DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

Final Report

Northeast Georgia Regional Commission • 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia • www.negrc.org

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 #4852
Name of Project:	Jesse Cronic Road Industrial Development
Name of Host Jurisdiction:	Town of Braselton

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 10/19/2026 to 11/3/2026.

Proposed Development

SDP Acquisitions, LLC is proposing the construction of a 1 million square-foot warehouse distribution facility on an 82-acre site in the Town of Braselton south of Jesse Cronic Road and north of I-85. The parcel number is 124 004. According to the site plan, the proposal includes 368 automobile parking spaces, 196 trailer parking spaces, and two connections to the existing road network on Jesse Cronic Road. Currently, the site is undeveloped and partially wooded. The project would be completed in one phase with an estimated completion date in 2028.

Compatibility with Existing Plans and Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

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 applicant estimates that the proposed development would generate approximately 100 new full-time employees and that the regional workforce is sufficient to meet this demand.
Elevates public health and equity	The proposed site does not include any public amenity areas that would improve public health or equity. Although the parcel is within a Manufacturing & Distribution area in Braselton, it is adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods. The site plan includes a 75-foot zoning buffer and a 15-foot landscape strip. Maintaining trees and other vegetation in these buffer areas would minimize the potential for adverse effects on the adjacent residential area.
Supports and adds value to existing communities	The proposed project would create local jobs and expand the area's established manufacturing and distribution sector.
Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable	Not applicable to this project type.
Includes transportation choices and is well- connected with existing and planned transportation options	The proposed site plan includes 2 connections to the existing road network on Jesse Cronic Rd. Kimely Horn completed a traffic study that recommends aligning Site Driveway A with Dayton Superior Driveway and aligning Site Driveway B with Braselton Parkway. Each driveway would have one egress lane exiting the site and one ingress lane entering the site. The traffic study projects 1,462 new daily trips from the proposed development, including 113 AM peak hour trips and 130 PM peak hour trips.
Protects natural and historic resources	The proposed development does not seek to protect natural resources. There are converging streams and wetland areas located on the project site. According to the site plan, the site would be regraded and the warehouse/distribution facility and its associated features would be constructed on top of the streams and wetland areas. If approved, the developer should incorporate design interventions to maximize on-site stormwater retention. This would help mitigate adverse impacts by reducing downstream erosion, filtering stormwater runoff, and minimizing disruptions to drainage patterns downstream. There is a water supply watershed within 7 miles of the site. According to the applicant, the watershed will not be adversely impacted with this development and will be addressed through the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Individual Permit.

Compatibility with Regional Resource Management Plan

NEGRC evaluated the potential for impacts to wetlands[1], conservation land[2], regionally important resources[3], and threatened regionally important resources[4] within the site area and within one-mile of the site. Please refer to the footnotes for definitions for each of these terms.

Thompson Mills Forest Arboretum is a Regionally Important Resource (RIR) located within one mile of the proposed site. The 337-acre forest is deeded to the University of Georgia and serves as a site for the study of trees and natural plant communities. To minimize potential adverse effects to this RIR, the developer should confine clearing, grading, and ground disturbance to essential construction areas. This will preserve the existing trees and soils that treat and help retain ecological functions of the area.

[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).

Because the project is located within an area zoned for manufacturing and distribution, which features several existing warehouses, the development will not significantly alter the local viewshed.

Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts

No other significant interjurisdictional impacts were identified during this review.

Comments from Affected Parties

Stuart Cofer, Vice Chair, Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council
See the letter below for the comments from the Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council.

Alan Hood, Airport Safety Data Program Manager, Georgia Department of Transportation, Aviation Programs
This proposed construction of 1,000,000 square feet of wholesale & distribution space is about 10 miles from the any civil airport. 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/oe3a/main/#/noticePrescreen). 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.

Maggie Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Resources Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Our office has records for a state-listed aquatic species, the Altamaha shiner (*Cyprinella xaenura*), immediately downstream of the proposed project. We encourage project proponents involved in the proposed development to initiate early coordination with our office outside of the DRI process if the proposed project moves forward. We can provide technical assistance regarding Georgia's species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) and ways to avoid or minimize potential impacts to these species during the early coordination and consultation process. Please visit our environmental review website for more information and specific work area contacts (https://georgiawildlife.com/environmental-review#areas).

Please visit our Georgia Biodiversity Portal for more information on SGCN rare species and natural communities. If there is concern that the proposed project may impact SGCN species or communities, please contact the Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Environmental Review shared inbox (nongame.review@dnr.ga.gov) for further guidance. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

GEORGIA
WATER PLANNING

October 30, 2026

DRI Regional Review
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
305 Research Drive
Athens, Georgia
Submitted via email

Re: DRI #485 – Jesse Chronic Road Industrial Development

To Whom It May Concern:

The Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council leads review and revision of the Upper Oconee Regional Water Plan, which was last revised in 2023. The focus of the Regional Water Plan is managing water as a critical resource vital to the health, economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of the Upper Oconee Water Planning Region.

Protection of water quality is one of the major themes in the Upper Oconee Regional Water Plan. On behalf of the Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council, I'm submitting a comment to raise concerns about potential water quality impacts of the proposed development. The site of the proposed development has topographic and hydrologic characteristics that pose particular challenges for protection of downstream water quality and the riparian corridors, wetlands, and floodplains that contribute to that protection. Challenges like these can result in unacceptable impacts, unless design and management practices are incorporated to mitigate impacts during and after construction.

The Upper Oconee Regional Water Plan includes four recommended management practices directly relevant to this proposed development:

WQ-1: Encourage comprehensive land use planning

- Use land use planning to encourage development in certain areas and discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas
- Protect open space along riparian corridors, wetlands, and groundwater recharge areas to help protect water resources.

WQ-5: Encourage stream buffer protection

- Continue to implement the measures and practices outlined through current legislation and local jurisdictions

WQ-6: Encourage floodplain management/ flood damage prevention

- Implement site plan review practices to minimize development in the floodplain

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WATER PLANNING

WQ-7: Encourage general stormwater practices

- Implement practices such as:
  - Measures to minimize stormwater runoff through site planning (conservation subdivisions and other practices) and land use planning
  - Stormwater system inventory and maintenance
  - Preventing pollutants from reaching stormwater systems through good housekeeping or illicit discharge detection programs
  - Public education
  - Capital programs to develop management practices, regional ponds, and other watershed practices
- Implement post-development stormwater controls to decrease runoff velocity and promote infiltration, such as stormwater retention ponds, constructed wetlands, grassed swales, and other low-impact development methods for new development and redevelopment areas to address hydrology and water quality

The Council encourages the host government, as well as state and federal agencies with permitting authority, to consider these management practices in review of the proposed project and in determination of site development and permit conditions.

On behalf of the Council, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed project and encourage sustainable use of our shared resources. Our Council remains committed to sound long-term management of our region's water resources to support the region's health, economic, social, and environmental wellbeing, and we stand ready to assist in the future.

Sincerely,

Stuart Cofer

Vice Chair, Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council