

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 #4399
Name of Project:	Lake Oconee Estates and Beach Club
Name of Host Jurisdiction:	Greene County

Background

DRI review was initiated following the developer's request for a rezone from Agricultural District (A1) to Planned Unit Development (PUD). Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 2/12/2025 to 2/27/2025.

Proposed Development

Lake Oconee Estates & Beach Club, LLC is proposing construction of 325 detached single-family homes on a 196-acre site in Greene County. The development would include 50 acres of open space, and the minimum lot size would be 15,000 square feet. This project represents phase II of an existing Planned Unit Development, previously reviewed in DRI #4105. Phase I of the development includes 365 detached single-family homes and 91 acres of open space on a 264-acre site. Once phase I and II are complete, the entire development will feature 690 homes and 141 acres of open space on a 461-acre site. Phase I of the development has three site entrances, one on Leslie Mill Road and two on Veazy Connector. Phase II does not include any additional connections to the existing road network.

The proposed development would be located between Leslie Mill Rd and Veazy Connector in Greene County. The entire project is divided into four separate tracts along the north and south side of Veazy Connector. Phase II includes tracts 3 and 4 on the north side. The affected parcel numbers in phase II are 0730000210, 073000021B, and 0910000120. The estimated completion date for phase II is June 2027, and the estimated completion date for the overall project is June 2029.

Compatibility with Existing Plans

Compatibility with Regional Plan

The site is identified as “Developing” 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 proposal’s alignment with these recommendations:

REGIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED PROJECT’S COMPATIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATION
Enhances economic mobility and competitiveness	The applicant states that the regional workforce is sufficient to meet the demand created by the proposed project.
Elevates public health and equity	Phase I of the proposed development includes a community center that contains a swimming pool and tennis/pickle ball courts, which would positively impact public health for those who have access. Providing a trail system within natural areas in phase II would provide additional opportunities for passive and active recreation. To maximize their potential and improve access to recreation activities in Greene County, the developer should consider opening these facilities to the public.
Supports and adds value to existing communities	Creating new housing options for residents adds value to the Greene County community. If the developer can maximize the amount of green space preserved on site, it would support existing surrounding communities that rely on Lake Oconee for leisure, recreation, and drinking water.
Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable	The applicant states that the proposed development would include single-family detached homes that vary from 1,200-2,000 square feet on lots that are approximately 15,000 square feet. To create range in diversity and affordability, the developer could consider including housing types such as duplexes, triplexes or cottage courts, which would deliver more affordably priced homes with a similar neighborhood feel. The developer could also consider mixing the housing types throughout the community to create a mixed-income neighborhood.
Includes transportation choices and is well- connected with existing and planned transportation options	Phase II does not include any additional connections to the existing road network. To reduce potential congestion, the developer should consider adding a site entrance that connects Tract 3 to Leslie Mill Road. If included, this entrance should take measures to protect the stream that is located between Leslie Mill Road and the proposed development.
Protects natural and historic resources	<p>The proposed site includes multiple wetland and stream areas. There is no development planned within the wetland areas. However, there are 6 locations where the proposed lots directly border the wetlands. Significant clearing and grading would negatively impact these wetland areas and streams by reducing the amount of nearby naturally vegetated areas, which slow and filter stormwater, and increasing the amount of impervious surfaces. To minimize the impact that the potential development would have on Lake Oconee as well as surrounding wetlands and streams, the developer should maximize the amount of natural vegetation on site that is preserved and should minimize the use of impervious surfaces, where possible, through the use of impervious surfaces in select locations or other similar methods.</p> <p>There are no known historic resources that would be impacted by the proposal.</p>

Compatibility with Regional Resource Management Plan

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 (196 Acres)	Wetland Acres ¹	11.3	5.8%
	"Conservation Land" ²	196	100%
	Regionally Important Resource Land ³	196	100%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land ⁴	196	100%
1 MILE BUFFER AROUND SITE (4,080 Acres)	Wetland Acres	296.6	7.3%
	"Conservation Land"	3,888	95.3%
	Regionally Important Resource Land	3,779	92.6%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land	3,888	95.3%

Lake Oconee is a Regionally Important Resource located within one mile of the proposed site. The site is located upstream from Lake Oconee, which Morgan and Greene County both use as a water source. To minimize the impacts of the proposed site on Lake Oconee, the developer should take actions to minimize the runoff of pollutants and sediment from the site.

Additionally, the entire site is located within 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.

Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

Natural Resources and Stormwater Management

Currently, the site is primarily forested with 3 streams and 7 identified wetland areas. The applicant states that an estimated 15% of the site would be covered in impervious surfaces. No detention or retention ponds are shown in the site plan. According to the applicant, a 50-foot undisturbed buffer and a 75-foot impervious buffer are proposed along all identified state waters. Additionally, the applicant states that bioretention and other water quality best management practices will be implemented in accordance with the Georgia Storm Water Manual to ensure proper treatment of runoff before it is discharged into Lake Oconee. The applicant states that the project is unlikely to affect any of the environmental quality factors identified on the DRI Additional Form, including water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, protected mountain and river corridors, floodplains, historic resources, and other environmentally sensitive resources.

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).

Transportation

SEI Engineering completed a traffic impact study that projects 6,616 new daily trips, including 486 AM peak hour trips and 659 PM peak hour trips from the total project (phase I and II). Tract 1 will generate 136 AM peak hour trips, 184 PM peak hour trips, and 1,848 daily trips. Tracts 2,3, and 4 will generate 350 AM peak hour trips, 475 PM peak hour trips, and 4,768 daily trips.

According to the traffic study, the west entrance on Veazy Connector requires an eastbound left and right turn lane, as well as a westbound right turn lane. The east entrance on Veazy Connector requires an eastbound left turn lane and a westbound right turn lane.

Water Supply and Wastewater

The project would be served by the Piedmont Water Company for water and sewer services with an estimated daily demand of 0.1 MGD for each system. The applicant states that these demands can be covered by existing capacity. No water or sewer line extensions are anticipated other than those extended within the development.

Solid Waste

The applicant estimates the project would generate 300 tons of solid waste annually and that sufficient landfill capacity exists to handle this waste. However, based on the number of homes in phase II, it is more likely that the development would generate approximately 1,500 tons of solid waste per year, based on average waste produced per household. Prior to approval, the County should ensure that the system can handle this higher volume of 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. The applicant states that no hazardous waste would be generated.

Lifecycle Costs and Revenues

The applicant estimates that the project would be worth \$125,000,000 at build-out in 2029 and generate \$780,000 in annual local taxes. On a per-acre basis, the project would be worth approximately \$637,755 and generate approximately \$3,980 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, Director of Planning & Public Administration, Middle Georgia Regional Commission

MGRC concurs with the designation of Lake Oconee as a Regionally Important Resource. Recommendations from the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan to minimize adverse impacts should be considered by the developer. Furthermore, the expansion of this development into an additional phase highlights an additional concern that was raised in the initial phase: the importance of operational improvements on SR-44 between Eatonton and Greensboro. In particular, intersection improvements should also be considered for SR-44 at Richland Connector to help ensure safe travel along the SR-44 corridor.

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

This proposed construction of 325 residential units on a 196-acre is almost 6.5 miles from the Greene County Regional Airport (CPP). It is located outside of the 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.