

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 #4789
Name of Project:	Project Billie
Name of Host Jurisdiction:	Barrow County

Background

DRI review was initiated following the developer's request for a special use permit, which is required by code for any proposed industrial development over 500,000 square feet in Barrow County. Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 7/13/2026 to 7/28/2026.

Proposed Development

SFG Properties, LLC is proposing construction of 568,700 square feet of industrial space on a 56-acre site in unincorporated Barrow County (parcel XX107 009). The site design includes 297 employee parking spaces as well as two truck courts on the north and south sides of the building. The proposed site would also include a 4.1-acre storage yard, a flatbed unloading area, a covered storage area, and a drive-in door into the warehouse. A fence would encircle most of the property except for a small parking area near the proposed site entrance. The site would have one entrance along Innovation Drive. Currently, the site is primarily wooded. The project would be completed in one phase with an estimated completion date in December 2027.

Compatibility with Existing Plans

Compatibility with Regional Plan

The site is identified as "Developing" 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 proposed site would enhance economic mobility and competitiveness in the area by creating approximately 297 new jobs.
Elevates public health and equity	Due to its industrial nature, the proposed development has the potential to negatively impact surrounding areas due to noise, heavy truck traffic, and air pollution. The applicant should maximize buffers to mitigate impacts on surrounding areas.
Supports and adds value to existing communities	The proposed development would benefit the existing community by providing employment opportunities. The proposed development is also near the Lanier Technical College Winder-Barrow Campus, which could partner with the occupant of the proposed development for work and apprenticeship opportunities for students.
Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable	Due to its industrial nature, the proposed development would not contribute to creating housing in the area. Barrow County should be mindful of how the new jobs of the proposed development could impact the demand for housing in the county.
Includes transportation choices and is well- connected with existing and planned transportation options	The proposed development is appropriately located adjacent to an interchange for US-29. Its location would minimize heavy traffic through Barrow County's residential and downtown areas and would allow employees and freight traffic to efficiently access the site.
Protects natural and historic resources	Building the proposed development would require clearing much of the tree canopy on the site and could potentially disturb surrounding streams. The developer should consider maintaining as much of the existing tree canopy as possible and maintaining the natural topography of the site, especially near the creeks and ponds. This would help reduce erosion, filter stormwater runoff, and minimize disruptions to the site's drainage patterns.

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 (56 Acres)	Wetland Acres ¹	0.2	0.4%
	"Conservation Land" ²	3	5.3%
	Regionally Important Resource Land ³	0	0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land ⁴	3	5.3%
1 MILE BUFFER AROUND SITE (2,866 Acres)	Wetland Acres	44.9	1.6%
	"Conservation Land"	845.3	29.5%
	Regionally Important Resource Land	0	0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land	602.6	21%

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).

Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

Natural Resources and Stormwater Management

There is one stream and associated floodplains and wetlands in the northeast portion of the site. The applicant states that an estimated 55% of the site would be covered in impervious surfaces. The proposed site plan includes one proposed detention pond to handle site stormwater. 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.

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

A&R Engineering Inc. completed a traffic impact study that projects 920 new daily trips, including 93 AM peak hour trips and 111 PM peak hour trips from the proposed development. The site plan recommends constructing a separate left turn lane on Innovation Drive for traffic turning onto Hog Mountain Road/Highway 53.

Water Supply and Wastewater

The project would be served by Barrow County's water and sewer systems with an estimated daily demand of 0.0415 MGD for each system. The applicant states that these demands can be covered by existing capacity. No water or sewer line extensions are anticipated.

Solid Waste

The applicant estimates the project would generate 450 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 Barrow County is disposed of in a landfill within the County. The applicant states that no hazardous waste would be generated.

Energy Supply

The applicant states that the proposed project's estimated peak connected electrical load would be 9 Megawatts. Walton EMC would be the project's energy supply provider. The applicant states that existing electrical transmission and distribution infrastructure is sufficient to serve the proposed project.

Lifecycle Costs and Revenues

The applicant estimates that the project would be worth \$70,000,000 at build-out in 2027 and generate \$677,600 in annual local taxes. On a per-acre basis, the project would be worth approximately \$1,250,000 and generate approximately \$12,100 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

Jonathan Peevy, P.E., District Traffic Engineer, Georgia Department of Transportation, District 1 Traffic Operations

Please see the attached Deliverable Review Comment Form for GDOT's comments on the traffic study that was included in this DRI's comment package.

Deliverable Review Comments Form

Project Name:

Project ID:

Project Location

County

RC Name

Project Billie

DRI #4789

636 Innovation Drive, Winder, GA, 30680

Barrow

Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

Deliverable Review Summary

Revise and Resubmit: This Deliverable is being returned to be revised and resubmitted. See the review comments included and refer to any supporting documentation provided. Developer to coordinate, address, and resolve any review comments prior to resubmitting.

Deliverable Review Contents Attached

N/A

GDOT			
Document	Comment Number	Reference	Deliverable Review Comment
Revision 0	001	Page 1	Label Figure
Revision 0	002	Page 1: Section 1	Although peak times are mentioned in Executive summary, mention them in Introduction of report as well.
Revision 0	003	Page 1: Section 1	Specify if the evaluated intersections are signalized / unsignalized.
Revision 0	004	Page 3: Figure 1	Consider impacts to SR 316 intersections due to significance as ramp terminals and the project development exceed 7% of the daily two-way traffic. Additionally, it would be expected majority of heavy truck trips accessing the development would utilize SR 316.
Revision 0	005	Page 3: Figure 1	Indicate location of schools referenced earlier.
Revision 0	006	Page 3: Figure 1	Update figure number since aerial is first one.
Revision 0	007	Page 4: Section 2.1.1	Verify if data is estimated or actual count.
Revision 0	008	Page 4: Section 2.1.3	List road classifications.
	009	Page 4 - General	More recent TADA data is available from 2025 and 2026. The counts can be processed by using the most recent GDOT seasonal factors to develop AADTs. These data points can also be incorporated in the growth rate determination.
	010	Page 7: Section 4.1	Why weren't the intersections at SR 316 considered in analysis?
	011	Page 7: Section 4.1	State the specific peak hour chosen within the peak periods. Choose uniform peak hours for the entire study area. Based on the TMC data, it appears that each intersection was analyzed based on an intersection-specific peak.
	012	Page 8: Figure 2	Consider adding School Dismissal volumes for all intersections due to proximity to Intersections 3/4.
	013	Page 10: Table 3	Consider: -Showing all movements/approaches and leaving blank/indicating when not applicable. -Indicate LOS E/F with a different color.
	014	Page 10: Table 3	Evaluate all intersections due to all intersections presumably being impacted by school traffic as well - not just Intersections 3 & 4.

Deliverable Review Comments Form

Project Name:	Project Billie	Deliverable Review Summary
Project ID:	DRI #4789	
Project Location	636 Innovation Drive, Winder, GA, 30680	
County	Barrow	
RC Name	Northeast Georgia Regional Commission	
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		N/A

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Document	Comment Number	Reference	Deliverable Review Comment
	015	Page 11	Label Figure.
	016	Page 13: Section 5.1	Using square footage of facility shows higher trip generation rates in Trip Gen - difference in volumes of approx. 25-50%; Review if the use of employees as the dependent variable fully captures expected trips generated by development.
	017	Page 13: Table 4	Considering the land use, include information regarding truck volume and routing.
	018	Page 13: Section 5.2	Considering that in existing conditions minimal traffic is accessing Innovation Dr, how were these travel patterns determined?
	019	Page 14: Figure 5	Unclear how the Trip Distribution values are derived from existing traffic conditions. Clarify source/methodology used to distribute volumes.
	020	Page 14: Figure 5	It would seem that based on location and proposed use that the vast majority of vehicles and especially trucks would use SR 316. Existing Innovation Drive traffic may not be indicative of future use based on very low volume shown.
	021	Page 15: Section 6	State if there are any other developments present in the area which could affect volumes within the study area.
	022	Page 15: Section 6.1.1	Include counts from 2025 and 2026 where available.
	023	Page 15: Section 6.1.1	Suggest considering 5-yr and 10-yr growth as well.
	024	Page 15: Section 6.1.1	Consider following the guidelines in Section 4.4.1 GDOT TADA - Historical Growth of GDOT's Design Traffic Forecasting Manual.
	025	Page 15: Section 6.2	Ensure the metric (square footage or employees) used for Trip Generation is consistent between the Trip Gen from the Warehouse in Table 4 to ensure consistency.
	026	Page 15: Section 6.3	State any assumptions made in Build conditions here such as proposed improvements such signaling intersection, modifying lane geometry, etc.

Deliverable Review Comments Form

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GDOT			
Document	Comment Number	Reference	Deliverable Review Comment
	027	Page 16: Figure 6	Intersection 2 - Show possible movements in figures, even if 0.
	028	Page 16: Figure 6	Unclear how these value are derived from existing traffic conditions. Clarify source/methodology used to distribute volumes.
	029	Page 19: Table 6	Apply comments from Table 3.
	030	Page 19: Table 6	In reference to Intersection 2 - If signalized (as indicated in Figure 9), include LOS for all movements.
	031	Page 19: Table 6	""Dedicated eastbound right turn lane assumed on Innovation Drive in future "Build" conditions" - Figure 9 shows LT. Please confirm and revise.
	032	Page 21: Figure 9	Referencing the "Proposed Traffic Signal" text from the legend - Was this analyzed as a signalized approach? Will this signal be present in No-Build and/or Build? No mention of this signal elsewhere in the report. Clarify if this signal is a recommendation of this analysis. If proposing signal, include relevant signal warrant analysis documentation.
	033	Page 22: Section 7.2	Note on Table 6 mentions dedicated right turn lane.
	034	Appendix: Existing Intersection Analysis; Synchro 12 Report: Page 1	How was HV % determined? Did not see separate counts in raw data.
	035	Appendix: Future "Build" Intersection Analysis; Synchro 12 Report: Page 2	Analyze this intersection as signalized if proposing signal per Figure 9.
	036	Appendix: Future "Build" Intersection Analysis; Synchro 12 Report: Page 2	Figure 9 shows dedicated RT, and shared LT/Thru.