

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 #4380
Name of Project:	IMI Corporate Campus
Name of Host Jurisdiction:	Oconee County

Background

DRI review was initiated following the developer’s request for a permit. Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 2/5/2025 to 2/20/2025.

Proposed Development

Industrial Properties Management, LLC, is proposing construction of a 53-acre industrial corporate campus in Oconee County and the City of Bogart. The proposed development would occupy property at the intersection of Aiken Road and Pete Dickens Road, bordering State Route 316 (parcel number is B 01 072). The proposal includes a 25,750 square-foot two-story office building, 14 industrial shops totaling 202,500 square feet, and two equipment yards. According to the site plan, there would be approximately 78 parking spaces next to the office building and 25 parking spaces next to the shops. At this time, construction is only proposed on the eastern side of the site, and proposed structures would occupy less than half of the parcel. No information was provided by the applicant about future development plans for the remainder of the site. Currently, the site is vacant, with some wooded areas within the eastern and southern portions of the site. Wide landscaped buffers (80 to 100 feet) are proposed between the site and the two houses that neighbor the property to the northeast and southwest, and a narrower 25-foot landscaped buffer is proposed along State Route 316. A small portion of the site is within the City of Bogart, as shown on the attached site plan. The project would be completed in one phase, with an estimated completion date in December 2025.

Compatibility with Existing Plans

Compatibility with Regional Plan

The site is identified as “Developed” on the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Regional Land Use Map (dated 6/15/2023).

The Regional Plan recommends development that

- Enhances economic mobility and competitiveness
- Elevates public health and equity
- Supports and adds value to existing communities
- Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable
- Includes transportation choices and is well-connected with existing and planned transportation options, and
- Protects natural and historic resources.

The following table outlines the proposal’s alignment with these recommendations:

REGIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED PROJECT’S COMPATIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATION
Enhances economic mobility and competitiveness	The applicant states that the regional workforce is sufficient to fill the demand created by the proposed project.
Elevates public health and equity	The site plan submitted includes wide landscaped buffers between the site and two adjacent houses. There are several houses directly across Aiken Road from the proposed industrial development, and the site plan includes some trees and a landscaped berm between the development and Aiken Road. The proposed landscaped buffers, landscaped berm, and trees are important to include, to provide visual screening between the homes and the industrial site. Additionally, due to the site’s proximity to residential uses, it is important to minimize or avoid loud noises, fumes, odors, and other noxious activities.
Supports and adds value to existing communities	Based on the site plan’s labels for each of the 14 shops, it appears that this facility would provide job opportunities for a variety of craft trades. This configuration might create efficiencies, such as having these facilities located together would simplify logistics or reduce driving time for customers.
Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable	Not applicable for this project type.
Includes transportation choices and is well-connected with existing and planned transportation options	No traffic study was provided, but from the site plan, it appears that there would be two vehicular entrances to the site from Aiken Road, spaced 235 feet apart, and that an eastbound deceleration lane for right turns would be added on Aiken Road for turning into each entrance. There is a loading area on the site plan, but all parking spaces shown are sized for automobiles, not tractor trailers. The proposal does not appear to include pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure.
Protects natural and historic resources	There is an unnamed tributary to McNutt Creek on the site, but no construction is proposed near the stream. Since the proposed facilities would occupy less than half of the site, and no information was provided about the intended uses of the remaining land area nor about the location of the wastewater infrastructure, it is difficult to fully assess potential impacts on natural resources. Please note GDOT’s comment, below, which advises moving the stormwater pond further from State Route 316 so that it is not impacted by likely future road-widening projects. There are no known historic resources that would be affected by the proposal.

Compatibility with Regional Resource Management Plan

The chart below summarizes the number of acres within the site area as well as within a one-mile buffer around the site that contains 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.

Wetland, Conservation, and Regionally Important Resources

	AREA TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	PERCENT OF AREA
SITE AREA (53.0 Acres)	Wetland Acres ¹	0.1	0.3%
	“Conservation Land” ²	25.7	48.5%
	Regionally Important Resource Land ³	–	0.0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land ⁴	25.7	48.5%
1 MILE BUFFER AROUND SITE (2837.2 Acres)	Wetland Acres	62.2	2.2%
	“Conservation Land”	1,004.3	35.4%
	Regionally Important Resource Land	–	0.0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land	1,004.3	35.4%

No specific Regionally Important Resource sites are identified within one mile of the proposed site.

Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

Natural Resources and Stormwater Management

According to the site plan, an existing unnamed tributary to McNutt Creek flows through the edge of the southwest corner of the site. No construction is proposed near the stream. The applicant states that an estimated 24% of the site would be covered in impervious surfaces. The site plan includes protected stream buffers and one proposed stormwater pond. For any potential future phases on the western areas of the property, the site 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 this project’s design, where applicable. 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.

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.

Transportation

No traffic study was submitted for the proposed development. The applicant estimates that the project would produce 100 new peak hour trips per day.

Water Supply and Wastewater

The project would be served by the Oconee County Water Department, with an estimated daily demand of 1,130 gallons per day. The applicant states that these demands can be covered by existing capacity. The estimated wastewater flow to be generated by the project is approximately 3,500 gallons per day. This demand would be served by on-site septic and a drain field. Planned locations of wastewater infrastructure are not shown on the site plan. The applicant states that no water or sewer line extensions are anticipated.

¹ Wetland acres are derived from the National Wetland Inventory (NWI)

² “Conservation” land is derived from the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Conservation and Development Map (6/15/2023).

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

⁴ 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).

Solid Waste

The applicant estimates the project would generate 40 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, most municipal solid waste (MSW) generated in Oconee 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 \$20 million at build-out in 2025 and generate \$80,000 in annual local taxes. On a per-acre basis, the project would be worth approximately \$377,000 and generate approximately \$1,500 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

Justin Lott, District Preconstruction Engineer, Georgia Department of Transportation

- There are 3 GDOT projects in the vicinity of the development:
 - o PI 0013763 – SR 316 at Dials Mill Rd/Dials Mill Ext – Interchange
 - PE: FY 2021
 - RW: FY 2024
 - CST/UTL: FY 2026
 - Let to Construction: 11/21/2025
 - o PI 0013764 – SR 316 at McNutt Creek Rd
 - PE: FY 2022
 - RW: FY 2026
 - CST/UTL: FY 2027
 - Let to Construction: 6/15/2027
 - o PI 0019182 – SR 316 Sign Upgrade (by mileposts)
 - PE: FY 2022
 - CST: FY 2025
 - Let to Construction: 6/13/2025
- Recommend constructing storm water detention pond further away from SR 316 right of way. It is likely that SR 316 will be widened in the future and it would be preferred to not impact the pond.
- Ensure drainage follows GDOT Driveway and Encroachment Manual according to Chapter 6.2 in regards to runoff on GDOT right of way.
- If work is to be performed in GDOT right of way (non shown), a special encroachment permit will be needed from the District Traffic Operations Office.

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

This proposed construction of 202,500 square feet of industrial shop space and 25,750 square feet of office space on a 53 acre tract is less than 7 miles from the Barrow County Airport (WDR). It is located outside of the FAA approach or departure surfaces, and airport compatible land use areas, and does not appear to impact any 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.