



Public Statement

From: The Joint Development Authority of Jasper, Morgan, Newton and Walton Counties
Date: February 18, 2022
For Immediate Release

The Joint Development Authority (JDA) and Rivian have continued to listen and engage in dialogue with the public over the last several weeks regarding how best to plan for the proposed electric vehicle assembly facility.

With an economic development opportunity of this size and scope, it is critical that we work together to ensure that the public's input is properly incorporated into plans. We recognize this project is unprecedented for our community, as well as the state, and there are unique issues that are associated with it. As a result, our legal, environmental, and planning experts are thoroughly evaluating issues raised by both the public and the recent reports from the City of Social Circle and Morgan County Planning and Development. We have been assessing how to fairly address these questions in our planning process.

While some areas of both reports have merit, the Morgan County Planning and Development report includes some incorrect zoning conditions and inaccuracies that we believe invite inconsistency of decision-making. For example, the report is inaccurate in its assessment of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's (NEGRC) Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) "Final Report". As the NEGRC's press release states, DRI reviews often occur very early in project development, which was the case with our project. The proposal's details and designs were still in-process when submitted for a DRI Review. It is not uncommon for a project to undergo design changes after a DRI Review has already been performed and, if necessary, resubmitted. It is also incorrect that a DRI report must be completed before a Planning Commission vote. That rule applies to the City Council only.

Likewise, the subsequent NEGRC press release clarifies: "...a number of environmental, traffic and other studies and analyses are currently underway, which is common for projects undergoing DRI Reviews. It is fully anticipated that the proposal will be adjusted, as appropriate, to address any findings and mitigating effects. Due to the heightened interest in this specific Final Report, the NEGRC will issue an amended report once new information becomes available, to accurately capture the proposed project's evolution."

Additionally, comments about a lack of information related to environmental issues simply means those studies were not available or complete at the time – this does not mean there will be problems.

We are confident we can reach a mutually beneficial outcome for all parties; however, we believe the areas mentioned above in the Morgan County Planning and Development report require additional

clarification and review. Progress has been made with respect to the completion of assessments, plans and supporting materials including a [groundwater recharge plan](#), [independent groundwater assessment](#), [site plan](#), and [over 3 dozen letters of support](#). We believe all these materials, and additional reports and studies that are in process, will help clarify many issues for the public and relevant planning commissions. Regarding traffic impacts, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has administered a traffic study to evaluate traffic impacts and planned improvements. That study will be made public once GDOT has completed it.

Therefore, we have asked both the City of Social Circle and Morgan County Planning and Development to table all zoning matters pertaining to this project on their agendas slated respectively for Tuesday, February 22nd, 2022 and Thursday, February 24th, 2022.

Thank you for participation in this public process and we look forward to a thoughtful, civil dialogue in weeks ahead.