



DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

Final Report

Northeast Georgia Regional Commission • 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia • www.negrc.org

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) has completed its review of the following Development of Regional Impact (DRI). This report contains the NEGRC’s assessment of how the proposed project relates to the policies, programs, and projects articulated in the Regional Plan and Regional Resource Plan. Also included is an assessment of likely interjurisdictional impacts resulting from the proposed development, as well as all comments received from identified affected parties and others during the fifteen-day comment period.

The materials presented in this report are purely advisory and under no circumstances should be considered as binding or infringing upon the host jurisdiction’s right to determine for itself the appropriateness of development within its boundaries.

Transmittal of this DRI report officially completes the DRI process. The submitting local government may proceed with whatever final official actions it deems appropriate regarding the proposed project, but it is encouraged to take the materials presented in the DRI report into consideration when rendering its decision.

Project I.D.:	DRI #4220
Name of Project:	Breedlove Farms
Name of Host Jurisdiction:	City of Monroe

Background

DRI review was initiated following the developer’s request for rezoning the property from B-3 (Highway Business District) to a mixture of PCD (Planned Commercial District) and PRD (Planned Residential District). Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 7/8/2024 to 7/23/2024.

Proposed Development

The applicant is proposing the construction of 1,062 residential units, 541,430 square feet of commercial space, and 18,112 square feet of civic space on a 106-acre site in the City of Monroe. The proposed development would include a variety of housing options including single-family detached homes, townhouses, apartments, and multi-family buildings. It also proposes commercial buildings in the form of mixed-use and live/work buildings, which are primarily concentrated in the northeast portion of the site. Civic green areas, which include natural areas, trails, and fields, would be scattered throughout the proposed development. The following table summarizes the proposed building areas.

Proposed Building Areas

Building Type	Total Units (if applicable)	Gross Square Footage (SF)
Single Family (Cottages, Houses, Townhouses, Live/Work)	335 units	1,441,463 sf
Multifamily (Apartment House, Mixed-Use, Medium- and Large-Scale Multifamily)	727 units	972,694 sf
Residential Total	1,062 units	2,414,157 sf
Mixed Use (Commercial)		298,252 sf
Live-Work (Commercial)		243,178 sf
Commercial Total		541,430 sf
Civic		18,112 sf
Total for Site	1,062 units	2,973,699 sf

The pattern book submitted by the applicant proposes four internal-site character areas:

1. **CA-1 Breedlove Natural Areas** consist of natural landscaping and areas that are unsuitable for development. These areas are located adjacent to on-site creeks and water features. Only natural areas, playgrounds, and small civic buildings would be permitted in this area.
2. **CA-3 Breedlove Neighborhood Areas** consist of primarily low-density single-family detached residential to medium-density single-family attached residential uses. Development standards would require front, side, and rear setbacks, and buildings would be limited to three stories. Mixed-use, commercial, and multifamily buildings would not be permitted in this area.
3. **CA-4 Breedlove Neighborhood Center** would be a medium to high-density area and would include all residential types, multi-use, commercial, and civic building usages. The buildings in this area would have zero side setbacks. Large-scale multi-family buildings would be limited to the southern portion of the site, adjacent to the existing shopping center.
4. **CA-CV Breedlove Civic Area** would be primarily for civic purposes, such as plazas, playgrounds, community gardens, and parks. In the proposed site, the Civic Area would surround the existing silo.

The proposed site plan includes seven site entrances: four would be along Charlotte Rowell Boulevard, two would be located along Highway 11 North, and the last would connect to the existing shopping center south of the proposed site. The site plan includes an unspecified amount of street parking and parking lot spaces. A roundabout would be built along one of the entrances along Charlotte Rowell Boulevard. Currently, the site is mostly an undeveloped mixture of farmland and forests. There is an existing silo on site that would be incorporated into the potential development. There are two creeks and a pond located on site. The site plan proposes a 50-foot city buffer as well as a 75-foot impervious setback around all existing streams and ponds.

The proposed development would occupy 106 acres on the portion of parcel #M0050045 located east and south of Charlotte Rowell Boulevard in the City of Monroe. There are no plans for the remainder of parcel #M0050045. Parcel #M0050045 has been formally subdivided but is still reflected as one parcel with the Walton County Tax Assessor's Office. The site plan illustrates additional development areas in the east portion of the site that are faded out and not included in this review. While these properties (parcel #C0920002 and a portion of parcel #M0050044) are not a part of the rezoning request or a part of this DRI, they are included in the Pattern Book in anticipation of being incorporated into the project in the future.

The site would be built in four phases. The first phase would include the southernmost portion closest to the existing shopping center and would include all large-scale multifamily buildings on site. The second phase would include most of the commercial center and civic area in the northeast portion of the site. The third phase

would include the residential areas in the western portion of the site. The fourth, and final, phase would be the southeastern portion of the site. All phases are estimated to be complete by 2035.

Compatibility with Existing Plans

The site is identified as the “Northwest Sub-Area” Character Area on the City's Character Areas Map (dated 6/14/2022). This category is described in the City of Monroe’s Comprehensive Plan as an area that will be “predominantly single-family larger lot with focused areas of higher density mixed-use and recreational areas. Activity areas with pedestrian and bike access would provide a live/work environment.” The proposed development is compatible with the future character of the Northwest Sub-Area, as it would fulfill the intention of creating a live/work activity center with pedestrian and bike access. However, it should be noted that the future character of the sub-area should include “predominately single-family larger lots.” Developing the remainder of the character area to a density similar to the proposed development would not be compatible with that portion of the character area description.

The site is identified as “Developed” on the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Regional Land Use Map (dated 6/15/2023) The Regional Plan recommends development that:

- Enhances economic mobility and competitiveness
- Elevates public health and equity
- Supports and adds value to existing communities
- Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable
- Includes transportation choices and is well-connected with existing and planned transportation options, and
- Protects natural and historic resources.

The following table outlines the proposals alignment with these recommendations:

REGIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED PROJECT’S COMPATIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATION
Enhances economic mobility and competitiveness	The proposed development would include approximately 540,000 square feet of commercial space, which would create many job opportunities in the city.
Elevates public health and equity	The civic and park space proposed in the plan would elevate public health for surrounding residents by creating greenspace and recreation areas. The developer should ensure that these areas are easily accessible to both residents of the development and the public so that all can benefit from the proposed amenities.
Supports and adds value to existing communities	The proposed development adds value to the existing community by creating a mixed-use activity center that will create diverse housing options, new businesses, and civic space.
Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable	The proposed development would create diverse housing options that include single-family-detached houses, townhomes, live-work units, and apartments. Due to the mixed-use nature of the project, residents would live within walking distance of businesses and work. The developer and the city should ensure that the proposed development encourages a stable community that is mixed-aged and mixed-income. This can be done by providing both homeownership and renting options and by building homes that have a wide variety of price points.

REGIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED PROJECT'S COMPATIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATION
<p>Includes transportation choices and is well-connected with existing and planned transportation options</p>	<p>The proposed development includes a well-connected internal street and path network with seven different external access points. This connectivity would help prevent access bottlenecks. Additionally, the southern access point creates access to an existing commercial center. The mixed-use and compact nature of the proposed development would promote traveling by bicycle and walking throughout the development, which would promote a healthier lifestyle for residents.</p> <p>Pedestrian and bicycle access to the proposed site is cut off from surrounding areas by busy state routes (US Highway 78 to the south, State Highway 138 to the west, and State Highway 11 to the east). Over the long-term, the City should work with GDOT to incorporate sidewalks or multi-use paths connecting to other areas of Monroe so that there can be practical and safe access to the site by multiple modes of transportation.</p>
<p>Protects natural and historic resources</p>	<p>There are two streams located on site, and the proposed site plan protects them through a 50" city buffer and a 75" impervious setback. The pattern book submitted by the applicant includes a stormwater & drainage strategy that outlines best management practices including permeable pavers, bioswales, cisterns, and more. These practices would help reduce stormwater runoff and preserve the surrounding environment. The proposed development also helps preserve the historic legacy of the site as a dairy farm by preserving the existing silo onsite.</p>

Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

NATURAL RESOURCES:

The applicant states that some floodplain areas are designated along two unnamed branches of Mountain Creek on site. The proposed site plan includes a 75-foot impervious setback around all creek areas. The applicant states that the project is unlikely to affect all other environmental quality factors identified on the DRI Additional Form, including water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, protected mountain and river corridors, historic resources, and other environmentally sensitive resources.

The chart below summarizes the number of acres within the site area as well as within a one-mile buffer around the site that contains 1) wetlands, 2) conservation land, 3) regionally important resources, and 4) threatened regionally important resources. Please refer to the footnotes for definitions for each of these terms.

Wetland, Conservation, and Regionally Important Resources

	AREA TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	PERCENT OF AREA
SITE AREA (106 Acres)	Wetland Acres ¹	1.7	1.6%
	“Conservation Land” ²	61.4	58.0%
	Regionally Important Resource Land ³	-	0.0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land ⁴	61.4	58.0%
1 MILE BUFFER AROUND SITE (2,410 Acres)	Wetland Acres	77.3	3.2%
	“Conservation Land”	1,236.9	51.3%
	Regionally Important Resource Land	162.2	6.7%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land	1,236.9	51.3%

A portion of the 1-mile buffer around the proposed site is part of the Northeast Georgia Green Infrastructure Network as identified in the Northeast Georgia Resource Management Plan for Regionally Important Resources (dated 8/7/2018). The Northeast Georgia Green Infrastructure Network is intended to serve as a strategically planned and managed network of wilderness, parks, greenways, conservation easements, and working lands with conservation value that benefits wildlife and people, supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, links urban settings to rural ones, and contributes to the health and quality of life for the communities and citizens sharing this network. No specific Regionally Important Resource sites are identified within one mile of the proposed site.

The proposal should be designed to minimize disruption to the existing streams, associated wetlands, and floodplains to avoid future erosion, flooding, and degraded water quality onsite and downstream from the site. Low impact design measures, like bioswales, rain gardens, and other green infrastructure should be incorporated into the project design. At minimum, the project should be in accordance with the latest edition of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (Blue Book) and meet all relevant EPD requirements.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

Transportation

Acampora Traffic, LLC completed a traffic impact study that projects 18,448 new daily trips, including 948 AM peak hour trips and 1,463 PM peak hour trips from the proposed development. The applicant states that the existing roadways at the perimeter of the site should be sufficient in handling traffic generated by the project and that a proposed roundabout at the intersection of Double Springs Church Road Connector and Charlotte Rowell Boulevard is currently planned and would be incorporated into the site.

¹ Wetland acres are derived from the National Wetland Inventory (NWI)

² “Conservation” land is derived from the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Conservation and Development Map (6/15/2023).

³ Regionally Important Resources were identified as a part of the Northeast Georgia Resource Management Plan for Regionally Important Resources (2/15/2018).

⁴ This area represents the intersection between Conservation areas (identified on the Conservation and Development Map, 6/15/2023), adopted Regionally Important Resources (RIR), and “Developed” and “Developing” Regional Land Use areas (identified on the Regional Land Use Map, 6/15/2023).

Water Supply and Wastewater

The project would be served by the City of Monroe's water and sewer systems with an estimated daily demand of 0.5 MGD for each system. The City currently has sufficient water supply capacity to serve the proposed project, but the City is also in the process of enlarging its wastewater treatment plant and obtaining necessary discharge permits to facilitate future growth. No water or sewer line extensions are anticipated to reach the site.

Stormwater Management

An estimated 68% of the site would be covered by impervious surfaces. The Site Pattern Book states that all site stormwater will be treated utilizing Low Impact Design (LID) practices such as rain gardens, bioswales, and pervious pavers and that all stormwater best management practices will be designed to meet the guidelines within the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual for treatment, channel protection and peak flow discharge.

SERVICES:

Solid Waste

The applicant estimates the project would generate 21,100 tons of solid waste annually and that sufficient landfill capacity exists to handle this waste. According to annual tonnage reports from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, almost all municipal solid waste (MSW) generated in Walton County is disposed of in a landfill in Barrow County. The applicant states that no hazardous waste would be generated.

Lifecycle Costs and Revenues

The applicant estimates that the project would be worth \$361,654,000 at build-out in 2035 and generate \$366,600 in annual local taxes. On a per-acre basis, the project would be worth approximately \$3,412,000 and generate approximately \$3,458 in tax revenue. Prior to approval, the City should measure the life cycle costs of the infrastructure needed to serve this project to ensure that they would not be committing to more maintenance expenses than the new tax revenue can cover.

Comments from Affected Parties

Justin Lott, P.E., District Preconstruction Engineer, Georgia Department of Transportation

There are several construction projects in the area but they should be completed before this project gets started. Those PI numbers are: 0019291, 0015678, and 0015421. There is also a project that is active in Preconstruction. That project PI is 0019642 and it proposes to add an additional through lane on SR 138 from west of SR 10 Business to the eastbound entrance ramp onto SR 10/US 78. There are several long range projects to widen through the area. Those PI numbers are: 0015576, 0000414, and 0000415. PI 0015576 proposes to widen SR 138/Charlotte Rowell Blvd from SR 81 to SR 11. This is directly adjacent to the proposed development. Recommend not constructing any permanent structures adjacent to the road which may be impacted by the widening project. It is difficult to discern from the submittal if sidewalks are proposed on Charlotte Rowell Blvd and SR 11. If not, please include sidewalks along the frontage of these roads.

Jonathan Peevy, P.E., District 1 Traffic Operations, Georgia Department of Transportation

This development will add significant volumes to the area, which already has overloaded infrastructure. I would like to see impacts and potential improvements to the intersections highlighted below. These include the ramps (which are unsignalized/side street stop), Charlotte Rowell Blvd @ 11 and the signals at SR 10 @ SR 11 and SR 11 @ SR 138. They will need additional throughput (more so at the 138 signal).

Photo from Jonathan Peevy (Screenshot from Google Maps)

