

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.

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<b>Project I.D.:</b>	DRI #3717
<b>Name of Project:</b>	Sun Lake Oconee
<b>Name of Host Jurisdiction:</b>	Greene County

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### **Background**

DRI review was initiated following the developer’s request for rezoning from Greene County. Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 6/10/22–6/25/22.

### **Proposed Development**

Sun Lake Oconee RV, LLC, is proposing construction of 700 units of residential space on a 315-acre tract along US-278 (Madison Highway) between Swords Road and JP Dyar Road in unincorporated Greene County (parcel numbers: 0310000020, 0310000030, and 031000003B). The proposed planned-unit development would include a neighborhood with 410 conventional single-family lots and another neighborhood of 290 clustered homes with shared parking, entry plazas, and green spaces. The proposed development’s recreational facilities include two amenity centers, four parks, and a kayak and paddle board launch area. Other facilities include a maintenance facility, a wastewater treatment plant, three proposed wells, and a dripfield. Currently, the site is mostly comprised of forested areas located along Lake Oconee, with the exception of one house located along JP Dyar Road. The project would be completed in one phase with an estimated completion date of December 2025.

### **Compatibility with Existing Plans**

The site is identified as “Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting” on the Greene County Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map (dated 10/16/2018). This designation is predominantly farms and forest land, with residential development maintaining a rural character of single-family homes on large lots. A1 and A2 zoning are the only categories that are listed as compatible with this area. The proposed development does not fit the designation that is proposed in Greene County’s Comprehensive Plan, as this site proposal cannot be

described as rural. Additionally, while the site design only includes single-family homes as described in the land use characterization in the Comprehensive Plan, the overall site density is 2.22 units per acre, which is much higher than a typical rural area. However, the site design makes an effort to minimize its impact on the surrounding area. 30% of the site will be left as open space (undeveloped lands, buffers, parks, trails, and amenity areas), which goes beyond the required 20% of open space. The site design also includes a 100-foot minimum buffer from surrounding parcels, a 150-foot buffer from Lake Oconee, and large buffers from surrounding homes (one buffer is 300 feet, another is 700 feet).

The portion of the site located along Lake Oconee is identified as “Developing” on the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Regional Land Use Map (dated 6/7/2018), and the rest of the site is identified as “Rural.” The Regional Plan recommends development that matches the region’s workforce, prices in the lifecycle cost of infrastructure, creates a sense of place, builds a compact development pattern on existing infrastructure, creates diverse and affordable housing, and compliments existing and planned transportation options—especially non-automobile transportation modes. The applicant states that the project can be staffed with the region’s existing workforce. No information was provided in the application that would enable determination of whether the proposal prices in the lifecycle cost of infrastructure. The proposed development only includes single-family detached homes; however, within the single-family category the development does include a diversity of housing and lot design, varying from conventional lots to “pod modules” that have shared parking, courtyards, and greenspaces. The site plan also shows a small range of home and garage size options for the conventional single-family lots, which might result in some variation in home prices, but given the project’s proximity to the lake, it is unlikely that the homes constructed would be considered “affordable housing.” The pod modules encourage compact development and would lower the impact of the development on the surrounding areas per unit, but the project would not be built on existing infrastructure as new wells and wastewater facilities would need to be constructed to support development at this location. The proposed development provides a number of trails within the development, but there are no sidewalks or trails proposed along US-278 that would provide pedestrian and bicycle access to other potential future development in the area. Sidewalks along streets within the residential areas are strongly recommended, but it is not indicated on the site plan whether sidewalks are proposed along the streets within the conventional residential area. The development promotes a sense of place due to its proposed open space facilities, the clustered configuration of some of the homes, and its location near Lake Oconee, which is a Regionally Important Resource.

### **Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts**

The applicant states that the project is unlikely to affect any of the environmental quality factors identified on the DRI Additional Form, including water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, protected mountain and river corridors, floodplains, historic resources, and other environmentally sensitive resources. The site area includes three streams connected to Lake Oconee as well as three wetlands. The proposed site plan includes one stream crossing, yet the rest of the proposed development is buffered at least 25 feet from any stream and 150 feet away from Lake Oconee. Existing streams and wetlands are to be preserved, and the applicant states that an estimated 30% of the site would be covered in impervious surface.

The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) identifies less than one wetland acre onsite and 1,355 wetland acres within one mile of the site, most of which are part of Lake Oconee. The Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Conservation and Development Map (dated 7/19/2018) identifies 315 acres of “Conservation” land onsite and 4,387 acres of “Conservation” land within one mile of the site. This “Conservation” land includes 192 acres of Regionally Important Resource (RIR) land onsite and 2,667 acres of RIR land within one mile of the site. Most of this acreage is part of the Northeast Georgia Green Infrastructure Network as identified in the Northeast

Georgia Resource Management Plan for Regionally Important Resources (dated 8/7/2018). Lake Oconee is a Regionally Important Resource site within one mile of the proposed site. The proposal should be designed to minimize disruption to the existing streams, associated wetlands, and floodplains to avoid future erosion, flooding, and degraded water quality onsite and downstream from the site. Low impact design measures, like bioswales, rain gardens, and other green infrastructure should be incorporated into the project design. At minimum, the project should be in accordance with the latest edition of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (Blue Book) and meet all relevant EPD requirements. However, given the site's proximity to the Regionally Important Resource of Lake Oconee and the extensive Conservation land onsite, the project should go above and beyond the minimum recommendations and protection standards.

KCI Technologies Inc. completed a traffic impact study that projects 2,436 new daily trips, including 152 AM peak hour trips and 207 PM peak hour trips from the proposed development. The proposed access to the site would include two driveways: the primary driveway would be at the intersection of US-278 and Lawrence Road, and the secondary driveway would be located along US-278 to the southeast of the primary access driveway. The traffic study recommends left and right-turning lanes to be introduced along US-278 for entering both driveways. The site plan offers many off-street trails for pedestrians to travel. However, the site plans should include features such as sidewalks, lighting, signage, or speed bumps to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians within the development.

The project would be served by three private wells for water supply and stored in a water storage tank. The community will have a private sewer system with a private onsite wastewater treatment plant and spray field application. The estimated daily demand for each system is 0.145 MGD. No municipal water or sewer line extensions are anticipated. The applicant estimates the project would generate 1,400 tons of solid waste annually and that sufficient landfill capacity exists to handle this waste. According to the Northeast Georgia Regional Solid Waste Authority's *Regional Solid Waste Management Plan (2021-2031)*, most municipal solid waste (MSW) generated in Greene County is disposed of in a landfill in Twiggs County. The applicant states that no hazardous waste would be generated.

The applicant estimates that the project would be worth \$58.5 million at build-out in 2025 and generate \$1,568,000 in annual local taxes. On a per-acre basis, the project would be worth approximately \$185,714 and generate approximately \$4,978 in tax revenue. Prior to approval, the County should measure the life cycle costs of the infrastructure needed to serve this project to ensure that they would not be committing to more maintenance expenses than the new tax revenue can cover.

### **Comments from Affected Parties**

*Greg Boike, Director of Public Administration, Middle Georgia Regional Commission*

I would not expect impacts to Middle Georgia from this project.

*Alan Hood, Airport Safety Data Program Manager, Georgia Department of Transportation*

The proposed of 700 units of residential space on a 315-acre tract zoned partially as LR1 (Lakeshore Single-Family Residential/Recreation District) as well as A1 (Agricultural District) is 7.7 miles west of the Greene County Regional Airport (3J7), and is located outside of any FAA approach or departure surfaces, and airport compatible land use areas, and does not appear to impact the airport.

However, if any construction or construction equipment reaches 200' AGL or more, 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.

*Joya McCants, Civil Engineer 3, Georgia Department of Transportation*

1. Provide additional operational analysis for having only 1 driveway
  - a. Utilize our GDOT Regulations for Driveway and Encroachment Control Manual to verify spacing is met for the deceleration lane and left turn lane
  - b. Verify there is enough right-of-way to put in the auxiliary turn lanes
  - c. Sight distance will need to be met based off AASHTO guidelines
2. Access points will be determined based off our sight distance requirements, driveway spacing, and spacing for the auxiliary lanes
  - a. Check and provide adequate sight distance for the secondary driveway using AASHTO Guidelines