

**HALL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

Applicant Degaria Dowdy

Request **Rezone** | from Light Industrial (I-1) and
Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) to Heavy
Industrial (I-2)

Proposed Use Repackaging of processed animal products

Size 4.42± acres

Zoning Current: Light Industrial (I-1) and Agricultural
Residential 1 (AR-1) | Proposed: Heavy
Industrial (I-2)

Location **2620 & 2634 Barrett Road** | Tax Parcels
15023A000037 & 15023A000007

Commission District Three

Planning Commission Date June 16, 2025

Staff Recommendation **Approval, with conditions**, as the proposed use
is consistent with the Employment or Business
Nodes & Corridors future land use classification
within the Comprehensive Plan.

Record Number..... HZON25-0023

Planning Commission Recommendation..... **Approval, with conditions**

Vote: 4-0 (Varner absent)

Planning Commission Conditions:

1. Development is approved as generally shown on the site plan dated March 27, 2025, and described in the supplemental project narrative dated April 03, 2025, modified as necessary for compliance with conditions herein and development standards enforced at the time of site plan approval.
2. Access to the property shall be approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation. The developer shall be responsible for all costs associated with improvements necessary for access to the development.

3. No variances to Gateway Corridor Overlay District (GCOD) standards and no additional variances or development exceptions are granted as part of this request that are not explicitly granted herein.
4. The development shall be compliant with the Unified Development Code of Hall County, as well as any other agencies or reviewing departments, including, but not limited to the Fire Marshal and Hall County Engineering.
5. All conditions of zoning shall be made as part of any plats or construction plans created for the property.
6. Any future improvements or development on the property shall be brought into compliance with the Hall County Unified Development Code. All proposed work must be submitted for review, and the appropriate permits shall be obtained prior to any construction.
7. No outdoor operations beyond loading and unloading of trucks shall be permitted on site. All operations shall be completely contained within the structure.
8. No outdoor storage shall be permitted per the Gateway Corridor Overlay District (GCOD) standards.
9. The following uses shall not be allowed:
 - a. Adult establishments
 - b. Funeral homes
 - c. Crematorium
 - d. Psychic or fortune teller
 - e. Pawn shop or pawn broker
 - f. Smoke or vape shop
 - g. Truck stop

Excerpts from the minutes of the June 16, 2025 meeting

Applicant's Presentation:

Vamsee Polamarasetty, Planner, presented a summary of the request.

DeGaria Dowdy, 607 Gordon Street, Jefferson, presented the request. The applicant is requesting to rezone a 4.42± acre tract from Light Industrial (I-1) and Agricultural Residential I (AR-I) to Heavy Industrial (I-2) to allow for the repackaging of processed animal products. The subject property is located within the Gateway Corridor Overlay District (GCOD) and is currently developed with approximately 47,082 square feet of existing metal buildings, including two warehouses and an office building constructed in 1969 and 1987.

Public Forum:

There were no comments in support or opposition.

Motion: A motion to approve, with conditions was made by Stan Hunt and seconded by Frank Sosebee. Vote: 4-0 (Varner absent)

Conditions:

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 2. Access to the property shall be approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation. The developer shall be responsible for all costs associated with improvements necessary for access to the development.
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 7. No outdoor operations beyond loading and unloading of trucks shall be permitted on site. All operations shall be completely contained within the structure.
 8. No outdoor storage shall be permitted per the Gateway Corridor Overlay District (GCOD) standards.
 9. The following uses shall not be allowed:
 - a. Adult establishments
 - b. Funeral homes
 - c. Crematorium
 - d. Psychic or fortune teller
 - e. Pawn shop or pawn broker
 - f. Smoke or vape shop
 - g. Truck stop
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Staff recommends APPROVAL of the applicant's requests with the following conditions:

1. Development is approved as generally shown on the site plan dated March 27, 2025, and described in the supplemental project narrative dated April 03, 2025, modified as necessary for compliance with conditions herein and development standards enforced at the time of site plan approval.
2. Access to the property shall be approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation. The developer shall be responsible for all costs associated with improvements necessary for access to the development.
3. No variances to Gateway Corridor Overlay District (GCOD) standards and no additional variances or development exceptions are granted as part of this request that are not explicitly granted herein.
4. The development shall be compliant with the Unified Development Code of Hall County, as well as any other agencies or reviewing departments, including, but not limited to the Fire Marshal and Hall County Engineering.
5. All conditions of zoning shall be made a part of any plats or construction plans created for the property.

Summary Analysis

The applicant is requesting to rezone a 4.42± acre tract from Light Industrial (I-1) and Agricultural Residential I (AR-I) to Heavy Industrial (I-2) to allow for the repackaging of processed animal products.

The subject property is located within the Gateway Corridor Overlay District (GCOD) and is currently developed with approximately 47,082 square feet of existing metal buildings, including two warehouses and an office building constructed in 1969 and 1987.

The surrounding properties are zoned and developed as outlined below:

North: Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) and Office & Institutional (O-I): vacant
South: Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1): single-family residences (Sherwood Forest Subdivision)
East: Light Industrial (I-1): gas holding tanks
Planned Industrial Development (PID): vacant
West: Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1): single-family residences

The applicant is requesting to rezone the subject parcels to allow for the repackaging and handling of processed animal products, primarily poultry. The combined development site consists of approximately 4.42± acres. The narrative states that the location and existing infrastructure make the property well-suited for the proposed use.

The proposed use will operate within two warehouses and an office building, and will utilize the existing infrastructure along with existing connections to public water service and an on-site septic system. No

renovations or alterations to the existing buildings or the development site are proposed as part of this request.

The existing development standards for the project are identified in the table below and are compared to the GCOD requirements (6.2):

GCOD Analysis

Standard	Proposed Work	Notes	Compliance
6.2.5.A.– Transitional buffers	The developed portion of the site is approximately 30 feet from the property zoned Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1).	A 50-foot transitional buffer is required adjacent to residential property. Buffers shall comply with GCOD standards.	Deficient
6.2.5.B.1 – Additional Landscape and Screening	None	Shrubs must be planted within ten feet of the foundation of the primary structure along each building facade at the rate of at least 20 shrubs per 100 lineal feet of building facade except for sides or rear of building used for loading or service areas. Foundation plantings may be clustered to provide visual interest.	Deficient
6.2.5.B.2 – Additional Landscape and Screening	None	Along each street frontage there must be a landscape strip at least 10 feet in width except for perpendicular crossings for driveways and utilities.	Deficient
6.2.5.C.1 – Parking Lot Design -Required # of Parking Spaces	The submitted site plan shows 59 existing parking spaces on site; only 15 are required.	Off-street parking space calculations are governed by Sec. 8.1 of the UDC. The maximum number of parking spaces that may be constructed on impervious surfaces may be no more than 125 percent of the minimum number of parking spaces required in Sec. 8.1.	Deficient

6.2.5.C.2.e – Parking Lot Design - Location	Existing parking is located along the front of the property.	Off-street parking must be located to the side or rear of the principal building and may not be located between the building and the street.	Deficient
6.2.5.D – Outdoor lighting	Unknown	Shall comply with GCOD standards.	Unknown
6.2.6 - Architectural Standards	Metal Buildings	Architectural metal panels are restricted to no more than 50 percent of the surface area of each side of a building.	Deficient
6.2.7 – Signs	Unknown	Signage shall comply with GCOD standards.	Unknown

Based on the future land-use plan, staff finds the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and future land use designation of Employment or Business Nodes & Corridors. These areas could consist of industrial and/or office uses housed in either formalized campuses or along major road corridors that have existing or future access to water and sewer. They may also consist of higher-intensity commercial uses, low-intensity, consumer-facing industrial uses that house businesses that serve nearby communities, and some higher density residential, where appropriate.

Zoning Analysis

When considering a zoning amendment to the zoning maps, the Planning Commission must study the need and justification for the change based on a determination of the facts applicable to the particular case, and the following general lines of inquiry must be considered:

- a. Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use, development and zoning of adjacent and nearby property; **The proposed Heavy Industrial (I-2) zoning district is consistent with the use, development, and zoning of adjacent and nearby properties.**
- b. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property; **The proposed rezoning should not adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent properties.**
- c. Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned; **The property has reasonable economic use as currently zoned.**
- d. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, schools, police protection, fire protection, public health facilities or emergency medical service; **The proposed rezoning is not expected to cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, schools, police protection, fire protection public facilities, or emergency medical service. The property is served by on-site septic and City of Gainesville public water.**

- e. Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the future land use plan for the physical development of the area; **The proposed use is consistent with the future land use designation of “Business & Employment Nodes and Corridors” which may consist of industrial and/or office uses housed in either formalized campuses or along major road corridors that have existing or future access to water and sewer. They may also consist of higher-intensity commercial uses, low-intensity, consumer-facing industrial uses that house businesses that serve nearby communities, and some higher density residential, where appropriate.**
- f. The extent to which property values are diminished by the existing zoning restrictions; **Staff is unable to determine the extent to which property values are diminished by the existing zoning restrictions.**
- g. The extent to which the destruction of the subject property's value under the existing zoning promotes the health, safety, morals or general welfare of the public; **Staff is unable to comment on the impact of property values without a full market analysis. Multiple factors impact property value including construction types, proposed uses, and maintenance. Often it is difficult to determine the effect of a development on adjacent properties until the development is completed.**
- h. The relative gain to the public as compared to the hardship imposed upon the individual property owner; **Staff has not identified a hardship imposed on the property owner as the property is currently zoned.**
- i. The length of time the property has been vacant as zoned considered in the context of land development in the area in the vicinity of the property; **The property is currently developed with approximately 47,082 square feet of commercial space, including two warehouses and an office building constructed in 1969 and 1987.**
- j. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use or development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal; **Staff is not aware of any changing conditions affecting the use or development of the property.**
- k. Whether the change would create an isolated district unrelated to the surrounding districts; **While the proposed rezoning to I-2 would create a distinct zoning district, it would not be considered isolated in context. Surrounding properties are zoned Planned Industrial Development (PID), Office Institutional (O-I), and Light Industrial (I-1), with an existing Heavy Industrial (I-2) district located in proximity. As such, the proposed zoning is generally compatible with the existing zoning pattern and is not anticipated to conflict with the surrounding development character.**
- l. Whether the present zoning district boundaries are illogically drawn in relation to existing conditions in the area; **There is no evidence that the present zoning district boundaries are illogically drawn.**

- m. Whether the change requested is out of scale with the needs of the county as a whole or the immediate neighborhood; **No, the request is not out of scale with the needs of the county as a whole.**
- n. Whether it is impossible to find adequate sites for the proposed use in districts permitting such use and already appropriately zoned; **There are other properties within the county currently zoned for Heavy Industrial (I-2) uses; however, the applicant is seeking to establish the proposed use at the subject property, which is currently zoned Light Industrial (I-1). Rezoning to I-2 is necessary in order to accommodate the intended use of the repackaging of processed animal products.**
- o. Whether the need for rezoning could be handled instead by a variance request to the Planning Commission; **The request for rezoning could not be handled alternatively as a variance.**
- p. Whether there would be an ecological or pollution impact resulting from major modifications to the land if the request is granted; **Any land disturbance activities on the property shall be required to go through the land development permitting process, and as a result are subject to local, state, and federal regulations. As a result, there are no anticipated ecological or pollution impacts resulting from any modification to the land if the request is granted.**
- q. Whether there is reasonable evidence based upon existing and anticipated land use that would indicate a mistake was made in the original zoning of the property; **There is no indication that a mistake was made in the original zoning.**

11.2.6.E - Submission requirements

1. Any person or persons requesting a change in the official zoning map or use subject to approval of the County Commission must file an application with a plat or map of the property attached thereto, together with payment of such fees set forth in this Sec 11.2. to cover administrative and advertising costs, in the Planning and Zoning Department office. Such person or persons or their authorized agent must appear in person at the public hearing held to consider the district change. **The proposal meets the requirement. The applicant has paid the appropriate fees and understands that someone must be present at both the Hall County Planning Commission meeting and the voting meeting of the Hall County Board of Commissioners.**
2. All applications for a change of zoning classification or use subject to approval of the County Commission must include:
 - a. A narrative statement identifying the existing and proposed use of the property and addressing each of the criteria set forth in this Sec. 11.2. **The proposal provides a narrative outlining the intent of the development; however, the applicant has not prepared a response to each of the criteria listed in 11.2.6.E.2.**

- b. A site plan drawn to scale designating the area covered by the application and identifying existing and proposed buildings and uses, adjacent existing land uses, zoning on contiguous parcels, including those across an abutting public right-of-way, and any other significant site improvements proposed to accommodate the proposed use or buffer adjacent uses, etc., or a plat of the subject property where no specific land use is proposed. In cases where only a plat or map is provided and no land use is proposed, the Planning Commission and County Commission may evaluate the application based on the most intense possible land use permitted in the proposed district. **The proposal meets the requirement.**
- c. For any application for a slow rate land treatment system as defined in 7.6.9.D.1, additional requirements apply. **This standard is not applicable to the applicant's request.**
- d. For any application proposing the development of 100 or more residential dwelling units, a traffic impact study must be submitted prior to consideration of the application by the County Commission. At the applicant's expense, the traffic impact study must be prepared by a professional engineer in accordance with requirements established by the Hall County Engineering Department. The Engineering Department must review the traffic impact study and forward any comments to the County Commission. **This standard is not applicable to the applicant's request.**

Development Support and Constraints

Hall County Environmental Health

In an email dated May 13, 2025, Emily McGahee stated "Must meet all Environmental Health commercial septic system permitting requirements if able to be permitted by Environmental Health. Environmental Health can only permit residential strength wastewater; therefore, non-domestic wastewater will be required to be disposed of through public sewer or an EPD permitted system. Further determination will be made during the civil plan review process."

Georgia Department of Transportation

In an email dated May 8, 2025, Nakia Nembhard Civil Engineer 3, stated that GDOT coordination is required.

Hall County Public Works and Utilities

In a memorandum from Public Works and Utilities dated May 16, 2025, Director Bill Nash stated the following:

Engineering:

This site may require a stormwater management report should the site plan indicate the proposed development meets stormwater thresholds for impervious surfaces and/or disturbed acreage.

Traffic:

Driveways will need to meet County industrial standards

Utilities:

No sanitary sewer service in area. Hall County/Gainesville shared service area.

Hall County Fire Marshal

In an email dated May 9, 2025, John Hornick, NPQ Fire Service Plans Examiner 1, stated, "Hall County Fire Marshal's comments:

According to the Survey buildings 2620 and 2634 are classified as warehouses which would be classified according to Life Safety Code as Storage, the change of use will be to food handling and packaging which would be classified as industrial. Life Safety Code Section 43.7 Change of Use and Occupancy Classification requires all buildings to meet current fire code for the occupancy classification that the buildings will be used for, such as but not limited to the following 1) Installation of a fire protection system 2) Installation of a fire alarm system. 3) All 3 buildings will be required to meet the life safety code requirements of the occupancy that they are classified as before a passing life safety report will be issued. 4) ERRCS emergency responder radio communication system testing will be required in all 3 buildings to determine the emergency radio strength inside the structure. 5) Before any site development or building reconstruction occurs engineered / architectural plans will have to be submitted for review."