Effingham County Georgia
Planning and Zoning Services

Staff Report

Department:	Development Services
Subject:	Site Plan
Meeting Date:	November 13, 2026
Application:	Site-26-6

Existing Zoning: I-1 (Industrial)

Map & Parcel: 433-1E & 433-1

Parcel Size: ± 739.95 acres (433-1E) ± 607.19 acres (433-1)

Applicant: Jamie Garner
577 Mulberry Street, Suite 1225
Macon, GA 31201

Owner(s): Octans GA, LLC
Framers Bank Bldg, 301 N Market St
Wilmington, DE 19801

Commissioner District: Second District

Location: Rincon, GA 31326

Project Name: Project Camellia

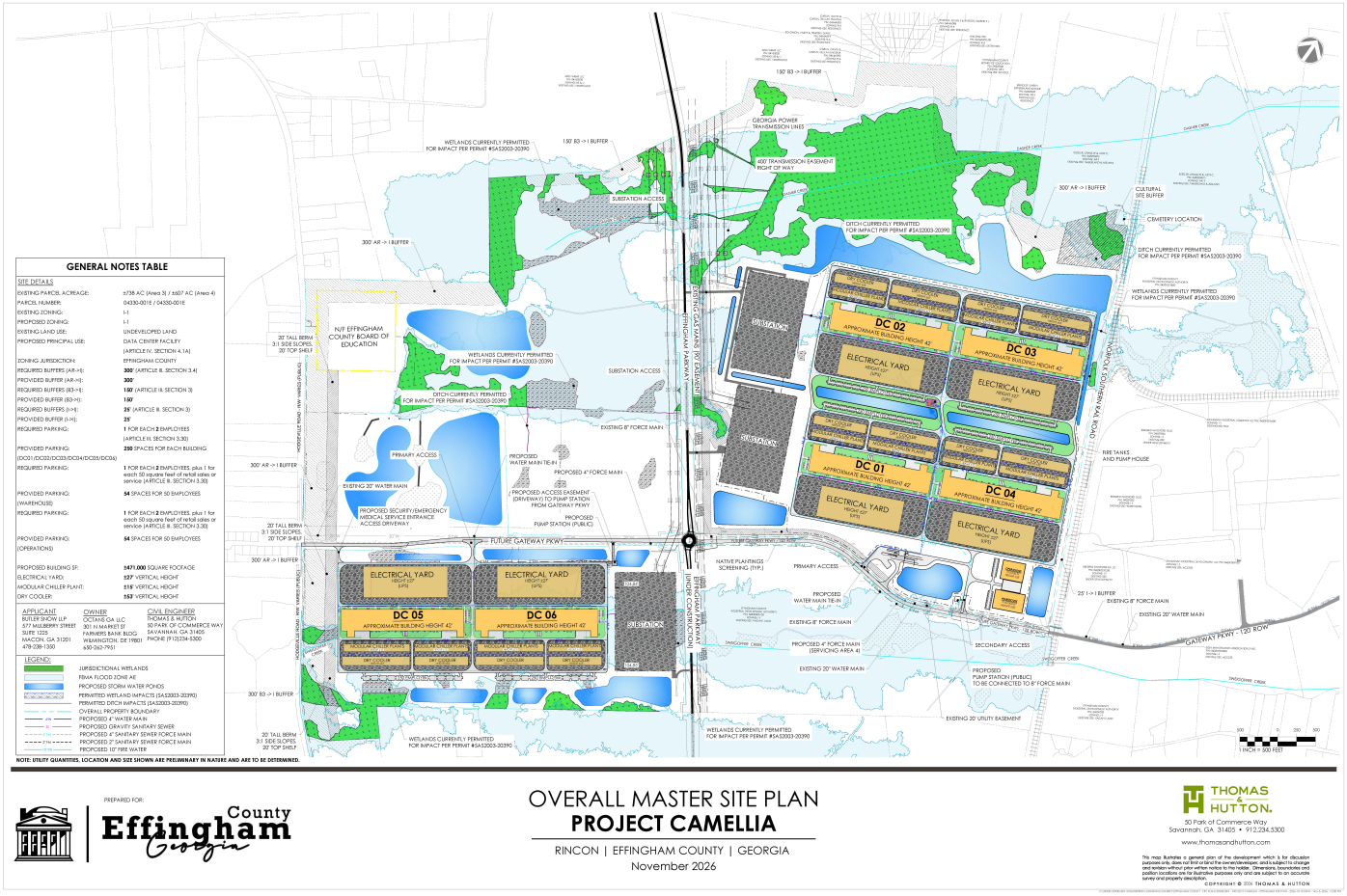
Existing Land Use and Zoning:

The subject properties are vacant, undeveloped land along Effingham Parkway. Both parcels are zoned I-1 (Industrial) and are about ±739.95 acres on parcel 433-1E and ± 607.19 acres on parcel 433-1. Access to the site is provided directly from Effingham Parkway, Hodgeville Rd. and Gateway Parkway.

Project Description/Site Characteristics

The applicant proposes the development of a data center facility.

Sec. 2.137. Data center. A physical facility used to house computer systems and associated components, such as telecommunications and storage systems. It is the central hub for processing, storing, and managing data, often for organizations that rely heavily on cloud computing, enterprise applications, or big data services.


GENERAL NOTES TABLE
OVERALL MASTER SITE PLAN
PROJECT CAMELLIA
RINCON | EFFINGHAM COUNTY | GEORGIA
November 2026
DC 01
DC 02
DC 03
DC 04
DC 05
DC 06
ELECTRICAL YARD
SUBSTATION
FUTURE GATEWAY PKWY
GATEWAY PKWY - 120 ROW
PRIMARY ACCESS
SECONDARY ACCESS
N/F EFFINGHAM COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
GEORGIA POWER TRANSMISSION LINES
400' TRANSMISSION EASEMENT RIGHT OF WAY
EXISTING GAS MAIN W/ EASEMENT
EFFINGHAM PARKWAY
EXISTING 8" FORCE MAIN
EXISTING 20" WATER MAIN
PROPOSED 4" FORCE MAIN
PROPOSED PUMP STATION (PUBLIC)
PROPOSED PUMP STATION (PUBLIC) TO BE CONNECTED TO 8" FORCE MAIN
EXISTING 20' UTILITY EASEMENT
CEMETERY LOCATION
CULTURAL SITE BUFFER
RETENTION POND
RETENTION POND
RETENTION POND

The proposed development includes six major data center buildings, identified as DC01, DC02, DC03, DC04, DC05, and DC06, each approximately 42 feet in height. Additional buildings and site features include:

- A warehouse containing approximately 100,000 square feet;
- An operations building containing approximately 75,000 square feet;
- Chiller equipment to provide cooling for the data center buildings;
- Three electrical substations designed to support the development's electrical demand; and
- Associated electrical yards and supporting infrastructure.

The substations, electrical yards, and cooling equipment are proposed as accessory facilities supporting the primary data center use.

The development includes multiple access connections, with primary access points identified on the site plan from the proposed roadway network, including Gateway Parkway and Effingham Parkway. A secondary access point is also identified. These connections are intended to accommodate operational traffic and provide alternative routes for emergency access, subject to applicable engineering and fire access requirements.

Parking & Buffers

The proposed development provides 250 parking spaces for each of the six data center buildings, totaling 1,500 spaces. The proposed warehouse and operations building each provide 54 parking spaces, resulting in a total of 1,608 parking spaces throughout the development.

Pursuant to Section 3.30.3 of the Zoning Ordinance, parking is required at a ratio of one space per two employees, with additional parking applicable to retail sales or service areas. Employee counts for the six data center buildings have not been provided. Therefore, final parking compliance will be verified during the development plan review process.

The proposed development provides the required 300-foot buffer adjacent to AR-1 zoning, 150-foot buffer adjacent to B-3 zoning, and 25-foot buffer adjacent to I-1 zoning, consistent with Section 3.4 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Facts and Findings:

Zoning Context

The proposed Project Camellia development is located within Effingham County's I-1 (Industrial) zoning district. This district accommodates industrial activities and facilities that require substantial infrastructure, large development sites, and access to major transportation networks. The proposed data center campus is consistent with the general industrial character of the area, incorporating six data center buildings, electrical substations, cooling infrastructure, a warehouse, and an operations building.

The development is situated near Effingham Parkway and the proposed Gateway Parkway, providing connections to the surrounding transportation network. Given the scale and infrastructure demands of the proposed development, consideration must be given to compatibility with adjacent properties, adequate buffering, stormwater management, and potential impacts associated with noise, lighting, and utility infrastructure.

The site plan identifies required vegetative buffers of 300 feet adjacent to Agricultural-Residential (AR-1) properties, 150 feet adjacent to B-3 (Major Commercial) properties, and 25 feet adjacent to I-1 (Industrial) properties. These buffers are intended to minimize potential impacts on surrounding land uses, provide visual screening, preserve existing vegetation where required, and support compatibility between industrial development and neighboring properties.

Heavy Industrial Future Land Use Designation

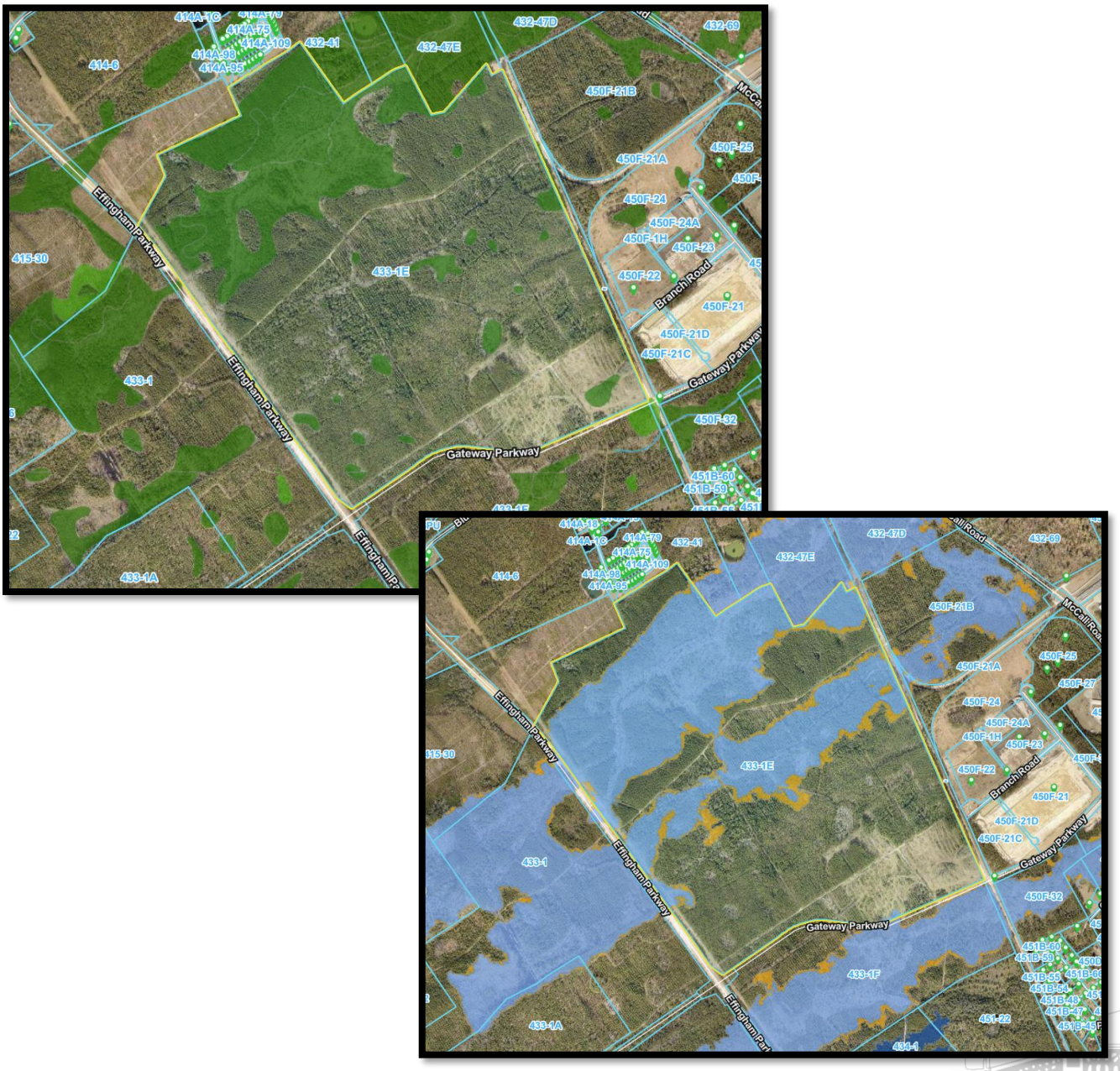
The Heavy Industrial future land use designation is intended to support employment opportunities and economic development by identifying areas suitable for large-scale industrial operations and supporting infrastructure. These areas accommodate facilities requiring significant utility capacity, extensive land area, and access to transportation networks. The designation encourages the retention and expansion of existing industries while attracting new investment that contributes to the County's economic growth.

The proposed data center campus reflects the type of infrastructure-intensive development contemplated within industrial areas. Its associated electrical substations, cooling systems, warehouse, and operations facilities support the primary data center use. Development within this designation should incorporate appropriate measures to address environmental impacts, protect surrounding properties, and maintain compatibility with adjacent land uses through buffering, screening, and compliance with applicable development standards.

Infrastructure and Services

The property is served by **County water and sewer,** consistent with surrounding development. Future development will remain subject to applicable stormwater, floodplain, wetland, utility, and environmental review requirements.

County GIS mapping indicates the presence of **wetlands** and **FEMA Zone AE floodplain** areas on portions of the site.



Planning and Zoning Services

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effinghamcounty.org

Surrounding Development Pattern

The surrounding area reflects a transition between rural residential development and emerging industrial and commercial activity. The corridor continues to experience commercial and industrial investment, while adjacent rural residential uses remain.

Surrounding Neighborhood
• North: **AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more) & B-3 (Highway Commercial) & R-6 (Single-Family Residential District)**
• South: **I-1 (Industrial)**
• East: **I-1 (Industrial)**
• West: **I-1 (Industrial)**



****DRI Report for Project Completed August 26, 2026

2.1 Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

According to the Future Land Use Map, the site is within the Industrial and Transitional land use areas. The areas to the north, west, and east are also zoned Industrial with a few areas in the Transitional zoning class. The proposed Technological Facility Development (including Data Centers) is compatible with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

3.1 Regional Commission Recommendations and Environmental Considerations

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** stating it does not anticipate any direct impacts outside of existing water use planning and supply allocation. This information is included within the Regional Surface Water Supply Partnership documents and the existing intergovernmental agreement between the City of Savannah and Effingham County. The City of Savannah anticipates only briefly providing the initial phase of the indicated water demand through wholesale surface water provided to Effingham County prior to the new Effingham County surface water treatment plant coming online in early 2030.

The **Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division** provided detailed information regarding federally listed species that have been documented within three miles or within the watershed of the proposed project. They suggested a consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for project consultation and survey recommendations. In addition, state protected species have been documented near the proposed project. Additional information is provided regarding plants, fish, crayfish and mussels, reptiles and amphibians, mammals, inland birds, and shore and water birds, along with contact information for DNR specialists associated with each. Concerns and recommendations were provided regarding natural resources in the area of this development.

Savannah Riverkeeper submitted a letter of concern regarding regional infrastructure and environmental impacts regarding the area in which this development is located. Primary concerns included: Water resource safeguards and the quantity of water being utilized; the number of and types of developments in Effingham County; potential stormwater runoff and the importance of mitigation; the demand for energy; and construction timelines.

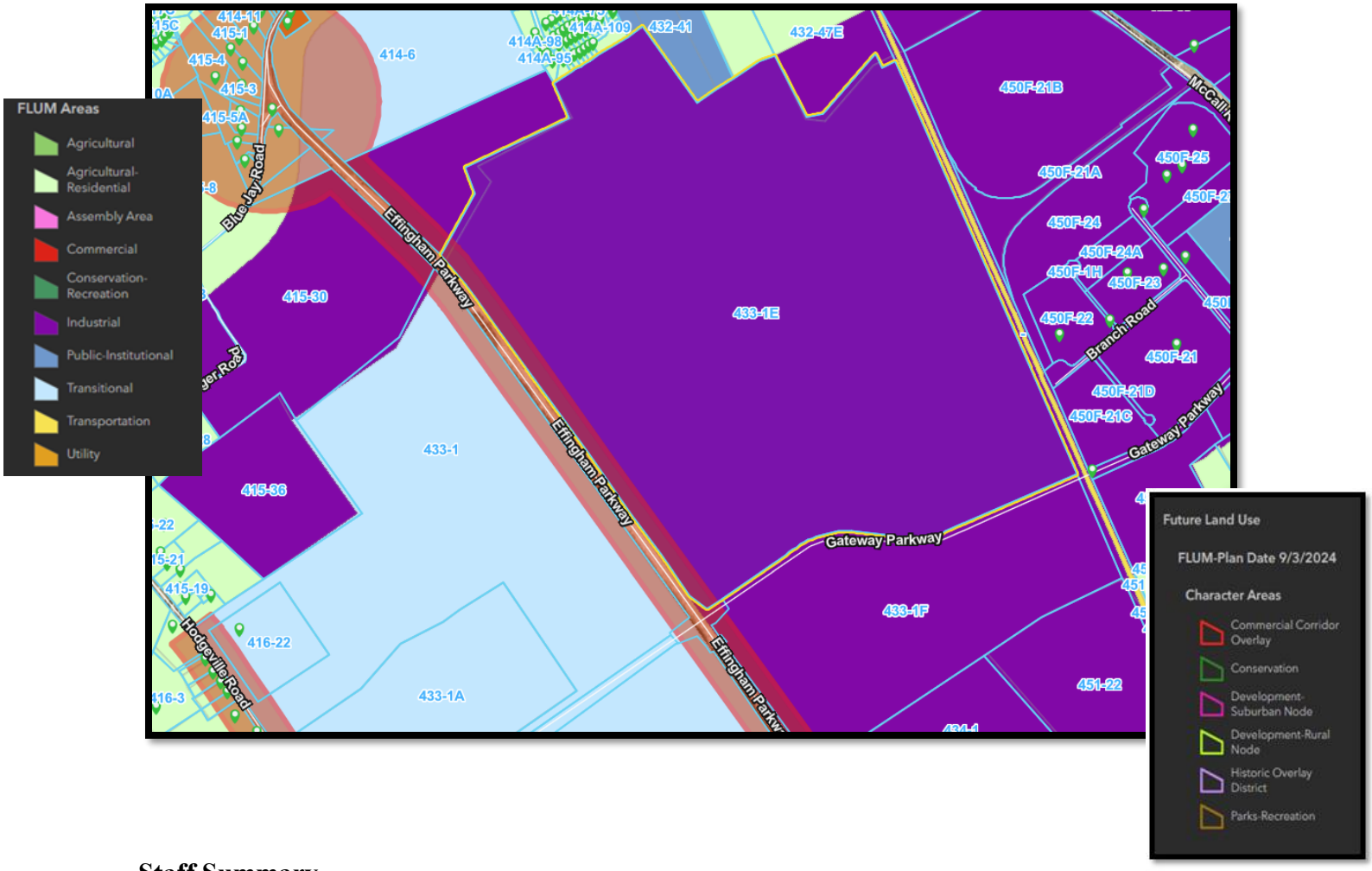
100 Miles, a coastal advocacy organization dedicated to protecting Georgia's 100-mile coast through advocacy, education, and community engagement submitted a letter of concern regarding the following: The energy supply capacity and transmission infrastructure required to power this project; possible site plan elements that are missing such as where backup power will come from and the number of acres needed; questions regarding the two pairs of buildings shown on the concept plan; the operational "flexibility" during peak demand hours does not have any specific details provided for grid resilience with Georgia Power and whether this development will be used to offset lost capacity at other facilities during their peak demand hours.

Multiple submissions from the **public** were received and have been forwarded to Effingham County for review. As with all proposed development submissions, we encourage the county to review and consider the comments and concerns of both residents and potentially affected local governments and public agencies.

Comprehensive Plan:

*The parcel is designated **Industrial** on the **Future Land Use Map (FLUM).** This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses. Light and Heavy industrial uses are permitted in these areas. Heavy industrial is generally defined as manufacturing uses, large-scale warehouses, concrete facilities, or any other process that could produce high levels of noise, dust, smoke, odors, or other emissions. Light industrial includes, but is not limited to, warehousing and distribution, trucking, and small-scale assembly and manufacturing. Development in this category requires supportive infrastructure and access to major transportation thoroughfares. It is important for industrial areas to comply with environmental regulations, implement sustainable practices, and mitigate their environmental footprint to minimize the adverse effects of commercial and industrial land uses on surrounding property and public thoroughfares; to act as a filtration zone for stormwater; to make the environment more visually attractive; and to preserve the undisturbed vegetative buffers in the county.*

*The parcel is designated in the **Commercial Corridor Overlay** on the **Future Land Use Map (FLUM).** Areas designated for the commercial corridor area is characterized by highly trafficked commercial development along streets and highways. The purpose is to establish standards for the design of sites, buildings, structures, plantings, signs, street hardware, and other such improvements that are visible to the public and affect the physical development of land within specific designated transportation corridors. The Design should be pedestrian-oriented with walkable connections. Commercial corridors play a vital role in the local economy by providing goods and services to residents, creating job opportunities, and contributing to the vibrancy and vitality of the community.*



Staff Summary

The applicant has submitted the site plan in accordance with Section 14-56(w) of the Effingham County Site Plan Ordinance. The proposed development meets the applicable zoning and site plan requirements of the I-1 (Industrial) district, including parking, buffering, and access standards.