

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 #4047
<b>Name of Project:</b>	Nancy Industrial Drive Tract
<b>Name of Host Jurisdiction:</b>	City of Hoschton

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### **Background**

The developer’s request to the City of Hoschton for rezoning initiated the review. The site would be rezoned from M-1 (Light Industrial) to PUD (Planned Unit Development). Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 8/15/23–8/30/23.

### **Proposed Development**

G.P.’s Enterprises, Inc., is proposing construction of a mixed-use planned unit development on a 56-acre site on the north side of State Route 53 at Nancy Industrial Drive in Hoschton. The parcel numbers are 113 030 and 113 118. A 1.2-acre portion of the current right-of-way for Nancy Industrial Drive would also be included within the project site. The development would include 352 townhouses, 360 multi-family housing units, 43,000 square feet of commercial and office space, and 20,000 square feet of civic space. The project would be completed in one phase with an estimated completion date in 2027.

According to the site plan, the multi-family residential housing would consist of three apartment buildings surrounding a central parking lot. At the north end of the parking lot, four smaller, unlabeled buildings are shown that might be either covered parking or storage buildings, based on their size and location. The townhouse area is depicted with a traditional gridded street pattern and includes an amenity area, including what appears to be a swimming pool. Four municipal buildings would surround a shared parking lot, with a small park area next to one of the municipal buildings. The municipal buildings would be directly accessible from Nancy Industrial Drive. Three retail/office/restaurant buildings are shown on the portion of the site

fronting State Route 53. Two are shown as strip-style buildings with parking in front, and the third is shown as a standalone building with parking on all four sides.

A creek forms part of the property line on the northern end of the site, and a small portion of the northern end of the site is within the 100-year floodplain; no construction is proposed within the floodplain or creek. Two detention ponds are shown on the site plan, the larger of which would be next to the creek and floodplain.

Currently the site is forested, except that a portion of an existing road (Nancy Industrial Drive) is within the site. Nancy Industrial Drive currently provides vehicular access to the City of Hoschton’s wastewater treatment facility, which is located immediately northeast of this site. The northern end of Nancy Industrial Drive would be rerouted slightly as part of this project, and 1.2 acres of right-of-way for Nancy Industrial Drive would be abandoned, as noted on the site plan. The site plan also notes that there are existing sewer lines and other utilities on the site that would be relocated to conform with the plan.

**Compatibility with Existing Plans**

In the City of Hoschton Comprehensive Plan (dated 2/15/21), the site is identified as “Industrial” on the Future Land Use Map. The proposed development is not consistent with the Future Land Use Map, as summarized in the table below:

**City of Hoschton Future Land Use Compatibility**

FUTURE LAND USE	LAND USE CATEGORY DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT’S COMPATIBILITY WITH CHARACTER AREA
INDUSTRIAL	“Manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehouses and wholesale trade facilities.”	<p>The proposed development would include a mix of residential, commercial, office, and civic uses. None of these uses are compatible with the plan’s description of Industrial land uses.</p> <p>Furthermore, the parcels immediately to the east of the project site are also shown as Industrial on the Future Land Use Map. Because of this, significant vegetative buffering is recommended along the east side of the development to separate the proposed residential and office uses from the sights and noise of current and potential future industrial uses of the adjoining parcels.</p> <p>If the City of Hoschton determines that it is in the best interest of the city to have a mixed-use development on this site, instead of the industrial uses envisioned in the comprehensive plan, then it should amend its comprehensive plan to change the designated future land use for this parcel to “PUD” prior to taking action to approve the proposed development.</p>

The site is identified as “Developed” on the Regional Land Use Map in the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan (dated 6/15/2023). The Regional Plan recommends developments that contain six characteristics that benefit the region’s people, economy, environment, and communities. The proposed project’s compatibility with these recommendations is summarized below:

### Regional Plan Compatibility

REGIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED PROJECT’S COMPATIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATION
<b>Enhance economic mobility and competitiveness</b>	The applicant states that the regional work force is sufficient to fill the demand created for the proposed project.
<b>Elevate public health and equity</b>	<p>As a mixed-use development, the proposed development has the potential to elevate equity and public health by enabling residents to be able to walk or bike to access goods, services, and potential employment nearby, especially if at least some of the housing units are available at price points that are affordable for people who work within the development.</p> <p>The site plan shows “open space” between this site’s residential units and adjoining industrial and utility sites, including the city’s wastewater treatment plant. However, it is unclear from the site plan whether this open space will include tall-enough and thick-enough vegetation to buffer residents from neighboring industrial and wastewater treatment uses.</p>
<b>Support and add value to existing communities</b>	<p>As a dense development with a well-connected street network that uses existing road and utility infrastructure where possible, this proposal represents an efficient use of land.</p> <p>However, as noted in the application, wastewater treatment capacity is a current concern in Hoschton. The proposed development would add many new users to an already-stressed wastewater treatment system. Before approving this project, Hoschton should confirm that the waste generated by this project would not exceed the capacity increases expected from its ongoing wastewater treatment plant upgrades.</p> <p>No information was provided about the project’s architectural design elements. The Regional Plan recommends new development that contributes to the region’s character and sense of place, and that uses context-sensitive design principles.</p>
<b>Create housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable</b>	<p>This project would add to the diversity of housing within Hoschton, as the proposal includes townhouses and multi-family housing units, which are both currently uncommon in the city. The different types of housing units are likely to be available at different price points. Further variation in home prices could be realized by including a range of finish levels for each housing type.</p> <p>No information was provided that would enable evaluation of whether this development would create affordable housing, except to note that multi-family housing is typically more affordable than single-family housing.</p>
<b>Include transportation choices and is well-connected with existing and planned transportation options</b>	<p>The street network is well-connected, both within the site (i.e., gridded streets) and between the project site and neighboring parcels (i.e., two street stubs facing neighboring parcels, multiple entrances from State Route 53, and a new connection with Amy Industrial Lane, which currently ends in a cul-de-sac).</p> <p>As a mixed-use site, this project has the potential to reduce the number of vehicular trips somewhat, if residents can walk or bike to access goods and services on the site.</p>
<b>Protect natural and historic resources</b>	A small portion of the site is within the 100-year floodplain, but no structures are proposed within the floodplain or stream buffers.

## Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

### Natural Resources:

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 chart below summarizes the number of acres within the site area as well as within a one-mile buffer around the site that contain: 1) wetlands, 2) conservation land, 3) Regionally Important Resources, and 4) threatened Regionally Important Resources. Please refer to the footnotes for definitions for each of these terms. No specific Regionally Important Resource sites are identified within one mile of the proposed site.

### Wetland, Conservation, and Regionally Important Resources

	AREA TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	PERCENT OF AREA
<b>SITE AREA (56.3 Acres)</b>	Wetland Acres <sup>1</sup>	0.7	1%
	Conservation Land <sup>2</sup>	1.2	2%
	Regionally Important Resources Land <sup>3</sup>	1.2	2%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resources Land <sup>4</sup>	0.7	1%
<b>1 MILE BUFFER AROUND SITE (2,853.9 Acres)</b>	Wetland Acres	46.3	2%
	Conservation Land	576.1	20%
	Regionally Important Resources Land	233.3	8%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resources Land	20.8	1%

### Water Supply and Wastewater:

The project would be served by the City of Hoschton water and sewer systems with an estimated daily demand of 0.25 MGD for each system. The applicant states that these demands cannot be covered by existing capacity. For water supply, the applicant notes that the city purchases water from the Town of Braselton and the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority and is actively engaged in efforts to increase available water supply. For wastewater, the applicant notes that the city is in the process of upgrading the capacity of its sewage treatment plant. No water or sewer line extensions are anticipated.

### Stormwater Management:

According to the applicant, an estimated 80% of the site would be covered in impervious surfaces. Two detention ponds for managing stormwater runoff are shown on the site plan. A stream forms a portion of the northern property border, and required buffers are shown on the site plan. No buildings or roads are proposed within the riparian buffer. 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

<sup>1</sup> Wetland acres are derived from the National Wetland Inventory (NWI)

<sup>2</sup> Conservation land is derived from the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan's Conservation and Development Map (6/15/2023).

<sup>3</sup> Regionally Important Resources were identified as a part of the Northeast Georgia Resource Management Plan for Regionally Important Resources (2/15/2018).

<sup>4</sup> This area represents the intersection between Conservation areas (identified on the Conservation and Development Map, 6/15/2023), adopted Regionally Important Resources (RIR), and "Developed" and "Developing" Regional Land Use areas (identified on the Regional Land Use Map, 6/15/2023).

with the latest edition of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (Blue Book) and meet all relevant EPD requirements.

#### Transportation:

A&R Engineering completed a traffic impact study that projects 8,537 new daily trips resulting from the proposed development, including 586 new AM peak hour trips and 699 new PM peak hour trips. The traffic study recommends that both full access driveways on State Route 53 be configured to include one entering lane and two exiting lanes consisting of left and right turn lanes, a stop sign on the driveway approach, and a left turn lane for entering traffic. One of the two entrances already includes a deceleration lane for entering traffic, and the study recommends adding a deceleration lane for entering traffic at the second entrance. Highway 53 would remain free flow at both entrances.

Additionally, the study recommends system improvements at the intersection of State Route 53 and Peachtree Road, which is located west of the proposed development. This intersection's northbound approach is already operating at level-of-service F in the "existing" condition. The study recommends that a detailed traffic engineering study be prepared for this intersection to see whether a traffic signal is warranted, and if so, that a signal be installed at this location. The study also recommends the construction of turn lanes on Peachtree Road and State Route 53.

#### Solid Waste:

The applicant estimates the project would generate 950 tons of solid waste annually and that sufficient landfill capacity exists to handle this waste. According to annual tonnage reports from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, almost all municipal solid waste (MSW) generated in Jackson County is disposed of in a landfill in Banks County. The applicant states that no hazardous waste would be generated.

#### Lifecycle Costs and Revenues:

The applicant estimates that the project would be worth \$240 million at build-out in 2027 and generate \$4 million in annual local taxes. On a per-acre basis, the project would be worth approximately \$4.3 million and generate approximately \$71,000 in tax revenue. Prior to approval, the City 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**

*Jamie Dove, Public Development Director, Jackson County*

(See attached)

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

The proposed construction of 352 townhouses, 360 multi-family housing units, 43,000 square feet of commercial/office space, in the city of Hoschton is 12 miles from Jackson County Airport (JCA). It is located outside any FAA approach or departure surfaces, and airport compatible land use areas, and does not appear to impact the airport.

If any construction equipment or construction exceeds 200' AGL, an FAA Form 7460-1 must be submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration according to the FAA's Notice Criteria Tool found here (<https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/gisTools/gisAction.jsp?action=showNoNoticeRequiredToolForm>). Those submissions for any associated cranes may be done online at <https://oeaaa.faa.gov>. The FAA must be in receipt of the notifications, no later than 120 days prior to construction. The FAA will evaluate the potential impacts of the project on protected airspace associated with the airports and advise the proponent if any action is necessary.



## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT

*Planning Division • Engineering Division • Code Enforcement Division*

August 24, 2023

Carol Flaute, Community Planner  
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission  
305 Research Drive  
Athens, GA 30605

**RE: DRI # 4047 – Nancy Industrial Drive Tract, City of Hoschton**

Dear Ms. Flaute,

Jackson County Public Development staff has reviewed the DRI package distributed for review and wishes to provide the following comments:

1. The proposed mixed-use development would be detrimental to the tax-base by ridding the chance of utilizing the property as industrial.
2. The development proposal calls for 712 residential units and if this 56-acre project were to be zoned and utilized for multi-family residential within unincorporated Jackson County, our maximum density would be 448 units. We have high concerns that the 712 residential units is significantly over our density and it is utilizing a much smaller acreage.
3. All stream buffers should be adhered to and protected. The County would like for a 75-foot undisturbed State water buffer to be maintained as well as no construction within wetlands or floodplains, as per the Unified Development Code for unincorporated Jackson County.
4. Currently, there are 20+ developments either under construction or in the process of going under construction soon within the West Jackson Elementary School zone. According to Dr. Philip Brown, Jackson County School System Superintendent, “the impact of growth to our district will leave our community strained to house all our students in permanent classrooms.” Due to redistricting and residential growth, we ask that the school system be considering during the decision-making process.

We are appreciative of the opportunity to comment and the job you do in coordinating these reviews.

Sincerely,

Jamie Dove  
Public Development Director