

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) has completed its review of the following Development of Regional Impact (DRI). This report contains the NEGRC's assessment of how the proposed project relates to the policies, programs, and projects articulated in the Regional Plan and Regional Resource Plan. Also included is an assessment of likely interjurisdictional impacts resulting from the proposed development, as well as all comments received from identified affected parties and others during the fifteen-day comment period.

The materials presented in this report are purely advisory and under no circumstances should be considered as binding or infringing upon the host jurisdiction's right to determine for itself the appropriateness of development within its boundaries.

Transmittal of this DRI report officially completes the DRI process. The submitting local government may proceed with whatever final official actions it deems appropriate regarding the proposed project, but it is encouraged to take the materials presented in the DRI report into consideration when rendering its decision.

Project I.D.:	DRI #3141
Name of Project:	Jesse Cronic Road Tract
Name of Host Jurisdiction:	Town of Braselton

Background

DRI review was initiated following the developer's request for a rezoning from the Town of Braselton. Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of August 7-22, 2020.

Proposed Development

Braselton 38, LLC is proposing to construct a mixed-use project consisting of multi-family, senior living, and various commercial uses in the Town of Braselton with an estimated completion date in 2025. The proposed development would occupy property totaling 39 acres off of Jesse Cronic Road, Tax Parcel 119 004J4, in the Town of Braselton. The project would include 360 multi-family units, 150 senior living units, a 15,000 sq. ft. daycare, a 25,000 sq. ft. medical office, 85,000 sq. ft. self-storage and 26,400 sq. ft. business service space/general light industrial. Additionally, a trail would be constructed between the multi-family and the senior living, connecting to a feature pond that will also serve as a drainage area. Approximately 50% of the site will be maintained as open space. Currently, the site is wooded with what appears to be a cleared easement through the middle of the site.

Compatibility with Existing Plans

The site is identified as Medium Density Residential (up to 5.9 units per acre) on the Braselton Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map (dated 7/29/2020). This land use category identifies single-family detached homes, townhomes, and missing-middle housing (duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage courts, etc.) as appropriate for the area. The site is currently zoned Manufacturing and Distribution (MD). While the site is currently vacant, the surrounding land uses are manufacturing and distribution. The Comprehensive Plan's Character

Area Map (dated 7/29/2020) identifies the area as a Transitional Employment Center. Recommended Land Uses include medium-density residential, commercial (retail and office), industrial (not warehousing and distribution), civic/institutional, mixed use, parks/recreation/conservation, and utilities. The proposed uses meet these recommendations. Policies for this character area include creating and enforcing appropriate transitions between warehouses and adjacent residential areas, maintaining truck access while limiting conflict with other modes, promoting access to Downtown, minimizing encroachment into natural areas, encourage a mix of housing, and coordinating decisions with Jackson County. The site plan shows that the proposed residential uses would generally be surrounded by open space and landscaped buffers which would provide a transition between those units and the proposed business service space and adjacent warehouses. The proposal does not identify the current or future types businesses that would be adjacent to the residences. As part of the approval process, the Town should ensure that there is no potential for conflict between business activities (including generation of excessive noise, noxious smells, bright light, and heavy truck traffic) and the residents that would live here.

The site is identified as “Developed” on the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Regional Land Use Map (dated 6/7/2018). The site is also within a Rapid Development portion of the region as labeled on the Areas Requiring Special Attention Map (dated 6/7/2018). The Regional Plan encourages development patterns that preserve open space through clustering, a mix of uses and housing types, shared parking, and neighborhood commercial centers in these kinds of areas. The commercial components of mixed-use properties should have attractive and accessible businesses for the people living in the residential portion of the project. Multi-modal transportation options are strongly encouraged to reduce the number of new automobile trips that a project may create. The site plan shows a proposed trail network onsite, 12-foot travel lanes on the proposed street, and significant amounts of space devoted to parking. The Regional Commission finds several opportunities to bring the proposal into closer alignment with the Regional Plan recommendations, including connecting the trail directly from the residential units to the daycare and medical office, narrowing travel lanes to 10 feet, adding protected bike lanes, providing on-street parking, and reducing the overall amount of parking by sharing spaces between multiple buildings and uses.

No Regionally Important Resources are identified within one (1) mile of the proposed site.

Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

The applicant states that the project would likely affect wetlands and other environmentally sensitive resources, but will not impact the other environmental quality factors including water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, protected mountain and river corridors, floodplains, historic resources as identified on the DRI Additional Form.

The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) does not identify any wetlands onsite; 40-acres of wetlands are located within one (1) mile of the site. The Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Conservation and Development Map (dated 7/19/2018) identifies 13-acres as “Conservation” within one (1) mile of the site and zero (0) acres onsite. Refer to the attached site plan for any stream, flood plain, and buffer locations.

The applicant estimates that 47% of the site would be covered in impervious surfaces. Stormwater would be handled by a pond that would also serve as an amenity. Three (3) intermittent streams are located onsite, but the site plan shows they would be protected by 75-foot buffers. The applicant states that open spaces, natural buffers, a pond, landscaped areas, and buffers for environmentally sensitive areas would be used to manage stormwater and protect natural resources. Reduction and rearrangement of parking and other impervious surface areas would help reduce the project’s impacts on nearby waterways and stormwater infrastructure.

Green infrastructure and low-impact development measures should be incorporated into the design. At minimum, the project should be in accordance with the current Georgia Stormwater Manual.

The applicant estimates the project would generate 4,163 new trips including 362 AM peak hour trips and 419 PM peak hour trips. The traffic study recommends adding a full-access driveway on SR-53 (Green Street) via Cherry Drive (the street directly north of the proposed apartments on the site plan) and a full-access driveway on Jesse Cronin Road. By creating multiple connections to the existing street network, the proposed street would improve access and mitigate some of the impact of new trips.

The project would be served by the Town of Braselton's water and sewer systems with an estimated daily demand of 0.126 MGD for each system. The applicant indicated that these demands can be covered by existing capacity. No water or sewer line extensions are anticipated. The applicant also estimates the project will generate 759 tons of solid waste annually and that sufficient landfill capacity exists to handle this waste.

The applicant estimates the project will be worth \$108 million dollars at build-out, which would generate \$1,550,000 in tax revenue. This translates to \$39,744 of revenue-per-acre. Braselton should measure the potential tax revenue against the additional life cycle maintenance costs of the infrastructure needed to serve this project to ensure that the proposal does not generate more maintenance costs than tax revenue.

Comments from Affected Parties

Alan Hood, Georgia Dept. of Transportation

The proposed a mixed-use project with 360 multi-family, 150 senior living units, a 15,000 s.f. daycare and a 25,000 s.f. medical office on a 39-acre tract is located more than 10 miles from any civil airport, and is located outside any FAA approach or departure surfaces, and airport compatible land use areas, and does not appear to impact any airport.

However, if any construction equipment reaches 200' above ground or higher, an FAA Form 7460-1 must be submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration. That may be done online at <https://oeaaa.faa.gov>. The FAA must be in receipt of the notification, no later than 120 days prior to construction. The FAA will evaluate the potential impact of the project on protected airspace associated with the airports and advise the proponent if any action is necessary.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed development.

Cyndi Sloan, Gwinnett County (see below)



August 21, 2020

Stephen Jaques
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
305 Research Drive
Athens, Georgia 30605-2795

Re: Development of Regional Impact- Local Government (DRI #3141) Jesse Cronic Road in Braselton

The Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development has reviewed the Regional Review Notification (Review) regarding the proposed development of a residential and commercial development located on Parcel # 119 004J4 in the city of Braselton. A request for rezoning has initiated this DRI review. The site is currently zoned M-D (Manufacturing & Distribution), but the zoning applied for is unspecified. The northern boundary of the site is along the south side of Interstate 85 approximately four miles from Gwinnett County. The proposed development consists of a 39-acre parcel located on Jesse Cronic Road. The site is currently undeveloped.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant proposes to develop the site as a mixed-use development that would include approximately 360 multi-family residential units on the 39 acre site. The proposed development would also offer 150 senior residence units, a 15,000 square foot daycare facility, 26,400 square feet of general business or light industrial space, and 85,000 square feet of self-storage. A pond will be constructed for storm water purposes. Several large warehouse/distribution facilities have been constructed to the immediate west of the site in recent years.

According to the Official Zoning Map of Gwinnett County, the unincorporated portion of the County along the City Limits of the Town of Braselton in Gwinnett is residential in character, which includes numerous low density single-family residential developments zoned R100 (Single Family Residence District), R-100 CSO (Conservation Subdivision Overlay District), R-100 MOD (Modified Single-Family Development), and OSC (Open Space Conservation District) and single-family dwellings on large lots zoned RA-200 (Agriculture Residence District).

COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING PLANS

According to the draft Town of Braselton 2020 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map, the site is given a Medium Density (up to 5.9 units an acre) designation. The map appears to give this designation specifically to the parcel where the site is located. An additional Character Area Map indicates this area is in the Transitional Employment Center Character Area, which could be compatible with the commercial uses planned for the site in this DRI. The site is immediately adjacent to the Historic Downtown Character Area.

The Northeast Georgia Regional Plan's Regional Land Use Map identifies the site as "Developed" (as in the character of the surrounding area, not the site specifically). The site is also within a Rapid Development category within the Areas Requiring Special Attention map. This designation encourages the preservation of open space, along with a variety of housing and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses. Approximately 50% of the site will be preserved as open space, according to the submittal materials, when "open space" is defined as non-impervious surface.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The National Wetlands Inventory does not identify any wetlands onsite, however the text and exhibits of the submittal packet indicate presence 2.64 acres of creeks, wetlands, or stream buffer areas. These are not clearly

delineated on an aerial photo-based zoning site plan provided in the submittal packet. No FEMA-defined floodplain is located on the site.

Gwinnett County is committed to the conservation, protection, and enhancement of the water quality in our streams and lakes. The potential impacts of the proposed mixed-use development suggest that conditions of zoning should be included requiring full buffers along all waterways meandering along and throughout the subject property.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Transportation

Access to the proposed developments would be provided through full service driveways on Jesse Cronin Road and SR 53 (Green Street) at Cherry Drive. Jesse Cronin Road crosses Interstate 85 immediately to the west. State Route 53 has an interchange northeast of the site, providing access to Interstate 85. The traffic study by A&R Engineering in the submittal packet forecasts 4,163 daily trips to/from the development, with 50% of those traveling on the portion of Highway 53 to or from Interstate 85. An unspecified portion of those will travel to or from the Gwinnett portion of Interstate 85, resulting in impact on the Interstate 85 traffic volume in Gwinnett. Gwinnett County DOT has no comment at this time.

Water Supply and Wastewater

According to the Review, the City of Braselton will be responsible for the water supply and sewer services with an estimated demand of 0.126 million gallons per day (MGD), which can be met with existing capacity.

Stormwater Management

According to the Review, the impervious surface coverage of proposed mixed-use development would be approximately 47% of the total area. A stormwater detention pond, which will also serve as an open space amenity, will be located in the northwest portion of the site adjacent to the senior living facility.

Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources has no comment on stormwater or water & sewer provisions for the project, as they have no direct impact on Gwinnett County.

Gwinnett County recommends that all work at a minimum be in accordance with the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual 2016 Edition. Additionally, the designated Stream Buffer Protection area and Best Stormwater Management Practices should diminish the impacts on stormwater management.

SERVICES

Solid Waste

No comment

Gwinnett County appreciates the opportunity to comment on this proposed development, and sincerely hopes that these comments will be given full consideration as the review process moves forward. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding Gwinnett County's position on this issue.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cyndi Sloan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cyndi Sloan, Acting Division Director
Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development