



## Staff Report

Subject: Rezoning  
Author: Jennifer Rose, Planner I  
Department: Development Services  
Application: RZN-26-14  
Meeting Date: May 12, 2026

Existing Zoning: AR-1 (Agricultural Residential; 5 acres)

Proposed Zoning: B-2 (General Commercial)

Map & Parcel(s): 415-34 & 415-15  
Total Acreage Affected ± 34.85 acres  
Location: Bluejay Road & Hodgeville Road  
Commissioner District: 2<sup>nd</sup> District

Proposed Use: Commercial Development

Applicant: Doug Morgan – EMC Engineering Services, Inc.  
Savannah, GA

Owner: Childrens LEZ/LBZ LLC

## Rezoning Summary:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Request</b>	Rezone ±34.85 acres from <b>AR-1</b> to <b>B-2</b>
<b>Proposed Use</b>	<b>Commercial</b>
<b>Existing Use</b>	Undeveloped Woodlands
<b>Future Land Use</b>	<b>Mixed / Transitional Corridor Area</b>
<b>Utilities</b>	Public Water (Effingham County)
<b>Access</b>	Bluejay Rd & Hodgeville Rd



## Request Overview:

The applicant requests to rezone approximately **34.85 acres from AR-1 to B-2 (General Commercial)** to establish commercial zoning entitlements on a vacant tract.

The request is **not associated with a specific development proposal**. The stated intent is to:

- Rezone the property to a commercial classification
- Market and sell the property for future commercial use
- Allow flexibility for uses permitted within the B-2 zoning district

Approval of this request would allow **any use permitted within the B-2 district**, subject to applicable development standards and future site plan review.

## Property & Site Conditions:

The subject properties are:

- Undeveloped and wooded
- Free of existing structures or site improvements
- Located at the intersection of Bluejay Road and Hodgeville Road
- A large, contiguous tract with frontage on both Bluejay Road and Hodgeville Road.

The site's location at an intersection provides **increased visibility and access potential**, which are characteristics supportive of future non-residential development.

## Surrounding Zoning Pattern:

Based on the zoning map provided, the surrounding area reflects a mixed but transitioning zoning pattern, described as follows:

### North (Along Bluejay Road)

- Predominantly R-1 (Single-Family Residential)
- Established residential subdivision pattern
- Smaller lot configuration compared to AR-1

### West

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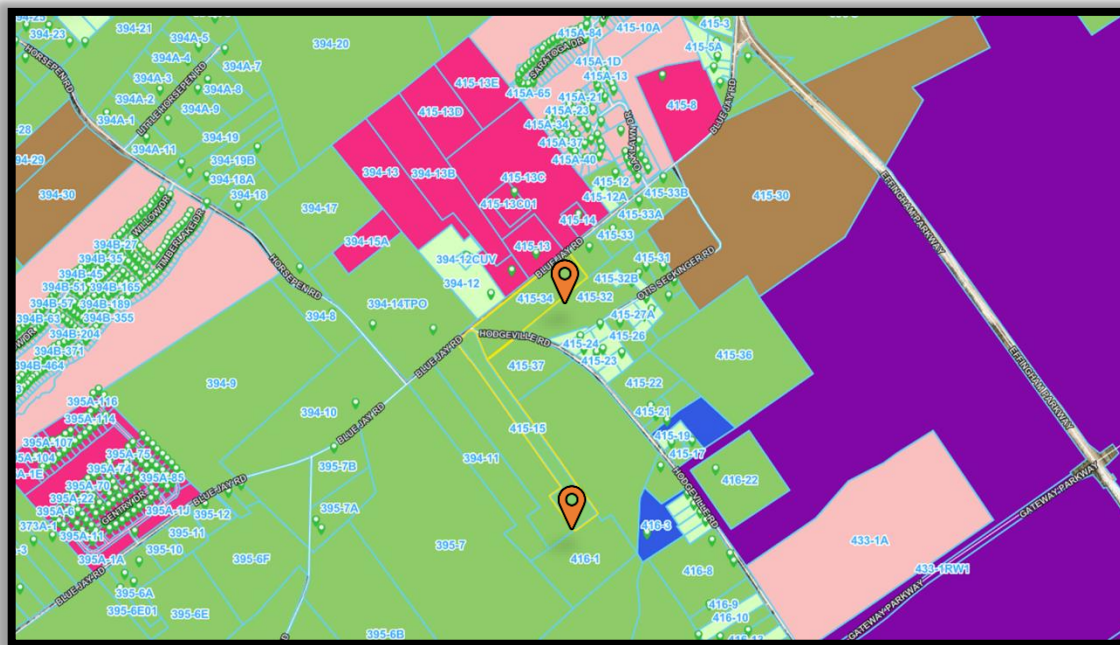
- Large tracts zoned AR-1 (Agricultural Residential)
- Undeveloped or low-intensity rural land uses
- Represents the remaining rural character of the area

**South**

- Primarily AR-1 zoning with large undeveloped parcels
- Limited residential development
- Continuation of rural/agricultural land pattern

**East / Southeast**

- Mix of:
  - AR-1 (Agricultural Residential)
  - R-1-A (Residential Transitional / larger lot residential)
  - B-2 (General Commercial) and B-3 / Industrial zoning in the broader corridor
- Notably, there is existing commercial and industrial zoning in proximity, particularly along the corridor extending southeast, indicating:
  - Emerging non-residential activity
  - Corridor-based development pressure



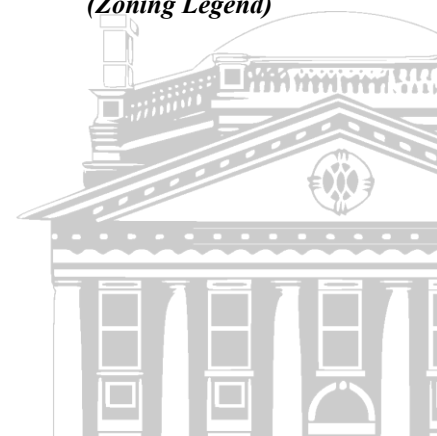
*(Zoning Map)*



*(Zoning Legend)*

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## DEVELOPMENT PATTERN & TRANSITION CONTEXT

The surrounding zoning pattern reflects a transition between established residential development to the north, rural agricultural land to the west and south, and increasing commercial and industrial activity to the east and southeast.

## PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- The intersection of **Bluejay Road and Hodgeville Road** functions as a:
  - Logical **activity node**
  - Potential **future transition area for more intense uses**
- The presence of **existing B-3 and industrial zoning nearby** indicates:
  - Market pressure for non-residential uses
  - Gradual corridor evolution
- However, the immediate adjacency to **R-1 residential zoning to the north** introduces:
  - Compatibility considerations
  - Need for buffering and transition at time of development
- Protection of nearby residential character
- Access management at a developing intersection

## Consistency with Comprehensive Plan

The Future Land Use Map designates the property as Agricultural–Residential, which supports low-density uses.

However, the property is also located within the Development – Suburban Node Character Area, which anticipates increased intensity at key intersections and allows for transitional growth.

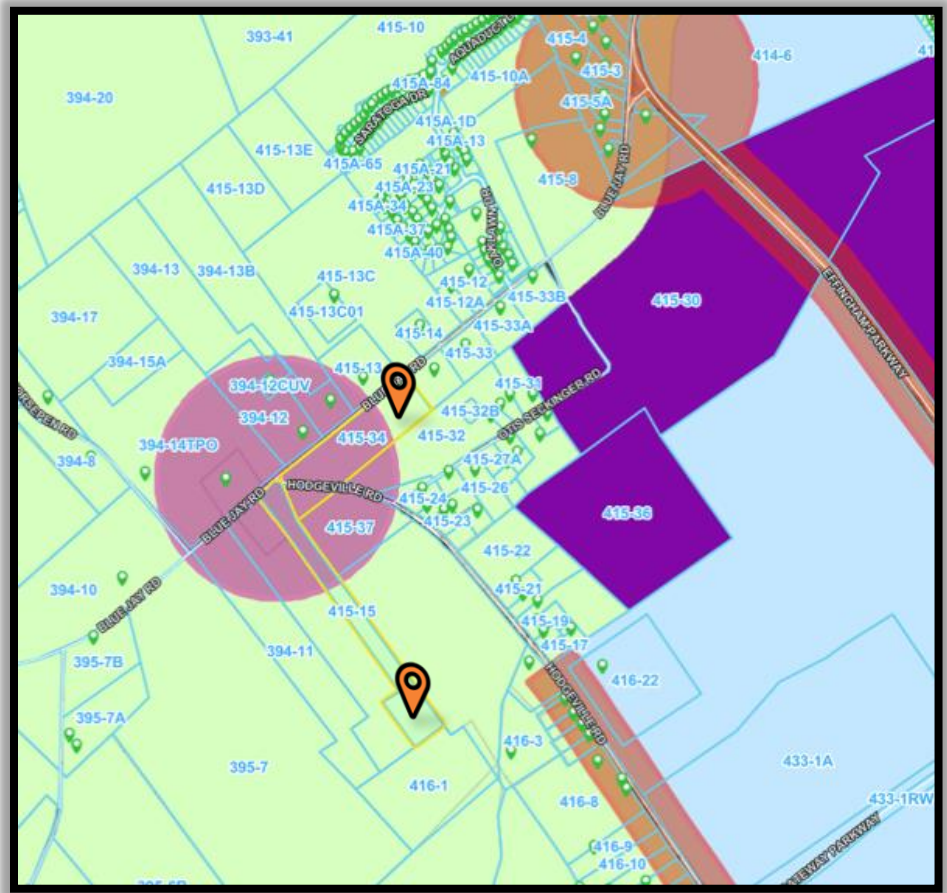
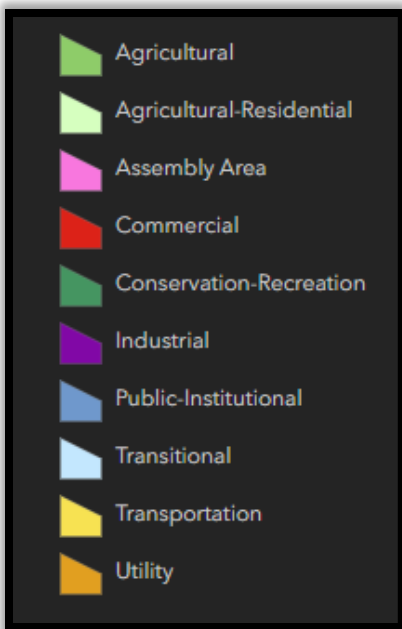
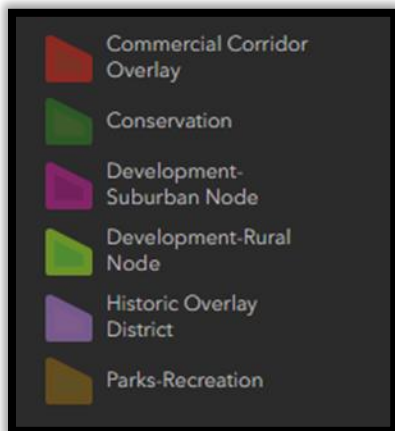
While the requested B-2 zoning exceeds the base FLUM designation, its location within the Suburban Node supports consideration of future commercial development.

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*(FLUM Legend)*

*Future Land Use Map (FLUM)*

As such, the request may be viewed as:

- **Inconsistent with the base FLUM designation, but**
- **Generally aligned with the intent of the Suburban Node Character Area, which allows for transitional growth at appropriate locations.**

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## INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICE CONTEXT

- The property has frontage on two roadways, supporting access flexibility
- The intersection of Bluejay Road and Hodgeville Road is identified for **future improvement (roundabout)**
- Public water service is available; sewer service has not been identified

In the absence of a specific development plan:

- Traffic impacts cannot be fully evaluated
- Utility demand is unknown
- Required infrastructure improvements will be determined at the time of development

Future development will be subject to:

- Access management standards
- Traffic Impact Study (if required)
- Coordination with County and GDOT (as applicable)

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Available mapping indicates the presence of wetlands and floodplain areas in the vicinity. In the absence of a site plan, the extent of impacts cannot be determined. Future development will require delineation, permitting, and compliance with all applicable regulations.



(Wetlands)



(Floodplains)

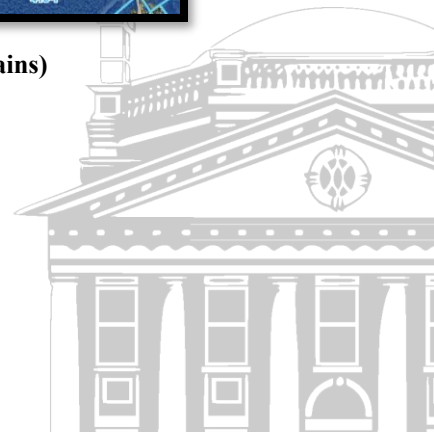
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## **PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE**

Rezoning to B-2 allows a range of commercial uses, which would allow:

- Increased traffic volumes
- Additional turning movements at the intersection
- Moderate noise and activity typical of commercial uses

The most significant compatibility consideration is the **proximity of residential development to the north.**

These impacts would be addressed during site plan review through buffering, access design, and operational controls.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

This request represents a policy-level rezoning of a large vacant tract and should be evaluated based on long-range land use considerations.

The property is located at a key intersection within a transitional area influenced by residential, agricultural, and emerging commercial uses. Its location supports consideration of increased intensity over time, particularly within the Suburban Node Character Area.

However, the request would establish full B-2 zoning entitlements without a defined development plan, allowing a wide range of commercial uses that may vary in intensity and impact.

The primary planning considerations include:

- Compatibility with adjacent residential development to the north
- The extent and timing of infrastructure improvements
- Environmental constraints that may influence development potential

Ultimately, the request presents a policy decision regarding whether this intersection is appropriate for long-term commercial zoning, given existing land use patterns and future growth expectations.

## **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS (If Approved)**

If the Board elects to approve the rezoning request, the following conditions are recommended:

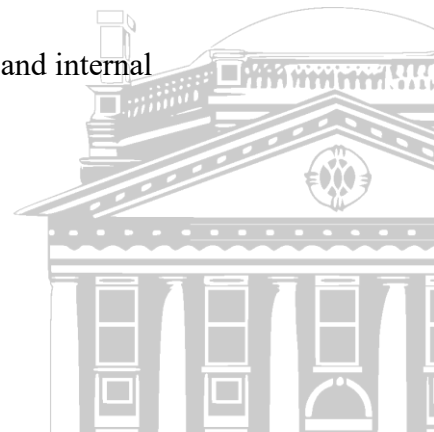
### **1. Access Management**

All access points shall require County and GDOT approval. Shared access and internal circulation shall be required where feasible.

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2. **Traffic Improvements**

The developer shall be responsible for any roadway and intersection improvements identified through a Traffic Impact Study.

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