



REVISED STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

January 25, 2018

Christopher Tomlinson
Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
245 Peachtree Center Avenue, NE, Ste. 2200
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-1426

RE: Staff Report and Recommendations – Emerson Center (DRI #2764)

GRTA staff has reviewed Emerson Center (DRI #2764) Review Package, and provides this Staff Report and Recommendations pursuant to Section 2-302 of the *Procedures and Principles for GRTA Development of Regional Impact Review* ("P&P").

PROJECT SUMMARY

Name and Number of DRI:	DRI 2764 Emerson Center
Jurisdiction:	City of Smyrna
Local Development Approval Sought:	Rezoning and Annexation
Location:	This proposed development is located at 2800 and 2810 Spring Road, north of I-285, west of Cobb Parkway (US 41) and south of Spring Road.
Uses and Intensities of Use:	The mixed-use project is proposed to consist of approximately 87,500 SF of office space, 11,000 SF of retail space, a 200-room hotel and 310 multifamily residential units
Project Phasing & Build-Out Schedule:	2020
Net Trip Generation (AM / PM/ Daily):	465/ 461/ 5,791
Notice of Decision Due:	February 5, 2018
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:	Approval with Conditions

STAFF FINDINGS SUMMARY

Accessibility (§ 3-101.A., P&P)

The development is proposing pedestrian connections between the mixed uses on the site. The development plan also suggests design elements on the site that include bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The site plan also illustrates two circles labeled “future aerial pedestrian connection” on the north side of the site at Spring Road and on the south side of the site at Interstate 285. However, there is no internal pedestrian path between these two connections. It is also unclear where these pedestrian connections lead. No bike paths are present in the study network.

CobbLinc and MARTA operate bus routes in and around the study network. There is a bus stop on Spring Road east of Cumberland Boulevard and a bus stop on Cumberland Boulevard south of Spring Hill Parkway.

Connectivity (§ 3-101.B., P&P)

The site provides an internal road that bisects the site, connecting New Spring Road to Spring Hill Parkway. As an alternative to this internal road, traffic can turn into the Motor Court and parking lot adjacent to the hotel. While there are some pedestrian cross walks along the internal roadways, there is not an internal crosswalk that would connect the retail and office space building to the hotel.

Access Management (§ 3-101.C., P&P)

There are two access points along New Spring Road with an approximately 100-foot decal lane separating the right-in/right outs. There is a full access driveway at Spring Hill Parkway.

Regional Policies and Adopted Plans (§ 3-101.D., P&P)

Per ARC’s final staff report, the DRI is located in a Regional Employment Corridor as well as a Regional Center.

This DRI appears to create an infill, mixed- use development with a significant housing component - in close proximity to existing bus transit service and a developing mixed-use activity center nearby at The Battery Atlanta/SunTrust Park. However, care should be taken to ensure that the development promotes a functional, safe, clearly marked and comfortable pedestrian experience on all streets, paths and parking areas. Especially given the opportunity for district-wide connectivity via the two pedestrian bridges indicated on the site plan, ARC recommends that the development team reconsider how best to accommodate north-south pedestrian circulation internal to the site. Sidewalk access appears to end just south of the hotel at the Road C entrance to the parking structure for the multifamily component. Sidewalks do not appear to connect directly to either of the future aerial pedestrian walkways. The development team is also encouraged to ensure that end-of-trip facilities (bicycle racks, etc.) are provided for residents, workers and visitors at key locations throughout the site. The project could further support The Atlanta Region's Plan in general if it incorporated other aspects of regional policy, including green infrastructure and/or low-impact design (e.g., rain gardens, vegetated swales, etc.) as part of any improvements to streetscapes, driveways, parking areas, buildings, etc.

Vehicle Miles of Travel (§ 3-103.A.1., P&P)

The proposed development meets the 15% goal.

	Build-out Total
Gross Trip Generation:	5,791

(-)Mixed-use reductions	380
(-)Pass-by trips	310
(-)Alternative modes	204
Net Trips:	4,897
Reduction Percentage	15.43%

Transportation and Traffic Analysis (§ 3-103.A.2., P&P)

The site is expected to impact regional mobility on adjacent roadways. Staff is not aware of any factors that could hinder the implementation of necessary improvements.

Relationship to Existing Development and Infrastructure (§ 3-103.A.3., P&P)

GRTA staff is unaware of any non-transportation related infrastructure deficiencies.

TECHNICAL COMPLIANCE WITH GRTA DRI REVIEW STANDARDS

The recommendations in this document are based on the information found in the Technical Analysis Transmittal dated January 16, 2018. The review package includes: (1) the site development plan (Site Plan) dated December 8, 2017 titled “Emerson Center” prepared by Summit Engineering Consultants, Inc with a final draft received on December 19, 201 (2) the transportation analysis dated December 11, 2017 prepared by A& R Engineering Inc, received by GRTA on December 12, 2017.

Technical Analysis Findings:

The technical analyses transmittal reported the improvements that serve the DRI in the build-out year, without regard to whether the improvements are generated as a direct result of the DRI. These improvements are “land transportation service[s] or access improvement[s] which is [are] necessary in order to provide a safe and efficient level of service to residents, employees and visitors of a proposed DRI” (Principles and Procedures, Section 1-201.S.) The improvements are either (1) improvements currently in an adopted transportation improvement program (TIP) or regional transportation plan (RTP) or (2) improvements that were identified in the Review Package. The following improvements in the study network are documented in an adopted TIP or RTP, have been assumed as built in the analyses of the no-build and build conditions for the build-out year, and are planned for completion before the build-out of the proposed project:

TABLE 5 – PLANNED AND PROGRAMMED IMPROVEMENTS				
ARC#/GDOT#/ Local#	Project	Type of Improvement	Network Year	Source
AR-ML-200/ 0001758	Top-End Express – Managed Lanes & CD Lanes on I-285 from I-20 (West-End) to I-20 (East-End)	Roadway Corridor (Managed Lanes)	2022 LET	ARC/GDOT
0010008/ X2604	Cumberland Boulevard safety and operational improvements, turn lanes, sidewalks	Operational Improvement	2018	GDOT/ Cobb DOT/ Cumberland CID

The following improvement in the study network was identified in the Review Package as necessary to bring the level of service up to an applicable standard before the build-out of the proposed project:

General Conditions for GRTA Notice of Decision:

- Provide sidewalks on both sides of all internal roads connecting all buildings and site access points.
- Provide sidewalks along all property frontages.
- Provide pedestrian facilities internally connecting all structures and land uses creating a network throughout DRI project site
- Provide bike racks at all non-residential or multi-family buildings.
- Provide internal pedestrian connectivity between pedestrian bridges on site.

Road Improvements for GRTA Notice of Decision:

- Replace the existing eastbound protected left turn phase with protected + permissive phasing at the intersection of Spring Road at Cumberland Boulevard.
- Create a channelized island on the southbound right turn lane at the intersection of Spring Road at Cumberland Boulevard.
- Create a channelized island for westbound right turn movements at Cumberland Boulevard and Spring Hill Parkway.

Please confirm if a meeting is necessary to discuss the above recommended conditions. At this time, the Executive Director's decision is scheduled for issuance by February 5, 2018. If you have questions, please contact me directly at 404-893-6171.

GRTA Review by:
Emily Estes
Planner

cc:

Jon West, DCA
Annie Gillespie, SRTA/GRTA
Andrew Smith, ARC
Marquitrice Mangham, ARC
Paul DeNard, GDOT District 7
Tim Mathews, GDOT District 7
Karyn Matthew, Cobb County DOT
Amy Diaz, Cobb County DOT
Kevin Moore, City of Smyrna
Russell Martin, City of Smyrna
Ken Suddreth, City of Smyrna
Eric Randall, City of Smyrna

Garvis Sams, Sams, Larkin, Huff and Balli LLP
Abdul Amer, A & R Engineering, Inc.
Abby Rettig, A & R Engineering, Inc.
Chris Harrell, Summit Engineering