

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.

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<b>Project I.D.:</b>	DRI #4434
<b>Name of Project:</b>	Madison Farms Industrial Center
<b>Name of Host Jurisdiction:</b>	City of Madison

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### Background

DRI review was initiated following the developer's request for a rezone from Light Industrial/ Manufacturing District (I2) to Planned Industrial District (PID). Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 4/9/2025 to 4/24/2025.

### Proposed Development

Longleaf Commercial Properties, LLC is proposing construction of 1,839,780 square feet of industrial development on an approximately 170-acre site in the City of Madison. The proposed development would include 9 industrial buildings ranging from 113,400 to 267,840 square feet, 1,366 parking spaces, and 475 trailer parking spaces. The buildings would be rear-load buildings with truck courts located in the back. The proposal includes two connections to the existing road network on SR 83.

The proposed development would occupy property along the west side of SR 83/Monticello Hwy, north of I-20, and south of SR12/US278/Atlanta Hwy in the City of Madison. The parcel number is 037 138. The project would be completed in one phase with an estimated completion date in 2036.

## Compatibility with Existing Plans

### Compatibility with Regional Plan

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.

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	<p>The applicant states that the regional workforce is sufficient to meet the demand created by the proposed project.</p> <p>The project is expected to generate approximately 250 to 300 jobs in the manufacturing and distribution sectors, enhancing the area’s economic mobility. The project would also increase the City’s tax revenue.</p>
Elevates public health and equity	<p>The site plan includes 79 acres of green space and 5 public common areas, which would contribute to public health benefits of the site’s users by providing access to outdoor space. However, there are no pedestrian sidewalks or paths shown on the site plan to indicate an intended use or enhanced access of the outdoor spaces. Also, the development is expected to generate 4,269 new daily trips, which would increase congestion and air pollution in the area.</p>
Supports and adds value to existing communities	<p>The development would feature artwork commissioned by the Madison Arts Commission that accentuates the culture of Madison, including three sculptures on each side of the site entrance along SR 83.</p>
Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable	<p>Not applicable to this project type.</p>
Includes transportation choices and is well- connected with existing and planned transportation options	<p>The proposed use and site plan do not indicate options that support increased access to active transportation choices. The proposal is located within the Morgan County Transit service area, which would allow employees to use public transit, if desired. The site plan does connect well into the existing and planned roadway network by aligning one main entrance with Lions Club Road and by locating the site along SR 83 and an I-20 interchange.</p> <p>The developer plans to implement measures to prevent semi-trailer trucks from turning left out of the development and driving into downtown Madison. These measures include installing a traffic signal at the primary site entrance on SR 83 across from Lions Club Road. The traffic signal would have no left turn arrow and signs prohibiting trucks from turning left as they exit. The traffic signal would also improve safety at the intersection and help alleviate the current congestion on Lions Club Rd.</p> <p>The traffic study submitted recommendations to improve site access, which are summarized in the Transportation section below.</p>

REGIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED PROJECT'S COMPATIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATION
Protects natural and historic resources	<p>The developer should consider incorporating permeable pavement and other water retention methods throughout the site to mitigate stormwater runoff into Little Indian Creek, which flows across the western corner of the proposed site.</p> <p>Hanes farm is a designated Historic Landmark in the City of Madison, located north of the proposed development on SR 83. While the proposed development includes greenspace and a large detention pond in the northern portion of the site, it does not include other measures to protect or provide a buffer for the historic resource.</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
<b>SITE AREA (170 Acres)</b>	Wetland Acres <sup>1</sup>	2.0	1.2%
	"Conservation Land" <sup>2</sup>	2.6	1.5%
	Regionally Important Resource Land <sup>3</sup>	0.0	0.0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land <sup>4</sup>	2.6	1.5%
<b>1 MILE BUFFER AROUND SITE (3,484 Acres)</b>	Wetland Acres	199.0	5.7%
	"Conservation Land"	1,176	34%
	Regionally Important Resource Land	0.0	0.0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land	877.0	25.2%

No specific Regionally Important Resource sites are identified within one mile of the proposed site.

### Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

#### Natural Resources and Stormwater Management

Currently, the site is primarily agricultural land and woodlands. There is a pond located on the proposed site, and Little Indian Creek runs through the western corner of the site. An estimated 54% of the site would be covered in impervious surfaces, and 4 detention ponds are planned to manage stormwater runoff. 46% of the site would be pervious greenspace. 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.

<sup>1</sup> Wetland acres are derived from the National Wetland Inventory (NWI)

<sup>2</sup> "Conservation" land is derived from the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan's Conservation and Development Map (6/15/2023).

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

<sup>4</sup> 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).

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.

### Transportation

Southeastern Engineering, Inc. completed a traffic impact study that projects 4,269 new daily trips, including 626 AM peak hour trips and 626 PM peak hour trips from the proposed development. It also projects an average of 58 18-wheelers per day at each building. The study recommends installing a single-lane roundabout at the intersection of Site Driveway A, along with yield controlled right turn bypasses on the north, south, and eastbound approaches. It also recommends installing a southbound right turn lane on SR 83 at Site Driveway B, and an eastbound right turn lane on SR 12 at the intersection of SR 83.

### Water Supply and Wastewater

The project would be served by the City of Madison water and sewer systems with an estimated daily demand of 0.034 MGD for each system. The applicant states that these demands can be covered by existing capacity. A 0.174-mile sewer line extension would be required to serve this project.

### Solid Waste

The applicant estimates the project would generate 8,736 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 Morgan 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 \$300,000,000 at build-out in 2036 and generate \$3,101,869 in annual local taxes. On a per-acre basis, the project would be worth approximately \$1,764,706 and generate approximately \$18,246 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

*Greg Boike, Director of Planning & Public Administration, Middle Georgia Regional Commission*

I expect that this project may have some housing impacts on Putnam County within our region, given the potential number of new jobs available. Any adverse transportation impacts should be mitigated by the ongoing widening of US-441 in Putnam County.

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

This proposed construction of 1,839,780 square feet of industrial space on a n approximately 170 - acre tract in the City of Madison and is more than 3.5 miles from Madison Municipal Airport (52A). 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.

*Celia Murray, President, Historic Madison Coalition*

See attached letter for comments.

# Historic Madison Coalition, Inc.

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April 24, 2025

Delivered Electronically to BPirkle@negrc.org

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Northeast Georgia Regional Commission  
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Re: DRI #4434 Madison Farms

We thank you for the opportunity to voice our concerns with the application for the Madison Farms Distribution Centre proposed for Madison.

## Local Procedural Status

We understand that the requested zoning change to Planned Industrial Development (PID) is the triggering event for the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) review. Madison's Planning and Zoning Commission is set to hold a rezoning hearing for this application on May 15th. The Planning Department has communicated to us that the mitigation portion of the application does not yet exist and will not be drafted until the staff report for the May 15<sup>th</sup> hearing is prepared. Accordingly, one of the most important aspects, the plan for mitigation of effects, is not available to us prior to the deadline to make our comments to you. In the past, we have been told that benefits to the public for rezoning to planned developments have included a berm, and some shrubbery, so we do not know if considerations for impacts other than visual appearance will be available for mitigation for the Distribution Centre.

The DRI application indicates that no historic resources would be affected by the proposed project, in the Environmental Quality section. There is a historic resource, called Hanes Farm which is identified by the City in its Greenprint Addendum and Concept Map as a Historic Landmark. The property is located along the same road as the Madison Farm parcel.

## Impact of Proposal

The Madison Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is a designated Regionally Important Resource. Traffic and economic impact considerations of a project this size are of utmost concern to this historic community. Madison's Comprehensive Plan, which references our Major Thoroughfare Plan (2007), reflects the ongoing issues we have with traffic volumes on the federal and state routes running through the middle of the Madison

Historic District. Many segments of the Main Street corridor are congested already to the point that ancillary side streets are regularly and increasingly being used for cut-through traffic, on historic lanes that are too narrow for this heavy use.

The NEGRC Regional Plan shows the Main Street corridor at Level of Service of E. [https://negrc.org/uploads/sites/4/2019/05/NEGRC-RegionalPlanUpdate\\_s.pdf](https://negrc.org/uploads/sites/4/2019/05/NEGRC-RegionalPlanUpdate_s.pdf), at p. 85. Is there road infrastructure to spare at this point, given that Madison's stated desired Levels of Service are C or better?

In addition to significant safety concerns for residents and tourists of the Historic District (including deaths on downtown cross walks), the roads and intersections within the District cannot handle even greater amounts of added traffic without reducing the aesthetic appeal of our District, which helps generate and support many jobs in the community, revenues for businesses and the City, and property tax savings for Madison and Morgan County citizens. The Historic District's "attraction" component for our area is consistently reflected in realtors' advertising for not only homes in and near the District, but for commercial and industrial projects as well. Extreme traffic backups well may dampen this economic attraction.

The traffic study on file for this distribution center application estimates total daily trips to be 4,269, which includes a 'standard deviation' deduction of 31%. Through our research, we have seen that the number of trips generated out of industrial warehouses vary greatly according to traffic engineers. We have not as yet been able to see our City Engineer's review opinion. We have seen other municipalities, when projects are proposed as speculative, consider the highest, most intensive uses in evaluations while considering zoning decisions. We are very much concerned with all traffic mitigation efforts, especially when considering the height allowance of 50 feet (and beyond the building midpoint up to 75 feet), which easily supports the more intensive uses of high-cube warehouses.

As it stands, this application seeks even wider access to Highway 278 E as it enters the District and connects to Highway 441. This route would only compound our traffic problems.

Our county has been experiencing housing growth for the past several years, and impacts from the mega site to our west at the county line are expected. The Highway 441 route has been designated as a freight route, as an option for truckers and travelers to avoid the crowded roads around Atlanta, and as the four-lane widening process is completed locally, we expect more usage. Freight from the Port of Savannah was reported to have grown by 12.5% in 2024, as our state's efforts to increase capacity continue. All of this traffic already causes daily bottlenecks through the District and downtown.

As we have been unable to see our City Engineer's report or what will be included for mitigation of effects, we are advocating for the PID rezoning to be denied.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,  
Celia Murray, President  
Historic Madison Coalition