

DATE: July 27, 2023

TO: Chairwoman Lisa Cupid, Cobb County Commission
ATTN TO: Jeannie Peyton, Senior Planner, Cobb County
FROM: Mike Alexander, COO, Atlanta Regional Commission
RE: Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Review

ARC has completed a regional review of the below DRI. ARC reviewed the DRI's relationship to regional plans, goals and policies – and impacts it may have on the activities, plans, goals and policies of other local jurisdictions as well as state, federal and other agencies. This final report does not address whether the DRI is or is not in the best interest of the host local government.

Name of Proposal: 2023 Chastain Meadows DRI 3940

Submitting Local Government: Cobb County

Date Opened: July 6, 2023

Date Closed: July 26, 2023

Description: A DRI review of a proposal to construct a mixed-use project with 425,000 SF of light industrial space in three buildings, 140 townhomes, 220 age-restricted multifamily units, 22,500 SF of restaurant space, and 7,500 SF of retail space on an approximately 57-acre wooded site located on Chastain Road in unincorporated Cobb County.

Comments:

Key Comments

Key Comments

The Atlanta Region's Plan assigns the Regional Employment Corridor growth management designation to the project site. The project is not aligned with the Regional Employment Corridor stated need for more "accessible public greenspace...which affects the overall aesthetics and quality of life for residents and workers."

The project is somewhat aligned with Regional Employment Corridor growth policies which support the addition of housing and retail to employment-focused areas.

The project will remove a wetland area and a significant portion of the stream shown on the project site plan including the stream headland which is not supportive of regional environmental policies.

The project site is one of the last remaining large wooded parcels in the area and provides critical heat island mitigation/urban cooling functions and reduction of noise and air pollution from I-575. As climate change accelerates, these services become increasingly important. Only 4 of the site's 57 acres are to be retained as open space and it is unclear how much of this will remain wooded. Retention of additional wooded area including a substantial buffer along I-575 would be supportive of regional environmental policies as well as Cobb County's Greenprint plan for conserving land of environmental value.

The project is expected to generate a total of 4,500 daily new vehicular trips; several roadway/intersection improvements are proposed to mitigate the impact of these trips.

A total of 1,247 parking spaces are proposed which is 274 (28%) more than the 973 required; a reduction in parking spaces would be supportive of regional transportation policies.

The project does not appear to include bicycle parking spaces and EV charging spaces; provision of adequate numbers of both would be supportive of regional multi-modal transportation policies.

The TIS notes the opportunity to participate in the Town Center CID bike share program which would be supportive of regional multi-modal transportation policies

Comments received from the Bells Ferry Civic Association are attached.

Comments received from Cobb County Department of Transportation are attached.

A planned multi-use trail is shown along Chastain Road and then traversing the interior of the site to connect to Chastain Meadows Road. The proposed route would provide trail users with access to retail amenities and activate the site which is strongly supportive of regional multi-modal transportation and urban placemaking policies. A sidewalk will still need to be provided along the trail's originally planned route along Chastain Road to the east.

The project is located in the area of the Town Center LCI funded by ARC and attention should be given to implement relevant study recommendations and Town Center CID goals for the site.

General Comments

The Atlanta Region's Plan, developed by ARC in close coordination with partner local governments, is intended to broadly guide regional development in the 12-county metro region to ensure that required infrastructure and resources are in place to support continued economic development and prosperity. The Plan assigns a relevant growth management category designation with accompanying policy recommendations to all areas in the region. This DRI site is designated Regional Employment Corridor; corresponding policy recommendations are provided at the end of these comments.

The project is also located in the area of the Town Center LCI funded by ARC and attention should be given to implement all relevant LCI study recommendations as well as Town Center CID goals for the site.

Comments received from the Bells Ferry Civic Association are attached.

Transportation and Mobility Comments

ARC's Transportation Access and Mobility Group comments are attached.

The project is expected to generate a total of 4,500 new vehicular trips. Several roadway/intersection improvements are identified to reduce the impact of these new trips on surrounding roadways.

A total of 1,247 parking spaces are proposed which is 274 (28%) more than the 973 required; a reduction in parking spaces would be supportive of regional transportation policies.

The project does not appear to include bicycle parking spaces and EV charging spaces; provision of adequate numbers of both would be supportive of regional multi-modal transportation policies.

The TIS notes the opportunity to participate in the Town Center CID bike share program which would be supportive of regional multi-modal transportation policies.

A planned multi-use trail is shown along Chastain Road and then traversing the interior of the site to connect to Chastain Meadows Road. The proposed route would provide trail users with access to retail amenities and activate the site which is strongly supportive of regional multi-modal transportation and urban placemaking policies. However, a sidewalk will still need to be provided along Chastain Road where the trail was initially planned.

Comments received from the Cobb County Department of Transportation are attached.

Care should be taken to ensure that the development promotes an interconnected, functional, clearly marked and comfortable pedestrian experience on all streets, paths, entrances, and parking areas. To the maximum extent possible, new driveways and intersection corners where pedestrians will cross should be constructed with minimal curb radii to reduce speeds of turning vehicles and decrease crossing distances for pedestrians.

ARC Natural Resource Group Comments

ARC's Natural Resources Group are attached.

The USGS coverage for the project area shows no streams on or near the property. However, the submitted site plan shows a stream originating in the northern portion of the project property and running south-southeast through the property. The County 50-foot undisturbed buffer and 75-foot impervious setback, as well as the 25-foot State Sediment and Erosion Control buffer are shown and identified. The submitted plan shows townhouse structures and associated driveways built over the stream headwaters, as well as one access road crossing the stream and a portion of the proposed southeastern detention pond intruding into the 75-foot setback. The stream crossing is exempt under the County Stream Buffer Ordinance and the need for a variance for the detention pond will depend on what is done in the setback. The townhouses

may require variances under the both the County Stream Buffer Ordinance and the State 25-foot State Erosion and Sedimentation Control buffer. Any other unmapped streams on the property may be subject to the County stream buffer ordinance, and any waters of the state on the property would be subject to the State 25-foot Sediment and Erosion Control buffer.

Other Environmental Comments

The project site is one of the last remaining large wooded parcels in the neighborhood and provides meaningful carbon sequestration and heat island mitigation/urban cooling functions for the surrounding area as well as filtering air and noise pollution from I-575. As climate change accelerates these services become increasingly important. Only 4 of the site's 57 acres are to be retained as open space which is scattered around the site.

Cobb County is also an ARC designated Green Community. One of the key criteria for the designation was the development of a Greenprint plan to identify land of significant conservation value. The Greenprint plan is included as a supplemental plan in the County's Comprehensive Plan. The project site appears to be of medium environmental value in the Greenprint plan.

Retention of additional wooded area including a substantial buffer area along I-575 would be supportive of regional environmental policies as well as the County's Greenprint plan for conserving land of environmental value.

The project also proposes the removal of wetlands and a significant portion of the stream located in the site which is not in keeping with regional environmental policies. Ideally the building footprints could be adjusted to limit the significant negative wetland and stream impacts, to provide additional open space/retained wooded area, and to consolidate the existing space provided in order to better retain some of the existing trees. The construction approach should further attempt to retain existing trees wherever possible.

The central undeveloped space between the warehouse building footprints adjacent to the stormwater ponds presents an opportunity to create a functioning natural area.

The project can support The Atlanta Region's Plan in general by incorporating other aspects of regional policy, including green infrastructure and/or low-impact design, e.g., pervious pavers, rain gardens, vegetated swales, etc., in the project's substantial parking areas and site driveways, and as part of any improvements to site frontages.

Unified Growth Policy Considerations: Regional Employment Corridor

According the Atlanta Region's Plan, Regional Employment Corridors represent the densest development outside of the Region Core. Regional Employment Corridors connect several Regional Centers with the Region Core via existing capacity transportation facilities. These areas contain a large share of the region's

jobs in a relatively small land area. These areas are also increasing in both housing and job density and are experiencing increased redevelopment and new uses in traditionally employment-focused areas.

There is a lack of accessible public greenspace within Regional Employment Corridors, which affects the overall aesthetics and quality of life for residents and workers.

The intensity and land use of this proposed project partially aligns with The Atlanta Region's Plan's recommendations for Regional Employment Corridors. The project's provision of housing and retail adjacent to existing employment and retail centers is consistent with regional policies. The removal of most of the site's existing forest and wetlands and part of a stream is not supportive of regional environmental policies and the need to provide public greenspace in Regional Employment Corridors. The project could be more supportive of regional policies by preserving more of the wooded land and stream and wetlands and providing some degree of public access to these areas. Cobb County staff and leadership, along with the applicant team, should collaborate closely to ensure maximum sensitivity to the needs of nearby local governments, stakeholders, and natural systems.

THE FOLLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES RECEIVED NOTICE OF THIS REVIEW:

ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION	GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE	GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	GEORGIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY	GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY	GEORGIA CONSERVANCY	COBB COUNTY
CHEROKEE COUNTY	CITY OF MARIETTA	CITY OF WOODSTOCK
CITY OF KENNESAW	TOWN CENTER CID	

For questions, please contact Donald Shockey at (470) 378-1531 or dshockey@atlantaregional.org. This finding will be published to the ARC review website located at <http://atlantaregional.org/plan-reviews>.



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DRI #3940

DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT Initial DRI Information

This form is to be completed by the city or county government to provide basic project information that will allow the RDC to determine if the project appears to meet or exceed applicable DRI thresholds. Refer to both the [Rules for the DRI Process](#) and the [DRI Tiers and Thresholds](#) for more information.

Local Government Information

Submitting Local Government: Cobb County
Individual completing form: Jeannie Peyton
Telephone: 770-528-2022
E-mail: jeannie.peyton@cobbcounty.org

*Note: The local government representative completing this form is responsible for the accuracy of the information contained herein. If a project is to be located in more than one jurisdiction and, in total, the project meets or exceeds a DRI threshold, the local government in which the largest portion of the project is to be located is responsible for initiating the DRI review process.

Proposed Project Information

Name of Proposed Project: Chastain Meadows
Location (Street Address, GPS Coordinates, or Legal Land Lot Description): 287 Chastain Road Kennesaw GA 30144
Brief Description of Project: Proposed 372,400 SF of industrial warehouse space in three (3) buildings, 109 townhomes, 150 age-restricted multifamily units, 10,500 SF of office space and 39,890 SF of retail space on an approximately 57.28-acre site.

Development Type:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> (not selected) | <input type="radio"/> Hotels | <input type="radio"/> Wastewater Treatment Facilities |
| <input type="radio"/> Office | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mixed Use | <input type="radio"/> Petroleum Storage Facilities |
| <input type="radio"/> Commercial | <input type="radio"/> Airports | <input type="radio"/> Water Supply Intakes/Reservoirs |
| <input type="radio"/> Wholesale & Distribution | <input type="radio"/> Attractions & Recreational Facilities | <input type="radio"/> Intermodal Terminals |
| <input type="radio"/> Hospitals and Health Care Facilities | <input type="radio"/> Post-Secondary Schools | <input type="radio"/> Truck Stops |
| <input type="radio"/> Housing | <input type="radio"/> Waste Handling Facilities | <input type="radio"/> Any other development types |
| <input type="radio"/> Industrial | <input type="radio"/> Quarries, Asphalt & Cement Plants | |

If other development type, describe:

Project Size (# of units, floor area, etc.): Industrial warehouse 372,400 SF; 109 townhomes; 150 age-restricted multifamily units; 10,500 SF offi

Developer: Strategic Real Estate Partners, LLC

Mailing Address: 3715 Northside Parkway, Building 400, Suite 425

Address 2:

City: Atlanta State: GA Zip: 30327

Telephone: (404) 836-4841

Email: jrwright@strategicrepartners.com

Is property owner different from developer/applicant? ☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, property owner: McCamy Investments, L.P.; McCamy Properties, LLC; BK Properties, L.P.; VKEP-B, LLC

Is the proposed project entirely located within your ☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

local government's jurisdiction?

If no, in what additional jurisdictions is the project located?

Is the current proposal a continuation or expansion of a previous DRI?

(not selected)

Yes

No

If yes, provide the following information:

Project Name:

Project ID:

The initial action being requested of the local government for this project:

Rezoning

Variance

Sewer

Water

Permit

Other

Is this project a phase or part of a larger overall project?

(not selected)

Yes

No

If yes, what percent of the overall project does this project/phase represent?

Estimated Project Completion Dates:

This project/phase: 2025

Overall project: 2025

[Back to Top](#)



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DRI #3940

DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT Additional DRI Information

This form is to be completed by the city or county government to provide information needed by the RDC for its review of the proposed DRI. Refer to both the [Rules for the DRI Process](#) and the [DRI Tiers and Thresholds](#) for more information.

Local Government Information

Submitting Local Government: Cobb County
Individual completing form: Jeannie Peyton
Telephone: 770-528-2022
Email: jeannie.peyton@cobbcounty.org

Project Information

Name of Proposed Project: Chastain Meadows
DRI ID Number: 3940
Developer/Applicant: Strategic Real Estate Partners, LLC
Telephone: (404) 836-4841
Email(s): jwright@strategicrepartners.com

Additional Information Requested

Has the RDC identified any additional information required in order to proceed with the official regional review process? (If no, proceed to Economic Impacts.)
☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, has that additional information been provided to your RDC and, if applicable, GRTA?
☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

If no, the official review process can not start until this additional information is provided.

Economic Development

Estimated Value at Build-Out: Approx. \$200,000,000 - \$232,500,000

Estimated annual local tax revenues (i.e., property tax, sales tax) likely to be generated by the proposed development: Approx. \$2,428,000 - \$2,822,550

Is the regional work force sufficient to fill the demand created by the proposed project?
☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

Will this development displace any existing uses?
☐ (not selected) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please describe (including number of units, square feet, etc):

Water Supply

Name of water supply provider for this site: Cobb County Water System

What is the estimated water supply demand to be generated by the project, measured in Millions of Gallons Per Day (MGD)?

0.19 MGD

Is sufficient water supply capacity available to serve the proposed project?

☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

If no, describe any plans to expand the existing water supply capacity:

Is a water line extension required to serve this project?

☐ (not selected) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, how much additional line (in miles) will be required?

Wastewater Disposal

Name of wastewater treatment provider for this site:

Cobb County Water System

What is the estimated sewage flow to be generated by the project, measured in Millions of Gallons Per Day (MGD)?

0.12 MGD

Is sufficient wastewater treatment capacity available to serve this proposed project?

☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

If no, describe any plans to expand existing wastewater treatment capacity:

Is a sewer line extension required to serve this project?

☐ (not selected) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, how much additional line (in miles) will be required?

Land Transportation

How much traffic volume is expected to be generated by the proposed development, in peak hour vehicle trips per day? (If only an alternative measure of volume is available, please provide.)

Approximately 4,500 net daily trips, 586 AM peak hour trips, 473 PM peak hour trips

Has a traffic study been performed to determine whether or not transportation or access improvements will be needed to serve this project?

☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

Are transportation improvements needed to serve this project?

☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe below: Please refer to the traffic study prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates

Solid Waste Disposal

How much solid waste is the project expected to generate annually (in tons)?

1,100 tons

Is sufficient landfill capacity available to serve this proposed project?

☐ (not selected) ☒ Yes ☐ No

If no, describe any plans to expand existing landfill capacity:

Will any hazardous waste be generated by the development?

☐ (not selected) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please explain:

Stormwater Management

What percentage of the site is projected to be impervious surface once the

67%

proposed development has been constructed?

Describe any measures proposed (such as buffers, detention or retention ponds, pervious parking areas) to mitigate the project's impacts on stormwater management:Stormwater impacts will be mitigated by providing detention ponds that will provide water quality, stream channel protection, overbank protection, and extreme overbank protection in accordance with Cobb County regulations. In addition, approximately 750 linear feet of stream buffer will be retained.

Environmental Quality

Is the development located within, or likely to affect any of the following:

- 1. Water supply watersheds? (not selected) Yes No
- 2. Significant groundwater recharge areas? (not selected) Yes No
- 3. Wetlands? (not selected) Yes No
- 4. Protected mountains? (not selected) Yes No
- 5. Protected river corridors? (not selected) Yes No
- 6. Floodplains? (not selected) Yes No
- 7. Historic resources? (not selected) Yes No
- 8. Other environmentally sensitive resources? (not selected) Yes No

If you answered yes to any question above, describe how the identified resource(s) may be affected:
3) There is a small wetland area of approximately 0.156 acres that will be impacted by the development. These impacts will be mitigated through the Nationwide Permit process. 5) There is an approximate 750 lineal feet section of perennial stream that will remain undisturbed that will be buffered per State and County guidelines

Back to Top

CHASTAIN MEADOWS DRI
Cobb County
Natural Resources Comments
June 28, 2023

While ARC and the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District have no regulatory or review authority over this project, the Natural Resources Group has identified County and State regulations that could apply to this property. Other regulations may also apply that we have not identified.

Watershed Protection

The project site is in the Allatoona Lake Watershed. As a US Army Corps of Engineers lake, Allatoona Lake is exempt from the Georgia DNR Part 5 Minimum Planning Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds.

Stream Buffer

The USGS coverage for the project area shows no streams on or near the property. However, the submitted site plan shows a stream originating in the northern portion of the project property and running south-southeast through the property. The County 50-foot undisturbed buffer and 75-foot impervious setback, as well as the 25-foot State Sediment and Erosion Control buffer are shown and identified. The submitted plan shows townhouse structures and associated driveways built over the stream headwaters, as well as one access road crossing the stream and a portion of the proposed southeastern detention pond intruding into the 75-foot setback. The stream crossing is exempt under the County Stream Buffer Ordinance and the need for a variance for the detention pond will depend on what is done in the setback. The townhouses may require variances under the both the County Stream Buffer Ordinance and the State 25-foot State Erosion and Sedimentation Control buffer. Any other unmapped streams on the property may be subject to the County stream buffer ordinance, and any waters of the state on the property would be subject to the State 25-foot Sediment and Erosion Control buffer.

Stormwater/Water Quality

The project should adequately address the impacts of the proposed development on stormwater runoff and downstream water quality.

During the planning phase, the stormwater management system (system) should meet the requirements of the local jurisdiction's post-construction (or post-development) stormwater management ordinance. The system should be designed to prevent increased flood damage, streambank channel erosion, habitat degradation and water quality degradation, and enhance and promote the public health, safety and general welfare. The system design should also be in accordance with the applicable sections of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (www.georgiastormwater.com) such as design standards, calculations, formulas, and methods. Where possible, the project should use stormwater better site design practices included in the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual, Volume 2, Section 2.3.

During construction, the project should conform to the relevant state and federal erosion and sedimentation control requirements.

CCDOT comments are based on the DRI Submittal - Chastain Meadows DRI #3940 submitted 6/20/23.

General Comments:

1. Provide an Existing Alternative Transportation Map.
2. According to DRI review procedure "If the Project is residential, commercial or mixed-use, any destinations within ¼ mile that residents or visitors might be expected to walk to and any potential sidewalk gaps, needed crosswalks and needed crossing signals along the route(s)."
 - The proposed development is a mixed-use having age-restricted multifamily residential and townhomes. So, pedestrians and bicyclists' trip might be generated at the intersection of Chastain Meadow Parkway and Driveway D wanting to go east of Chastain Meadow Parkway. So, consider this situation and provide appropriate accommodations.
3. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities internal to the site connect to each land use is not visible in the site plan.
4. In the Appendix, attach the trip assignment from the TIS of Chastain Logistics Center development and the Edison Chastain Meadows Phase II development.

Study Specific Comments:

1. Page 12, document page 7-Recommend vehicle left turn analysis for movements at Site Driveway B/Chastain Lakes Dr/Chastain Rd intersection. It is not clear if proposed left turn paths will overlap/conflict based on proposed site plan geometry
2. Page 17, document page 12- Recommend showing truck turn analysis for Site Driveway D to provide recommendations for driveway apron design
3. Page 18, document page 13- Recommend reconstructing corner and narrow median to meet turn radius requirement instead of removing 60ft of median
4. Page 20 >> 3. Trip Generation >> Alternative modes reductions >> "Alternative mode reductions were taken at 2% per the LOU".
 - This not available in LOU. Please explain the reason for using 2%.
5. Page 21 >> 4. Trip Distribution and Assignment >> "The anticipated distribution and assignment of the trips throughout the study roadway network is shown for residential land uses in Figure 11; retail land uses in Figure 12; heavy vehicle (truck) warehouse uses in Figure 13; and for employee (car) warehouse uses in Figure 14."
 - Figures 11, 12, 13 and 14 do not have trip assignment. Please add separate figure for trip assignment.
 - Additionally, provide a figure showing pass-by trip distribution.
6. Page 27 >> 5.1 Chastain Road at George Busbee Parkway (Intersection 1)
 - In the Synchro model, max split time used is less than min split time for existing, no-build and build conditions. Max split time should be => minimum split time. Please update table accordingly.

(continued)

- In the discussion in the report, it is anticipated that a change in signal timing would improve the northbound and southbound approach operation. However, from the discussion it is not clear whether signal timing adjustment is required for improving Existing/No-build condition OR Build condition.
- 7. Page 28 >> 5.2 Chastain Road at I-575 Southbound Ramps (Intersection 2)
 - In the Synchro model, EB Right-Turn Channelization is modeled as signalized, however, it should be modeled as "yield controlled". Please update the table accordingly (if any).
 - In the Build condition, for both AM and PM Peak Period, 95th and 50th percentile queue length has increased substantially from the No-build condition. For example, in the PM Peak, 95th percentile queue length has degraded to 686 feet in the Build condition from 130 feet in the No-build condition. This queue in the Build condition is expected to go until/beyond upstream intersection of Chastain Road and Chastain Center Blvd/ Town Park Dr. Please explain/address this issue.
- 8. Page 29, document page 24- 40% truck traffic distribution to/from area south of Big Shanty Road seems high. Please confirm local land uses for these trips
- 9. Page 30 >> 5.4 Chastain Road at Chastain Meadows Parkway/Private Driveway (Intersection 4)
 - In the Synchro model, max split time used is less than min split time for existing, no-build and build conditions. Max split time should be => minimum split time. Please update table accordingly.
 - Northbound left-turn has a storage of 175 feet. However, the 95th percentile queue length has increased to 366 feet in the Build condition from 280 feet in No-build condition. This issue should be addressed.

Comments related to Zoning Case (not comments on the traffic study itself):

1. Page 47, document page EX-1 of Appendix A-Recommend implementation of internal network of sidewalks/bike-pedestrian paths connecting doors of every building to support Mixed Use Reductions assumed in Trip Generation
2. Page 47, document page EX-1 of Appendix A-Recommend modifying current Site Plan to add a new 10ft wide multiuse path on south side of Chastain Road between office buildings and southwest corner of Chastain Rd/Chastain Meadows Pkwy intersection to support Alternative Mode Reductions assumed in Trip Generation
3. Page 47, document page EX-1 of Appendix A- Recommend modifying current Site Plan to add a new 10ft wide multiuse path on west side of Chastain Meadows Pkwy between Driveway C and southwest corner of Chastain Rd/Chastain Meadows Pkwy intersection to support Alternative Mode Reductions assumed in Trip Generation

(continued)

Comments for the Project Driveways:

1. Site Driveway D at Chastain Meadows Parkway - According to the site plan, eastbound approach (Driveway D) has one shared left/thru lane and one exclusive right-turn lane. However, in the report and Synchro model, this approach is considered as one exclusive left-turn and one exclusive right-turn lane.
2. Please mention the storage and turn-bay length for all the turning movement entering and exiting the driveways.

July 21, 2023

Re: ARC DRI Review Response – 2023 Chastain Meadows DRI 3940

Thank you for allowing the Bells Ferry Civic Association (BFCA) to submit our comments regarding DRI 3940. The BFCA is a non-profit civic organization who represents thousands of residents along the Bells Ferry Corridor. We have been in close collaboration with the rezoning applicant, Strategic Real Estate Partners, LLC since last year. During that time, we have reviewed several conceptual site plans that they have presented. The applicant also held a community meeting for area residents in June. Generally, we are in favor of their proposed concept, however, the site plan lacks detail for a development of this size. Therefore, we look forward to actually reviewing an engineered site plan drawn to scale.

Following is a list of our comments, concerns and recommendations:

INDUSTRIAL ZONING

The Office Services Warehouses are to be zoned in “Light Industrial” in the application. We have communicated to the applicant that we are opposed to “light industrial.” This is not an industrial area. This is a residential corridor with established subdivisions that were here long before any of the commercial entities. In 1984, these parcels, as well as several others, were rezoned from R-20 to OS and OI (Z-380-1984). The county had planned to rezone many of the parcels to higher intensity zoning categories such as GC. However, the BFCA and a coalition of nearby neighborhoods petitioned to “protect the rights of private property and the right to quiet enjoyment.” The PC and BOC agreed not to increase the intensity to protect the rights of area residents.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The applicant requests that “retail and office be 6 am to 2 am and Office Services (warehouses): 24 hours a day and 7-days a week.” These hours are not compatible when the plan is to abut residential. The majority of other businesses in the area are low volume, operating Monday through Friday from 8 am-5 pm.

SUFFICIENT PARKING

At the community meeting residents from the subdivisions adjacent to the development were concerned that there were not enough parking spaces. Residents do not want overflow parking in their neighborhoods and adjacent church. A parking deck would be ideal but if that is not possible, we recommend the use of pervious pavers which have been implemented in other nearby properties.

TRAFFIC LIGHT

Residents of Chastain Lakes Subdivision ask that a traffic light be added at the new intersection that coincides with the main entrance to Chastain Lakes. It is already very difficult for residents to exit their subdivision.

NOISE BUFFERING

The property currently consists of 57 wooded acres which serves as a natural buffer to keep much of the noise pollution and highly polluted air from interstate I-575 from reaching area subdivisions. A large buffer of the existing trees needs to remain and/or a sound barrier of at least 30 ft needs to be constructed. Sound Barriers were added several years ago along the rest of this stretch of interstate because traffic noise already exceeded NAC impact threshold noise levels (66 decibels) in 2017. The property should definitely not be clear cut. The changing climate is an existential threat. We need to address these needs at the local level in planning and development standards.

FLOODING CONCERNS

Part of this property is owned by VKEP B (B.R. Keappler) who has a decades-old agreement with the county that their properties can use a 27-year-old hydrology study and they are “exempt from providing separate detention or stormwater management facilities” (Big Shanty BTS Hydrology Memorandum dated May 27, 2004). This can cause increased flooding to hundreds of Cobb County residents who live along Noonday Creek, which flows North to Lake Altoona, our major source of drinking water. A project of this magnitude must be based on current hydrologic conditions. Stormwater from this site will be discharged **south** of the Regional Detention Facility through the Vanderlande property to Noonday Creek. Over the years, there has been a substantial increase of impervious development along Noonday Creek, increasing downstream residents’ flood insurance rates. The GA stormwater mgmt manual and Cobb County stormwater states that the runoff reduction on this piece of property does not meet requirements as outlined in their manuals. The site needs to provide adequate detention ponds. The BFCA would like to note, that no stream buffer variances should be allowed as this is an “environmentally sensitive area.” The impervious amount has been stated as 67%. However, the pervious areas are not evenly distributed throughout the property. The majority of the previous area is located near the warehouses where the stream is located and cannot be built upon. There needs to be more greenspace near the residential areas.

BUFFERING BETWEEN OFFICE SERVICE AREA TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The office-services warehouses do not provide the step-down nodal zoning that should be seen against a residential area. Therefore, a larger buffer should be required between the two areas and the existing trees should remain.

NEARBY ROCKRIDGE NATURE PRESERVE

Located just 3 miles from this proposed development is the Rockridge Nature Preserve and Wildlife Sanctuary consisting of 175 mostly wooded acres. It receives a hefty tax break under a conservation tax bracket because the State of Georgia recognizes the value of natural, forested areas. Unfortunately, Beazer Homes purchased the property and will now build almost 500 homes, townhouses and senior living. There will be two entrances/exits onto Bells Ferry Rd which is only 2 lanes. Several thousand cars will enter/exit the development in a 24 hr period. Originally a DRI study was required but the developer slightly reduced the number of houses so that a DRI could be avoided.

INTENSITY

The TCCID would prefer to see a high intensity, more commercially driven development, however, the residents of this area do not. This proposed development does benefit the surrounding neighborhoods and promotes the vibrant, pedestrian community touted on the TCCID's website. The TCCID mission statement boasts "thoughtful development" and contemplates a "vibrant, accessible community that integrates natural assets." This development would fulfill that need without having to increase density.

PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY

Residents support pedestrian friendly areas, multi-use paths and bike share programs with more open green spaces. Sidewalks that connect to the Noonday Creek trail are needed as well as adding sidewalks along the nearby roads, such as Bells Ferry Road between Westmoreland Drive and North Lakeside Drive, to connect to this development.

RSL VS "AGE-RESTRICTED"

The applicant plans to build an "age-restricted residential apartment." This is a "label" and not an actual zoning code. The correct specific zoning should be a "RSL Nonsupportive Urban Rental Unit." This would ensure that the apartment complex comply as an age-restricted dwelling.

OTHER PVC DEVELOPMENTS

Town Village, located a mile away from this proposed development, was originally supposed to be a PVC consisting of condominiums, town houses, senior living units, a church, greenspace with an outdoor amphitheater, and retail/office space. It was to be a viable "Live, Work, Play" Planned Village Community. Unfortunately, the area became "Developer Driven" and has turned into just a "Live" area with multiple Purpose-Built Student Housing (PBSH) and apartment complexes that have reached the allowable maximum of 1600 residential units on 50 acres. Town Village has become "rental city" with, according to law enforcement, a higher-than-average crime rate. *Eastpark Village* in Kennesaw was approved as a PVC and was to consist of 850 residential units, 300,000 sq ft of commercial, retail, and office space and have a Village Green surrounded by restaurants, open markets, and residential living. Groundbreaking took place in 2019. Since that time, the hotel and grocery store backed out and the majority of what is being built are apartment buildings. These are example of area PVCs that did not live up to their promises.

In summary, the goal is to ensure that this development does become a viable "Live, Work, Play" Community. Therefore, it is essential that it consists of owner-occupied townhomes, a RSL apartment complex, a Village Green with outdoor amphitheater and a minimum of 25,000 sq ft of retail/commercial space. There have been numerous age-restricted apartment and townhome developers interested in this development. This leads to the question as to why we need more office services warehouses as there are currently six empty office service warehouses in the immediate area. And Scannell plans to build 2 large speculative warehouses/distribution facilities adjacent to this proposed development. Fortunately, Amazon and FedEx Distribution Facilities pulled out as they would have greatly negatively impacted hundreds if not thousands of Cobb County residents.

Thank you for allowing the BFCA to submit our public comments to Chastain Meadows DRI 3940. The BFCA looks forward to helping create a highly desirable (and profitable) multi-use development for area residents.

Kind Regards,
BFCA Board

Development of Regional Impact Assessment of Consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan

DRI INFORMATION

DRI Number #3940
DRI Title Chastain Meadows
County Cobb County
City (if applicable) N/A
Address / Location 287 Chastain Road Kennesaw, GA 30144

Proposed Development Type:

A DRI review of a proposal to construct a mixed-use project with 425,000 SF of light industrial space in three buildings, 140 townhomes, 220 age-restricted multifamily units, 22,500 SF of restaurant space, and 7,500 SF of retail space on an approximately 57-acre wooded site located on Chastain Road in unincorporated Cobb County.

Build Out: 2025

Review Process ☐ EXPEDITED
☒ NON-EXPEDITED

REVIEW INFORMATION

Prepared by ARC Transportation Access and Mobility Division
Staff Lead Reginald James
Copied Marquitrice Mangham
Date July 10, 2023

TRAFFIC STUDY

Prepared by Kimley-Horn
Date June 1, 2023

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROJECTS

01. Did the traffic analysis incorporate all projects contained in the current version of the fiscally constrained RTP which are within the study area or along major transportation corridors connecting the study area with adjacent jurisdictions?

☒ YES *(provide the regional plan referenced and the page number of the traffic study where relevant projects are identified)*

The planned projects are located on page 19 of the traffic study.

☐ NO *(provide comments below)*

[Click here to provide comments.](#)

REGIONAL NETWORKS

02. Will the development site be directly served by any roadways identified as Regional Thoroughfares?

A Regional Thoroughfare is a major transportation corridor that serves multiple ways of traveling, including walking, bicycling, driving, and riding transit. It connects people and goods to important places in metropolitan Atlanta. A Regional Thoroughfare's operations should be managed through application of special traffic control strategies and suitable land development guidelines in order to maintain travel efficiency, reliability, and safety for all users. In light of the special function that Regional Thoroughfares serve in supporting cross-regional and interjurisdictional mobility and access, the network receives priority consideration for infrastructure investment in the Metro Atlanta region. Any access points between the development and a Regional Thoroughfare, combined with the development's on-site circulation patterns, must be designed with the goal of preserving the highest possible level of capacity and safety for all users of the roadway.

☒ NO

☐ YES *(identify the roadways and existing/proposed access points)*

No driveways provide access to the site via a road identified as a Regional Thoroughfare.

03. Will the development site be directly served by any roadways identified as Regional Truck Routes?

A Regional Truck Route is a freeway, state route or other roadway which serves as a critical link for the movement of goods to, from and within the Region by connecting airports, intermodal/multimodal facilities, distribution and warehousing centers and manufacturing clusters with the rest of the state and nation. These facilities often serve a key mobility and access function for other users as well, including drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users. A Regional Truck Route's operations should be managed through application of special traffic control strategies and suitable land development guidelines in order to maintain travel efficiency, reliability, and safety for all users. In light of the special function that Regional Truck Routes serve in supporting cross-regional and interjurisdictional mobility and access, the network receives priority consideration for infrastructure investment in the Metro Atlanta region. Any access points between the development and a Regional Truck Route, combined with the development's on-site circulation patterns, must be designed with the goal of preserving the highest possible level of capacity and safety for all users of the roadway.

☒ NO

☐ YES (*identify the roadways and existing/proposed access points*)

No driveways provide access to the site via a road identified as a Regional Truck Route.

04. If the development site is within one mile of an existing rail service, provide information on accessibility conditions.

Access between major developments and transit services provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce congestion. If a transit service is available nearby, but walking or bicycling between the development site and the nearest station is a challenge, the applicable local government(s) is encouraged to make the route a funding priority for future walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements.

☒ NOT APPLICABLE (*nearest station more than one mile away*)

☐ RAIL SERVICE WITHIN ONE MILE (*provide additional information below*)

Operator / Rail Line

Nearest Station

[Click here to enter name of operator and rail line](#)

Distance*

☐ Within or adjacent to the development site (0.10 mile or less)

☐ 0.10 to 0.50 mile

☐ 0.50 to 1.00 mile

Walking Access*

☐ Sidewalks and crosswalks provide sufficient connectivity

☐ Sidewalk and crosswalk network is incomplete

- ☐ Not applicable (*accessing the site by walking is not consistent with the type of development proposed*)

[Click here to provide comments.](#)

Bicycling Access*

- ☐ Dedicated paths, lanes or cycle tracks provide sufficient connectivity
- ☐ Low volume and/or low speed streets provide connectivity
- ☐ Route follows high volume and/or high speed streets
- ☐ Not applicable (*accessing the site by bicycling is not consistent with the type of development proposed*)

Transit Connectivity

- ☐ Fixed route transit agency bus service available to rail station
- ☐ Private shuttle or circulator available to rail station
- ☐ No services available to rail station
- ☐ Not applicable (*accessing the site by transit is not consistent with the type of development proposed*)

[Click here to provide comments.](#)

** Following the most direct feasible walking or bicycling route to the nearest point on the development site*

05. If there is currently no rail transit service within one mile of the development site, is nearby rail service planned in the fiscally constrained RTP?

Access between major developments and transit services provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce traffic congestion. If a transit agency operates within the jurisdiction and expansion plans are being considered in the general vicinity of the development site, the agency should give consideration to how the site can be best served during the evaluation of alignments and station locations. Proactive negotiations with the development team and local government(s) are encouraged to determine whether right-of-way within the site should be identified and protected for potential future service. If direct service to the site is not feasible or cost effective, the transit agency and local government(s) are encouraged to ensure good walking and bicycling access accessibility is provided between the development and the future rail line. These improvements should be considered fundamental components of the overall transit expansion project, with improvements completed concurrent with or prior to the transit service being brought online.

- ☐ NOT APPLICABLE (rail service already exists)
- ☐ NOT APPLICABLE (accessing the site by transit is not consistent with the type of development proposed)
- ☒ NO (no plans exist to provide rail service in the general vicinity)
- ☐ YES (provide additional information on the timeframe of the expansion project below)
 - ☐ CST planned within TIP period
 - ☐ CST planned within first portion of long range period
 - ☐ CST planned near end of plan horizon

[Click here to provide comments.](#)

06. If the development site is within one mile of fixed route bus services (including any privately operated shuttles or circulators open to the general public), provide information on walking and bicycling accessibility conditions.

Access between major developments and transit services provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce congestion. If a transit service is available nearby, but walking or bicycling between the development site and the nearest station is a challenge, the applicable local government(s) is encouraged to make the connection a funding priority for future walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements.

☐ NOT APPLICABLE (nearest bus, shuttle or circulator stop more than one mile away)

☒ SERVICE WITHIN ONE MILE (provide additional information below)

Operator(s) Cobb Linc, GRTA Xpress

Bus Route(s) Park and Ride lot

Distance* ☐ Within or adjacent to the development site (0.10 mile or less)

☐ 0.10 to 0.50 mile

☒ 0.50 to 1.00 mile

Walking Access* ☒ Sidewalks and crosswalks provide sufficient connectivity

☐ Sidewalk and crosswalk network is incomplete

☐ Not applicable (accessing the site by walking is not consistent with the type of development proposed)

[Click here to provide comments.](#)

Bicycling Access* ☒ Dedicated paths, lanes or cycle tracks provide sufficient connectivity

☐ Low volume and/or low speed streets provide sufficient connectivity

☐ Route uses high volume and/or high speed streets

☐ Not applicable (accessing the site by bicycling is not consistent with the type of development proposed)

* Following the most direct feasible walking or bicycling route to the nearest point on the development site

07. Does a transit agency which provides rail and/or fixed route bus service operate anywhere within the jurisdiction in which the development site is located?

Access between major developments and transit services provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce traffic congestion. If a transit agency operates within the jurisdiction and a comprehensive operations plan update is undertaken, the agency should give consideration to serving the site during the evaluation of future routes, bus stops and transfer facilities. If the nature of the development is amenable to access by transit, walking or bicycling, but direct service to the site is not feasible or cost effective, the transit agency and local government(s) should ensure good walking and bicycling access accessibility is provided between the development and any routes within a one mile radius. The applicable local government(s) is encouraged to make these connections a funding priority for future walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements.

☐ NO

☒ YES

GRTA Xpress and Cobb Linc

08. If the development site is within one mile of an existing multi-use path or trail, provide information on accessibility conditions.

Access between major developments and walking/bicycling facilities provide options for people who cannot or prefer not to drive, expand economic opportunities by better connecting people and jobs, and can help reduce traffic congestion. If connectivity with a regionally significant path or trail is available nearby, but walking or bicycling between the development site and those facilities is a challenge, the applicable local government(s) is encouraged to make the route a funding priority for future walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements.

☒ NOT APPLICABLE (nearest path or trail more than one mile away)

☐ YES (provide additional information below)

Name of facility

[Click here to provide name of facility.](#)

Distance

☐ Within or adjacent to development site (0.10 mile or less)

☐ 0.15 to 0.50 mile

☐ 0.50 to 1.00 mile

Walking Access*

☐ Sidewalks and crosswalks provide connectivity

☐ Sidewalk and crosswalk network is incomplete

☐ Not applicable (accessing the site by walking is not consistent with the type of development proposed)

Bicycling Access*

☐ Dedicated lanes or cycle tracks provide connectivity

☐ Low volume and/or low speed streets provide connectivity

☐ Route uses high volume and/or high speed streets

- ☐ Not applicable (*accessing the site by bicycling is not consistent with the type of development proposed*)

NOTE: The Cobb County Trails Master Plan and Town Center CID identifies that there is a multi-use path that is anticipated along the north and east frontage of the site.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

09. Does the site plan provide for the construction of publicly accessible local road or drive aisle connections with adjacent parcels?

The ability for drivers and bus routes to move between developments without using the adjacent arterial or collector roadway networks can save time and reduce congestion. Such opportunities should be considered and proactively incorporated into development site plans whenever possible.

- ☒ YES (*connections to adjacent parcels are planned as part of the development*)
- ☐ YES (*stub outs will make future connections possible when adjacent parcels redevelop*)
- ☐ NO (*the site plan precludes future connections with adjacent parcels when they redevelop*)
- ☐ OTHER (*Please explain*)

10. Does the site plan enable pedestrians and bicyclists to move between destinations within the development site safely and conveniently?

The ability for walkers and bicyclists to move within the site safely and conveniently reduces reliance on vehicular trips, which has congestion reduction and health benefits. Development site plans should incorporate well designed and direct sidewalk connections between all key destinations. To the extent practical, bicycle lanes or multiuse paths are encouraged for large acreage sites and where high volumes of bicyclists and pedestrians are possible.

- ☒ YES (*sidewalks provided on all key walking routes and both sides of roads whenever practical and bicyclists should have no major issues navigating the street network*)
- ☐ PARTIAL (*some walking and bicycling facilities are provided, but connections are not comprehensive and/or direct*)
- ☐ NO (*walking and bicycling facilities within the site are limited or nonexistent*)
- ☐ NOT APPLICABLE (*the nature of the development does not lend itself to internal walking and bicycling trips*)
- ☐ OTHER (*Please explain*)

11. Does the site plan provide the ability to construct publicly accessible bicycling and walking connections with adjacent parcels which may be redeveloped in the future?

The ability for walkers and bicyclists to move between developments safely and conveniently reduces reliance on vehicular trips, which has congestion reduction and health benefits. Such opportunities should be considered and proactively incorporated into development site plans whenever possible.

- ☒ YES (connections to adjacent parcels are planned as part of the development)
- ☐ YES (stub outs will make future connections possible when adjacent parcels redevelop)
- ☐ NO (the development site plan does not enable walking or bicycling to/from adjacent parcels)
- ☐ NO (the site plan precludes future connections with adjacent parcels when they redevelop)
- ☐ NOT APPLICABLE (adjacent parcels are not likely to develop or redevelop in the near future)
- ☐ NOT APPLICABLE (the nature of the development or adjacent parcels does not lend itself to interparcel walking and bicycling trips)

12. Does the site plan effectively manage truck movements and separate them, to the extent possible, from the flow of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists both within the site and on the surrounding road network?

The ability for delivery and service vehicles to efficiently enter and exit major developments is often key to their economic success. So is the ability of visitors and customers being able to move around safely and pleasantly within the site. To the extent practical, truck movements should be segregated by minimizing the number of conflict points with publicly accessible internal roadways, sidewalks, paths and other facilities.

- ☒ YES (truck routes to serve destinations within the site are clearly delineated, provide ample space for queuing and turning around, and are separated from other users to the extent practical)
- ☐ PARTIAL (while one or more truck routes are also used by motorists and/or interface with primary walking and bicycling routes, the site plan mitigates the potential for conflict adequately)
- ☐ NO (one or more truck routes serving the site conflict directly with routes likely to be used heavily by pedestrians, bicyclists and/or motorists)
- ☐ NOT APPLICABLE (the nature of the development will not generate a wide variety of users and/or very low truck volumes, so the potential for conflict is negligible)

RECOMMENDATIONS

13. Do the transportation network recommendations outlined in the traffic study appear to be feasible from a constructability standpoint?

- ☐ UNKNOWN (additional study is necessary)
- ☒ YES (based on information made available through the review process; does not represent a thorough engineering / financial analysis)

☐ NO *(see comments below)*

[Click here to enter text.](#)

14. Is ARC aware of any issues with the development proposal which may result in it being opposed by one or more local governments, agencies or stakeholder groups?

☒ NO *(based on information shared with ARC staff prior to or during the review process; does not reflect the outcome of an extensive stakeholder engagement process)*

☐ YES *(see comments below)*

[Click here to enter text.](#)

15. ARC offers the following additional comments for consideration by the development team and/or the applicable local government(s):

None at this time.

