



REGIONAL REVIEW NOTIFICATION

Atlanta Regional Commission • 229 Peachtree Street NE | Suite 100 | Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • ph: 404.463.3100 fax: 404.463.3205 • atlantaregional.org

DATE: May 15, 2024

TO: Chairman Oz Nesbitt Sr., Rockdale County Commission
ATTN TO: Denise Tugman, Planning Manager, Rockdale County
RE: Development of Regional Impact Review
FROM: Mike Alexander, COO, Atlanta Regional Commission

ARC has completed a preliminary regional review of the following 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 preliminary report does not address whether the DRI is or is not in the best interest of the local government.

Name of Proposal: 2024 DC Blox – ATL East Data Center DRI 4120

Submitting Local Government: Rockdale County

Date Opened: May 15, 2024

Deadline for Comments: May 30 2024 **Date to Close:** May 30, 2024

Description: A regional DRI review of a proposal to construct three data center buildings with a combined 1,016,828 SF of space with associated equipment yards, parking, and electrical substation on a 68-acre site at 1726 Farmer Road NW in Rockdale County.

PRELIMINARY COMMENTS:

Key Comments

The Atlanta Region's Plan assigns the Established Suburbs growth management designation to the project site. The project is not aligned with Established Suburbs policy recommendations which emphasize the importance of preserving single-family neighborhoods with appropriate infill development. The project could be more aligned with Established Suburbs policies by preserving additional wooded land and utilizing green infrastructure in paved/developed areas.

There are growing concerns about the impacts of high levels of energy and water consumption generated by the tremendous increase in the number of data center projects in the Atlanta region. ARC therefore recommends that the applicable water provider carefully examine its capacity to meet peak-day project demands, in addition to other current and projected peak-day demands. ARC also recommends the use of advanced "waterless" cooling technologies or "near waterless" technology for data center projects to reduce the burden on the drinking water supplies and increase the resiliency of both the project and the potable water system.

The project is expected to generate approximately 1,007 daily new vehicular trips.

Areas of natural open space are proposed to be retained but the total amount of open space is not clear and should be shown as a total and as a percentage of the site on a revised site plan.

A requested variance to reduce required parking spaces is supportive of regional environmental and transportation policies.

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 11-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 to all areas in the region- Established Suburbs for this project - and provides accompanying growth policy recommendations which are detailed at the end of these comments.

There are growing concerns about the impacts of high levels of energy and water consumption generated by the tremendous increase in the number of data center projects in the Atlanta region. Given that daily maximum water flow requirements for water cooled systems often coincide with the hottest days of the year, the peak demand for water has a higher likelihood of occurring during times of water stress in the water supply watershed. ARC therefore recommends that the applicable water provider carefully examine its capacity to meet peak-day project demands, in addition to other current and projected peak-day demands. ARC also recommends the use of advanced "waterless" cooling technologies or "near waterless" technology for data center projects to reduce the burden on the drinking water supplies and increase the resiliency of both the project and the potable water system.

Transportation and Mobility Comments

ARC's Transportation Access and Mobility Group comments will be provided in the Final Report.

The project is projected to generate 1,007 daily new vehicular trips; minor roadway improvements to provide project access and mitigate traffic impacts are proposed.

A requested variance to reduce required parking spaces is supportive of regional environmental and transportation policies.

ARC Natural Resources Group Comments

ARC's Natural Resources Group comments will be provided in the Final Report.

Environmental Comments

The DCA form 2 for the project notes that the project will impact wetlands which will be handled with a USACE permit.

The total amount of open space to be retained does not appear to be shown on the site plan. This should be shown as a total and as a percentage of the site.

Additional retention of wooded and water-adjacent areas would be desirable and in keeping with regional goals regarding carbon sequestration and climate change/heat island effect mitigation. There may be potential opportunities for linking these fragmented undeveloped areas with adjacent undeveloped or protected areas to ensure their maintenance and potential use for recreation or habitat preservation. Incorporation of green stormwater and heat island mitigation designs for the surface car parking spaces proposed and use of an ecosystem-based design for the stormwater detention areas would be supportive of regional environmental policies.

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

Atlanta Region's Plan Growth Policy Considerations: Established Suburbs

According to the Atlanta Region's Plan, Established Suburbs are areas where suburban development has occurred and are characterized by single-family subdivisions, commercial development, and office, industrial and multi-family development. These areas represent the part of the region that has recently reached "build-out." With few remaining large parcels for additional development, these are the areas in which the region may see the least amount of land-use change outside of retail and commercial areas. While there is still room for limited infill development, these areas will begin to focus more on redevelopment over the next 30 years.

Preservation of existing single-family neighborhoods is important, and wholesale change will most likely not occur in the single-family subdivisions that make up a majority of these areas. However, infill and redevelopment will occur in areas of retail/commercial concentrations, especially commercial corridors. The project is not aligned with Established Suburbs recommendations but could be more aligned by preserving additional wooded land, utilizing a construction approach that retains existing trees in the development footprint where possible and by generally employing a low-impact design approach. Rockdale County leadership and staff, along with the applicant team, should collaborate closely to ensure maximum sensitivity to nearby local governments, neighborhoods, land uses and natural systems.

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

ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY

CITY OF CONYERS

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE

GEORGIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

GEORGIA CONSERVANCY

DEKALB COUNTY

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

CITY OF STONECREST

CITY OF LITHONIA

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>.



Developments of Regional Impact

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DRI #4120

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: Rockdale
 Individual completing form: Denise Tugman
 Telephone: 7702787124
 E-mail: denise.tugman@rockalecountyga.gov

*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: DC Blox - ATL East Data Center
 Location (Street Address, GPS Coordinates, or Legal Land Lot Description): 1726 Farmer Road NW, Conyers GA 30012
 Brief Description of Project: The project includes three industrial data center buildings with a combined 1,016,828 SF of space, equipment yards, parking, and substation

Development Type:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> (not selected) | <input type="radio"/> Hotels | <input type="radio"/> Wastewater Treatment Facilities |
| <input type="radio"/> Office | <input 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 checked="" type="radio"/> Industrial | <input type="radio"/> Quarries, Asphalt & Cement Plants | |

If other development type, describe:

Project Size (# of units, floor area, etc.): 1,016,828 SF gross square footage (SF)

Developer: DC Blox

Mailing Address: 1040 Crown Point Parkway, Suite 560

Address 2:

City: Atlanta State: GA Zip: 30338

Telephone: 770-827-4733

Email: chip.scaglione@dcblox.com

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

If yes, property owner:

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: 2026

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DRI #4120

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: Rockdale
Individual completing form: Denise Tugman
Telephone: 7702787124
Email: denise.tugman@rockalecountyga.gov

Project Information

Name of Proposed Project: DC Blox - ATL East Data Center
DRI ID Number: 4120
Developer/Applicant: DC Blox
Telephone: 770-827-4733
Email(s): chip.scaglione@dcblox.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: ~\$1.2 Billion
Estimated annual local tax revenues (i.e., property tax, sales tax) likely to be generated by the proposed development: \$5M per year, averaged over 10 years at full buildout.
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: Rockdale Water Resources

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

785 GPD (0.008 MGD, 0.55 GPM)

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:

Rockdale County Water and Sewer

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

785 GPD (0.008 MGD, 0.55 GPM)

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? Pump station and approximately 5000 LF force main extension is proposed.

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.)

24 hrs. two way traffic: 1,007 trips AM Peak Hour: 70 entering, 57 exiting, 127 total PM Peak Hour: 32 entering, 74 exiting, 106 total

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: Deceleration Lane on Lester Road at Proposed Driveway 1

Solid Waste Disposal

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

34 tons (68lb/1000 sf/year)

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

44% (~30 ac impervious on 68 ac site)

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:Two Stormwater detention ponds, 25' state pond buffer on existing ponds to remain, 75' (50' undisturbed) stream buffer on streams to remain

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:
Wetland areas will be preserved through all phases of development until Army Corps permits are issued.

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