

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 #4252
Name of Project:	Oconee Shores
Name of Host Jurisdiction:	Greene County

Background

The DRI review was initiated following the developer’s request for a rezone from A1 (Agricultural District) and LR1 (Lakeshore Single-Family Residential/Recreation) to CPUD (Commercial Planned Unit Development). Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 8/16/2024 to 8/31/2024.

Proposed Development

531 Greene LLC is proposing construction of 1,038 residential units and 18-acres of commercial development on a 520-acre site in Greene County. The new mixed-use district would include a variety of housing options and a marina with dry-stack boat storage. The commercial areas are unspecified in the site plan, but the traffic study notes potential future uses such as a retail plaza, fast-food restaurant, and two office buildings all totaling approximately 62,000 square feet. The development would have access to Lake Oconee and feature scattered open space connected by a trail system. The site plan proposes two full-access entry lanes on US Hwy 278 (Madison Highway).

Currently, the site is undeveloped and wooded, situated adjacent to Lake Oconee. The parcel numbers are 0100000060, 010000006A, 010000006B, and 010000006C, and they are located off US Hwy 278 across from Reid Duvall Road. The project would be completed in one phase with an estimated completion date in 2037.

Compatibility with Existing Plans

The site is identified as North Greene/Lake Oconee on the County’s Character Areas Map (dated 06/2023). The

North Greene/Lake Oconee character area is described in the Greene County Comprehensive Plan as “will help accommodate additional housing needs in the county via low-density neighborhoods and quality lakefront development. The area will support traditional single-family housing types with expanded access to Lake Oconee’s recreational offerings, such as fishing and boating.” Large lot sizes and deep setbacks are specifically mentioned in the character area’s implementation initiatives. The local zoning districts R1, LR1, and PUD are shown as compatible with this character area. The proposal includes much more density than what is envisioned in the character area’s description by including townhomes, condominiums, clustered short-term rentals, single-family detached lots of 1/3 - 1 acre in size, and commercial land uses. However, the proposal does include shared open space with trails and access to Lake Oconee which would expand access to the lake. Also, the commercial area would place retail facilities within walking distance of housing, serving as a supportive land use for the community. The County will need to determine whether the increase in density would be beneficial to the community and its overall future land use strategy.

The site is identified as “Rural” 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.

REGIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED PROJECT’S COMPATIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATION
Enhances economic mobility and competitiveness	<p>The marina in the proposed development would increase recreation outlets at Lake Oconee, attracting new residents and tourists and creating opportunities for economic development.</p> <p>Depending on the mix of housing price points and commercial tenets selected, having a mix of residential and commercial uses in this project may enhance economic mobility and competitiveness by placing retail establishments near potential employees and/or customers.</p>
Elevates public health and equity	<p>The project could elevate public health of the neighborhoods residents by providing access to Lake Oconee for residents and visitors. The project also proposes a trail system to connect the neighborhood, commercial areas, and lakeshore.</p> <p>If some of the housing units have price points that are affordable for workers at the site’s office and retail establishments, then the project has the potential to advance equity in the community by providing employment opportunities within a walkable distance of housing.</p>

Supports and adds value to existing communities	The proposed project would provide additional housing and retail facilities to the community. It would also provide more opportunities for the public to access outdoor amenities through the common open space and marina.
Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable	The proposal includes 1,038 new housing units through 5 different types of housing. Including a variety of housing types will theoretically result in variation in housing costs and values, creating more equitable and affordable housing options. However, as part of this review, equitability and affordability are unable to be determined as no indication of marketing prices were included in the application. Homes adjacent to Lake Oconee have historically been priced at the high-end of the housing market.
Includes transportation choices and is well-connected with existing and planned transportation options	The proposal displays a well-connected internal street network with 2 full-access driveway connections to US Hwy 278 and a thorough trail network. The connectivity of roads within the development will reduce the potential for traffic congestion.
Protects natural and historic resources	<p>Lake Oconee is a Regionally Important Resource (RIR) identified within one mile of this site. Therefore, the County should carefully consider the impacts of land clearing, development, and land application activities on the proposed site as it could have negative downstream impacts on sensitive resources. Mitigation of stormwater runoff should be a high priority for this proposal.</p> <p>The developer plans to protect the lake with an Erosion Control Plan in accordance with State and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) standards. The plan also includes dispersed open space and at least 1 detention area to manage stormwater. The developer should also consider including permeable pavement in target areas throughout the site to minimize the volume of stormwater runoff generated by the development.</p> <p>The proposal will have no adverse effects to known historic resources.</p>

Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

Natural Resources

The development would be located within areas containing environmentally sensitive resources, including Lake Oconee. The proposed site plan includes a 62+ acre area dedicated to land application for sewage and on-site water detention, as well as dispersed open space to mitigate storm water runoff into the lake. The applicant also plans to implement an Erosion Control Plan in accordance with State and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) standards. 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, floodplains, and historic resources. Refer to the attached site plan for any stream, floodplain, and buffer locations.

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 520.47	Wetland Acres ¹	4.6	0.9%
	“Conservation Land” ²	525.2	100.0%
	Regionally Important Resource Land ³	525.2	100.0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land ⁴	3,989.6	759.7%
1 MILE BUFFER AROUND SITE 3989.6	Wetland Acres	513.4	12.9%
	“Conservation Land”	3,989.6	100.0%
	Regionally Important Resource Land	3,989.6	100.0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land	593.0	14.9%

Lake Oconee is a Regionally Important Resource (RIR) identified within one mile of this site and there are 3,989.6 acres of Threatened RIR Land within one mile of the site. The threatened RIR acreage 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. The proposal does reserve portions of undeveloped land and includes trails throughout the wooded areas that would contribute to the health and quality of life for the communities and citizens sharing the amenities.

Transportation

A&R Engineering completed a traffic impact study that projects a potential of 16,719 new daily trips, including 1,349 AM peak hour trips and 1,367 PM peak hour trips from the proposed development. The study determined that two full-access driveways on US Hwy 278 are needed to serve this project. Both entrances would need two entering lanes and two existing lanes with a left turn lane and deceleration lane for entering traffic. Refer to the attached traffic study for more details and the site plan for the location of proposed infrastructure.

Water Supply and Wastewater

The project would be served by a private water and sewer supply company with an estimated daily demand of 0.3221 MGD for each system. The proposal would include an on-site land application system for sewage treatment and discharge that would occupy approximately 62-acres of the site. The applicant states that these

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).

demands can be covered by existing capacity. No water or sewer line extensions are anticipated as the infrastructure of the private supplier reaches the project location, but additional extensions will be required within the project area.

Stormwater Management

An estimated 25.7% of the site would be covered in impervious surfaces. Dispersed open space, an Erosion Control Plan, and at least one detention area are planned to manage stormwater runoff. Refer to the site plan for the proposed location of open space and the detention area. 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.

Solid Waste

The applicant estimates the project would generate 4,320 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 Greene County is disposed of in a landfill in Twiggs County. This landfill has an estimated capacity of 29 years. The applicant states that no hazardous waste would be generated.

Lifecycle Costs and Revenues

The applicant estimates that the project would be worth \$519,000,000 at build-out in 2037 and generate \$9,100,000 in annual local taxes. On a per-acre basis, the project would be worth approximately \$997,176 and generate approximately \$17,484 in tax revenue. Prior to approval, the County 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

Greg Boike, AICP, Director of Planning and Public Administration, Middle Georgia Regional Commission

The project appears to be situated such that Middle Georgia will not experience any significant impacts.

Alan Hood, Airport Safety Data Program Manager, Georgia Department of Transportation

The proposed construction of 1,038 residential units and 106,000 square feet of commercial space on a 520.47-acre tract in Greene County is 6 miles from Madison Municipal Airport (52A). It is located outside any FAA approach or departure surfaces, and airport compatible land use areas, and does not appear to impact any airport.

If any construction equipment or construction exceeds 200' AGL, an FAA Form 7460-1 must be submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration according to the FAA's Notice Criteria Tool found here (<https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/gisTools/gisAction.jsp?action=showNoNoticeRequiredToolForm>). Those submissions for any associated cranes may be done online at <https://oeaaa.faa.gov>. The FAA must be in receipt of the notifications, no later than 120 days prior to construction. The FAA will evaluate the potential impacts of the project on protected airspace associated with the airports and advise the proponent if any action is necessary.

Rachel Borkowski, Civil Engineer 3, Georgia Department of Transportation

- Provide a sight plan including all proposed work
 - i.e. deceleration lanes, left turn lanes, and driveways
- Note that for the parcels near the driveways labeled “future development” the DOT requires land 5 acres and under to have a subdivision of properties to be submitted
- An access plan will need to be submitted to the GDOT permitting office and will be subject to the driveway and encroachment manual.
- Sight distance will need to be verified based off AASHTO guidelines.
- Verify traffic counts and trips for full build out including future development.
 - If future development is included, please state this in the submission