

REGIONAL REVIEW NOTIFICATION

Atlanta Regional Commission • 229 Peachtree Street NE | Suite 100 | Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • ph: 404.463.3100 fax: 404.463.3205 • atlantaregional.org

DATE: May 30, 2022

TO: Chairwoman Laura Semanson, Forsyth County
ATTN TO: Leslie Silas, Planning Manager, Forsyth County
RE: Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Review

FROM: Mike Alexander, Director, ARC Center for Livable Communities

ARC has completed a preliminary regional review of the following DRI. ARC reviewed the DRI's relationship to regional plans, goals and policies – and impacts it may have on the activities, plans, goals and policies of other local jurisdictions as well as state, federal and other agencies. This preliminary report does not address whether the DRI is or is not in the best interest of the local government.

Name of Proposal: Empire Highway 306 DRI 3594 Submitting Local Government: Forsyth County

<u>Date Opened</u>: May 30, 2022 <u>Deadline for Comments</u>: June 15, 2022 <u>Date to Close</u>: June 17, 2022

<u>Description</u>: A DRI review of a proposal to construct a mixed-use project with 60 single family lots, 64 townhomes, 303 multi-family apartments, 13,000 SF of office space, 10,000 SF of retail, and 20,000 SF of restaurant space on a 68 acre site in Forsyth County. The site has been partially developed for agricultural use. Baldrige Creek runs through the site.

Key Comments

The project is partially aligned with the applicable Developing Suburbs growth policy recommendations which state: "There is a need in these areas for additional preservation of critical environmental locations and resources, as well as agricultural and forest uses." It could be better aligned through retention of additional undisturbed areas and through the utilization of the nearly 36 acres of proposed open space/stream buffer areas as managed conservation area.

The project is expected to generate approximately 4,580 daily new car trips; a number of improvements to mitigate project generated vehicular traffic are identified in the TIS.

The project's incorporation of a multi-use trail and mixed-use layout are supportive of relevant regional growth management policies.

Incorporation of green stormwater and heat island mitigation designs for the roughly 1,126 surface car parking spaces proposed would be supportive of regional environmental policies.

General Comments

According to the ARC Unified Growth Policy Map (UGPM), part of The Atlanta Region's Plan, the site of this DRI is designated as Developing Suburbs. The Plan's Regional Development Guide (RDG) details general information and policy recommendations for Developing Suburbs which are provided at the end of these comments.

Transportation and Mobility Comments

ARC's Transportation Access and Mobility Group comments will be provided in the Final Report.

The project is expected to generate approximately 4,580 daily new car trips; a number of improvements to mitigate project generated vehicular traffic are identified in the TIS.

A total of 1,126 parking spaces are provided which is almost double the required number of 677 spaces; no EV charging stations appear to be proposed. A reduction of total spaces to an amount closer to the minimum required and the provision of EV parking spaces would be supportive of regional transportation policies.

Care should be taken to ensure that the constructed development provides an interconnected, functional, clearly marked and comfortable pedestrian experience on all driveways, paths, entrances, and parking areas. To the maximum extent possible, new driveways and intersection corners where pedestrians will cross should be constructed with minimal curb radii to reduce speeds of turning vehicles and decrease crossing distances for pedestrians.

ARC Natural Resources Comments

ARC's Natural Resources Group comments are attached.

The project site is in the Lake Lanier Watershed. The Lake Lanier watershed is upstream of the portion of the Chattahoochee River under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan River Protection Act. Lake Lanier, as a US Army Corps of Engineers lake, is exempt from the Georgia DNR Part 5 Minimum Planning Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds, and, as the site is more than seven miles upstream of the closest intake on the Chattahoochee, no other Part 5 Water Supply Watershed criteria apply.

Both the USGS coverage for the project area and the submitted site plan show two streams on the project property. Baldridge Creek runs along the northwestern, western and southwestern sides of the property and a tributary to Baldridge runs along the eastern side of the project property, joining Baldridge Creek near the southern end of the property. The site plan shows the 25-foot State Sediment and Erosion Control buffer as well as the Forsyth County's Stream Buffer Ordinance's 50-foot stream buffer and 75-foot impervious setback along both streams. The only proposed intrusions on the site plans are a stream crossing accessing the property from Freedom Parkway, which is exempt from the buffer standards and the possible intrusion

of a proposed 10-foot wide multi-use trail along Driveway 1 a few feet into the 75-foot setback, which may require a variance from the County.

Any unmapped streams on the property may also be subject to the City stream buffer ordinance, and all waters of the state on the property are subject to the State 25-foot Sediment and Erosion Control buffer.

Other Environmental Comments

Much of the existing site is wooded; additional retention of existing trees on the site would be desirable and in keeping with regional goals regarding carbon sequestration and climate change/heat island effect mitigation.

The project can further support The Atlanta Region's Plan in general by incorporating other aspects of regional policy, including green infrastructure and/or low-impact design, e.g., pervious pavers, rain gardens, vegetated swales, etc., in parking areas and site driveways, and as part of any improvements to site frontages.

Incorporation of green stormwater and heat island mitigation designs for the roughly 1,126 surface car parking spaces proposed would be supportive of regional environmental policies.

Approximately 36 acres of the site are shown as open space and water quality protection buffer areas. Designation of this area as managed open/conservation space would substantially reduce the overall impact of the project. There may be potential opportunities for linking these fragmented undeveloped areas with adjacent undeveloped or protected areas to ensure their maintenance and potential use for recreation or habitat preservation.

Unified Growth Policy: Developing Suburbs

Developing Suburbs are areas in the region where suburban development has occurred, and the conventional development pattern is present but not set. These areas are characterized by residential development with pockets of commercial and industrial development. These areas represent the extent of the urban service area. There is a need in these areas for additional preservation of critical environmental locations and resources, as well as agricultural and forest uses. Limited existing infrastructure in these areas will constrain the amount of additional growth that is possible. Transportation improvements are needed within these Developing Suburbs, but care should be taken not to spur unwanted growth.

The intensity and land use of this proposed project is partially aligned with The Atlanta Region's Plan recommendations for Developing Suburbs. The project's mixed-use plan, proposed multi-use trail, and designation of nearly 36 acres or half of the total project site as open space are supportive of Developing Suburbs policies. The project could be made more responsive to these goals and policies by retaining additional wooded area, dedicating undisturbed areas for conservation uses, and employing green infrastructure in the surface parking areas. Forsyth County leadership and staff, along with the applicant

team, should collaborate closely to ensure maximum sensitivity to the needs of nearby local governments, neighborhoods, and natural systems.

THE FOLLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES RECEIVED NOTICE OF THIS REVIEW:

ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE
GEORGIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY

CITY OF CUMMING

GEORGIA CONSERVANCY

FORSYTH COUNTY

If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Donald Shockey at (470) 378–1531 or dshockey@atlantaregional.org. This finding will be published to the ARC review website located at http://atlantaregional.org/plan-reviews.





Developments of Regional Impact

	DRI Home	<u>Tier Map</u>	<u>Apply</u>	<u>View Submissions</u>	<u>Logout</u>
DRI #3594					
	Б	EVELOPME	NT OF REC	SIONAL IMPACT	
	_		I DRI Infor		
	meet or exceed ap			asic project information that will al both the Rules for the DRI Proce	
		Local Go	vernment	Information	
Subn	nitting Local Governr	nent: Forsyth			
In	dividual completing	form: Leslie Sila	as		
	Teleph	none: 770-205-4	1568		
	E-	mail: Idsilas@fo	orsythco.com		
vhich the largest por	tion of the project is			itiating the DRI review process. nformation	
N:	ame of Proposed Pro	oject: Empire H	wv 306		
	dress, GPS Coordin	ates, -84.081 34.	251 Degrees		
or Leç	gal Land Lot Descrip	, <u> </u>	40.01 1 =		_//
Br	ief Description of Pro	Apartments	s, totaling 432	amily detached residential lots, 6 Residential units, 13,000 SF office	
Development Type:					
O(not selected)	(OHotels		OWastewater Treatment F	acilities
Office	(Mixed Use		OPetroleum Storage Facili	ties
Ocommercial	(OAirports		OWater Supply Intakes/Re	servoirs
OWholesale & Distr	ibution	OAttractions & Re	ecreational Fac	ilities Olntermodal Terminals	
OHospitals and Hea	alth Care Facilities	⊃Post-Secondary	Schools	OTruck Stops	
OHousing		Waste Handling		OAny other development ty	ypes
Olndustrial	(Quarries, Aspha	alt & Cement P	ants	
If other development	type, describe:				
Project Size (#	of units, floor area,	etc.): 432 Resid	lential units, 1	3,000 SF Office, 10,000 SF Re	etail, 20,000 SF Restaura
	Devel	oper: Empire Co	ommunities		
	Mailing Add	ress: 5775 Gler	nridge Drive		
	Addre), Suite 350		
		City: Atlant		State: GA	Zip: 30328
	Teleph				
	·		empirecomm	unities.com	
ls prop	perty owner different developer/applic		cted) Yes N	0	
	If yes, property or	vner: R. Smith,	M.S. Bennett	, B.R. Shadburn, K.T. Shadbur	n, L & B.M SI

DRI Initial Information Form

Is the proposed project entirely located within your local government's jurisdiction?	○(not selected) Yes No	
If no, in what additional jurisdictions is the project located?		
Is the current proposal a continuation or expansion of a previous DRI?	○(not selected)○Yes®No	
If yes, provide the following information:	Project Name: Project ID:	
The initial action being requested of the local government for this project:	Rezoning Variance Connect Sewer Connect Water Permit Other	
Is this project a phase or part of a larger overall project?	○(not selected)○Yes®No	
If yes, what percent of the overall project does this project/phase represent?		
Estimated Project Completion Dates:	This project/phase: 2025 Overall project: 2025	
Save Updates to Submitted Form	Save without Submitting Cancel	_
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You are logged in to the DRI Website as *dshockey* . | Change Password | Go to Applications Listing

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DRI Site Map | Contact





Developments of Regional Impact

DRI Home

Tier Map

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DRI #3594

DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT Additional DRI Information

This form is to be completed by the city or county government to provide information needed by the RDC for its review of the proposed DRI. Refer to both the Rules for the DRI Process and the DRI Tiers and Thresholds for more information.

Local Government Information

Submitting Local Forsyth

Government:

Individual completing form: Leslie Silas

Telephone: 770-205-4568

Email: Idsilas@forsythco.com

Project Information

Name of Proposed Project: Empire Hwy 306

DRI ID Number: 3594

Developer/Applicant: Empire Communities

Telephone: 770-541-5250

Email(s): knorton@empirecommunities.com

Additional Information Requested

Has the RDC identified any additional information

required in order to proceed with the official regional

(not selected) Yes No

review process? (If no, proceed to Economic

Impacts.)

If ves, has that additional information been provided

(not selected) Yes No to your RDC and, if applicable, GRTA?

If no, the official review process can not start until this additional information is provided.

Economic Development

Estimated Value at Build-Out:

\$129,433,591

Estimated annual local tax revenues (i.e., property tax, sales tax) likely to be

\$9,647,071

generated by the proposed

Is the regional work force

sufficient to fill the demand created by the proposed

(not selected) Yes No

project?

Will this development displace any existing uses?

(not selected) Yes No

If yes, please describe (including number of units, square feet, etc):

Water Supply

Name of water supply provider for this site:

City of Cumming

What is the estimated water supply demand to be generated by the project, measured in Millions of Gallons Per Day (MGD)?	0.10 MGD							
Is sufficient water supply capacity available to serve the proposed project?	(not selected) Yes No							
If no, describe any plans to expand the existing water supply capacity:								
Is a water line extension required to serve this (not selected) Yes No project?								
If yes, how much additional 0.71 miles	line (in miles) will be required?							
Wastewater Disposal								
Name of wastewater treatment provider for this site:	Forsyth County							
What is the estimated sewage flow to be generated by the project, measured in Millions of Gallons Per Day (MGD)?	0.10 MGD							
Is sufficient wastewater treatment capacity available to serve this proposed project?	(not selected) Yes No							
If no, describe any plans to e	xpand existing wastewater treatment capacity:							
Is a sewer line extension required to serve this project?	(not selected) Yes No							
If yes, how much additional li	ine (in miles) will be required?0.5 miles							
	Land Transportation							
How much traffic volume is expected to be generated by the proposed development, in peak hour vehicle trips per day? (If only an alternative measure of volume is available, please provide.)	24 hour 2 way trips: 4,543; AM peak hours: 93 entering and 164 exiting; PM peak hours: 304 entering and 246 exiting							
Has a traffic study been performed to determine whether or not transportation or access improvements will be needed to serve this project?	(not selected) Yes No							
Are transportation improvements needed to serve this project?	O(not selected) Yes No							
If yes, please describe below	If yes, please describe below:See detailed traffic study for summary of recommendations.							
	Solid Waste Disposal							
How much solid waste is the project expected to generate annually (in tons)?	2,100 tons							
Is sufficient landfill capacity available to serve this proposed project?	(not selected) Yes No							
If no, describe any plans to e	xpand existing landfill capacity:							
Will any hazardous waste be generated by the development?	(not selected) Yes No							
If yes, please explain:								
Stormwater Management								
What percentage of the site Approximately 35% is projected to be								

impervious surface once the

proposed development has been constructed?							
Describe any measures proposed (such as buffers, detention or retention ponds, pervious parking areas) to mitigate the project's impacts on stormwater management:Stormwater management measures include forebays, infiltration trenches or chambers, dry detention basins.							
	Environmental Quality						
Is the development located w	vithin, or likely to affect any of the following:						
Water supply watersheds?	(not selected) Yes No						
2. Significant groundwater recharge areas?	(not selected) Yes No						
3. Wetlands?	○(not selected) ○Yes ◎ No						
4. Protected mountains?	(not selected) Yes No						
5. Protected river corridors?	(not selected) Yes No						
6. Floodplains?	(not selected) Yes No						
7. Historic resources?	(not selected) Yes No						
8. Other environmentally sensitive resources?	○(not selected)○Yes®No						
If you answered yes to any q	question above, describe how the identified resource(s) may be affected:						
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DRI Site Map | Contact

2022 EMPIRE HIGHWAY 306 DRI Forsyth County Natural Resources Group Comments May 24, 2022

While ARC and the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District have no regulatory or review authority over this project, the Natural Resources Group has identified County and State regulations that could apply to this property. Other regulations may also apply that we have not identified.

Watershed Protection

The project site is in the Lake Lanier Watershed. The Lake Lanier watershed is upstream of the portion of the Chattahoochee River under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan River Protection Act. Lake Lanier, as a US Army Corps of Engineers lake, is exempt from the Georgia DNR Part 5 Minimum Planning Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds, and, as the site is more than seven miles upstream of the closest intake on the Chattahoochee, no other Part 5 Water Supply Watershed criteria apply.

Stream Buffers

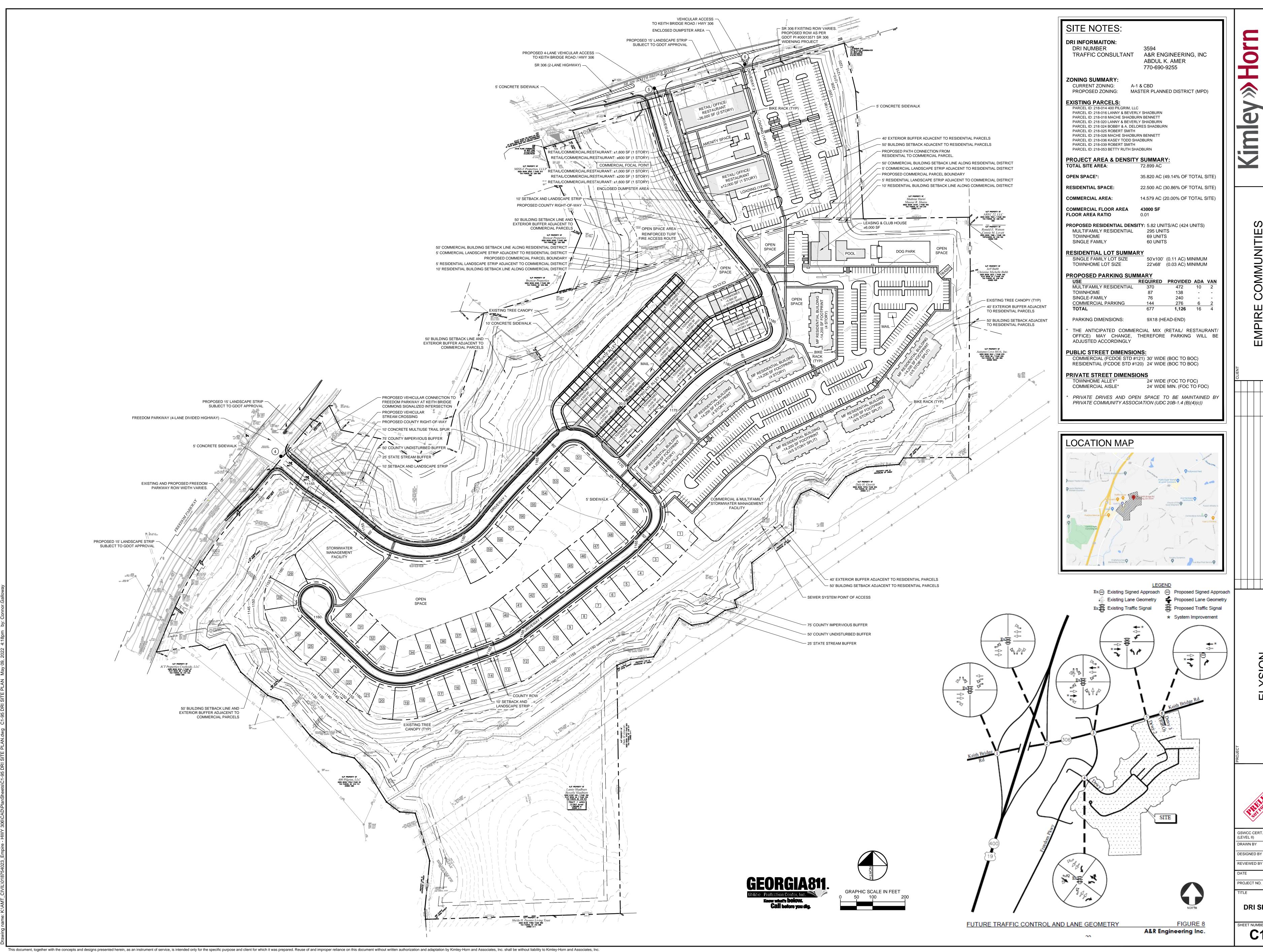
Both the USGS coverage for the project area and the submitted site plan show two streams on the project property. Baldridge Creek runs along the northwestern, western and southwestern sides of the property and a tributary to Baldridge runs along the eastern side of the project property, joining Baldridge Creek near the southern end of the property. The site plan shows the 25-foot State Sediment and Erosion Control buffer as well as the Forsyth County's Stream Buffer Ordinance's 50-foot stream buffer and 75-foot impervious setback along both streams. The only proposed intrusions on the site plans are a stream crossing accessing the property from Freedom Parkway, which is exempt from the buffer standards and the possible intrusion of a proposed 10-foot wide multi-use trail along Driveway 1 a few feet into the 75-foot setback, which may require a variance from the County. Any unmapped streams on the property may also be subject to the City stream buffer ordinance, and all waters of the state on the property are subject to the State 25-foot Sediment and Erosion Control buffer.

Storm Water/Water Quality

The project should adequately address the impacts of the proposed development on stormwater runoff and downstream water quality.

During the planning phase, the stormwater management system (system) should meet the requirements of the local jurisdiction's post-construction (or post-development) stormwater management ordinance. The system should be designed to prevent increased flood damage, streambank channel erosion, habitat degradation and water quality degradation, and enhance and promote the public health, safety and general welfare. The system design should also be in accordance with the applicable sections of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (www.georgiastormwater.com) such as design standards, calculations, formulas, and methods. Where possible, the project should use stormwater better site design practices included in the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual, Volume 2, Section 2.3.

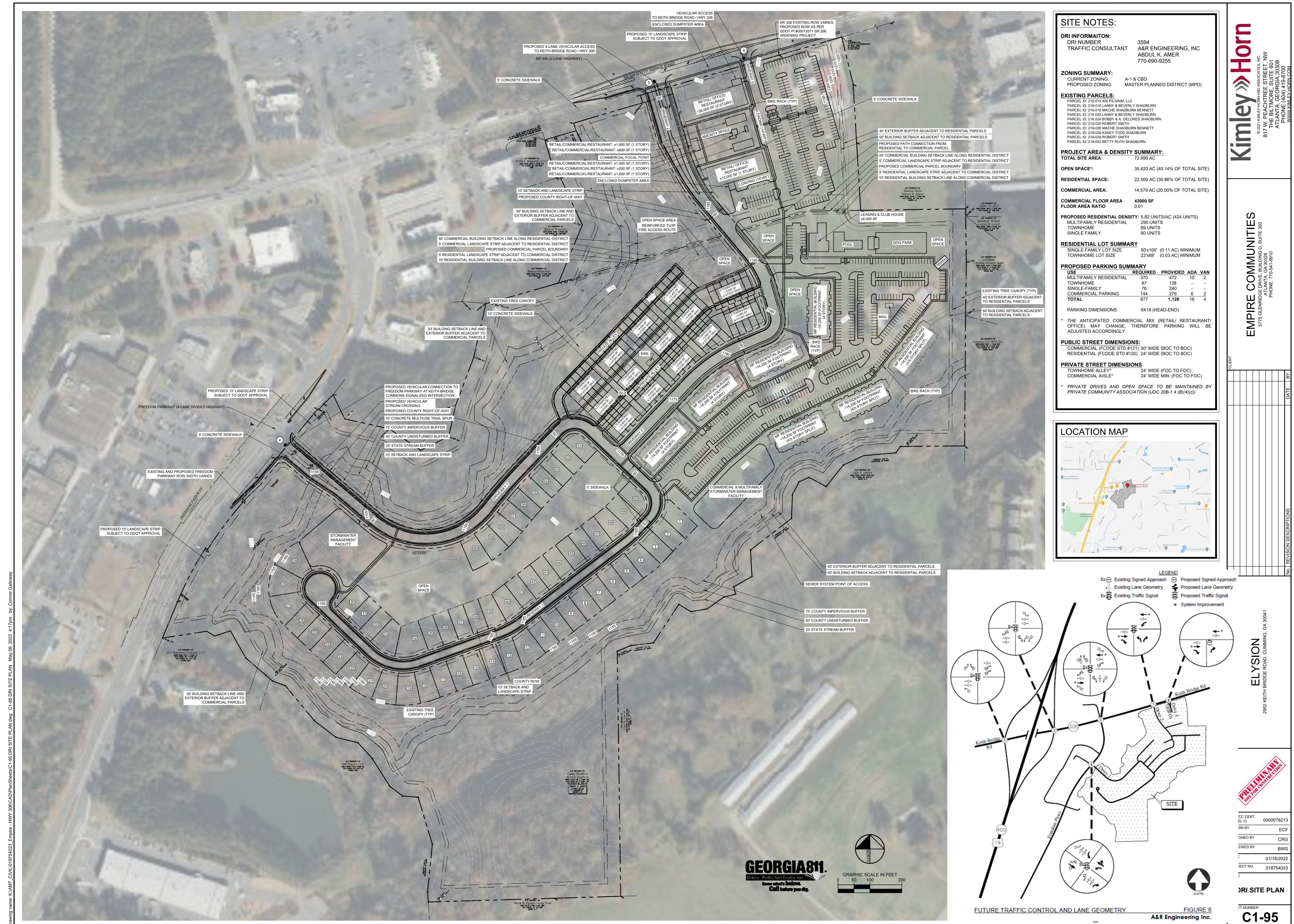
During construction, the project should conform to the relevant state and federal erosion and sedimentation control requirements.



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DRI SITE PLAN

C1-95



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