



# **DRI REPORT**

## **#4693 – The District**

Prepared for The City of Pooler  
April 30, 2026



Coastal Regional Commission  
[planning@crc.ga.gov](mailto:planning@crc.ga.gov)

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## 1 Applicant Information

### 1.1 Jurisdiction and Local Government Information

Local Government: The City of Pooler  
Contact Person: Nicole Johnson  
Contact: (912)748-7261 | njohnson@pooler-ga.gov  
Developer: Robert Forrest

### 1.2 Project Description

DRI #4636 is a **Mixed-Use Development** consisting of 1,060 multi-family residential units, 440 hotel rooms, 100,000 sq. ft. grocery store, 135,000 sq. ft. anchor commercial, and 12 outparcels for commercial use. The parcel is currently zoned **Planned Unit Development (PUD)**, the applicant indicated that this rezoning took place in 2024, and that the zoning map for The City of Pooler has not been updated to show this change.

### 1.3 Site Information

#### *Site Overview*

The project is located on **Pine Barren Road, Pooler, GA** on parcels [5102301001A](#)

The [attached site plan](#) illustrates the proposed layout of the development.

#### *Character Area/Future Land Use*

According to the Future Land Use Map, the site is within the **Residential and Planned Development** land use areas. According to the [adopted local comprehensive plan](#), Residential areas are characterized by grid street patterns, pedestrian circulation, architectural character, and a sense of community. Planned development land use areas are established to promote projects that integrate different land uses and should aim to provide services equitably throughout the community.

#### *Zoning Classification*

The site is located within the **Planned Unit Development (PUD)** district. The Planned Unit Development (PUD) district encourages flexibility in land planning to improve design, character, and quality of new mixed-use developments. While also promoting the most appropriate use of land, facilitating the provision of streets and utilities, and preserving the natural, scenic, and open space features.

## Consistency and Compatibility Analysis

### 1.4 Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The proposed Mixed-Use Development is compatible with surrounding land uses and is generally consistent with [the adopted Comprehensive Plan](#). The Future Land Use Map designates the area for Residential and Planned Development areas. Currently, the parcel is adjacent to and part of a previous Planned Unit development (PUD).

## 1.5 Consistency with the Regional Plan of Coastal Georgia

Since 1964, the Coastal Regional Commission of Georgia (CRC) has been dedicated to serving the ten counties and thirty-five cities of Coastal Georgia. The CRC region encompasses Georgia's eastern shore, stretching almost 100 miles from the northern tip of Savannah to the southern city of St Marys. The region is home to historic towns, industries, military installations, major ports including the fourth busiest and fastest-growing container terminal in the U.S., and a thriving tourism trade, each driving some part of the region's economic engine. Equally important, one finds abundant wildlife, beautiful beaches, and over 2,300 miles of tributaries and salt marshes.

In 2022, the CRC Council adopted the updated [Coastal Georgia Regional Plan](#) to satisfy planning requirements for regional commissions established under the Georgia Planning Act and the Department of Community Affairs' Regional Planning Requirements. The plan aims to secure a successful future for the region's communities and achieve a common vision through comprehensive planning and collaborative implementation.

The CRC recommends that the applicant and local government review the Coastal Georgia Regional Plan to ensure that the proposed development is consistent with the Implementation Program in relation to:

- Water and Wastewater
- Stormwater
- Transportation
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Natural Resources
- Regional Growth Management
- Economic Development
- Tourism
- Quality of Life
- Coastal Vulnerability
- Governance Regional Land Use Map

### *Regional Land Use*

The Regional Land Use Map analyzes current development patterns in terms of urbanization. Three categories are used to represent these patterns:

- **Rural** areas are not expected to urbanize or require urban services in the next 20 years. These areas are characterized by sparsely developed non-urban areas where the land is primarily used for farming, forestry, and very low density residential or open space uses.
- **Developing** areas are expected to urbanize and require provision of new urban services in the next 20 years. These services will include water and sewer service at a minimum.
- **Developed** areas are currently exhibiting urban type development patterns and currently have access to urban services. These areas typically include higher density residential areas, along with industrial and commercial developments.

The proposed development is located entirely within the **Developing** area.

### ***Area Requiring Special Attention (ARSA)***

The Areas Requiring Special Attention Map was developed by considering the Regional Land Use Map and incorporating local comprehensive plans and the regionally important resources map to evaluate land use trends within the region and identify areas requiring special attention. These areas include:

- **Threatened Regionally Important Resources:** Areas where crucial natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development
- **Rapid Development:** Areas where rapid development or change of land uses are likely to occur, especially where the rate of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation.
- **Redevelopment:** Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness.

The Areas Requiring Special Attention Defining Narrative includes a list of recommended development patterns, types of land uses, and implementation measures.

According to the ARSA Map, the site is located within **Areas of Rapid Development**.

### ***Green Infrastructure***

As part of the Conservation area in the Coastal Land Use Map, Green Infrastructure encompasses features such as wetlands, floodplains, streams, prime agricultural lands, and habitats for endangered species or state-listed species. These areas include vital riparian buffers along water bodies and wetlands. Protecting coastal Georgia's green infrastructure network helps

- Maintain biodiversity and ecosystem health
- Safeguard native species
- Minimize landscape disruption and invasive species spread
- Improve water quality
- Support sustainable land use planning and stormwater management
- Promote transportation connectivity
- Encourage ecotourism and outdoor recreation
- Strengthen the local economy
- Enhance residents' quality of life

According to the Green Infrastructure Map, the site is not located within a green infrastructure area. The property contains **Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands** centrally located within the parcel. The site is not located within a Flood Zone, considered part of the special flood hazard area (SFHA).

## **1.6 Coastal Stormwater Supplement**

The applicant indicated that approximately **70%** of the project site is expected to be covered by impervious surface upon completion. The applicant indicated that the project will utilize

detention ponds/lakes, water quality structures, pervious pavers, and water reuse for irrigation.

## 1.7 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The CRC serves as the designated Economic Development District (EDD) for six coastal and four inland counties, as recognized by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA). In alignment with EDA requirements, the region’s [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\)](#) is updated and submitted every five years.

The 2017-2022 CEDS outlines a collaborative regional planning process that brings together public and private sector partners to create a roadmap for strengthening and sustaining coastal Georgia’s economy. The document includes a detailed analysis of the regional economy and serves as a foundation for establishing goals and objectives, implementing a plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources.

By maintaining an up-to-date CEDS, the region remains eligible for EDA investment assistance, which can support local infrastructure improvements, technology-driven economic initiatives, and responses to sudden and severe economic disruptions.

### *Population and Employment Trends*

	2000	2010	2020	2024	2030
Pooler	6,339	19,140	25,711	28,466	
Chatham	232,048	265,128	295,291	300,879	325,637

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census 2000-2020; U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; and Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget Population Projects, County Population 2024-2060 (<https://opb.georgia.gov/census-data/population-projections>).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the city’s population has increased from 6,339 in 2000 to 25,711 in 2020, representing an 75% increase. Population in the county is projected to reach 325,637 by 2030 according to the Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget. Regionally, the coastal Georgia area is expected to see a substantial growth as well, with the population rising from 558,350 in 2000 to a projected 842,715 in 2030.

Employment across the region is also expected to increase significantly. According to the Georgia Coast 2030: Population Projections for the 10-county Coastal Region published by the Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development at the Georgia Institute of Technology, the coastal Georgia region supported approximately 312,400 jobs in 2000. By 2030, that figure is expected to reach 435,050 jobs, reflecting an economic expansion of 39%. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, unemployment rate in Chatham County was 3.1 in January 2026, which is less than the unemployment rate of 3.6 in Georgia.

## 1.8 Economic Impact

The proposed development has an estimated build-out value of **\$650,000,000**. Upon completion, the proposed development is expected to generate an estimated **\$25,000,000** in annual local tax revenue. According to the applicant, the estimated number of full-time employees to be generated will be 4,000. Furthermore, the applicant indicated that the existing regional workforce is sufficient to meet the labor demands of the project, and the development is not anticipated to displace any existing uses or employees.

## 1.9 Transportation Impact

**A traffic study has been conducted for the proposed development.** The applicant stated that the traffic volume expected to be generated by the proposed development will be approximately 2,848 vehicle trips for the AM peak hour and 3,248 vehicle trips for the PM peak hour. The applicant has stated that intersection improvements and/or new access points totaling 10 access points will be created and/or improved per the recommendations of the traffic study.

## 2 CRC Resources

### 2.1 Regional Commission Recommendations and Environmental Considerations

The following comments from the CRC are recommendations. The CRC is not the approving body for new developments in The City of Darien, that authority rests with locally elected representatives. The CRC is tasked with providing public notice, an opportunity for public comment, and recommendations based on existing comprehensive plans and best planning practices.

Water conservation is a key planning priority in coastal Georgia, particularly in support of long-term resource stewardship. The CRC strongly encourages the use of native or drought-tolerant landscaping and recommends the applicant to review the [Coastal Georgia Regional Water Plan](#) to ensure that the best practices for water efficiency, and stormwater management are incorporated into site design.

The CRC strongly advises the applicant to evaluate the potential impacts on the overall drainage system and flood risks associated with the proposed development, taking into account FEMA flood zone designation.

The CRC has reviewed the comments submitted by The City of Savannah, The Ogeechee River Keepers, and the City of Pooler residents regarding traffic improvements, traffic volume, traffic safety, water supply, flooding, wetlands, wildlife, noise, density and size, and the long-term impacts for the city and residents. We encourage the applicant to carefully review and consider these concerns.

### 2.2 Public Comments

Public comments were received on or by April 29, 2026, and are included as [Attachment F](#).

**Attachment A**  
**Site Concept Plan**



SITE  
solutions

02.20.2026

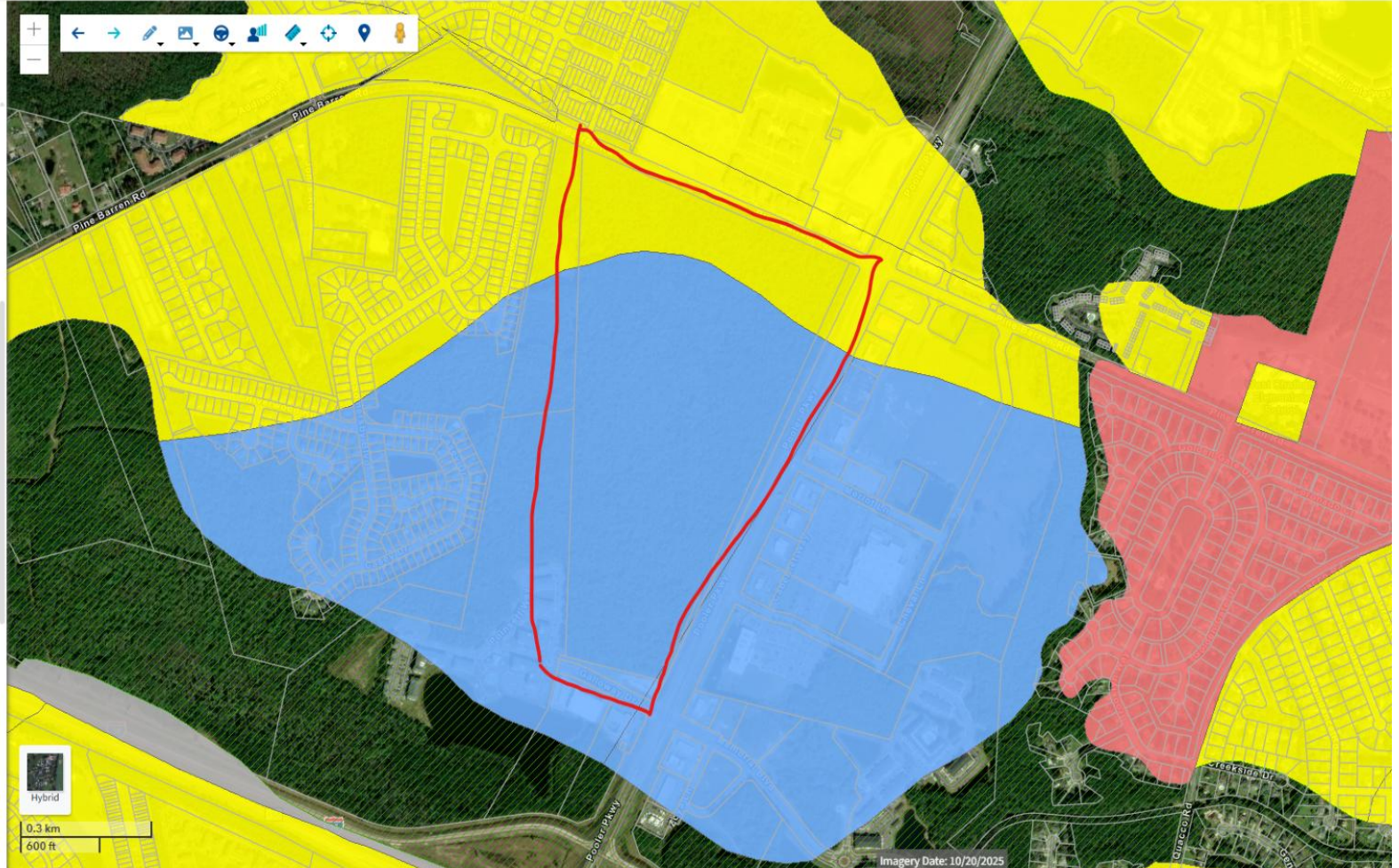
Master Plan

The District At Pooler

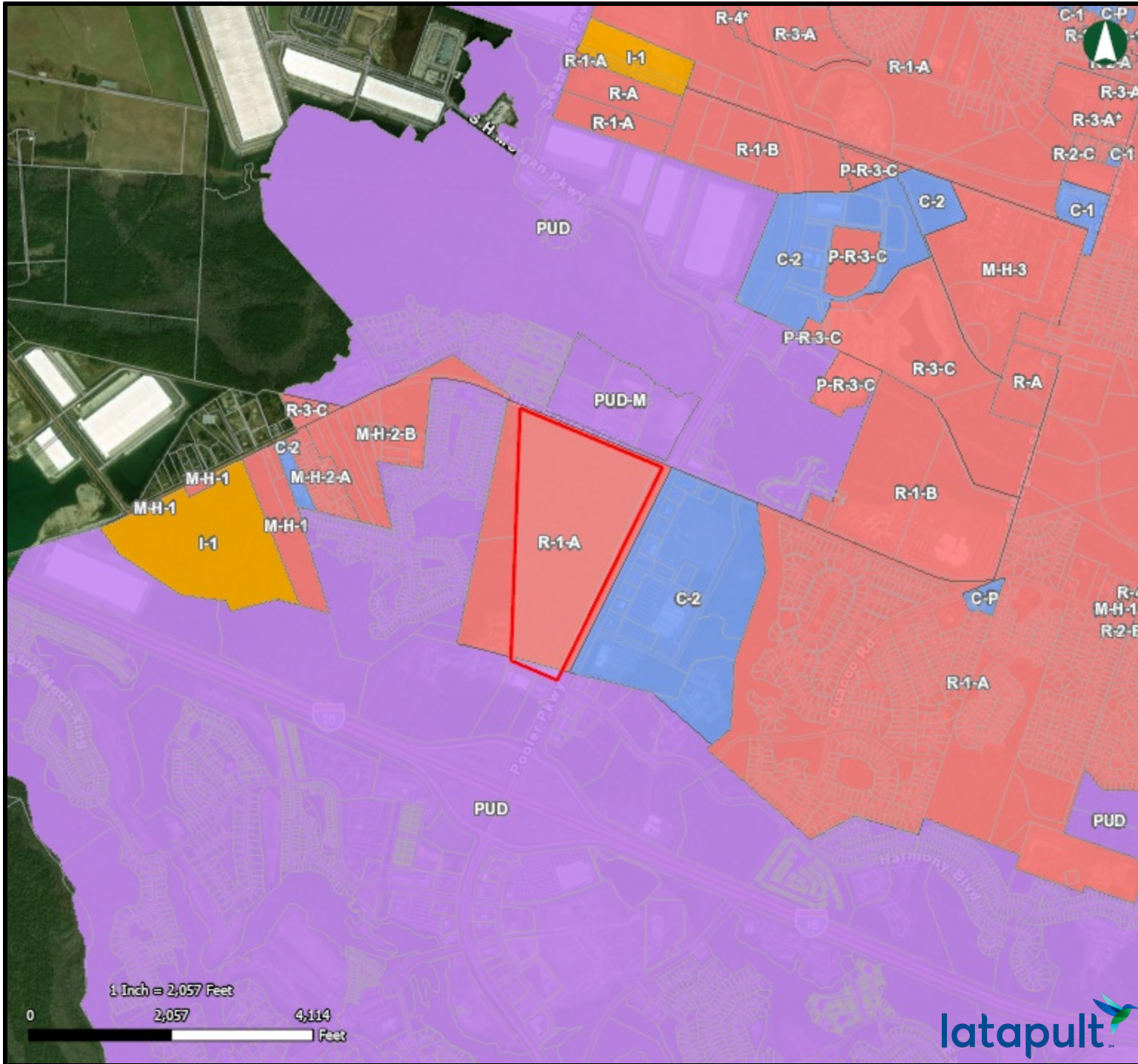
**Attachment B**  
**Future Land Use Map**



- Single Family Residential (SFR)
- Residential - Townhomes
- Multifamily Residential (MFR)
- Heavy Commercial
- Heavy Commercial/Commercial Professional/Heavy Industrial (HC/CP/HI)
- Amenity Site
- Medical Campus
- Open Space/Easement/Wetland
- Pooler Character Areas
  - Commercial
  - Historic District
  - Industrial
  - PUD/Mixed-Use
  - Residential
  - Residential Agricultural
  - Residential Homestead
  - Shopping & Dining
  - Traditional Neighborhood
- Pooler Future Land Use (current)
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Parks/Recreation/Conservation
  - Wetlands
  - Public
  - Planned Development
  - Residential
  - Transportation Corridor
  - Undeveloped
- Zoning - Parcels
  - Business/Commercial
  - Industrial
  - PUD
  - Residential



**Attachment C**  
**Zoning Districts Map**



**CITY OF POOLER**  
 GEORGIA  
*A great place to Live, Work and Play*

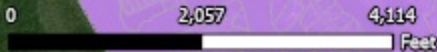
## Zoning Map - Jabot PUD Amendment 19 - PUD Amendment

11/24/2025

- Parcels
- Business/Commercial
- Industrial
- PUD
- Residential

The site was rezoned into the Jabot PUD in 2024. The map has not been updated to reflect that zoning change.

1 Inch = 2,057 Feet

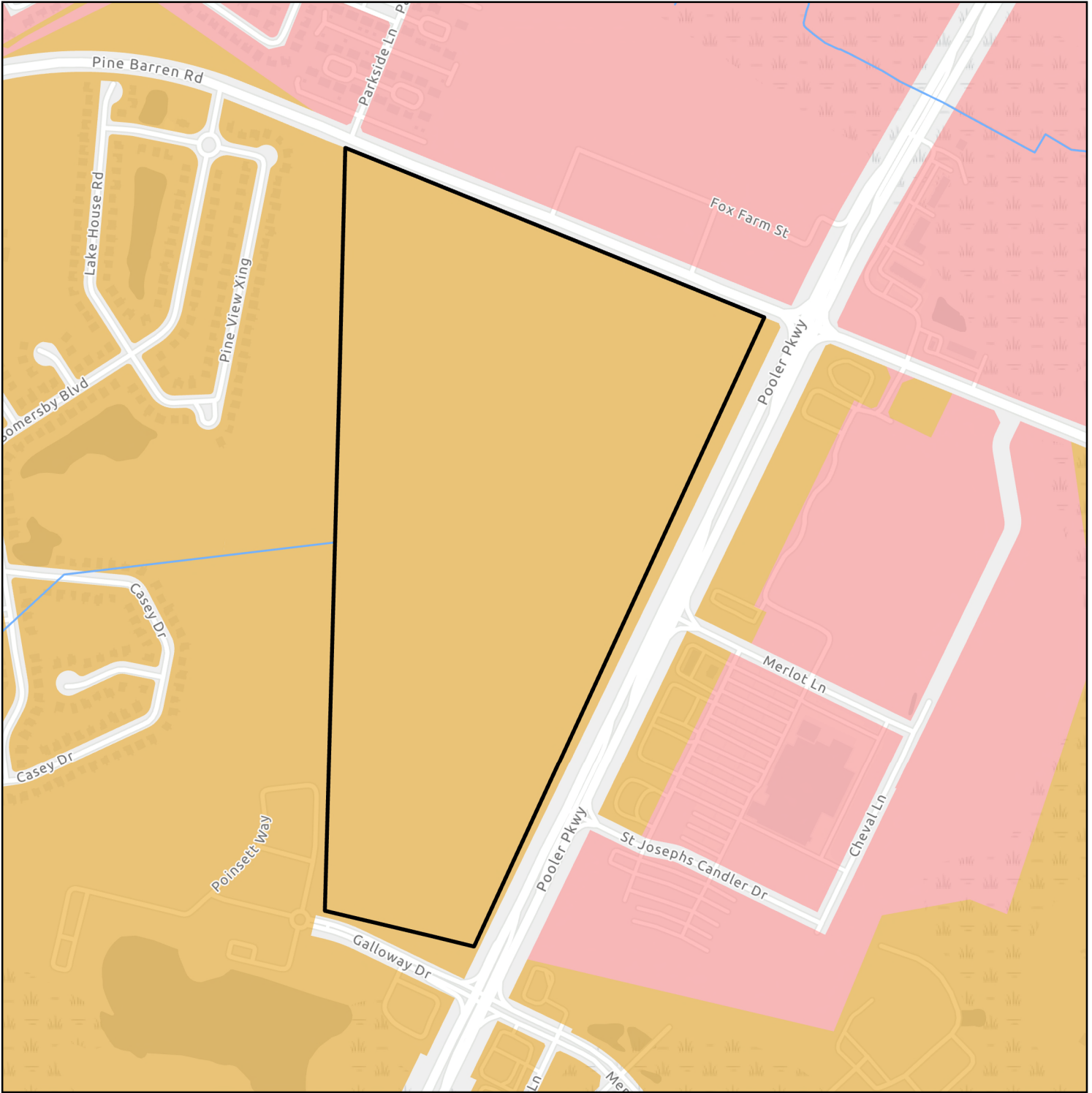


**Attachment D**  
**Regional Impact Maps**

# DRI #4693 - The District

## Jurisdiction: Pooler

### Future Development



— Rivers

#### Future Development

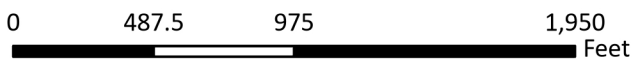
■ Developed

■ Developing

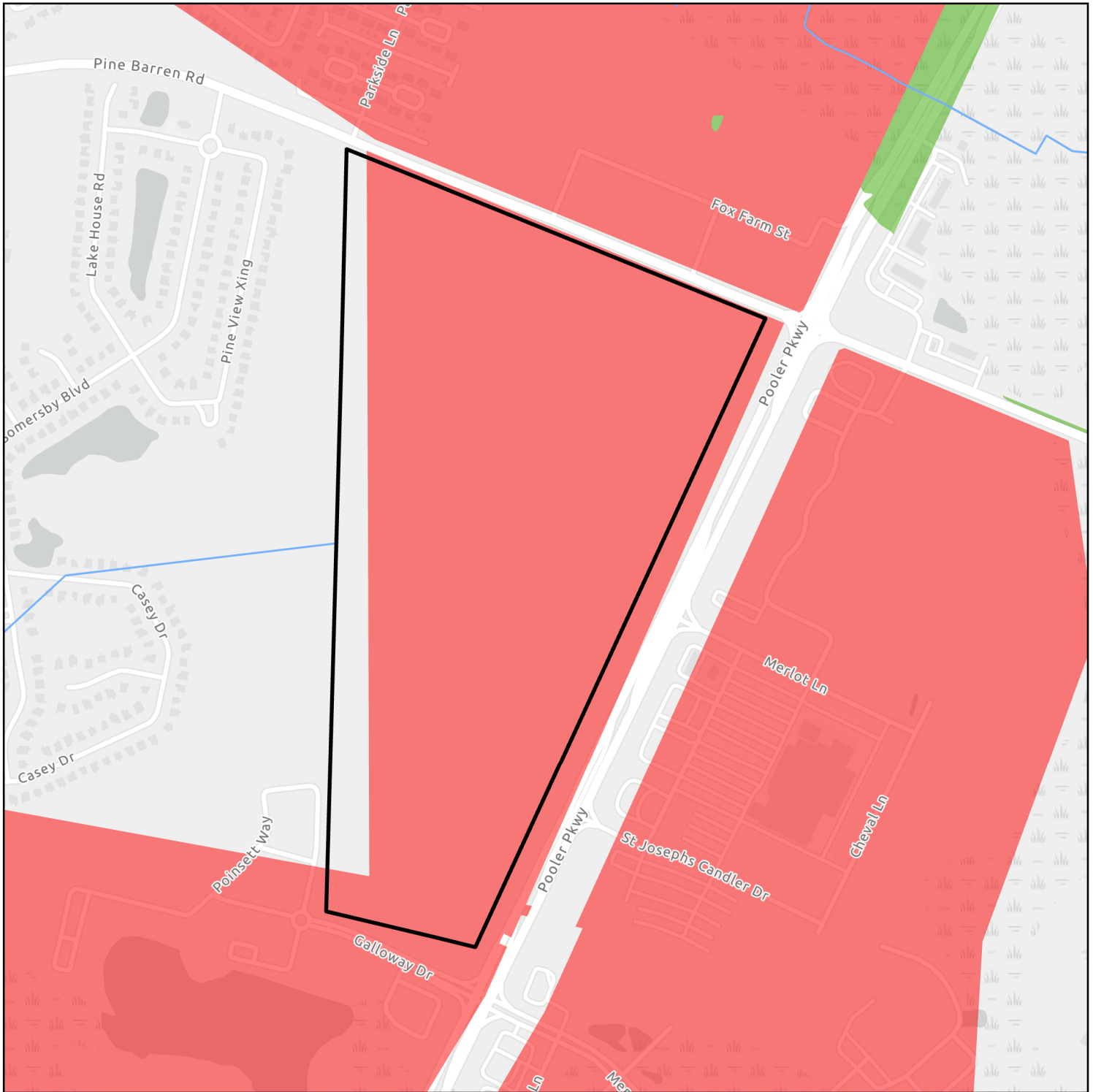
Map Coordinates:

81.27627°W 32.09421°N

Date Exported: 4/15/2026



**DRI #4693 - The District**  
**Jurisdiction: Pooler**  
**Areas Requiring Special Attention**



— Rivers

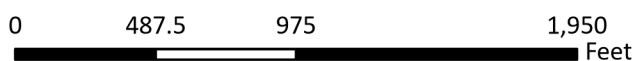
**Areas Requiring Special Attention**

- Areas of Rapid Development
- Areas of Significant Natural Resources

Map Coordinates:

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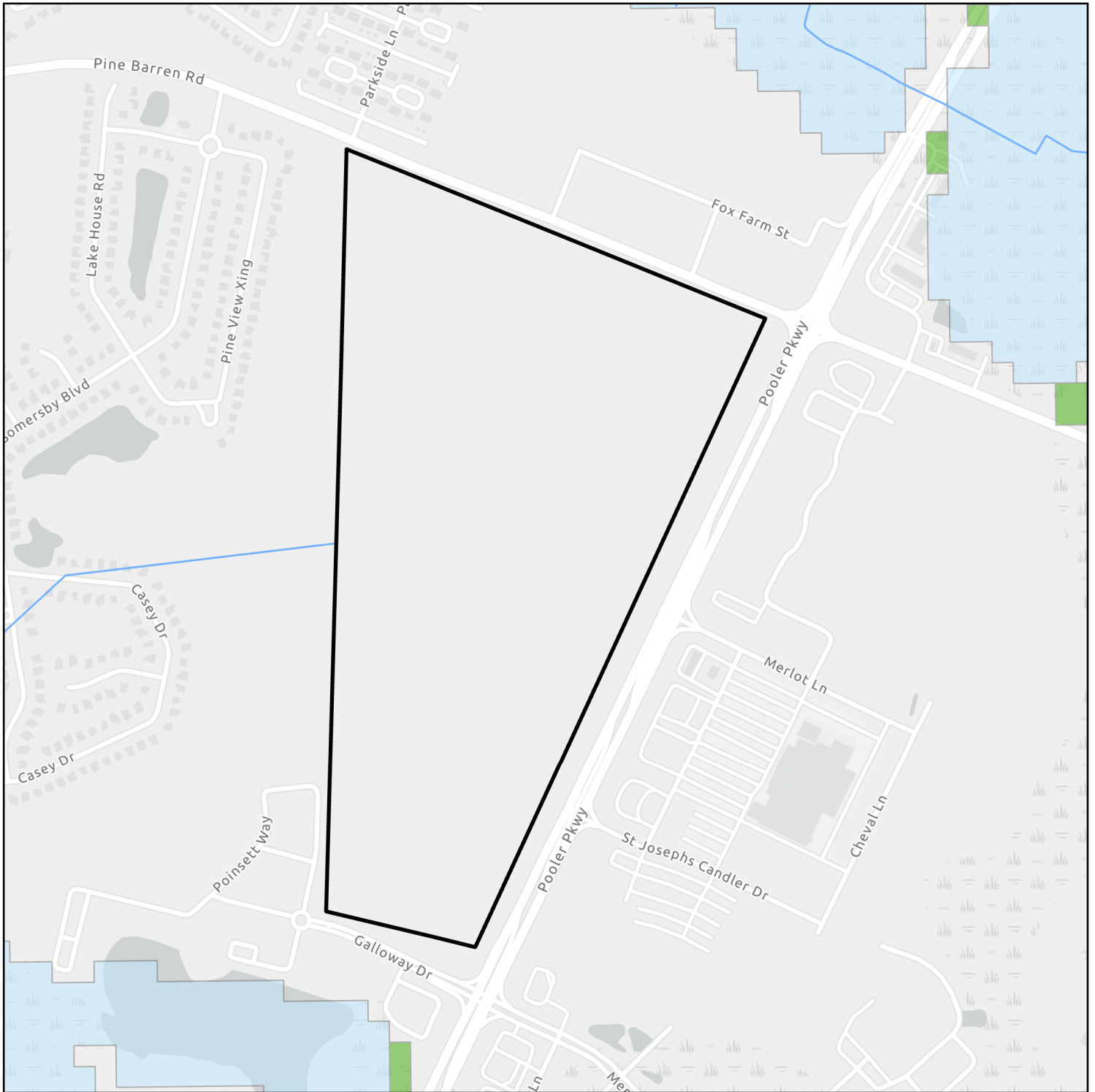
Date Exported: 4/15/2026



# DRI #4693 - The District

## Jurisdiction: Pooler

### Green Infrastructure



— Rivers

#### Green Infrastructure Class

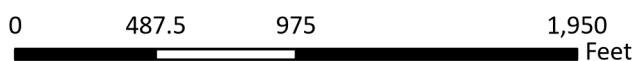
Core

Corridor

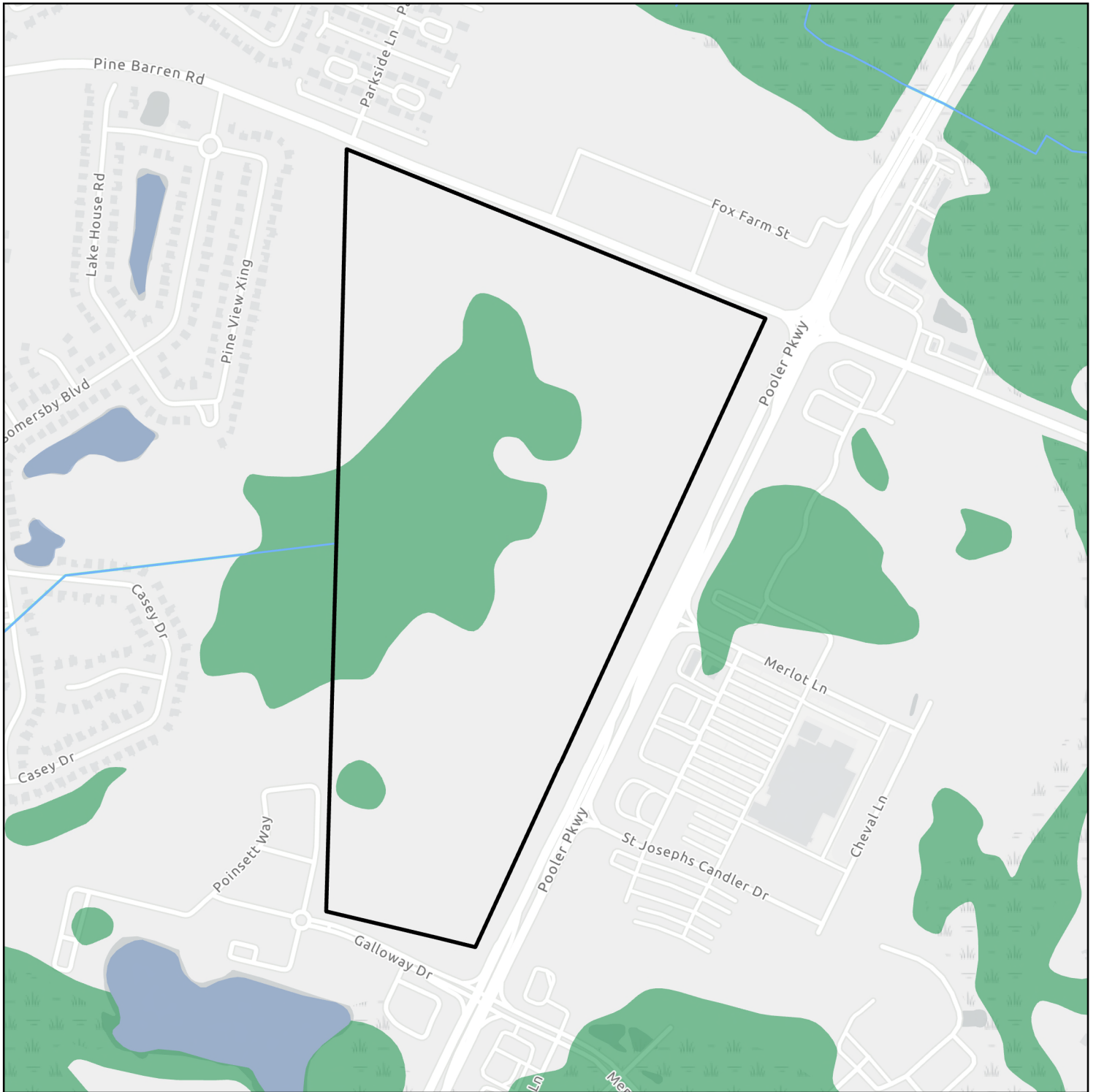
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Date Exported: 4/15/2026



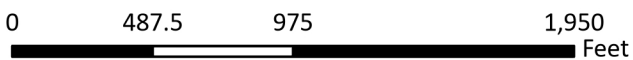
**DRI #4693 - The District**  
**Jurisdiction: Pooler**  
**Wetlands**



- Rivers
- Wetlands Type**
  - Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
  - Freshwater Pond
  - Riverine

Map Coordinates:  
 81.27627°W 32.09421°N

Date Exported: 4/15/2026



**DRI #4693 - The District**  
**Jurisdiction: Pooler**  
**Flood Zones**



— Rivers

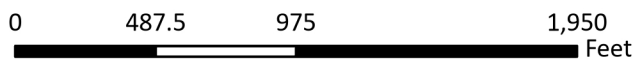
**Flood Zone**

■ AE

Map Coordinates:

81.27627°W 32.09421°N

Date Exported: 4/15/2026



**Attachment E**  
**Property Record Card**

# Chatham County, GA

## Summary

**Parcel Number** 51023 01001A  
**Location Address** PINE BARREN RD  
POOLER GA 31322  
**Legal Description** PT OF THE BAKER TCT  
**Property Class** RES - Residential  
**Neighborhood** 23080.25 - W080.25 W. SIDE (POOLER) 20 + AC  
**Tax District** (050) POOLER  
**Zoning** R-1-A  
**Acres** 106.74  
**Homestead Exemption** No

[Click Here to Open Cyclomedia Viewer in a New Tab](#)

[View Map](#)

## Owner

[POOLER FORREST PLACES LLC](#)  
6075 BARFIELD RD  
SANDY SPRINGS GA 30328

## Assessment

	2025 Certified	2024 Certified	2023 Certified	2022 Certified	2021 Certified
LUC	RES	RES	RES	RES	RES
Class	R5	R5	R5	R5	R5
+ Land Value	\$1,604,300	\$1,604,300	\$1,604,300	\$1,604,300	\$1,604,300
+ Building Value	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
= Total Value	\$1,604,300	\$1,604,300	\$1,604,300	\$1,604,300	\$1,604,300
Assessed Value	\$641,720	\$641,720	\$641,720	\$641,720	\$641,720

## Valuation Notice

[2025 Assessment Notice \(PDF\)](#)

## Land

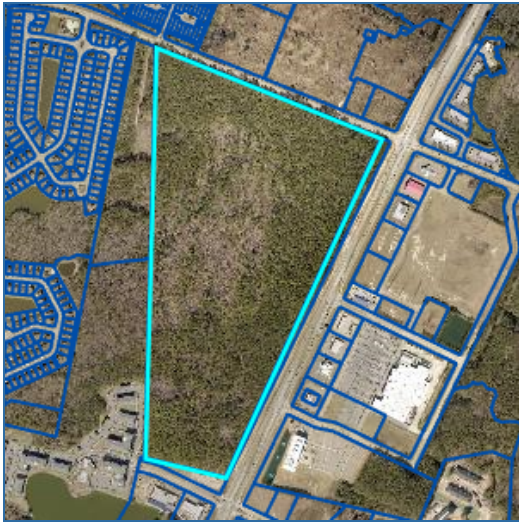
Description	Land Type	Land Code	Square Feet	Acres	Front Foot
RESIDENTIAL V L	A	91	2,589,206	59.4400	0
OBSERVED WETLANDS	A	16O	2,060,388	47.3000	0

Total Acres:  
106.7400

## Sales

Sale Date	Sale Price	Instrument	Deed Book / Deed Page	Sale Qual
4/18/2024	\$0.00	QC	3361 / 0685	Unqualified
4/18/2024	\$11,400,000.00	LD	3361 / 0681	Unqualified
3/1/1981	\$166,500.00		/	Unqualified

## Map



**No data available for the following modules:** Comp Search (Residential), Comp Search (Comm), Comp Search (Commercial), Photos, Residential Improvement Information, Additions, Commercial Improvement Information, Interior/Exterior Information, Accessory Information, Other Features, Sketches, Permits.

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[Last Data Upload: 4/15/2026, 5:41:43 AM](#)

[Contact Us](#)

**Attachment F**  
**Public Comments**

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**City of Savannah Responses DRI 4693 - Pine Barren Road, Pooler, GA**

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**From** Cornelia Reed <CReed@Savannahga.Gov>

**Date** Wed 4/29/2026 12:36 PM

**To** Planning <planning@crc.ga.gov>

**Cc** Kenneth Cullens Jr <Kenneth.CullensJr@savannahga.gov>; Shawn Rosenquist <Shawn.Rosenquist@Savannahga.Gov>; Ronald Feldner <Ronald.Feldner@Savannahga.Gov>; James Laplander <JLaplander@Savannahga.Gov>; Stephen Henry <SHenry@Savannahga.Gov>; Cornelia Reed <CReed@Savannahga.Gov>; Bridget Lidy <blidy@Savannahga.Gov>; Edward Morrow <Edward.Morrow@Savannahga.Gov>



The City of Savannah has the following responses for the proposed development: DRI 4693 – Pine Barren Road, Pooler, GA

**Water Resources Planning & Engineering:** We anticipate that potable water supply from the City of Savannah to the City of Pooler may be required to meet the estimated water demand for this development. It is possible for the City of Savannah to supply the estimated water volume pending completion of appropriate infrastructure improvements, delivery schedules, and water supply agreement modifications between the City of Pooler and City of Savannah.

Shawn Rosenquist, Ph.D., P.E.  
Assistant Director  
Water Resources Planning and Engineering  
[Shawn.Rosenquist@Savannahga.gov](mailto:Shawn.Rosenquist@Savannahga.gov)  
O: 912.651.6573 ext. 2511; M: 912.657.6975

**Traffic Engineering:** Recommend the City of Pooler to evaluate elimination or modification of one of the signalized intersections along Pooler Parkway to mitigate potential failing levels of service during AM and PM peak hours. The PUD should also be evaluated for traffic calming to prevent cut through traffic from Pine Barren to Pooler Parkway during AM and PM peak hours.

Kenneth B. Cullens Jr.  
Civil Engineer  
Traffic Engineering  
Phone: (912) 525-3100 Ext. 6461  
Fax: (912) 525-1535  
[kenneth.cullensjr@savannahga.gov](mailto:kenneth.cullensjr@savannahga.gov)

Thank you.

With best regard

Cornelia M. Reed, M.A.

Program Coordinator

[creed@savannahga.gov](mailto:creed@savannahga.gov)

Office: 912.525-3100, ext. 1161

Department: 912-525-2783 (Option 2)





PO Box 16206  
Savannah, GA 31416  
Phone/Fax: 866-942-6222

[www.ogeecheeriverkeeper.org](http://www.ogeecheeriverkeeper.org)  
*Working Together to Protect the Ogeechee, Canoochee and Coastal Rivers*

April 29, 2026

**Via E-Mail**

Coastal Regional Commission  
[planning@crc.ga.gov](mailto:planning@crc.ga.gov)

**Re: Comments on DRI #46393 - The District (Pooler)**

Coastal Regional Commission and the City of Pooler:

Ogeechee Riverkeeper 501(c)(3) (ORK) works to protect, preserve, and improve the water quality of the Ogeechee River basin, which includes the Canoochee River, tributary streams, and all of the streams flowing out to Ossabaw Sound and St. Catherine's Sound. The Ogeechee River system drains more than 5,500 square miles across 20 counties in Georgia. ORK works with local communities to retain the ecological and cultural integrity of rivers, streams, wetlands, and related habitats throughout the Basin. One of ORK's primary roles is as watchdog on new land development projects in the watershed that could pose a threat to its water quality and aquatic environments.

ORK's comments on The District development fall into two main categories. First, we are unclear about the process of this development and DRI, including what action is under review and the current stage of development. Second, we have concerns about stormwater and flooding, wetland filling, and wastewater management on the development site, but cannot provide specific or detailed comments and feedback with the publicly shared information.

Additionally, ORK wishes to share our general concern with the number of DRIs that have been announced in quick succession and alert the City of Pooler and the Coastal Region Commission (CRC) of the difficulty that creates in collecting thoughtful and constructive public feedback. In the future, ORK requests that DRIs be submitted and shared publicly as they are applied-for, not all at once as we have here. ORK encourages deadline extensions and leniency where warranted for comment collection, and urges a careful, methodical, and publicly inclusive in the decision-making process.

1. Clarity needed in the DRI and City decision process

This DRI application is not clear on the basic purpose or actions being considered. Without clarity on what is being proposed, it is difficult for the public to meaningfully participate in this review process. In the future, ORK urges

the applicant and DRI submission to better communicate the details, purpose, status, and design of the project so that the community members who will be most impacted are provided detailed information and can share constructive feedback. Should it become clear that the public was confused, misunderstood, or was otherwise prevented from providing meaningful comments, ORK urges the CRC to require this DRI to be resubmitted and open a second public comment period.

The action under review in this DRI is not made clear. Nowhere in the documents provided is it clearly stated what action is under review. While the Initial DRI Information form<sup>1</sup> notes that the action sought is a “Rezoning,” the DRI Public Notice email appears to state that a rezoning already occurred. Is a rezoning taking place here? What is the current zoning of the property - R1A or PUD? What zoning is ultimately planned for the proposed development, something different than R1A or PUD? Further, if a rezoning is not occurring, what action is being reviewed in this DRI? The Initial DRI Information form does not indicate that any other action is being taken or under consideration. ORK requests clarification on this question.

The stage of development is also unclear for this project. Some aspects, including water and sewer connection as well as the traffic study appear to be complete. Other aspects do not appear complete. Specifically, the Master Plan/Development Site Plan/Concept Plan is lacking significant and usable information, even for an initial proposal. Will a more detailed Master Plan be shared before construction begins?

In sum, ORK asks:

- The action(s) under consideration to be clearly stated,
- The ultimate zoning planned for this development to be clearly stated,
- For clarity as to this project’s current state of development,
- For a Master Plan/Development Site Plan/Concept Plan that provides usable information to allow the public to provide meaningful feedback, and
- For a resubmission of the DRI, if it is apparent that the public was sufficiently confused by the information in this DRI.

2. Stormwater management should build in long-term resilience, including wetland preservation

Stormwater management is important for any development in Chatham County. As storms will intensify and occur more frequently in the coming years and decades, stormwater management will only become more important. As such, preservation of natural stormwater management, reduction to artificial and constructed stormwater intensifiers, and building in long-term resilience should be conditions that the City of Pooler imposes on the applicant and developers .

Stormwater management planning as reflected in the DRI notice and associated materials are inadequate. Only a passing reference to that “applicant indicat[ing]” that the development will utilize “Detention ponds/lakes, water

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Community Affairs (DCA). “DRI #4693 DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT Initial DRI Information.” Available at: <https://apps.dca.ga.gov/DRI/InitialForm.aspx?driid=4693>

quality structures, pervious pavers, water reuse for irrigation” is included in the DRI materials.<sup>2</sup> This is insufficient - now is the time to consider flooding and how stormwaters will be managed on the property. Not centering these fundamental considerations now threatens to make them afterthoughts. Proactive planning and concrete proposals should be discussed before any approvals occur.

**Wetlands - natural and no-cost stormwater management** - should be preserved throughout the property. These quickly-dwindling resources not only reduce stormwater flows, they retain important volumes of stormwater, filter pollutants, and provide natural habitats for the region’s fish and wildlife. All of these ecosystem services are invaluable and are freely available - so long as the City of Pooler and other governmental bodies and regulators do not allow developers to fill the wetlands and build atop them. When wetlands are filled, these services are lost and either have to be replaced with expensive and less effective artificial options or are not replaced and harm our shared places and natural resources. **Wetlands provide these ecosystem services regardless of the Army Corps’ jurisdictional determination.** As such wetlands preservation should be the first step in stormwater management.

Further, the City of Pooler should seek clarification from the applicant on the question of wetlands impact by requiring the applicants to develop a separate wetlands plan. Failing to delineate and enumerate the wetlands present on the site obscures the actual impact that this development will have on the property’s existing aquatic features. Failure to include wetland location on the Master Plan shows the applicant’s lack of sufficient consideration of these wetlands in their planning. To address this apparent oversight, ORK asks the City of Pooler to require the applicant to create a wetlands plan that, at minimum, (1) clearly delineates all of the wetlands present on the property, overlays their location on the Master Plan and any subsequent plans, and enumerates the acreage proposed to be filled and preserved, (2) prioritizes and details how the development preserves the wetlands present on the site, (3) adjusts the Master Plan and site layout to avoid wetland fill wherever possible, (4) provides a justification for why wetlands must be filled, and (5) mitigates any lost wetlands and their ecosystem functions with on-site mitigation or restoration efforts as close to the site as possible to reduce localized impacts.

Impervious surface coverage reduction should be the second step in reducing stormwater management pressure. Based on the applicant’s estimate of 70% impervious surface coverage of the approximately 106.74-acre site, this proposal will create approximately **74.5 acres of new impervious surface**. These hard surfaces, like concrete and asphalt, prevent stormwater from infiltrating into the ground, where they can be absorbed and reduce stormwater volumes. Impervious surfaces also speed up stormwaters, adding to management pressure. Finally, impervious surfaces hold pollutants and allow them to be washed into nearby waterways if not properly captured or treated. To reduce these issues, a significant reduction in impervious surfaces should be prioritized.

Following wetland preservation and impervious surface reductions, the developers should be required to build resilient and long-term stormwater retention/detention structures. The City of Pooler should be specific in its requirements, rather than relying on non-specific, passing references of potential management options. To better prepare for intensifying and more frequent storming and flooding, stormwater and flood damage prevention designs should go beyond the required minimums. First, the development should be conditioned on **reducing post-construction runoff**, rather than just ensuring no additional runoff compared to pre-construction amounts. This

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<sup>2</sup> DCA. “DRI #4693 DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT DRI Information Form Part 2” Available at: <https://apps.dca.ga.gov/DRI/AdditionalForm.aspx?driid=4693>

will help to offset stormwater pressure from stronger storms. Second, **increasing stormwater retention/detention ponds capacity** should be increased. As one of the main mechanisms to control post-construction runoff, these ponds capacities are important. In anticipation of increasing storm strength, requiring these ponds to be able to retain and assimilate 125% of the 100-year storm or 100% of the 500-year storm.

Additionally, the City of Pooler should require more specificity from the applicants for its stormwater plans. The DRI information notes that, in addition to stormwater ponds, the project will use “water quality structures, pervious pavers, water reuse for irrigation.” First, the City of Pooler should require the applicant to precisely explain what these are. For example, a “water quality structure” could be anything from a mesh filter on a stormwater drain to a water treatment facility. The imprecise language prevents any meaningful feedback from the public and should not reassure the City of Pooler’s staff and decisionmakers. Second, the applicant should share specific plans with the public about how these will be used. What percentage of the property will “pervious pavers” be used on? Will they only occur in specific locations or in specific contexts? And what are the devices, mechanisms, and equipment needed for the development to use stormwater in “water reuse for irrigation.” Without more details or with specific conditions on the development, these imprecise stormwater management options should do very little to reassure the City that stormwater will be successfully managed. But, through implementing these suggested stormwater-related requirements, the City of Pooler will be able to better ensure that this site remains resilient to both present and future flood pressures from stormwater.

Finally, **wastewater management** plans should be specified in detail prior to any approvals being granted by the City. The DRI information does not provide the whole picture of wastewater management. While the City of Pooler will be the wastewater management provider and states that it will have sufficient capacity, the DRI information also states that no sewer line extension is necessary. Is there already sewer interconnection on site? If not, will the site be using a septic system to treat and process the 430,000 gallons per day of wastewater? ORK strongly urges against the use of septic systems, especially at that volume.

In addition, the DRI Information Form Part 2 confusingly states that “Irrigation will be supplemented from detention/lakes to be created on site” within the wastewater section. This seems to imply that wastewater generated on site will remain on site and be used for irrigation. Without more information, this is concerning. Will the applicant have treatment facilities on site to treat the wastewater to a usable standard? If not, what are the public health concerns and precautions that will be used. How does this plan differ from or interact with the plans to reuse stormwater for irrigation. ORK strongly urges the City of Pooler to clarify these plans before any approval.

In summary:

- Stormwater management considerations must be central to any decision on annexation, rezoning, and permitting undertaken by the City of Pooler,
- The current discussion of stormwater management, as reflected in the DRI notice and attachment materials, is inadequate,
- Wetland preservation should be prioritized for the broad-ranging and free environmental services it provides, and their presence on the site should be fully detailed in Wetlands Plan,
- A reduction to the 74+ acres of new impervious surface coverage should occur,

- Stormwater retention and detention features should be built above minimum standards to add long-term resiliency in light of anticipated increased storm frequency and intensity,
- The other planned stormwater management features should be clarified, and the plans for the implementation should be fully detailed,
- Wastewater management should be clarified, and should avoid the use of septic systems, and
- The applicant should describe in full detail how it plans to use wastewater in on-site irrigation.

3. Need for time, flexibility, and genuine public involvement in DRI decision-making process

In light of the recent glut of DRIs for the City of Pooler, ORK strongly urges caution, patience, and additional public outreach in the coming weeks and months. As such, ORK calls for flexible deadlines on comments, spaced-out and slow-paced decision-making on these projects, and a strong effort from the City of Pooler to educate, inform, and allow for robust public discussion of each of these projects before a final decision is made, above and beyond the usual review process.

Currently, there are four<sup>3</sup> separate Developments of Regional Impact under consideration just within the City of Pooler's jurisdiction. Any single one of these developments could have serious, significant, and permanent impacts on neighboring and nearby property owners. Each project requires significant time to meaningfully read, review, understand, and provide considered and constructive feedback on. For working residents, the time needed to review just one project could be prohibitively long. Stacking multiple of these regionally-impactful developments could make meaningful public engagement and feedback nearly impossible. The purpose of the DRI process is to help stakeholders, residents, and governments gain an understanding of the project impacts on a local as well as a regional level before a decision is made. Rushing these important steps or providing incomplete/unclear information in an application weakens the effectiveness of the DRI process.

Spreading out the voting timeline on these DRI projects is one way to lessen the burden on the public. By limiting each City Council meeting to the review and approval of a single DRI project, the public will be able to meaningfully review and provide feedback on these projects. To do otherwise risks excluding residents' feedback with no clear benefit.

In general, ORK urges the CRC and City of Pooler to approach these upcoming projects slowly and ensure public input can be meaningfully included.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration; please let me know if you have any questions or would like to talk further on these topics: [ben@ogeecheeriverkeeper.org](mailto:ben@ogeecheeriverkeeper.org).

Ben Kirsch, Legal Director  
Ogeechee Riverkeeper

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<sup>3</sup> (1) DRI #4693 - The District, (2) DRI #4697 - Oglethorpe Speedway - Stone Property Warehouses, (3) DRI #4698 - Hicks Tract - Suncap Warehouse, and (4) DRI #4701- QuickTrip Gas Station & Convenience Store.

**RE: DRI #4693 - The District**

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**From** Arlene Hobbs <Clerk@pembrokega.net>

**Date** Tue 4/21/2026 4:37 PM

**To** Planning <planning@crc.ga.gov>

You don't often get email from clerk@pembrokega.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

This development way too large for an already congested area. There is not proper infrastructure in place to support it.

Regards,

*Arlene Hobbs*

City Clerk

City of Pembroke

912-653-4413 office

912-653-4424 fax

PO Box 130, 353 N Main St

Pembroke, GA 31321

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**From:** Coastal Regional Commission <planning@crc.ga.gov>

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2026 2:10 PM

**To:** Arlene Hobbs <Clerk@pembrokega.net>

**Subject:** DRI #4693 - The District

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**Public Comment on DRI #4693: The District**

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From Jenny Watkins <jenny@ta-tria.com>

Date Mon 4/27/2026 1:09 PM

To Planning <planning@crc.ga.gov>

My name is Jenny Watkins, and I am a resident of Pooler, GA. I am submitting this comment regarding the proposed multi-use project called “The District” at Pooler Parkway and Pine Barren Rd (DRI #4693).

**I oppose this project for the following reasons:**

**This project will compound traffic and flooding problems in the area.**

The project is proposed in an area that is already heavily congested with traffic and prone to flooding.

I live approximately two miles from the proposed site. Since moving to my home in 2019, development in the area has been relentless, and flooding and traffic problems have compounded. This project would dramatically exacerbate these conditions, negatively impacting property values and quality of life for residents in the area.

The Pooler Planning and Zoning Department has recommended denying the petitioner’s request to rezone the property due to concerns about traffic and inadequate infrastructure.

**Environmental impact studies have not been addressed, and the required documentation is incomplete.**

The proposed project impacts a wetland area, and the proper studies on impacts to protected flora and fauna do not appear to have been conducted. In addition, the applicant’s DRI form appears to have been submitted incorrectly, using the information for a different proposed project.

I urge you to adhere to the CRC’s purpose of enhancing the quality of life for all people in the Coastal Region, uphold your duty to protect the sustainability of the region, and prevent this irresponsible project from moving forward.

Sincerely,

Jenny Watkins

[jenny@ta-tria.com](mailto:jenny@ta-tria.com)

**DR 4693**

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**From** John Woods <johnwwiii@yahoo.com>

**Date** Mon 4/27/2026 4:27 PM

**To** Planning <planning@crc.ga.gov>

This is the first time you received an email from this sender (johnwwiii@yahoo.com). Exercise caution when clicking links, opening attachments or taking further action, before validating its authenticity.

This DRI should be approved. Pooler is in desperate need of more housing. The median rent in Pooler is about the same as midtown Atlanta and people around here don't make midtown Atlanta money.

I understand some folks will be upset about the traffic but the tax revenue should be allocated to improving infrastructure.

Some folks will be upset about the aesthetics and they prefer to see trees. But that is small in comparison to the issues poor folks face.

Somewhere there is a single mom working three jobs trying to make rent. If we don't build more housing rent prices will keep rising and eventually she and others like her will be forced into homelessness.

Thanks,  
John

Sent from my iPhone

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## Disapproval of DRI #4693

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**From** michael bartusch <michaelbartusch@gmail.com>

**Date** Tue 4/28/2026 4:20 PM

**To** Planning <planning@crc.ga.gov>

This is the first time you received an email from this sender (michaelbartusch@gmail.com). Exercise caution when clicking links, opening attachments or taking further action, before validating its authenticity.

You don't often get email from michaelbartusch@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Michael Bartusch, and I have been a resident of Pooler for ten years. I am writing to formally express my deep concern regarding the pace of over-development in our community.

During my time here, I have seen Pooler transform from a small, friendly town into an increasingly congested area. The proliferation of massive warehouses and large apartment complexes has placed an unsustainable strain on our local infrastructure.

Specifically, I believe "The District" will place an undue burden on our community. Pooler does not currently have the capacity to support an additional 1,000+ apartments, 440 hotel rooms, and a 100,000 sq. ft. grocery store without significantly impacting our quality of life.

I have attended several City Council, Planning and Zoning, and community meetings regarding this project. At each session, the developer has threatened to build car lots, car washes, and more chain restaurants if this specific project is not approved.

I urge you to carefully consider the long-term impact of these large-scale projects on our community's character and resources. Please prioritize sustainable growth that respects the needs of current residents.

Thank you for your time and your service to our city.

Sincerely,

Michael Bartusch

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## Pooler development concerns

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From Susan Aberson <grits\_100@hotmail.com>

Date Wed 4/29/2026 10:02 AM

To Planning <planning@crc.ga.gov>

Caution: The sender name (Susan Aberson) is different from their email address (grits\_100@hotmail.com), which may indicate an impersonation attempt. Verify the email's authenticity with the sender using your organization's trusted contact list before replying or taking further action.

You don't often get email from grits\_100@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am contacting you with my concerns related to proposed development in Pooler, specifically the one on Pine Barren/Pooler Parkway.

### The District DRI #4693

From what I have been told, "The District" development is going to happen. It is my understanding that the current item up for City Council vote has to do with rezoning/changing an area in order to put in a 1000+ unit apartment complex. Here are my concerns regarding this proposal.

### **Traffic:**

The volume of traffic currently on Pooler Parkway and Pine Barren has increasingly worsened over the last 2-3 years. Although there are plans to make improvements on Pine Barren Rd, as well as the intersection of Pooler Parkway & Pine Barren Rd, the improvements are for current traffic problems. By the time they are completed, additional improvements will be needed for "The District" impact.

On any given day, several times a day, traffic is backed up on Pine Barren and Pooler Parkway. It can take several cycles of a traffic signal just to get a green light, to then move up to wait again at the next signal.

Also, every time there is a wreck on I-95 which causes lane/road closures, travelers get off of the interstate and get on Pooler Parkway, which only worsens the situation for Pooler residents. This is not something that happens just occasionally. It is a regular occurrence.

Lastly, if a 1000+ unit apartment complex is built, how many additional vehicles will that add to just commuter traffic? These days, almost every person with a driver's license has a vehicle. The apartments could add an additional 1500-2000 vehicles to daily traffic. This is not even considering all the traffic brought in by the other areas of this development.

### **Apartments needed:**

I have emailed City Council members and the Mayor to ask about all of the apartment complexes in Pooler. I would seriously like to know how many apartment units are projected to be needed in Pooler. I have yet to get a reply from anyone. Has a study been done that tells the need, how many currently exist, how many are in the construction phase, and what the occupancy rate is?

In the area surrounding "The District", there is a new apartment complex directly across the street on Pine Barren. There is another complex across Pooler Parkway on Pine Barren. On the other side of "the District" property, there is one adjacent to the property on Galloway Dr. Another complex is across Pooler Parkway on Memorial Dr. Then, just across I-16, 3(4?) huge apartment complexes have been built just in the last year. Several already existed in the Blue Moon area.

Seriously, how many does Pooler need?

### **Flooding:**

I continue to be concerned about all of the clearcutting and unchecked development all over Pooler, but specifically in this area. Prior to the current drought we are facing, standing water has become an issue. It really became noticeable once the lot where Wawa and apartments are located was cleared and developed. Water stands in ditches and neighborhood streets where it previously did not.

### **Noise:**

The noise level, primarily from additional traffic, is expected to increase dramatically. Trees are such a great sound barrier. The noise from trains, traffic, and emergency vehicles is so much more noticeable at our house than it was just a few years ago. Between all of the clearing and development of warehouses and the Wawa property, the noise pollution has become a constant reminder of the ongoing development in Pooler.

Lastly, as a homeowner in Morgan Pines subdivision our **daily life** will be impacted by whatever is eventually built on this huge piece of property. Our subdivision is on Pine Barren, just past the development where Wawa and apartments are. We are concerned about all of the impacts I listed, as well as the overall impact to the possible wetlands, environment, and wildlife in these 100+ acres. We are not naïve enough to think that this property will remain as it is now. But we ask that the concerns and wishes of Pooler residents, especially those of us who live in the area, are seriously and thoughtfully taken into consideration.

Thank you,

Susan Aberson

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## DRI 4693 The District, Pooler, GA

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**From** AMY GILLIAM <agilliam14@comcast.net>

**Date** Wed 4/29/2026 7:12 AM

**To** Planning <planning@crc.ga.gov>

DRI 4693

“THE DISTRICT” (Corner of Pine Barren / Pooler Parkway (parcel # 5102301001A) multi-use proposed development consisting of 1,060 multi-family residential units, 440 hotel rooms, 100,000 sq ft grocery store, 135,000 sq ft anchor commercial, 12 outparcels with commercial use, etc.

I am writing in strong opposition to the proposed rezoning and development that would destroy **127 acres of forested land**, including **48.54 acres of freshwater shrub wetlands classified as PF01B**, within the City of Pooler, Georgia.

This acreage represents one of the **remaining contiguous natural landscapes** in an area already experiencing intense development pressure. Its loss would constitute an irreversible environmental, hydrological, and ecological impact to Pooler and the greater Chatham County region.

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## Cumulative Rezoning Impacts in Pooler

Over the past five years, the City of Pooler has approved **over 98% of the rezones that have been presented to council**, many of which have converted forested and rural land into high-density residential, industrial, or commercial uses. During that same period, **100’s of acres of wetlands** have been filled or otherwise impacted under federal and state permits.

Additionally, there have been land cleared without Land Disturbance Request, Invalid paperwork, missing paperwork and a city employee approving paperwork without certification, Scott MacPherson whose title was Inspections Certification. Additionally, Pooler, GA has not done DRI’s since 2023 and needs investigated to include (The Wardlaw’s PUDs including Godley Station, Harmony, Forrest Lakes, Jabot PUD, a WaWa Build and many other infractions). The city of Pooler Council has let builders add additional parcels to existing PUDS destroying old neighborhoods and allowing for overbuilds on 40 Foot lots.

This project cannot be evaluated in isolation. When considered cumulatively, Pooler’s rezoning trajectory reflects:

- Accelerated loss of tree canopy (**Between 2,000 and 3,500 acres of land in Pooler have been cleared or heavily disturbed between 2015 and 2026.**)
- Increased flood vulnerability
- Declining groundwater recharge capacity
- Fragmentation of wildlife habitats
- Permanent loss of jurisdictional wetlands

The remaining undeveloped land is rapidly disappearing, and approval of this project would further reduce Pooler's natural resilience.

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## Wetland Destruction: PF01B Freshwater Shrub Wetlands

The wetlands targeted for destruction are classified as **PF01B (Palustrine, Freshwater Shrub)** wetlands. These wetlands are federally recognized for critical ecological functions, including:

- Floodwater attenuation
- Water filtration and pollutant removal
- Groundwater recharge
- Carbon sequestration
- Nursery habitat for wildlife and pollinators

Once filled, PF01B wetlands **cannot be functionally replaced**, even with mitigation. Mitigation sites do not replicate the hydrology, biodiversity, or watershed value of original wetlands.

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## Wildlife and Federally Protected Species at Risk

The proposed destruction directly threatens habitat known or expected to support species protected under the **Endangered Species Act** and Georgia conservation law, including:

### Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*)

- Federally listed as **Threatened** in eastern Georgia
- Requires large, undisturbed upland habitat
- Forest clearing and soil compaction eliminate burrows essential to over 350 commensal species

### Northern Long-Eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)

- Federally **Endangered**
- Relies on intact forests for roosting and foraging
- Particularly vulnerable to tree clearing during maternity season

### Additional Species of Concern Likely Impacted

- Wood stork
- Eastern indigo snake
- Amphibians dependent on ephemeral wetlands
- Migratory songbirds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- Pollinators and keystone invertebrates

Fragmentation of this habitat increases mortality, reduces breeding success, and accelerates local extirpation.

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## Remaining Land After Destruction

Approval of this project would leave **less than [INSERT VERIFIED FIGURE] acres** of contiguous undeveloped land in this portion of Pooler. What remains would be fragmented, isolated, and ecologically compromised—no longer capable of supporting viable wildlife populations or providing meaningful ecosystem services.

Once lost, this land **cannot be restored**.

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## Conclusion and Request

I respectfully urge the City of Pooler to:

1. **Deny or delay rezoning approval** for this project

2. Require a **full cumulative environmental impact assessment**

3. Preserve remaining forest and wetland resources

4. Prioritize redevelopment and infill over greenfield destruction

5. Uphold Pooler's responsibility to protect public natural resources for future generations

The long-term costs of continued environmental loss far outweigh short-term development gains. Pooler stands at a critical crossroads—one where stewardship, foresight, and sustainability must guide decision-making.

Thank you for your time and for considering the lasting consequences of this action.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)