



# DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

## *Finding*

Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center • 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30605-2795 • 706.369.5650 • Fax 706.369.5792 • www.negrdc.org

**TO:** Affected Local Governments and Other Interested Parties  
**FROM:** James R. Dove, Executive Director *JRD*  
**DATE:** September 24, 2008

The Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) has completed its review of the following Development of Regional Impact (DRI). The Northeast Georgia RDC reviewed the proposed project with regard to conflicts with regional plans, goals, and policies and the impacts it might have on the activities, plans, goals, and policies of other local jurisdictions and state, federal, and other agencies. The finding does not address whether the DRI is or is not in the best interest of the local government.

DRI ID Number: 1926  
Name of Proposed Project: Auburn Station  
Submitting Local Government: City of Auburn

**Finding:** After review of information submitted by the host government and comments received from affected agencies, the Northeast Georgia RDC finds that the development is in the best interest of the Region and therefore the State.

### Additional Comments:

#### **The review produced the following concerns:**

- The estimated traffic impacts have the potential to greatly exceed the road network's ability to accommodate the additional traffic volumes and will likely decrease the level of service of U.S. Highway 29/State Route 8.
- The potential effect of stormwater runoff and the subsequent impact on water quality specifically due to the proposed development's proximity to the Apalachee River which is identified as a high priority stream by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division and which is also listed on the State's 305(b)/303(d) list as a segment not supporting its designated use for fishing, based on fecal coliform violations.
- The adverse impacts on the capacities of the local school system resulting from the proposed project independent of additional growth throughout the county.

#### **Should the project be pursued, the following recommendations are made:**

- It is essential that a detailed traffic impact analysis be conducted to address the direct impacts on the adjacent road network and identify the needed improvements. All access management and road improvements should be coordinated with the City of Auburn, Barrow County, Gwinnett County, and the Georgia Department of Transportation. Development should be phased in conjunction with the implementation of road improvement projects.
- It is essential that the developer conform to regulations outlined in local ordinances, the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act, and NPDES Permit for Construction Activities throughout the development phases to ensure minimal impact on the surrounding areas. Conservation practices should be utilized to minimize soil erosion during all phases of land-disturbing activity.
- Every attempt should be made to conserve and utilize on-site natural features to protect water quality. The developer should also consider using alternatives to conventional stormwater best management practices such as bioretention cells, pervious paving materials, cisterns, green roofs, and bioswales.
- The project should be phased concurrent with the ability of supportive infrastructure to accommodate the additional growth.



# DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

## Request for Comments

---

Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center : 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30605-2795 : 706.369.5650 :  
Fax 706.369.5792 : [www.negplanning.org](http://www.negplanning.org)

DRI Number:	DRI #1926 Auburn Station, City of Auburn
Name of commenting organization:	Athens-Clarke County Unified Government
Department:	Planning Department
Address:	120 W. Dougherty Street
Telephone:	706.613.3515
Email address:	<a href="mailto:leahstewart@co.clarke.ga.us">leahstewart@co.clarke.ga.us</a>
Date:	September 12, 2008

---

September 12, 2008

Mr. Moneyhun,

In general, the proposed mixed-use development in the City of Auburn (Project ID DRI-1926), as proposed, would not have a measurable impact on Athens-Clarke County's transportation infrastructure, solid waste management services, natural or historic resources, or other community facilities or services.

Should you have any questions or comments, please contact Brad Griffin, Planning Director, or myself at (706) 613-3515.

Leah Graham Stewart  
ACC Long Range Planner



# DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

## Request for Comments

---

Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center : 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30605-2795 : 706.369.5650 :  
Fax 706.369.5792 : [www.negplanning.org](http://www.negplanning.org)

DRI Number:	DRI #1926 Auburn Station, City of Auburn
Name of commenting organization:	Department of Natural Resources
Department:	Historic Preservation Division
Address:	34 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 1600
Telephone:	404-651-6452
Email address:	<a href="mailto:Melina.Vasquez@dnr.state.ga.us">Melina.Vasquez@dnr.state.ga.us</a>
Date:	September 12, 2008

---

RE: DRI 1926, Proposed Mixed Use Development, "Auburn Station", over 150.47 Acres,  
US Highway 29/SR 8, Auburn, Bartow County

The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) has reviewed the information submitted concerning the proposed project in Bartow County, Georgia. Our comments are offered to assist the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center in assessing the potential impacts of the proposed project as it pertains to the Georgia Planning Act.

Regarding historic structures that may be located in the area, we recommend a survey be conducted by a qualified historian to identify historic structures located within the project's area of potential effects.

Regarding archaeological resources, due to the size and topographic setting of the subject property, we recommend that an intensive (Phase I) archaeological survey be conducted by a qualified archaeologist.

We offer these comments now as technical assistance; however HPD looks forward to reviewing this project under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act if at some stage in the development federal funding, permitting or licensing becomes required, or under the Georgia Environmental Policy Act (GEPA) if state funds are utilized.

If we may be of further assistance, or for more information on compliance requirements for Section 106 or GEPA, please contact Michelle Volkema at (404) 651-6546.



# DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

## Request for Comments

---

Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center : 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30605-2795 : 706.369.5650 :  
Fax 706.369.5792 : [www.negplanning.org](http://www.negplanning.org)

DRI Number:	DRI #1926 Auburn Station, City of Auburn
Name of commenting organization:	City of Arcade
Department:	Administration
Address:	P.O. Box 417, Jefferson, GA 30549
Telephone:	706-367-5500
Email address:	<a href="mailto:arcadecityadmin@windstream.net">arcadecityadmin@windstream.net</a>
Date:	September 16, 2008

---

We don't feel this development project will have any impact on the City of Arcade.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
Wildlife Resources Division

Nongame Conservation Section  
2065 U.S. Highway 278, S.E., Social Circle, Georgia 30025-4743  
(770) 918 6411

September 17, 2008

Jim Moneyhun  
Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center  
305 Research Drive  
Athens, GA 30605-2795

**Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near DRI # 1926 Auburn Station, Barrow County, Georgia**

Dear Mr. Moneyhun:

This is in response to your request of September 9, 2008. According to our records, within a three-mile radius of the project site there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

Apalachee River [High Priority Stream] 0.3 mi. SW of site  
Little Mulberry River Park [Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Department] approx.  
2.5 mi. N of site

\* Entries above preceded by "US" indicates species with federal status in Georgia (Protected or Candidate). Species that are federally protected in Georgia are also state protected; "GA" indicates Georgia protected species.

**Recommendations:**

We have no records of species of concern within the property boundary. However, this could be due to a lack of survey information at this site. There are several records of species of concern within three miles of the project area and the potential for species of concern at this site. We recommend completing surveys for high priority species and habitats at this site.

We also urge you to consider the importance of protecting the Apalachee River, a high priority stream. The subject property is currently wooded and provides a buffer for the river, reducing runoff and sedimentation into the river and producing shade for the aquatic habitats. As part of an effort to develop a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy for the state of Georgia, the Wildlife Resources division has developed and mapped a list of streams that are important to the protection or restoration of rare aquatic species and aquatic communities. High priority waters and their surrounding watersheds are a high priority for a broad array of conservation activities, but do not receive any additional legal protections. Please consider whether another development along the Apalachee River is in the best interest of the region.

We advocate green growth community planning that focuses on leaving open space in newly developed residential areas. These subdivisions are designed to protect natural habitats by

clustering development and minimizing infrastructure, such as paved surfaces and utilities. Development should occur away from sensitive environmental resources, such as streams, wetlands and critical wildlife habitat. Undisturbed buffers of at least 100 feet should be left surrounding any streams or wetlands at the site. Open space should be protected by use of a conservation easement or other legal agreement. The open space may be used for recreation, wildlife habitat and stormwater control. We recommend these cluster developments that set aside as much land as possible to remain in a natural state. This will allow for the conservation of wildlife and natural resources as well as recreation opportunities for residents of the planned development and surrounding communities. For more information on Green Growth Guidelines visit GA DNR Coastal Resources Division website at <http://crd.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=969>.

### **Data Available on the Nongame Conservation Section Website**

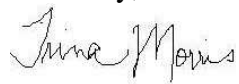
By visiting the Nongame Conservation Section Website you can view the highest priority species and natural community information by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=89>  
An ESRI shape file of our highest priority species and natural community data by quarter quad and county is also available. It can be downloaded from: <http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/assets/documents/gnhp/gnhpds.zip>

### **Disclaimer:**

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Nongame Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://www.georgiawildlife.com>) or by contacting our office. If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Katrina Morris  
Environmental Review Coordinator