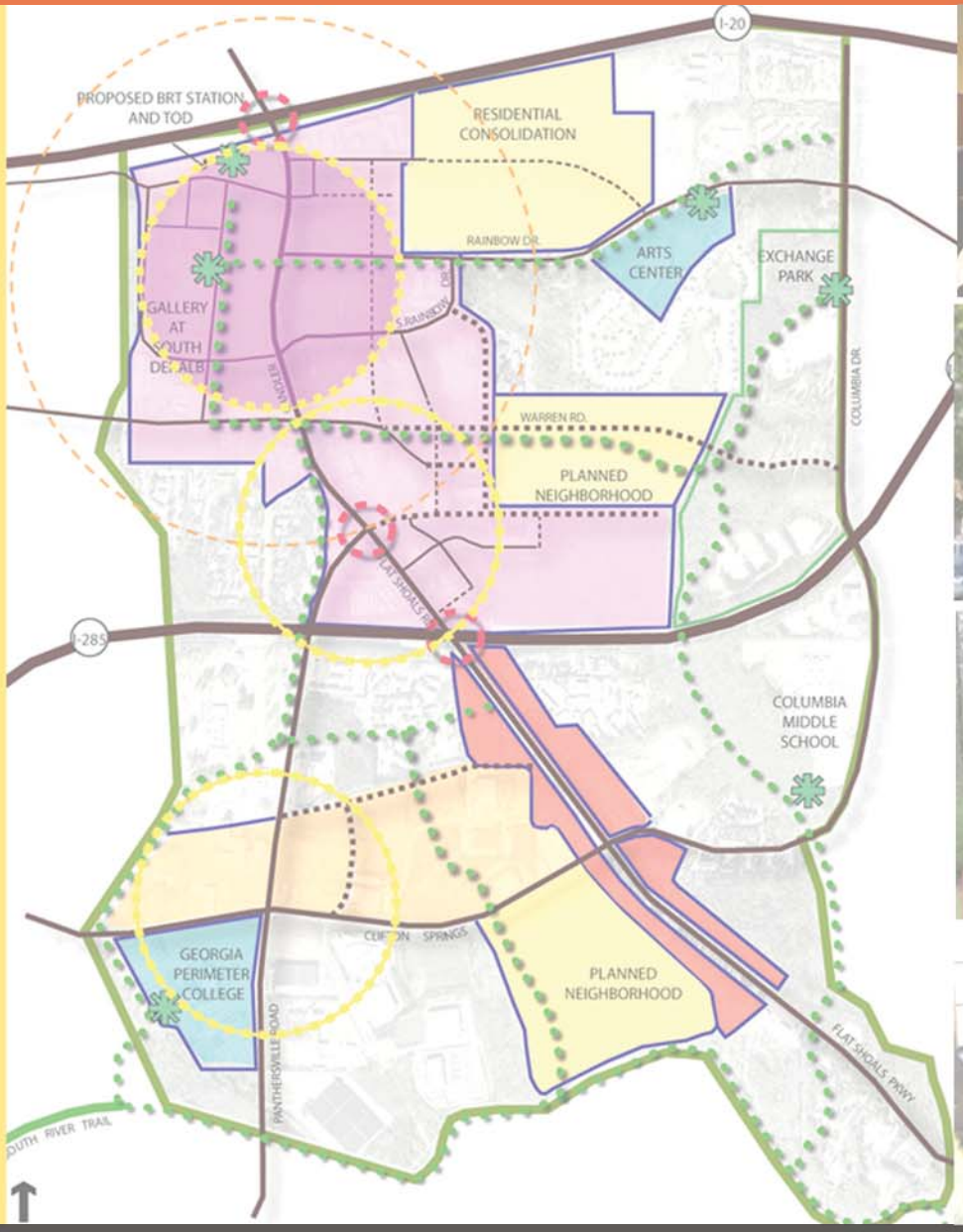
DeKalb County
Georgia

CANDLER ROAD/FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE



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In Association With: Sizemore Group / The Collaborative Firm / Huntley Partners

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Initiated by Commissioner Larry Johnson, this LCI Study represents six months of work by a Planning Team led by DeKalb County Planning and Development representatives, staff from Commissioner Johnson's office, and a consulting team led by Pond & Company. The Planning Team wishes to thank all who participated in the development of this plan for their time, leadership, and vision. The team is particularly grateful for the contributions of the following participants in the planning process:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section A. Introduction

A-1.	Overview	1
A-2.	Location and Context	2
A-3.	Community Participation	5
A-4.	Goals, Issues, and "SWOT"	9

Section B. Existing Conditions

B-1.	Land Use, Zoning, and Policy Context	15
B-2.	Urban Design	27
B-3.	Transportation and Circulation	34
B-4.	Market Analysis and Comparable Market Indicators	48

Section C. Master Plan

C-1.	Plan Development	79
C-2.	Concept Plan and Master Plans	85
C-3.	Development Plan	97
C-4.	Transportation Plan	109
C-5.	Transportation Design Illustrations	121
C-6.	Design Principles	125
C-7.	Design Challenges	136

Section D. Implementation

D-1.	Land Use Policy and Regulations	140
D-2.	Economic Development Strategies	143
D-3.	Funding Strategies	150
D-4.	Five Year Action Plan	156

SECTION A. INTRODUCTION

A-1. Overview

During the last five years, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) through its Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program has promoted the development of action plans to enhance livability, connectivity, and mobility within existing activity centers and town centers throughout the metropolitan Atlanta region, while identifying development and redevelopment opportunities.

In 2006, the ARC awarded DeKalb County a LCI planning grant to focus on developing a long-range plan for a Town Center on Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway.

The resulting planning study provides DeKalb County, its residents, employees, and business owners with an opportunity to re-evaluate goals for the Study Area, envision improvements to economic vitality of the area, and develop an action plan for achieving that vision. Many of the recommendations stem from land use changes and transportation improvements suggested by prior studies and approved site plans. Local plans referenced included:

- DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025 ;
- DeKalb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan 2005-2025 ; and,
- Candler Road Revitalization Plan.

This LCI plan identifies opportunities and projects, as well as the entities responsible for leading and managing land use and transportation efforts. In this regard, the plan integrates land use and transportation decision making into one comprehensive approach.

This study was funded by the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program directed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). This LCI study has been conducted in accordance with ARC guidelines, and customized to serve the unique nature of the Study Area as an under-utilized activity center.

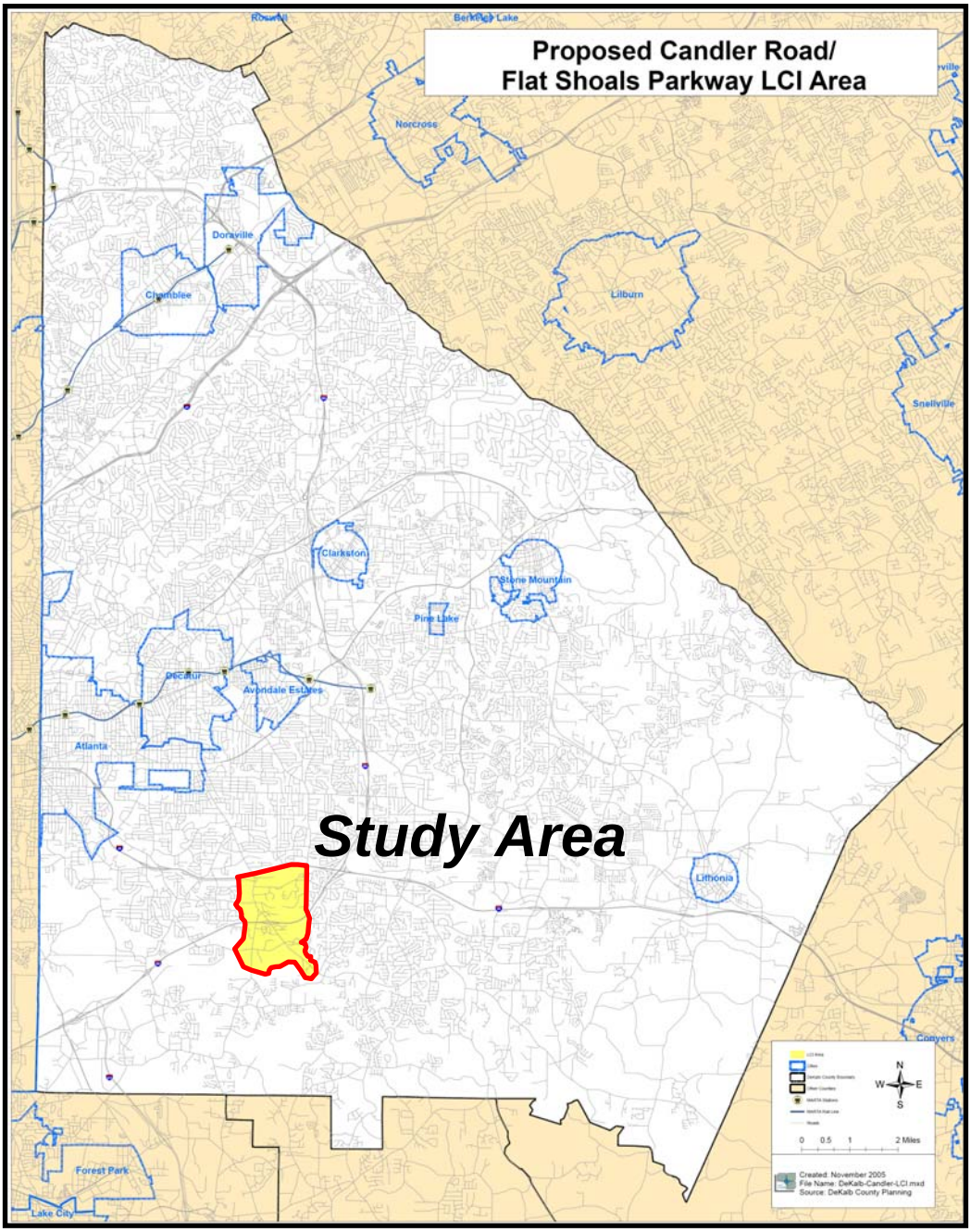
The ARC has adopted a regional plan whereby future development is concentrated in activity centers and along corridors. The overarching vision is to plan for more livable communities which are not completely dependent on private motorized vehicles.

A-2. Location and Context

The Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway LCI Study Area is located in unincorporated South DeKalb County. The Study Area size is approximately 1,900 acres and is anchored by the Gallery at South DeKalb (also known as South DeKalb Mall). The primary point of access is the I-20 / Candler Road (State Route 155) interchange.

The northern Study Area boundary follows I-20. Doless and Doolittle Creeks border the Area to the west, while Columbia Drive and Shoals Creek border the east, and the South River delineates the southern edge. The Study Area is predominantly medium density residential housing with pockets of heavy commercial development scattered throughout, especially along the highway corridors. Major commercial and institutional developments in the area include: The Gallery at South DeKalb Mall, Perimeter East Industrial Park, Georgia Perimeter College – South Campus, Georgia Regional Hospital and the Georgia Bureau of Investigations Headquarters.

Two maps follow. The first identifies the Study Area location within DeKalb County. The second is the Study Area "basemap" identifying key landmarks, environmental features (wetlands, creeks and buffers), recent site improvements, and major roadways over an aerial photograph.


Proposed Candler Road/
Flat Shoals Parkway LCI Area
Study Area
Norcross
Doraville
Chamblee
Lilburn
Snellville
Clarkston
Stone Mountain
Pine Lake
Decatur
Avondale Estates
Atlanta
Lithonia
Conyers
Forest Park
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Created: November 2005
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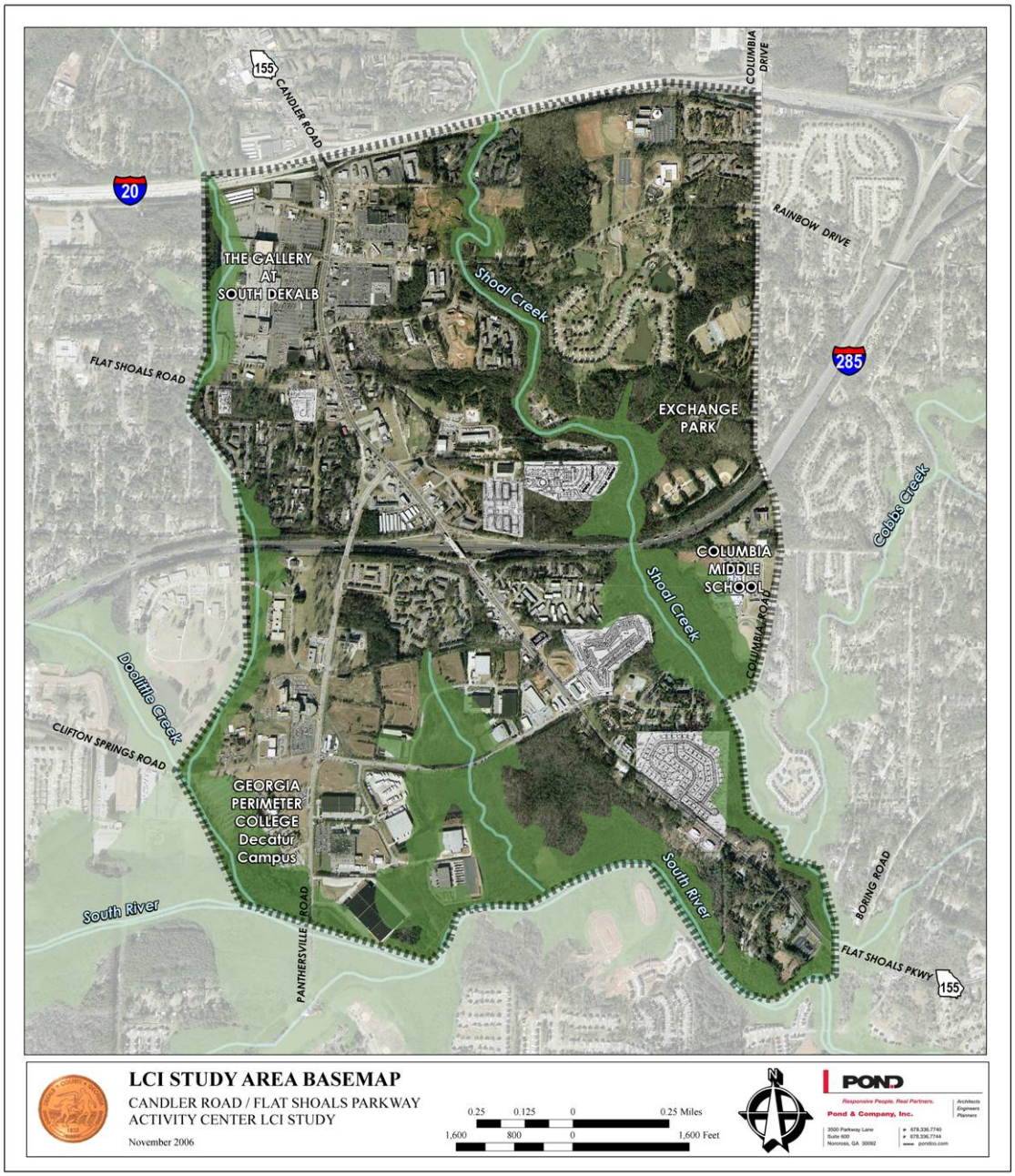
Source: DeKalb County Planning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CANDLER ROAD
COLUMBIA DRIVE
20
RAINBOW DRIVE
THE GALLERY AT SOUTH DEKALB
Shoal Creek
FLAT SHOALS ROAD
285
EXCHANGE PARK
Cobbs Creek
COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Shoal Creek
COLUMBIA ROAD
Doolittle Creek
CLIFTON SPRINGS ROAD
GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE Decatur Campus
South River
South River
BORING ROAD
PANTHERSVILLE ROAD
FLAT SHOALS PKWY
155
LCI STUDY AREA BASEMAP
CANDLER ROAD / FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY
ACTIVITY CENTER LCI STUDY
November 2006
0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles
1,600 800 0 1,600 Feet
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The Study Area is served by Exchange Park (173-acres) and enjoys a very active church community including two large complexes with significant community programs. Planned community improvements include a new DeKalb County Performing Arts Center site (2007-08 construction is programmed) and portions of the planned South River Trail.

The Candler Road corridor has been the subject of several studies aimed at stimulating improvements for an area with significant assets. Some of those studies include: a community visioning process for the Arts Center, the I-20 East Corridor study in 2002 and 2003, and a 1998 Revitalization Study. The County sponsored the latter study through the Candler Road Revitalization Project, which generated a comprehensive report recommending projects and specific government actions to stimulate the private sector. The County has indeed pursued many of the report's recommendations, including:

- implementing new economic development programs,
- utilizing a land swap for the relocation of a police precinct into the Study Area,
- creating new civic center
- expanding zoning options, and
- securing streetscape and transportation funds.

While businesses at the time of that report were motivated to participate in a redevelopment program, the weaknesses in the area have been slow to change. DeKalb County intends to use the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway LCI to coordinate prior efforts and prepare for future opportunities through a comprehensive, "strategic approach that takes into account land use, transportation, urban design, development options and implementation strategies."

A-3. Community Participation

The most essential component of any community plan is the involvement of the citizens that live, work, and play in the area. This involvement is a vital element in determining the community's vision for itself and will guide the plan and resulting policy decisions that shape the future of the community. The policy implemented by local jurisdictions for land use, transportation, urban design and economic development has the ability to create the type of environment desired by its citizens, as expressed in the community plan.

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) acknowledges the importance of citizen participation by requiring the community's involvement throughout the process. At every stage in the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway LCI study, community input shaped the recommendations made by the Planning Team to ensure the community vision was represented correctly. This section outlines the outreach and participation activities that took place during this process. Complete documentation of public participation is provided in three appendices.

Outreach

In order to inform the community about the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway LCI study, several outreach mechanisms were utilized to create community interest and encourage citizens to participate in the meetings.

- As a grass roots initiative, approximately 1,500 flyers were distributed to homes, apartment complexes, local business and the local library to advertise the LCI study and upcoming public meetings.
- Press releases were regularly placed in local newspapers to advertise meetings and report on the status of the LCI study. Newspapers included Crossroads News, The Champion, On Common Ground and the web-based media outlet GoDeKalb.com.
- The DeKalb County Planning and Development Department created a special page on their website for the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway LCI. This website allowed citizens to access status reports, past presentations and learn about the LCI program.
- A meeting was held for the pastors of 16 local churches to explain the purpose of the LCI study and stress the importance of their congregation's involvement. Pastors were asked to bring the news of the LCI back to their church and inform members of the upcoming meetings. While not all of the churches were within the Study Area, members of those churches potentially lived, worked, or played in the Study Area.

Public Meetings

To gather the necessary information that would guide the direction of the vision and future development plan, three large public meetings were conducted. At these meetings, information regarding the LCI Study was presented. In addition, highly participatory activities took place allowing citizens to give very specific information regarding what they would like to see happen in the Study Area.

At the first public meeting held on November 2, 2006, approximately 40 citizens were in attendance. DeKalb County Planning staff and the consultant team explained the LCI process and the team roles. Citizens were asked to share their thoughts on the important issues facing the Study Area.

In addition to gathering information on major issues, a Visual Preference Survey was administered. During this activity, citizens were presented pictures of different types of development and were asked to rate them on appropriateness and desirability for the Study Area. This allowed the consultants to determine design and building guidelines that should shape the policy for future development. Types of development included greenspace, streetscapes, residential and commercial development, mixed use, parking and traffic calming.

At the second public meeting held on November 18, 2006, consultants gave an overview of the LCI Study and presented information on the existing conditions of land use, urban design, transportation, and market conditions in the Study Area. In addition to presenting this information, the majority of the meeting was dedicated to a Design Charrette.

While the Visual Preference Survey determined the type of development desired for the community, the Design Charrette determined the desired location for these different types of development. The participants were separated into groups at different tables, each with a basemap of the Study Area. A facilitator at each table asked the participants what areas in the Study Area should be preserved or changed, where new development should be

created, and what destinations in the Study Area should be connected by alternative means of transportation. Participants drew on the map with markers, while facilitators documented their comments. The information gathered during the Design Charrette was the foundation for the future development plan.

At the final public meeting held on March 15, 2007, the consultant team presented the draft LCI plan and the recommendations proposed to implement the community vision. Citizens reviewed the draft plan and were asked to share their thoughts and opinions on what they were presented. Public comments received by citizens were considered in the final version of the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway LCI Plan.

Core Team Meetings

To ensure the LCI Plan was progressing in the correct direction, a core team of stakeholders was charged with guiding the overall process. Stakeholders for this LCI included staff from Commissioner Larry Johnson's office, DeKalb County Planning Staff, a representative from the Atlanta Regional Commission, members of the consulting team, and several citizens from the community.

The Core Team met regularly to discuss the status of the LCI, outreach efforts to increase citizen participation, new information gathered from the community, the consultant's analysis, and next steps for the LCI process. Core Team meetings were held on:

- June 27, 2006
- October 19, 2006
- January 30, 2007
- March 8, 2007

Board of Commissioners Meetings

When considering a future development plan for a community, not only is it essential to have community participation, but participation on the part of elected officials is also crucial. In the case of the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway LCI, leadership from DeKalb County's Board of Commissioners showed participants political support for the effort.

As a pioneer for the LCI, Commissioner Larry Johnson initiated the study and was involved throughout the process, participating in meetings and outreach initiatives. The entire Board of Commissioners kicked off their involvement by approving the application submittal for the LCI grant in 2004. During the LCI process, a work session was held to discuss the LCI study on April 3, 2007. The Board of Commissioners held a public hearing and formally adopted the LCI Plan on April 24, 2007.

Together, the involvement of the citizens and the elected officials demonstrates the type interaction that can create positive change for the future of DeKalb County.

A-4. Goals, Issues, and "SWOT"

LCI Program Goals

The ARC's goals for Livable Centers include:

- Connect homes, shops, & offices ;
- Enhance streetscapes & sidewalks ;
- Emphasize the pedestrian ;
- Improve access to transit & other transportation options ; and,
- Expand housing choice.

Community-Identified Issues

The matrix below organizes a set of planning and development issues that emerged from existing data, documents, community meetings, and interviews with stakeholders.

LCI Goals/Issues

Issue Identification	Land Use and Development	Economic Development	Housing	Character	Traffic and Transportation	Community Facilities	Urban Design
Problem Statement	Identify an appropriate mix of uses with reasonable densities in the right places. Create/cultivate neighborhood scale. Identify what mix a Town Center should incorporate.	Provide adequate infrastructure to accommodate new growth; create campaign and incentives to attract quality development. Stimulate re-investment and re-vitalization. Promote new retail types as per local demand.	Some housing stock is obsolete and could benefit from redevelopment.	Need to focus development of certain areas with a main focus on local character. Promote family friendly environment. Desire to improve aesthetics of some retail centers and neighborhoods.	Improve the transportation network by providing more bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. Prepare for future BRT station at the Mall. Ensure that road projects funded by programmed year.	Provide public gathering places and assembly opportunities for citizens. At the same time, achieve public space that everyone can feel safe in.	Create a vibrant active area that brings a sense of place; develop guidelines. Desire to mitigate effect of oversized signage, utility lines, large expanse of parking lots.
Issues	How can the area achieve the desired retail and civic mix? How can the area preserve and enhance neighborhoods? Is the community interested in using greenspace differently?	Does the market support the community vision? How to diversify retail? What incentives will encourage strip-retail owners to upgrade and seek new tenant mix? How can we best leverage existing businesses & public institutions?	How can we preserve existing neighborhoods? What mix of housing is appropriate? Are incentives that the developers would need to re-develop older housing acceptable to community?	Can new developments be consistent with the feel and look of existing neighborhoods? How can we make the area more attractive to new development? Why don't existing businesses improve appearance?	Can we address lack of East/West connections? What new ways exist to link existing large destinations (Greenforest expansion, Arts Center, Mall)? Can we improve MARTA stops so more inviting and safer?	Can the area get more parks and trails? How to promote new civic and arts destinations? What changes does community want to make Exchange Park a more useable amenity?	Can we promote neighborhood scale centers? What should the area look like? What changes are needed to existing design standards? Can design help create the safe public spaces that the community wants?

"SWOT" Analysis

Strengths

The Study Area exhibits a number of strengths and community assets upon which it can build. These strengths are reflected in the stability of the area, the dominance of its residential neighborhoods, and the very limited threat of encroachment by either higher density development or incompatible development. As metro Atlanta matures, there is continued interest and value in the "first generation" suburban neighborhoods, for their location and accessibility, maintained housing stock, and blend of residential, commercial, industrial and institutional uses. Additionally, as metro Atlanta expands geographically, there is renewed interest in areas close to downtown and convenient to Hartsfield Jackson International Airport. As a key sector of DeKalb County and the metro area, the Study Area can capitalize on certain strengths that will help assure its viability as the region continues to grow. Those key strengths include the following:

Location and Access

The Study Area's location and accessibility are primary strengths. I-285 bisects the Study Area, and it enjoys excellent access to I-20. These two highways, in particular, connect the Study Area with primary employment centers to the north and west. In addition, Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway and Columbia Drive are key north-south arterials. Dotted with strip centers and free-standing neighborhood-serving businesses, they provide convenient access to retailing and a range of business, personal and medical services. The area remains viable to homeowners who bought ten or twenty years ago, but with new housing inventory and affordable older homes, increasingly attracts younger and first time homebuyers.

Housing Affordability

Last year, the Study Area ranked second in total home sales among all DeKalb County areas ranked by zip codes. Among the top ten most active zip codes, four others were adjacent to the Study Area. However, with a median sales price last year of about $129,000, the Study Area home sales prices were more affordable than most of the county. By comparison, home prices in nearby Decatur and Avondale Estates have increased by more than one-third in recent years, and are two to three times the average price in the Study Area. The combination of high sales volume and relatively low prices suggests strong market demand for affordable "for sale" housing in this area (and probably the County).

Retail and Services

The Study Area is home to a broad range of retail and services. These include a major mall and additional retailing on the mall's out-parcels and along Candler Road, both within and beyond the Study Area's boundaries. Additionally, a broad variety of business, professional and personal services operate on Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway. The City of Decatur, about five miles north of the Study Area, is growing in importance as an employment center and features an expanding mix of moderately priced restaurants as well as distinctive retailing.

Weaknesses

Despite its strengths, the Study Area exhibits several weaknesses that need to be addressed. Key weaknesses include the following:

Aging Housing Stock

While the traditional residential neighborhoods of the area enjoy larger lots and lower density, their age and the relative absence of new residential construction activity are readily apparent. Nearly half the area's housing stock was built around 1970; another 20% was built in the 1980s. While the age of the inventory helps keep prices down, there is likely a growing lack of fit between new home buyers who wish to be in the area but also want more contemporary features.

Aesthetics

Many of the Study Area's public areas, whether along arterials or in public rights of way, in strip centers or entrances to communities, lack aesthetic design interest. Long stretches of Candler Road reveal no cohesive design guidelines for landscaping, signage or overall design. And there are few visual transitions among uses, especially where residential transitions to commercial and back again. Thus, a drive through the commercialized areas does not appeal to the eye and may result in some resistance by consumers or potential investors. Opportunities exist for either government entities or neighborhood improvement or civic groups to begin to articulate goals for curb appeal.

Opportunities

The Study Area's strengths, combined with the potential to address its weaknesses, offer a number of related opportunities that public policies can not merely participate in, but shape, including the following:

Potential Town Center

In many ways, the Gallery at South DeKalb functions for local residents as the town square and meeting place. With its retail and civic functions and heightened programming for families, the mall becomes a hub of community life. Nearby there is complementary retailing, as well as professional and business services, some institutional uses and then residential development. With the usual traffic volumes in the area, there is potential for more retailing as well as mixed-use development that incorporates residential and office/commercial uses.

Rising Incomes, Urban Lifestyles

The increasing affluence that will likely occur in the Study Area over the next decade, coupled with existing levels of unmet retail demand, could support expansion of current retailing, particularly including restaurants, entertainment, and home-related goods and services. A changing mix of households, anchored by the current population of maturing families, could reasonably expect and attract retailing, food and entertainment in configurations other than strip centers which would be appealing to area residents.

Educational Cluster

The proximity of a regional high school, a post-secondary institution (Georgia Perimeter College), state government (GBI) and private companies offers the potential for education, training and employment within the Study Area. Moreover, the daily traffic flow to these destinations could sustain existing and increased retailing and would be a component in the demand for new rental and "for sale" housing. Maintaining the lower density and natural areas surrounding this clustering is essential to expanding the appeal of this area for more than training or work.

Threats

Conditions now considered strengths or opportunities could easily become threats to the ongoing viability of the area and its ability to attract residential and commercial investors. Threats to the Study Area include the following:

Unchecked Urbanization

Without government guidance and community oversight, some corridors in the Study Area could become overwhelmed with the combination of cluttered signage, haphazard building conversions from residential to commercial uses, limited landscaping and clashing land uses. Currently, there is a measure of equilibrium in

the pace and size of development. Older residential neighborhoods seem to be protected from massive assemblage and redevelopment. However, as market forces come to bear, land prices may begin to escalate, forcing changes in the composition of the neighborhood.

"Leapfrog" Development Patterns

In a practice observed throughout metro Atlanta, developers and investors choose to locate projects on undeveloped land at the periphery of the region, rather than assemble and redevelop in maturing or first generation suburban neighborhoods. The ease of development in new areas, in contrast to sometimes challenging and often issue-laden prospect of redevelopment in existing neighborhoods is often cited as a key reason for overlooking these areas. Yet these older neighborhoods – if redeveloped – offer compelling reasons for redevelopment, including location and accessibility, community services in place, and potential capture of local residents who desire to remain in place but with more and better choices. With external pressures from traffic congestion and rising gas prices, closer in neighborhoods become an increasingly attractive alternative.

Lack of Diversity

Neighborhood homogeneity is not uncommon in the metro Atlanta region. As an outcome of personal preference and not illegal and immoral social codes, there is very little challenge to neighborhood segregation. However, when the neighborhood is largely African American, there can exist false assumptions regarding the community. In this case, socio-economic indicators belie false assumptions regarding the capacity to support new development. Furthermore, the engaged citizens of the Study Area welcome innovative development associated with new urbanism or transit-oriented development. Planners, consultants, residents and other stakeholders understand that creative, determined efforts are often required to attract new investment.

SECTION B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section includes an assessment of existing conditions, including:

- Land Use, Zoning, and Policy Context
- Urban Design
- Transportation and Circulation
- Market Analysis and Comparable Market Indicators

B-1. Land Use, Zoning, and Policy Context

The total amount of land within the Study Area boundary is 1,900 acres. The site contains significant portions with environmental constraints; natural features and their associated buffers constitute nearly one-fifth of the area.

The relationship of developed to undeveloped land is captured below:

DEVELOPED/UNDEVELOPED	ACREAGE	% of LCI Study Area
DEVELOPED	1,055	55.7%
UNDEVELOPED	488	25.8%
UNDEVELOPABLE	350	18.5%

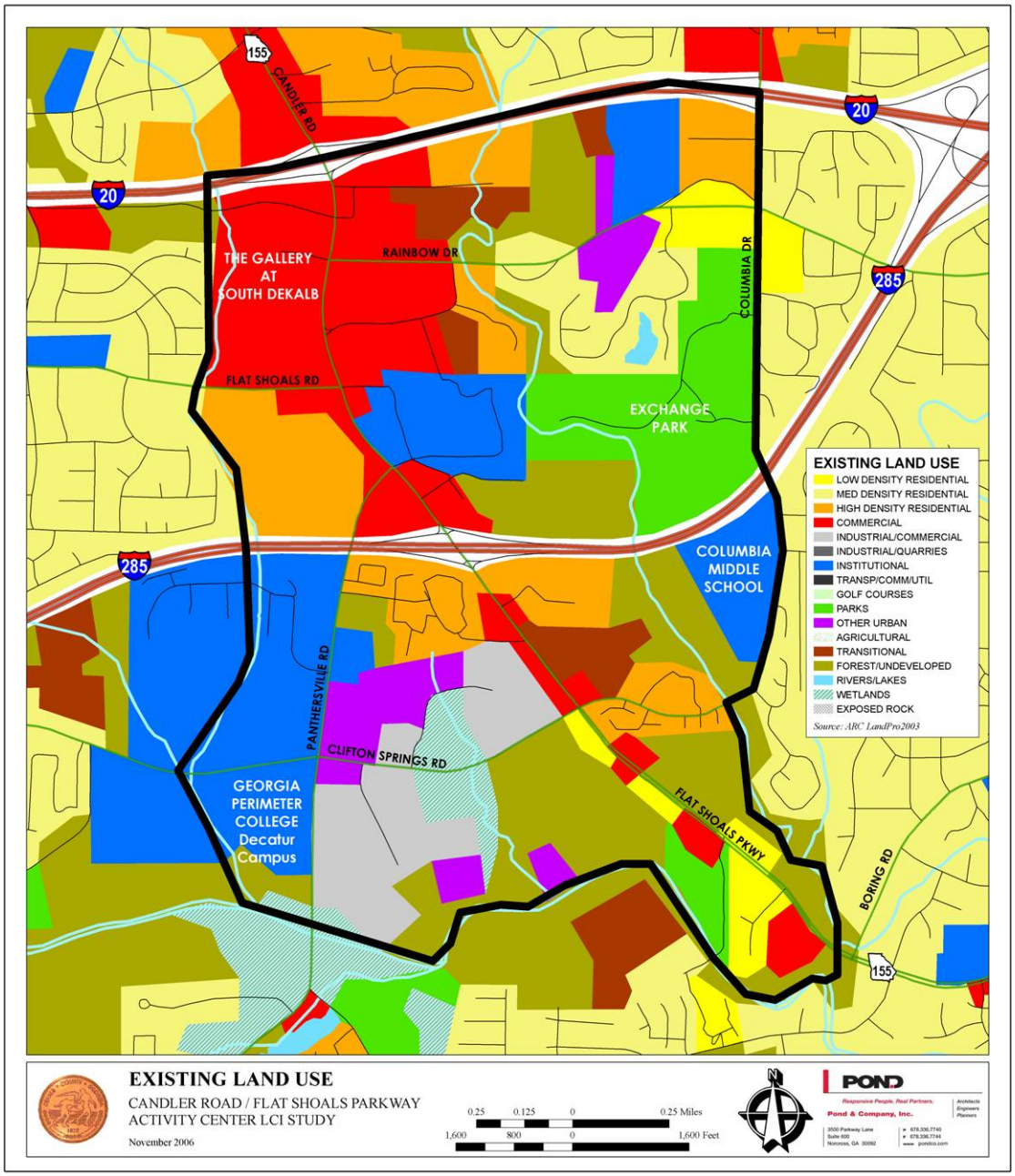
Note: Does not account for Interstate System Right of Way

Existing Land Use

A review of the way land is currently being utilized within the Study Area highlights that: (1) approximately 40% of land use is dedicated to employment activities, which suggests an economically balanced mix of uses, and; (2) natural growth, wetlands and parks comprise nearly one-third of the area. Following the table below is an Existing Land Use map.

LAND USE	ACREAGE	% of LCI Study Area
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	65	3.6%
MED DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	74	4.1%
HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	258	14.3%
COMMERCIAL	292	16.2%
INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL	117	6.5%
INSTITUTIONAL	291	16.1%
PARKS	170	9.4%
OTHER URBAN	83	4.6%
FOREST	342	18.9%
TRANSITIONAL	62	3.5%
WETLANDS + RIVERS/LAKES	50	2.8%

Note: Does not account for Interstate System Right of Way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CANDLER RD
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155
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MED DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
COMMERCIAL
INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL
INDUSTRIAL/QUARRIES
INSTITUTIONAL
TRANSP/COMM/UTIL
GOLF COURSES
PARKS
OTHER URBAN
AGRICULTURAL
TRANSITIONAL
FOREST/UNDEVELOPED
RIVERS/LAKES
WETLANDS
EXPOSED ROCK
Source: ARC LandPro2003
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Policy Context: Comprehensive Planning and Livable Communities

DeKalb County recently undertook an update of its Comprehensive Plan; the vision articulated within the draft plan states:

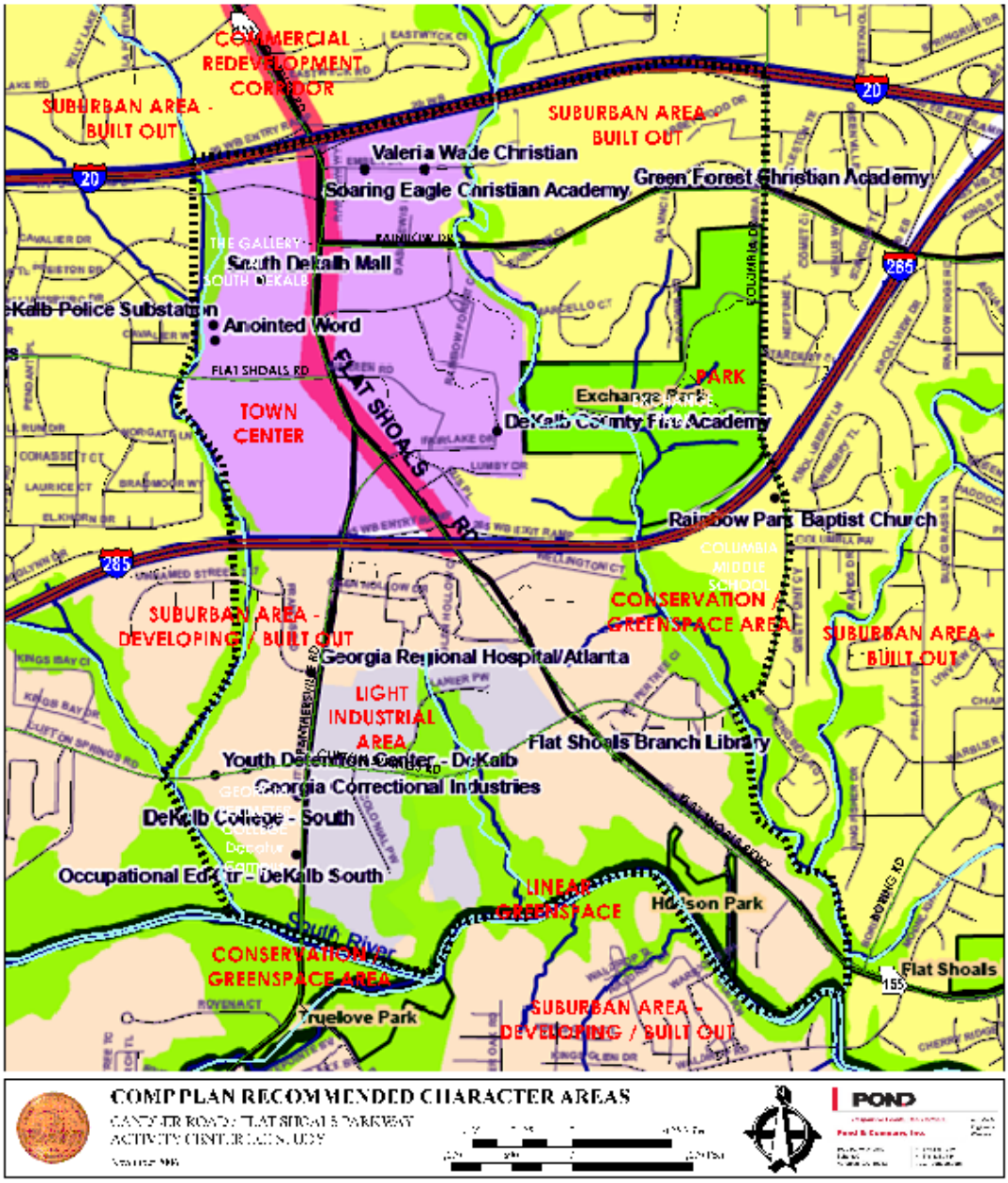
> *By 2025, DeKalb County will consist of walkable communities connected to recreation and green space areas by trails and sidewalks. Neighborhoods will be protected and enhanced with compatible development. The county will develop with less sprawl, a full range of housing opportunities that is affordable to the residents, clean air and water with the protection of the environment, a good transportation system (less congestion) that uses alternative modes of travel, redevelopment of declining neighborhoods, and a strong economic base which includes job opportunities and training. DeKalb County believes in citizen involvement, and the planning and development process in order to improve the overall quality of life.*

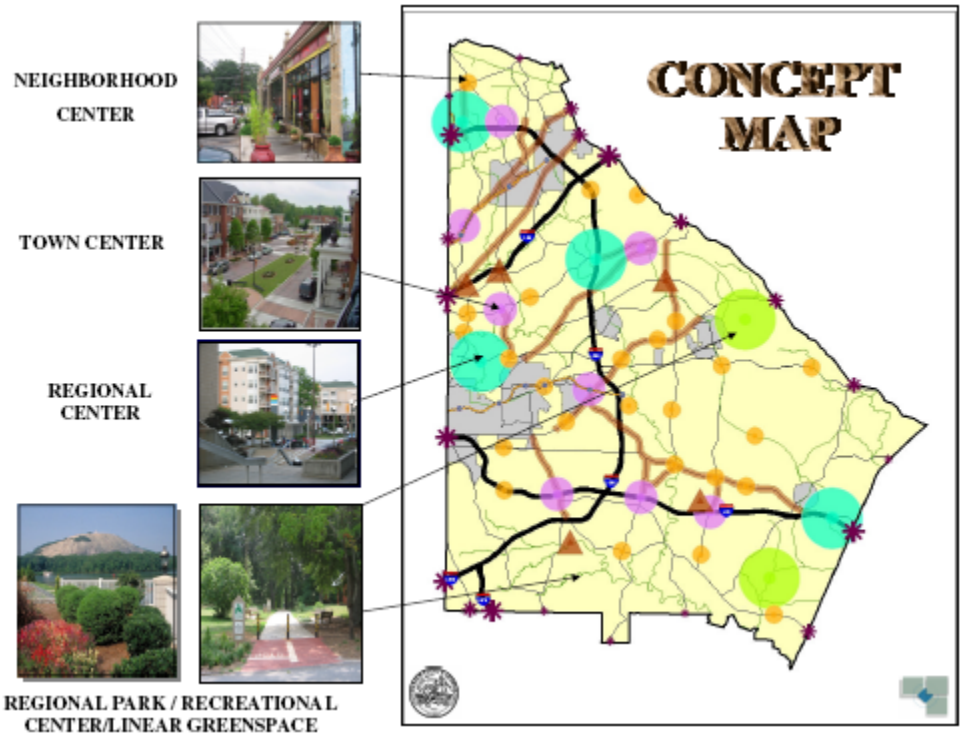
The emphasis on "walkable communities" and linking transportation with land use directly links the LCI study objectives with the broader policy context. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan Community Agenda explains that the County seeks to use the results of the smaller, focused LCI studies as a way to make the overall Future Development map a stronger tool and less vulnerable to frequent amendments in the short term.

DeKalb County is approximately 80% built-out, but according to the draft Comprehensive Plan, trends for new residential development are beginning to occur. The County is home to the second largest population in the Atlanta Metropolitan Region. Continued regional population growth and the decrease of available land create new redevelopment potentials for the County. To cultivate that potential, the County government has taken several pro-active measures to invite and prepare for new investors. Notably, the County has undertaken six Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) studies to date, and has incorporated study recommendations within the 2006 Comprehensive Plan (draft), which is pending approval for 2007. The County has also adopted two Tax Allocation Districts (TADs) and undertook a land-swap within the Study Area itself to aid in revitalization efforts.

The new Comprehensive Plan embraces **the "Corridors and Centers" policy concept** of concentrating intense activity centers at key crossroads with multiple transportation opportunities. To make mixed-use activity centers a viable option, the County has also recently adopted a number of mixed-use zoning options to achieve this vision (see zoning section below).

Specifically for the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway area, the draft **Comprehensive Plan identifies a Town Center extending from I-20 to Flat Shoals Road**, while preserving stable suburban neighborhoods. The map below reproduces the Character Area map found in the Comprehensive Plan for the Study Area. Following the Character Area map is a diagram that places the Study Area in a regional context of relating Regional, Town and Neighborhood centers to key transportation corridors, per the Comprehensive Plan's Concept Map for long-range development.


COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR
SUBURBAN AREA - BUILT OUT
SUBURBAN AREA BUILT OUT
Valeria Wade Christian
Soaring Eagle Christian Academy
Green Forest Christian Academy
South Dekalb Mall
Anointed Word
FLAT SHOALS RD
TOWN CENTER
PARK
Exchange Park
DeKalb County Fire Academy
Rainbow Park Baptist Church
CONSERVATION / GREENSPACE AREA
SUBURBAN AREA - DEVELOPING / BUILT OUT
SUBURBAN AREA - BUILT OUT
Georgia Regional Hospital/Atlanta
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AREA
Flat Shoals Branch Library
Youth Detention Center - DeKalb
Georgia Correctional Industries
DeKalb College - South
Occupational Ed Ctr - DeKalb South
LINEAR GREENSPACE
Hudson Park
CONSERVATION / GREENSPACE AREA
Flat Shoals
Truelove Park
SUBURBAN AREA - DEVELOPING / BUILT OUT
COMP PLAN RECOMMENDED CHARACTER AREAS
POND



The Concept Map shows the I-20/Candler Road Town Center in relation to the Stonecrest Mall "Regional Center" (represented by the green circle at the far east boundary of the County in the map above). Stonecrest Mall fills a long felt gap in the retail offerings for South DeKalb. The success of this development sends important signals to irrational markets that have failed to respond to consumer demand and disposable income levels (refer to Market Analysis). As retail market investment begins to correct, the County aims to direct it at locations with existing or planned transportation infrastructure, such as the BRT station at the I-20/Candler Road interchange (refer to Transportation and Circulation assessment).

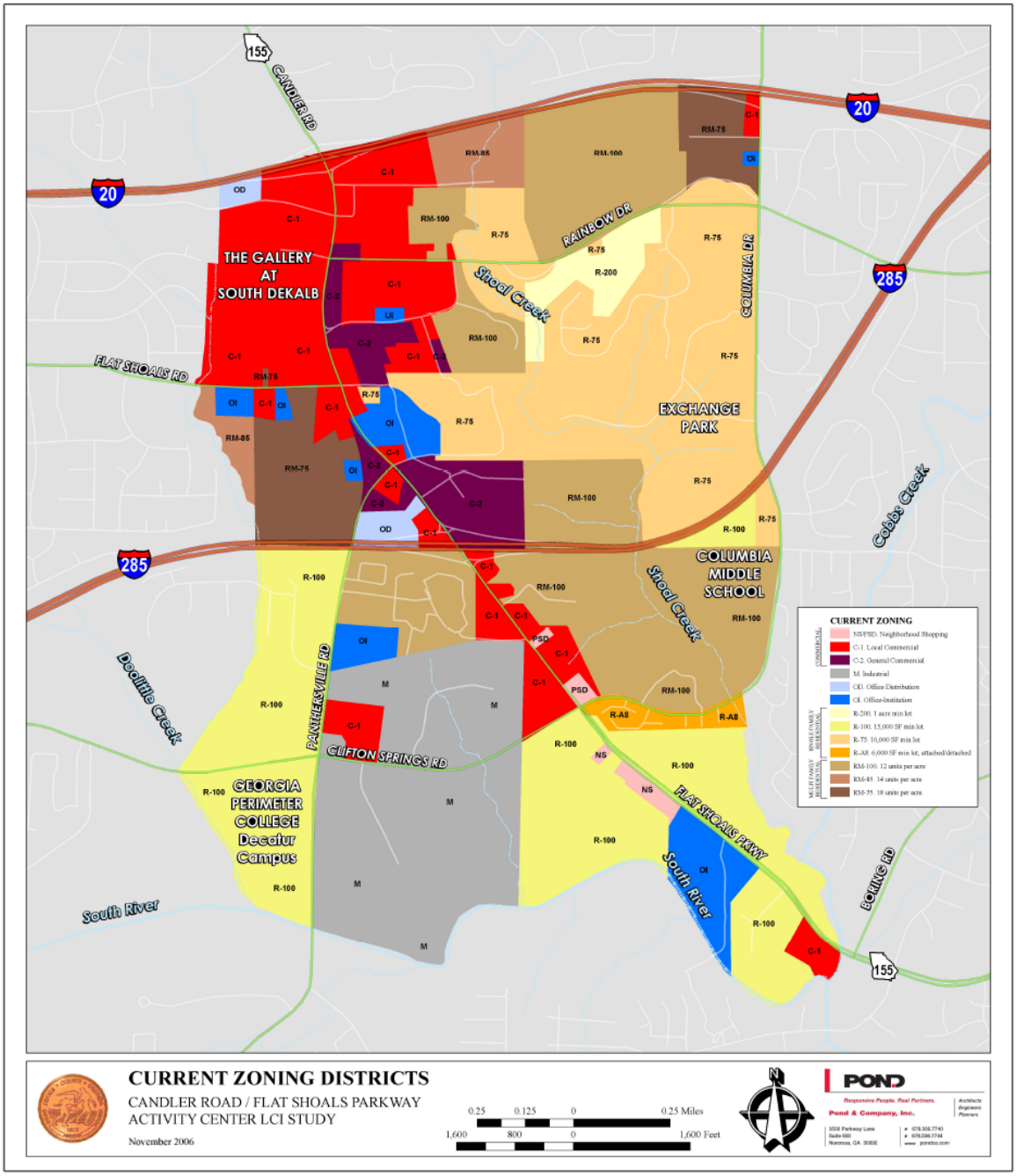
The draft Comprehensive Plan reports survey results indicating that 80% of DeKalb residents feel that existing streets discourage pedestrian and bike activity. Additionally, 67% of those surveyed agree that the County lacks transportation options to work and other destinations. As part of the efforts to create more "livable communities" the County has an adopted sidewalk plan and greenspace acquisition plan. Fortunately for the

Candler Road/Flat Shoals community, DeKalb County moved one step closer toward implementing those plans with a $75,000 grant to purchase South River Trail properties. The grant was awarded by the Georgia Land Conservation Trust Fund in December 2006.

Existing Zoning and Recent Development

According to the Planning and Development records, there has been no rezoning activity in the past year, although a few residential projects and church expansion projects have been initiated. The table and map below identify existing zoning districts and summarize the districts by type.

ZONING	ACREAGE	% of LCI Study Area
COMMERCIAL/PROFESSIONAL (NS, C-1, C-2, OD, O-I)	440	23%
INDUSTRIAL (M)	235	12%
SINGLE FAMILY RES (R-200, R-100.R-75,R-A8)	713	38%
MULTI-FAMILY RES (RM-100, RM-85, RM-75)	502	27%

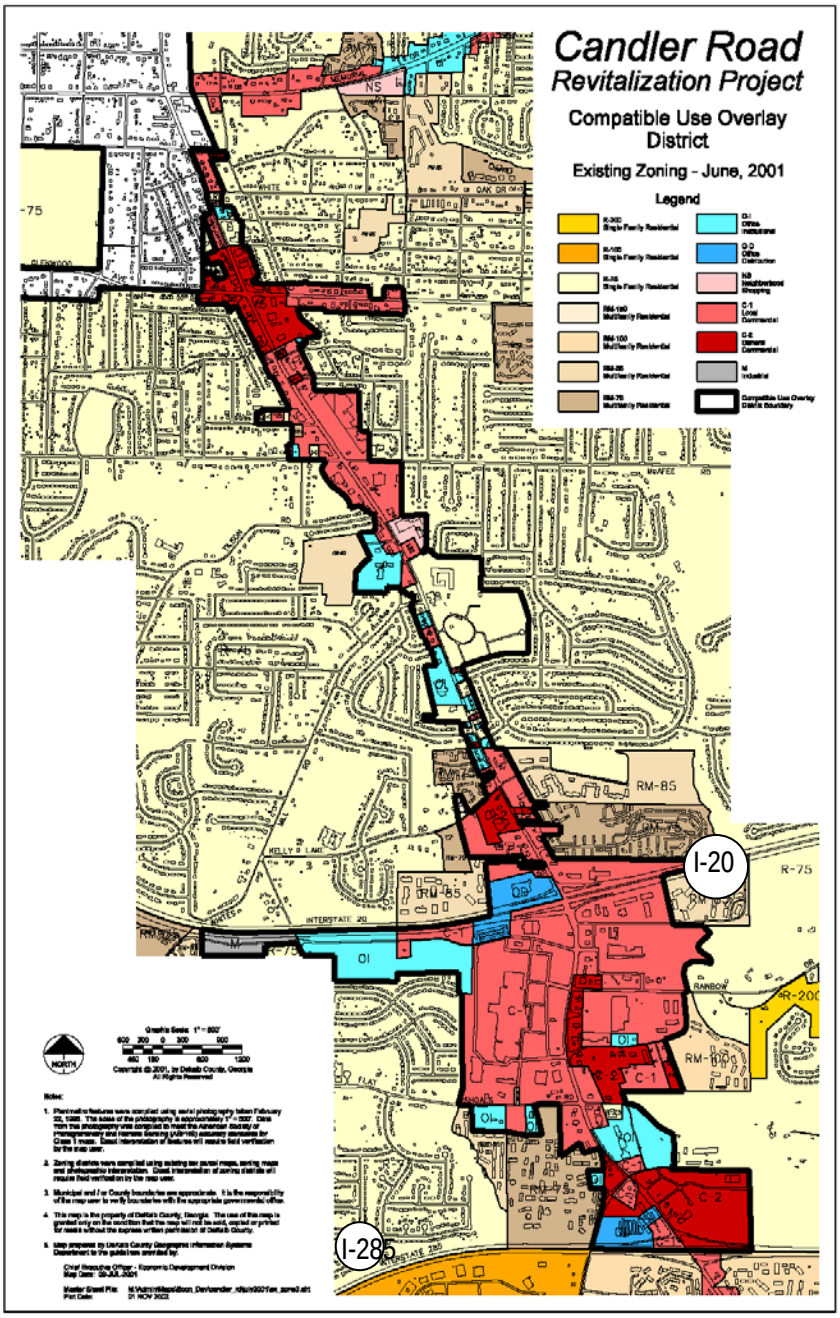

CURRENT ZONING DISTRICTS
CANDLER ROAD / FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY
ACTIVITY CENTER LCI STUDY
November 2006
0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles
1,600 800 0 1,600 Feet
POND
Responsive People. Real Partners.
Pond & Company, Inc.
Architects
Engineers
Planners
CURRENT ZONING
NS/PSD. Neighborhood Shopping
C-1. Local Commercial
C-2. General Commercial
M. Industrial
OD. Office Distribution
OI. Office-Institution
R-200. 1 acre min lot
R-100. 15,000 SF min lot
R-75. 10,000 SF min lot
R-A8. 6,000 SF min lot, attached/detached
RM-100. 12 units per acre
RM-85. 14 units per acre
RM-75. 18 units per acre
THE GALLERY AT SOUTH DEKALB
EXCHANGE PARK
COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE Decatur Campus
CANDLER RD
FLAT SHOALS RD
RAINBOW DR
COLUMBIA DR
Shoal Creek
Cobb Creek
Doolittle Creek
South River
FANTHERSVILLE RD
CLIFTON SPRINGS RD
FLAT SHOALS PKWY
BOKING RD
20
285
155

Existing Overlay District

The DeKalb County Board adopted the Candler Road Overlay District in May 2002. The only part of the Overlay within the LCI Study Area is the section of Candler Road between I-285 and I-20. The intent of this district is to:

- To encourage development and redevelopment to achieve a mixed-use community;
- To provide for sidewalks and walkways in order to promote safe and convenient pedestrian access and to reduce dependence on automobile travel;
- To promote a physically attractive, environmentally safe, and economically sound mixed-use community;
- To permit and to encourage pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use developments that achieve a live, work, and play environment; and
- To improve the visual appearance and increase property values within the Candler Road corridor; and,
- To implement the objectives of the comprehensive plan and of the Candler Road revitalization project plan.

Few projects have been initiated to indicate whether the provisions of the Overlay would achieve the design objectives or not. As it is written, the Overlay addresses future development only; it has no applicability provision for addressing existing problems with the over-size and questionable conformity status of existing signs. In addition to the lack of new investor activity, significant obstacles that exist for the area involve the transmission and other utility lines and large signs that dominate the Candler Road streetscape. The map below identifies the Overlay District boundary.


Candler Road
Revitalization Project
Compatible Use Overlay District
Existing Zoning - June, 2001
Legend
I-20
I-285
RM-85
R-75
OI
C-1
C-2
NORTH

Zoning Opportunities: Mixed-Use

DeKalb County has proceeded with adopting several ordinances that allow various types of mixed-use developments:

- Pedestrian Community Districts (PC-1, PC-2, PC-3);
- Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND); and,
- Office-Commercial-Residential District (OCR)

These districts have provisions for allowing a mix of uses and addressing specific policy objectives. The PC-Districts are organized such that a unified development plan is submitted for Board approval. The plan is detailed and requires more up-front details on the part of the applicant; the applicant proposes land use standards, design guidelines and site development dimensions. What applicants gain for the front-end investment of time, however, is greater flexibility in terms of relief from standard zoning district restrictions that actually impede livable-centers objectives.

B-2. Urban Design

This section describes the Study Area according to its existing character, the existing layout, and the types of relationship the major uses have to one another. The section then offers results of a preference survey to illustrate the kind of character residents would rather see.

Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway LCI Study Area consists of two major centers of activity. One is a commercial center at the intersection of I-20 and Flat Shoals Parkway that includes South DeKalb Mall across from two strip centers. The second is an employment center on Panthersville Road south of I-285 that consists of institutional/industrial uses, namely, South DeKalb Health Center, Georgia Perimeter College – Decatur Campus, Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI), and the Perimeter East Industrial Park. In addition to these two nodes of activity, there is smaller retail along Flat Shoals Parkway from the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall to Clifton Springs Road and along Columbia Drive.

Other major uses serve public functions: the Columbia Middle School, the Exchange Park along Columbia Drive, and several major churches and their respective community centers (notably, Green Forest Baptist and New Life Community Center). The rest of the Study Area has several residential communities with a variety of housing - single family, town homes and apartments.

The assessment of Urban Design issues were documented by functional districts or zones delineated based on their common attributes. In addition, general issues of concern were identified as well. The major issues are:

- Declining activity and sustainability of the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall
- Aging and obsolete strip mall and the scattered retail along Flat Shoals Road and parts of Columbia Drive
- Image, Identity and Character of the community; the arterial streets, gateways, signage, public realm space and community amenities
- Large block configuration that is auto oriented, not pedestrian friendly
- Street network and connectivity within the community, especially the east west connectivity is limited
- Traffic congestion and vehicular circulation

- Pedestrian environment; mobility, connectivity, safety and experience – streetscape, sidewalks, cross walks, plazas, lighting, signage, street furniture and art work
- Aging and poor residential communities (apartment complexes) and safety concerns
- Under-utilized buildings and parcels
- Leveraging the creek and the open space
- Sense of Place and a focal point for the community
- Diversity of uses and activities
- Lack of architectural and design controls

The urban design issues found here are similar to other communities around metro-Atlanta. There is an emergence of development activity within the area that is seen in various residential activity and a few office/retail buildings. The Study Area has many strengths and assets that present great opportunities for redevelopment, growth and long term sustainability of the community. The opportunities include:

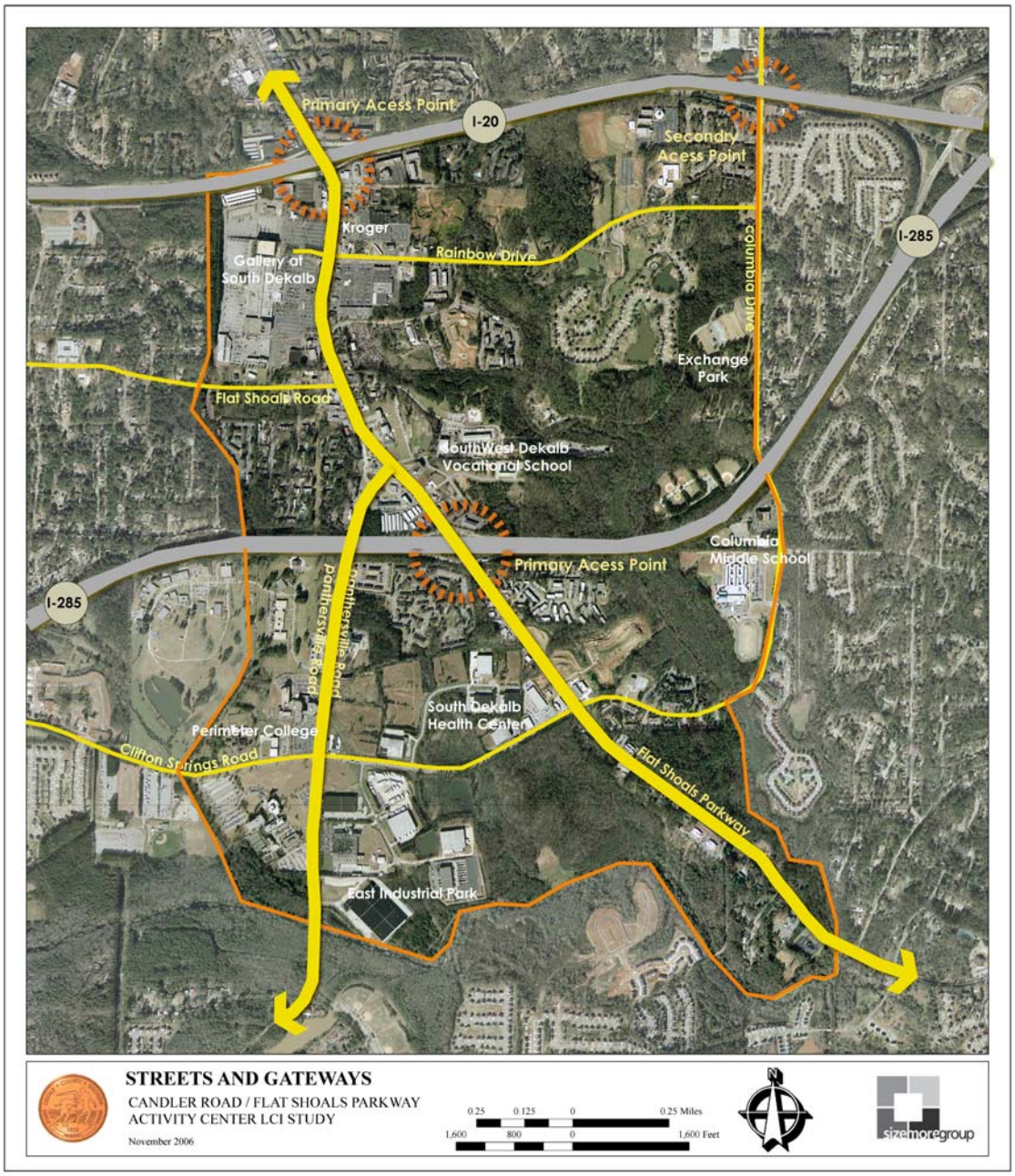
- Leveraging good accessibility – I-20 and I-285 access points and create gateways that identifies the community extent and image and branding
- Retrofitting of the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall and the two strip centers across the street from it. This area could be redesigned to improve the urban design quality. National trends in retrofitting suburban malls are aimed at reconstituting the block and street network with diverse uses and activities with improved pedestrian-friendly environment. This also provides opportunity to create a town green or a focal point for the community.
- Incorporating transit as an alternative mode of transportation
- Leveraging institutional uses like GA Perimeter College, GBI and South DeKalb Health Center by providing amenities and services that cater to both employees and student population: cafes, national copy shops or office supply stores, outdoor dining, restaurants, student housing, etc.
- Infill and redevelopment opportunities of vacant parcels and aging housing for various housing product types: single family, townhomes, condos, and apartments. This will further ensure a safer environment
- Availability of vacant land

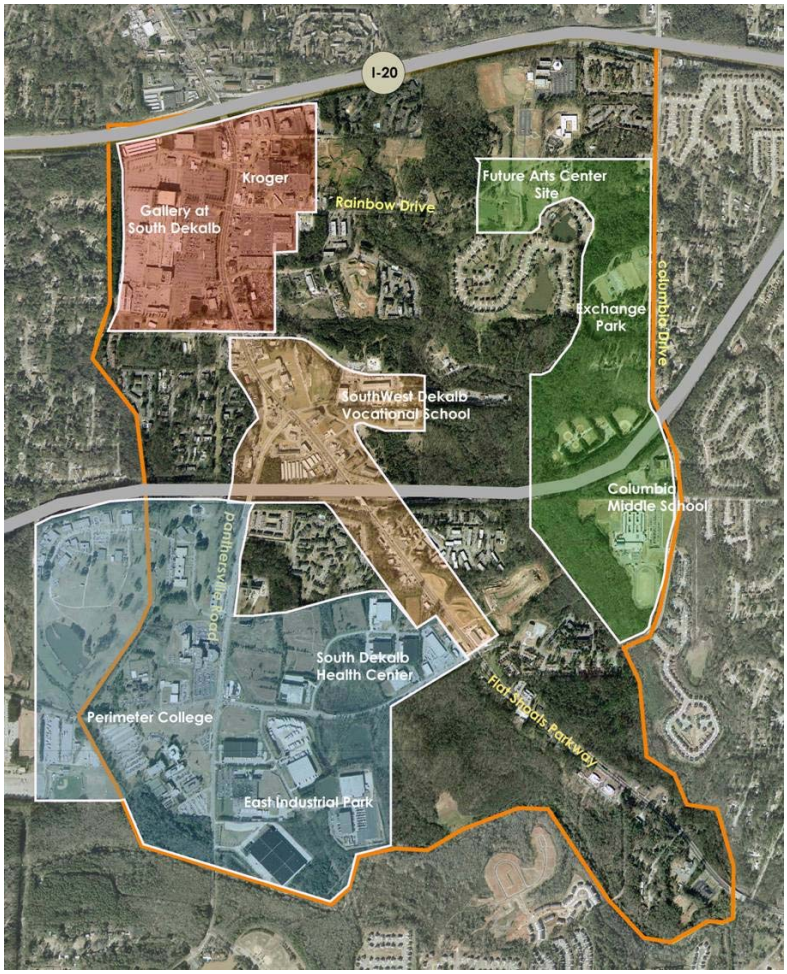
- Leveraging the creek and open space as part of the flood plain and the presence of established Exchange Park with amenities. Good multi-path trails could be explored to connect the various community elements and uses.
- Create a cohesive street image with streetscape, architectural controls, lighting, street furniture, sidewalks, and art work.

What follows are a series of maps that help visualize the existing conditions and capture how existing transportation and land use patterns interact.

The first map brings into relief the major features of the road system and identifies gateways. There are two major gateways or entryways into the community: one at the I-20 & Candler Road interchange and another at the I-285 & Flat Shoals Parkway. Gateways act as identity markers to the community and should reflect the community image and character. They demarcate a sense of boundary for a community by defining entry and exit points as one moves through the community. Currently for the Study Area, the existing gateways are poorly defined, cluttered, and aesthetically unpleasing. Landscape, lighting, artwork, signage, and other elements could be used to create a definitive sense of arrival at these points.

The second map conceptually divides the Study Area into functional subareas and nodes. Following that is a map showing, parks, conservation and undeveloped land to aid thinking on how to use open space in new ways and understand the opportunity for new development. The final map in this series indicates new development and expansion currently planned for the area.


Primary Acess Point
I-20
Secondry Acess Point
Kroger
Rainbow Drive
Gallery at South Dekalb
columbia Drive
I-285
Exchange Park
Flat Shoals Road
SouthWest Dekalb Vocational School
Columbia Middle School
Primary Acess Point
I-285
Panthersville Road
Panthersville Road
South Dekalb Health Center
Perimeter College
Clifton Springs Road
Flat Shoals Parkway
East Industrial Park
STREETS AND GATEWAYS
CANDLER ROAD / FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY
ACTIVITY CENTER LCI STUDY
November 2006
0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles
1,600 800 0 1,600 Feet
sizemoregroup



South Dekalb Mall/Retail Sub Area

- Major Node of activity & gateway
- Regional shopping destination
- Easy Access to I-20 & I-285
- Under utilized
- Aging and Obsolete strip malls
- Declining South DeKalb Mall
- Auto oriented
- Expansive parking surfaces – under utilized
- Poor image and character
- Lacks good streetscape/character
- Lacks cohesive image and a sense of place
- Redevelopment opportunities

Panthersville Institutional Sub Area

- Major institutions & employment; South DeKalb Health Center, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, DeKalb College, Sara Lee
- Growing DeKalb College
- Availability of land
- Provides opportunities for new development and jobs by leveraging the institutions /industries
- Opportunities for student oriented services/amenities/activities
- Traffic congestion and vehicular circulation along this corridor
- Lacks pedestrian environment and safety

Columbia School and Exchange Park Sub Area

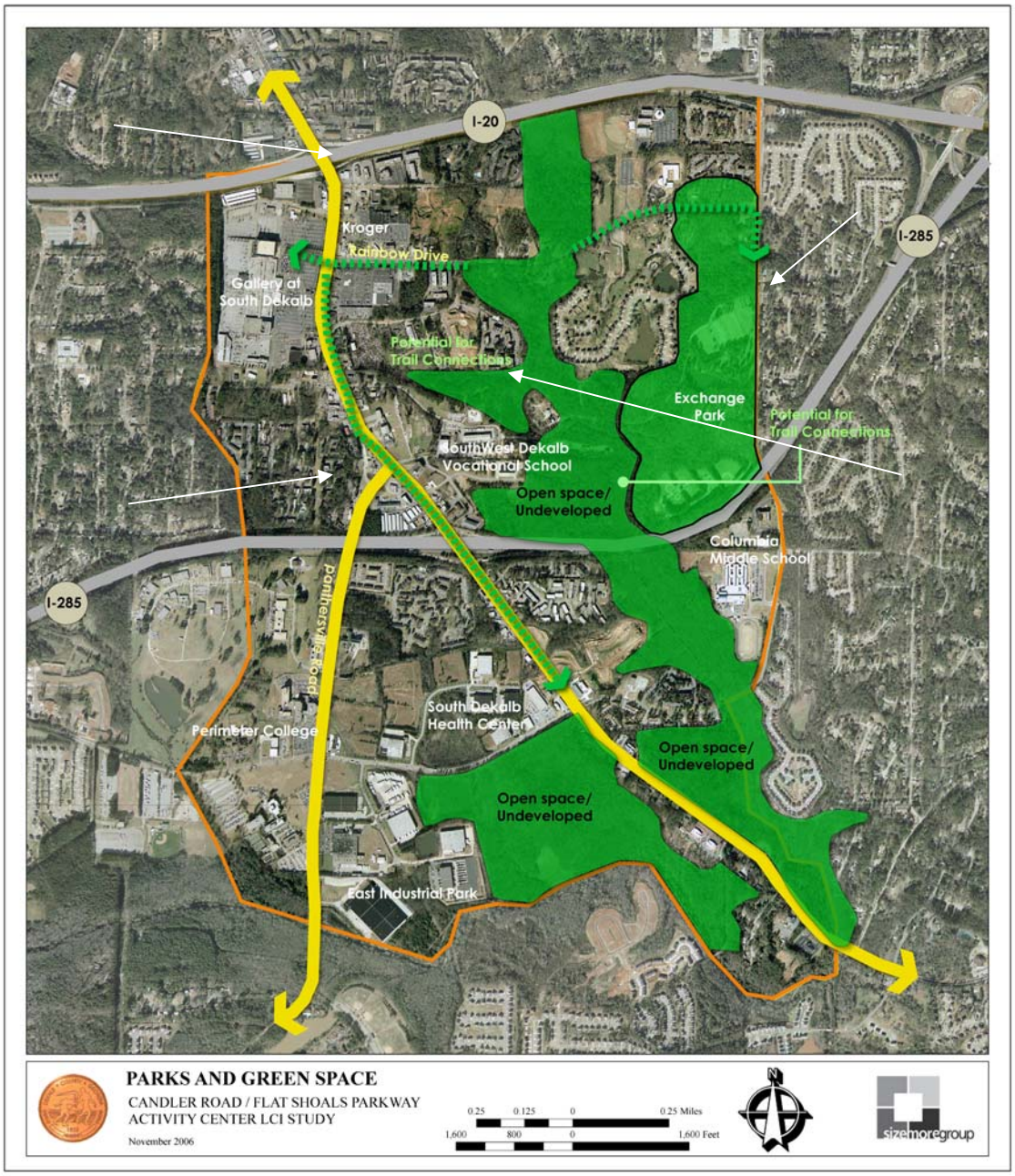
- Columbia School
- Proposed Arts Center
- Exchange Park – large park with various amenities; base ball, foot ball, and tennis
- Access to the creek
- Large open space within the community
- Potential for multi-path trail connecting the various nodes, uses and residential communities
- Lies within predominantly residential district

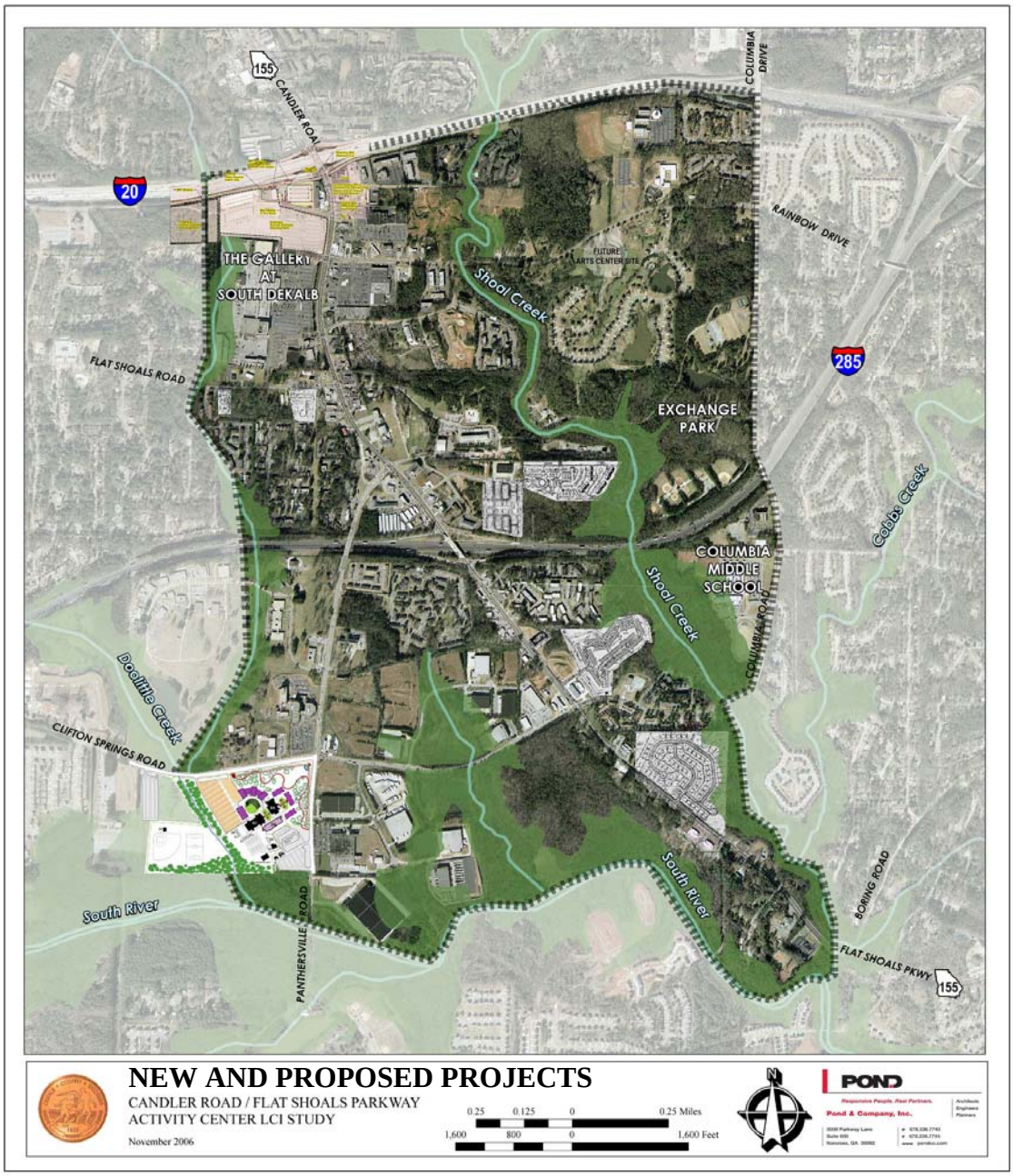
Panthersville and Flat Shoals Node

- Minor commercial/retail node
- Southwest DeKalb Vocational School
- Scattered aging and obsolete single story retail
- Smaller parcels and frequent curb cuts
- Lacks cohesive image along the corridor; streetscape, \ architectural character, pedestrian environment
- Good interstate access; I-20 and I-285
- Redevelopment potential

Residential Sub Area

- Several residential communities; single family, town homes, & apartments
- Various quality of housing, product types and age
- Some poor and deteriorating housing stock; apartments mainly
- Vacant land available
- Significant area along the creek and open spaces
- School and Park within close proximity
- Rolling topography
- Limited accessibility and street network


I-20
I-285
I-285
Kroger
Rainbow Drive
Gallery at South Dekalb
Potential for Trail Connections
Exchange Park
Potential for Trail Connections
SouthWest Dekalb Vocational School
Open space/ Undeveloped
Columbia Middle School
Panthersville Road
South Dekalb Health Center
Perimeter College
Open space/ Undeveloped
Open space/ Undeveloped
East Industrial Park
PARKS AND GREEN SPACE
CANDLER ROAD / FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY
ACTIVITY CENTER LCI STUDY
November 2006
0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles
1,600 800 0 1,600 Feet
N
sizemoregroup


155
CANDLER ROAD
COLUMBIA DRIVE
20
RAINBOW DRIVE
THE GALLERIA AT SOUTH DEKALB
FUTURE ARTS CENTER SITE
Shoal Creek
FLAT SHOALS ROAD
285
EXCHANGE PARK
Cobbs Creek
COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Shoal Creek
COLUMBIA ROAD
Doolittle Creek
CLIFTON SPRINGS ROAD
South River
South River
BORING ROAD
PANTHERSVILLE ROAD
FLAT SHOALS PKWY
155
NEW AND PROPOSED PROJECTS
CANDLER ROAD / FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY
ACTIVITY CENTER LCI STUDY
November 2006
0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles
1,600 800 0 1,600 Feet
N
POND
Responsive People. Real Partners.
Pond & Company, Inc.

B-3. Transportation and Circulation

This section includes:

- an assessment of the significance of the Study Area in terms of its transportation context;
- a brief review of prior transportation plans, studies, and recommendations;
- a summary of transportation improvement projects in/affecting the Study Area;
- an overview of the existing conditions of transportation and circulation facilities; and,
- information regarding emerging transportation issues and long range plans.

Transportation Context

From a regional transportation perspective, the prominent aspects of the Study Area include the following:

- Location "inside the perimeter" at the junction of I-20 and I-285 with relatively good access to major regional employment centers (most notably Atlanta's downtown Central Business District [< 10 miles] and Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport [< 20 miles]) ;
- Location on State Route 155 (Candler Road / Flat Shoals Parkway), an ARC-identified "Regional Strategic Facility," which links South DeKalb neighborhoods to destinations in central DeKalb (including the Memorial Drive corridor [3 miles], downtown Decatur [5 miles], and the Emory University / CDC area [< 10 miles] ;
- Inclusion of The Gallery at South DeKalb Mall, the core of a regionally significant center of activity ; and
- Plans for high capacity regional transit service along the I-20 corridor, likely bus rapid transit (BRT), with a proposed station / transit center in the Study Area.

From a County-level transportation perspective, further notable aspects of the Study Area include:

- Inclusion of a significant employment center around Panthersville Road / Clifton Springs Road intersection, including Light Industrial and Institutional Uses such as the Georgia Perimeter College Decatur Campus;
- Candler Road / Flat Shoals Parkway from I-285 to I-20 has been identified as an important "mixed use linkage corridor";
- The South River is an important natural resource offering opportunities for linear green space with special conservation concerns, but where the impact of access is low may also be utilized as a multi-use recreational greenway; and
- MARTA provides local bus service along most major roads through the Study Area.

Prior Plans and Studies

Prior plans and studies addressing the Study Area were reviewed through a transportation lens in order to take advantage of prior planning efforts. The following section summarizes prior transportation-related analysis and recommendations as they apply to the current planning effort.

<u>Candler Road Revitalization Project, DeKalb County (1998)</u>

This economic development plan included transportation analysis and recommendations along the Candler Road corridor.

Notable Results of Transportation Analysis:

- The intersection of Candler Road and Rainbow Drive is substantially over capacity at "rush hour."
- In the morning peak hour, northbound Candler Road traffic is a heavy contributor of vehicles to I-20 westbound.
- The traffic volumes on Candler Road near the Gallery at South DeKalb, were relatively greater than volumes on like arterials serving comparable malls

(Avondale and North DeKalb Malls) but slightly less than those near Northlake Mall.

The Corridor's capacity to handle traffic efficiently is diminished by the large number of driveways (i.e., curb cuts) and the resulting number of conflicting left-turn movements between intersections.

Relevant Transportation Recommendations and Implementation Plan Elements:

- Upgrade the Candler Road intersections at Rainbow Drive and Flat Shoals Road;
- Provide a raised median with left turn openings and pedestrian crossing refuge at selected places on the Corridor, for traffic management, safety, and landscaping ;
- Realign / "Straighten" Candler Road between Interstate 285 and Rainbow Drive ;
- Optimize the traffic signal phasing along the corridor;
- With MARTA, provide bus loading/unloading bays with pedestrian shelters off of the main travel-way, at South DeKalb Mall;
- Standardized and modernized lighting along the Corridor;
- Landscaping enhancements, sidewalks/pedestrian safety, curb cut reduction and signage ; and
- Determine the feasibility of constructing a service road parallel to Candler Road in order to facilitate reduction of curb cuts, alleviate traffic congestion and to open back land for more intensive development.

DeKalb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

At the time of the study preparation, the County CTP was in the process of adoption and served primarily as a resource for the evaluation of the existing transportation conditions in the Study Area.

Programmed Improvements

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was investigated in order to assess the potential impact of regionally significant projects on the Study Area. The five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is being updated and the 2007-2012 TIP is scheduled to be released in the near future (early 2007); thus, the current program merely serves as a point of reference (see the table on the following page).

Other programs and funding sources were investigated to learn of pending investments in transportation improvements affecting the Study Area, including: Federal "Earmarks" (SAFETEA-LU, US DOT), Georgia Governor's Fast Forward Program, Transportation Enhancement Funds (GDOT), DeKalb County 2006 Bond Initiative, DeKalb County Homestead Options Sales Tax (HOST) Program, DeKalb County Work Program (Public Works), and other Institutional/Private investments.

Projects that have the greatest potential impact on the Study Area network in the short term include:

- Pedestrian and Landscape Enhancements along Candler Road (TIP) ;
- Pedestrian Facilities on Flat Shoals Parkway (TIP) ;
- I-20 east HOV lanes, especially the impact on interchanges with Candler Road and Columbia Road (TIP) ;
- Signal Timing Coordination along the Candler Road Corridor, including pedestrian crossing signal improvements ; and
- Private investment in a Park & Ride facility at the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall with service to Emory / CDC.

ARC ID	Project Type	Complete Date	Funding / Programming	Project Description	Location / Project Start	End Project
AR-444	Roadway Operations	2008	Short Range - ALL PHASES PROGRAMMED	I-20 EAST AND WEST RAMP METERS / HIGHWAY ADVISORY RADIO	SR 6 (THORNTON ROAD) IN DOUGLAS COUNTY	EVANS MILL ROAD IN DEKALB COUNTY
DK-268B	Pedestrian Facility	2009	Short Range - ALL PHASES PROGRAMMED	SR 155 (CANDLER ROAD) PEDESTRIAN AND LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS: PHASE II	I-285 SOUTH	SR 154 (MEMORIAL DRIVE) [SEE ALSO DK-268A]
DK-320A1	Pedestrian Facility	2009	Short Range - ALL PHASES PROGRAMMED	18 SIDEWALKS: RAINBOW ROAD	CANDLER ROAD	COLUMBIA DRIVE
DK-AR-BP054	Pedestrian Facility	2012	Short Range - ALL PHASES PROGRAMMED	SR 155 (FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY)	SNAPFINGER ROAD	FLAT SHOALS ROAD
AR-H-250	HOV Lanes	2012	Short Range - ALL PHASES PROGRAMMED	I-20 EAST HOV LANES	COLUMBIA DRIVE	EVANS MILL ROAD IN DEKALB COUNTY
DK-238	Bridge Upgrade	2012	Short Range - ALL PHASES PROGRAMMED	WALDROP ROAD	SOUTH RIVER	
DK-338	Roadway Capacity	2013	Mid Range - PE and/or ROW funded (CST NOT PROGRAMMED)	PANTHERSVILLE ROAD	CLIFTON SPRINGS ROAD	SR 155 (FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY)
DK-320B	Pedestrian Facility	2014	Mid Range - PE and/or ROW funded (CST NOT PROGRAMMED)	SIDEWALKS ALONG EIGHTEEN (18) CORRIDORS: PHASE II - INCLUDES FLAT SHOALS RD		
DK-AR-BP017	Pedestrian Facility	2014	Mid Range - PE and/or ROW funded (CST NOT PROGRAMMED)	COLUMBIA DRIVE	RAINBOW DRIVE	SR 154 (MEMORIAL DRIVE)
DK-AR-009A	Roadway Capacity	2014	Mid Range - PE and/or ROW funded (CST NOT PROGRAMMED)	I-20 EAST	COLUMBIA DRIVE	EVANS MILL ROAD - INCLUDES ASSOCIATED COLLECTOR / DISTRIBUTOR LANES
DK-AR-247	Other	2015	Mid Range - PE and/or ROW funded (CST NOT PROGRAMMED)	I-285 SOUTH NOISE BARRIERS	I-20 EAST	BOULDERCREST ROAD
DK-343	Roadway Capacity	2016	Mid Range - PE and/or ROW funded (CST NOT PROGRAMMED)	RAINBOW DRIVE	SR 155 (CANDLER ROAD)	WESLEY CHAPEL ROAD
DK-339	Roadway Capacity	2016	Mid Range - PE and/or ROW funded (CST NOT PROGRAMMED)	COLUMBIA DRIVE	SR 155 (FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY)	RAINBOW DRIVE
DK-AR-206	Interchange Capacity	2020	Mid Range - PE and/or ROW funded (CST NOT PROGRAMMED)	I-285 SOUTH	SR 155 (FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY)	
AR-904A	Transit Facility	2025	Long Range - NO PROGRAMMED FUNDING	I-20 EAST BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)	STONECREST MALL (DEKALB COUNTY)	DOWNTOWN ATLANTA [SPLIT FUNDED - SEE AR-904B]
AR-904B	Transit Facility	2025	Long Range - NO PROGRAMMED FUNDING	I-20 EAST BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)	STONECREST MALL (DEKALB COUNTY)	DOWNTOWN ATLANTA [SPLIT FUNDED - SEE AR-904A]

TIP Projects have "Programmed" status (2006-2011 TIP current through 7-27-06)

Transportation Systems

User Characteristics

In order to assess the local transportation system, it is necessary to consider the relationship of the system to its users.

Readily available data regarding localized travel behavior is provided by the 2000 US Census, which summarizes the commute behavior of working local residents. The following is a summary of relevant facts (*2000 US Census, Panthersville CDP*):

- approximately 46% of area residents work in DeKalb County ;
- 63% of area resident commuters drove alone to work [vs. 77.0% of metro-Atlantans] ;
- 22% carpooled to work [vs. 14% of metro-Atlantans] ;
- 12% used public transportation [vs. 4% of metro-Atlantans] ; and
- the remaining 3% walked or biked to work or worked from home [vs. 6% of metro-Atlantans].

Also notable, area residents are less likely to have a private vehicle available to them, reporting an average of just 1.64 vehicles per occupied housing unit [vs. 1.8 for metro-Atlantans].

Roadway Facilities

The map on page 41 serves as a reference for the following section.

From an aerial view, the Study Area appears well served by roadway facilities. Despite the prominence of Interstates 20 and 285, these routes are designed to serve thoroughfare traffic. As restricted access facilities, the interstates actually serve as barriers to local circulation patterns due to the expense required to bridge these rights of way with local serving streets. Other significant barriers to local circulation are waterways.

Fortunately, the Study Area has three access points to the interstate network. The full access points at the Candler Road / I-20 interchange and Flat Shoals Pkwy / I-285 interchange are the principal transportation nodes. Thus, State Route 155 between these interchanges is the critical link in terms of automotive access. The partial

interchange at Columbia Drive / I-20 plays a significant, but diminished role as it merely provides westbound I-20 access.

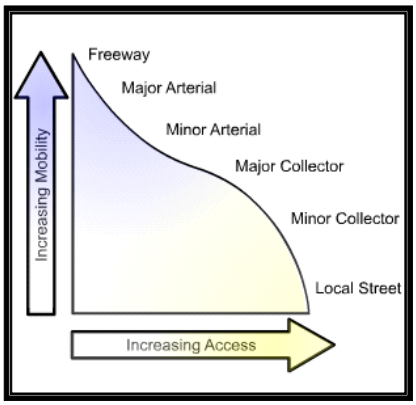
State Route 155 (Candler Road / Flat Shoals Parkway) is the primary transportation feature defining the Study Area and is the route along which most travelers experience the Study Area. Following are key statistics which characterize this route:

- Typical traffic volumes for its function as a "minor arterial" (AADT 2005 40,300) ;
- Low/Medium level of congestion during peak commute periods ;
- Fairly low truck traffic (3% trucks 2005) ; and
- Low-Modest traffic growth rate over past 5-6 years (AADT 2000 39,000).

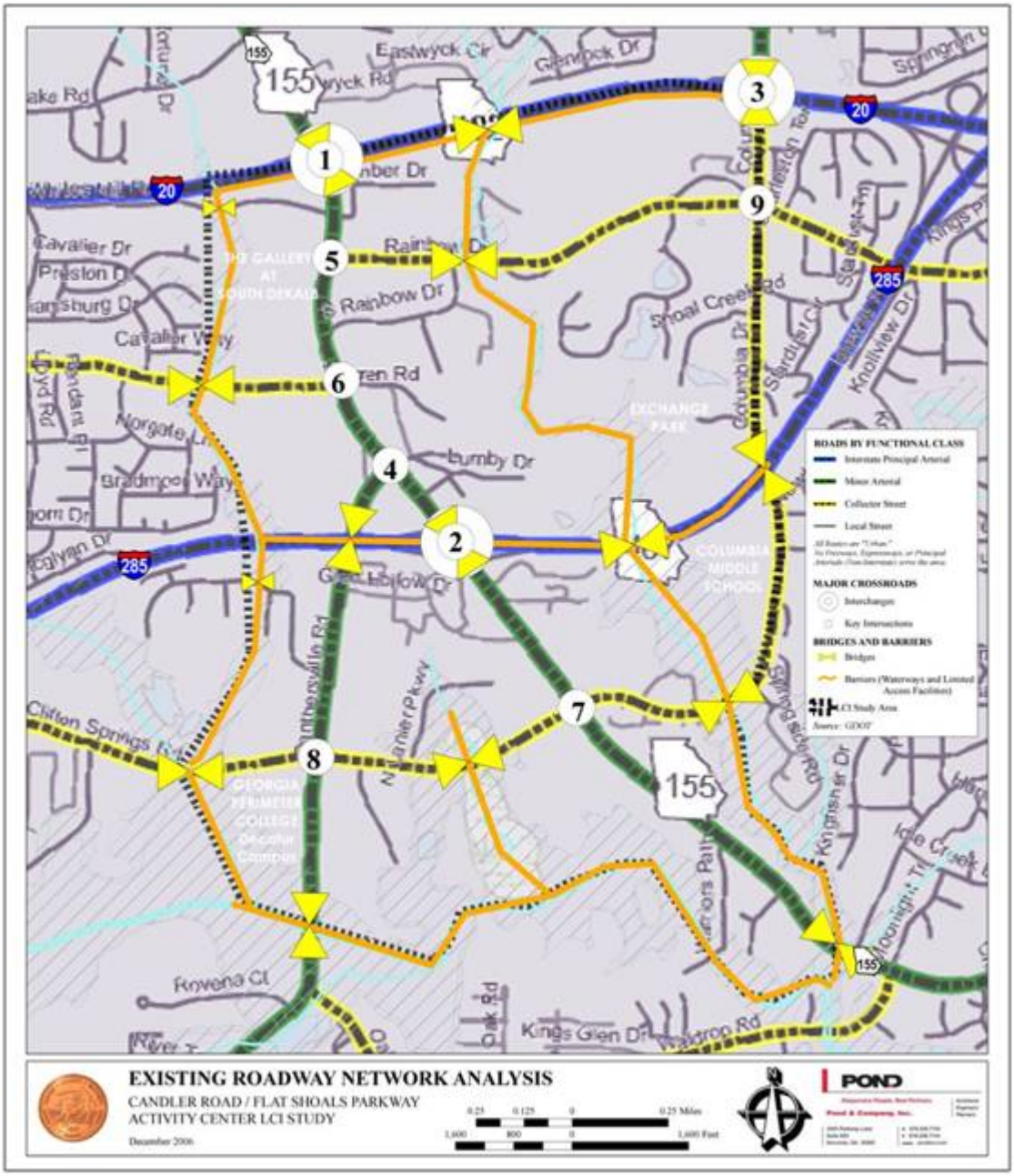
An inventory of area roadways is maintained by GDOT according to the degree to which they fulfill two purposes: movement of traffic, or mobility, and access to development.

As expressed in the following diagram, these functions are inversely related in that the more traffic volume a roadway can accommodate, the less access it provides (and vice versa).

Figure: Roadway Classification by Function



Thus, a functional classification system provides a hierarchical ranking based on the degree of mobility and accessibility that a street provides its users. The accompanying Map (Existing Roadways Network Analysis) displays Study Area roadways by GDOT functional classification.


EXISTING ROADWAY NETWORK ANALYSIS
CANDLER ROAD / FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY
ACTIVITY CENTER LCI STUDY
December 2006
POND
ROADS BY FUNCTIONAL CLASS
Interstate Principal Arterial
Minor Arterial
Collector Street
Local Street
MAJOR CROSSROADS
Interchanges
Key Intersections
BRIDGES AND BARRIERS
Bridges
Barriers (Waterways and Limited Access Facilities)
LCI Study Area
Source: GDOT
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
155
20
285
Eastwyck Cir
Glenwick Dr
Rainbow Dr
Shoal Creek Rd
Cavalier Dr
Preston Dr
Cavalier Way
Morgate Ln
Bradmoor Way
Lumby Dr
Greenbriar Dr
Clifton Springs Rd
Rowena Ct
Kings Glen Dr
Waldrop Rd
Knollview Dr
Kingfisher Dr
Columbia Dr
Sardis Ct
Stagecoach Tr
Kings Pt
Lake Creek
Moonlight Tr
Oak Rd
Mantua Rd
Mantua Pkwy
Lithonia Rd
Flat Shoals Rd
Clifton Springs Rd
Kingsley Dr
Lithonia Rd
Floyd Rd
Bandera Pl
Calyan Dr
Spring Gln
Kings Pt
EXCHANGE PARK
COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE Decatur Campus
PO GALLERY AT SOUTH DEKALB

State Route 155 and Panthersville Road are classified by GDOT as Minor Arterials. Routes that are classified by GDOT as Collector Streets include: Clifton Springs Road, Columbia Drive, Flat Shoals Road, and Rainbow Drive. The intersections of all these routes are thus critical transportation nodes. Note that due to the increasingly competitive nature of federal and state funding, routes generally must be classified as arterials and collectors to qualify for federal assistance to fund improvement projects.

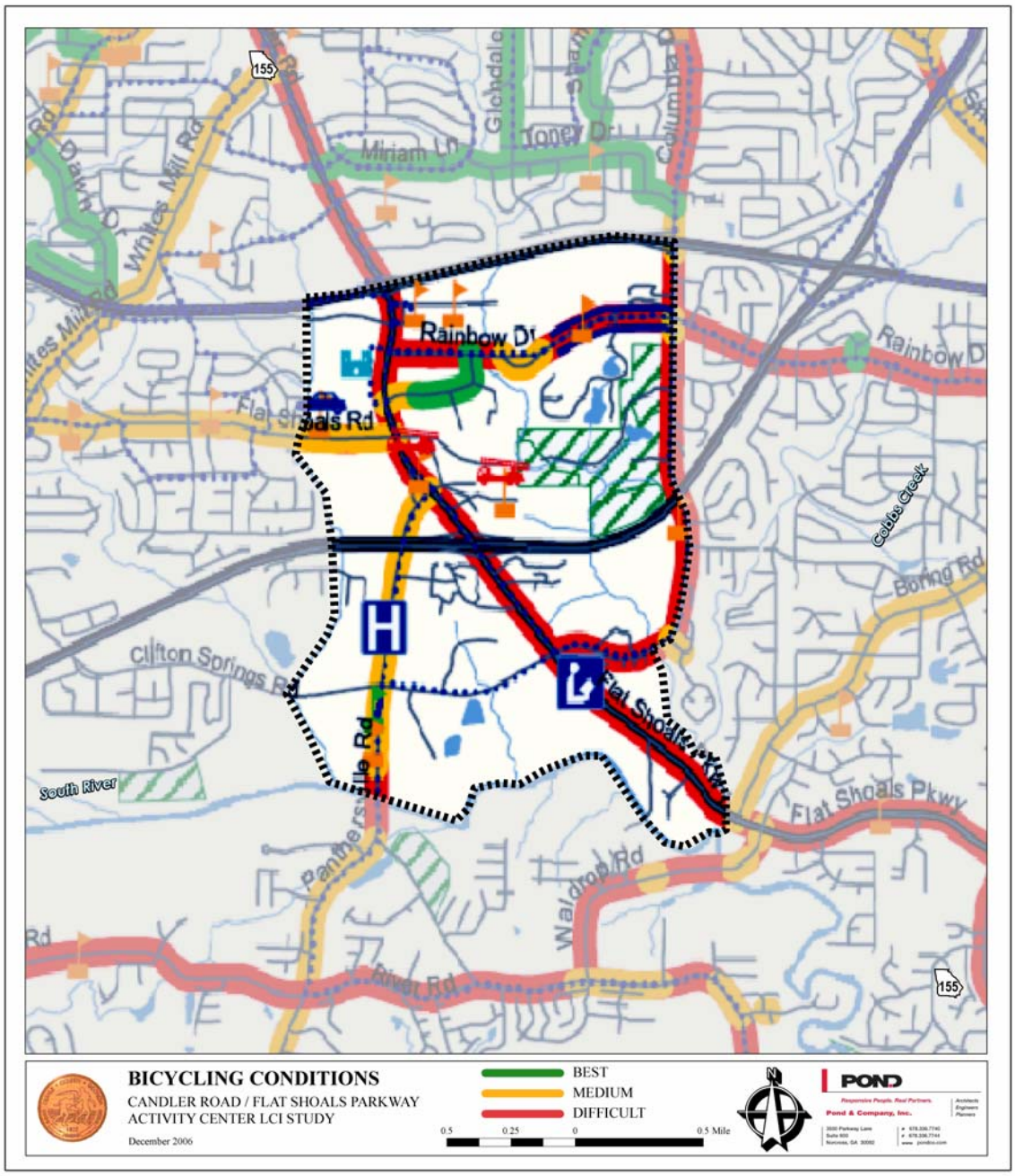
Like other locations in DeKalb County, the historic rural crossroads town of Panthersville (in the vicinity of the Panthersville Road / SR 155 intersection) was not built upon an urban street grid. Over time, local streets in the area were constructed incrementally to serve private developments as lands converted from agricultural uses. Thus, there is essentially no system of local streets and blocks. Just a few side streets (South Rainbow Drive, Lumby Drive, Glen Hollow Drive, and private access drives serving the Gallery at South DeKalb) provide viable alternatives to the major roads for local circulation.

Alternative Transportation

Alternative modes of transportation include any means of travel other than private vehicle. In the metro-Atlanta region, such means traditionally include: pedestrian, bicycle, heavy rail, commuter bus, and local bus.

Due to the absence of a local street network, pedestrians must walk along or across major roads through the Study Area. Every arterial and collector street serving the Study Area has been identified by county or regional programs for pedestrian facility improvements. This is a major indicator as to the inadequacy of the existing facilities. Additionally, County Public Works personnel have reported that residents complain about the need for new and/or improved sidewalks and crosswalks in the vicinity.

Dedicated bicycle facilities are rare in the metro-Atlanta region, thus it is not surprising that the Study Area is virtually absent of bike lanes, shared-use paths, or multi-use trails. The following map, excerpted from the ARC's "Bicycle Suitability Map" for DeKalb County (2003), highlights the discontinuity of bicycle-friendly routes serving the Study Area.


BICYCLING CONDITIONS
CANDLER ROAD / FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY
ACTIVITY CENTER LCI STUDY
December 2006
BEST
MEDIUM
DIFFICULT
0.5
0.25
0
0.5 Mile
N
POND
Rainbow Dr
Flat Shoals Rd
Flat Shoals Pkwy
Clifton Springs Rd
Panthersville Rd
Waldrop Rd
River Rd
South River
Cobbs Creek
Boring Rd
Whites Mill Rd
Miriam Ln
Toney Dr
Glendale
155

As previously mentioned, the **rate of transit ridership by area resident commuters is three times that of metro-Atlantans.** This is in part due to the relatively good availability and coverage of MARTA bus service along most all major roads through the Study Area. Routes serving the Study Area include:

- Route 15 – South DeKalb (service along SR 155 to Decatur),
- Route 74 – Flat Shoals (offering service westward along the I-20 corridor as far as Five Points Rail Station),
- Route 114 – Columbia Woods (serving Clifton Springs Road / Columbia Drive, eventually terminating at Kensington Rail Station), and
- Route 186 - Rainbow / Wesley Chapel (initiating from the Wesley Chapel Road Corridor, this route offers virtually express service to downtown Atlanta).

MARTA advertises several destinations in the Study Area including: Gallery @ South DeKalb (Mall), South DeKalb / Clifton Springs Health Center, and Georgia Perimeter College (Decatur Campus).

KELLEY LAKE
155
74
216
114
20
Future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Station site yet to be determined
186
20
THE GALLERY AT SOUTH DEKALB
285
15
EXCHANGE PARK
74
FLAT SHOALS RD
285
COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
SPRINGS RD
LCI Study Area
114
GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE Decatur Campus
THERSVILLE RD
FLAT SHOALS PKWY
155
EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
CANDLER ROAD / FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY
ACTIVITY CENTER LCI STUDY
November 2006
0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles
1,000 800 0 1,000 Feet
POND

Emerging Transportation Issues

At present the County is in the process of finalizing its Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) and is entering the final stages of its Comprehensive Plan (essentially the policy guide for future land use decisions). Upon adoption of these plans, the implementation of projects planned for the mid range and long range may be coordinated with land use decision making.

Planned projects that have the greatest potential impact on the Study Area network in the mid-term include:

- Reconstruction of the I-285 / SR 155 Interchange (RTP) ;
- Widening and Bike/Ped Improvements to Panthersville Road (RTP);
- Widening and Bike/Ped Improvements to Columbia Drive (RTP);
- Continued expansion of Park & Ride facilities at the Gallery @ South DeKalb (MARTA / GRTA) ; and
- Investments in multi-use trails along South River and Shoal Creek greenways.

Finally, long range transportation planning has focused on the following improvements:

- Bus Rapid Transit Service along I-20, including a transit center at the Gallery @ South DeKalb (RTP).

In an attempt to succinctly present a snapshot of the existing and emerging transportation conditions, the following problem statement, issues, opportunities, and challenges have been identified and must be addressed as the LCI planning effort moves forward.

Problem Statement:

- Improve the transportation network by providing more bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.
- Prepare for future BRT station at the Mall.
- Ensure that road projects funded by programmed year.

Major transportation issues include:

- A need for "transparent" transportation planning (i.e. readily accessible public information about plans/programs)
- Image, identity and character of the arterial streets
- Large block configuration that is auto oriented and not pedestrian friendly.
- Street network and connectivity within the community is limited, especially east west connectivity in the Study Area
- Traffic congestion and vehicular circulation, especially adequacy and coordination of traffic signal controls at major intersections
- Pedestrian environment; mobility, connectivity, safety and experience – streetscape, sidewalks, cross walks, plazas, lighting, signage, street furniture and art work
- Limited public access to the greenways, creeks

The major transportation opportunities are;

- Improve corridor mobility and walkability with programmed projects
- Create the foundation for transit development
- Provide for a safe pedestrian experience
- Good access to the interstate system
- Reconstitute the block and street network, especially at the activity center in and around the Mall
- Multi-use trail system to connect community elements and uses.
- Create a cohesive street image with streetscape, architectural controls, lighting, street furniture, sidewalks, and art work.

Challenges

- Can lack of East/West connections be addressed?
- What new ways exist to link existing large destinations (church community centers, college, Arts Center, Mall)?
- Can MARTA stops be improved so they are more inviting and safer?

B-4. Market Analysis and Comparable Market Indicators

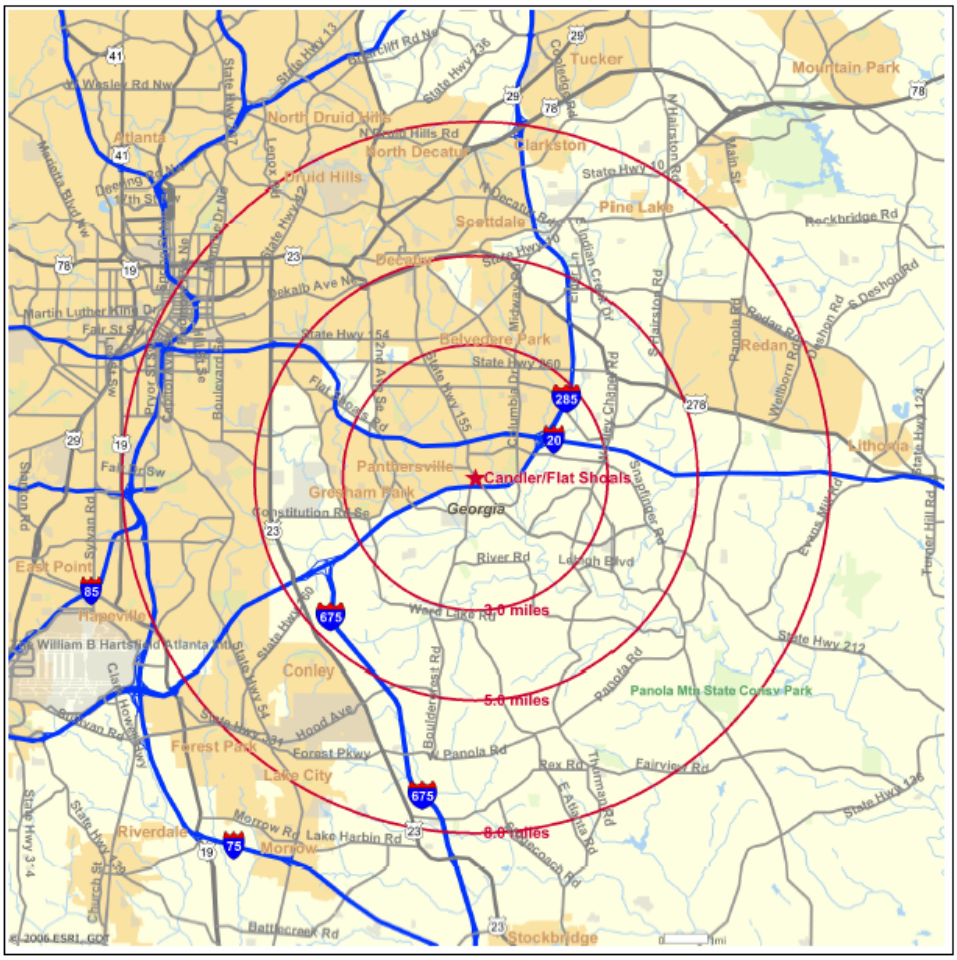
Market Area Definition

Three basic geographic areas are relevant to a market analysis. The first is the clearly defined Candler-Flat Shoals "Study Area" itself, shown below. The second and third are the two "Market Areas."

Study Area

For purposes of assessing the commercial (retail, services, office) potential of the Study Area, the primary focus is on its two "Market Areas," which are its "Primary Market Area" and "Secondary Market Area." The Primary Market Area approximates a ring with a 3-mile radius centered at the SR 155 / Panthersville Road intersection (the innermost ring on the map below).

The Secondary Market Area is defined as the area within a 5-mile ring (the middle ring as shown on the map below) centered on that same intersection. The 8-mile outer-most ring can be useful in analyzing the potential market for major destination retail but has not been incorporated into this analysis. Including it would artificially inflate the size of the demand. However, it is useful to realize how wide an overall area this LCI community could draw from with the appropriate type and amount of retail. The market areas also reflect both the potential market and the competitive market areas for residential products.



Market Area

This Market Analysis focuses primarily on population, household, income and other basic demographic data within the "Primary Market Area" (within the 3-mile distance from the intersection) while the retail/commercial demand analysis is based on both the Primary and Secondary Market Areas. Based on comparisons of basic demographic and income data from the Study Area itself and the 3-mile ring Primary Market Area, the Primary Market Area generally reflects the residential population within the smaller Study Area. Moreover, both current conditions and projected new developments – private and public – within the Study Area itself will be generated from the slightly larger Primary Market Area, and those Study Area developments will certainly impact the surrounding Primary Market Area. For these reasons, we have focused on the Primary Market Area in assessing the demographic and income trends in the Study Area.

As stated above, demographic and income data assessments have also taken into account both census data and local/regional projections from the 8-mile ring outer market area.

Demographics & Socio-Economic Profile

Population & Household Growth

Suburban DeKalb County, which includes those neighborhoods just inside I-285 often referred to as "first generation suburbs," grew and thrived in the decades between 1970 and 1990. Accompanying residential development, a cluster of office, commercial and retail development sprang up along the crescent of I-285. By the mid-1990s, some of these neighborhoods had begun to be eclipsed by development further outside the perimeter. Lower land prices and abundant land created an attractive destination for homebuilders and homebuyers alike.

While these older neighborhoods retained their appeal, as affordable, established and stable communities, they experienced the impacts of transition: declining population and unstable property values, loss of businesses and decline in retail investment.

POPULATION & HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

	3-mile radius	5-mile radius	8-mile radius
1990 Population	71,266	170,469	438,877
Households	22,271	55,853	159,631
Average Household Size	3.16	3.00	2.67
2000 Population	81,121	191,951	509,683
Households	26,630	65,382	184,944
Average Household Size	3.00	2.89	2.66
1990 - 2000 Average Annual Growth	986	2,148	7,081
2006 Population	87,573	209,651	566,206
Households	29,584	73,065	209,612
Average Household Size	2.92	2.82	2.61
2000 - 2006 Average Annual Growth	1,075	2,950	9,421
2011 Total Population	91,468	220,572	612,409
Households	31,134	77,280	228,231
Average Household Size	2.90	2.81	2.60
2006 - 2011 Average Annual Growth	779	2,184	9,241
2006 - 2011 Average Annual Growth Rate	0.9%	1.0%	1.6%

The primary Study Area, within a three-mile radius of the intersection of Candler and Flat Shoals Roads, currently has a population of 87,573. Population has increased by more than 20% in the past 25 years. Beyond the primary Study Area, at the secondary and tertiary market areas, population growth has been even more rapid: 23% and 29%, respectively. Household growth, a measure that reflects movement into an area as well as new household formation, has also increased at a strong pace. Total households have increased by one-third between 1990 and 2006. Although the period from 2000 –

2006 has been one of rapid growth, projections for population growth in the next five years slow slightly.

While the primary Study Area has added about 1,000 persons annually since 1990, in the next five years (assuming similar conditions) it will grow by less than 800 persons annually. And in the area within the eight-mile radius, where population grew by almost 9,500 persons annually between 2000 and 2006, an annual growth rate of about 9,200 is projected.

The Study Area is a large and growing portion of the total population of DeKalb County. Currently, the County's population is estimated at slightly more than 700,000 in 265,000 households. About 12.5% of the county's population resides in the primary Study Area; however, more than 80% of the countywide population is captured within an eight-mile radius. Projections suggest that as the county grows, much of that growth will be captured within the Study Area.

Racial Composition

In contrast to DeKalb County's racial balance, the Study Area is characterized by a high concentration of African American households. Within the primary Study Area, nearly 95% of the population is African American. That figure decreases some at the five and eight mile radius, but the racial dominance remains. Countywide, the African American population is 55% of the total. Since so much of the available undeveloped inventory of land is located in south DeKalb County, these patterns are unlikely to change soon.

2006 POPULATION BY RACE / ETHNICITY

	3-mile radius	5-mile radius	8-mile radius
Total	87,574	209,651	566,206
White Alone	3.3%	9.6%	22.0%
Black Alone	94.6%	87.2%	71.5%
American Indian, Asian, Pacific Island or Other	1.0%	1.8%	46.0%
Two or More Races	1.1%	1.4%	2.0%
Hispanic Origin	1.1%	2.1%	4.1%

Household Composition

One and two person households, which often include householders of all ages, including singles, young couples and empty nester couples, account for 45% of Study Area households but nearly 60% of DeKalb County households. The Study Area is characterized by relatively larger households, often including children living at home. Large households (five or more persons), while about 12% of the countywide population, are more than 16% of the Study Area population. These households support demand for owner-occupied housing as well as the expectation for community and civic services.

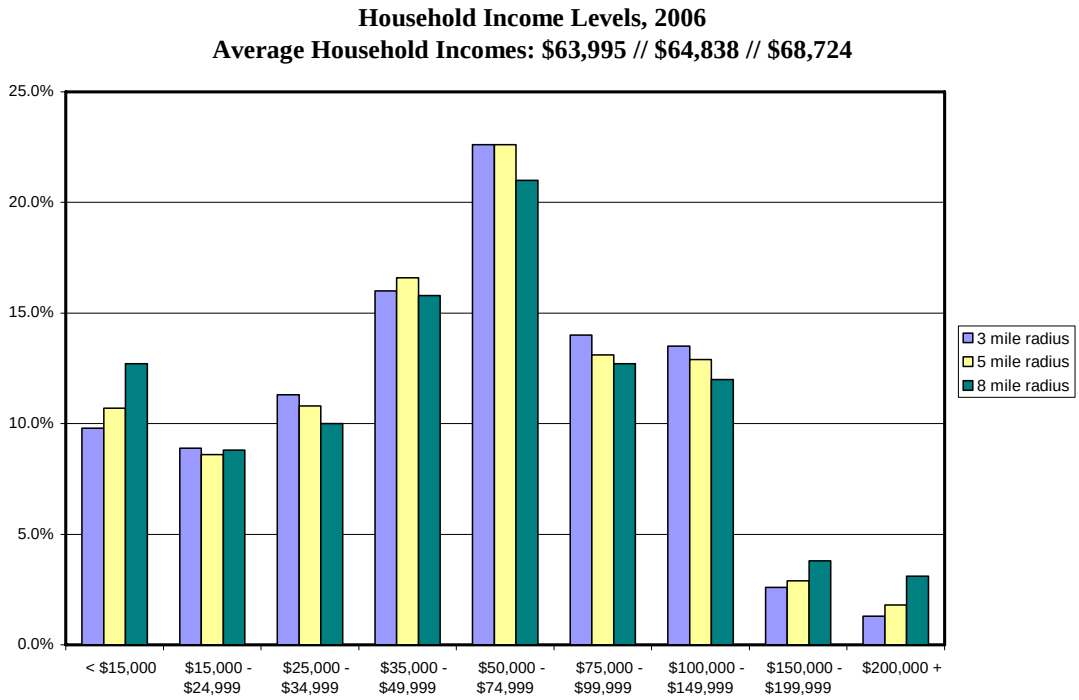
2000 HOUSEHOLDS BY SIZE

	3-mile radius	5-mile radius	8-mile radius
Total Households	26,630	65,382	184,944
1 - 2 Person Households	44.9%	48.8%	53.2%
3 - 4 Person Households	38.4%	35.9%	31.1%
5+ Person Households	16.7%	15.2%	12.6%

The average age in the primary Study Area is 34.6 years, comparable to the countywide average for DeKalb, but higher than either the secondary or tertiary Study Areas. Twenty-seven percent of Study Area residents are under age 18; only 7.6% are over age 65. In DeKalb County, 25% are under age 18 and the population over 65 is 8% of the total.

Household Income

Household income is one among several key measures of a community's wealth, along with per capita income and disposable income. Currently, the median household income in the Study Area is about $64,000, compared to slightly above $54,000 for the County. Household incomes by range closely match the countywide averages: nearly 20% of DeKalb County households report incomes above $100,000; similarly, about 18% of Study Area residents attain that level. Countywide, about 46% of households have incomes below $50,000, as do a comparable number of households within the Study Area.



A summary of income and wealth indicators appears below for the secondary market area, the population within a five mile radius of the Flat Shoals/Candler Roads intersection. Average home values are likely to increase, possibly by as much as 22% over the next five years. Despite this growth, the area is likely to remain a relatively affordable option within DeKalb County. Over the same period, incomes are likely to grow by 21%, which, when coupled with population growth, adds significantly to aggregate wealth within the Study Area. Disposable income, defined as income available to households after required obligations are met, will hold constant at 64% of household income. These figures suggest significant support for new housing at higher than current prices as well as ongoing support for a broad range of retailing.

Summary of Wealth Measures, at the 5 Mile Radius

	2006	2011	Incr %	Incr #	Incr/Yr
Population	209,651	220,572	5%	10,921	2,184
Households	73,065	77,280	6%	4,215	843
Avg Home Value	$ 158,487	$ 192,920	22%		
Per Capita Inc	$ 22,795	$ 27,680	21%		
Avg HH Inc	$ 64,838	$ 78,442	21%		
Med Disp Inc	$ 41,535	$ 50,250	21%		
Disp % of HH	64%	64%			

The projected net increase in households and the increases in affluence in those households within the combined Primary and Secondary markets of 4,215 over the next five years, averaging 843 per year, is the general foundation upon which the area's future retail development will be based. It should be noted, however, that the dual strengths of household formation and household affluence drops off only slightly in the Primary Market itself, which indicates the immediate Study Area itself should be increasingly appealing both as a residential location as well as a retail one.

Summary of Wealth Measures, at the 3 Mile Radius

	2006	2011	Incr %	Incr #	Incr/Yr
Population	87,573	91,468	4%	3,895	779
Households	29,584	31,134	5%	1,550	310
Avg Home Value	$ 142,916	$ 172,824	21%		
Per Capita Inc	$ 21,712	$ 26,013	20%		
Avg HH Inc	$ 63,995	$ 76,215	19%		
Med Disp Inc	$ 42,046	$ 50,075	19%		
Disp % of HH	66%	66%			

Land Development Market Assessment

Location

The Study Area enjoys the lower density, neighborhood scale of development appropriate to its age and function as a suburban alternative to downtown Atlanta. There is little evidence of infill development, as new (residential) development has occurred on undeveloped sites to the south and east. Most neighborhoods consist of traditional single family homes on the curving streets associated with subdivision design of this era. Services, retailing and institutional uses such as churches, schools and libraries are comfortably interspersed among residential areas. Multifamily housing is limited in the Study Area, and accounts for about 15% of total housing inventory.

The Study Area is well-situated and easily links commuters to employment centers throughout the metro area. Convenient to both I-20 and I-285, and served by MARTA, the Study Area enjoys a strategic location that to date has not been fully exploited for

commercial or business uses. The Gallery at South DeKalb forms an unofficial "town center" with a variety of retail, commercial, and medical and business services located conveniently nearby. Candler Road, the Study Area's primary north-south connector, effectively links the South DeKalb neighborhoods to the Memorial Drive corridor and then into downtown Decatur.

The potential for transformation in the Study Area is a combination of multiple forces: the community's vision for itself, market factors and the willingness of businesses and investors to subscribe to and support that vision. County officials can help accelerate changes in the Study Area by offering incentives and strong, targeted marketing efforts to attract more and complementary development in the Study Area.

Residential Trends

The large inventory of traditional single family homes in the Study Area has contributed to a stable and steady market for home sales. Although homes are, on average, older than in competing areas, modest price appreciation makes the Study Area an affordable option for first-time and move-up buyers. Demographics show that the Study Area effectively attracts small and growing families who purchase and remain in the area over a long period of time. Prices of both new and resale homes are well below the averages in neighboring areas, enhancing the area's appeal. This fact, coupled with the volume of sales activity, defines the Study Area's housing market.

Housing Types

The Study Area's housing development boom peaked close to 30 years ago. Over half the existing housing stock was built in the 1970s: large brick ranch and two story traditional homes on wide lots; split level homes were added in the early 1980s. Less than 10% of existing homes have come online in the past decade. By contrast, more than 20% of DeKalb County's housing has been built since 1990.

Housing Tenure and Value

Close to two-thirds of Study Area residents are homeowners. There is a limited inventory of multifamily housing, most of which is contained in properties with fewer than 20 units.

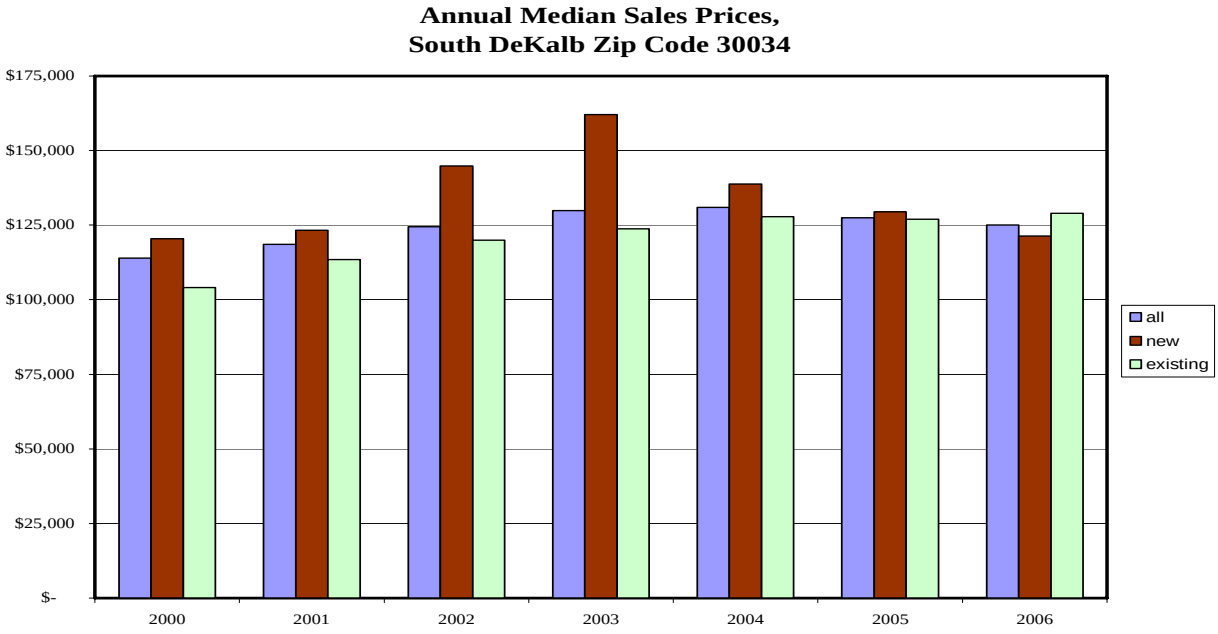
The average home value in Study Area was $129,000, and more than 68% of the home inventory is valued below $150,000. For the county, census estimated average home value of $163,000. The Study Area also has a sizeable inventory of homes priced under $100,000, increasingly rare price point in the metro Atlanta area.

VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOMES									
Value	3-mile radius			5-mile radius			8-mile radius		
	2000	2006 est	2011 proj	2000	2006 est	2011 proj	2000	2006 est	2011 proj
Total Homes	18,120	20,187	21,181	42,658	48,150	50,988	105,215	120,337	129,915
<$99,999	59.7%	21.6%	10.4%	53.2%	19.1%	9.7%	44.4%	17.7%	10.0%
$100,000-$149,999	31.7%	46.9%	35.9%	30.3%	41.7%	31.3%	29.5%	34.8%	25.6%
$150,000 - $199,999	6.5%	22.2%	30.8%	9.8%	21.3%	28.0%	11.2%	24.7%	25.2%
$200,000 - $299,999	1.6%	7.6%	19.3%	5.4%	12.3%	21.5%	8.6+6.4%	14.0%	21.9%
>$300,000	0.6%	1.7%	3.6%	1.6%	5.6%	9.5%	59.7%	9.7%	17.4%
Median	*$ 94,184*	*$ 129,044*	*$ 154,917*	*$ 97,910*	*$ 136,196*	*$ 163,146*	*$ 108,139*	*$ 146,277*	*$ 174,707*
Average	*$ 104,646*	*$ 142,916*	*$ 172,824*	*$ 115,382*	*$ 158,487*	*$ 192,920*	*$ 139,354*	*$ 190,648*	*$ 231,917*

New Construction & Sales

New and resale homes compete for buyers in the Study Area, as the gap in prices decreases. During the early 2000s, new home prices rose faster, even as fewer homes were sold. However in the past couple of years, prices for existing homes began to equal and then slightly exceed average new home prices.

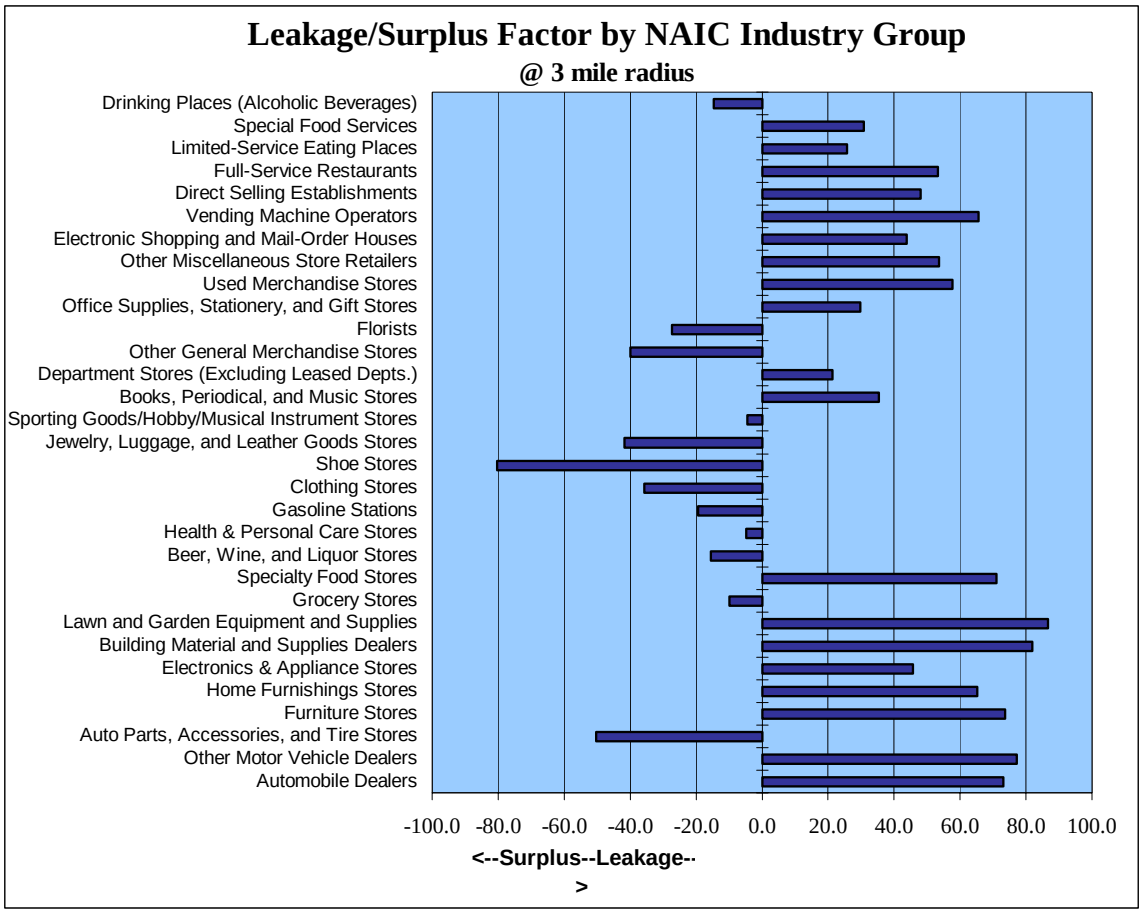
Last year, about 11% of DeKalb County new home sales were captured in the Study Area. The Study Area also accounted for more than 5% of existing home sales, which totaled over 10,000 sales countywide.



Retail Market Demand

While the Study Area enjoys robust retailing activity, the analysis suggests that there is potential for increased capture of sales from two sources: local residents who have increasing levels of disposable income and non-residents who already recognize the area as a retail center.

Currently, existing retail offerings serve the area in limited and fairly predictable ways: clothing and apparel, drinking (but not eating) establishments, auto parts and accessories are the categories that dominate the retail mix. However, as the table below indicates, there is excess demand for retail in a number of other potentially lucrative areas. This excess demand is known as “leakage” in that money that would be spent by an area’s residents on retail goods and services if they were available in the area itself is spent outside the area in communities where such retail does exist – i.e. consumer dollars “leak” out of a community due to a lack of retail supply.



A lack of retail sufficient to meet demand within the Primary Market is apparent in the following categories that have potential as stores within the community (as opposed to "Vending Machine Operators," auto dealers, and other non-store categories):

- Special Food Services
- Limited-Service Eating Places
- Full-Service Restaurants
- Specialty Food Stores
- Miscellaneous Retail Stores
- Office Supply Stores
- Books, Periodical and Music Stores

- Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies
- Building Material and Supplies
- Electronics and Appliance Stores
- Home Furnishings Stores
- Furniture Stores

Incorporating industry standards regarding sales per square foot of retail space, total retail space per store and anticipated share-of-market that the Study Area itself can "capture" of the total Primary, Secondary and combined markets "leakage" sales that could be expected to remain in the community if retail supply were available, one can project the following just for the major retail categories included in the table below:

PRIMARY MARKET AREA - TOTAL CURRENT UNMET RETAIL DEMAND								
		Total Area	Area Share of Sales					
	Category - Retail	Sales Leakage	Share	Additional Spending	Sales Per SF	Additional SF	SF Per Store	Stores
1	Full-service Restaurants	$ 100,003,024	53%	$ 53,373,853	$ 400	133,435	5,000	27
2	Limited-service Eating	59,441,762	64%	38,307,468	400	95,769	2,500	38
3	Bldg Material, Lawn, Garden	40,113,621	70%	28,089,896	300	93,633	6,000	16
4	HH Furnishings/Equipment	36,726,025	50%	18,363,013	300	61,210	4,500	14
5	Electronics & Appliances	26,729,914	50%	13,364,957	300	44,550	2,500	18
6	Special/Specialty Foods	19,848,235	57%	11,350,920	400	28,377	2,000	14
7	Dept. Stores	18,288,500	50%	9,144,250	300	30,481	20,000	2
8	Books, Periodicals, Music	8,473,306	56%	4,745,487	300	15,818	5,000	3
9	Office Supply/Stationary	6,916,824	59%	4,074,427	300	13,581	2,500	5
10	Used/Antiques	2,285,884	65%	1,485,825	300	4,953	5,000	1
	RETAIL TOTALS	$ 318,827,095	**57%**	$ 182,300,094	$ 349	521,807	3,800	137

- Over $182 million in additional spending within the community if retail offerings were available
- Support in the community for over 521,000 square feet of additional retail space

- As many as 27 full-service restaurants (yellow)
- As many as 137 total new retail stores, or the improvement and/or expansion of existing stores to capture these "leaked" consumer dollars

Of particular significance is the amount of unmet retail demand in the area within categories of retail that the Study Area community appears to consider desirable:

- Restaurants
- Specialty Foods
- Books, Periodicals
- Electronics, Computers
- Office Supplies
- Building Materials, Lawn and Garden Supplies
- Household Furnishings and Equipment

The first five (restaurants plus those indicated in tan above) categories listed above not only reflect the often-expressed desire by community residents for higher-quality eating establishments, but also the types of non-food preferences that reflect an increasingly-affluent, educated and profession consumer profile. The last two categories (indicated on the table in light blue) are strong indicators of home ownership versus renters.

Given the extent to which there is a lack of area retail in these categories, as indicated by the degree of leakage of the area's disposal income, one must conclude that retail developers, **retail brokers and retailers themselves have misread (or completely ignored) the retail potential of this market area and the changing demographics and income levels found within it**.

Existing unmet demand could support an estimated one-half million square feet of retail space. The potential for new stores and the creation of new "urban village" type centers, as an alternative to one dimensional strip centers, is apparent and could serve to attract additional spending from outside the primary market area. Detailed calculations relating to the current and projected demand for retail space, types of retail that the area can support and assumptions regarding sales volume and sizes of stores are contained in the "Retail Projections" section below.

Retail Projections

In order to determine the amount of retail goods and services that the LCI community can support based on fundamental population, household and income characteristics – all based on census data – as well as consumer spending preferences, disposal income and supply-demand ratios, one must determine (1) the amount of unmet retail demand that currently exists in the community's market area and (2) the amount of new demand that can be anticipated to occur due entirely to increases in households and household expenditures in certain categories of retail goods and services.

"Share" or share of market that the Primary Market Area can be expected to capture depends primarily on the extent to which convenience is considered a major factor in the purchase decision. Price is a major factor, also. The higher-priced the item, the farther a consumer will go to purchase that item (or collection of items). The shares incorporated below are generally accepted industry measures.

Current Unmet Retail Demand

The categories of retail that are particularly relevant to the Study Area include those that exhibit a significant excess of demand over supply, resulting in a "leakage" of residents' consumer spending out of the community.

PRIMARY MARKET AREA - CURRENT UNMET RETAIL DEMAND							
	Total Area	Area Share of Sales					
Category - Retail	Sales Leakage	Share	Additional Spending	Sales Per SF	Additional SF	SF Per Store	Stores
Electronics & Appliances	$ 10,033,204	50%	$ 5,016,602	$ 300	16,722	2,500	7
Full-service Restaurants	33,723,405	60%	20,234,043	400	50,585	5,000	10
Limited-service Eating	21,466,468	90%	19,319,821	400	48,300	2,500	19
Special/Specialty Foods	7,134,011	70%	4,993,808	400	12,485	2,000	6
HH Furnishings/Equipment	15,640,633	50%	7,820,317	300	26,068	4,500	6
Office Supply/Stationary	2,053,384	80%	1,642,707	300	5,476	2,500	2
Bldg Material, Lawn, Garden	26,776,951	80%	21,421,561	300	71,405	6,000	12
Books, Periodicals, Music	3,392,226	65%	2,204,947	300	7,350	5,000	1
Dept. Stores	13,241,583	50%	6,620,792	300	22,069	20,000	1
Used/Antiques	2,285,884	65%	1,485,825	300	4,953	5,000	1
RETAIL TOTALS	$ 135,747,749	67%	$ 90,760,421	$ 342	265,412	4,033	66

Industry standards are also used in the sales-per-square-foot and square-feet-per-store assumptions. *The Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers*, updated annually, is the industry standard and a good source of these basic measures. Applying these measures to the leakage amounts from the Primary Market Area alone results in additional sales of $91 million remaining in the area if retail supply were in balance with demand. This would support approximately 265,000 square feet of additional retail stores, or approximately 66 stores including 10 full-service restaurants.

The community may also anticipate capturing retail demand from the Secondary Market Area, which has approximately $316 million in excess retail demand. The amounts indicated in the table below reflect what the entire Secondary Market Area should be able to support with such leakage: an additional $251 million in spending, generating a need for approximately 715,000 square feet of new retail or the equivalent of almost 200 stores.

SECONDARY MARKET AREA - CURRENT UNMET RETAIL DEMAND							
	Total Area	Area Share of Sales					
Category - Retail	Sales Leakage	Share	Additional Spending	Sales Per SF	Additional SF	SF Per Store	Stores
Electronics & Appliances	$ 26,729,914	65%	$ 17,374,444	$ 300	57,915	2,500	23
Full-service Restaurants	100,003,024	75%	75,002,268	400	187,506	5,000	38
Limited-service Eating	59,441,762	95%	56,469,674	400	141,174	2,500	56
Special/Specialty Foods	19,848,235	85%	16,871,000	400	42,177	2,000	21
HH Furnishings/Equipment	36,726,025	65%	23,871,916	300	79,573	4,500	18
Office Supply/Stationary	6,916,824	90%	6,225,142	300	20,750	2,500	8
Bldg Material, Lawn, Garden	40,113,621	90%	36,102,259	300	120,341	6,000	20
Books, Periodicals, Music	8,473,306	90%	7,625,975	300	25,420	5,000	5
Dept. Stores	18,288,500	65%	11,887,525	300	39,625	20,000	2
Used/Antiques	-	65%	-	300	-	5,000	-
STORE RETAIL TOTALS	$ 316,541,211	79%	$ 251,430,203	$ 352	714,482	3,734	191

Since the Primary Market is contained within the Secondary Market, one needs to separate the two, then estimate the amount of the balance of the Secondary Market excess retail demand that the Primary Market – basically the Study Area community – could be expected to attract: 50% in all cases based primarily on distance and/or drive-time.

PRIMARY MARKET SHARE OF SECONDARY MARKET BALANCE OF UNMET RETAIL DEMAND							
	Market	Area Share of Sales					
Category - Retail	Sales Leakage	Share	Additional Spending	Sales Per SF	Additional SF	SF Per Store	Stores
Electronics & Appliances	$ 16,696,710	50%	$ 8,348,355	$ 300	27,828	2,500	11
Full-service Restaurants	66,279,619	50%	33,139,810	400	82,850	5,000	17
Limited-service Eating	37,975,294	50%	18,987,647	400	47,469	2,500	19
Special/Specialty Foods	12,714,224	50%	6,357,112	400	15,893	2,000	8
HH Furnishings/Equipment	21,085,392	50%	10,542,696	300	35,142	4,500	8
Office Supply/Stationary	4,863,440	50%	2,431,720	300	8,106	2,500	3
Bldg Material, Lawn, Garden	13,336,670	50%	6,668,335	300	22,228	6,000	4
Books, Periodicals, Music	5,081,080	50%	2,540,540	300	8,468	5,000	2
Dept. Stores	5,046,917	50%	2,523,459	300	8,412	20,000	0
Used/Antiques	-	50%	-	300	-	5,000	-
RETAIL TOTALS	$ 183,079,346	50%	$ 91,539,673	$ 357	256,395	3,586	72

The community could attract an additional $92 million from the balance of demand found in the Secondary Market Area. This would support approximately 256,000 square feet of additional retail or approximately 72 stores.

PRIMARY MARKET AREA - TOTAL CURRENT UNMET RETAIL DEMAND								
		Total Area	Area Share of Sales					
	Category - Retail	Sales Leakage	Share	Additional Spending	Sales Per SF	Additional SF	SF Per Store	Stores
1	Full-service Restaurants	$ 100,003,024	53%	$ 53,373,853	$ 400	133,435	5,000	27
2	Limited-service Eating	59,441,762	64%	38,307,468	400	95,769	2,500	38
3	Bldg Material, Lawn, Garden	40,113,621	70%	28,089,896	300	93,633	6,000	16
4	HH Furnishings/Equipment	36,726,025	50%	18,363,013	300	61,210	4,500	14
5	Electronics & Appliances	26,729,914	50%	13,364,957	300	44,550	2,500	18
6	Special/Specialty Foods	19,848,235	57%	11,350,920	400	28,377	2,000	14
7	Dept. Stores	18,288,500	50%	9,144,250	300	30,481	20,000	2
8	Books, Periodicals, Music	8,473,306	56%	4,745,487	300	15,818	5,000	3
9	Office Supply/Stationary	6,916,824	59%	4,074,427	300	13,581	2,500	5
10	Used/Antiques	2,285,884	65%	1,485,825	300	4,953	5,000	1
	RETAIL TOTALS	$ 318,827,095	57%	$ 182,300,094	$ 349	521,807	3,800	137

Combining these two sources of unmet retail demand – the Primary and Secondary market areas – the Study Area could support an additional **521,800 square feet of retail** today, which could translate into 137 stores including 27 full-service restaurants. **No "Big Box" or "Junior Box" stores are assumed in this analysis**. If they were to be incorporated into the retail mix within the community, the total number of stores could drop significantly but would have no impact on full-service restaurants or limited-service eateries.

Anticipated New Retail Demand

A forward looking projection of retail demand, derived from population growth and the increase in disposable income among new and existing households, could generate demand for more than one million square feet of retail space. If designed as a "destination," for a combination of dining, drinking, retail and entertainment, these new facilities would result in an experience not readily available in the Study Area. There are two major malls in south DeKalb County, the Gallery at South DeKalb and Stonecrest Mall, which offer the range of entertainment, shopping and dining. The alternatives, however, are limited to older strip centers on the major corridors. A fresh, new approach, including both design and tenants not widely represented in the Study Area, could generate and capture a significant portion of consumer loyalty and disposable income.

Growth Projections

Projected increases in population and households within the Primary Market Area, which approximates the Study Area, are particularly relevant to the retail demand analysis, followed by demand in the balance of the Secondary Market. However, a comparison of income-related measures among the Study Area/Primary Market Area and Secondary Market Area produces a positive indication of the consumer strength within the Study Area – the community itself: with respect to all income-related measures, the community is more affluent than either the overall Secondary market area.

PRIMARY MARKET AREA					
	2006	2011	Incr %	Incr #	Incr/Yr
Population	87,573	91,468	4%	3,895	779
Households	29,584	31,134	5%	1,550	310
Avg Home Value	$ 142,916	$ 172,824	21%		
Per Capita Inc	$ 21,712	$ 26,013	20%		
Avg HH Inc	$ 63,995	$ 76,215	19%		
Med Disp Inc	$ 42,046	$ 50,075	19%		
Disp % of HH	66%	66%			

SECONDARY MARKET AREA					
	2006	2011	Incr %	Incr #	Incr/Yr
Population	209,651	220,572	5%	10,921	2,184
Households	73,065	77,280	6%	4,215	843
Avg Home Value	$ 158,487	$ 192,920	22%		
Per Capita Inc	$ 22,795	$ 27,680	21%		
Avg HH Inc	$ 64,838	$ 78,442	21%		
Med Disp Inc	$ 41,535	$ 50,250	21%		
Disp % of HH	64%	64%			

The net additional consumer spending over the next five years (using a 2006 base, the latest available from industry databases) can be determined by incorporating census-based population, household, and per-household spending in selected retail categories into a simple mathematical equation: the projected net increase in household expenditures within major retail categories multiplied by the net increase in households between 2006 and 2011.

PRIMARY MARKET AREA					
		2006 Retail Spending		2011 Retail Spending	
Category - Retail	SPI	Per HH	Total	Per HH	Total
Apparel & Accessories	68	$ 1,855	$ 54,866,191	$ 2,209	$ 68,766,551
Computers & Accessories	92	235	6,963,186	280	8,727,311
Food at Home	90	4,442	131,409,761	5,290	164,702,452
Food Away from Home	92	3,084	91,244,156	3,673	114,360,882
HH Furnishings/Equipment	79	1,751	51,789,455	2,085	64,910,324
TV/Video/Sound Equipment	92	1,002	29,650,268	1,194	37,162,170
Entertainment/Recreation	89	2,957	87,485,509	3,522	109,649,981
RETAIL TOTALS		$ 12,369	$ 365,923,017	$ 14,731	$ 458,629,690
All Retail Goods	86	$ 22,456	$ 664,324,991	$ 26,743	$ 832,631,867

Applying the same industry measures regarding sales and size of stores as were applied in the analysis of current unmet retail demand to the retail demand projections, one produces the net new retail demand over the next five years as reflected in the following tables. That demand is sufficient to support an additional **205,500 square feet of retail**.

PRIMARY MARKET AREA							
	Total Area	Area Share of Sales					
Category - Retail	Additional Spending	Share	Additional Spending	Sales Per SF	Additional SF	SF Per Store	Stores
Apparel & Accessories	$ 13,900,361	**65%**	$ 9,035,235	$ 300	30,117	2,500	12
Computers & Accessories	1,764,125	**50%**	882,062	300	2,940	1,500	2
Food at Home	33,292,691	**95%**	31,628,056	400	79,070	50,000	2
Food Away from Home	23,116,726	**80%**	18,493,381	400	46,233	3,000	15
HH Furnishings/Equipment	13,120,869	**65%**	8,528,565	300	28,429	4,500	6
TV/Video/Sound Equipment	7,511,902	**75%**	5,633,926	300	18,780	2,500	8
Entertainment/Recreation	22,164,472	**75%**	16,623,354	300	55,411	2,500	22
RETAIL TOTALS	$ 92,706,673	**80%**	$ 74,201,225	$ 361	205,570	4,586	45
All Retail Goods	$ 168,306,875	**80%**	$ 134,710,652	$ 361	373,207	4,586	81

Applying these measures to the Secondary Market Area yields the following:

SECONDARY MARKET AREA					
		2006 Retail Spending		2011 Retail Spending	
Category - Retail	SPI	Per HH	Total	Per HH	Total
Apparel & Accessories	69	$ 1,892	$ 138,218,522	$ 2,289	$ 176,865,455
Computers & Accessories	94	241	17,593,321	291	22,512,546
Food at Home	92	4,524	330,523,410	5,473	422,940,230
Food Away from Home	94	3,144	229,746,317	3,804	293,985,107
HH Furnishings/Equipment	80	1,772	129,440,493	2,143	165,633,024
TV/Video/Sound Equipment	93	1,021	74,577,446	1,235	95,429,858
Entertainment/Rec - Stores	90	2,991	218,565,910	3,619	279,678,576
RETAIL TOTALS		$15,584	$1,138,665,418	$18,854	$1,457,044,796
All Retail Goods	87	$22,736	$1,661,187,574	$27,506	$2,125,668,058

Overall Secondary Market Area demand is sufficient to support over **723,000 square feet of additional retail**.

SECONDARY MARKET AREA							
	Total Area Additional	Area Share of Sales					
Category - Retail	Spending	Share	Additional Spending	Sales Per SF	Additional SF	SF Per Store	Stores
Apparel & Accessories	$ 38,646,934	**65%**	$ 25,120,507	$ 300	83,735	2,500	33
Computers & Accessories	4,919,224	**50%**	2,459,612	300	8,199	1,500	5
Food at Home	92,416,820	**95%**	87,795,979	400	219,490	50,000	4
Food Away from Home	64,238,790	**80%**	51,391,032	400	128,478	3,000	43
HH Furnishings/Equipment	36,192,531	**65%**	23,525,145	300	78,417	4,500	17
TV/Video/Sound Equipment	20,852,412	**75%**	15,639,309	300	52,131	2,500	21
Entertainment/Rec - Stores	61,112,665	**75%**	45,834,499	300	152,782	20,000	8
RETAIL TOTALS	$ 318,379,377	**79%**	$ 251,766,084	$ 348	723,231	5,475	132
All Retail Goods	$ 464,480,485	**79%**	$ 367,299,018	$ 348	1,055,115	5,475	193

Total Potential Retail Demand

Combining current and projected demand in both the Primary and Secondary market areas yields the following overall demand for retail square footage that could reasonably be expected to locate within the Study Area:

POTENTIAL NEW RETAIL FROM CURRENT UNMET DEMAND			
Secondary Market Area		714,482	SF
Primary Market Area		**265,412**	SF
Into Primary Market Area from Secondary Market Area		**256,395**	SF
CURRENT UNMET RETAIL DEMAND IN PRIMARY AREA		**521,807**	**SF**

POTENTIAL NEW RETAIL FROM 5-YR GROWTH			
Secondary Market Area		723,231	SF
Primary Market Area		**205,570**	SF
Into Primary Market Area from Secondary Market Area		**388,246**	SF
RETAIL DEMAND FROM PRIMARY AREA GROWTH		**593,816**	**SF**

TOTAL PRIMARY MARKET AREA NEW RETAIL DEMAND			
From Current Unmet Demand		**521,807**	SF
From Primary & Secondary Market Area 5-year Growth		**593,816**	SF
TOTAL PRIMARY AREA NEW RETAIL DEMAND		**1,115,622**	**SF**

Types of Retail Supportable in the Market Area

PRIMARY MARKET AREA - TOTAL CURRENT UNMET RETAIL DEMAND								
		Total Area	Area Share of Sales					
	Category - Retail	Sales Leakage	Share	Additional Spending	Sales Per SF	Additional SF	SF Per Store	Stores
1	Full-service Restaurants	$ 100,003,024	53%	$ 53,373,853	$ 400	133,435	5,000	27
2	Limited-service Eating	59,441,762	64%	38,307,468	400	95,769	2,500	38
3	Bldg Material, Lawn, Garden	40,113,621	70%	28,089,896	300	93,633	6,000	16
4	HH Furnishings/Equipment	36,726,025	50%	18,363,013	300	61,210	4,500	14
5	Electronics & Appliances	26,729,914	50%	13,364,957	300	44,550	2,500	18
6	Special/Specialty Foods	19,848,235	57%	11,350,920	400	28,377	2,000	14
7	Dept. Stores	18,288,500	50%	9,144,250	300	30,481	20,000	2
8	Books, Periodicals, Music	8,473,306	56%	4,745,487	300	15,818	5,000	3
9	Office Supply/Stationary	6,916,824	59%	4,074,427	300	13,581	2,500	5
10	Used/Antiques	2,285,884	65%	1,485,825	300	4,953	5,000	1
	RETAIL TOTALS	$ 318,827,095	**57%**	$ 182,300,094	$ 349	521,807	3,800	137

Indicators of Area Demand for Community-oriented Services

The amount of spending per household on several types of goods and services can provide a reasonable indication of the support for rental space for community-focused professional and business services such as legal, medical, insurance, real estate and financial services. The following tables show projected additional spending in the Primary and Secondary market areas over the next five years on these types of services.

PRIMARY MARKET AREA					
		2006 Services Spending		2011 Services Spending	
Category - Services	SPI	Per HH	Total	Per HH	Total
Education	121	$ 1,289	$ 38,123,126	$ 1,535	$ 47,781,628
Health Care	117	4,060	120,109,265	4,835	150,538,972
Investments	118	9,842	291,155,078	11,721	364,919,278
Travel	127	2,297	67,962,436	2,736	85,180,733
SERVICES TOTALS		$ 17,487	$ 517,349,904	$ 20,827	$ 648,420,611

PRIMARY MARKET AREA			
	Total Area Additional Spending	Area Share of Sales	
Category - Services		Share	Additional Spending
Education	$ 9,658,502	**20%**	$ 1,931,700
Health Care	30,429,707	**75%**	22,822,281
Investments	73,764,200	**20%**	14,752,840
Travel	17,218,297	**10%**	1,721,830
SERVICES TOTALS	$ 131,070,706	**31%**	$ 41,228,651

SECONDARY MARKET AREA					
		2006 Services Spending		2011 Services Spending	
Category - Services	SPI	Per HH	Total	Per HH	Total
Education	94	$ 1,060	$ 77,437,210	$ 1,282	$ 99,089,233
Health Care	88	3,243	236,926,414	3,923	303,172,814
Investments	89	4,157	303,767,007	5,030	388,702,537
Travel	90	1,619	118,257,894	1,958	151,323,687
SERVICES TOTALS		$ 10,079	$ 736,388,525	$ 12,193	$ 942,288,271

SECONDARY MARKET AREA			
	Total Area Additional Spending	Area Share of Sales	
Category - Services		Share	Additional Spending
Education	$ 21,652,024	**20%**	$ 4,330,405
Health Care	66,246,400	**75%**	49,684,800
Investments	84,935,530	**20%**	16,987,106
Travel	33,065,793	**10%**	3,306,579
SERVICES TOTALS	$ 205,899,746	**36%**	$ 74,308,890

While there are industry measures relating to the average size of offices that these types of services occupy in various types of shopping centers, no attempt has been made to determine the additional office space that might be required based on these projections. There are too many location and patronage criteria and factors for such a determination. However, a generally accepted measure of community-serving office space is 15 square feet per household. Applying this measure to the increase in households in the Primary Market Area yields a net demand of 33,570 square feet. However, the projected expenditures shown above with respect to education, health care, investments and travel indicate a potentially much larger demand for such office space.

Demand Summary

Demand for new households, retail space and community-serving office space over the next five years, as well as unmet demand for retail space currently, is summarized as follows:

New Households: 5 yrs	**1,550**	**Units**
Current Unmet Retail Demand	**521,807**	**SF**
Projected Retail Demand: 5 yrs	**593,816**	**SF**
Total Retail Demand	**1,115,622**	**SF**
Local-serving Office Demand: 5 yrs	**33,570**	**SF**

Comparative Analysis of Retail Nodes in South Metro Area

The Study Team reviewed demographic and consumer spending data on selected south metro area neighborhoods and compared them with the LCI Study Area to determine whether development and spending patterns in these selected neighborhoods could provide any additional insights as to the potential for the LCI Study Area. These areas were chosen based on their comparability to the Study Area in terms of recent demographics, expansion of the retail sector (and anticipated growth in consumer spending), and general patterns of consumer spending in selected categories.

Population Growth	1990	2000	Avg. Annual Growth 1990 - 2000	2006	Avg. Annual Growth 2000 - 2006	2011	Avg. Annual Growth 2006 - 2011
Moreland Ave., Atlanta	337,916	357,318	1,940	384,154	4,473	416,561	6,481
Cascade Rd., Atlanta	244,129	258,084	1,396	283,024	4,157	317,748	6,945
Stonecrest, DeKalb	77,056	106,428	2,937	129,791	3,894	144,147	2,871
LCI Study Area	***170,469***	***191,951***	***2,148***	***209,651***	***2,950***	***220,572***	***2,184***
Downtown Decatur	257,094	281,007	2,391	294,790	2,297	308,631	2,768
Camp Creek Pkwy., Atlanta	132,987	140,650	766	151,199	1,758	168,891	3,538
Ellenwood, Clayton Co.	75,956	86,005	1,005	93,671	1,278	100,514	1,369

Observations from the comparison within this group include the following.

- Study Area is at the mid-point among this group in terms of total population and annual population growth.
- Within this comparison group, the highest population growth in this decade occurred in areas of new retail and residential development, namely: Moreland Avenue/Little Five Points and Cascade Road corridor in southwest Atlanta.

- Similarly, fastest near term population growth among these neighborhoods is projected at areas of current new development, such as Moreland Avenue/Little Five Points, Cascade Road, and Camp Creek Parkway.

A comparison of these communities with respect to median household income indicates the following:

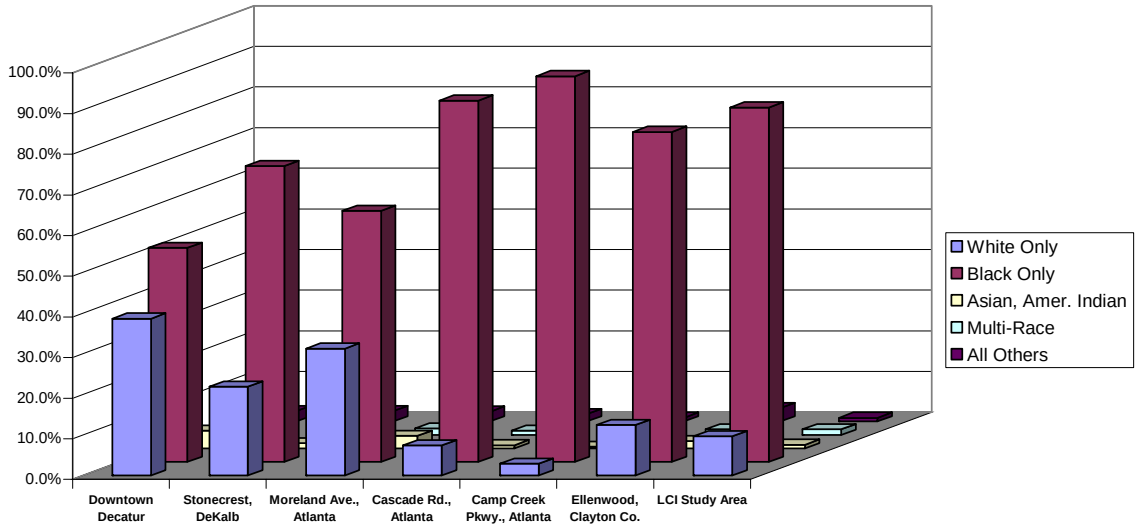
Median HH Income	2000	2006	2011	% African American pop.
Stonecrest, DeKalb	$46,750	$57,039	$66,748	72.8%
Downtown Decatur	$42,727	$54,022	$65,894	52.7%
LCI Study Area	***$41,896***	***$52,365***	***$62,582***	***87.2%***
Moreland Ave., Atlanta	$34,999	$44,823	$54,634	61.8%
Ellenwood, Clayton Co.	$35,010	$42,735	$49,425	81.2%
Camp Creek Pkwy., Atlanta	$30,672	$37,508	$44,198	94.9%
Cascade Rd., Atlanta	$29,200	$36,090	$42,548	88.9%

- The Study Area trails only the Stonecrest and (barely) Downtown Decatur communities in median household income
- The Study Area has significantly higher income than Moreland Avenue (with its new Edgewood Shopping District), Ellenwood (in northeast Clayton County, with approximately 500,000 square feet of WalMart-anchored retail under construction), Camp Creek Parkway (with over 1 million square feet of retail in its Camp Creek Marketplace) and Cascade Road at I-285, with almost 800,000 square feet of retail).

A comparison of these communities with respect to racial diversity indicates the following:

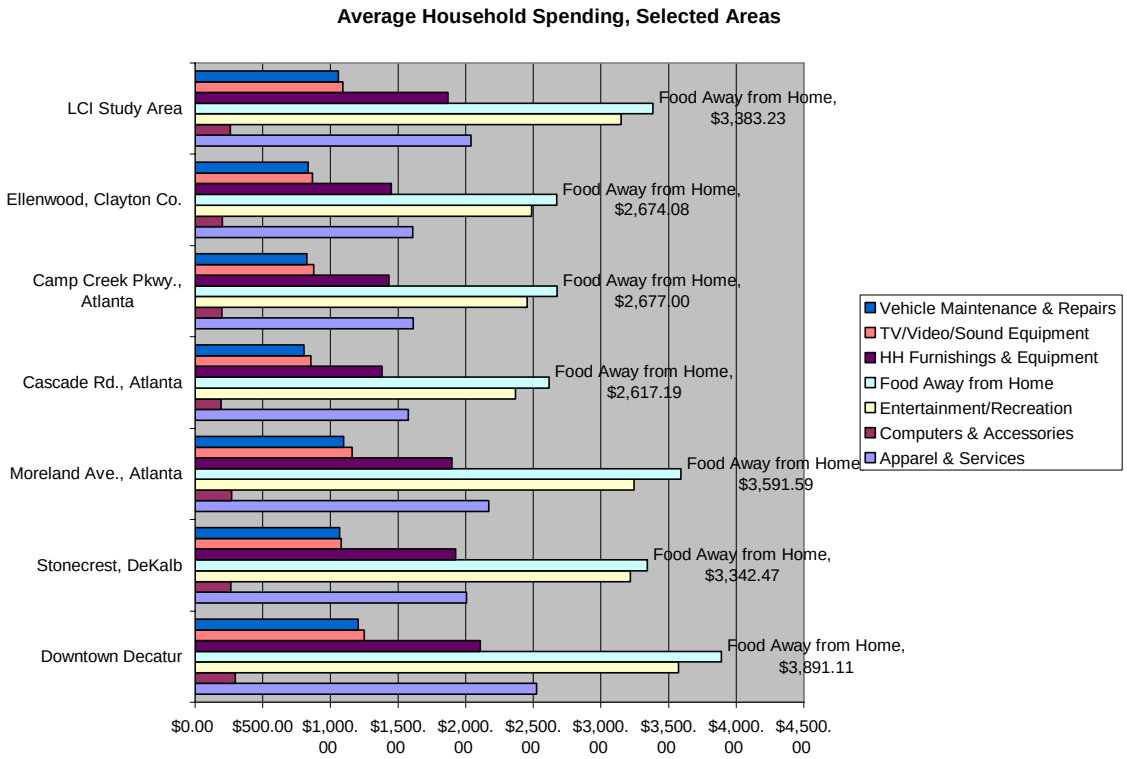
- While all these selected areas have majority black residents, ranging from 52% to 95%, higher average household incomes are found in areas with lowest black majority.
- Similarly, projected growth in household income among this group is greater in more racially balanced areas.

Racial Mix of Selected Areas



A comparison of these communities with respect to household spending indicates the following:

- Household spending patterns within this group of neighborhoods, for a selected basket of consumer goods and services, is consistent with levels of household incomes. **Households in the LCI Study Area outspend comparable areas such as Camp Creek and Cascade**, where median household incomes are lower.



- "Food Away from Home" was the largest expenditure category, among those examined, for these neighborhoods. This includes food purchased and consumed outside the home.
- "Entertainment & Recreation" the second leading category, may include admission fees to sporting and cultural events, participation or lessons, as well as recreational equipment.

- Computer and equipment had the lowest average household spending among all compared neighborhood areas.
- Spending in key retail categories such as food away from home, entertainment, household furnishings and apparel indicates that the Study Area compares favorably with Decatur, Stonecrest and Moreland Avenue (Inman Park-Little Five Points).
- Again, **LCI Study Area expenditures are significantly higher than Ellenwood, Camp Creek and Cascade – all of which have or will soon have major retail offerings**.

SECTION C. MASTER PLAN

This section includes:

- Plan Development
- Concept Plan and Master plans
- Development Plan
- Transportation Plan
- Transportation Design Illustrations
- Design Principles
- Design Challenges

C-1. Plan Development

The concept plan, with its associated subarea master plans, was developed through a four step process. First, the key issues were identified through visioning exercises and analysis. Second, the needs, preferences and desires of the community and the county were determined by the stakeholder interviews, character preference survey, and the established goals for the study. Third, the market demand and potential were determined through the market analysis. And finally, fourth, a public design workshop was conducted to solicit the community vision for the Study Area in order to develop the Plan. The project team combined the results of this four-step process and prepared the final concept plan, informing it with transportation solutions that meshed with community objectives.

Concept Plan Principles

The concept plan for the Study Area is based on the vision and goals of the community: residents, businesses, property owners, stakeholders, county and other civic, religious and social institutions. The concept plan incorporates several major initiatives. These initiatives are designed to leverage the resources of the Study Area, encourage development and redevelopment, and promote a variety of land uses and activities and create a pedestrian friendly environment. These initiatives diverge from the current mode of development but they are designed to promote a vibrant, sustainable community with unique identity and sense of place.

The following are key goals and principles that guide the Concept Plan:

- Create a Town Center around the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall and the two strip shopping malls (Rainbow Village and the South DeKalb Plaza).
- Redevelop the Gallery Mall, Rainbow Village, South DeKalb Plaza and other aging and obsolete retail along the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway corridor.
- Promote Town Center diversity of uses and activities: retail, office, entertainment, recreation, civic plaza, town green, entrance to Arts Center, and housing variety.
- Create a focal point for the community that creates a 'sense of place' for the community.
- Consolidate the retail and commercial activities along Candler Road and Flat Shoals Parkway in a walkable center.
- Make Candler Road/Flat Shoals Road more pedestrian friendly and enhance the visual quality and character of the corridor (parking, utilities, signage, streetscape and art work).
- Address the transportation issues along the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway corridor; ingress/egress, curb cuts, inter-connectivity of parcels, street grids, median cuts, transit integration and access management.
- Provide a good hierarchical street network that offers alternative ways for traffic to circulate, especially the east-west circulation within the Study Area.
- Create a "loop road" on north and south end of Town Center site that diverts traffic volume to an improved South Rainbow Drive and Ember Drive, allowing Rainbow Drive to be transformed from a major cut-through street to an entrance-and-interior street for the new Town Center project.
- Create a mixed use node around the intersection of Clifton Spring Road and Panthersville Road that would utilize the vacant land and also leverage the location of Perimeter College, DeKalb Health Center, Georgia Bureau of Investigation and Perimeter East Industrial Park.
- Create a neighborhood retail node at the intersection of Flat Shoals Parkway and Clifton Springs Road.
- Create a network of paths to connect the various nodes, activities and uses.

- Create gateways at critical entry ways and nodes.
- Provide diverse housing types and product mix that promotes economic, social and cultural mix and residential neighborhoods.
- Incorporate public open space as a community-wide amenity and as integral to the new Study Area identity ("branding").
- Attract new business types which respond to the strong consumer market demographics and affluence and reflect tastes and preferences.
- Build on thriving, existing small businesses to create a strong economic base with jobs and tax revenues.
- Create major new funding source to facilitate land assemblage, private investment and development-oriented public/private partnerships.

Existing Conditions Review

The LCI Study Area consists of two principal nodes; one around the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall at the I-20/Candler Road interchange and the other node on Panthersville Road between I-285 and Clifton Spring Road that contains South DeKalb Health Center, GBI, Perimeter College and Perimeter East Industrial Park. There is scattered retail along Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway. Most of the retail/commercial in the Study Area is aging, obsolete and under-utilized.

There are two schools, a regional park (Exchange Park), and County owned greenspace with community programs run by a non-profit called Wonderland Gardens. A good portion of the Study Area is designated as floodplain. The South River, Shoal Creek, and Dolittle Creek are significant waterways. The rest of the Study Area includes both single and multi-family residential. There is a county library on Flat Shoals Parkway toward the southern edge of the Study Area.

The Study Area has great accessibility to both I-20 and I-285. Both of these freeways have ingress/egress onto Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway. The two main arterial roads are Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway and Panthersville Road. Other significant streets in the Study Area are Rainbow Drive, Columbia Drive and Clifton Springs Road.

Most of the land is developed, with some pockets of vacant land. A larger piece of vacant land is located in the northeast quadrant of Clifton Springs Road and Panthersville Road intersection.

In terms of pending developments, several residential projects are proposed within the Study Area. Also, the County plans to break ground this year (2007) on a new Art Center on Rainbow Drive.

Subarea Identification

Based on the location of the activities, uses, geographic structure and parcel size, the Concept Plan organizes the Study Area into subareas, each having similar functional, physical and social attributes. The character of the subareas emerges with a common theme that reinforces and reflects its uses/activities, open spaces, public realm, scale, architecture and land uses.

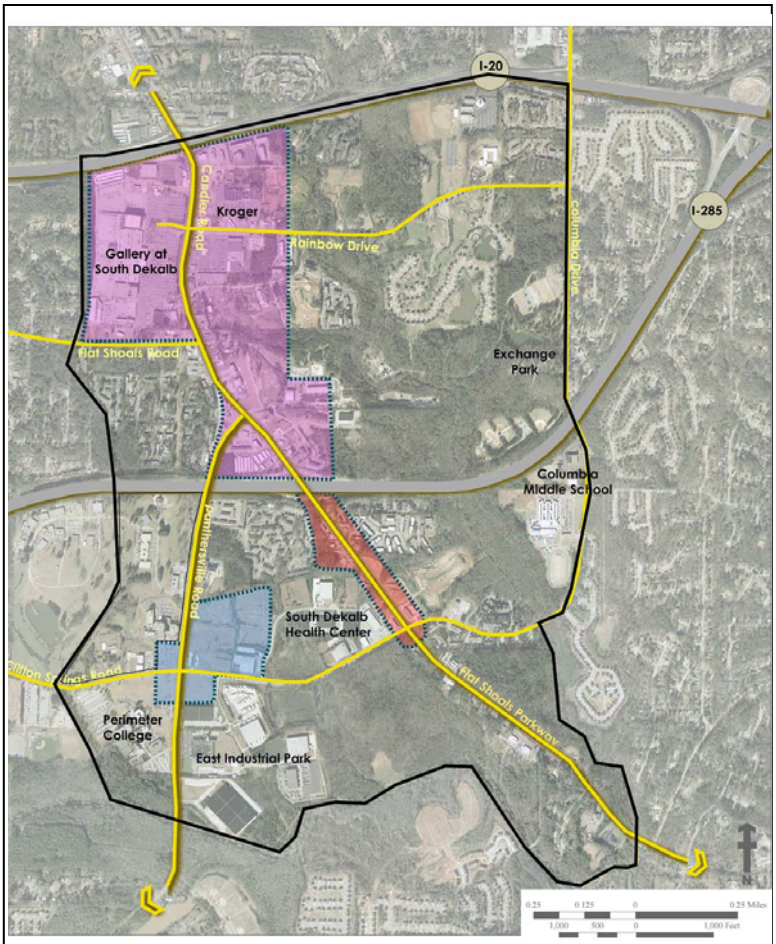
The following map identifies the Town Center, the Perimeter Mixed Use District, and a Flat Shoals Corridor subarea.

Perimeter Mixed Use Node

- Vacant parcels of land are available at the intersection of Clifton Springs Road and Panthersville Road. This will be a good location for office type of uses, leveraging the Perimeter College and the health facilities.
- According to the market potential, this node can be further developed into a mixed use development with retail and housing for the students and workforce.
- Access management on Clifton Springs; curb cuts, inter-parcel connectivity and parking facilities/location.
- New compact street network and connectivity to existing streets to enhance the street network.
- Connectivity to the primary town center area by trails, enhanced streetscape and a better pedestrian environment.
- The Perimeter node has a potential of becoming a secondary mixed use node in the future that will complement the town center and provide the area residents, students and business owners with another activity center

Flat Shoals Corridor

- A planned I-285 interchange improvement project will have a significant positive impact on the further development of the Flat Shoals corridor, with better access, enhanced traffic and pedestrian routes will allow for a higher mix and quality of development.
- Redevelopment of aging/declining grey field retail and isolated single retail buildings and under utilized parcels. Consolidation of smaller parcels into developable tracts.
- Redevelopment of auto salvage yards and other incompatible uses along the corridor.
- Create street grid and inter parcel connectivity within the parcels lining the corridor.
- Higher density retail/mixed uses that offers variety retail and commercial services and amenities.
- Make both vehicular and pedestrian environment on the corridor more pleasing and stress free by improving the image and character; liner buildings to cover the parking lots, streetscape, signage and architectural controls.



CANDLER ROAD/ FLAT SHOALS SUB AREAS

CANDLER ROAD FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY LCI COMMUNITY WORKSHOP RESULTS

Town Center

- New town center leveraging the Gallery at South Dekalb Mall with public plazas, village green and mixed uses; retail/ commercial, condos, live/work, apartments, town homes, and detached and attached single family.
- Full life cycle housing options to support aging in place.
- Housing options for all economic and social groups
- Preservation of existing creeks, natural green space and important social institutions
- Creating a focal point and sense of place for the community
- Well landscaped streets, open spaces, parks and good quality architecture that give unique character and image
- Connectivity to adjacent uses; residential, school, larger retail.
- Park and ride facility for BRT and improved inter parcel connectivity to promote less automobile usage.
- Path network connections to Exchange Park, Arts Center, Perimeter College and other focal points within the area and enhancement of pedestrian environment and experience.

Appropriate Uses by Subarea

As the County pursues land use regulations and an economic development strategy to achieve the Concept Plan, the following table provides a reference for the intent of the LCI Plan subareas.

SUBAREA	Existing Uses	Proposed Uses	Comments
Town Center	Retail, Commercial/Office	**Mixed Uses**: Retail, Commercial/Office, Live/Work, Condos, Apartments, Town Homes, Town Green, and Public Plaza	Private development and redevelopment
Perimeter Mixed use Node	Vacant	**Mixed Uses:** Retail, Commercial/Medical & other Offices, Live/Work, Condos and Apartments and town homes	Private development and redevelopment
Flat Shoals Parkway	Retail, Commercial/Office	**Integrated Retail, Commercial/Office**	Private development

C-2. Concept Plan and Master Plans

The current suburban model of development with segregated uses, isolated buildings, large parking lots, cul-de-sac streets, and long, auto-oriented blocks does not provide for a cohesive and integrated pattern of development that is walkable and pedestrian friendly. Embarking on a mixed use development strategy will allow for a vibrant urban structure that offers room for various socio-economic groups and accessibility to diverse services, shopping, dining, entertainment, and recreation. A compact mixed use structure promotes greater interaction among the people and fosters a close knit community. This in turn creates a safe environment. By mixing uses and activities, the community generates a greater workday and leisure-evening mix of activity.

The vision behind the concept plan is to transform the Study Area into a vibrant Town Center (activity center) with a distinctive architectural character. The plan aims at enhancing the streetscape/pedestrian experience, pedestrian scale, and pedestrian connectivity. The uses and development strategy will depend on the assemblage of the parcels by private sector. Allowing for various degrees of mixed uses will provide the required flexibility.

An important goal of the study is to consolidate scattered office, retail and commercial development along the corridor which currently is set away from the street and flanked by surface parking lots. All of these establishments have individual ingress and egress onto Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway which hampers smooth traffic flow and makes the corridor unsafe for pedestrians. The master plan suggests consolidation of curb-cuts and interconnectivity between parcels as an important strategy to integrate different uses and provide a safe and pedestrian friendly environment along the corridor. The plan also addresses redevelopment of vacant and underutilized parcels and phasing out of incompatible uses.

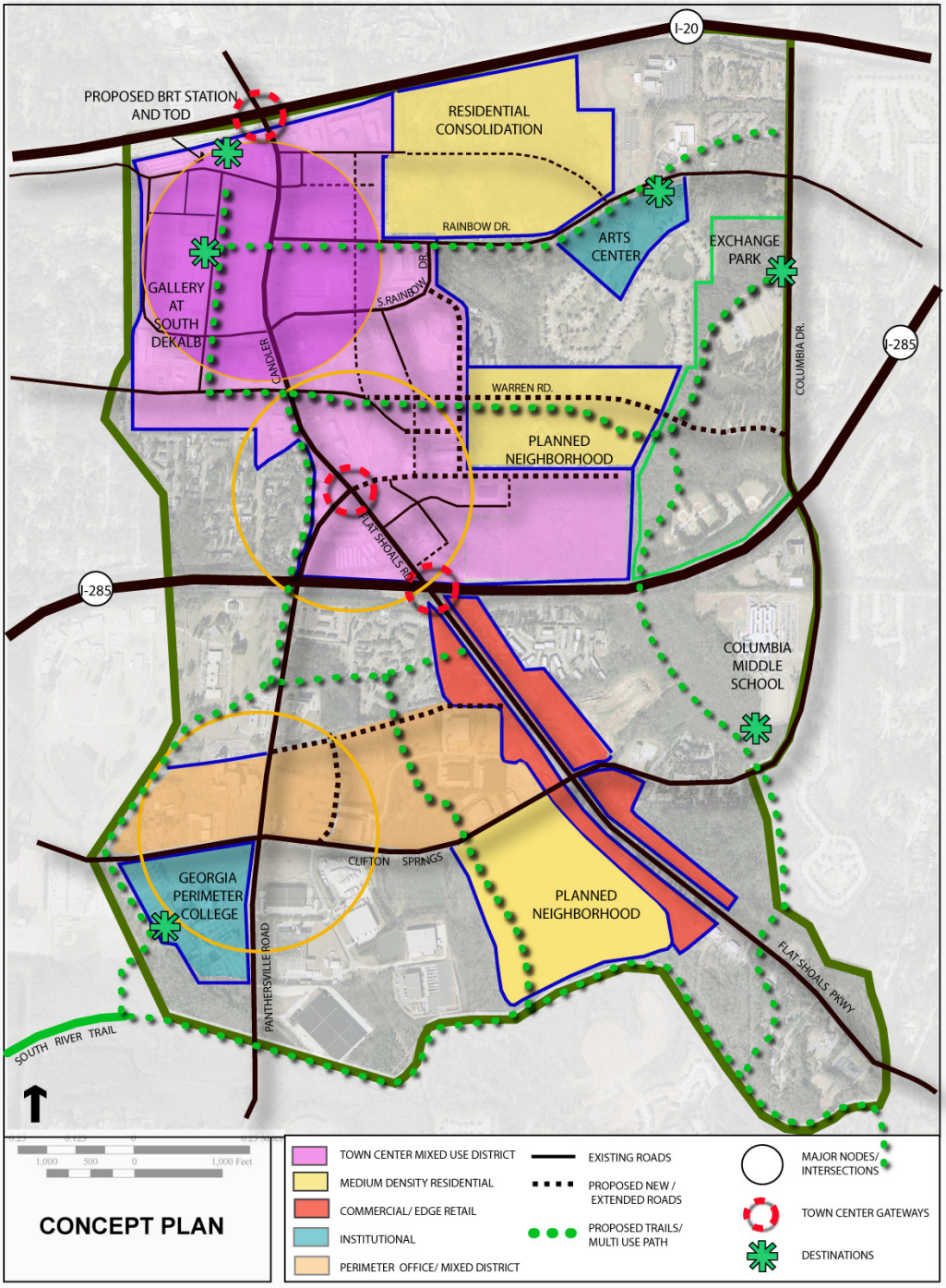
Along with incorporating proposed traffic initiatives including traffic signals, new streets and street alignments, median cuts and improved crosswalks, the plan also identifies several traffic calming measures such as landscaped medians and paved intersections along the corridor to provide a safe pedestrian environment.

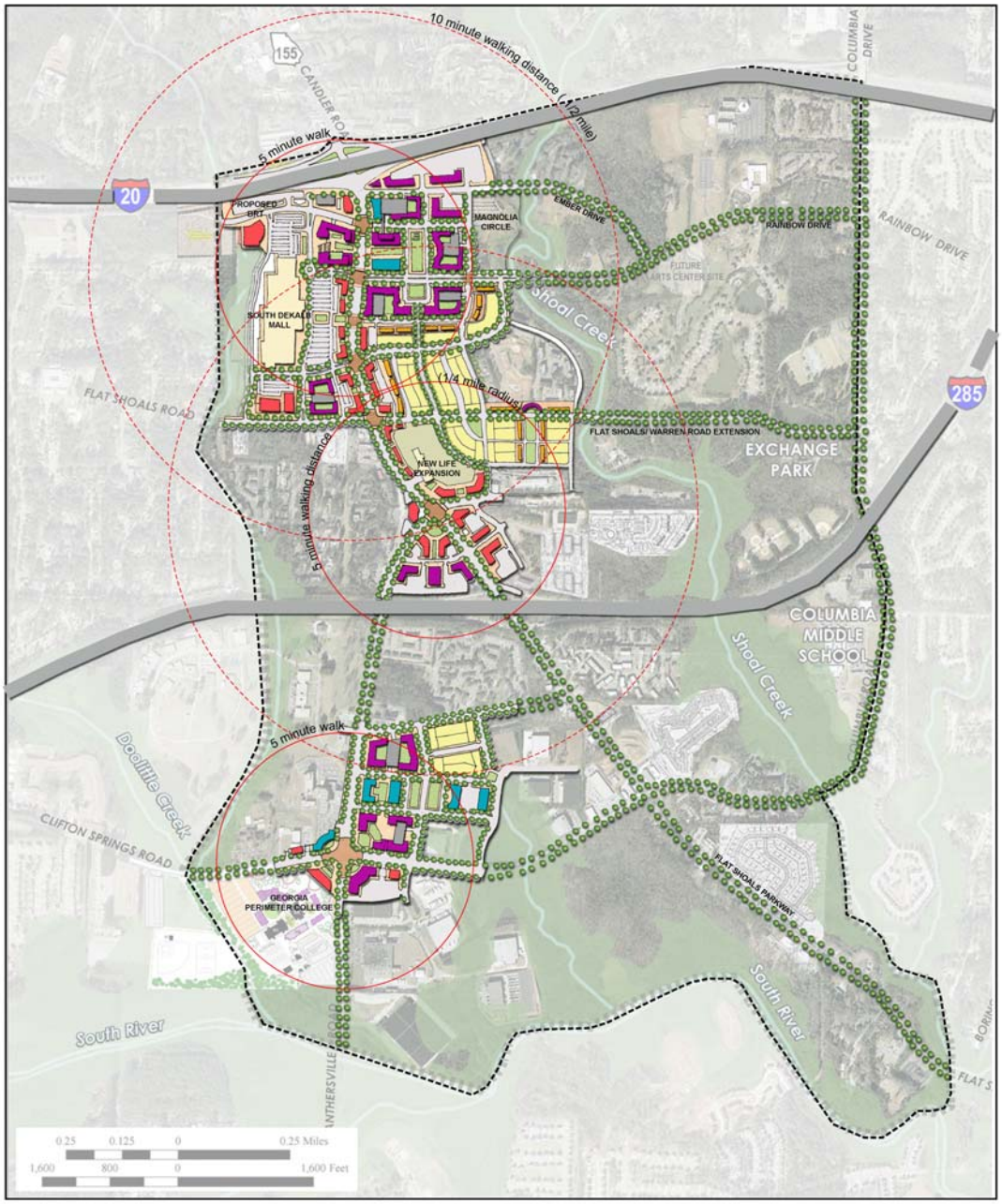
The ***jewel*** of the concept plan is the ***new Town Center***. This is located along SR 155 / Candler Road between I-20 ramp and I-285 ramp to capture through traffic, but will offer a new pattern of local traffic circulation that invites the through traffic into the area while making it more livable for residents. The Town Center will contain a town green, public plaza, and an array of mixed uses; retail, office, entertainment, apartments, condos, townhomes, detached and attached single family houses. This new Town Center will create a sense of place, identity, character and pride for the community. The intensity of uses and density gradient will be higher at the core and decrease toward the neighborhood with a smooth transition achieved through both design features and use regulations.

Following are two maps. The Concept Map represents the overall, conceptual plan for destinations, new local road circulation and multi-use path network, and land use characters that emerged from the workshop, market study, and transportation analysis.

A Master Plan map follows the Concept Map, providing illustrative detailing for the Town Center and Perimeter Node subareas. The sets of concentric circles provide a frame of reference for establishing a realistic walking distance radius around each subarea. Pedestrians do not tend to walk more than a quarter of a mile to a given destination; thus the Master Plan incorporates this principle to ensure that alternatives to the automobile are real options for pedestrians, bicyclists and those who enjoy the convenience of public transportation.

Narratives with urban design graphics elaborate further the intent of the Concept and Master Plans.


I-20
PROPOSED BRT STATION AND TOD
RESIDENTIAL CONSOLIDATION
RAINBOW DR.
ARTS CENTER
EXCHANGE PARK
GALLERY AT SOUTH DEKALB
S. RAINBOW DR.
CANDLER
COLUMBIA DR.
I-285
WARREN RD.
PLANNED NEIGHBORHOOD
FLAT SHOALS RD.
I-285
COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
CLIFTON SPRINGS
GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE
PLANNED NEIGHBORHOOD
PANTHERSVILLE ROAD
FLAT SHOALS PKWY
SOUTH RIVER TRAIL
1,000 500 0 1,000 Feet
CONCEPT PLAN
TOWN CENTER MIXED USE DISTRICT
MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
COMMERCIAL/ EDGE RETAIL
INSTITUTIONAL
PERIMETER OFFICE/ MIXED DISTRICT
EXISTING ROADS
PROPOSED NEW / EXTENDED ROADS
PROPOSED TRAILS/ MULTI USE PATH
MAJOR NODES/ INTERSECTIONS
TOWN CENTER GATEWAYS
DESTINATIONS



GREEN SPACES/ PARKS	MIXED USE	DECKS	TOWN CENTER MASTER PLAN
PAVED PLAZAS	RETAIL/ COMMERCIAL	MULTI FAMILY - T HOMES	
ROADS	OFFICE	SINGLE FAMILY	CANDLER ROAD FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY LCI

Town Center

Center of attention. The Study Area lacks a discernable center of public activity. The Concept Plan creates a new Town Center that gives a new identity, sense of place and a focal point to the community. The plan promotes the new ***Town Center*** as the ***jewel*** of the concept plan because resources should be directed to showcase the new center. As mentioned, the Town Center will contain a town green, public plaza, amphitheatre, and an array of mixed uses; retail, office, entertainment, apartments, condos, town homes, detached and attached single family.

Leverage existing assets. The Town Center leverages the existing mall and integrates the planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station with a park and ride facility in the mixed use district. The plan envisions redevelopment of the mall parking lot with a proposed movie theatre at the rear and a mixed use development at the northeast corner of the mall property. Private investment already has moved to make the theater closer to reality, and the County has invested in relocating a police precinct to occupy a vacant building to augment security and create a safe landscape for a new environment.

Below street parking and outparcels. The grade here drops from Candler Road to the parking lot, allowing for a potential parking deck and interim transit station below the street level and mixed use development above with public plaza at the street level. All along Candler Road fronting the mall, liner retail buildings (road frontage out-parcels) are proposed to create a pedestrian friendly street environment. The liner buildings will be spaced strategically to allow good visibility of the mall from the street. The parking lot and area to the south of the mall could be developed into a mixed use development with additional big-box retail at the back.

New Grid Network. A town green is proposed to the east of Candler Road that will focus on redeveloping the two shopping strips across the main road, namely Rainbow Village and South Dekalb Plaza. These outdated strip centers sit on large lots with underutilized surface parking lots. Fairlake Drive forms the eastern edge of the Town Center. The area bounded by South Rainbow Drive, I-20, Candler Road, and Shoal Creek will be the heart of new Town Center. A new street grid network is proposed to create pedestrian-friendly Town Center blocks with town green and public plaza. The proposed streetscaping of Rainbow Drive is integrated into the Town Center. The

peripheral blocks that surround the Town Center to the south up to I-285 would contain liner retail fronting Candler Road and residential (town homes and single family) behind. Within the heart of Town Center the blocks that front Candler Road would contain retail and office with some residential and the blocks behind would contain retail/office at the street level and residential above.

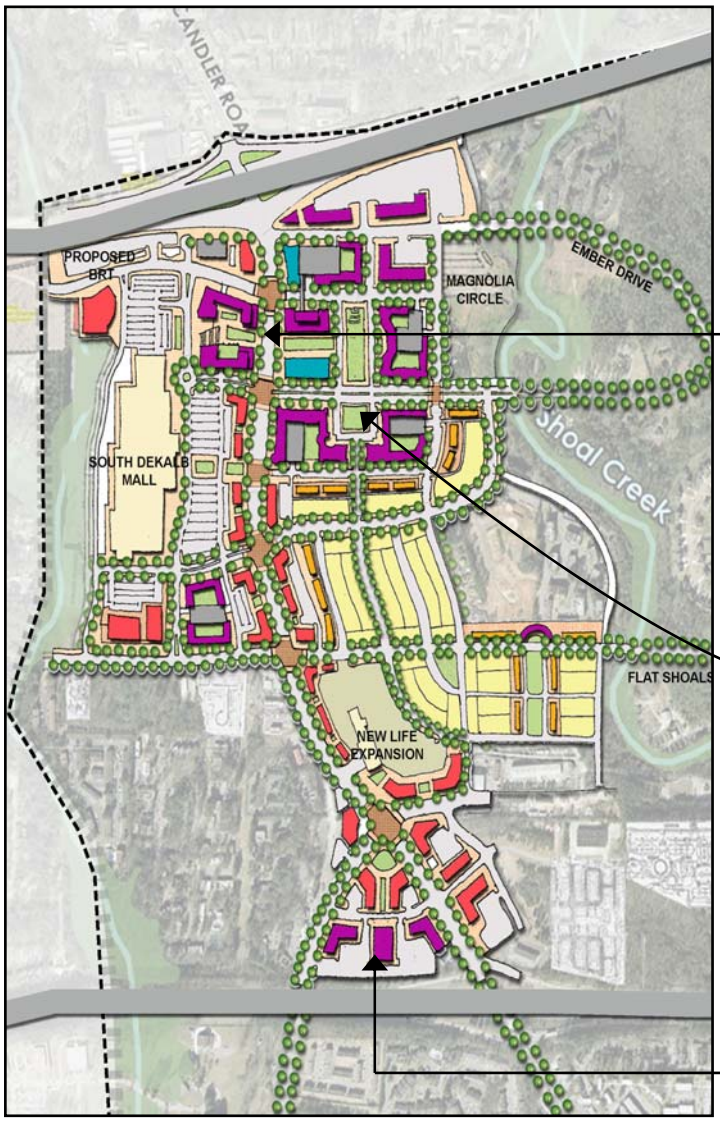
The parcel north of the Gallery Mall between I-20 and Shepherd Drive would potentially be used in the long term as a BRT station and park & ride facility. To the south of South Rainbow Drive, liner retail along Candler Road and residential (town homes and single family) is proposed. The new Magnolia circle senior housing is integrated into the master plan. Several street connections are proposed to further increase the mobility and the east-west connectivity including the extension of Flat Shoals Road/Warren Road to Columbia Drive and the extension of Ember Drive to Rainbow Drive.

The blocks created by the master plan street grid creates the framework, street and block structure with adequate flexibility to accommodate various uses and building types to meet the changing needs of the market. The town green provides public space for an array of activities, both passive and active. A small amphitheater could be created that can support cultural activities. The master plan ties all of the elements together; the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall, proposed street improvements, infrastructure and the creek together with the Town Center. A path network would connect various uses.

Note the following about the proposed new roadway connections and associated development:

1. the new streets and site plans displayed in the illustrations are conceptual;
2. detailed engineering analyses will be required to consider environmental and fiscal constraints before street alignments and site plans may be finalized;
3. any new roadway capacity which is projected to function as a major collector or greater must be included in the ARC's regional model and examined for consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan;
4. Green Forest Baptist Church is not opposed in principle to the proposed extension of Ember Drive but has requested that the alignment be consistent with their master site plan;
5. Representatives of DeKalb County Parks and Recreation and Public Works stated that they support the overall LCI plan;

6. County personnel are not opposed in principal to the proposed extension of Flat Shoals Rd / Warren Rd to Columbia Drive, but identified the following potential constraints:
   - Such plans would have to be coordinated with plans for Enchange Park, including the pending construction of a recreation facility;
   - Such plans must take into account the impact on public park space;
   - Further survey and site analyses are will be required prior to moving forward with any plans to develop the site of the former MSW landfill (located on county-owned property);
   - Such plans must take into account the potential relocation of county facilities; and
   - Such plans must continue to be monitored to serve the best interest of the county overall.

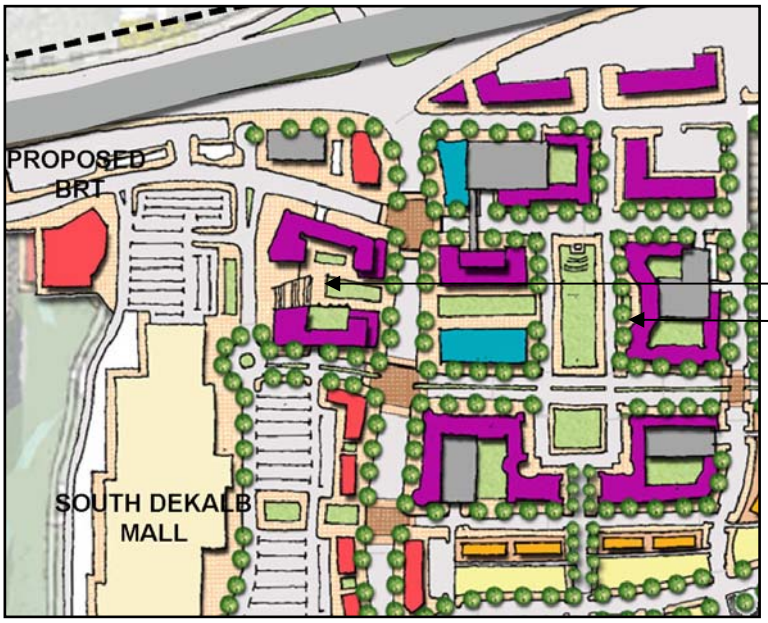


Pedestrian intersection with retail uses/ activity at street level

Town Green /Public Plaza

Mixed Use Buildings with Retail at street level

Illustrative Map: Town Center Master Plan



Illustrative Map: Town Center Core

Public Plaza

High density mixed use

Panthersville – Flat Shoals Retail Node

The intersection of Panthersville Road and Flat Shoals Road is envisioned to be a small retail node with street side shops, restaurants etc. Currently the area consists of isolated retail with large parking lots. This existing retail is proposed to be consolidated into a cohesive retail district with an attractive architectural character. A paved intersection would act as a traffic calming device improving pedestrian walkability around the retail node. This makes provision for the expansion of New Life Community Center.

Illustrative Map: Town Center Edge

Perimeter Mixed Use Node

As the market demand increases with various initiatives within the Study Area, this subarea holds potential to be developed for mixed use. Various medical offices and other office uses with service retail that serve the needs of Perimeter College and the workforce in the immediate vicinity could be developed along with residential. In the future, depending on the growth of Perimeter College program and the demand, some student housing could be developed along with other residential (single family, town homes and multi-family). Note that planned improvements to Panthersville Road presents an opportunity to establish streetscape design standard for this district.

Mixed Use office buildings

Textured Pedestrian crossing

Illustrative Map: Perimeter Mixed Use Node

Office developments

Flat Shoals Parkway Corridor

Retail consolidation and office along this corridor that relate to the street with inter-parcel connectivity and access management is envisioned for this corridor. The infill development as it happens should ensure the integration of street and provide for pedestrian friendly environment. A small neighborhood retail node is envisioned at the intersection of Flat Shoals Parkway and Clifton Springs Road to serve the needs of the immediate neighborhood. Larger tracts of parcels can be consolidated and developed into new planned neighborhoods leveraging the natural surroundings and the proposed trail network. These medium density neighborhoods will act as a transition between the dense Town Center uses and the existing single family neighborhoods.

Character Images: Pedestrian Friendly Retail Corridor

Character Images: Planned residential developments

C-3. Development Plan

Development Objectives

Of the key development and design goals previously articulated, this section focuses on the following economic development dimensions of the LCI Study Area:

- Upgrading and repositioning retail and services to appeal to changing consumer preferences and to meet demand per wealth trends identified in the Market Analysis section
- Increasing/Strengthening entertainment offerings
- Creation of a "Town Center" through redevelopment that includes Rainbow Village and South DeKalb Plaza shopping centers
- Redevelopment of the outer edges of the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall
- Development of a new supermarket-anchored Neighborhood Center at Panthersville Road and Clifton Springs Road to attract strong household growth around the Study Area, especially to south/southeast
- Introduction of professional & business offices & services
- Positioning of Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway corridor to take advantage of future improvements to the interstate system
- Creation of community-wide linkages, green spaces and amenities

Development Opportunities

Potential sites for new development or redevelopment of existing facilities (primarily retail) were identified based on a number of factors, including the following:

- Location within the Study Area, particularly with respect to current and potential future impact on the improvement of major traffic corridors (Candler Road, Panthersville Road, Flat Shoals Parkway, Clifton Springs Road and Rainbow Drive)
- Physical appearance, age, state of repair/disrepair and both quantity and quality of site landscaping
- Traffic patterns
- Availability of undeveloped or significantly underdeveloped land

- Potential for assemblage of multiple parcels of land into one larger development/redevelopment site
- Land use and zoning
- Potential positive impact on the Study Area as indicated by participants' comments and recommendations during public meetings and workshops

Recommendations regarding the types of development or redevelopment that should occur on these identified sites are based on an assessment of current and emerging market conditions and trends, with that assessment focusing primarily on the following census- and survey-based data collected from ESRI, a national proprietary database:

- Documented (1990-2006) and projected (2006-2011) population and household growth within the Study Area and, more importantly, the Primary and Secondary consumer market areas
- Disposable income indicators relating to housing and retail spending, including average and median per capita and household income, disposable household income, housing sale prices and rent rates, and the rate of increase within these categories (see Market Analysis)
- Identified spending patterns and preferences
- Assessment of area supply or retail and services in relation to consumer demand

In addition to comments and preferences indicated by participants in the public meetings and design workshop, information came from various residential and retail developers (local and regional), as well as from brokers and investors familiar with the area and existing retail and residential inventory.

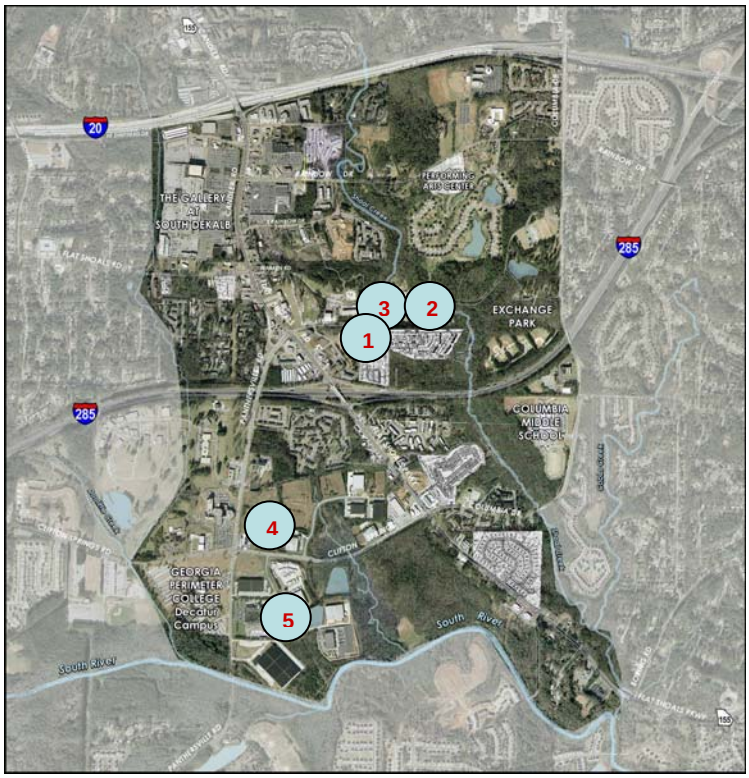
<u>Potential New Development Sites</u>

Sites that are undeveloped or significantly underdeveloped include the following:

1. *Fairlake Residential:* A potential undeveloped site that could support residential development is located at the end of Fairlake Drive in the Warren Road and Lumby Drive area. This site is in the immediate vicinity of the following two sites, currently utilized by DeKalb County for fire training and vehicle

staging/maintenance purposes. All are in the vicinity of a new apartment development that is likely planning a Phase 2 development. *Note that further survey and site analyses will be required prior to moving forward with any plans to develop the site of the former MSW landfill (located on county-owned property).*

2. *DeKalb County Fire Academy:* See above.
3. *DeKalb County Maintenance Facility:* See above.
4. *Clifton Springs Center:* An assemblage of undeveloped parcels behind a gas-and-convenience store in the northeast quadrant of the Panthersville Road/Clifton Springs Road intersection.
5. *Perimeter East Industrial Park:* Underdeveloped lots still remain in the industrial park in the southeast quadrant of the Panthersville Road/Clifton Springs Road intersection. The owner is actively marketing the sites for warehouse/distribution facilities with 10-25% office "flex" space.



Potential Sites: New Private Development

1. Fairlake Residential
2. DeKalb County Fire Academy
3. DeKalb County Maintenance Facility
4. Clifton Springs Center
5. Perimeter East Industrial Park

Potential Redevelopment Sites

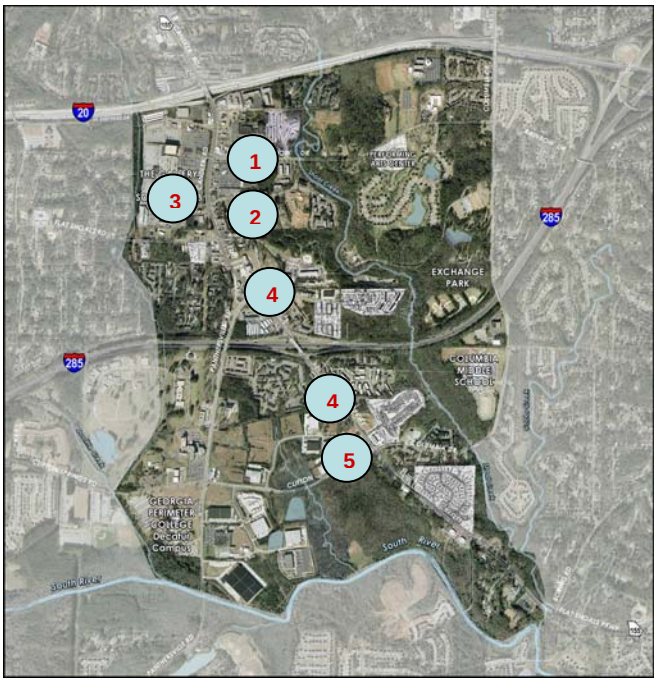
Redevelopment can mean either the complete demolition of existing structures and rebuilding of new structures or significant improvements of existing structures, including significant site landscaping, repositioning of parking and improvements in frontage properties, if any exist. Sites containing existing development that could support either additional development or significant redevelopment include the following:

1. *Rainbow Village Retail and Residential:* Rainbow Village occupies an extremely strategic position within the Study Area. Located between Ember Drive and Rainbow Drive and fronting Candler Road, this aging Kroger-based strip center establishes the dominant commercial image of the community in the mind of most potential retail (and residential) consumers exiting I-20. The Kroger itself is outdated with respect to size and layout, and the structure containing it and ancillary stores is in a state of serious deterioration. The freestanding outparcel retail does nothing to establish an identity for the area, although it does help to block the visibility of the remaining Rainbow Village – a positive factor in this case. Redevelopment could also include new residential around the center, particularly if **Ember Drive is reconfigured to act as a loop road** connecting Candler with Rainbow Drive east of the site. *Note that Green Forest Baptist Church is not opposed in principle to the proposed extension of Ember Drive but has requested that the alignment be consistent with their master site plan.*
2. *South DeKalb Plaza Retail and Residential:* The expansive Big Lots center immediately south of Rainbow Drive and Rainbow Village shopping center presents a good opportunity for redevelopment given its size and location. Whether formally combined under one owner with Rainbow Village or simply redevelopment along with Rainbow Village by separate entities, this Candler Road/Rainbow Drive intersection presents a great opportunity for creating a positive commercial cluster and major entryway into the community. Redevelopment could also include new residential around the center, particularly if **South Rainbow Drive is sufficiently improved to act as a loop road** connecting Candler Road with Rainbow Drive east of the site.
3. *The Gallery at South DeKalb Mall Retail, Services and Residential:* The Gallery itself appears healthy, albeit not with the offerings residents desire. Store space is filled; customer traffic is high during most of the day; a new multiplex theater is

being constructed; and new ownership may be prepared to make improvements that will strengthen the center even more – thus increasing the probability that the Macy's department store anchor will not leave the Gallery in the foreseeable future. The Gallery does have a significant amount of developable space at its periphery, even along the Candler Road "frontage" that actually prevents clear sightlines to the Gallery due to a major drop in elevation. The **northern portion of the Gallery offers** a particularly good **opportunity for residential development**, which could add tremendously to the center's image.

4. *Candler Road/Flat Shoals Pkwy Corridor Retail and Services:* Freestanding commercial structures will continue to be developed along this corridor either replacing existing structures or built as in-fill properties. A concerted effort should be made to **attract desirable commercial uses** – retail, services and office – to this corridor rather than allow it to continue to grow in its current haphazard fashion.

5. *South DeKalb Health Center:* This site contains aging office structures containing health-related services. While the area should continue to strengthen and expand its health-related offerings, this cluster appears **ready for a complete redevelopment.**



Potential Sites:

Private Redevelopment

1. Rainbow Village Retail and Residential
2. South DeKalb Plaza Retail and Residential
3. The Gallery at South DeKalb Retail, Services and Residential
4. Candler-Flat Shoals Corridor Retail and Services
5. South DeKalb Health Center

Improvements to Public Facilities and Institutions

One can anticipate increasing demand on area schools as new family-oriented households (primarily single-family detached housing or townhomes) are added to the community. Columbia Middle School may need improvements, including expansion of existing structures and grounds. Georgia Perimeter College anticipates moderate but steady growth over the next five years. At some point, the College will certainly add new non-residential facilities. It may also attempt to become more of a residential campus with the introduction of student housing on its campus. Plans for the Georgia Regional Hospital are unclear, but improvements will certainly be needed in order to keep the facility up-to-date and competitive.

Improvements to Public Facilities & Institutions

1. Columbia Middle School
2. Georgia Perimeter College – Decatur Campus
3. Georgia Regional Hospital

Major Public Improvements

Recommended public improvements to the area are described in detail in other sections of this report. Such improvements will positively impact both the overall quality of life within the community, as well as its appeal as a commercial and residential location.

The **proposed extension of Flat Shoals Road/Warren Road, however, deserves special attention as a major initiative the County could undertake** to stimulate new development and address east/west congestion. As an underutilized asset, fully under County ownership, the portions of Exchange Park sacrificed to the road would gain great economic benefit to the area. It creates available land for development under County control of design features, while opening up the Park itself to greater use and thus greater safety features with more eyes on the interior of the facility. Land and right-of-way constitutes the greatest cost of new road construction. Because the County already owns the property, this solution provides a cost-effective new road that addresses several issues at once. Representatives of DeKalb County Parks and Recreation and Public Works stated that they support the overall LCI plan and are not opposed in principal to the proposed extension of Flat Shoals Rd / Warren Rd to Columbia Drive, but identified several potential constraints as previously mentioned.

Major categories of improvements detailed in other sections of this report are listed below.

Major Public Improvements Throughout Study Area

1. Improvements of existing roads
2. Construction of new roads
3. Landscape improvements
4. Streetscape improvements
5. Open-space improvements
6. Existing parks improvements
7. Multi-use trail system and open-space linkages

Private Market Development

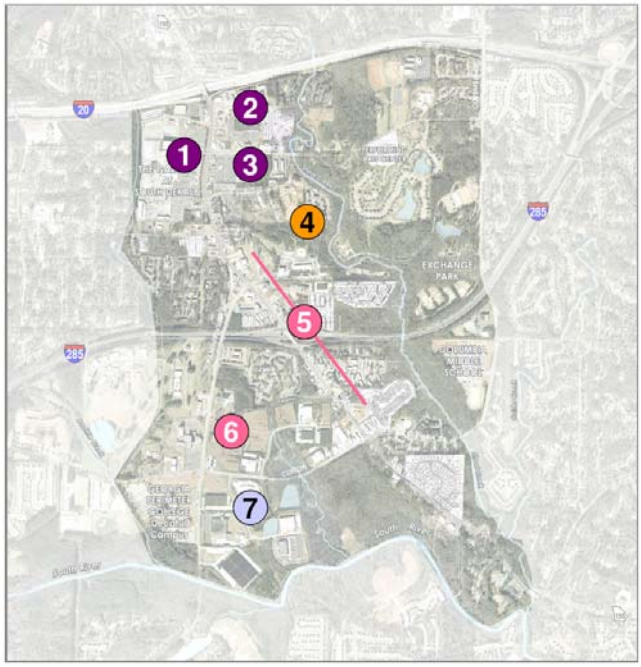
As indicated in the Market Analysis section, demand for new households, retail space and community-serving office space over the next five years, as well as unmet demand for retail space currently, is summarized as follows:

- New Households: 1,550 units
- Current Unmet Retail Demand: 521,800 square feet
- Projected New Retail Demand: 594,000 square feet
- Total Retail Demand: 1,115,800 square feet
- Local-serving Office Demand: 33,600 square feet

Recommendations for specific development and redevelopment sites identified within the Study Area, as well as the potential amount of retail space, local (community-serving) office space, industrial space and housing units – described below as townhomes but appropriate to single-family detached housing units, also – are summarized as follows:

	Site	Retail SF	Local Office SF	Industrial	Townhome Units
1	Rainbow Village	200,000	20,000		
2	So. DeKalb Plaza	300,000	20,000		
3	Gallery at So. DeKalb				120
4	Rainbow Center Housing				120
5	South Rainbow Housing				150
6	Fairlake Housing				200
7	Clifton Springs Center	125,000	150,000		
8	Candler-Flat Shoals Corr.	50,000	25,000		
9	Perimeter East Ind. Center			150,000	
	TOTALS	**675,000**	**215,000**	**150,000**	**590**

The map below summarizes the recommended new development/redevelopment and is followed by a narrative that relates the Development Plan to projected demand.



Private New Development Summary

1. Enhance Existing Retail; 120 Residential Units
2. 200K Retail; 20K Office; 120 Residential Units
3. 300K Retail; 20K Office; 120 Residential Units
4. 200 Res. Units
5. 50K Retail; 25K Office
6. 125K Retail; 150K Office
7. 150K Industrial

- *Retail:* Total new retail demand is projected at 1.1 million square feet within the Primary Market area over the next five years (Sites 1, 2, 3, and 5). Recommended new retail development totals 675,000 square feet – approximately 60% of the total projected demand. Given that the major portion of recommended retail is at Candler Road and I-20, which is an excellent location that lacks only the proper retail offerings and "look," this share-of-market capture rate seems quite reasonable. Additionally, another 125,000 square feet of retail is recommended as a supermarket-anchored Neighborhood Center at a site that was actually rezoned several years ago specifically for such a center anchored by a relocated (from Rainbow Village) Kroger Supermarket (to Site 6). Given the apparent appeal of the new site to Kroger – which has only recently begun developing new stores after three years of retrenchment due to financial difficulties – and the obvious lack of appeal of its current location, such a relocation and related retail development appears probable.

- *Housing:* The type of housing projected is described as "Townhome" units but could be single-family detached, as are incorporated into the overall recommended Land Use Plan. A total of 590 units over five years is projected, while demand within the Primary Market has been calculated to be 1,550 units. Given the potential availability of land currently owned by DeKalb County and the anticipated pair of "loop roads" (Ember and South Rainbow) around a new "Town Center" on the Rainbow Village and South DeKalb Plaza sites flanking Rainbow Drive, this share-of-market capture rate of 38% appears reasonable. The areas identified as potential sites for this new housing also enjoy excellent access to I-20 and I-285, as well as major employment centers (sites 1 – 4) .

- *Industrial:* There is no projected demand for industrial, as explained in the *Market Assessment* section, due primarily to location factors. What is know is that the Perimeter East Industrial Center has land available for 1-2 an additional major flex/light industrial users – projected at 150,000 square feet (site 7). The Center is being actively marketed by a company with a great deal of experience in this local market.

- *Office:* If restricted to "local-serving office," which is a demand calculation based entirely on the number of new households introduced into an area, the projected development of 215,000 square feet of office appears to significantly exceed the projected demand of less than 34,000 square feet. However, this new office development really incorporates a 150,000-square-foot "office park" behind or within the anticipated Neighborhood Shopping Center at Panthersville and Clifton Springs roads (site 6). Such a concentration of offices within a single location is supported by a regional market, not only – or even primarily – the immediate Primary Market. In retail terms, it would be considered a destination in itself, not dependent upon local demand. Of the remaining 75,000 square feet of recommended office supply, it is anticipated that the development of a new "Town Center" can also induce new demand from outside the Primary Market Area, particularly if this excellent location is redeveloped to remove and replace the barriers now presented by Rainbow Village and South DeKalb Plaza (sites 2 & 3).

Development Plan Timeframe

Development will certainly continue to occur after 2018, but the recommended Development Plan should be completed over this 11-year timeframe starting in 2008, as reflected in the following table:

			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
TOTALS														
SFD	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TH	590		-	-	120	295	100	75	-	-	-	-	-	-
Apts	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Condos	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Retail	675,000		-	-	255,000	380,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
.ocal Office	215,000		-	44,167	16,667	60,417	-	43,750	-	43,750	-	6,250	-	-
Corp Office	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hotel	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Industrial	150,000		-	-	75,000	-	75,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
				2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Single-family Detached		-	Units	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Single-family Attached/Tow		590	Units	-	-	120	295	100	75	-	-	-	-	-
Multi-family Apartments/Cor		-	Units	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Apartments	-	Units	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Condo Lofts	-	Units	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total Resident	590	Units	-	-	120	295	100	75	-	-	-	-	-

Implications for Employment and Household Growth: 25-year Population and Household Projections

Population and household increases, as well as employment increases based at least partially on the recommended Development Plan are summarized in the table below, which show a jobs to household ratio that steadily becomes more in balance over time.

The jobs-housing balance is one measure for local governments to assess whether their residents potentially can live near job opportunities. The development plan promotes new employment in the community that ideally match the labor force skills. Additionally, the mix of housing recommended by the plan along with trends of existing housing stock aims to make a range of options available in terms of price and size for workers who wish to live in the area.

Putting the Study Area into the broader context, the majority of workers in DeKalb County do not reside in the County. Therefore, a high number of residents are commuting in and out of the County, which is common for the Atlanta region. According to the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan data, there are twice as many jobs as housing units in DeKalb County, which indicates a need to increase the number of housing units currently provided in the County. The Development Plan conforms to the Comprehensive Plan in this regard.

25-Year Projections: Study Area Only									
		2000	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	25-Yr Inc
* **Population**		81,121	87,573	91,468	94,622	96,938	98,341	98,781	11,208
			8.0%	4.4%	3.4%	2.4%	1.4%	0.4%	12.8%
Households		26,630	29,584	31,134	32,628	34,013	35,122	35,920	6,336
									21.4%
Persons/Household		3.05	2.96	2.94	2.90	2.85	2.80	2.75	1.77
Household Incr/Year			591	310	299	277	222	160	
Employment			16,162	19,272	22,394	25,028	26,894	27,777	11,615
Decrease/Year	0.008			0.038	0.030	0.022	0.014	0.006	71.9%
HH-to-Job Ratio			1.830	1.616	1.457	1.359	1.306	1.293	

** Sources: US Census (2000); ESRI (2006-2011); Huntley Partners (2016-2031)*

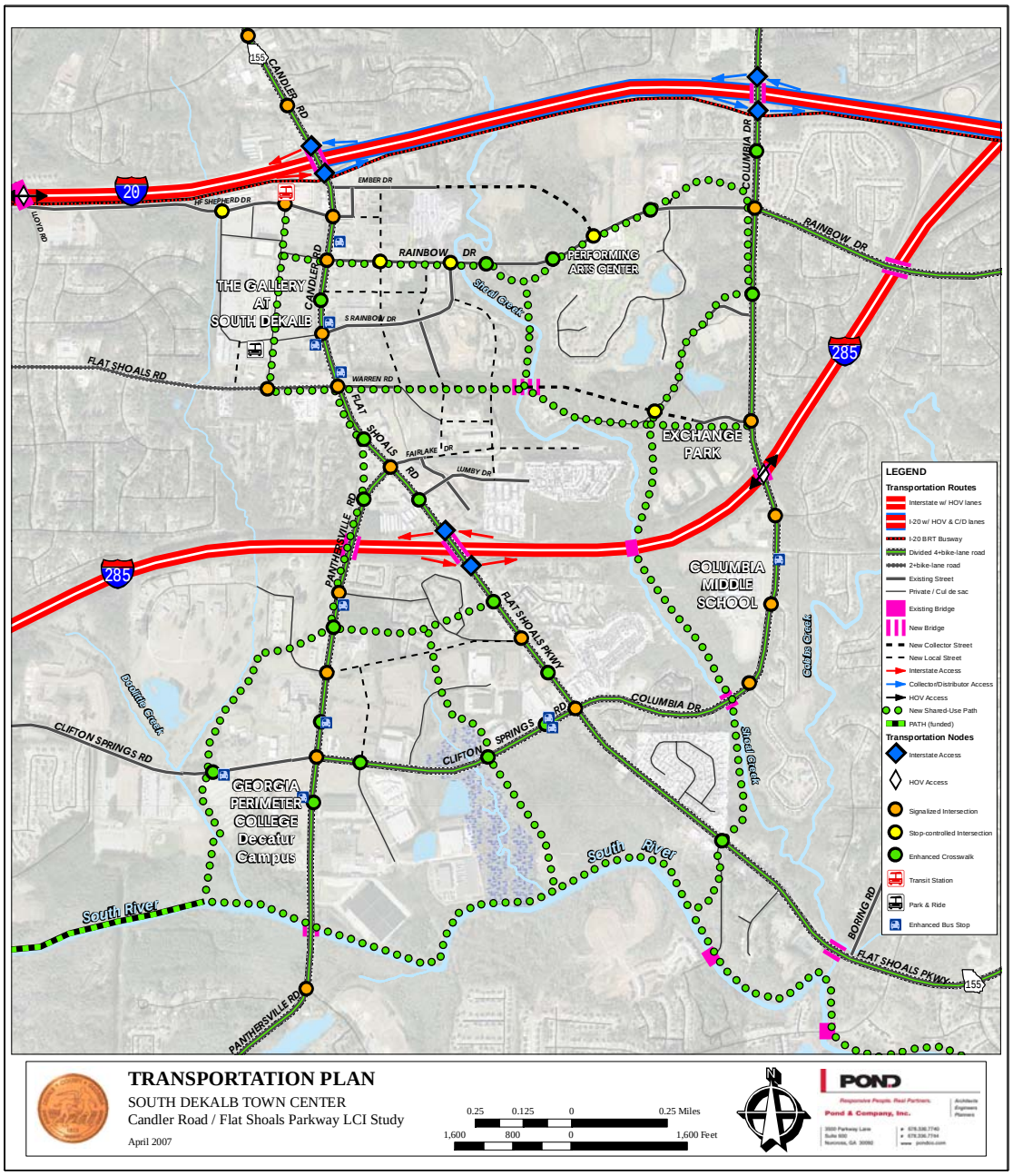
C-4. Transportation Plan

The Transportation Plan identifies the long term vision for how various transportation facilities will serve travel to, from, and through the Study Area. Details of each facility by their respective route/location are provided in a series of tables. The tables document the existing facilities along each route and present the critical elements of future facilities which would best serve the LCI Study Area.

Some of the proposed future facilities originated directly from the LCI planning process. Others were derived from pre-existing transportation plans and programs, including:

- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), *ARC*;
- DeKalb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), *pending adoption*;
- I-20 East Corridor Study, *MARTA December 2007*;
- HOV Strategic Implementation Plan for the Atlanta Region, *GDOT March 2003*;
- I-20 Dekalb HOV Project, *GDOT ongoing;*
- Proposed PATH Multi-Use Trail Plan & On-Street Bicycle Lanes, *DeKalb County May 2006*;
- DeKalb Greenway Trails, *PATH Foundation March 2005.*

The overall plan is presented graphically in the map on the following page.


CANDLER RD
EMBER DR
HF SHEPHERD DR
LLOYD RD
RAINBOW DR
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
THE GALLERY AT SOUTH DEKALB
S RAINBOW DR
Stoval Creek
FLAT SHOALS RD
WARREN RD
FAIRLAKE DR
LUMBY DR
EXCHANGE PARK
COLUMBIA DR
COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
PANTHERSVILLE RD
FLAT SHOALS PKWY
Cobb Creek
Doolittle Creek
CLIFTON SPRINGS RD
GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE Decatur Campus
South River
BORING RD
LEGEND
Transportation Routes
Interstate w/ HOV lanes
I-20 w/ HOV & C/D lanes
I-20 BRT Busway
Divided 4+bike-lane road
2+bike-lane road
Existing Street
Private / Cul de sac
Existing Bridge
New Bridge
New Collector Street
New Local Street
Interstate Access
Collector/Distributor Access
HOV Access
New Shared-Use Path
PATH (funded)
Transportation Nodes
Interstate Access
HOV Access
Signalized Intersection
Stop-controlled Intersection
Enhanced Crosswalk
Transit Station
Park & Ride
Enhanced Bus Stop
TRANSPORTATION PLAN
SOUTH DEKALB TOWN CENTER
Candler Road / Flat Shoals Parkway LCI Study
April 2007
0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles
1,600 800 0 1,600 Feet
N
POND
Pond & Company, Inc.

Town Center

Transit "Ready." The premier transportation facility proposed for the Town Center is a Transit Station. The station would be located just south of the I-20 / Candler Road interchange, most likely along HF Shepherd Drive (the specific site has not been finalized).

The MARTA board has identified Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as the locally preferred alternative for transit service along the I-20 corridor; and, during the course of this study effort, MARTA reported to DeKalb County that 2011 is the soonest, most optimistic timeframe for BRT service to the Study Area. However, complications have arisen about plans for a dedicated Busway along the I-20 corridor. A variety of new transportation facilities have been proposed by state and regional transportation planners for inclusion in long range plans for the I-20 east corridor (including additional capacity, HOV lanes, truck lanes, collector-distributor lanes). GDOT is presently attempting to develop a concept plan for this route which would accommodate as many of these facilities as possible, within the constraints of funding, right of way, and operational logistics.

Until some type of transit station comes to fruition, discussions of private market investment in a transit-oriented development are premature. Thus, the master plan is not contingent on BRT service but calls for concentrated pedestrian-oriented (and thus transit ready) development in the immediate vicinity of the Candler Road / Rainbow Drive intersection.

Over the course of this study, it was determined that MARTA is pursuing an "interim" solution which includes a transit station in this immediate vicinity which would serve as a centralized location for access to local and commuter bus routes.

The station would offer a variety of transit service facilities over time as described below, starting from the base-line services currently available.

Existing Service

- No centralized transit service station
- Four local MARTA bus routes with numerous stops in the mall vicinity
- Emory shuttle service from a park & ride on the south end of the mall

Short term: "Interim" plan

Construct a transit center/station at the future BRT station site or in close proximity thereto with:

- New route providing direct (blue flyer / express) bus to downtown Atlanta
- Express bus routes to Perimeter Center and Atlanta Airport (operated by GRTA or MARTA)
- Modification of existing local bus routes to stop at this location
- Park & ride facility
- Security (MARTA / in addition to the pending relocation of police precinct)
- Pedestrian-friendly (walkable from proposed mixed use Town Center)
- Emory shuttle service (and any other providers) should share this facility

Mid term:"BRT Phase One"

Construct a BRT station with:

- BRT bus-way service from downtown Atlanta to the Gallery Mall site (phase one end of line)
- Bus transfers
- Secure, ped-friendly, park & ride facility

Long Range: "BRT full service"

- BRT service from downtown Atlanta to Stonecrest
- Candler Road BRT service (as per Memorial Drive) from South DeKalb station to Decatur

Parking and Pedestrians. In order to truly integrate the proposed station into the Town Center, the facility must not only serve as a “park and ride” facility for commuters but must also cater to riders approaching the station by foot. The proposed strategy to best resolve this potential conflict is to invest in both a centralized shared parking deck as well as enhanced pedestrian facilities along existing local streets in the immediate vicinity of the proposed station.

Street Grid. To improve circulation within the Town Center, a retrofitted street grid is proposed as the most logical means to best serve local pedestrian, bicycle, and motorized trips.

Route / Location	Existing Facilities	Future Facilities
South DeKalb Town Center Transit Station	Local MARTA bus routes share common bus stops along SR 155 / Candler Road	Transit Station in the vicinity of the SR 155 / Candler Road and HF Shepherd Drive intersection featuring: direct MARTA buses to downtown Atlanta, Emory shuttle service, GRTA Xpress buses to Perimeter and HJAI Airport, local bus transfers and future conversion to BRT station
	Underutilized Surface Parking Lots	Shared Parking Deck serving the transit station and transit-oriented development (approx 200 spaces, 2 acre site TBD)
	Skeletal sidewalk network in the immediate vicinity of the proposed transit station site	Enhanced sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping and lighting along HF Shepherd Drive, Ember Drive, and Rainbow Way
South DeKalb Town Center Connectivity	Inadequate local street network	Improve local circulation with street and path connections, especially east of SR 155 / Candler Road

Shared Use Path Network

Facilities lacking. Because there are no existing rights of way dedicated to non-motorized travel, bicyclists and pedestrians are forced to use the street network as the primary means of circulation. Some existing local streets adequately serve automotive and non-motorized travel, especially where continuous ADA-compliant sidewalks and on-street bike lanes are present. However, there is an obvious lack of bike/pedestrian facilities accommodating bicycle or pedestrian trips of any significant length.

The plan calls for a network of shared use paths along greenways and existing rights of way in order to serve as truly alternative routes to travel along the major roadway network.

Route / Location	Existing Facilities	Future Facilities
South River Trail (Atlanta to Panola Mountain)	N/A	Multi-Use Trail (construction funding in place for segment between Atlanta Prison Farm and College)
Shoal Creek Trail (Transit Station / Arts Center / Exchange Park / Columbia Middle School / South River)	N/A	Shared Use Path along Rainbow Drive and Shoal Creek
Shared Use Path (South River / College / South DeKalb Mall / Transit Station)	N/A	Shared Use Path along greenways and existing rights of way. Note: this route is a high priority but has not been identified as a short term project due to complications related to coordination issues with the I-285 / SR 155 interchange project

Major Streets

Local Connectivity and New Routes. Of primary concern for the Study Area is the inadequate network of major streets in the vicinity of the proposed Town Center. For example, Rainbow Drive represents the lone local street serving east-west trips across Shoal Creek in the Town Center vicinity. Similarly, Candler Road is the only public right-of-way accommodating north-south trips across the Town Center. Note that each of the following existing roadways essentially terminate at T-intersections with Candler Road: Ember Drive, HF Shepherd Drive, Rainbow Drive, South Rainbow Drive, Flat Shoals Road, Panthersville Road, and Lumby Drive. In order to operate effectively, the collector street system not only must channel traffic from local streets to the arterial system but also must serve local traffic circulation. Instead of relying on additional capacity along the few existing congested roadways through the Town Center (particularly Candler Road and Rainbow Drive), the plan calls for the provision of new alternative routes intended to create a grid of major streets.

East-West Collector. The premier new roadway proposed is the extension of Flat Shoals Road/Warren Road from Candler Road to Columbia Drive. The proposed route represents the most feasible alignment for a new east-west collector street. The future capacity of this new route will alleviate traffic on Rainbow Drive. Thus, investments on Rainbow Drive may be concentrated on improving traffic operations and providing bike/ped facilities.

Note that the new street alignments displayed in the illustrations are conceptual. Detailed engineering analyses will be required to consider environmental and fiscal constraints before street alignments may be finalized. Futher note that any new roadway capacity which is projected to function as a major collector or greater must be included in the ARC's regional model and examined for consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan. Further investigation is necessary to determine if the proposed extension of Flat Shoals Road/Warren Road from Candler Road to Columbia Drive meets the criteria for a collector street.

Route/Location	Existing Facilities	Future Facilities
Columbia Drive / Clifton Springs Rd from Pvl Rd to I-285	varies 2-4 lanes undivided	4-lane + bike lanes divided by raised urban median
Rainbow Drive from SR 155 to Candler Rd	2-lane undivided	Sidewalks on westbound shoulder (Construction funds are programmed for FY2008); Improve to 2 lane divided, shared use path on eastbound shoulder, enhanced crosswalks and bus stops
Flat Shoals Rd / Warren Road	West of SR 155, 2-lane undivided. Sidewalks on westbound shoulder are not ADA-compliant	Improve sidewalks to ADA-compliance
	East of SR 155, Flat Shoals Road becomes w-lane undivided county-facility "Warren Road" with no sidewalks	Extend as 2-lane divided street to Columbia Drive through county-owned property, including pedestrian facilities; coordinate with New Life Center and Parks Dept
Ember Drive extension	2-lane undivided, ends at apartment complex	Extend as 2-lane divided street to Rainbow Drive, including pedestrian facilities; coordinate with private owners including Green Forest Baptist

Arterial Roadway Network

Several projects are planned along the minor arterials through the LCI Study Area.

Pedestrian facilities and streetscape enhancements along SR 155 / Candler Road through the Town Center are scheduled for completion by 2009.

Segments of Flat Shoals Parkway and Panthersville Road will be reconstructed as part of the planned I-285 / SR 155 interchange.

Route / Location	Existing Facilities	Future Facilities
SR 155 from Clifton Springs to Pvl Rd	4-lane divided (median design varies)	6-lane + bike lanes divided by raised urban median (part of I-285 / SR 155 interchange project)
SR 155 from Pvl Rd northward	4-lane divided by turn lanes	Enhancement including sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, median refuge, enhanced crosswalks and bus stops (Construction funds programmed for FY2008)
SR 155 from Clifton Springs Rd southward	4-lane divided (median design varies)	6-lane + bike lanes divided by raised urban median
Panthersville Rd from Clifton Springs to SR 155	4-lane undivided	4-lane + bike lanes divided by dual left turn lanes (part of I-285 / SR 155 interchange project)

Arterial Access Management

The levels of service of both SR 155 and Panthersville Road are forecast to decrease. DeKalb County's Comprehensive Transportation Plan includes mid- and long-range projects to add lanes to these routes. However, adding capacity (i.e. lanes) to these routes is not only cost prohibitive but also degrades the environment for local circulation by non-motorized means. The proposed approach to containing traffic growth on these routes constitutes the framework for an access management plan and is three-fold:

- *Leverage private development dollars to improve connectivity of the local street grid to support the arterial system*.

  Historically, local governments like DeKalb County looked to federal grants to improve arterial routes; such grants are increasingly competitive and limited. Based on the market analysis, the Study Area is poised to capture the attention of private investors. Thus, it is recommended that DeKalb County concentrate on leveraging private dollars to improve the local transportation system. Private redevelopment plans must be held in compliance with the LCI plan both in terms of literal interpretation of the transportation plan and in honoring the key design principles underlying the plan.

- *Strictly regulate direct access to the arterial system.*

  Though Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway is itself under state jurisdiction (SR 155), DeKalb County plays a critical role of in land use decision making that affects access to the state route. Strict access restrictions must be adopted into local land use and zoning regulations in order to preserve the operational capacity of the arterials. Additionally, site plans for all properties within ¼ mile of an arterial (not just those fronting the arterial) should be reviewed for consistency with access management principles (such as inter-parcel connectivity) so that local trips are not completely dependent on the arterial streets.

- *Ensure that public investments in the arterial system are consistent with pedestrian design and access management principles.*

  Urban design guidelines often contradict auto-centric transportation design standards. Where local, regional, and/or state funds are to be directly invested in along an arterial corridor, DeKalb County must stay involved through the design and construction phases in order to ensure consistency with the original intent of the principles underlying the LCI plan.

Interstate System

As previously mentioned, a variety of transportation facilities have been proposed by state and regional transportation planners for inclusion in long range plans for the I-20 east corridor (including a dedicated busway for bus rapid transit, additional mainline capacity, HOV lanes, HOV interchanges, truck lanes, and collector-distributor lanes). GDOT is presently attempting to develop a concept plan for I-20 which would accommodate as many of these facilities as possible within the constraints of funding, right of way, and operational logistics. The following plan specifies the improvements along I-20 and I-285 which would most improve access to the LCI Study Area and complement the LCI Plan for a viable Town Center.

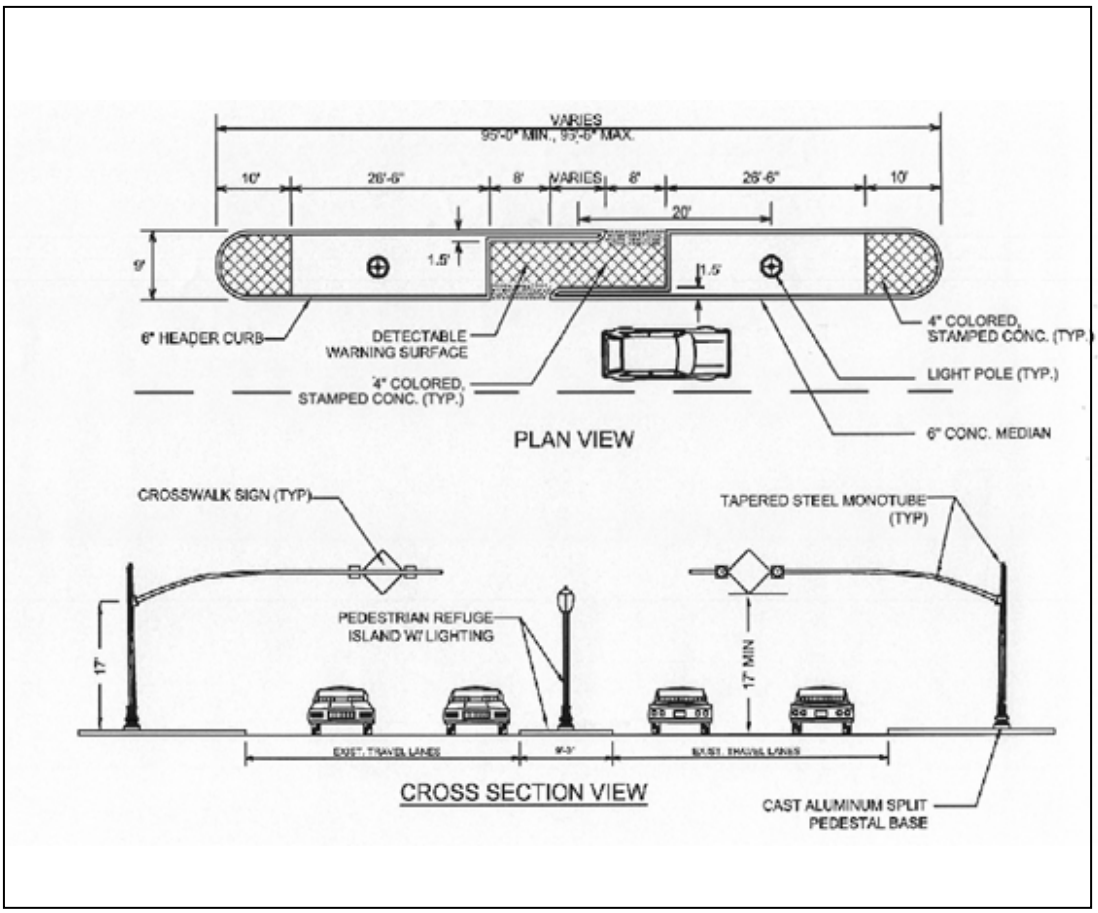
The following elements are particularly noted as being newly conceived during the LCI planning process:

- full diamond access to I-20 collector-distributor lanes from Columbia Drive;
- I-20 HOV drop ramps at Lloyd Road;
- I-285 HOV drop ramps at Panthersville Road or Columbia Road.

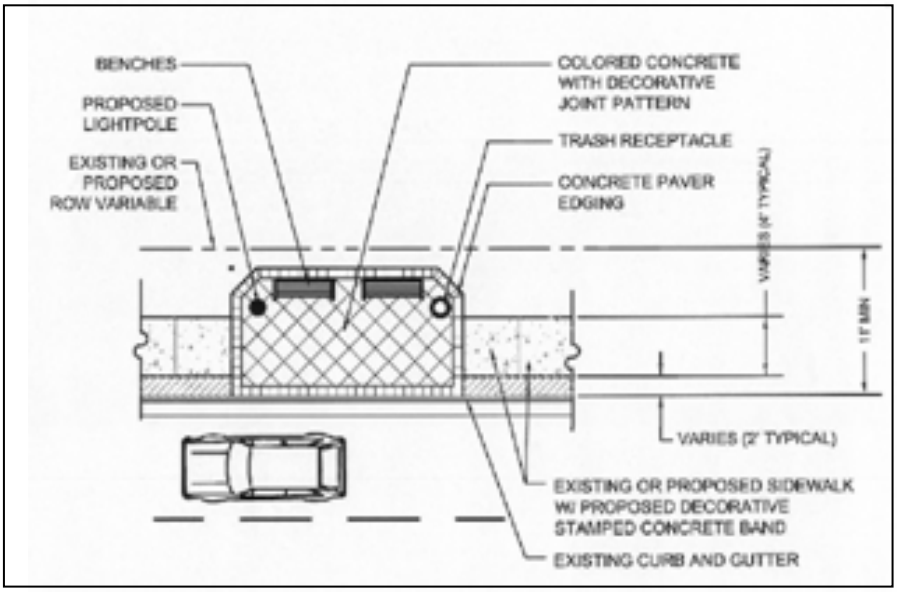
Route/Location	Existing Facilities	Future Facilities
I-20 Corridor	Mainline capacity: 8 lanes drop to 6 lanes at Columbia Drive; Full diamond at SR 155 / Candler Rd, half diamond at Columbia Dr	Capacity to 4-lanes each direction + collector/distributor lanes (Engineering and Right of Way funding are programmed); westbound access to mainline and eastbound access to CD lanes at SR 155 / Candler Rd; full diamond access to CD lanes at Columbia Dr
	HOV lanes end at Columbia Drive; No dedicated HOV access	Extend HOV lanes eastward to Evans Mill Rd (Construction funding programmed for 2010); HOV drop ramp at Lloyd Rd
	MARTA Blue Flyer & Xpress Bus Routes; No Local Stops	BRT Busway (Alternatives Analysis Complete; Construction funding is long range); Short Range Transit Station converts to Long Range BRT station @ SR 155 / Candler Rd
I-285 Corridor Mainline	Mainline Capacity: 8 lanes	Long Range may include HOV and/or CD system; HOV drop ramps at Panthersville Rd or Columbia Dr
I-285 / SR 155 Interchange	Full diamond at SR 155 / Candler Rd	Improvement to full diamond at SR 155 / Candler Rd (Engineering and Right of Way funding are programmed)

C-5. Transportation Design Illustrations

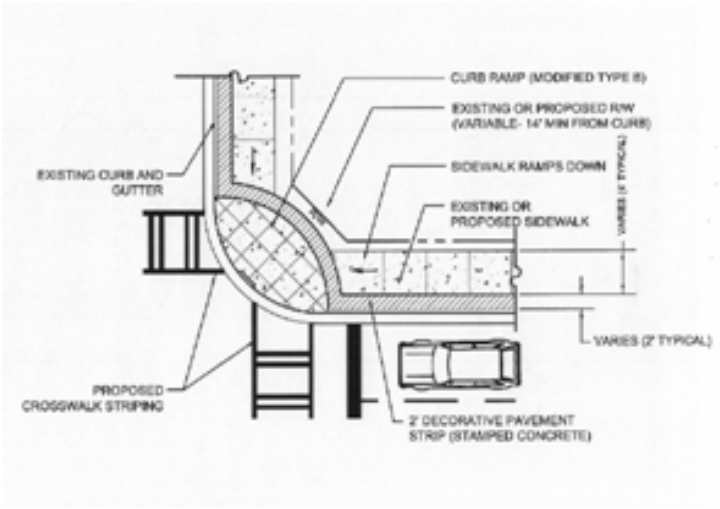
Median Refuge Island



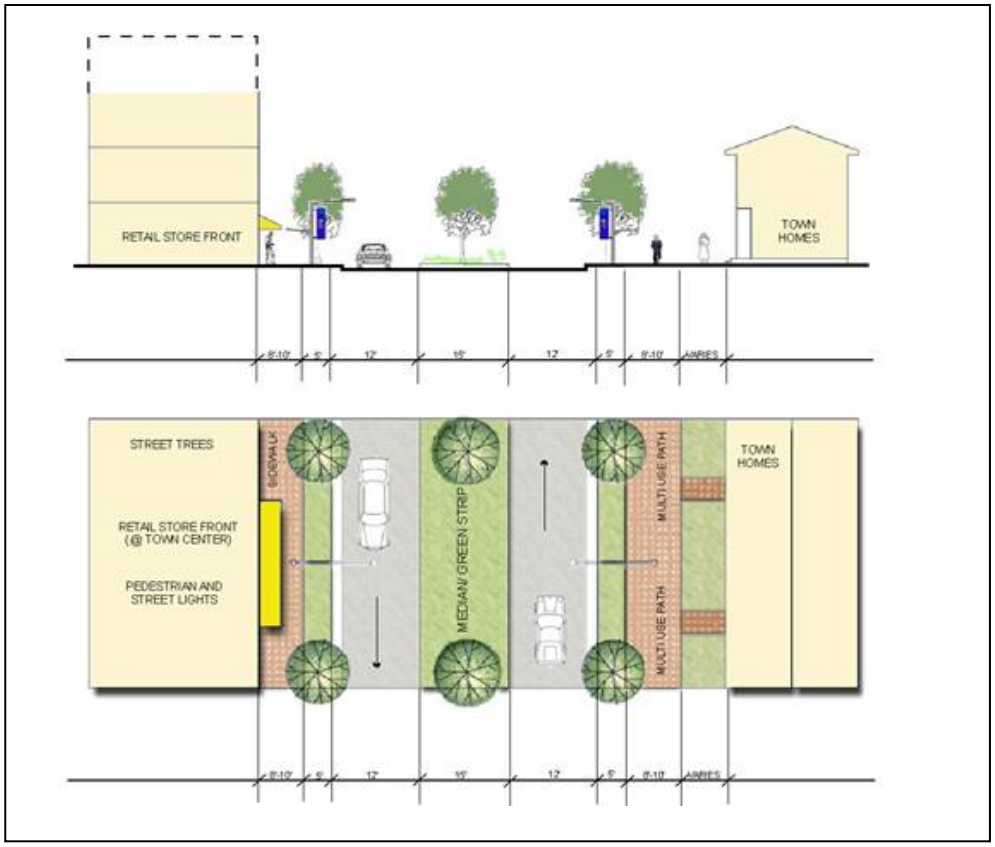
Bus Stop Seating Area



Typical Intersection Detail

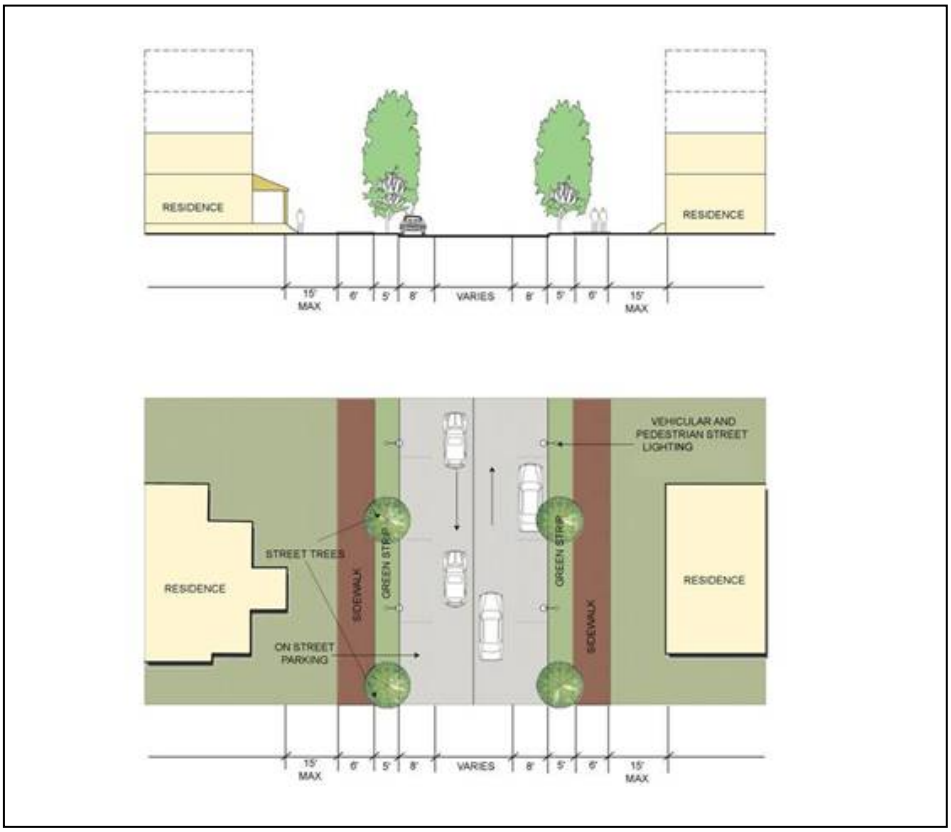


Proposed Town Center Street Section



LANDSCAPED MEDIAN, SHARED USE PATH, PEDESTRIAN REFUGE

Proposed Residential Street Section



MATURE TREES, ON-STREET PARKING, TRAFFIC CALMING

C-6. Design Principles

Urban Design Principles

In order to ensure that the new development initiatives are in-line with the vision and goals of the community to create vibrant pedestrian-friendly, quality communities, it is imperative that these developments be well designed. Design is critical for creating sustainable and successful communities. It is recommended that a study be commissioned to develop detail design guidelines. In the interim, it is essential to establish broad design principles that can guide the development.

It is difficult to foresee the future; hence it is important to provide the flexibility in land use, density and design. In this respect the design principles focus on the form and character of these developments rather than specificity with the goal of realizing a quality end product. The key to successful and sustainable communities are the scale of the streets, street grids and network, relationship of buildings to streets and with each other, the streetscape and landscape, integrated parking, variety of uses and mix of uses and activities, visual and aesthetic quality, walkability and pedestrian oriented, public realm, and open spaces. These qualities create unique identity and sense of place for a community.

The following design principles should be kept in mind as the detailed design guidelines and standards are developed.

<u>Mix of Uses and Activities</u>

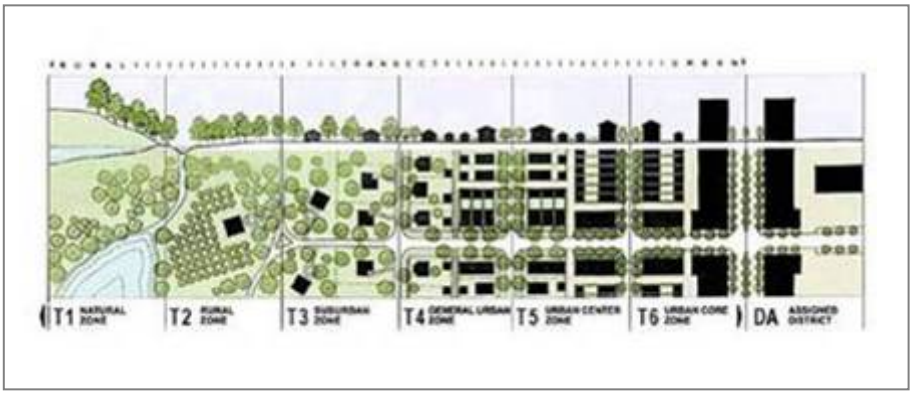
Diverse mix of uses is important for the identity of the community. It enriches the quality of life and allows for social interaction and strengthens the community fabric. Various compatible and complementary uses feed off each other and support the functioning of each other. It draws a diverse clientele as well. As the various uses expand it generates more pedestrian traffic that adds to the vitality and quality of life. The size and location of these mixed use nodes are critical.

<u>Density</u>

Successful urban places thrive on density; they tend to locate in high-density areas. This allows for people to live, work and play in close proximity. It offers pedestrian friendly

environments. A critical mass helps create self-sustaining community. The appropriate density depends on the location and the mix of uses that are desired. Mixed use areas thrive on higher density. The densities decrease as it moves away from these nodes toward the residential neighborhoods as suggested in the Concept Plan.

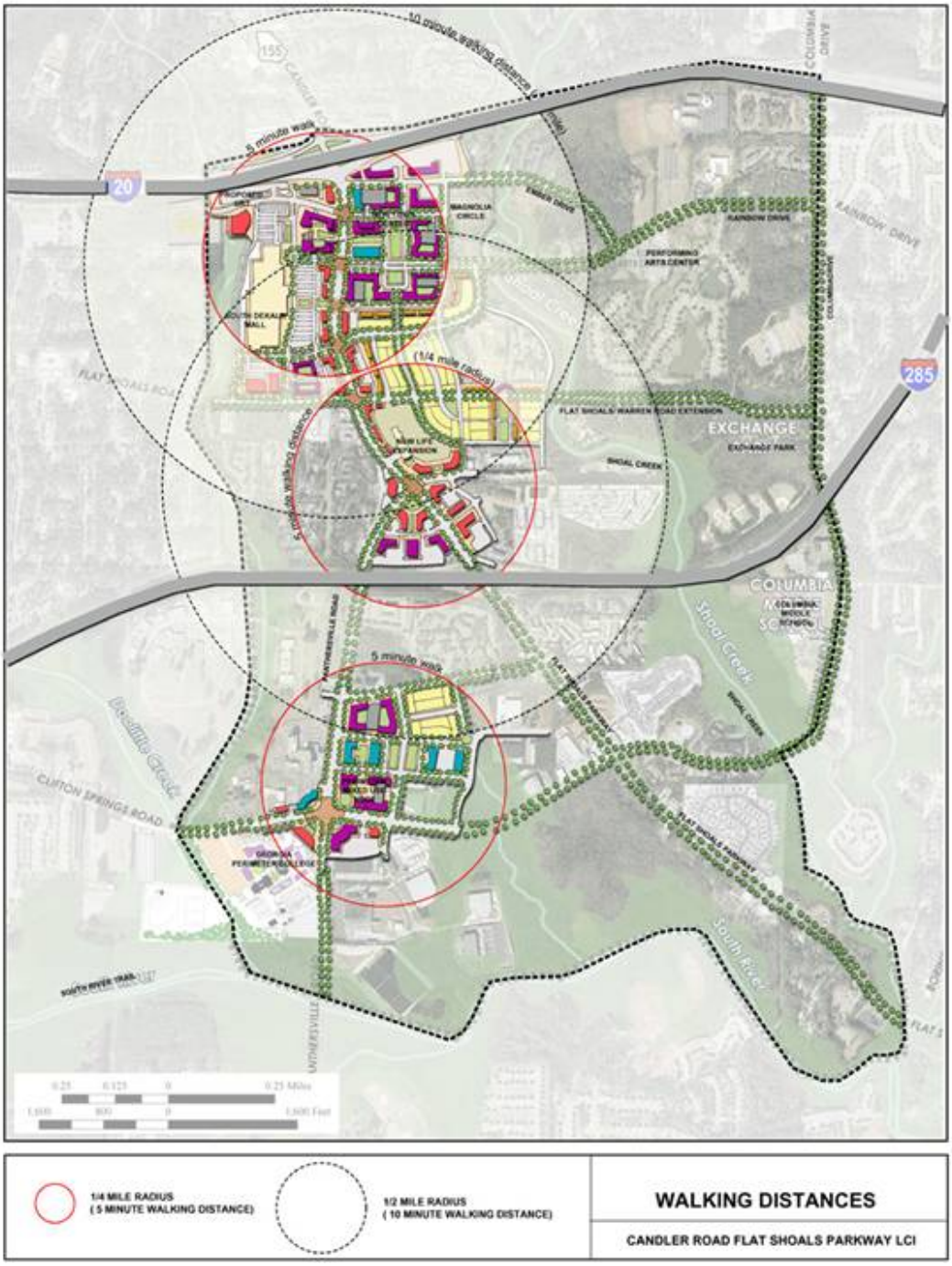
A Transect as illustrated below offers varied density within walking distance and supports full life cycle choices.



A Transect offers varied densities within walking distance

The following map illustrates how the proposed Concept Plan for the Study Area concentrates the most intense, mixed use development in walkable centers.

Walkable Centers of Development



1/4 MILE RADIUS
(5 MINUTE WALKING DISTANCE)

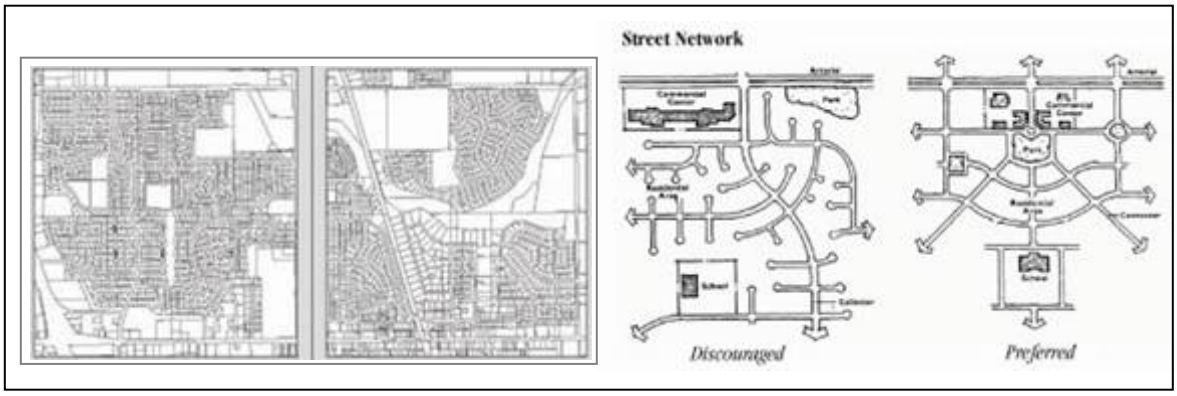
1/2 MILE RADIUS
(10 MINUTE WALKING DISTANCE)

WALKING DISTANCES

CANDLER ROAD FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY LCI

Street Network and Grid

A good street grid network is very critical for pedestrian friendly environment. A good network facilitates vehicular flow and offers multiple paths of travel, distributes the traffic and alleviates the traffic grid lock that the typical suburban development is often faced with. The size of these streets is critical for creating the pedestrian scale streets and promoting pedestrian safety. The transportation network need not completely be installed by public investment in new rights of way. Inter-parcel connectivity should be provided which facilitate movement between parcels without requiring to get out on the main roads. Private Roads and access easements play an important role. The residential street grids should be compact in order to cater to pedestrian travel.



A dense Street Network offers multiple paths of travel by non-motorized means.

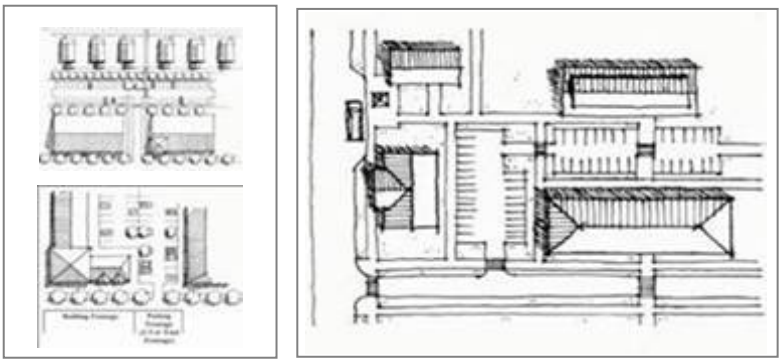
Streets and Street Life

The quality of streets reflects the quality of the community and quality of life. The width of the streets, tree planting, sidewalks, street furniture, paving texture, bike lanes add to the pedestrian experience and safety. It not only enhances the pedestrian experience, it also enriches the vehicular experience. Lively streets are the hallmark of great urban places. It gives reason for the people to be on the street. The streets are not merely a two dimensional surface, but are public spaces; they are the nervous system of urban fabric. It is essential that the buildings and streets inter-relate to one another to facilitate the pedestrian experience. Special attention has to be given to the streetscape, such as lighting, signage, street furniture, paving texture, art work and other elements that contribute to the quality of streets.

Lively pedestrian streets act as public spaces.

Parking and Inter-parcel Connectivity

Parking should be provided below or behind the buildings and any residual small sections of parking on the street or alongside buildings should be provided with landscape buffer/screens.



Inter Parcel connectivity ensures minimum local traffic on main roads

Pedestrian Friendly

Quality of space depends on whether are people in it. It is critical to give precedence to pedestrians over the automobile. This gives opportunity for the pedestrians to walk and experience the urban spaces. Pedestrian safety is an integral part of this effort, to ensure, pedestrian crossings, traffic calming are provided. Such environments give an alternative option for people to walk instead of using their cars.

Public Spaces

Creating good and active public spaces are critical. A hierarchy of public spaces and gathering spaces should be provided that offer opportunity for an array of activities; public plazas, extended streetscape, pedestrian boulevards, civic greens and other elements facilitates public activities and social interaction. A well defined focal point gives unique identity, orientation and sense of place. Landscape elements such as fountains, water bodies, art installations, enhance the visual quality and experience of the public realm. Such spaces make the community sustainable over long periods of time. Spaces such as amphitheatre or podium or civic greens for civic activities should be provided for recreation and entertainment.

Town Green/ Public plaza

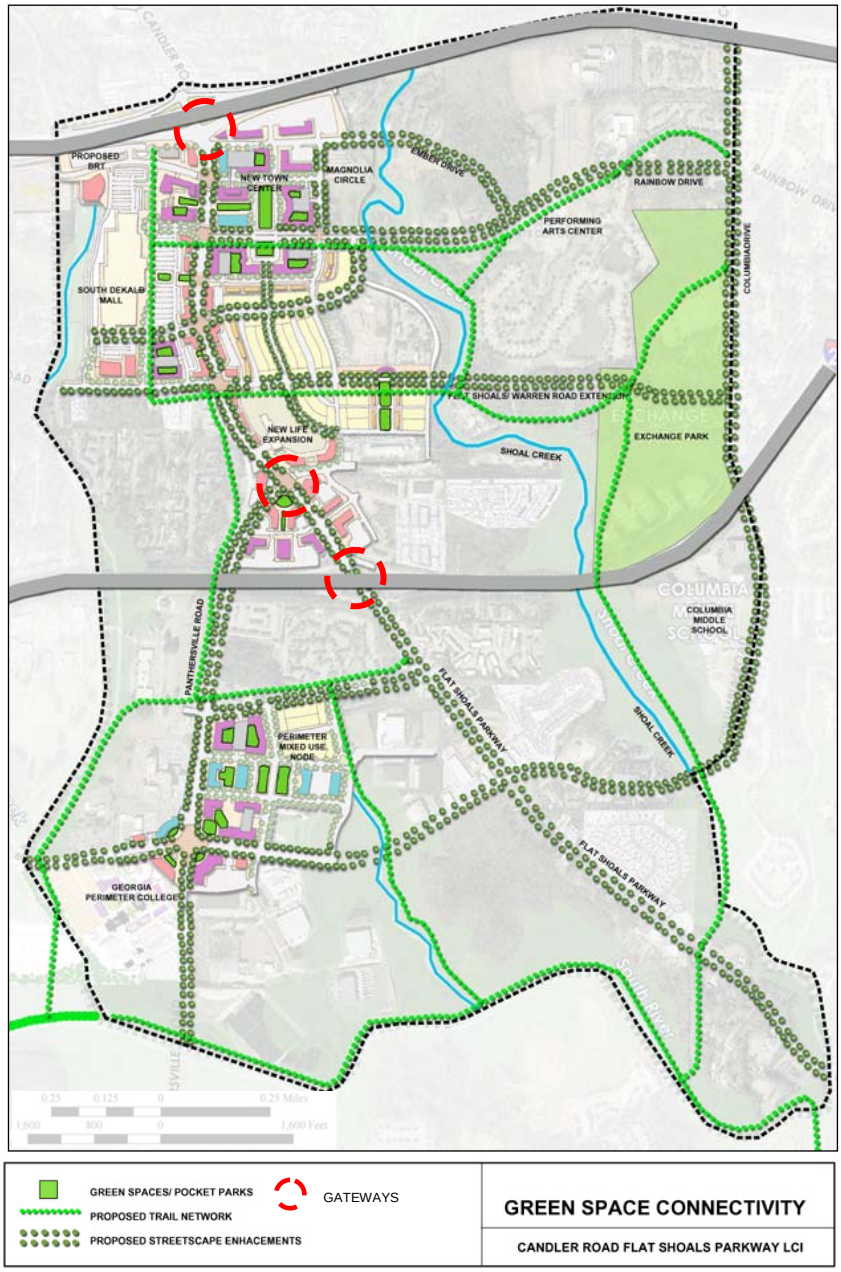
Parks, Open Spaces and Trails

Amenities such as parks and trails should be provided throughout the community. Natural open spaces such as floodplains, natural buffers, etc. should be preserved. Creating a connected green space system would enhance the natural areas of the community. In residential areas, pocket parks should be provided within 5 minute walking radius for the residents. A larger community park that offers an array of active and passive recreation should be provided; activities such as ball fields, picnic areas, large open green space for festivals and large gathering. A good network of multi-purpose trails for bike and pedestrians should be provided that offer opportunity for connecting different parts of the neighborhood and community. Such pathways should be designed to serve not only recreational but also mobility purposes.

Connect Greenspace and Activity Centers by Trails and Bike Paths

Green Space Connectivity

The following map illustrates the network of greenspace and trails proposed for the LCI Study Area. Note that the proposed trails and streetscape enhancements not only serve as recreational amenities but also facilitate and encourage circulation by pedestrians and bicyclists.



GREEN SPACES/ POCKET PARKS
PROPOSED TRAIL NETWORK
PROPOSED STREETSCAPE ENHACEMENTS
GATEWAYS

GREEN SPACE CONNECTIVITY

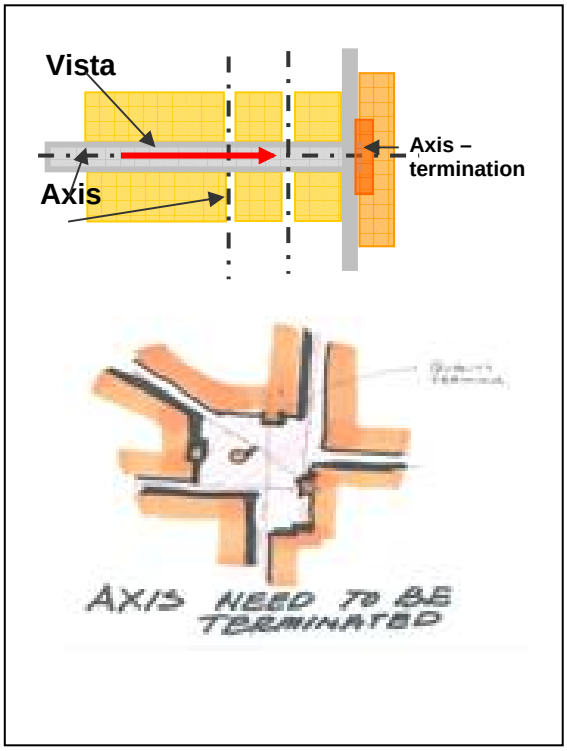
CANDLER ROAD FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY LCI

Civic Amenities

New investments in civic amenities (community center, library, fire station, school, amphitheatre, museum, and other public urban-scale facilities) should be considered for location in the Town Center. These not only provide an amenity to the community, but it enriches the public realm and quality of life of the residents. Such diverse activities will render uniqueness to the community. These amenities act as catalyst for private development and investment. Public-private partnership is encouraged in creating these amenities that benefit both the public and the private sector. People take pride and ownership with these facilities and the community.

Good Design

Good urban design is the hallmark of great community. Attention has to be paid to the mass, scale, color, material, texture, proportion, siting of buildings, form of the buildings. Buildings have to relate to each other and the street and the public realm, especially the ground level where the pedestrians engage with the building, the store fronts, canopies, entrances and others. Creating axis and vistas and culminating in good buildings are important to the urban fabric; these elements give character to the place, sense of place, enclosure and orientation to the users and pedestrians.



Good Urban Design – Enhancing the public realm

Sustainable Communities

Sustainability is very critical to the survival and endurance of the community. Offering life cycle housing options that can retain people throughout their life will ensure the longevity of the residence and the community. Preserving natural areas and resources, such as creeks, forests, flood plains, historic and cultural resources and significant buildings such as churches, cemeteries, are crucial to the sustainability of the community. Accomodating a variety of uses, activities and pedestrian friendly environment with jobs to housing balance leads to healthy community. Compact walkable environments not only promote social interaction but a healthy life style. Building forms that provide flexibility for adapting to different uses and functions are encouraged. Large paved parking areas should be avoided and should be supplemented with tree planting and pervious surfaces wherever feasible. Use of environmental building materials, energy efficient systems and building design, promotes healthy living and sustainable environment. An effort should be made to have the buildings LEED certified. All of these efforts are critical for the long term sustainability of the community.

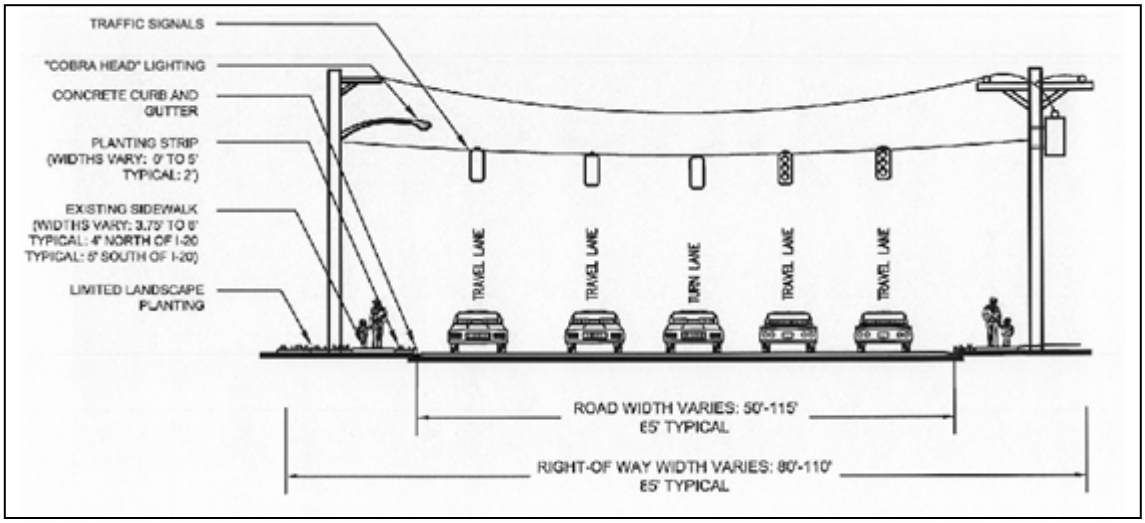
C-7. Urban Design Challenges

Overhead Utility Lines

Overhead utility lines are one of the major contributing factors to visual clutter along the Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway corridor. Tall wooden poles in combination with the large number and complex pattern of lines create a congested and unsightly visual environment. The poles occupy valuable pedestrian space and in some cases are dangerously close to the traffic lanes.

Overhead power lines

Utility poles take away valuable pedestrian space



Existing section of Candler road

Ideally all utility lines should be located underground. The placement of underground electric power lines, telephone, and cable enhances the visual appearance of roadways, reduces vehicle safety hazards, provides a safer pedestrian environment and also, due to the elimination of above-ground poles, reduces the cost of maintenance.

However, it is an established fact that although the long-term benefits of underground utilities are attractive, it is not typically fiscally feasible for government to place the overhead electric power lines underground unless the private sector pays for the cost. Thus, the public sector should implement appropriate measures that minimize the visual impact of these overhead power lines. Following are some techniques that can be implemented to reduce visual clutter of these overhead utilities along main corridors:

Consolidating Utility Pole Usage

The joint use of poles is the most useful technique in reducing the visual impact of the utility poles. Joint use refers to the process of securing agreements from the public works departments, traffic agencies and utility companies to combine several different types of components onto one pole thereby reducing the number of poles along a corridor. All overhead utilities should be bundled together where possible on stronger/taller steel poles.

Stronger steel poles allow bundling of utilities

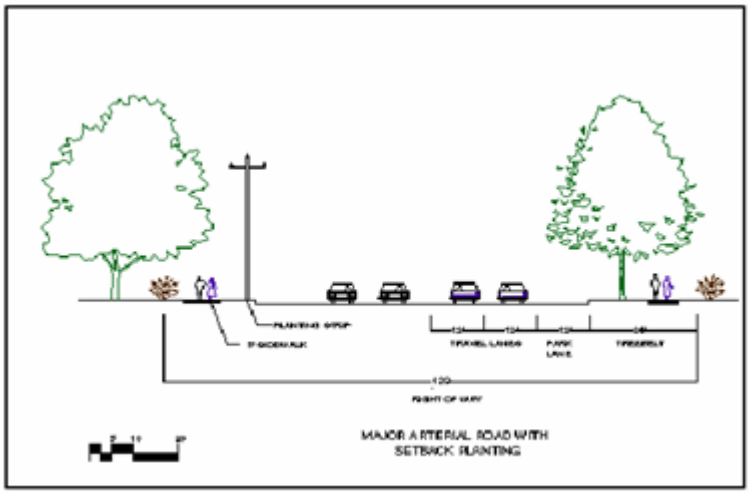
Utility consolidation at Emory village, Atlanta

Relocating Power Lines

Another way to reduce visual clutter on main streets/ corridors is to relocate the overhead utility lines to less visible corridors, such as alleyways.

Landscape Treatment

Planting street trees reduces the impact of these utility lines at the pedestrian level. Where there are existing overhead utility lines, wider landscape buffers/green strips should be provided to provide adequate planting area for full canopy trees. This allows for sufficient room for the street tree to grow without reaching the clearance distance from the utility lines. Another alternative is to provide smaller understory trees so that the tree foliage does not interfere with the power lines.

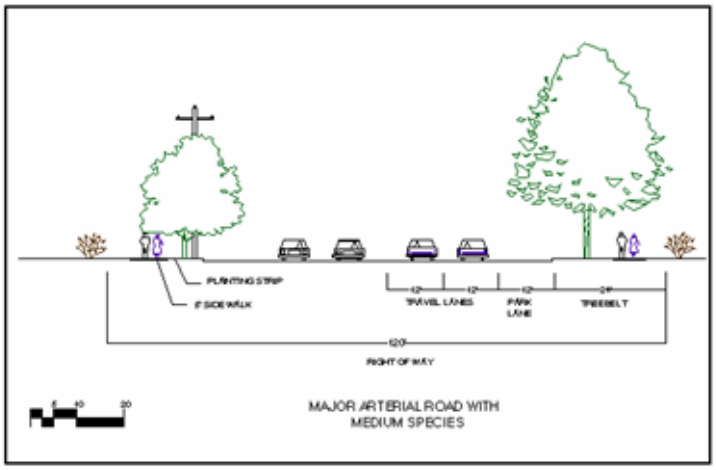


Setback planting – Wider green strips

(Source: Street trees, overhead distribution and physical infrastructure: Design Implications, Maintenance costs and design alternatives)

Planting smaller understory trees

(Source: Street trees, overhead distribution and physical infrastructure: Design Implications, Maintenance costs and design alternatives)



Recommended Actions

Currently the Candler Road corridor does not have an overhead utility management system in place thereby creating a visually cluttered environment. All utility lines including power, telephone and cable are supported on individual wooden poles all along the corridor. The county traffic signals, MARTA signage etc. is also supported on these utility poles.

To develop a relocation/consolidation plan for the corridor, it is essential for the county to establish a dialogue with the primary utility provider (Georgia Power). It might also be that some of the upgrades that the county desires be a part of the Utility Company's capital improvement plan which will allow the county to coordinate the corridor improvement with some of the planned utilities work.

Any new infrastructure the county invests in should be kept independent of these existing utility poles. All streetlights, signage and traffic signals and other street furniture should be well coordinated within a common design aesthetic and should be be mounted on independent structures so as not to be dependent on the utility poles.

In accordance with the Master Plan, the county should concentrate efforts on utility consolidation/relocation in the proposed Town Center. This prioritization will allow the county to negotiate for a phased strategy for utility consolidation/relocation so that the costs are spread over time to accommodate budget constraints.

Signage

Guidelines affect signs put in place by new businesses, but many existing signs along Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway are non-conforming. Several measures can encourage replacement of non-conforming signs, including:

- providing a size bonus for a new sign if the old sign is removed by a certain date;
- offering to remove the nonconforming sign without charge to the owner;
- offering a cash incentive or a tax credit for the removal of nonconforming signs;
- conditioning any rezonings, variances, or conditional use permits on the removal of nonconforming signs; and
- requiring the removal of nonconforming signs any time there is a change in the certificate of occupancy or business license for the premise.

SECTION D. IMPLEMENTATION

This section includes

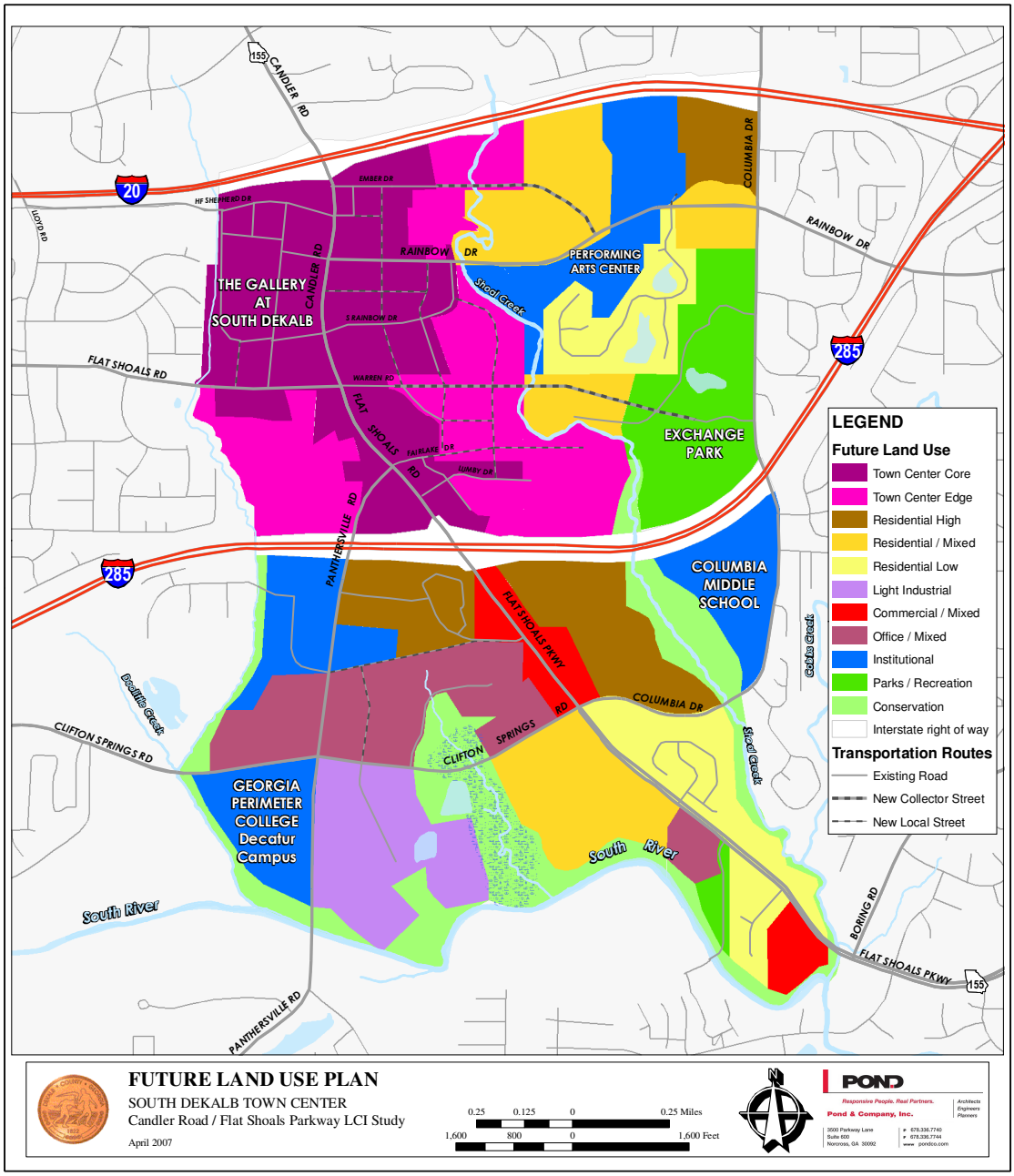
- Land Use Policy and Regulations
- Economic Development Strategies
- Funding Strategies
- Five Year Action Plan

D-1. Land Use Policy and Regulations

The following Land Use and Zoning recommendations will lay the regulatory framework for successfully implementing the Master Plan and Development Plan. The proposed recommendations result from an analysis that synthesized community workshop results with market realities and existing land use trends.

As mentioned in the Existing Conditions section, the newly adopted DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan identifies Future Development Character areas, which include a Town Center concept for the LCI area, surrounded generally by residential and some isolated campus development. The recommended land uses (mapped on the following page) refine the character areas defined by the County's Future Development Map into a concrete vision.

First, it is recommended that **the Comprehensive Plan be amended to include this detailed subarea land use map as a guide for zoning and development decisions** made for the South DeKalb LCI subarea. This provides the policy direction for developing zoning regulations and incentives that permit and promote the kind of development envisioned by the LCI Master Plan.


CANDLER RD
155
20
285
EMBER DR
HF SHEPHERD DR
LLOYD RD
RAINBOW DR
COLUMBIA DR
THE GALLERY AT SOUTH DEKALB
S RAINBOW DR
Shoal Creek
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
FLAT SHOALS RD
WARREN RD
FAIRLAKE DR
LUMBY DR
EXCHANGE PARK
PANTHERSVILLE RD
FLAT SHOALS PKWY
COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Cobb's Creek
Bedlite Creek
CLIFTON SPRINGS RD
GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE Decatur Campus
South River
BORING RD
LEGEND
Future Land Use
Town Center Core
Town Center Edge
Residential High
Residential / Mixed
Residential Low
Light Industrial
Commercial / Mixed
Office / Mixed
Institutional
Parks / Recreation
Conservation
Interstate right of way
Transportation Routes
Existing Road
New Collector Street
New Local Street
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN
SOUTH DEKALB TOWN CENTER
Candler Road / Flat Shoals Parkway LCI Study
April 2007
0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles
1,600 800 0 1,600 Feet
N
POND
Responsive People. Real Partners.
Pond & Company, Inc.
Architects Engineers Planners
3500 Parkway Lane
Suite 600
Norcross, GA 30092
p 678.336.7740
f 678.336.7744
www pondco.com

The plan envisions a distinction between the core of the Town Center and the edge of the Town Center where uses become less intense further from a focal point within the Center. The following narratives capture the general intent of Land Use Categories proposed for the Study Area; these categories, along with the urban design components, should orient the creation of specific zoning districts that achieve the overall Master Plan.

Town Center Core	Compact, high density, mixed-use districts with high design standards targeting an 80% Commercial/20% Residential mix
Town Center Edge	Compact, high density, mixed-use districts with high design standards targeting an 20% Commercial/80% Residential mix to transition to surrounding, less intense uses
Residential High	High density residential that corresponds to zoning densities under DeKalb's existing high density land use category
Residential/Mixed	Planned neighborhoods that allow a mix of high quality town-home and single-family units (which average out to medium density), incorporate Traditional Neighborhood Development principles
Residential Low	Planned neighborhoods that do not exceed 4 units to the acre and reward clustering of units to create greater percentage of open space
Light Industrial	Land dedicated to business and research parks, light assembly, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities
Commercial/Mixed	Primarily retail, office, service and entertainment development that allows some residential and/or office when proposed within a planned, mixed-use development
Office/Mixed	Primarily office, service and medical developments that allow some residential and/or ancillary retail when proposed within a planned, mixed-use development
Institutional	Civic and educational, large-scale medical and religious.
Parks/Recreation	Parks, athletic fields and recreation centers
Conservation	This category identifies streams, buffers, flood plain and other protected, natural features within the study area.

Second, DeKalb County should create an Overlay District that: (1) repeals the portion of the existing Design Corridor Overlay on Candler Road; (2) incorporates elements of that Overlay as appropriate; (3) establishes incentives to address the imposition that over-sized signage and utility lines create along Candler Road and (4) establishes density bonuses for the Town Center Core, along with other incentives to achieve the grid pattern and new local roads (namely Ember Drive).

Third, as the County considers new zoning regulations, mixed-use zoning categories should be created that allow: (1) Residential districts with a mix of product type (townhome with single family residential); (2) Office and Commercial mixed-use districts that allow office with retail and some residential; (3) Commercial-heavy mixed use (80% commercial with 20% residential); and, (4) Residential-heavy mixed use (20% commercial with 80% residential). Furthermore, these mixed-use districts should (1) provide density bonuses and (2) allow flexible performance standards in exchange for higher design standards, streetscape improvements and grid-patterned roads.

D-2. Economic Development Strategies

The Master Plan section details the Economic Development objectives for the Study Area. This section describes strategies for achieving those objectives, along with specific measures to fund the public/private development efforts, culminating in preliminary data analysis regarding what a Tax Allocation District would portend for Study Area investment and economic growth.

Key Development Participants

Clearly, the implementation initiative must include the entire community, as well as elected officials, County administrative staff, decision-makers throughout the public sector and, perhaps the most critical participants, the private sector as represented by (1) the current owners of property and/or businesses within the Study Area and particularly those within/on identified development sites, and (2) developers and investors who can actually see that the development happens, whether as part of a public-private partnership or as a private-only venture.

The overall list of key development participants includes the following:

- Area Business Owners & Residents
- Private Owners
  - Rainbow Village
  - South DeKalb Plaza
  - Gallery at South DeKalb
  - Federated Dept. Stores (Macy's)
- Private Developers

- DeKalb County CEO & Administrative Departments
  - Office of Economic Development
  - Planning
  - Community Development
  - Parks and Recreation
- DeKalb County Commission
- DeKalb County School System/Board of Education
- Development Authority of DeKalb County
- ARC, GDOT, MARTA, GRTA

Basic Development Strategies

Facilitating real development within the Study Area rests on the ability of the County in particular to attract private investment into the area through the County's "toolbox" of economic development incentives. Specific approaches and objectives include the following:

- Formation of Public-Private Partnerships for land assemblage & redevelopment
- Conversion of DeKalb County land within the Study Area into private developments
- Creation of a Tax Allocation District for initial funding of both public and private improvements
- Creation of a Community Improvement District

Implementation Strategies

There are specific steps that could and should be taken within the next several months to begin implementing the recommendations of this study. These steps involve the creation of a Tax Allocation District and soliciting private developers and the investment they can bring to the area.

1. Create a Tax Allocation District encompassing most of the Study Area (*Office of Economic Development*):
   - Prepare a TAD Redevelopment Plan incorporating most all of the LCI Study Area
   - Refine the Development Plan recommended within the LCI Study based on identified property owner, business owner/retailer and developer interest
   - Determine the current taxable value of all property within the proposed TAD
   - Project increases in the current taxable value of property within the TAD over the next 25 years based on anticipated new development as well as appreciation of existing property within the TAD
   - Calculate the amount and timing of anticipated TAD bonds supported by incremental tax revenues generated within the TAD over the next 25 years
   - Secure approval of the TAD by the DeKalb County Commission
   - Secure approval of the TAD by the DeKalb County Board of Education
   - Create the TAD formally as of December 31, 2007
2. Determine the likelihood of assembling Rainbow Village and South DeKalb Plaza, including out-parcels fronting Candler Road based on owners' interests, valuation of property, and willingness to sell or to participate *(DeKalb Development Authority and Office of Economic Development).*
3. Identify interested developers and/or development teams with the capacity to participate in the area's redevelopment, including the following:
   - North American
   - Sembler
   - Thomas
   - Cousins
   - Local area developers
4. In addition to developers, identify area and regional brokers regarding major retailers they may represent.

5. In conjunction with current ownership/management of the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall, contact Federated regarding Macy's store. Discuss continued operation or sale of the store and/or auto store.
6. Research the status of the site northeast of the Clifton Springs and Panthersville Road intersection which was rezoned for commercial use in 2004. Identify and contact participating broker/representative to discuss potential for moving Kroger from Rainbow Village to this site as anchor for neighborhood shopping center.
7. Identify and contact residential developers regarding townhome development along the Town Center periphery streets (especially Ember Drive and S. Rainbow Drive). Also discuss townhome development in perimeter locations at the Gallery at South DeKalb Mall.
8. Contact Patillo regarding industrial development plans as well as professional (medical) office development, particularly along Clifton Springs Road behind the proposed Kroger center, at "South DeKalb Health Center" collection of outdated offices, within Patillo's Perimeter East Industrial Center on sites fronting Clifton Springs and along Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway and Panthersville Road corridors.

If created this year by the County and approved by the School System (thereby committing the School System's incremental property tax revenues generated within the TAD to the support of TAD bonds that are issued), the TAD would become effective the last day of the year. If new tax revenues were projected to be sufficient to support TAD bonds, those bonds could be issued as early as 2008, although our projections present a timeframe that would not allow bonds to be issued until 2010.

The LCI Study recognizes that the DeKalb County School System has not lent support to the TAD concept. Given however that the Middle School located within the Study Area is a new school that already needs some improvements, and that it is also designated as a Parent Resource center, this particular TAD may be attractive to the School System since the school itself could obtain dedicated revenue streams for capital improvements.

Strategies for Neighborhood Economic Development

While specific steps related to the LCI Study Area are recommended, there are basic development strategies that can be applied to almost any community, the Study Area included. Many if not most of these strategies are already being applied in DeKalb County generally and the Study Area specifically, but the preparation of this LCI Plan may provide an excellent time to re-visit and re-examine how they are being applied and what their impact might be.

1. Business retention and expansion
   - At the county level, regularly monitor existing businesses to assure that their needs – facilities, workforce development, financing, etc. – are being met.
   - In collaboration with other businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority and County agencies, public and private colleges, etc., make sure all businesses are aware of county resources available to support existing business operations in the County.
   - Promptly and clearly address issues of public safety, visual/aesthetic conditions of publicly-owned property and right-of-ways, accessibility and roadway conditions.
2. Business recruitment
   - Consider the concept of "clustering" around the business supply chain. Identify dominant industry groups present within the Study Area, such as retail, medical services and education, and begin to recruit other businesses along the supply or distribution chain.
   - Physical clustering of specific types of businesses in order to create sufficient critical mass to attract other compatible companies: for example, the number of dentists and population growth within the Study Area may support specialists in the field, such as orthodontists and oral surgeons, as well as labs and manufacturers/distributors of equipment and supplies. (Mixed use with office space is recommended in several locations, including along Rainbow Drive and Clifton Springs Road.)

- Aggressive Marketing:
  - Prepare and distribute collateral materials with specific messages highlighting the advantages of locating within the Study Area. Similarly, enhance the county's economic development website.
  - Routinely meet with regional and state economic development agents (e.g., DeKalb and Metro Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Power Co., and state Department of Economic Development) to assure that they have most current description of Study Area opportunities, assets and resources.
  - Provide programming consistent with and in support of the "community gathering place" function provided at the Gallery at South DeKalb. In addition to its primary retailing function, the mall has for years hosted community events, celebrations, public meetings, etc. With the proposed expansion of these activities across Candler Road and the introduction of major transit function, the Town Center will become a natural crossroads for residents and commuters.

3. Entrepreneurial Development

Successful economic development and community redevelopment of the metro area's in-town neighborhoods has been largely driven by entrepreneurial output. Areas such as East Atlanta, downtown Decatur, Virginia Highlands and west Midtown (i.e., Northside Drive, Howell Mill Road, etc.) are known for their diverse mix of entrepreneurial shops and businesses as well as a noticeable absence of retail chains and big box retailers. Whether deliberate (as in downtown Decatur) or arbitrary, the absence of major regional or national chains has not deterred the economic development of these areas.

A similar tradition is observed within the Study Area, where a wide range of small businesses thrive. These include business and professional services, medical care, and personal care services. Traditionally and currently, many of these businesses located on Candler Road are housed in converted homes. Others operate as home-based businesses. The potential for growth of these businesses can be enhanced with a program dedicated to small entrepreneurial businesses.

Following are key elements of entrepreneurial development:

- Education and Workforce Development – exploit the continuum of lifelong learning: improving quality of secondary schools and adding career development to the curriculum; job creation/job training opportunities beginning in high school; use of local two-year college for certificate or before transferring to another school; relationships between employers and colleges – do they know about ICAPP and/or Georgia LEADS (customized job training programs) available through Georgia Perimeter College.
- Business incubator facilities: to help new businesses stabilize and grow, the County can support development of small office spaces and the advisory services to help these businesses grow. The County can help facilitate access to advisory and other services (such as from County agencies, Georgia Tech's or University of Georgia's economic development consulting divisions, etc.) An example of small office initiative in the private sector is the new phase at Trinity Office Park, a 40,000 square foot addition to the existing 20,000 facilities. The new building will be styled as executive suites, providing access to shared administrative functions, telecommunications, and meeting/training facilities.
- Micro-financing: increase the marketing and outreach to further the use of financial resources offered by the County to support small businesses. Consider locating an office of DeKalb Enterprise Corp. within the Study Area, possibly co-located with an office of Georgia Tech's Economic Development Institute or UGA's Small Business Development Center.
- Cultivation of sustained community patronage: with the leadership, assistance and support from area churches, community groups and civic associations, encourage local patronage of local businesses. This may include information to local residents on the array of local businesses as well as training and support for businesses to improve delivery of goods and services at their businesses.

D-3. Funding Strategies

Potential Funding Sources

The need for private sector investment and County support to attract that investment can be seen in the limited list of major sources of funding that either are currently available to existing or prospective area land and business owners or could be within 1-2 years include the following:

- Enterprise Zone & Economic Development Enterprise Fund: Defined by demographic characteristics, the Enterprise Zone covers only a small portion of the Candler Road commercial corridor. That portion, however, is important in that it encompasses the existing development between Ember Road and I-20, Rainbow Village and South DeKalb Plaza – a key area for redevelopment and revitalization as the new recommended Town Center.

- Private Bond Financing: A private or public-private development entity could have the DeKalb County Development Authority issue bonds on its behalf. Unless the County guaranteed those bonds, however, they would be supported totally by project revenues and very likely secured by the developer.

- County Bond Financing: DeKalb County could issue and back County General Obligation Bonds. This would impact the County's debt capacity and possibly its credit rating. It would also put implementation of the Development Plan in competition with all other demands on County bonds.

- Atlanta Regional Commission Implementation Grants: The ARC is a likely source of two types of Implementation Grants. The first are small follow-up grants that usually fund market/feasibility studies, preparation of design standards, and designs of public improvements such as trail, roadway and right-of-way landscape/streetscape initiatives. The second are major awards for public improvements recommended in the LCI study, almost exclusively for transit, transportation and trail/linkage programs. The ARC has been hampered in recent years by a reduction in federal funds available to it for such grants.

- DEBCO Revolving Loan Fund and Microloan Program: The incentives are available to qualifying businesses in the Enterprise Zone.

- PATH Foundation, Trust for Public Land and other "Green" Foundations: Both PATH and TPL have been active in the metro Atlanta area. They have been joined in recent years by foundations with interest in greenspace, open space and trail systems, such as the Blank Foundation.

- Community Improvement District: The creation of a district in which business and property owners tax themselves – usually .25-.50 mills – an additional amount to fund such are activities as increased security, sidewalk and landscape improvements, and increased maintenance of visible areas can be very useful in keeping the area at a high level of maintenance, safety and appearance once redevelopment has begun. At the moment there would be serious questions about the ability (or willingness) of current property owners to (1) create such a district or (2) take on the additional financial burden of paying the additional tax. Once redevelopment begins in earnest, however, such a district should be created.

- Private Debt and Equity: Private conventional debt-and-equity financing will continue to be the major source and type of development/redevelopment funding, even if combined with traditional public sector funding incentives.

- Tax Allocation District: A Tax Allocation District (TAD) represents the best source of funding for area development that the public sector can provide. It does not represent an additional tax nor does it reduce tax revenues that the County and School System collect from within the defined TAD.

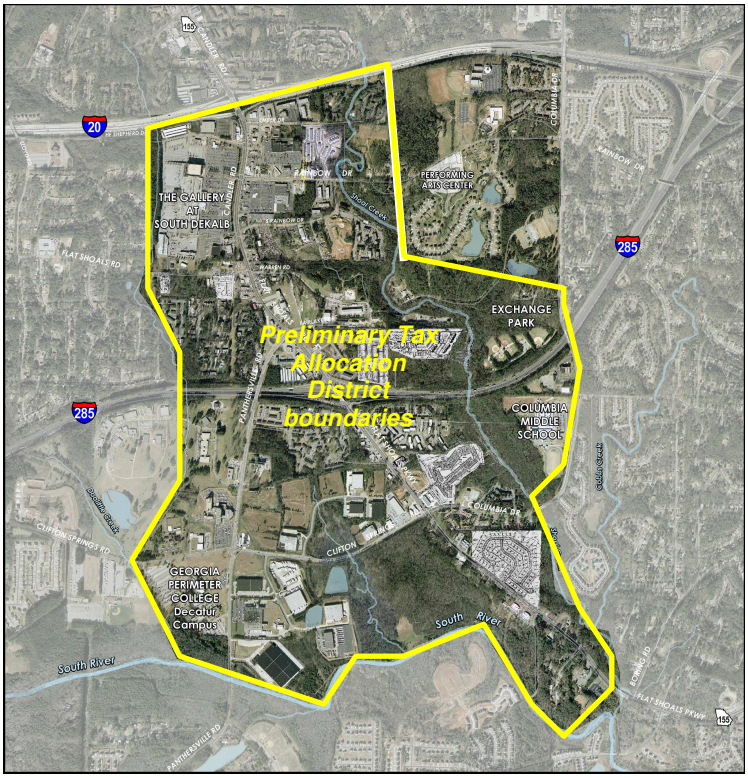
Tax Allocation District (TAD)

Based on our assessment of the development potential within the Study Area, we believe that a TAD should be created that encompasses the majority of the Study Area.

There are two major advantages of a TAD with respect to the implementation of the recommended Development Plan and recommended public improvements.

1. A Candler-Flat Shoals TAD could encompass all major nodes recommended for improvement in the LCI Plan, including:
    - All potential new development sites
    - All potential redevelopment sites
    - All major existing and proposed roadways and traffic corridors

2. A TAD would create a major additional funding source for most Development Plan and public improvements implementation activities, including:
    - Total or matching funds for public/road improvements
    - Land acquisition for private development/redevelopment
    - Private development costs



A TAD could include majority of Study Area:

- Gallery – Town Center retail
- Candler & Flat Shoals Commercial Corridors
- Residential development sites
- New retail & services center

A TAD would allow all entities that levy property taxes in the defined district – in this case DeKalb County and the DeKalb County School System – to commit any new property tax revenues generated within the district after the date of the TAD's creation to servicing bonds issued by the County for implementation activities within the TAD. The TAD bonds are not considered public debt. They are not guaranteed by the County; thus, the taxpayers are not obligated to pay off the bonds if new ("incremental") tax revenues are not sufficient to service (repay with interest) the bonds. The bonds can usually be issued in advance of the actual tax-generating development (they are basically revenue-anticipation bonds), thus allowing the funding of public improvements, land assemblage and other implementation activities that in turn can attract private developers and investors who will create the tax-generating properties.

Projecting only anticipated new tax revenues from the new recommended Development Plan, we believe it is possible to support as much as $29 million – or net proceeds of approximately $25 million after debt service reserves, capitalized interest and issuance costs – from the initial phase of new development alone. Over time, as additional development occurred, as much as $28 million in additional TAD bonds could be supported, although we would recommend that such funding be limited to the initial development period of 4-10 years.

Projected Timing and Amounts of Bond Issues

Year of Issue	Amount of Issue	Cumulative Bonds
2010	**$ 29,225,760**	**$ 29,225,760**
2014	**8,945,682**	**38,171,442**
2018	**8,764,327**	**46,935,769**
2022	**6,777,501**	**53,713,270**
2026	**3,582,872**	**57,296,142**
2030	**-**	**57,296,142**
	$ 57,296,142	

If the TAD has not attracted new development within the first four years, it could be an indication of the TAD's lack of effectiveness as an economic incentive within this area. However, there are numerous examples of TADs in metro Atlanta that have produced excellent results in terms of new development, including the following:

- Atlantic Station
- Camp Creek Marketplace and Princeton Lakes Community
- Villages of Ellenwood residential and retail development
- Eastside TAD
- Westside TAD
- Smyrna Atlanta Road Corridor TAD

Most recently, a TAD was established by the City of Atlanta to encompass and fund its massive Atlanta BeltLine rail, parks and trails project that loops the city's CBD and in-town neighborhoods – primarily the commercial portions, not established residential communities.

The calculations of anticipated bonds were based on a number of factors that are usually applied by bond underwriters who actually purchase the bonds for subsequent sale to pension funds, insurance companies, private equity groups and other major participants in the bond market. Those underwriter criteria include requirements relating to debt service coverage, capitalized interest, debt service reserves and approaches to valuing property for tax purposes.

If the recommended Development Plan is implemented, the following results can be anticipated based on our very preliminary assessment as part of this study:

OVERALL SUMMARY			
Total Supportable TAD Bonds: TAD Term		$ 57,297,000	Yrs 1-25
Total Supportable TAD Bonds: Devel Period		$ 46,936,000	Yrs 1-12
Housing Units Created		590	Units
Retail Square Footage Created		675,000	SF
Office Square Footage Created		215,000	SF
Industrial Square Footage Created		150,000	SF
Permanent Jobs Created		3,110	Jobs
Construction Jobs Created		1,495	Jobs
Total New Development within TAD		$ 239,205,000	
25-Year TAD Addition to Tax Base (100% Value		$ 627,090,000	

D-4. Five Year Action Plan

This section identifies:

- Economic Development Initiatives
- Land Use, Zoning, and Housing Initiatives
- Transportation Initiatives
- Program of Transportation Projects

Economic Development Initiatives (2007-2013)

Specific steps should be taken immediately to begin implementing the economic development recommendations of this study. These include creating the Tax Allocation District and soliciting private developers and the investment they can bring to the area. A tabulated action plan of Economic Development Initiatives follows:

Project ID	Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party(ies)	Potential Funding Source(s)
EDI-1	Create a Tax Allocation District encompassing most of the Study Area	$30,000	07-13	DDA / OED	DeKalb County
EDI-2	Investigate private redevelopment interest in Rainbow Village, South DeKalb Plaza, andout-parcels fronting Candler Road	Staff	07-13	DDA / OED	DeKalb County
EDI-3	Identify private interests with the capacity to participate in the area's redevelopment	Staff	07-13	DDA / OED	DeKalb County
EDI-4	Identify area and regional brokers regarding major retailers they may represent	Staff	07-13	DDA / OED	DeKalb County
EDI-5	Initiate contact with current Gallery at South DeKalb ownership/mgmt and Federated regarding future plans.	Staff	07-13	DDA / OED	DeKalb County
EDI-6	Investigate Kroger relocation to site at Clifton Springs and Panthersville Road.	Staff	07-13	DDA / OED	DeKalb County
EDI-7	Identify and contact residential developers regarding townhome development in the Town Center.	Staff	07-13	DDA / OED	DeKalb County
EDI-8	Contact Patillo regarding industrial development plans as well as professional (medical) office development	Staff	07-13	DDA / OED	DeKalb County

Land Use, Zoning, and Housing Initiatives (2007-2013)

A tabulated action plan of recommended Land Use, Zoning, and Housing Initiatives follows:

Project ID	Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party(ies)	Potential Funding Source(s)
LU-1	**Update Future Land Use Regulations.** Adopt new land use for the LCI study area to accommodate mixed use, pedestrian friendly sustainable environments and to require local street grid connections.	N/A	07-08	DeKalb County	DeKalb County
LU-2	**Revise Zoning Regulations.** Develop zoning regulations to implement the LCI Plan: use, height, setbacks, parking, inter parcel connectivity, streets, signage, open space to promote and encourage the desired character for the LCI area. May require modifications to existing zoning regulations.	TBD	07-08	DeKalb County	DeKalb County
LU-3	**Develop Design Guidelines.** Develop guidelines (including access management) for the LCI Study Area to ensure the quality and character of development to reflect the community's vision as articulated in LCI study	$50,000	07-08	DeKalb County	DeKalb County

Transportation Initiatives (2007-2013)

The Transportation Initiatives include recommended actions to ensure that future public/private investments in the local infrastructure enhance the transportation networks for both thoroughfare travel and local circulation. Seven (7) recommended Transportation Initiatives are presented in the following tables:

Project ID	Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party(ies)	Potential Funding Source(s)
TI-1	**Conduct a Traffic Impact Study.** Analyze the impact of the development plan on the street network in terms of traffic operations. Traffic conditions should be analyzed to determine where specific non-interstate improvements (i.e. local street capacity improvements, turn lanes, new roadways, etc.) are needed and how they should be prioritized. The study should address the impacts of the town center development, Performing Arts Center, and other major developments in the area.	$60,000	09	DeKalb Co, ARC	ARC grant, 50-50 local match
TI-2	**Update DeKalb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan(CTP).** Revise the CTP for consistency with the LCI plan to increase competitiveness for project funding.	Staff	09	DeKalb Co	N/A
TI-3	**Request Modifications and Secure Construction Funding for the I-285 / SR 155 Interchange Project.** DeKalb Co shall request modifications to the proposed design of Panthersville Road to include: a raised median and/or pedestrian refuge islands where appropriate, a shared use path on the southbound shoulder, and enhanced pedestrian facilities at the Pvl Rd / SR 155 intersection. DeKalb Co & GDOT should collaborate to secure construction funding for this project.	TBD	08	DeKalb Co, GDOT	Dedicate County/TAD/Private Funds to supplement federal funds

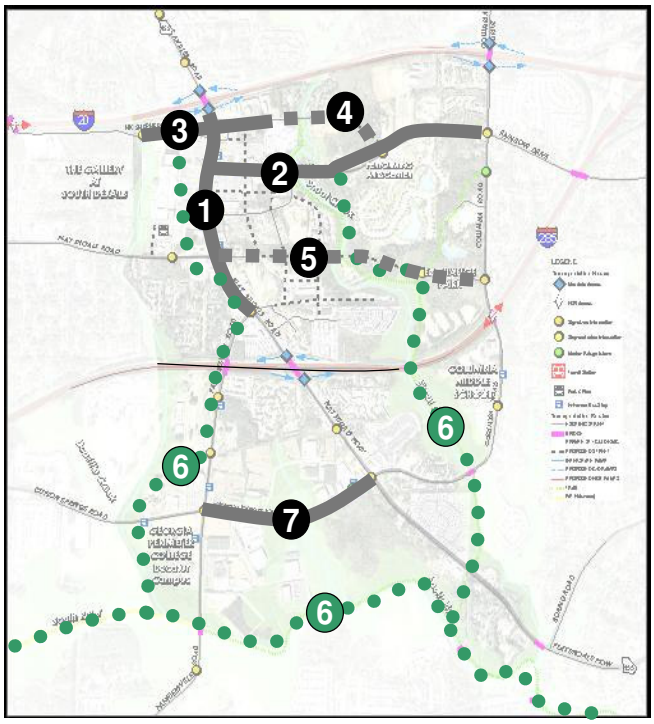
Project ID	Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party(ies)	Potential Funding Source(s)
TI-4	**Require Private Re/Development Plans to dedicate right of way for the proposed town center street network.** Priority local routes include: Ember Drive extension to Rainbow Drive and north-south alternative to Candler Road through proposed town center.	TBD	Ongoing	DeKalb Co / Private	DeKalb Co / Private
TI-5	**Modify GDOT's Concept Development for I-20 improvements to support access to the South DeKalb Town Center and Transit Station** including HOV Full Drop Ramps at Lloyd Road bridge, collector distributor system from Candler Road eastward, full diamond CD-access from Columbia Drive, BRT Busway, and HOV eastbound extension.	Staff	08	DeKalb Co / GDOT	N/A
TI-6	**Consolidate Transit Service at the proposed South DeKalb Town Center Transit Station location** providers include MARTA (local routes), proposed MARTA direct bus to downtown Atlanta), GRTA (planned Xpress Buses to Perimeter Center and HJAI Airport), and Emory Shuttle Service	Staff	08-09	MARTA	N/A
TI-7	**Finalize and Publicize Plans for the I-20 East Corridor.** Short term public and private projects on and along I-20 are hampered by the fact that long range plans for this right of way are unclear.	Staff	08	ARC, GDOT, MARTA	N/A

Program of Transportation Projects

The Five Year Program of Transportation Projects includes transportation projects which are recommended in the short-term in order to support the LCI plan. These include previously funded projects and those recommended for funding in the short term.

The Program is presented in the following map and tables:

- Priority Routes (map)
- Priority LCI projects sponsored by DeKalb County (table)
- Related projects sponsored by DeKalb County (table)
- Priority projects sponsored by other transportation agencies (table)



Priority Routes

1. **Candler Road** – landscaping and pedestrian facilities *(DK-268B)*
2. **Rainbow Drive** - sidewalk, landscaped median, turn lanes, shared use path *(DK-320A1, A1)*
3. **Transit Station Area** - parking deck, streetscapes, sidewalks *(A2, A3)*
4. **Ember Drive Extension to Arts Center** *(Public/Private Initiative)*
5. **Flat Shoals Road/Warren Road extension** *(A4)*
6. **PATH Network** *(A5, A6)*
7. **Clifton Springs Road** - sidewalks *(A7)*

Priority LCI projects sponsored by DeKalb County

Project ID	Short Title/Location	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party(ies)	Potential Funding Source(s)	Potential Local Source(s)	Local Match Amount
TIP ID# DK-268B	**SR 155 (CANDLER ROAD) PEDESTRIAN AND LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS: PHASE II** from I-285 SOUTH to SR 154 (MEMORIAL DRIVE)	Roadway Capacity, Intersections, Pedestrian Facilities	*All phases of funding previously programmed. Completion scheduled for 2009.*										
TIP ID# DK-320A1	**18 SIDEWALKS: RAINBOW ROAD** from CANDLER ROAD to COLUMBIA DRIVE	Pedestrian Facilities	*Note: project includes sidewalks on the westbound shoulder only. All phases of funding previously programmed. Completion scheduled for 2009.*										
A1	**RAINBOW DRIVE** left turn lanes, median, and/or pedestrian median refuge where appropriate; shared use path on westbound shoulder, landscaping and lighting (1-1/10 miles) *Note: Rainbow Drive is an Urban Collector Street (GDOT 2005)*	Roadway Operations and Multi-Use Bike/Ped Facilities	08-10	$ 412,500	09-11	$ 550,000	10-12	$ 2,750,000	$ 3,712,500	DeKalb Co	LCI Implementation	DeKalb Co, TAD, Private	$ 742,500
A2	**South DeKalb Town Center Shared Parking Deck** serving the transit station and transit-oriented development in the vicinity of the SR 155 / Candler Road and HF Shepherd Drive intersection. (approx 200 spaces, 2 acre site TBD)	Parking Deck	09-11	$ 450,000	10-12	$ 450,000	11-13	$ 3,000,000	$ 3,900,000	DeKalb Co / MARTA	DeKalb Co / MARTA / LCI Implementation	DeKalb Co, TAD, Private, MARTA	$ 780,000
A3	**South DeKalb Town Center Transit Station Area Pedestrian Facilities** including: sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping and lighting along HF Shepherd Drive, Ember Drive, and Rainbow Way (total 3/4 mile local rights of way)	Pedestrian Facilities	09-11	$ 281,250	10-12	$ 187,500	11-13	$ 1,875,000	$ 2,343,750	DeKalb Co / MARTA	DeKalb Co / MARTA / LCI Implementation	DeKalb Co, TAD, Private, MARTA	$ 468,750
A4	**Flat Shoals Road/Warren Road Extension** from Candler Road to Columbia Drive as a divided 2-lane roadway with enhanced pedestrian facilities; includes a new bridge over Shoal Creek (1-1/10 mile) *Note: Flat Shoals Road west of SR 155 is an Urban Collector Street (GDOT 2005)*	Roadway Capacity	10-12	$ 825,000	11-13	$ 275,000	12-14	$ 5,500,000	$ 6,600,000	DeKalb Co	DeKalb County / TAD / Private	N/A	N/A
A5	**South River Trail** from Georgia Perimeter College to SR 155 / Flat Shoals Pkwy @ Warriors Path / county-owned "Hudson Park" (1-3/4 miles)	Multi-Use Bike/Ped Facility	10-12	$ 131,250	11-13	$ 175,000	12-14	$ 875,000	$ 1,181,250	DeKalb Co / PATH foundation	TE / LCI Implementation	DeKalb Co, TAD, Private, PATH	$ 236,250
A6	**Shoal Creek Trail** from Rainbow Drive to SR 155 / Flat Shoals Pkwy @ Warriors Path / county-owned "Hudson Park" (2 miles)	Multi-Use Bike/Ped Facility	11-13	$ 150,000	12-14	$ 200,000	13-15	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,350,000	DeKalb Co / PATH foundation	TE / LCI Implementation	DeKalb Co, TAD, Private, PATH	$ 270,000
A7	**CLIFTON SPRINGS ROAD** sidewalks from Panthersville Rd to SR 155 / Flat Shoals Pkwy (3/4 miles) *Note: Clifton Springs Road is an Urban Collector Street (GDOT 2005)*	Pedestrian Facilities	11-13	$ 112,500	12-14	$ 187,500	13-15	$ 750,000	$ 1,050,000	DeKalb Co	TE, LCI	DeKalb Co, TAD, Private	$ 210,000

Related projects sponsored by DeKalb County

Project ID	Short Title/Location	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Sponsor
TIP ID# DK-320B	**SIDEWALKS ALONG EIGHTEEN (18) CORRIDORS: PHASE II** including Flat Shoals Road from Second Avenue to Candler Road	Pedestrian Facilities	07-08	$ 267,000	08-09	$ 100,000	09-12	$ 3,155,000	$ 3,522,000	DeKalb Co
TIP ID# DK-AR-BP017	**COLUMBIA DRIVE** from RAINBOW DRIVE to SR 154/MEMORIAL DRIVE	Pedestrian Facilities	08-09	$ 100,200	09-10	$ 200,400	10-12	$ 2,004,000	$ 2,304,600	DeKalb Co
TIP ID# DK-339	**COLUMBIA DRIVE** FROM SR 155 (FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY) TO RAINBOW DRIVE	Roadway Capacity	08-09	$ 273,000	09-10	$ 546,000	10-12	$ 5,460,000	$ 6,279,000	DeKalb Co

Priority LCI projects sponsored by other Transportation agencies

Project ID	Short Title/Location	Type of Improvement	Sponsor
TIP ID#: AR-H-250, DK-AR-009A, AR-904 A/B, DK-AR-241	**I-20 Corridor Improvements** including HOV extension, capacity, collector-distributor system, HOV-only access interchanges, BRT Busway, etc	HOV Lanes, Roadway Capacity Interchange Capacity, Interchange Upgrades, Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GDOT, MARTA
TIP ID# DK-AR-206	**I-285 SOUTH AT SR 155/FLAT SHOALS PARKWAY**	Interchange Capacity	GDOT
-	**SR 155 / Candler Road Traffic Signal Upgrades.** Including signal coordination, mast arm design, pedestrian countdown signals, internally illuminated street signs	Intersection Improvements	GDOT
-	**South DeKalb Town Center Transit Station** in the vicinity of the SR 155 / Candler Road and HF Shepherd Drive intersection offering: local bus transfers as well as direct service to downtown Atlanta, Perimeter Center, and Emory University	Transit Facility	MARTA

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