



## Bulloch County Departmental Review

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<b>Agenda Item:</b>	2	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	May 20, 2025 (P&Z)
<b>Application #:</b>	RZNE-2025-00185	<b>Application Type:</b>	Rezoning
<b>Request:</b>	River Bluff Properties, LLC., has submitted an application to rezone approximately 61 acres AG-5 (Agricultural 5 acres sq. ft.) to R-40 (Residential 40,000 sq. ft.) for the purpose of creating a single-family subdivision. The property is located on Highway 119 Connector. Jim Anderson will serve as agent.		
<b>Final Staff Recommendation:</b>	The staff recommends approval of the request with conditions.		

<b>Applicant:</b>	River Bluff Properties, LLC.	<b>Acres in Request:</b>	61
<b>Location:</b>	Hwy 119 Connector	<b>Existing Lots:</b>	1
<b>Map #:</b>	195 000002 002	<b>Requested Lots:</b>	59
		<b>Current Zoning:</b>	AG-5
<b>Future Land Use:</b>	Rural Neighborhood Character Area	<b>Requested Zoning:</b>	R-40

**HISTORY, FACTS, AND ISSUES:** This request, provided by River Bluff Properties LLC., pertains to an application for a rezone from AG-5 to R-40 within the subject property. The general motivation in this case is for the applicant to rezone the property in order to create conforming lots for a subdivision. This subject property possesses road frontage on Highway 199 Connector, a state-maintained road, and is within the Rural Neighborhood character area according to the Bulloch County 2045 Comprehensive Plan. The Rural Neighborhood character area zoning and design policies align with the applicant's request.

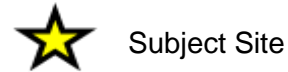
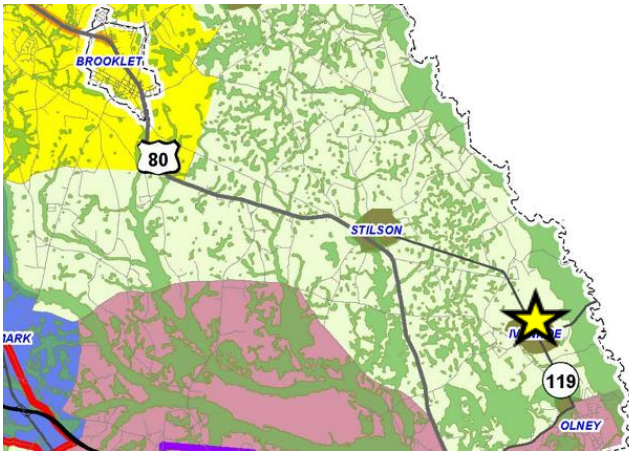
The subject property abuts other adjacent AG-5 zoned properties. This property has historically been used for agricultural use. No structures are present on the property.

Staff analyzed this request to determine compliance with the governing standards for the exercise of zoning and subdivision powers within Bulloch County. The factors most relevant to this application were considered, including the neighboring land uses, lot sizes, the unique shape of the property, and the impact of the proposed request. Therefore, the staff recommends approval of the request for a rezone as provided in the following report.



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## Location of Parcel



Subject Site

Rezone Standards		Yes	No	Comment
(1)	Is the proposed use suitable in view of the zoning and development of adjacent and nearby property?	X		
(2)	Will the proposed use adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property?		X	
(3)	Are there substantial reasons why the property cannot or should not be used as currently zoned?		X	
(4)	Will the proposed use cause an excessive or burdensome use of public facilities or services, including but not limited to streets, schools, EMS, sheriff or fire protection?		X	
(5)	Is the proposed use compatible with the purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Plan?	X		The property and surrounding Ivanhoe area has been identified as a Rural Neighborhood in multiple iterations of the comprehensive plan.
(6)	Will the use be consistent with the purpose and intent of the proposed zoning district?	X		
(7)	Is the proposed use supported by new or changing conditions not anticipated by the Comprehensive Plan?		X	
(8)	Does the proposed use reflect a reasonable balance between the promotion of the public health, safety, morality, or general welfare and the right to unrestricted use of property?	X		



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## Land Use Planning Impact

**Future Land Use Map:** The Bulloch County Joint Comprehensive Plan indicates the property would be appropriate for the Rural Neighborhood character area.

**Existing Land Use Pattern:** There are primarily agricultural uses at adjacent and nearby properties.

**Zoning Patterns and Consistency:** The proposed change appears to be consistent with the suggested zoning patterns for a rural neighborhood as identified in the future development map of Bulloch County.

**Neighborhood Character:** The proposed development anticipates an appropriate density level around a community crossroads with arterial roadway access.

Zoning Density Analysis						
Current Allowed Density		.02 units per acre	Future Land Use Map Density (gross)			
			Rural-Open Space		0.2 units per acre	
Proposed Density		.967 units per acre	Rural-Neighborhood		1.0 units per acre	
			Suburban Neighborhood Character Area		2.0 units per acre	
Density Alternative Analysis						
Zoning	Gross Density: 61 acres <sup>1</sup>	Net Density: 56.21 acres <sup>2</sup>	Estimated Lot Yield: Max. Gross Density	Estimated Lot Yield: Max. Net Density	Net Lot With 15% Density Bonus	
R-80	0.544 units per acre		33	30	34	
R-40	1.089 units per acre		66	61	69	
R-25	1.741 units per acre		106	97	111	
R-15	2.904 units per acre		177	163	187	

<sup>1</sup> Gross density calculates total acreage less the estimated land needed for public dedication.

<sup>2</sup> Net density calculates total acreage less areas which cannot be developed due to environmental constraints (wetlands) and the estimated land needed for public dedication.

**Positive Impact:** The development appears to conform with suggested land use planning policy.

## Fiscal/Economic Impact

**Fiscal Analysis:** Using the Envision Tomorrow Regional Fiscal Impact Tool 3.4, and based on 59 single-family housing units (2.5 persons per unit) valued at \$330,000 per parcel; it is estimated that after a 7-year build out, public revenues will exceed expenditures by \$68,321 (\$967,744 in total revenues v. \$899,424 in total expenditures).

\*Note- The fiscal impact tool is an estimate based on the best available data sources. Some data has been assumed by the practitioner's knowledge and best practices. In addition, the impact tool measures direct revenue/cost data. Indirect benefits are not included.

**Neutral Impact:** Cost of public service expenditures is expected to be neutral.

## School Impact

**Student Enrollment Created by New Development:** School impact is anticipated. A minimum of 36 new students in the Southeast Bulloch High School Feeder district.

**Negative Impact:** The impact to the Southeast Bulloch High School feeder system is likely to be negative assuming 25% of new residents will be less than 19 years old.



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## Water / Sewer Impact

**Water System:** A privately-owned, community water system meeting state EPD standards will be required.

**Sewerage:** Septic tank installation approval is required by the County Health Department.

**Neutral Impact:** Major soil types are identified as Norfolk Sand (Ns) and Norfolk Sandy Loam (Nsl) and pose few limitations for septic tanks and filters.

## Solid Waste Impact

**Nearest Existing Solid Waste and Recycling Centers:** Stilson Recycling Center

**Waste Generation Estimate:** 147 tons annually.

**Neutral Impact:** Private collection services are available. No significant impact on the County's Solid Waste Management Plan or Ordinance requirements is expected.

## Environmental Impact

**Wetlands and Flood Zones:** Development as proposed assumes disturbance of 8.9 acres of wetland areas and/or flood zone areas.

**Stormwater:** The impervious surface ratio based on the proposed number of lots and use is expected to be 6-10%.

**Aquifer Recharge Areas:** There are no known areas affected.

**Water Supply Watersheds:** There are no known watersheds affected.

**River Corridors:** There are no known corridors affected.

**Air:** This project is not expected to create an air pollution nuisance.

**Soils:** Soil type is primarily Norfolk Sand (Ns) and Norfolk Sandy Loam (Nsl) and poses minimal limitations for septic tanks and filters, and roadways.

**Historic or Archeological Resources:** There are no known resources affected.

**Resources of Regional or Statewide Importance:** No Development of Regional Impact study was required or performed.

**Neutral Impact:** A stormwater management plan and Hydrology Study will be required.

## Traffic and Road Infrastructure Impact

**ITE Trip Generation Rate:** 9.2 per household or 542 trip ends per day.

**Proposed Road Construction in Development:** Internal public road meeting county standards are proposed for the development.

**Parking:** Parking will be on-site per dwelling.

**GDOT Road Classification for Access Road:** Highway 119 Connector is an arterial roadway.

**Bulloch Transportation Plan Classification for Access Road:** Highway 119 Connector is a state-maintained arterial route.

**Condition of Access Road:** Highway 119 Connector is a state-maintained paved road in adequate condition.

**Intersection Analysis:** Access to Highway 119 Connector will be permitted by GDOT.

**Drainage:** The development is located in the Lower Ogeechee River Basin. Currently all drainage is natural; no man-made improvements to the parcel are known other than roadside drainage ditches and culverts. The access way/driveways to primary structures should have proper roadside drainage measures installed.



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**Neutral Impact:** The rezone request, in consideration of the scale of the development, would have a neutral impact to the road infrastructure, traffic safety and drainage. A hydrology study and stormwater management plan are required for the initiation of a subdivision development. A County permit will be required for the subdivision entrances. Cost for improvements will be paid by the developer.

### E-911 and Emergency Management Impact

Street addresses can be easily assigned. The County GIS 911 Coordinator should be contacted prior to construction.

**Neutral Impact:** These services would not be severely impacted.

### Law Enforcement Impact

**Agency:** Bulloch County Sheriff's Office

**Level of Service Standard (national: 0.6 per 1,000 population):** Bulloch County has 37 sworn officers for road patrols. The LOS is 67 for the total county population or 38 based on unincorporated population.

Public Safety Unit	Facility Distance / Response Time	LOS Impact or Deficiency	Intangibles
Law Enforcement (Sheriff)	20 miles, 27 minutes depending on patrolling patterns	.025 or no full-time equivalent additional officers would be required	Shift of 3 covers 684 square miles
Georgia State Patrol	21 miles, 29 minutes depending on patrolling patterns	NA	Post #45 located south of Statesboro on US 301

**Negative Impact:** The Sheriff's Department's capabilities are already exceeding capacity. The additional development would not require an additional full-time officer.

### EMS and Fire Service Impact

Public Safety Unit	Facility Distance / Response Time	LOS Impact or Deficiency	Intangibles
Fire (Bulloch Co. Fire Department)	Stilson Station 6.5 miles 21 min. response time	ISO Rating 4Y	City of Statesboro would need to be called for automatic aid or in event of a hazardous materials spill.
EMS-Rescue (County)	20 miles, 29 minutes response time	(-0.276) EMT / Paramedic per 1,000 population	

**Negative Impact:** Response times for fire and EMS are currently inadequate, however future staffing plans for an EMS station will place the development within 6 miles of an EMS station. Future plans for a fire station are in place. The new Eldora station will be located approximately 3.5 miles from the development. The developer donated 1 acre to Bulloch County for the fire station location.



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## Recreation-Open Space Impact

**Nearest Facilities:** Stilson Park (1.8 miles).

**NRPA Level of Service – Acreage (9.2 acres per 1,000):** The development would create a demand of 1.3-acres of public park space. The applicant proposes to create a recreation area of 3 acres.

**Open Space:** Open space area designated for recreation.

**NRPA Level of Service - Trails (14 miles for population class; current 2.9) Greenway:** Nearest facility is S&S Greenway 19.5 miles. LOS deficiency is 11.1 miles.

**Positive Impact:** The development proposes a common area for a passive park. Additionally, conditions for playground equipment are proposed.

## Summary of Findings – Final Staff Recommendation

Impact Summary			
Impact Factor	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Land Use Planning	X		
Fiscal-Economic			X
Schools		X	
Water-Sewer			X
Solid Waste			X
Environmental			X
Traffic and Roads			X
Emergency Management			X
Law Enforcement		X	
EMS-Fire		X	
Recreation			X
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
Local Impact Findings	The rezoning of the 61 acres is likely to have a neutral impact on County services		
Regional Impact Findings	N/A		

## FINAL STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**The staff recommends approval of the request with the following conditions:**

1. All structures must be site-built conventional construction according to state minimum building codes. No manufactured or industrialized structures shall be permitted.
2. The development shall be required to provide active playground equipment within a common area.
3. Prior to the submittal of the sketch plan, a playground design and specifications should be submitted to the Bulloch County Parks and Recreational Director for approval.





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## PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING OVERVIEW

The Bulloch County Planning and Zoning Commission convened on May 20<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 p.m., for the monthly meeting to review the rezone request submitted by River Bluff Properties, LLC. The meeting was attended by Planning and Zoning Commission Board members; Schubert Lane, Betsy Riner, Charles Chandler, Adam Bath, and Chairman Jeanne Anne Marsh. County staff, the applicant, and members of the public were also in attendance.

Jim Anderson represented the applicant and presented a sketch plan to the commission. Several residents spoke in opposition during the public comment period. Nearby property owners addressed concerns regarding additional traffic impacts and safety, infrastructure limitations with septic systems and groundwater supply, the risk of increased stormwater runoff on the drainage systems, impacts on nearby Stilson Elementary school and the possible strain on resources, potential negative impacts on the solid waste system, potential strain on emergency service resources, environmental concerns regarding the gopher tortoise and indigo snake habitats, and the alteration of access to adjacent farmland.

Robbie Bell, representing River Bluff Properties, LLC, responded to the the public concerns. After hearing the presentations and public input, the planning commission voted 3-1 to recommend denial of the rezoning request. The final decision was scheduled to be made by the Bulloch County Board of Commissioners at their meeting on June 3, 2025.



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**Existing Zoning Map**  
Current Parcel Zone: AG-5  
Area Zoning: AG-5







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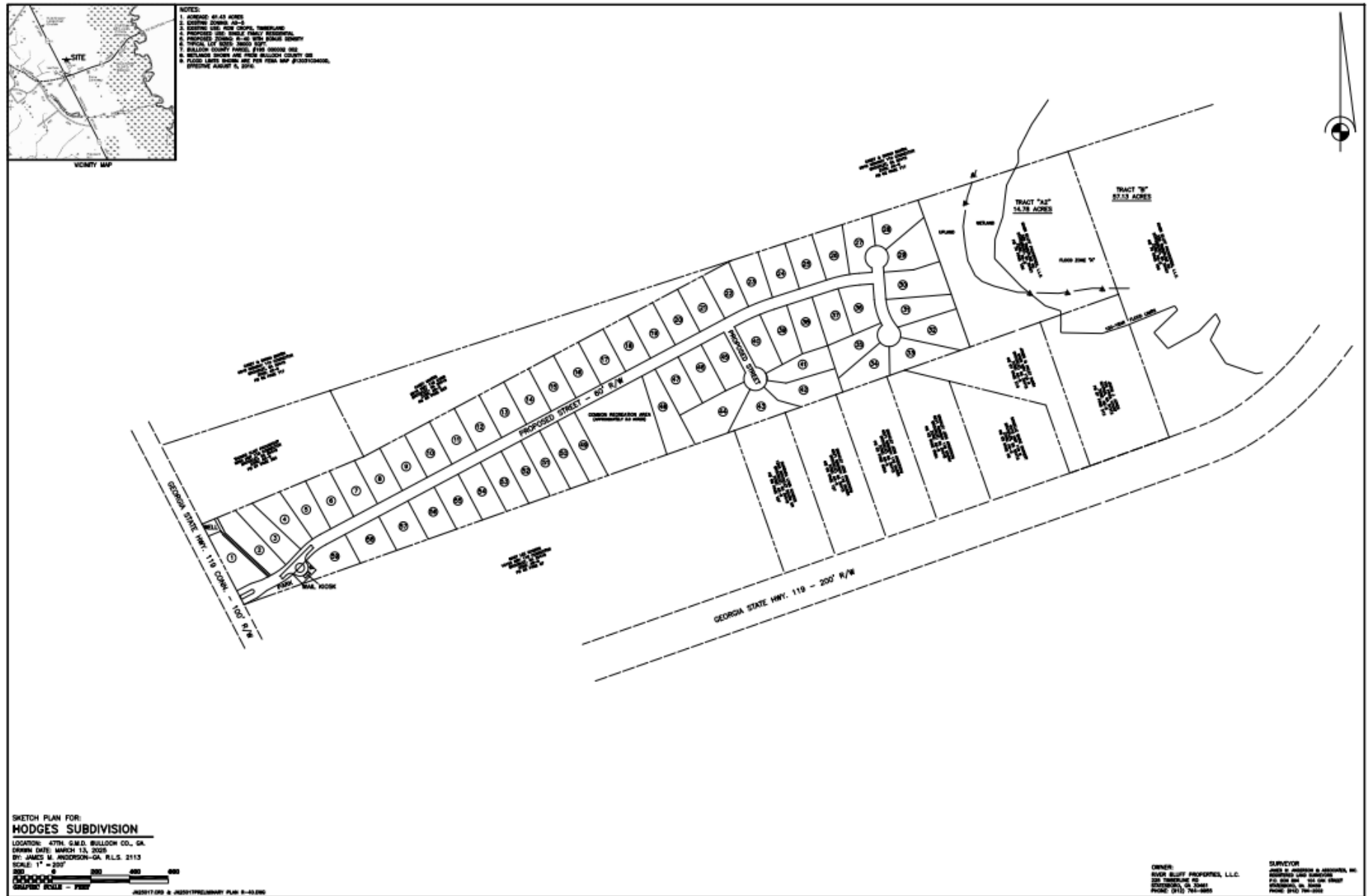
Aerial of Parcel





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## Proposed Site Plan





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## Letter of Intent by Applicant

### Letter of Intent

River Bluff Properties, LLC currently owns two adjacent parcels of land totaling 133.34 acres in the lower part of southeast Bulloch County area near the Effingham County line. The property borders Hwy. 119 and is primarily in timberland. Due to the strong demand and lack of affordable housing in the area, River Bluff Properties, LLC is requesting to rezone a portion of this property from AG-5 to R-40 to develop part of this property into site built residential subdivision lots in conformity with the rural character of the area and in compliance with the comprehensive land use plan designation of Rural Neighborhood.

The subdivision will have restrictive covenants and will be served by a private community water system with fire protection.

We appreciate the consideration of the Planning Board and the Board of Commissioners with the request.





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View Facing South into the Subject Property





**ZONING NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Zoning Appeals has adopted a resolution to change the zoning of the property located at 12345 Main Street, from R-1 (Single-Family Residential) to R-2 (Medium-Density Residential).

The property is located at 12345 Main Street, and the zoning change is effective as of the date of this notice.

The zoning change is subject to the following conditions:

- The property must be used for residential purposes only.
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View Facing North of Highway 119 Connect





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