finchbrook Drive from the existing neighborhoods to the west (across 150 West). The entrance on Deaver Road will be a cul-de-sac street called Timberlane Court and serving 24 lots.
4. The only existing local street that will not be continued into the development from the west side of 150 West is Bridle Way Boulevard. It will remain a “T” intersection from the west with 150 West. Section 16.24.060(A)(1)(b) of the Subdivision Control Ordinance requires sidewalk and curb ramp connections at “T” intersections. Rather than install those curb ramps and create a mid-block crossing at Bridle Way, the applicant is requesting a waiver from this requirement and instead is proposing connecting the existing sidewalks on Bridle Way Boulevard northward along the west side of 150 West to Wrenwood Drive, where there will be a full intersection and a pedestrian connection into the development. This would avoid a mid-block pedestrian crossing of 150 West, particularly at the location of a future vehicular deceleration lane that is preferred by the City Engineer as part of this development’s road improvements. The applicant has stated that there is adequate right-of-way existing on the west side of 150 West to install this sidewalk without major disturbances.
5. Per Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.24.030(C), the frontage of all existing streets bordering or adjacent to a parcel of land which is being subdivided shall be improved in all respects (including right-of-way dedication, widening, street trees, sidewalks, etc.). Improvements to local and collector streets are specified by the Subdivision Control Ordinance, while improvements to arterial streets are to be determined by the Plan Commission based on the recommendation of the City Engineer. 150 West is classified as a “Minor Arterial, Residential, Suburban” street. The following chart compares the current conditions, what is recommended by the Thoroughfare Plan, and the applicant's proposal.

150 West	Current Conditions	Thoroughfare Plan	Proposed
Min. Right-of-Way (half)	+/-15 ft	45 ft.	Variable / 45 ft. Min.
Lane Width	10 ft.	12 ft	12 ft.
Cycle Track	None	15 ft (lanes and buffer)	15 ft of right-of-way reserved
Curb & Gutter	None	2 ft.	2 ft.
Tree Lawn	None	Min. 5 ft.	Variable / 5 ft. Min.
Shared Use Path	None	10 ft.	10 ft.

6. Deaver Road is classified as a “Collector, Residential, Suburban” street. The following chart compares the current conditions, what is required by the Subdivision Control Ordinance, and the applicant’s proposal.

Deaver Road	Current Conditions	Thoroughfare Plan	Proposed
Min. Right-of-Way (half)	+/-15 ft.	30 ft.	Variable / 30 ft. Min.
Lane Width	10 ft.	12 ft.	12 ft.
Curb & Gutter	None	2 ft.	2 ft.
Tree Lawn	None	5 ft.	Variable (5 ft. Min.)
Shared Use Path	None	10 ft.	10 ft.

7. The Thoroughfare Plan refers to the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for recommendations on the location of shared use paths, bicycle routes, bicycle lanes, and other similar facilities. The Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan recommends a shared use path along Deaver Road and both a shared use path and cycle track along 150 West. A cycle track provides a lane for bicycle traffic in each direction and is separated from vehicle traffic by a curbed island or other buffer. Cycle tracks best accommodate experienced cyclists traveling longer distances. The 150 West corridor is one of a very few cycle tracks recommended by the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan. It is intended to provide a route for experienced riders between downtown Columbus and the neighborhoods and employers to the south. The applicant is providing adequate right-of-way along 150 West to accommodate a future cycle track but is not constructing it at this time. Installing a cycle track along 150 West likely requires a city improvement project that examines the entire road corridor, rather than only this limited subdivision site frontage.
8. The Subdivision Control Ordinance requires local streets within a major subdivision to extend to the boundary lines of the subdivision in order to provide future connections to adjacent properties that have the potential to be developed, per Section 16.24.030(E)(1). Birchmeadow Drive, one of the prominent east/west streets within the proposed subdivision, is shown to extend to the eastern property boundary as right-of-way only to provide a future connection to the adjoining property if it ever were to develop.
9. The applicant is requesting a “blanket” modification from Section 16.24.030(F)(1) of the Subdivision Control Ordinance to allow the length of temporary dead-end streets to extend to 310 feet, which is 160 feet longer than the maximum 150-foot permitted length. This blanket modification is meant to apply to any street that would need to have a temporary dead-end during the phased construction of this subdivision. The applicant has indicated that this site’s unique shape, location of drive entrances, presence of the regulated drain, and adjacent floodplain makes construction phasing challenging. The currently submitted phasing plan would allow the developer to build out the subdivision in a way that would comply with access requirements and temporary turn-around lengths. If for some reason, as development proceeds, the applicant needs to create a temporary turn-around longer than 150 feet, without this modification considered now they would be required to return to Plan Commission for approval.
10. The applicant is requesting a modification to allow the relocation of overhead utility lines along 150 West, rather than burying them underground as required by Section 16.24.140(C)(2) of the Subdivision Control Ordinance. The applicant is proposing to locate these overhead lines within a 20-foot-wide utility easement between the shared use path and a 25-foot-wide landscape buffer. This would result in the placement of utility poles at least 30 feet from the new edge of 150 West and behind a dense landscaping separating the adjacent property owners.

11. Where smaller lots are present, those averaging approximately 4,000 square feet with lot widths of approximately 50 feet, the applicant is proposing to accommodate adequate on-street parking by carefully specifying driveway locations to maximize lengths of street frontage where parking would be possible. As a possible alternative, Subdivision Control Ordinance Section 16.24.055 gives the Plan Commission the discretion to require alley access when certain conditions are met. Those conditions include (1) utilities provided in those alleys as well, (2) a maximum alley length of 500 feet, (3) accommodating service vehicles, (4) the reduction of driveways on adjacent streets, and (5) minimizing cross-neighborhood trips by those alleys rather than streets.

Applicable Subdivision Control Ordinance Requirement(s):

The following provisions of the Subdivision Control Ordinance apply to the consideration of this application:

1. Section 16.24.030(C)(3) Arterial Streets: The required design elements and corresponding right-of-way for arterial streets shall be as determined by the Plan Commission, based on a recommendation from the City Engineer (for arterial streets).
2. Section 16.24.060(A)(1)(b) Sidewalks at Intersections: Sidewalks shall extend to all streets at all intersections. At "T" intersections, sidewalks shall extend across the through street from at least one side of the intersection street. All street crossings shall include curb ramps.
3. Section 16.24.030(F)(1) Dead End Streets: The maximum length of a temporary dead-end street shall be 150 feet.
4. Section 16.24.140(C)(2) Utility Location: Lots that abut existing easements or public rights-of-way where overhead electric or telephone distribution supply lines and service connections have previously been installed may be supplied with electric and telephone service from those overhead lines, but the service connections from the utilities overhead lines shall be installed underground. In the case of existing overhead utilities, should a road widening or an extension of service or other such condition occur as a result of the subdivision and necessitate the replacement or relocation of such utilities, such replacement or relocation shall be underground.