

**INFRASTRUCTURE
EVIDENCE GROUP**

AI infrastructure research and intelligence

FLAGSHIP EVIDENCE BRIEF

What We Know - and Still Don't Know - About Project Camellia

A plain-language review of electricity, water, land, public finance, environmental risk, and the decisions still ahead in Effingham County, Georgia.



Official project-site landscape image. It is not a final site plan or evidence of a constructed campus. Source: ProjectCamellia.com

EDITORIAL POSITION Infrastructure Evidence Group is neither for nor against the project. Our standard is whether benefits, costs, resource demands, and safeguards are supported by evidence and designed to remain sustainable over time.

Prepared by the AI Resource Efficiency Lab

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Table of contents

Executive summary	3
1. What is reasonably established	4
2. How Camellia compares with recent Georgia filings	5
3. Electricity: what 3.2 GW means	6
4. Water and cooling: promising design, missing measurements	7
5. Land, stormwater, air, and other environmental effects	8
6. Jobs, taxes, and public finance	10
7. Approvals and decisions still ahead	12
8. The questions that matter most now	13
9. A reasonable sustainability standard	14
Methodology and confidence ratings	15
Sources	16

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT “Officially stated” means a government, utility, or project source made the statement. It does not mean the outcome has occurred. “Established” is reserved for facts supported by current records. Projections remain projections, even when they come from an official source.

Version and verification trail

Last verified September 4, 2026. This visible trail is part of the report, not only its file metadata. Each material update identifies what changed, why it changed, and which new record supports the revision.

Version	Last verified	Material change
v1.0	September 4, 2026	Added the adopted 2026 millage action, phased county and school revenue projections, community-input process, and pending zoning-process litigation.
v0.3	August 30, 2026	Incorporated the August 29 county work-session presentation; clarified PILOT, water, noise, backup-power, traffic, job, and approval claims.
v0.2	August 27, 2026	Added direct DRI and PSC identifiers, Georgia comparables, a fiscal reconciliation template, audience framing, and resolution checkpoints.
v0.1	August 26, 2026	Initial complete prepublication draft.

Executive summary

BOTTOM LINE Project Camellia is a very large proposed AI infrastructure campus with potentially significant economic benefits and unusually large resource demands. The public record is now strong enough to understand its announced scale, but not yet strong enough to verify several of its most important protections and outcomes.

Who should read this

Investors and advisers can use this report to identify diligence gaps before relying on project-scale, utility, tax, or operating claims. Residents can see which resource protections are documented and which remain open. Journalists and public officials can follow direct primary-source links, deadlines, and correction history. Developers, utilities, and professional firms can use the same framework to test whether commitments are measurable, financeable, and durable. Readers who need project-specific analysis can request a briefing at infrastructureevidence.com/briefing.

Project Camellia is being designed and developed for OpenAI in Effingham County. The state DRI record lists four data-center buildings totaling 4.4 million square feet, a peak connected electrical load of 3,210 megawatts, estimated water and sewage demand of 30,000 gallons per day each, and 65% impervious surface. The filing estimates a \$20 billion build-out value and 400 full-time jobs. [1][2][3]

Those numbers are planning representations, not measured outcomes. The project is not operating, the final site plan remains in development, and the reviewed public record does not establish that all construction approvals have been issued. As of September 4, DRI #4801 remains listed as “Certified Complete” and warrants regional review, with a projected process-completion date of September 6. County materials still identify site-plan, water, sewer, stormwater, wetlands, utility, erosion-control, building, fire-safety, inspection, and occupancy steps. [1][7][35]

OpenAI and Georgia Power say the project will pay the full infrastructure and electric-service costs required to serve it under a 25-year agreement. Georgia Power says it may reduce service by as much as 1,000 MW during high-demand periods. Systemwide large-load protections are traceable to Georgia PSC Docket 44280, including Document 221165 and the April 17, 2025 compliance order, Document 222325. No Camellia-specific PSC docket was identified in the reviewed public record. The public still needs a project-level summary showing minimum payments, financial security, termination protection, cost allocation, and how flexible load will be tested and enforced. [4][5][11][12][30]-[32]

The closed-loop cooling design may substantially reduce ongoing withdrawals compared with evaporative cooling, but it does not make the campus water-free. At the August 29 work session, the county said domestic water and sewer use would be limited to 30,000 gallons per day, while one-time cooling-system fills would be scheduled under separate daily-volume and timing conditions. That clarification is useful, but the fill volume, make-up water, peak demand, drought rules, meter plan, and executed water-and-sewer agreement are still not public. [3][8][35]

Environmental review should extend beyond cooling water. The DRI lists 65% impervious surface, but the final site plan, campus acreage, drainage design, wetland findings, and permit record remain incomplete. The county now says permanent diesel backup generation is not planned after construction and that a battery energy storage system would provide backup power; construction generators would still require mitigation and permit review. The work-session presentation also adds a 300-foot buffer at non-industrial borders, a pre-operation noise study, perimeter monitoring, and 60/50 dBA day/night limits at adjacent

residential property lines. These are official representations until the relevant plans, permits, agreements, and monitoring data are available. [3][16][17][35]

The economic case may be substantial, but different categories must remain separate. The county reports that adopted 2026 rates now include a two-mill County reduction, a two-mill School District reduction, and suspension of ECIDA's two-mill levy - six mills of local relief. It attributes that relief to use of Project Camellia land-sale proceeds. Separately, the county projects payments beginning in 2027 at about \$2.5 million for the County and \$3.5 million for the School District, rising by 2029 to about \$10 million and \$14 million, and at full build-out in 2032 to about \$27 million and \$39 million. These are official projections, not audited receipts, and the executed PILOT, payment schedule, default remedies, valuation rules, and net fiscal model remain unpublished. [9][10][35][37][38]

A new legal issue is now part of the approval record. On September 3, local news organizations reported that three Effingham County residents filed suit challenging the process used to adopt Ordinance 2026-352, which expanded data-center eligibility on industrially zoned land. The complaint alleges required public hearings were not held. These are plaintiffs' allegations, not court findings. Reports state the suit does not ask the court to halt Project Camellia, and no ruling or county response was identified by the September 4 verification cutoff. [40][41]

The five strongest conclusions today

1. The project's scale is established well enough for serious planning: 4.4 million square feet and a 3,210 MW peak connected load appear in a filed state record.
2. The project is advancing through review, but "Certified Complete" in the DRI process is not final construction approval.
3. Closed-loop cooling is a credible water-saving design direction, and the county has now described separate controls for domestic use and one-time system fills; the actual volumes, drought terms, and enforceable agreement remain unpublished.
4. Large-load customer rules create meaningful ratepayer safeguards; the project-specific application of those safeguards remains only partly visible.
5. The adopted six-mill local reduction is a verified 2026 policy outcome, and the county has now published phased revenue projections. Those facts strengthen the near-term fiscal case, but they do not replace the need for the executed PILOT, a year-by-year net model, and clear separation of one-time proceeds, recurring payments, incentives, public costs, and enforcement.

1. What is reasonably established

The table below separates facts supported by current public records from announcements and unresolved details. Confidence describes the evidence available as of September 4, 2026; it is not a prediction that the project will achieve the announced outcome.

Topic	Current public record	Treatment	Confidence
Project and location	Proposed AI data-center campus in Effingham County; DRI coordinates 32.261081, -81.263903.	Established in filed record	High
Physical program	Four buildings totaling 4,400,000 square feet.	Planning representation	High that filed
Electric scale	3,210 MW peak connected load; 3.2 GW service announced in phases from 2028-2032.	Filed estimate + official announcements	High that stated
Flexible load	Up to 1,000 MW of demand response under a 25-year	Utility statement; operating	Medium-high

Topic	Current public record	Treatment	Confidence
	arrangement.	terms unavailable	
Water and sewage	30,000 gallons/day each in the DRI.	Planning estimate; basis unavailable	High that filed
Cooling and source	Closed-loop cooling and treated surface water are planned.	Design commitment; not measured performance	High that stated
Land cover	65% impervious surface in the DRI.	Planning estimate; acreage/design unavailable	High that filed
Investment and jobs	\$20 billion build-out estimate and 400 FTEs in the DRI.	Projected outcomes	High that filed; outcome unknown
DRI status	Certified Complete; regional review warranted; projected completion Sept. 6.	Current administrative record	High as of Sept. 4
PILOT terms	County presentation: 32.537-mill calculation; five phases; \$20B and 400-job guarantees.	Official summary; executed agreement not reviewed	Medium-high that stated
Noise / backup	300-ft non-industrial buffer; pre-operation study and monitoring; BESS after construction.	Official design representation	Medium
2026 tax action	County -2 mills; School District -2 mills; ECIDA 2-mill levy suspended.	Adopted local policy outcome; individual bills vary	High that adopted
Revenue path	Official projections: 2027 \$2.5M County/\$3.5M schools; 2029 \$10M/\$14M; 2032 \$27M/\$39M.	Official projections; executed model not reviewed	Medium-high that stated
Zoning litigation	Three residents reportedly filed suit challenging adoption of Ordinance 2026-352.	Allegations pending; no ruling identified	Medium-high that filed/reported

Sources: [1]-[5], [7]-[9], [35], [37], [38], [40], [41].

IMPORTANT DISTINCTION A filed estimate is evidence that the estimate was submitted. It is not proof that the result will occur or that the underlying calculation is correct.

2. How Camellia compares with recent Georgia filings

The comparison below uses recent Georgia DRI forms for completed data-center reviews. It compares filed planning representations, not measured operations. Differences in cooling design, site boundaries, project phases, utility service, and filing quality limit direct equivalence. Even with those limits, the filings provide a useful scale check.

Filed project	DRI ID	Filed floor area	Peak connected load	Water demand	Impervious
Project Camellia	DRI #4801	4.40 million sq. ft.	3,210 MW	30,000 GPD	65%
PRL2, LaGrange	DRI #4797	470,000 sq. ft. phase	350 MW	2-4 MGD	about 29%
Project Indo, Cartersville	DRI #4761	1.10 million sq. ft.	288 MW	5,034 GPD	less than 85%
ATL2 East, Fayetteville	DRI #4603	2.00 million sq. ft.	Not stated in filed form	0.20 MGD	60%

Sources: [21]-[29].

What the benchmark demonstrates

Camellia's 3,210 MW peak connected-load estimate is more than nine times PRL2's 350 MW filing and more than eleven times Project Indo's 288 MW filing. ATL2 East did not state a usable peak-load value in its filed Part 2 form. This supports describing Camellia's filed electrical scale as unusually large within this recent Georgia comparison set, while still avoiding the claim that connected load equals continuous consumption.

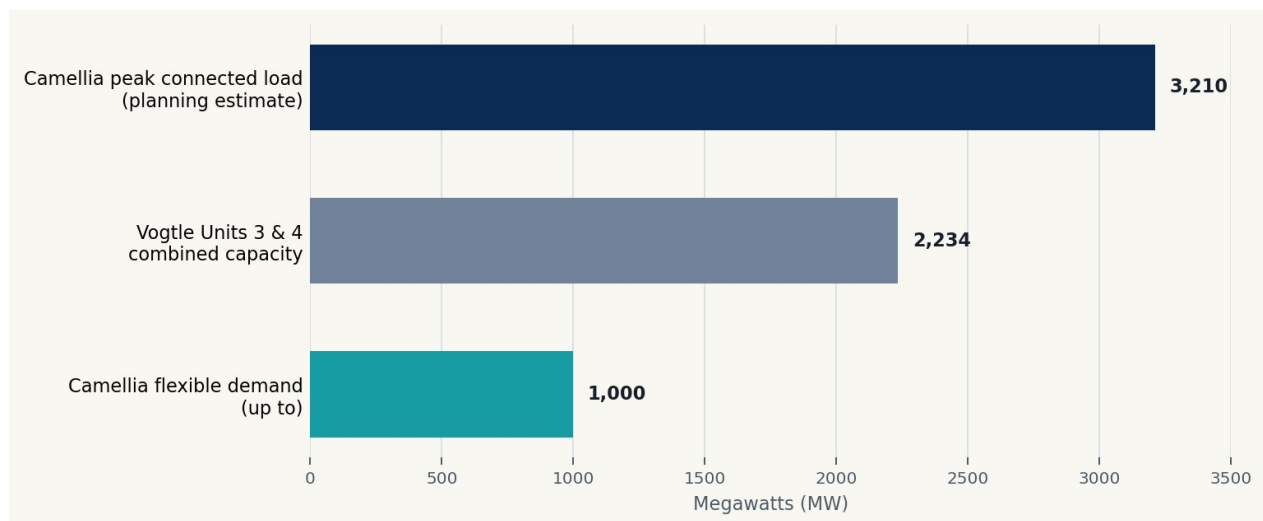
The water comparison points in the opposite direction: Camellia's 30,000 GPD filing is above Project Indo's 5,034 GPD estimate but well below ATL2 East's 200,000 GPD and PRL2's 2-4 MGD filings. Those differences may reflect cooling technology, phase boundaries, or inconsistent assumptions; they strengthen the case for publishing the calculation behind Camellia's number rather than treating the low figure as self-proving.

Camellia's 65% impervious estimate is close to ATL2 East's 60%, substantially above PRL2's approximately 29%, and not directly comparable with Project Indo's broad "less than 85%" ceiling. The missing Camellia site acreage still prevents conversion of 65% into developed acres or runoff volume.

BENCHMARK CONCLUSION The filings make the scale claim more precise: Camellia stands out most clearly on connected electrical load, not on the filed daily water estimate. Its impervious share is material but not unprecedented in the small comparison set.

3. Electricity: what 3.2 GW means

A megawatt measures power at a point in time. A megawatt-hour measures energy delivered over time. The 3,210 MW figure is a peak connected-load estimate, not proof that the campus will continuously consume 3,210 MW. Actual annual energy use will depend on the load ramp, operating profile, efficiency, outages, and curtailment.



Scale comparison only. Connected load and generating capacity are not the same as annual energy use. Source: DRI #4801; Georgia Power

Why the demand-response promise matters

Georgia Power says it can reduce electricity delivered to the campus by up to 1,000 MW during certain high-demand periods. At the full 3,210 MW planning peak, that equals about 31% of the load. Even if the full amount were curtailed, roughly 2,210 MW would remain. That does not make the commitment weak; it shows why the trigger, duration, notice, testing, and enforcement terms matter. [5]

Flexible demand can reduce the amount of generation that must be available for rare peak conditions. Its value depends on when the load can move, how often curtailment can occur, how quickly the campus responds, and whether the reduction is contractually dependable when the grid needs it.

What “paying its own way” should mean

Georgia’s large-load rules allow longer contract terms, minimum bills, financial security, upfront payments for local infrastructure, and termination payments. The governing record is Georgia PSC Docket 44280. Document 221165 contains the Commission’s January 2025 order addressing revised large-load rules, and Document 222325 is the April 17, 2025 order on Georgia Power’s tariff-compliance filing. The 2023 IRP update is Docket 55378, and the 2025 IRP is Docket 56002. These systemwide records should not be described as a public Camellia contract. [11][12][30]-[34]

The unresolved issue is not whether safeguards exist in general. It is whether the project-specific contract allocates local and upstream generation, transmission, and distribution costs in a way that remains protective across delays, lower-than-expected demand, early termination, and long-lived assets. The reviewed public record does not disclose enough of those terms to verify the full claim.

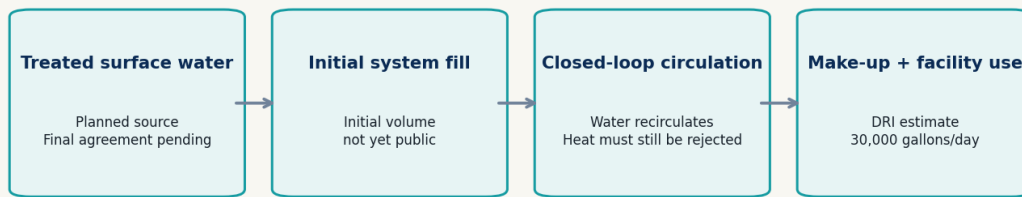
Environmental consequence of the power supply

The campus’s operational carbon and air-quality footprint will depend on the generators that respond to its load, not simply Georgia’s average annual mix. For context, the U.S. Energy Information Administration reports that natural gas supplied 39% of Georgia’s net generation in 2025, nuclear 35%, and coal nearly 14%. No project-specific energy mix or emissions pathway is public in the reviewed record. [14]

SOUND CONCLUSION The flexible-load commitment is a meaningful resource-efficiency tool. It should be evaluated as a measurable grid service, not a slogan: required capacity, event hours, response speed, verification method, penalties, and annual performance should be published.

4. Water and cooling: promising design, missing measurements

OpenAI and county materials describe a closed-loop cooling system that recirculates water rather than continuously withdrawing and discharging it. This can reduce water use compared with cooling towers that reject heat through evaporation. The U.S. Department of Energy notes that cooling can account for a large share of data-center energy use and that water and energy efficiency are connected design choices. [4][8][15]



The key question is not whether the loop recirculates water; it is how much new water enters, when, under what limits, and with what public reporting.

A neutral reading of the current water claim. The final agreement and operating measurements remain essential. Source: DRI #4801; county statements

What the 30,000-gallon figure does and does not tell us

The DRI lists 0.03 million gallons per day - 30,000 gallons - for water demand and sewage flow. The August 29 county presentation describes that same figure as a limit for domestic water and sewer use, calculated at 30 gallons per employee per day. It separately says one-time closed-loop fills will be scheduled under agreed timing and maximum-daily-volume conditions, and that cooling water requiring disposal will go to an approved third-party facility rather than the county's current wastewater plant. The presentation does not quantify the fill, normal make-up water, peak-day demand, drought-stage limit, or disposal volume. [3][35]

Thirty thousand gallons per day would equal about 10.95 million gallons in a 365-day year if the domestic-use limit were reached every day. That arithmetic is not a forecast and should not be treated as total campus water consumption because the county presentation separates domestic use from cooling-system fills. The public benchmark should therefore track domestic use, initial and later fills, make-up water, reuse, disposal, and drought-period demand separately. [35]

What responsible water governance would include

- A quantified initial fill and normal make-up-water range.
- Average-day, peak-day, and annual limits tied to the phased build-out.
- Drought-stage restrictions and a priority rule protecting community supply.
- Metering at meaningful points, with public monthly or quarterly reporting.
- A clear definition of consumptive use, discharge, reuse, and emergency operation.
- An independent audit whose scope, auditor selection, data access, and correction process are public.

SOUND CONCLUSION Closed-loop cooling is directionally encouraging. The environmental claim becomes verifiable only when the final agreement converts the design into volumes, limits, meters, drought rules, reporting, and remedies.

5. Land, stormwater, air, and other environmental effects

Water use is only one environmental category. A campus of this scale can affect land cover, runoff, wetlands, habitat, traffic, noise, lighting, air quality, and the regional generation system. Compliance with applicable law is necessary, but a data-driven review also asks what the impacts are, how they are minimized, and what performance will be disclosed.

Impervious surface is a material planning fact

The DRI lists 65% impervious surface. Impervious areas - roofs, roads, parking, and hardscape - prevent rainfall from soaking into the ground. The effect depends on total site acreage, soil, topography, detention design, discharge points, wetlands, buffers, and rainfall assumptions. The DRI does not supply enough of that information to calculate runoff volume. [3]

DO NOT OVERREAD THE NUMBER The 65% figure is important, but it cannot be converted into acres from the public DRI alone because the filed forms do not state the project-site acreage. The 2,600-acre Savannah Gateway Industrial Hub is a larger host property, not a confirmed campus boundary.

Backup power, batteries, and construction emissions

The August 29 county presentation materially narrows the backup-power claim: it says there will be no diesel backup generation after construction and that a battery energy storage system will provide operational backup power. It also says construction generator use will be subject to strategic placement, sound barriers, and berms. The public record still needs the BESS capacity, duration, fire-safety plan, construction-generator inventory, fuel storage, testing hours, and applicable air permits. [3][16][35]

Wetlands and aquatic resources

The DRI environmental section states that the project will follow applicable permitting and study requirements, but the reviewed online form does not provide a usable project-specific finding for wetlands, floodplains, recharge areas, historic resources, or other sensitive resources. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reviews construction activities in waters of the United States, including wetlands, when federal jurisdiction applies. [3][17]

A practical environmental scorecard

Category	What is public	What would make it measurable
Direct water	30,000 GPD planning estimate; closed-loop design	Final agreement, initial fill, peak use, drought rules, meter data
Stormwater	65% impervious surface estimate	Site acreage, drainage model, detention, discharge, maintenance
Wetlands / floodplain	Permitting commitment only	Delineations, jurisdiction, impacts, mitigation, permits
Air / backup power	County says operational backup will use BESS; construction generators may be used	BESS capacity/duration and fire plan; construction generator count, fuel, hours, emissions and permits
Noise / light	300-ft non-industrial buffer; 60/50 dBA limits; study and perimeter monitoring announced	Final site plan, baseline/model, monitor locations, reporting cadence and enforcement records
Electricity emissions	No project-specific mix	Marginal supply, annual emissions, clean-energy procurement
Construction	Large multi-year build implied	Traffic, road wear, erosion, waste, workforce housing effects

Sources: [3], [7], [8], [14]-[17], [35].

6. Jobs, taxes, and public finance

A project can create genuine public value and still require careful accounting. The central discipline is to keep separate categories separate: private capital investment, land-sale proceeds, recurring taxes, abatements, construction spending, permanent payroll, community-benefit commitments, in-kind credits, and public service costs.

The current headline figures

Figure	What it describes	Correct treatment
\$20 billion	Estimated build-out value in the DRI	Private capital estimate, not public revenue
400 FTEs	Estimated full-time jobs in the DRI	Future employment estimate; wages, timing, residency not stated
\$20 million/year	Estimated annual local tax revenue in the DRI	Applicant estimate; definition and model not public
\$43+ million/year by 2032	County projection across four local sales-tax streams	Projection sensitive to timing, spending and tax rates
\$80 million	OpenAI community-benefit commitment over project life	Separate from taxes; allocation and enforcement pending
\$30 million x 3 years	Announced ECIDA transfers to the county	\$90 million finite transfer tied to land-sale proceeds
6 mills	Adopted 2026 local reduction: 2 County, 2 schools, 2 ECIDA	Verified rate action; bill effects vary by property and exemptions
32.537 mills	PILOT calculation basis stated at county work session	Fixed 2026 basis; executed schedule and valuation rules not reviewed
5 phases	\$4B capital and 80 permanent jobs per phase	Presented as guarantees; contract terms and remedies not reviewed
\$6M in 2027	Projected County + school revenue on undeveloped land	Official projection: \$2.5M County + \$3.5M schools
\$24M in 2029	Projected annual County + school revenue	Official projection: \$10M County + \$14M schools
\$66M in 2032	Projected annual County + school PILOT revenue at full build-out	Official projection: \$27M County + \$39M schools

Sources: [3], [4], [9], [10], [35], [37], [38].

Why reconciliation is necessary

The DRI's \$20 million annual local-tax estimate, the county's separate sales-tax projections, and the newly published PILOT path may measure different revenue streams, years, and assumptions. The county now projects combined County and School District revenue of about \$6 million in 2027, \$24 million in 2029, and \$66 million at full build-out in 2032. Those figures improve the timeline but still require a bridge showing assessed value, equipment refresh, phase timing, abatements, taxable purchases, public costs, and which government receives each dollar. [3][10][38]

The announced \$30 million annual transfers for three years are tied to land-sale proceeds. They may support near-term tax relief, but they are finite. A sustainable fiscal analysis should show what happens after the transfers end, how recurring operating revenue changes through the abatement period, and what

new service or infrastructure costs the county, schools, utilities, roads, and public-safety agencies incur. [9]

Open question 7: the year-by-year fiscal bridge

The adopted 2026 rate action and the September 1 revenue schedule fill several cells, but the public record still does not provide a complete fiscal-year bridge reconciling land-sale proceeds, ECIDA transfers, assessed value by phase, PILOT payments, undeveloped-land taxes, sales taxes, school and county shares, abatements, and incremental service costs. The table shows what is now stated and what remains unavailable. [35][37][38]

Fiscal year	One-time proceeds / transfers	Recurring taxes / PILOT / abatements	Incremental public costs	Net recurring value
FY2026	Land-sale proceeds funded local relief; amount allocated to each action not stated	Adopted 6-mill local reduction; not recurring Camellia operating revenue	Not yet public	Not calculable
FY2027	\$30M ECIDA transfer announced; fiscal allocation detail not public	Projected \$2.5M County + \$3.5M schools on undeveloped land	Not yet public	Not calculable
FY2028	\$30M ECIDA transfer announced; fiscal allocation detail not public	Not yet public	Not yet public	Not calculable
FY2029	\$30M ECIDA transfer announced; fiscal allocation detail not public	Projected \$10M County + \$14M schools annually	Not yet public	Not calculable
FY2030	Not yet public	Not yet public	Not yet public	Not yet public
FY2031	Not yet public	Not yet public	Not yet public	Not yet public
FY2032	Not yet public	Projected \$27M County + \$39M schools annually at full build-out	Not yet public	Not calculable

PAID-DILIGENCE OPPORTUNITY A completed bridge would let a government, investor, lender, or adviser test timing, durability, downside cases, and who receives each dollar. Until the underlying agreements and assumptions are public, the correct entry is “not yet public,” not zero.

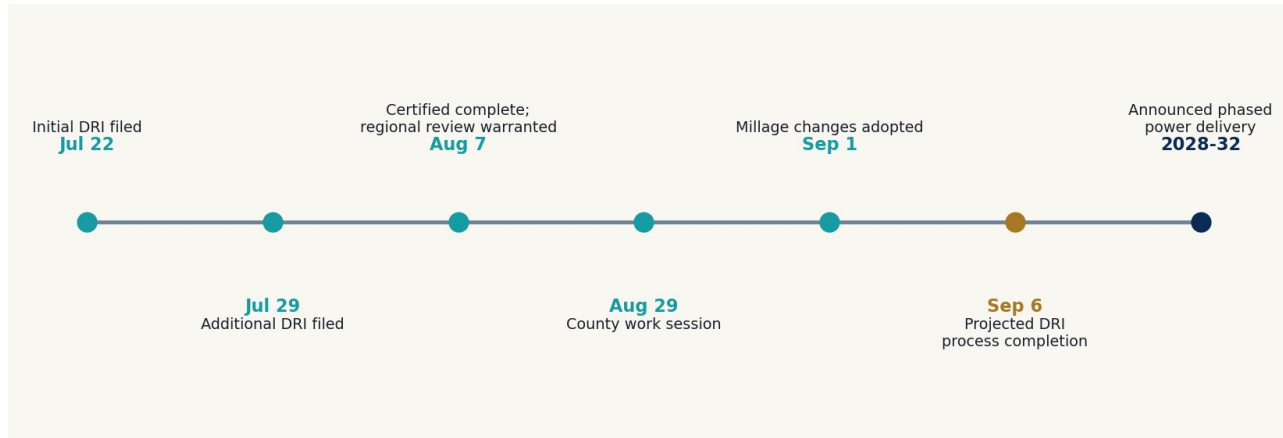
Jobs should be counted as outcomes, not slogans

The filed DRI estimate is 400 full-time employees. The August 29 presentation states that the PILOT guarantees 80 permanent jobs in each of five phases and gives an average salary of \$80,000. That is more specific than the earlier headline, but a credible jobs dashboard should still disclose hiring dates, direct versus contractor roles, full-time-equivalent definitions, wage distribution rather than only an average, benefits, residency, local procurement, retention, verification, and remedies for shortfalls. [3][4][6][35]

SOUND CONCLUSION The economic case should be evaluated on net, recurring, verifiable value. Near-term tax relief can be real while still requiring a long-term model that separates one-time proceeds from durable revenue and accounts for public costs.

7. Approvals and decisions still ahead

The state DRI process is an intergovernmental review mechanism, not a construction permit and not the final local land-use decision. DCA says local governments retain decision authority. “Certified Complete” means the regional-review submission is complete enough to proceed; it does not mean all project approvals are complete. [1][19]



Administrative and announced milestones. Future dates are not guarantees. Source: Georgia DCA; Effingham County; OpenAI

Near-term decision calendar

Timing	Expected event	Evidence to capture
September 3, 2026	Residents reportedly filed zoning-process lawsuit	Complaint, case number, service, county response, motions, orders and effect on permitting
August 29, 2026	County work session completed; presentation and video published	Official representations added; underlying contracts, plans and permits still required
September 1, 2026	County, School District, and ECIDA millage changes adopted	Six mills of local relief confirmed; long-term funding and bill-level outcomes still require tracking
September 6, 2026	Projected DRI process completion	Regional finding, comments, conditions or schedule change
After regional review	Site, utility and environmental approvals	Applications, staff reviews, permits, conditions and appeal opportunities
Construction phases	Building, fire, erosion and inspection process	Issued permits, inspection results and certificate of occupancy
2028-2032	Announced phased power delivery	Actual construction, commissioning and metered load ramp

Sources: [1], [5], [7], [9], [19], [35]-[38], [40], [41].

What should be published in one place

- DRI forms, maps, agency comments, final regional finding, and revisions.
- Site plans, parcel boundaries, land-disturbance and building permits.
- Water-and-sewer agreement, capacity studies, drought rules, and audit protocol.
- Stormwater, wetlands, floodplain, traffic, noise, lighting, generator and fire-safety records.
- Development, land-sale, tax-abatement, bond, PILOT, and community-benefit agreements.

- A public commitments dashboard with responsible party, deadline, metric, status, and evidence.

Five systems under continuing review

System	Record that could resolve it	Estimated resolution point
DRI and local approvals	Regional finding, local site and permit decisions, and zoning-litigation docket	DRI target: Sept. 6, 2026; litigation and later permit dates not fixed
Electricity and ratepayer protection	Project contract summary, infrastructure plan, PSC/IRP record	No public Camellia-specific docket date identified; track Dockets 44280, 55378 and 56002
Water and sewer	Executed agreement; fill and make-up volumes; drought terms; meters; third-party disposal records	Expected before connection or operation; public-release date not stated
Environmental performance	Stormwater, wetlands, erosion, generator/air and related permits	Expected through site-plan, land-disturbance and operating-permit stages
Fiscal and community outcomes	Adopted 2026 rates; executed PILOT; payment model; community-benefit allocation and results	2026 rate action complete; survey closes Sept. 30; recurring verification after operations begin

CALENDAR DISCIPLINE These are expected evidence points, not guaranteed publication dates. The Georgia AI Infrastructure Monitor should mark each item resolved only when the underlying record is available and reviewed.

8. The questions that matter most now

The following questions are designed to test the project's strongest promises without presuming bad faith or guaranteed success. They can be answered with documents, measurable terms, and time-bound commitments.

Open question 1 - Approval and litigation status: Which approvals have occurred, which remain, and how will the DRI finding and the pending challenge to Ordinance 2026-352 affect site-plan review, permitting authority, conditions, timing, and appeal rights?

Open question 2 - Electricity infrastructure: Which generation, transmission, substation, distribution, and storage investments are attributable to the project, and who pays each cost under delay, low-load, and early-exit scenarios?

Open question 3 - Flexible demand: Is the 1,000 MW figure a tested capability, binding minimum, maximum right, or operating target? How many events and hours are permitted, and what happens if performance falls short?

Open question 4 - Water: What are the initial and later fill volumes, normal make-up water, peak-day and annual demand, drought-stage caps, reuse performance, third-party disposal volumes, and public meter-reporting rules for each phase?

Open question 5 - Stormwater and wetlands: What site acreage underlies the 65% impervious figure, and what are the modeled runoff, detention, wetland, floodplain, buffer, and mitigation results?

Open question 6 - Backup power: What BESS capacity and duration will support the operational campus, what fire and emergency-response standards apply, and what construction-generator inventory, fuel, testing, emissions, and air permits will be required?

Open question 7 - Public finance: Will ECIDA publish the executed PILOT and a year-by-year model reconciling the adopted 2026 millage action with projected 2027, 2029, and 2032 payments, assessed value, undeveloped-land taxes, phase payments, land proceeds, transfers, sales taxes, public costs, default remedies, and each taxing authority's share?

Open question 8 - Jobs: How will the five 80-job phase guarantees be defined, verified, and enforced, and what are the wage distribution, direct/contractor split, residency, benefits, retention, and remedies behind the stated \$80,000 average salary?

Open question 9 - Community benefits: Project Camellia opened a public survey through September 30, initially focused on parks and recreation. How will that input translate into the stated \$80 million commitment, which benefits are cash, services, or in-kind support, who makes selections, and which terms and results will be enforceable and public? [39]

Open question 10 - Independent audit: Who selects and pays the auditor, what data will be tested, will underlying data be public, and what correction or remedy follows a missed commitment?

OUR STANDARD FOR UNKNOWNNS An unanswered question is not evidence of wrongdoing. It is a research item. We will update the report when a reliable record answers it.

9. A reasonable sustainability standard

Sustainability does not mean opposing growth or demanding zero impact. It means meeting a real need while keeping resource use, pollution, public cost, and long-term risk within transparent and enforceable limits. For a campus at Camellia's scale, good intentions should be converted into operating metrics.

A practical test for Project Camellia

Principle	Plain-language meaning	Evidence that would prove it
Efficient	Uses less electricity, water and land impact per unit of useful computing over time	PUE, WUE, compute/output proxy, peak load, annual energy, water and land metrics
Flexible	Reduces or shifts demand when the grid is stressed	MW available, response time, event hours, delivered performance
Self-supporting	Does not transfer project-specific costs or stranded-asset risk to others	Upfront payments, minimum bills, security, termination protection, cost allocation
Water-responsible	Protects community supply through normal and drought conditions	Caps, source, peak use, drought rules, meters, audit data
Environmentally accountable	Avoids and mitigates impacts; measures what remains	Stormwater, wetlands, air, noise, light, waste, emissions, restoration
Fiscally durable	Produces net recurring public value after temporary proceeds end	Year-by-year revenue, abatements, transfers, service costs, sensitivity cases
Correctable	Publishes data, errors and remedies	Independent audit, public dashboard, correction history, enforcement

The balanced position

Project Camellia could bring large private investment, jobs, public revenue, community funding, and an important new flexible-load resource. It could also require generation and transmission on an extraordinary scale, change land and runoff, require substantial battery systems and construction-phase generator use, and expose public systems to long-lived obligations. Both statements can be true. The best path is not automatic approval or automatic rejection. It is conditional confidence: allow claims to earn trust through contracts, permits, public data, independent verification, and consequences when commitments are missed.

INFRASTRUCTURE EVIDENCE GROUP POSITION The project should be judged by whether it converts scale into durable public value while measurably limiting resource use and environmental harm. That standard is demanding, neutral, and achievable.

Methodology and confidence ratings

This report was prepared from public records and official project, utility, county, state, and federal sources available through September 4, 2026. County announcements are treated as evidence of what officials represented; they are not substitutes for executed agreements, audited receipts, final plans, permits, or measured operating data. The zoning lawsuit is described as a pending allegation based on contemporaneous reporting, not as a court finding. This is an evidence review, not a legal opinion, engineering design review, environmental-impact statement, utility prudence determination, or investment recommendation.

Evidence classes

Class	Meaning	Examples
A	Primary enforceable or administrative record	Executed agreement, permit, tariff, order, audited measurement, filed administrative status
B	Primary official statement	Agency, utility, or company statement establishing what was announced or represented
C	Credible independent analysis	Technical or financial analysis with transparent methods and relevant expertise
D	Secondary reporting	Useful context or leads; material claims require primary-source verification
E	Unverified	Rumor, unsupported estimate, incomplete document, or unattributed claim; not published as fact

Confidence language

- High: supported by a current primary record or consistent primary sources.
- Medium: officially stated or plausibly supported, but underlying terms, methods, or measurements are unavailable.
- Low: incomplete, conflicting, indirect, or dependent on material assumptions.
- Unknown: the reviewed public record does not establish the answer.

Editorial safeguards

- We use “announced,” “planned,” “proposed,” or “officials state” when an outcome has not occurred.
- We do not equate connected load with constant consumption or generating capacity with annual energy.
- We do not describe closed-loop cooling as water-free.
- We do not infer campus acreage from the 2,600-acre industrial hub.
- We do not treat tax, job, savings, or community-benefit projections as measured outcomes.
- We preserve conflicts and update the public correction history rather than silently rewriting prior versions.

Publication-draft status

This v1.0 final publication draft is complete through September 4, 2026. It incorporates the adopted 2026 millage changes, the County’s phased revenue projections, the active community-input survey, and the newly reported zoning-process lawsuit. A final pre-release verification remains necessary if publication occurs after the projected September 6 DRI milestone. The executed PILOT, water-and-sewer agreement, final site plan, project-specific utility terms, court docket materials, and several technical records remain unavailable. Named organizations were invited to provide written corrections or technical feedback; no endorsement is implied.

Sources

All links were accessed or reverified September 4, 2026 unless otherwise noted. Source numbers correspond to bracketed citations in the report. DRI and PSC identifiers are included so professional readers can jump directly to controlling records. Official announcements, projections, allegations, executed agreements, and measured outcomes are identified separately.

- [1] **Georgia Department of Community Affairs.** DRI #4801 Application Summary. [Open source](#)
- [2] **Georgia Department of Community Affairs.** DRI #4801 Initial Information Form. [Open source](#)
- [3] **Georgia Department of Community Affairs.** DRI #4801 Additional Information Form. [Open source](#)
- [4] **OpenAI.** Building AI infrastructure with the Effingham County community, July 22, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [5] **Georgia Power.** Georgia Power to serve OpenAI project in Effingham County, July 22, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [6] **Effingham County.** Press Release: Project Camellia, July 22, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [7] **Effingham County.** Project Camellia resource center and process summary. [Open source](#)
- [8] **Effingham County.** Project Camellia: Water Done Right, August 11, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [9] **Effingham County.** Largest Tax Relief Event in Effingham County History, August 24, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [10] **Effingham County.** Project Camellia: Investment that Stays Local, August 25, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [11] **Georgia Public Service Commission.** Data Center Fact Sheet, March 2026. [Open source](#)
- [12] **Georgia Power.** Data Centers & Your Georgia Power Bill. [Open source](#)
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- [14] **U.S. Energy Information Administration.** Georgia State Energy Profile. [Open source](#)
- [15] **U.S. Department of Energy.** Data-center cooling efficiency resources. [Open source](#)
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- [18] Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. United States Data Center Energy Usage Report: 2025 Update. [Open source](#)
- [19] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Developments of Regional Impact FAQs. [Open source](#)
- [20] Project Camellia. Official project information site and fact sheet. [Open source](#)
- [21] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4797 (PRL2) Application Summary. [Open source](#)
- [22] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4797 Initial Information Form. [Open source](#)
- [23] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4797 Information Form Part 2. [Open source](#)
- [24] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4761 (Project Indo) Application Summary. [Open source](#)
- [25] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4761 Initial Information Form. [Open source](#)
- [26] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4761 Information Form Part 2. [Open source](#)
- [27] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4603 (ATL2 East) Application Summary. [Open source](#)
- [28] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4603 Initial Information Form. [Open source](#)
- [29] Georgia Department of Community Affairs. DRI #4603 Information Form Part 2. [Open source](#)

- [30] **Georgia Public Service Commission.** Docket 44280 - Georgia Power 2022 Rate Case and large-load rules record. [Open source](#)
- [31] **Georgia Public Service Commission.** Document 221165 - January 2025 large-load rules order. [Open source](#)
- [32] **Georgia Public Service Commission.** Document 222325 - Order on Georgia Power tariff-compliance filing, April 17, 2025. [Open source](#)
- [33] **Georgia Public Service Commission.** Docket 55378 - Georgia Power 2023 Integrated Resource Plan Update. [Open source](#)
- [34] **Georgia Public Service Commission.** Docket 56002 - Georgia Power 2025 Integrated Resource Plan. [Open source](#)
- [35] **Effingham County Board of Commissioners.** Project Camellia Work Session presentation, August 29, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [36] **Effingham County.** Project Camellia resource center - work-session update, presentation and video. [Open source](#)
- [37] **Effingham County.** Effingham homeowners will see about 30% lower 2026 property tax bills, September 2, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [38] **Effingham County.** Project Camellia: Revenue that Grows with Investment, September 1, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [39] **Project Camellia.** Community Investment Feedback survey; first phase focused on parks and recreation; closes September 30, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [40] **WTOC.** Effingham County residents sue county over data-center zoning ordinance, September 3, 2026. [Open source](#)
- [41] **Effingham Herald.** Effingham County residents sue over data-center zoning change, September 3, 2026. [Open source](#)

Corrections and updates

Corrections, additional records, and source submissions may be sent to corrections@infrastructureevidence.com. Material changes will be dated and described in the public update log.

Date	Version	Change	Reason
September 4, 2026	v1.0	Added adopted 2026 millage changes; phased 2027, 2029 and 2032 revenue projections; community survey; and pending zoning-process litigation.	Complete the release candidate with the newest material public record while separating adopted actions, projections and unresolved allegations.
August 30, 2026	v0.3	Added the official August 29 presentation; corrected operational backup from potential diesel to planned BESS; clarified domestic-water limit, fill controls, PILOT basis, phase guarantees, salary, noise, traffic and remaining records.	Incorporate new primary evidence while preserving the distinction between official representations and executed or measured terms.
August 27, 2026	v0.2	Added direct DRI and PSC identifiers, three Georgia comparables, audience framing, a fiscal-year reconciliation template, and five resolution checkpoints.	Strengthen transparency, diligence utility, benchmarking and repeat verification
August 26, 2026	v0.1	Complete prepublication draft based on available public record through August 26.	Initial flagship draft