BUFORD HIGHWAY
MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR STUDY
FINAL REPORT

Atlanta Regional Commission

Multimodal Corridor Planning Program

March 13, 2007

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MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR STUDY
FINAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study was one of the first in a series of regional corridor planning studies conducted as part of the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Multi-Modal Corridor Planning Program. The focus of the corridor study was the 18.4 mile section of Buford Highway, extending from Sidney Marcus Boulevard in Atlanta (Fulton County) to SR 120 in Duluth (Gwinnett County). The study included identifying deficiencies within the study corridor, assessing benefits and costs of alternative strategies, and selecting a preferred alternative program of policies and projects within the financial constraints for the region.

The Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study was initiated in the fall of 2005 and has involved the following phases:

1. Evaluation of current corridor conditions
2. Definition of goals and objectives
3. Identification of specific corridor needs
4. Development and evaluation of alternative strategies for addressing corridor needs
5. Recommendations for long range transportation and land use changes

Background

According to regional forecasts, the population within the corridor is anticipated to grow from an existing population of 290,000 to 360,000 by 2030, a 24 percent increase. Total employment in the corridor is anticipated to grow from 304,000 jobs to 363,000 jobs by 2030, a 19 percent increase. Along with expected growth, traffic volumes are forecasted to increase along the corridor. Where most of the corridor experienced acceptable levels of daily congestion in 2005, portions of the corridor, north of I-285, are anticipated to have poor to failing levels of service (LOS) by 2030.

Overall, the Buford Highway needs assessment revealed that the corridor is not conducive for multimodal usage. The transportation infrastructure has not kept up with demand for alternate travel modes. For example, existing pedestrian facilities are inconsistent and in need of upgrade. Users of the corridor experience a variety of conflicts between different travel modes. As a result, pedestrians and transit patrons are forced to walk adjacent to high speed traffic, without a sidewalk or street lighting along most of the corridor.

Recommendations

The charge of the Multimodal Corridor Study Program was to identify long range transportation improvements to address all modes within the corridors and consider how future land use and development changes can support future improvements. The recommendations developed for the Buford Highway corridor are the result of a multimodal, multidisciplinary needs assessment, coupled with input from the public and stakeholders. Improvements for the corridor for use by motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users and operators have been identified as

well as supportive land use and development strategies. The recommendations address existing and future transportation needs and are aimed at supporting Livable Centers Initiatives (LCI's), town centers and transit-oriented developments (TODs); maintaining and enhancing the corridor's business vitality; and integrating transportation improvements into the community through context sensitive design.

Major transportation projects recommended for the Buford Highway corridor include:

- Improving mobility on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to enhance regional travel;
- Enhancing cross-corridor mobility between I-85, Buford Highway, and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to facilitate east-west travel demand. Improvements have been identified for Button Gwinnett Drive, Jimmy Carter Boulevard, and Beaver Ruin Road;
- Providing dedicated bus lanes on Buford Highway inside I-285 to facilitate existing local bus and planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) services;
- Ensuring a complete sidewalk network along the corridor by filling in gaps;
- Developing a multi-use trail, between Buford Highway and the existing rail line north of I-285 to provide an alternative route for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

The transportation implementation program recommendations for Buford Highway are shown in Tables ES-1, ES-2, and ES-3 for short-term, mid-term, and long-range projects, respectively. The planning level costs presented include capital costs, design and engineering, construction and estimated rights-of-way, where applicable.

Table ES-1:
Projects for TIP Implementation (2008-2013)

Roadway / Location	Modification / Improvement	Limits	Improvement Type	Total Cost
Buford Highway	Intersection modification	Jimmy Carter Boulevard	Safety	$7,000
Buford Highway	Intersection modification, turning lanes	North Druid Hills Road	Safety	$130,000
Buford Highway	Intersection modification, turning lanes	Lenox Road	Safety	$160,000
Adjacent to Buford Highway	Multi-use trail on west side of Buford Highway between Buford Highway and railroad, with spur connections to W.P. Jones and West Gwinnett trails	Oakcliff Road to SR 120	Bicycle / Pedestrian	$3,500,000
New Peachtree Road	Bicycle lanes, connecting to multi-use trail	Shallowford Road to Oakcliff Road	Bicycle	$4,200,000
Buford Highway	Increased pedestrian zones/buffers and sidewalk widths	Sidney Marcus Blvd. to Oakcliff Road (both sides), Oakcliff Road to Beaver Ruin Road (east side), Pleasant Hill Road to SR 120 (east side)	Pedestrian	$4,600,000
Buford Highway	Sidewalk on east side of Buford Highway	Beaver Ruin Road to Pleasant Hill Road	Pedestrian	$800,000

Table ES-2:
Projects for Mid-Range Implementation (2014-2020)

Roadway / Location	Modification / Improvement	Limits	Improvement Type	Total Cost
Jimmy Carter Boulevard	Widen from 4 to 6 lanes	Buford Highway to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	Roadway Capacity	$9,200,000
Buford Highway	Grade separate intersection	Jimmy Carter Boulevard	Roadway Capacity	$12,800,000
Beaver Ruin Road, Hopkins Mill Road	Realign to improve connection	I-85 to Hopkins Mill Road	Roadway Capacity	$2,100,000
South Cemetery Street	Extension to Mitchell Road	South Cemetery Street to Mitchell Road	Roadway Capacity	$1,400,000
Buford Highway	ITS (Fiber optic communications, changeable message signs, closed circuit TV cameras, vehicle detection, and signal upgrades)	Various locations	ITS	$3,000,000
Various locations	Bicycle lanes on cross-streets to Buford Highway to connect to Buford Highway bicycle lanes and multi-use trail	Shady Valley Drive, N. Cliff Valley Way, Briarwood Road, Drew Valley Road, Dresden Road, Chamblee-Dunwoody Road, McElroy Road, Langford Road, South Berkeley Lake Road	Bicycle	$6,200,000

Table ES-3:
Projects for Long-Range Implementation (2021-2030)

Roadway / Location	Modification / Improvement	Limits	Improvement Type	Total Cost
Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	Extend 4-lane limited access highway	Holcomb Bridge Road to Sugarloaf Parkway	Roadway Capacity	$114,700,000
Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	New 2-lane service access roads parallel to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	Holcomb Bridge Road to Sugarloaf Parkway	Roadway Capacity	$134,100,000
Beaver Ruin Road, Langford Road, Medlock Bridge Road	Realign to improve connection	I-85 to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	Roadway Capacity	$1,600,000
Button Gwinnett Drive	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes	Pleasantdale Road to Buford Highway	Roadway Capacity	$14,300,000
Buford Highway	Intersection improvements (turning lanes)	Dresden Drive, Clairmont Road, and Briarwood Road	Roadway Operations	$576,000
Buford Highway	Convert outside lanes to dedicated busway	Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Shallowford Road	Transit	TBD
Buford Highway	BRT queue jumper lanes / bus pullouts at 5 locations	Oakcliff Road to Pleasant Hill Road	Transit	$1,000,000
Buford Highway	Transit ITS (traffic signal preemption/priority control, traveler information)	Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Pleasant Hill Road	Transit/ITS	$700,000
Buford Highway	Bicycle lanes adjacent to busway	Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Shallowford Road	Bicycle	$7,500,000

The estimated total cost of the implementation program is approximately $322,573,000 through 2030. The breakdown by time period and funding source is shown in Table ES-4. By funding category, the source of funding for the total program is estimated at 70 percent federal, one percent state, and 29 percent local.

Table ES-4:
Implementation Program Summary

	Estimated Funding Share by Source		
Time Period	**Federal**	**State**	**Local**
2008-2013	$4,557,600	$59,400	$8,780,000
2014-2020	$20,000,000	$4,400,000	$10,300,000
2021-2030	$200,860,800	$115,200	$73,500,000
Total	**$225,418,400**	**$4,574,600**	**$92,580,000**

In addition to specific transportation projects, additional multimodal transportation policies or strategies are recommended, including:

- Developing a multi-jurisdictional access management plan;
- Incorporating context sensitive design into future roadway improvements;
- Improving transit stop and transfer locations with shelters, benches, and sidewalks; and
- Developing and adopting design standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities to provide a safer environment for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

The following land use strategies are recommended to support transportation improvements.

- Capitalize on redevelopment opportunities to create a balance between higher and moderate density mixed use developments;
- Identify regional and neighborhood activity centers for concentrated development;
- Protect and connect open space/green space within the corridor;
- Revaluate existing and zoned land use to ensure a marketable mix of uses;
- Create secondary circulation systems at activity nodes;
- Establish sidewalk and bicycle facility, access management, and corridor design standards for the corridor; and
- Establish an intergovernmental coordination committee to develop a unified development overlay district for the corridor, identify local funding priorities and mechanisms, and provide overall guidance for plan implementation.

Next Steps

Although this planning process and resulting documentation were initiated by ARC, it does not build roads, bridges, sidewalks, nor does it operate transit services. As a planning body, ARC can assist local governments with staff resources. It can also direct the recommended projects through the metropolitan planning process. It is the responsibility of ARC to develop a RTP and short range transportation implementation program, governed by federal legislation and regulation. It will be the responsibility of the local jurisdictions to advance the plan recommendations.

Ongoing plan activities include:

- Coordinating local jurisdictions, ARC, and GDOT to advance projects in future RTP updates;
- Ensuring projects are implemented in a logical sequence to maximize benefits and utilize scarce resources efficiently;
- Initiating intergovernmental coordination activities to ensure transportation projects, policies, and programs are compatible; and
- Developing a monitoring program to provide feedback to refine future improvements.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study was one of the first in a series of regional corridor planning studies conducted as part of the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Multi-Modal Corridor Planning Program. The program was intended to study critical regional corridors and identify transportation program and policy recommendations to accommodate existing and future corridor travel, within the context of anticipated residential, employment, and development changes.

The study included identifying deficiencies within the study corridor, assessing benefits and costs of alternative strategies, and selecting a preferred alternative program of policies and projects within the financial constraints for the region. The recommendations address existing and future transportation needs and are aimed at supporting Livable Centers Initiatives (LCI's), town centers and transit-oriented developments (TODs); maintaining and enhancing the corridor's business vitality; and integrating transportation improvements into the community through context sensitive design. This report has been prepared for presenting the final recommendations from the study.

1.1 Study Area

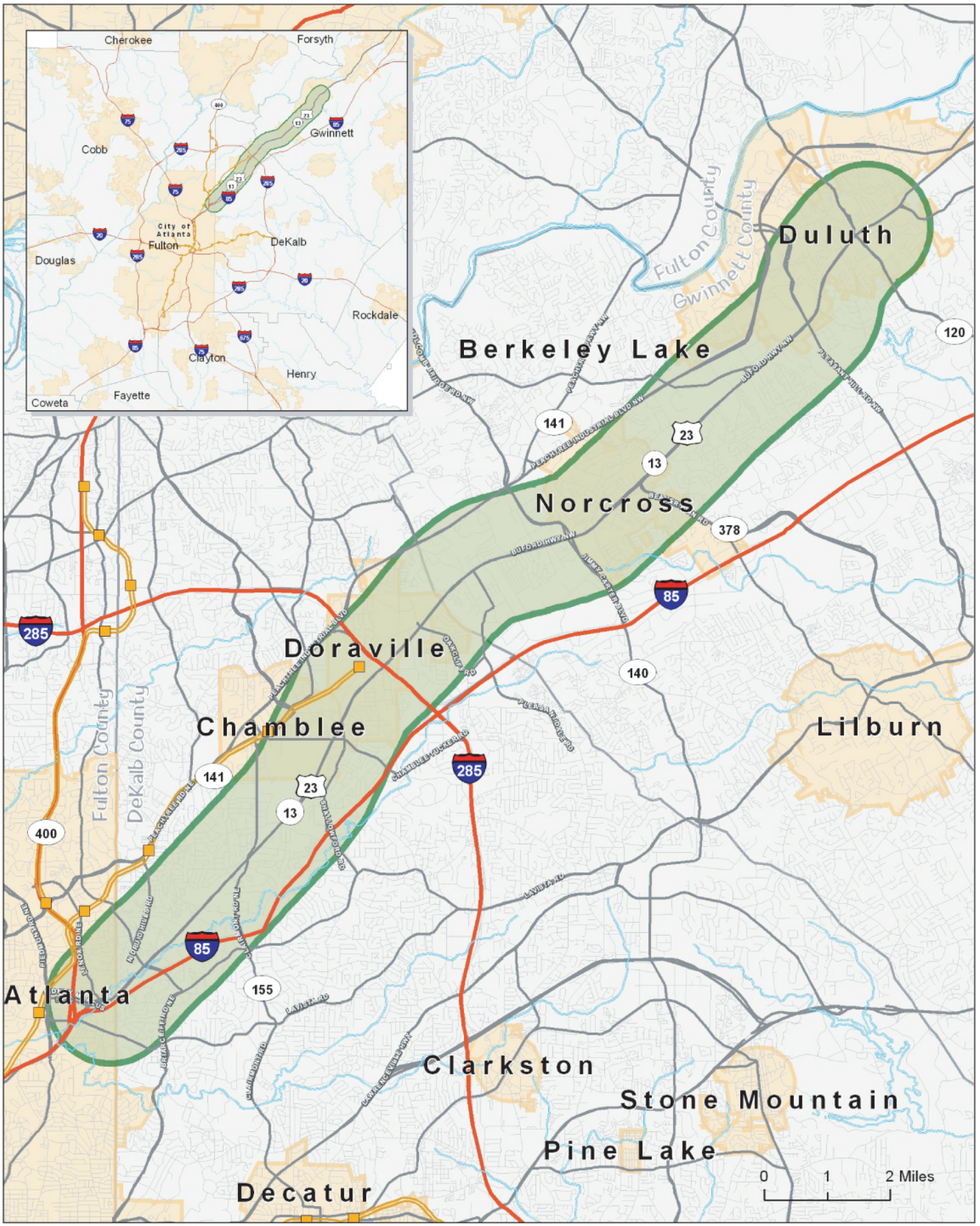
The focus of the corridor study is Buford Highway, also known as United States Highway (US) 23 and State Route (SR) 13, shown in Figure 1-1. The study corridor extends 18.4 miles, from Sidney Marcus Boulevard in Atlanta (Fulton County) to SR 120 in Duluth (Gwinnett County). The study area boundary extends from the roadway centerline to one-quarter mile in each direction from the roadway.

1.2 Study Process

The Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study was initiated in the fall of 2005 and has involved the following phases:

1. Evaluation of current corridor conditions
2. Definition of goals and objectives
3. Identification of specific corridor needs
4. Development and evaluation of alternative strategies for addressing corridor needs
5. Recommendations for long range transportation and land use changes

Many organizations and persons participated in the corridor planning process. Representatives from local, regional, and state jurisdictions and agencies as well as interest groups and citizens were involved. A consulting team led by URS Corporation was retained to conduct the study. The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and local governments (DeKalb and Gwinnett Counties as well as the Cities of Atlanta, Chamblee, Doraville, Norcross, and Duluth) were included as members of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee to ensure regional and local coordination.



LEGEND

- EXPRESSWAYS
- MAJOR ROADS
- RAILROADS
- RIVERS & STREAMS
- MARTA STATIONS
- MARTA RAILWAYS
- BUFORD HWY STUDY AREA

February, 2006

FIGURE 1-1
STUDY AREA MAP

0 1 2 Miles

1.3 Study Documentation

This report serves as the final documentation for the comprehensive transportation planning process. While the report presents an overview and findings, the focus of the report is to provide long range transportation recommendations and an implementation program. All documentation of the planning process and evaluation results is included in the report by reference. In development of the Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study recommendations, ten reports have been produced that present both technical and qualitative information, research, and findings. This section provides an overview of each document. All documents are available in electronic format from ARC and the ARC website: www.atlantaregional.com/mmcs.

1.3.1 Public Outreach

Four reports were developed to document public outreach and participation activities. In addition, comments received throughout the study were integrated into relevant project tasks, as appropriate.

Public Involvement Framework (December 2005) - A *Public Involvement Framework* and *Public Involvement Plan* were prepared to provide guidance on how to engage the public throughout the duration of the planning process. The framework presented the considerations, goals and strategies for developing strategic public involvement plans for the corridor.

Public Involvement Plan (February 2006) - The public involvement plan identified the approach for engaging the general public, government agencies, businesses and other stakeholders involved in the planning process. The *Public Involvement Plan* included six elements:

1. Clearly defined purpose and objectives for initiating public dialogue on transportation planning issues;
2. Specific identification of the affected public and other stakeholder groups;
3. Identification of techniques for engaging the public in the transportation planning process;
4. Notification procedures that target potentially affected groups;
5. Education and assistance techniques that result in accurate and full public understanding of transportation and related issues; and
6. Measurable actions that demonstrate federal, state, regional and local decision makers to seriously consider public input.

Focus Group Report (November 2006) - Focus groups provided an innovative outreach technique during the study. The focus groups were organized discussions guided by specific questions focusing on different aspects of the Buford Highway corridor. The purpose of the focus groups was to target users of the corridor (such as commuters, transit users and providers as well as representatives of health services, freight, development, and business communities) and gain a deeper understanding of participants' views and experiences, their feelings, perceptions, beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes about the conditions, issues and opportunities

along the corridor. The Focus Group report identifies the methodology, process, and findings from focus groups conducted in September 2006.

Public Involvement Summary Report (February 2007) - All outreach efforts and activities for the duration of the study have been compiled into a public involvement summary report. This report includes items such as project outreach notification, meeting minutes, comments received, project fact sheets, and other materials associated with the study.

1.3.2 Technical Reports

Study activities and analyses were documented during each phase of the study.

Baseline Conditions Report (April 2006) - The evaluation of current and anticipated future corridor conditions was undertaken during the first phase of the study and involved analysis of land use and urban design, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, roadway safety, roadway capacity and operations, transit, and freight movement within the corridor.

Market Overview Report (May 2006) - The *Market Overview Report* provided an inventory and analysis of real estate and demographic trends affecting both current development patterns in the study area as well as the development/redevelopment of the Buford Highway corridor. This analysis provided the development context for the study team's recommendations regarding transportation improvements to create a vibrant, balanced mix of uses benefiting local residents, employees, and businesses.

Needs Assessment Report (August 2006) - Following the evaluation of baseline conditions, existing and future needs related to roadway, transit, pedestrian, bicycle, freight, and land use were identified based on quantitative and qualitative analysis and via input solicited through an intensive public outreach program.

Goals and Objectives Report (September 2006) - The *Goals and Objectives Report* presented the study goals and objectives and the process in which the goals and objectives were developed. In addition, the report presented policy statements, based on the study goals and objectives, to guide analysis and selection of corridor improvements. The study goals and objectives were created in coordination with public and stakeholder input and consideration of local and regional policies.

Interim Recommendations Report (December 2006) - Following the needs assessment, the study team engaged in development of alternative improvement strategies to address corridor needs. The *Interim Recommendations Report* detailed the methodology and results of developing and evaluating long range improvement strategies designed to meet the transportation needs identified in the Buford Highway corridor.

VISSIM Analysis Report (January 2007) - To further address current and future operational efficiency along the corridor, a VISSIM model was developed for the two improvement scenarios developed as part of the interim recommendations analysis. VISSIM is dynamic traffic flow simulation tool that can be used to analyze vehicular traffic, including bus and pedestrian operations, under constraints, such as lane configuration, traffic composition and others. The

corridor operations simulation was performed on a critical intersection along the corridor, Buford Highway at Clairmont Road.

1.4 Final Report Organization

The *Final Report* focuses on the recommendations for the corridor, presents a discussion of potential environmental and community impacts, and provides an implementation program. The corresponding appendices contain additional technical documentation on land use recommendations and funding programs, as well as documentation of the public outreach effort. The organization of the *Final Report* is as follows.

- Section 2 presents the recommendations,
- Section 3 discusses potential community and environmental impacts,
- Section 4 provides the implementation program, and
- Section 5 presents concluding remarks.

2.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

To generate meaningful dialogue about transportation and land use issues, the Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study included a public involvement program. This program required skillful application of a set of public involvement techniques for effective communications, assertive outreach, education and regulatory compliance to ensure that public participation in the study is broad and inclusive. The program included several methods designed to inform and engage key stakeholders and the general public in the plan development and decision-making process.

2.1 Background

At the beginning of the Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study, ARC and its planning partners embarked on the development of an unprecedented and pioneering regional corridor plan. Establishing the groundwork for such an effort could not be accomplished without a process to build community and agency ownership of decisions. Two public involvement strategies were identified to accomplish this mission: public outreach and interagency coordination.

The public outreach strategy, an effective and long-standing planning practice, achieved the following strategic goals:

- The public was provided with early, ongoing and meaningful opportunities for involvement in the corridor planning process.
- Timely contact was maintained with the general public, government agencies, business owners, and other key stakeholders throughout the planning process.
- Traditionally underserved communities (low income, minority, elderly and disabled populations) were identified and involved in the corridor planning process.

The interagency coordination strategy was designed to include the many local, regional, state agencies and special interest groups responsible for formulation of policies and implementation of land use and transportation investment projects and policies. Coordination efforts with local municipalities and other various agencies included meetings to review technical reports, to determine transportation issues and needs, to consider alternatives, and to establish project priorities. Coordination also helped elected officials understand the consequences of land use and transportation choices on the lives of their constituents.

Taken together, the public outreach and interagency coordination activities were the focal points of the public involvement program – accentuating the technical milestones of the project while promoting public awareness, participation and consensus on plan recommendations. The public involvement plan, along with other public involvement materials is included in Appendix A.

2.2 Outreach Summary

2.2.1 Leadership Briefings

Implementation of corridor recommendations are primarily the responsibility of local and state officials, therefore the plan must have support at all levels. Ultimately, elected officials must champion funding, public and political support. Plan recommendations must reflect the needs of a wide and diverse spectrum of corridor users, not just commuters, but also business owners, major employers and residents along the corridor.

Elected officials from local jurisdictions within the Buford Highway study area were invited to special briefings to discuss the most pressing needs, opportunities, and recommended improvement strategies for the corridor. The impacted jurisdictions included DeKalb County, Fulton County, Gwinnett County, City of Atlanta, City of Chamblee, City of Doraville, City of Duluth, and City of Norcross.

Table 2-1 describes the leadership briefing dates and topics of discussion. Minutes from the leadership briefings are included in Appendix A.

Table 2-1:
Leadership Briefings

Date	Discussion Topics
April 6, 2006	- Introduction of study purpose and team - Overview of the corridor characteristics, draft goals and objectives, stakeholder and public involvement techniques - Identification of corridor issues and opportunities

2.2.2 Stakeholder Advisory Group

The Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) served as the core group responsible for overall input and guidance in the development of the corridor plan. As an advisory group, the SAG met at select milestones to discuss study developments and participate in decision-making. The significance of the SAG was multi-faceted:

- Allowed ARC to build partnerships and share information with local governments and community leaders
- Provided a continuing forum for direct input into the planning process
- Provided an opportunity for study participation, questioning and clarification
- Facilitated consensus about corridor plan assumptions and recommendations
- Helped to drive the achievement of technical milestones

Determining the membership of the SAG was a significant and important task. ARC recognized that there are many ways to define “stakeholder” and that the definition has implications for the approach to public outreach and agency coordination. It was critical to hear as many voices as

possible, particularly as the goals and objectives and scenarios were being developed. Therefore, the membership of the SAG was broad, including all interests, particularly those not traditionally represented in transportation planning. As a result, the SAG was comprised of over 80 professional staff from the local jurisdictions within the study area, members of the ARC Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and representatives from citizen, business, ethnic and special interest groups. All of these perspectives needed to be heard. Through series of facilitated discussions, this group has become a trusted partner in the corridor planning effort.

The following table describes the SAG meeting dates and topics of discussion. The SAG membership list and meeting minutes are included in Appendix A.

Table 2-2:
Stakeholder Advisory Group Meetings

Date	Discussion Topics
January 17, 2006	- Introduction of study team and purpose - Overview of ARC corridor development process - Review of committee structure, roles and responsibilities - Review of study area existing conditions - Discussion of corridor issues and opportunities
April 12, 2006	- Review of draft needs assessment findings - Review of draft goals and objectives and preliminary improvement strategies
August 9, 2006	- Update of study activities, including feedback leadership and public meetings - Review of final needs assessment findings and preliminary improvement strategies
September 20, 2006	- Review of preliminary strategies for roadway, land use, transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements
January 17, 2007	- Review final multimodal recommendations via corridor bus tour

2.2.3 Stakeholder Outreach

The study team conducted telephone interviews with key stakeholders to ensure that feedback from representatives was obtained. A summary of stakeholder interviews was developed, and the information was taken into consideration in plan development. While the Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study was underway, additional corridor outreach programs were conducted by GDOT's pedestrian improvement project, DeKalb County Commissioner Kathy Gannon's office, and Pedestrians Educating Drivers about Safety (PEDS). Study team members attended various activities hosted as part of these outreach efforts. In addition, targeted outreach to Hispanic and Latino groups residing in the corridor was undertaken. Documentation from these outreach efforts is included in Appendix A.

2.2.4 Public Meetings

ARC hosted two rounds of public meetings for the Buford Highway corridor during the months of May 2006 and January/February 2007. The objectives of the meetings were to:

- Increase public awareness of and participation in the regional multimodal corridor planning process, and

- Determine improvement strategies and priorities for land use and roadway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The meeting format began with study representatives positioned at maps and displays to respond to individual questions and concerns. Next, ARC opened the meeting with a formal welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda. Members of the study team provided updates on the planning progress, followed by an interactive exercise and/or facilitated discussion. All meetings were scheduled from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. In total, approximately 109 people attended the Buford Highway public meeting events.

Table 2-3 outlines the details of the public meeting dates, locations and major topics of discussion. The public meeting flyers, agendas, and minutes are included in Appendix A.

Table 2-3:
Public Information Meetings

Date	Location	Discussion Topics
Round 1 – Goals, Objectives, Needs Assessment		
May 9, 2006	Latin American Association 2750 Buford Highway Atlanta, GA 30324	- Introduction of study purpose and planning team - Overview of the corridor characteristics - Review of preliminary needs assessment findings for roadway, transit, land use, bicycle and pedestrian - Draft goals and objectives, priority needs
May 16, 2006	Doraville Civic Center 3770 Central Avenue Doraville, GA 30340	
May 23, 2006	Duluth City Hall 3578 W. Lawrenceville Street Duluth, GA 30096	
Round 2 – Final Recommendations, Cost Estimates, Priorities		
January 18, 2007	Norcross City Hall 65 Lawrenceville Street Norcross, GA 30071	- Review of final plan recommendations, cost estimates and implementation schedule - Identification of top priorities
January 25, 2007	Goodwill Center Northeast Plaza 3337 Buford Highway Atlanta, GA 30329	
February 6, 2007	Duluth City Hall 3578 W. Lawrenceville Duluth, GA 30096	

Major findings from each round of public meetings helped to confirm data, information, assumptions and recommendations for the Buford Highway study.

2.2.4.1 Needs Assessment Phase Comment Summary

In terms of goals and objectives, the common priorities for the corridor were to: increase safety; protect and improve the environment, contribute to economic vitality, and the quality of life; to

improve accessibility for all people and goods; and to coordinate corridor transportation improvements with land use decisions.

The findings of the needs assessment indicated that the public desired improved pedestrian facilities along the Buford Highway corridor such as sidewalks, ramps, designated crosswalks, and pedestrian actuated signals. This need was followed closely by a desire for improved bicycle facilities and a safer environment for walking and bicycling.

On the southern portion of the corridor there was clear disagreement with the need for Buford Highway to serve as an alternate to I-85; however, the participants in Duluth believed the corridor already served in this capacity and generally agreed with this need. The public general agreed with the need to reduce traffic congestion along the corridor, but cautioned that there must be a balance between public space and vehicle circulation. The public suggested a series of additional needs for pedestrian access and safety as well as traffic signal operations and intersection improvements.

Public meeting participants generally supported the identified transit needs, particularly improved pedestrian amenities at bus stops, including shelters, sidewalks, crosswalks, and trash receptacles. There was general consensus on the need for bus pull off locations and circulator service between cities and major activity centers. Participants at the Duluth meeting were not as supportive of enhancements to transit services.

Among all participants along the entire corridor, there was overwhelming consensus on the need to change access in the form of shared driveways, shared parking, control of driveway spacing, and connectivity between adjacent commercial developments. Participants also agreed with the other land use and development needs identified for the Buford Highway corridor. The public strongly encouraged local jurisdictions and transportation agencies to do a better job in creating mixed use, higher density development that supports transit, creates town centers, and establishes guidelines to beautify the corridor.

In keeping with the priority to improve safety along the corridor, the public agreed with identified safety needs. Overwhelming support was expressed for better facilities to enhance safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Support was expressed for improved safety at bus pull out locations and at mid-block and intersection locations.

2.2.4.2 Recommendations/Priorities Phase Comment Summary

The participants representing the southern portion of the corridor (inside I-285) generally agreed with the roadway recommendations for the Buford Highway corridor, including changes to the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, to redistribute traffic volumes from the Buford corridor to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. Participants on the northern portion of the corridor represented two primary interests: business or property owners with locations along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and residents with neighborhoods that may be impacted by a change in the alignment and footprint of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.

To broaden the understanding of the intent of the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Buford Highway roadway recommendations and to fully discuss the potential impacts, ARC engaged in

an extended dialogue and listening session with participants at the Duluth meeting. The dialogue session revealed there was general agreement with the roadway recommendations for other roadway upgrades, intersection improvements, cross-corridor connectors, and ITS/traffic operations improvements. With respect to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, the discussion lead to development of an alternate concept that would preserve the existing residential and business community, while still addressing the mobility challenges for both corridors. Additional capacity issues were cited by stakeholders on SR 141, Johns Creek, SR 120 and north of Rogers Bridge Road, which were not investigated in the Buford Highway corridor study. As a follow-up to the Buford Highway corridor study, mobility needs should be examined in the areas north and west of Duluth. ARC agreed to conduct further analysis and revisit the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard recommendation.

The public generally supported the transit recommendations for the Buford Highway corridor. The public supported the bicycle/pedestrian recommendations for the corridor and embraced the multi-use trail concepts for the corridor. Connecting communities with greenspace was viewed as highly desirable and a source of economic development.

While the general public accepted the land use recommendations for the corridor, continued public education on the distinction between the level of detail for regional corridor planning versus the subsequent phases of the project development process is required.

Priority projects were identified for the Buford Highway corridor as a result of the public input. One priority was to revisit the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard recommendation and its impacts on businesses and residential communities in the northern segment of the corridor. Another priority was implementation of a grade separated intersection at Jimmy Carter Boulevard and Buford Highway. Finally, implementation of ITS and other short term traffic operations strategies should be advanced at key choke points along the corridor, including traffic signal coordination at North Druid Hills and Shallowford Road.

2.2.4.3 Public Meeting Findings

The Buford Highway public meetings were considered a success by several measures. ARC advanced the goals of the public outreach program by providing lay-friendly, visually engaging, and current public information. ARC maximized the use of graphic and visual presentation materials that increased public understanding of study concepts. ARC and its planning partners increased public awareness of the regional corridor planning process and its relationship to economic development, redevelopment, and mobility. Finally, the public meetings provided opportunities for the public to comment on plan elements, discuss both positive and negative impacts of specific project recommendations, and help shape the final plan recommendations.

2.2.5 Focus Groups

The purpose of the moderated focus group discussions was to allow ARC to more thoroughly identify the concerns, needs, wants and expectations of constituents within the Buford Highway corridor. The emphasis of the focus groups was to provide background data and information as a context for discussion and reaction to two different improvement concepts. The focus groups also served as a supplement to the general public meetings. The focus group objective to reach a

target audience representing automobile commuters, business owners, developers/land owners, pedestrians, public transit riders, and residents (homeowners and apartment dwellers) was achieved.

Table 2-4 provides an overview of the focus groups. The *Focus Group Final Report* is included in Appendix A.

Table 2-4:
Focus Groups

Date/Time	Location	Discussion Topics
September 21, 2006 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Latin American Association 2750 Buford Highway Atlanta, GA 30324	- Introduction of project team, purpose of project, overview of the corridor characteristics, and project goals - Review and comment on more capacity and more choices concepts

The focus group objective, to more thoroughly identify concerns of constituents of the Buford Highway corridor, revealed that pedestrian safety is the highest level priority. Pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, crosswalks, street lights, and traffic signal timing were strongly encouraged to improve pedestrian safety.

One of the key components of the meeting was a moderated discussion of two possible futures for Buford Highway: one concept focused on providing more roadway capacity, and the other focused on providing greater multimodal choices. Overall, most focus group participants supported the more capacity concept's roadway strategies because it addressed the need for improved mobility, facilitated commuter traffic, and provided parallel access roads. The participants acknowledged that the concept did have potential negative impacts on pedestrians, residents and businesses that would have to be addressed. The concept of Buford Highway as a boulevard had some appeal but only in areas where the density and pedestrian traffic warranted such a facility. In terms of land use, participants expressed concern that affordable housing should be provided within mixed-use developments.

For transit services, participants supported the improvements described in the more choices concept. Bus Rapid Transit, dedicated bus lanes, and more user friendly and accessible transit services were strongly supported. It was suggested that existing transit providers better coordinate and cooperate to provide a seamless ride for transit users.

Safety is the most pressing pedestrian/bicycle issue for the Buford Highway corridor. Pedestrians suggested sidewalks, crosswalks, buffers, slower speeds, public education, and multilingual signage as potential improvements. Commuters asserted that Buford Highway should maintain its utility as a highway; although pedestrian safety was still a concern.

In summary, the focus groups contributed to ARC's identification and more thorough understanding of the concerns, needs, wants and expectations of constituents within the Buford Highway corridor. The findings enabled ARC to balance community considerations such as ensuring pedestrian and bicycle safety and security, building roadway capacity, creating

affordable mixed use/higher density developments and providing enhanced transit services with the technical strategies and recommendations for the corridor.

2.2.6 Regional Coordination

The Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor study coordinated with other regional study efforts, including the *Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan* and the *Atlanta Region Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan*. In addition, study findings were presented at the ARC Transportation and Air Quality Committee (TAQC) and Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC). The study also participated in the ARC *Envision6* Transportation Fairs in the fall of 2006. The public involvement approach also took advantage of ARC's Public Involvement Advisory Group (PIAG) to announce public meeting events and encourage participation.

2.2.7 Public Information Materials

A number of essential public information materials provided timely, straightforward information to the public and media during all stages of corridor plan development. The materials were developed to stimulate public interest, dialogue and feedback.

2.2.7.1 Fact Sheets

Three fact sheets were developed to communicate information in different ways and increase the general public's understanding of the technical information and planning process. The fact sheets contained up-to-date project information, explanations of how decisions were being made, and ways to give input and become involved in the development of the Buford Highway corridor study.

The first fact sheet, distributed in January 2006, provided details on the sponsor, purpose and need for the study, initial observations of corridor issues and needs, study tasks and schedule, public involvement program goals, a map of the corridor and study team contact information.

The second fact sheet, distributed in September 2006, reported the completion of the Baseline Conditions and Needs Assessment reports and summarized the findings of the key corridor issues. It also included a status update on public outreach, map, schedule, contact information and described the next planning phases.

The third and final fact sheet, distributed in January 2007, summarized the two proposed improvement scenarios that were developed based in the corridor needs, goals and objectives, and public input. It also included a map, schedule, contact information and described the evaluation and recommendations phase of the study.

Recognizing the diverse nature of the corridor, ARC provided fact sheets in Spanish, Chinese, and Korean and made a special effort to reach out to Asian and Hispanic communities along the corridor.

Each fact sheet was widely distributed at project events including Leadership Briefings, SAG, public, and focus group meetings. The fact sheets were provided to the study mailing list and posted on the study website. The fact sheets were part of an overall campaign that demonstrated ARC understands and values communication with the public. The fact sheets are included in Appendix A.

2.2.7.2 Mailing List

From sign-in sheets from the leadership briefings, SAG and public meetings, focus groups, existing mailing lists and other points of contact, the project team developed a project mailing list of over 877 names. The list included elected officials, transportation planning partners, residents, community organizations, businesses, property owners, and other interested parties of the Buford Highway corridor. The list was updated regularly with contact information gathered at meetings and from telephone calls, emails, and other correspondence from the public. The mailing list was used to announce public events, distribute public information materials, and to recruit focus group participants.

In terms of effectiveness, the most effective means of promoting public awareness and participation in Buford Highway outreach events were newspaper advertisements, media coverage and direct emails. The mailing list is included in Appendix A.

2.2.7.3 Media Relations

ARC disseminated information about the intent, progress, findings and recommendations for the Buford Highway corridor plan to the general public primarily through newspaper advertisements and press releases. The media was an important resource for building awareness of the role of Buford Highway in regional mobility.

Table 2-5 summarizes the publications and run dates for the print advertisements. The newspaper advertisements, press releases and print media coverage are included in Appendix A.

Table 2-5:
Media Advertisements

Date	Publication	Target Audience
May 11, 2006	Atlanta Daily Voice	African American community
May 11, 2006	Mundo Hispanico	Hispanic community
January 14, 2007	Atlanta Journal & Constitution	General Public
January 18, 2007	Atlanta Journal & Constitution	General Public

2.2.7.4 Web Site

Located at www.atlantaregional.com/mmcs, a dedicated web site for ARC multimodal corridor studies was launched in May 2006 and updated regularly. The web site included a study overview, description of major planning activities, interactive map, list of stakeholder participants, and copies of the planning documents. An important feature for the public

involvement program was an online comment form that provided direct and timely feedback to the study team. The web site pages are included in Appendix A.

2.3 Conclusion

During the last year, ARC has engaged the public and its planning partners in a compelling dialogue about regional corridor mobility and its relationship to traffic, economic development and sustainable growth over the short and long term planning horizon. Community, financial and technical issues for the Buford Highway corridor have been debated. Progress was made, opinions were heard, and general agreement was reached.

Yet there is still much work to be done. Coordination among local government and community leaders will be needed to implement corridor plan recommendations. The understanding generated by the open dialogue facilitated as part of the Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study must strengthen and deepen as the next phase of project development unfolds over the next several years. While the conceptual plan is in place, many challenges lay ahead regarding the funding and implementation of the Buford Highway corridor plan. Nonetheless, ARC remains committed to providing citizens with opportunities to participate in the regional policy development process and interacting with decision makers.

Engaging affected communities and corridor users in the decision-making process reflected ARC's track record of openness and active community participation. ARC looks forward to sharing the Buford Highway corridor plan with the general public and interested stakeholders, and continuing to create a dynamic forum for public participation and community-based planning.

3.0 CORRIDOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The charge of the Multimodal Corridor Studies is to identify long range transportation improvements to address all modes within the corridors and consider how future land use and development changes can support future improvements. The recommendations developed for the Buford Highway corridor are a result of a multimodal, multidisciplinary needs assessment, coupled with input from the public and stakeholders. Improvements for the corridor for use by vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users and operators have been identified as well as supportive land use and development strategies. This section describes the overall recommendations and how they were developed. The implementation program is presented in Section 4.

3.1 Recommendations Development

At each phase of the study, findings were documented in technical memoranda (as summarized in Section 1). The technical documentation presents the detailed findings and is included by reference for this study. The following is an overview of the previous findings to provide the context on which the recommendations are based.

3.1.1 Corridor Characteristics

As indicated in the *Baseline Conditions Report*, the existing population in corridor is 290,000. Most of that population is concentrated in DeKalb and Fulton Counties (58 percent), with the remaining 42 percent in Gwinnett County. According to regional forecasts, the population along the corridor is anticipated to increase by 24 percent to 360,000 by 2030. The greatest growth is expected in Gwinnett County, increasing by 32 percent, while the DeKalb and Fulton County portion is expected to grow 18 percent. The corridor is racially and ethnically diverse; 38 percent of the population identifies themselves as a race other than white. According to the 2000 Census, approximately 62 percent of the population identified themselves as white, 15 percent as African-American or Black, nine percent as Asian, and ten percent "Some Other Race. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin represent a relatively large proportion of residents living in the study area. In 2000, nearly one-quarter of Buford Highway study area residents identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino

In 2000, total employment in the Buford Highway study area was 304,000. The Gwinnett County portion accounted for 126,500 jobs or 44 percent of employment in the corridor, and the DeKalb/Fulton County portion accounted for 169,000 jobs, or 56 percent of the corridor job base. According to regional forecasts, employment in the corridor is anticipated to grow three percent to 313,000 jobs by 2010, nine percent to 341,000 jobs between 2010 and 2020, and six percent to 363,000 jobs between 2020 and 2030. The Gwinnett County portion of the corridor is expected to have the greatest rate of overall growth over the next thirty years, at 31 percent, increasing to 176,000 jobs. Employment in the DeKalb and Fulton County portion is expected to increase by 11 percent, to 187,000 jobs by 2030.

The Buford Highway corridor experiences heavy vehicle travel now, and an increase in travel demand is anticipated in the future, driven by expected population and employment growth. Existing and forecasted average daily traffic volumes and corresponding level of service (LOS) are summarized in Table 3-1. Traffic congestion with the northern end of the corridor, within Gwinnett County, is anticipated to reach unacceptable levels by 2030.

Table 3-1:
2005 and 2030 Average Daily Traffic Volumes and LOS

From	To	2005		2030 (without improvements)	
		Daily Volumes	LOS	Daily Volumes	LOS
SR 120	Pleasant Hill Road	35,600	D	42,600	F
Pleasant Hill Road	Beaver Ruin Road	40,500	D	62,600	F
Beaver Ruin Road	Jimmy Carter Boulevard	50,600	D	56,800	F
Jimmy Carter Boulevard	Jones Mill Road	47,400	D	45,000	E
Jones Mill Road	Oakcliff Road	39,900	D	42,600	F
Oakcliff Road	Chamblee Tucker Road	33,700	C	51,600	E
Chamblee Tucker Road	Clairmont Road	23,000	A/B	28,200	B
Clairmont Road	N Druid Hills Road	31,300	C	48,200	D
N Druid Hills Road	Lenox Road	22,700	A/B	35,900	C

Source: ARC Travel Demand Model

3.1.2 Major Issues and Needs

Overall, the Buford Highway needs assessment revealed that the corridor is not conducive for multimodal usage. It was designed for vehicular throughput. Classified as a principal and minor arterial by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), the corridor exhibits different characteristics within the jurisdictions it connects. The Buford Highway corridor has the distinction as a major market center for Hispanic/Latino and Asian businesses, including grocery stores, restaurants, retail stores, and services. It also serves as a main street within the cities of Doraville, Norcross, and Duluth. The types of uses along the corridor, combined with low-income and more affordable housing units, have resulted in trips made by modes other than vehicles: on public transit, by foot, or by bicycle. The transportation infrastructure to support alternative modes has not kept up with the demand for it. Users of the corridor perceive conflicts between the different modes, with pedestrians and transit patrons walking next to high speed vehicular traffic.

Major issues identified through the needs assessment and public involvement process include the following:

Roadway Capacity - Segments in the Gwinnett County portion of the corridor are congested, particularly at major intersections and cross-streets. Alternatives to Buford Highway are needed to provide an alternate route to I-85. Parallel routes and increased street network connectivity are in need of improvement.

Roadway Operations / Safety - Improvements to the corridor are needed to reduce the number of driveways, curb cuts and mid-block crossing and coordinate traffic signals. Conflicts occur between vehicular and pedestrian travel. The two-way center turn lane is problematic for a number of reasons. Many pedestrians wait in this area when crossing the street, unprotected from vehicles. The two-way left turn lane provides unrestricted turning, and conflicts between vehicles traveling in opposite directions can occur. In addition, the two-way center turn lane creates a seven lane cross-section south of I-285, and five lane cross-section north of I-285, which are very lengthy for pedestrians to cross.

Freight - Conflicts between freight movement and general traffic occurs at high volume freight intersections at I-285 and Jimmy Carter Boulevard. Freight routes should be identified to minimize impact on residential areas.

Transit - Amenities along existing transit routes and stops are lacking, including sidewalks, shelters, benches, trash receptacles and route information. More frequent transit service is desired. In addition, services provided along the corridor are not well coordinated. Connections for pedestrian access to bus and rail stops are inadequate.

Pedestrian / Bicyclist - Pedestrian and bicycle facilities and amenities are lacking along and across the corridor, with an absence of marked cross-walks and pedestrian-actuated signals, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. Corridor destinations, transit stops, adjacent developments, and housing are not well connected by pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The corridor experiences a high pedestrian fatality rate. No buffer exists between travel lanes and pedestrian facilities, and the design of pedestrian facilities is inconsistent.

Land Use / Development - Land use and development patterns are inconsistent, with minimal connectivity between adjacent businesses and residences. The existing land use patterns and zoning are not transit supportive.

3.1.3 Goals

Study goals and objectives were developed to direct the project, insure the recommendations address what is desired for future corridor development, and provide a means to prioritize the recommendations. The study goals and objectives are summarized in Table 3-2. A thorough discussion of the goals, objectives, and policies developed for the study is presented in the *Goals and Objectives Report*.

Table 3-2:
Goals and Objectives

Goal	Objective
Increase safety	a) Reduce the number and severity of accidents involving vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and others b) Mitigate identified safety issues (including speeding and red light running) c) Provide facilities for safe pedestrian travel (safe routes to school, community facilities, shopping and services, and access to transit stops) d) Locate transit facilities in safe locations
Maintain and preserve corridor infrastructure	a) Provide for the proper maintenance of the existing transportation facilities associated with the corridor through routine maintenance and rehabilitation
Protect and improve the environment, contribute to the economic vitality and the quality of life	a) Avoid or minimize disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of transportation decisions b) Plan transportation projects in an equitable manner c) Develop transportation improvements that serve the transportation needs of diverse communities along the corridor (where appropriate) d) Develop transportation improvements that support the region in improving air quality e) Provide transport linkages to employment, business and retail activity, and other activity centers f) Provide improvements which support economic development or the redevelopment potential of disadvantaged communities g) Protect existing neighborhoods and community integrity h) Develop strategies consistent with growth policy along the corridor i) Provide linkages to greenspace and multi-use trail networks j) Encourage land use development strategies that will improve the overall aesthetics of the corridor, where appropriate
Improve accessibility for all people and goods	a) Provide transportation alternatives that satisfy a full range of needs for travel market b) Improve connectivity/access to employment opportunities and activity centers via alternative travel modes c) Improve accessibility within the corridor, especially for transit users and pedestrians d) Improve and preserve intra- and inter-corridor freight mobility
Maintain and improve mobility and system performance	a) Reduce/mitigate congestion for all modes b) Improve the management and operations of the transportation system for all modes
Coordinate corridor transportation improvements with land use decisions - planning, zoning, site and development approvals	a) Provide transportation alternatives that are suited to and supported by land uses along the corridor b) Promote site development that provides the opportunity for access and on-site circulation c) Promote quality development and urban design standards d) Increase opportunity for mixed-use and transit oriented development e) Promote land uses that support multimodal transportation which will best serve anticipated employment densities, population densities, and travel demand f) Encourage discussion of land use decisions among corridor's governments
Work toward a sustainable multimodal transportation facility that meets the needs of its users	a) Promote the creation of an integrated seamless transportation system b) Provide alternatives to single occupant vehicles c) Identify improvements which provide linkages to major regional destinations and activity centers

3.1.4 Scenario Development

To address long range needs, two scenarios were developed for the Buford Highway corridor. Each scenario was comprised of multimodal strategies to address roadway, transit service, and pedestrian and bicycle facility needs. Potential land use and development options were identified to support each set of transportation improvements.

One scenario was focused on creating a multimodal corridor where mode usage was balanced among pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, transit operators, and vehicles. Supporting local trips via alternative modes was an important element. Strategies for enhancing regional vehicular mobility were applied on parallel facilities. The other scenario focused on improving vehicular mobility for regional trips, while making improvements to permit safe travel for those using alternative modes.

As was the case with the identification of corridor needs, strategies and scenarios were identified with input from the project Stakeholder Advisory Group and general public, the project website, stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings and other outreach activities. Both sets of strategies and scenarios were screened using quantitative and qualitative performance measures. The ARC travel demand model served as a critical component of the evaluation, providing the means to assess corridor travel characteristics. The results of the scenario testing are presented in the *Interim Recommendations Report*. The best performing strategies from each scenario were combined in order to develop the final recommendations detailed herein.

3.2 Recommendations

The recommended transportation improvements and land use changes are presented in the following sections. The recommendations have been presented to the public and corridor stakeholders for review and comment. Public information meetings were conducted on January 18 in Norcross, Georgia, on January 25 in Atlanta, Georgia, and on February 6 in Duluth, Georgia. A final Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting was conducted January 17. This meeting was crucial in that it brought together approximately 40 local jurisdiction representatives and regional and state partners for a corridor-long bus tour.

3.3 Roadway Recommendations

3.3.1 Roadway Projects

The major roadway capacity recommendations have been developed to provide alternatives to Buford Highway for regional travel. It was acknowledged throughout the study, that although Buford Highway is a state and federal highway, it also is a main street for many of the jurisdiction that it crosses. Chamblee, Doraville, Norcross and Duluth have all completed LCI plans, and these communities are actively promoting mixed-use and multimodal-supportive development.

3.3.1.1 *Mobility 2030 RTP* Projects

During the alternatives analysis and screening process, existing projects from the *Mobility 2030 RTP* were included in the model. *Mobility 2030 RTP* projects that impact the corridor are shown in Figure 3-1, and a complete list of projects is included in Appendix B.

Planned and Programmed Capacity Additions

- AR-H-300 - I-285 North HOV Lanes from I-75 North to I-85 North, 2 or 4 lanes (2015)
- DK-076 - East Roxboro Road from Buford Highway to Rockhaven Circle, widen 2 to 4 lanes (2020)
- GW-099A - US 23 (Buford Highway): Segment 1 from Old Peachtree Road to Sugarloaf Parkway, widen 2 to 4 lanes (2020)
- GW-271 - Pleasant Hill Road from Old Norcross Road to Chattahoochee River, widen 4 to 6 lanes (2030)

Planned and Programmed Operational Improvements

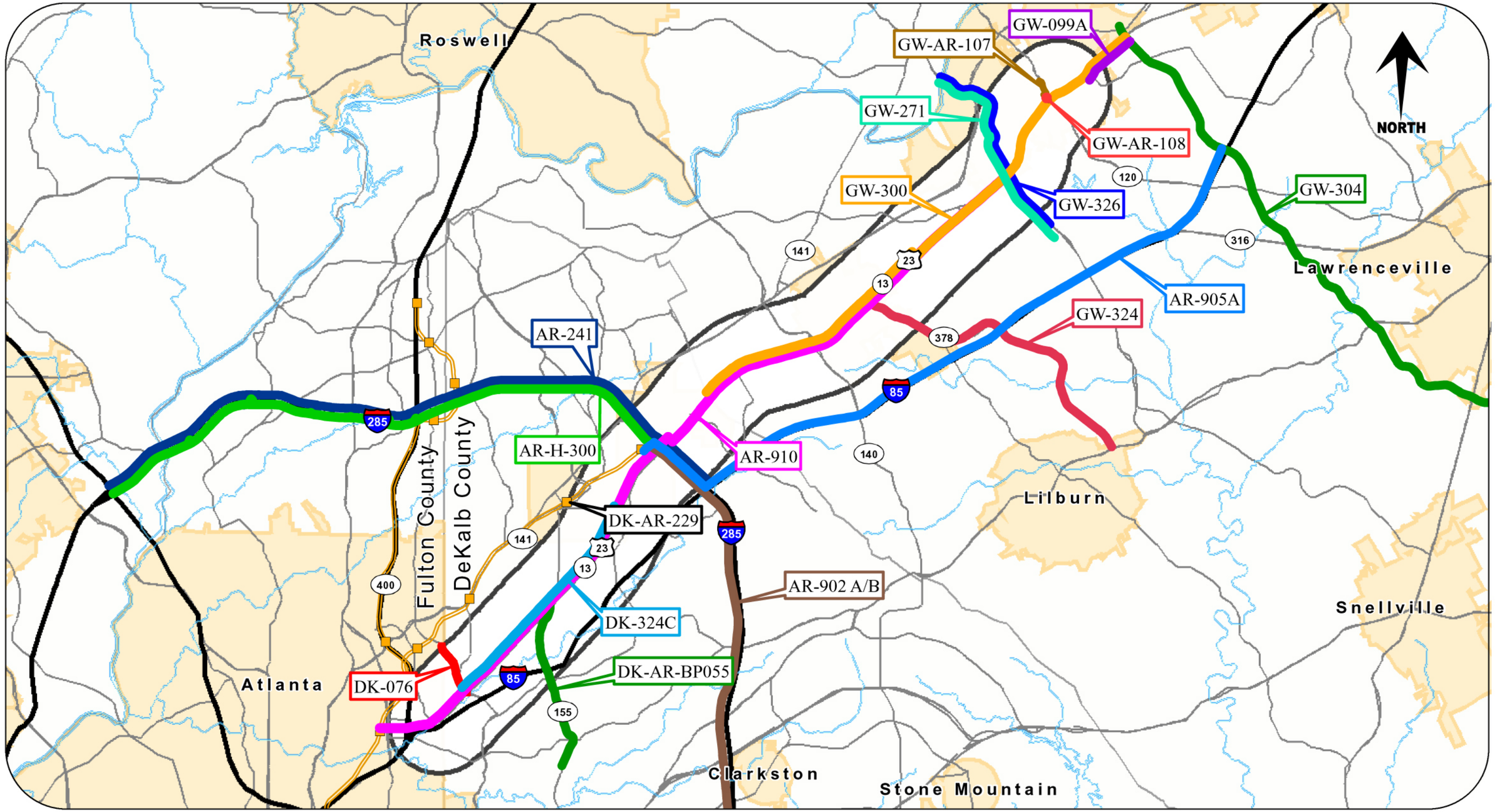
- GW-300 - US 23 (Buford Highway) ATMS from DeKalb County line to Sugarloaf Parkway (2010)
- GW-304 - Sugarloaf Parkway ATMS from SR 20 to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard (2010)
- GW-324 - SR 378 (Beaver Ruin Road) ATMS from Buford Highway to US 29 (2010)
- GW-326 - Pleasant Hill Road ATMS from Steve Reynolds Boulevard to Fulton County line (2010)

3.3.1.2 Projects Underway

Grade separation of Pleasant Hill road at Buford Highway and the Norfolk Southern Railroad is under construction in Duluth. The design will result in an interchange at Pleasant Hill Road, with Pleasant Hill Road passing under the rail line and Buford Highway.

3.3.1.3 New Projects

The following provides the recommended roadway capacity, operations, and safety projects for Buford Highway. Major projects are illustrated in Figure 3-2, along with recommended transit projects.



Multimodal Corridor Study
Buford Highway

LEGEND

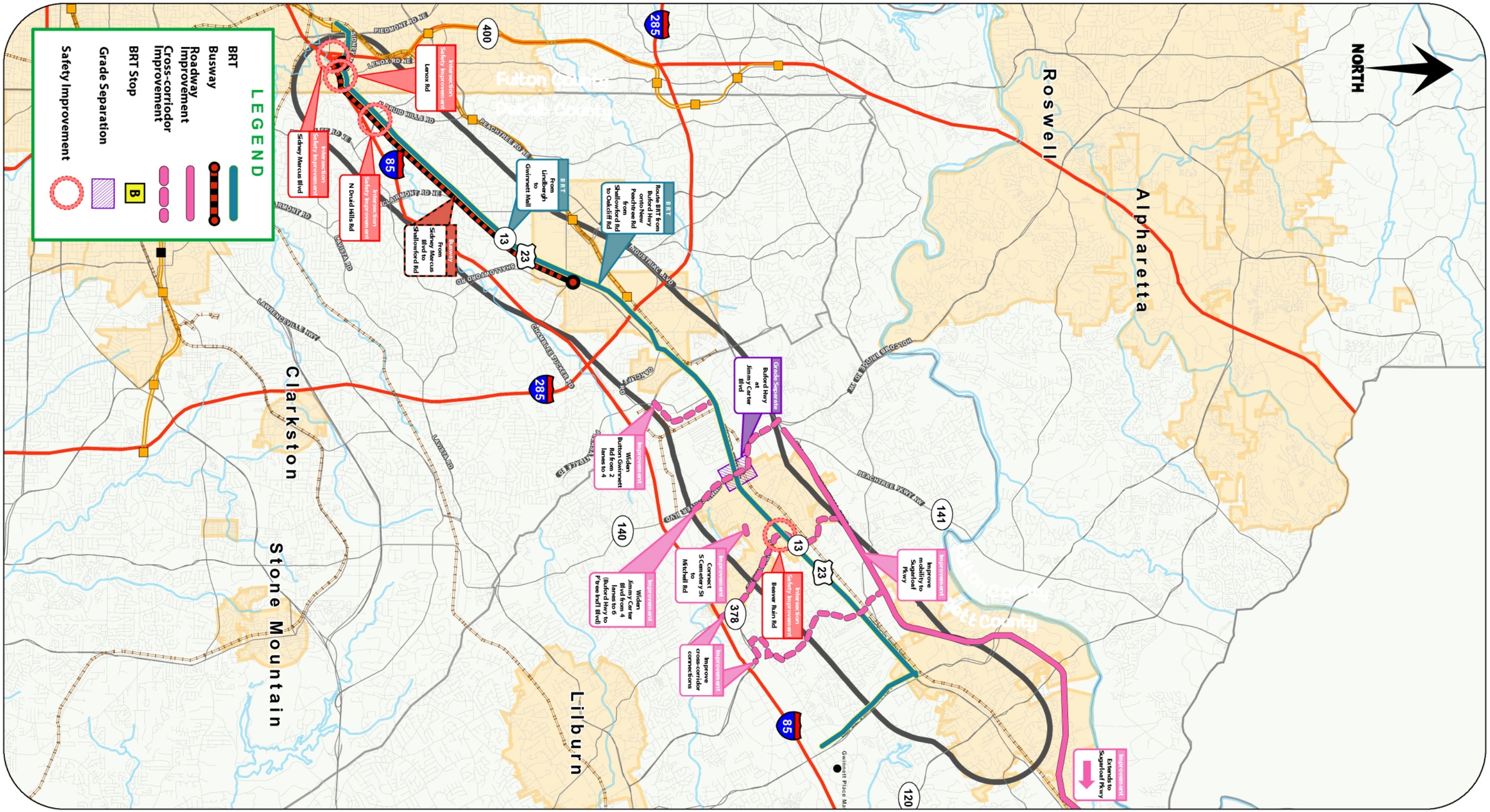
- BUFORD HIGHWAY STUDY AREA
- CITIES
- MAJOR ROADS
- EXPRESSWAYS
- MARTA STATIONS
- MARTA RAILWAYS
- RIVERS & STREAMS

February 2007

0 1 2 4 Miles

FIGURE 3-1
PLANNED AND PROGRAMMED PROJECTS IN THE *MOBILITY 2030 RTP*

ARC



Multimodal Corridor Study
Buford Highway

LEGEND

- EXPRESSWAYS
- MAJOR ROADS
- RAILROADS
- RIVERS & STREAMS
- MARTA STATIONS
- MARTA RAILWAYS
- BUFORD HWY STUDY AREA

February, 2006

0 1 2 Miles

FIGURE 3-2
RECOMMENDED
ROADWAY & TRANSIT PROJECTS

ARC

Capacity Adding Projects

► ***Peachtree Industrial Boulevard Mobility Improvements, Holcomb Bridge Road to Sugarloaf Parkway***

To enhance regional mobility, improvements to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and cross-corridor connections, between I-85 and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, are recommended. The planning concept that was tested in the regional travel demand model assumed an extension of the limited access highway portion of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, that exists between I-285 and Holcomb Bridge Road, to Sugarloaf Parkway. The current cross-section in the limited access segment of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard combines a four-lane, limited access highway with two-lane parallel access roads on the east and west sides of the limited access highway. As tested in the model, the improvements to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, combined with improved cross-corridor connections, were shown to provide needed regional mobility for travel in the study area.

Under this proposed recommendation, the limited access highway and access roads would be connected with a collector-distributor system. Major east-west cross-streets identified for grade separation include: Technology Parkway, Medlock Bridge Road, South Old Peachtree Road, South Berkeley Lake Road, North Berkeley Lake Road, Howell Ferry Road, Pleasant Hill Road, Abbotts Bridge Road, River Mill Drive, Chattahoochee Trace, Rogers Bridge Road, and Chattahoochee Drive. These locations, under the proposed improvement, would have full east-west access through the arterial.

Although a need for regional mobility improvements was validated through public meetings, concerns were expressed regarding the potential negative impacts associated with the limited access concept. It is important to note that the means to achieve these improvements could take different approaches.

For example, it was suggested that grade separation at major intersections with Peachtree Industrial Boulevard be examined. In this case, the grade separation would be targeted at the east-west connections and not Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. One concept is to provide for east-west roadways to go over or under Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, connecting to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard with an interchange. This would enhance mobility along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and cross-corridor roadways and would provide fewer adverse impacts to business owners and others along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. Further study will be needed; however, to identify potential impacts and more thoroughly investigate grade separations. McGinnis Ferry Road, SR 120, and Pleasant Hill Road were among the locations suggested for consideration for grade separation from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard by business owners, land owners, residents, and other stakeholders. A review of future model volumes indicated five locations are anticipated to have higher cross-corridor traffic volumes and could be candidates for grade separation: Medlock Bridge Road, Spalding/Old Peachtree Road, Pleasant Hill Road, Sugarloaf Parkway and SR 120.

Cross-Corridor Connections

A number of projects were identified to improve cross-corridor connections between I-85, Buford Highway, and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.

► ***Button Gwinnett Drive, Widen to Four Lanes, Pleasantdale Road to Buford Highway***

This capacity addition provides a better connection to Buford Highway from the interchange of Pleasantdale Road at I-85.

► ***Jimmy Carter Boulevard, Widen to Six Lanes, Buford Highway to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard***

Jimmy Carter Boulevard is a critical east-west connector for vehicular and freight movement in Gwinnett County. A higher capacity connection between Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Buford Highway, and from Buford Highway to I-85, could minimize freight movement on Buford Highway.

► ***Grade Separate Intersection of Buford Highway at Jimmy Carter Boulevard***

The intersection of Buford Highway at Jimmy Carter Boulevard is one that was flagged for a safety inspection, due to the high frequency of crashes. The inspection team identified the vertical alignment as a contributing factor to the crash problem, particularly with the rear end type and the left turn crashes on Buford Highway. In addition, Jimmy Carter Boulevard is a high volume east-west corridor that has heavy truck volumes. Grade separating Jimmy Carter Boulevard at Buford Highway is recommended to provide safety and mobility improvements.

► ***Provide Direct Connection between Beaver Ruin Road and Hopkins Mill Road at I-85***

Currently, to get from the Beaver Ruin Road interchange at I-85 to Hopkins Mill Road, one must connect through Satellite Boulevard. This project recommends creating a direct connection between Beaver Ruin Road and Hopkins Mill Road.

► ***Realign to Improve Connection between Beaver Ruin Road and Langford Road/Medlock Bridge Road***

A more direct connection between Beaver Ruin Road and Langford Road/Medlock Bridge Road at Buford Highway is recommended to facilitate the cross-connection.

► ***Extend South Cemetery Street to Mitchell Road***

This project was identified through the stakeholder involvement process to provide a needed connection within the City of Norcross. South Cemetery Street provides access to downtown Norcross from the east and intersects with Holcomb Bridge Road. Cemetery Street currently dead ends.

Operational and Safety Projects

To address the operational efficiency and safety of the corridor, additional projects were identified. The existing Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) infrastructure and high frequency crash locations were examined to determine what types of potential improvements were needed.

► ***Improve Cross-corridor Connection on Hopkins Mill Road, Old Norcross Road, Simpson Circle, and South Berkeley Lake Road between Beaver Ruin Road and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard***

It is recommended that a traffic study be conducted to see if any operation improvements could be undertaken along the cross-corridor alignment of Hopkins Mill Road, Old Norcross Road, Simpson Circle, and South Berkeley Lake Road. These roadways are contiguous and provide a primary connection to adjacent residential areas and provide a connection to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.

► ***ITS Infrastructure***

Within the Buford Highway corridor, the application of ITS varies by jurisdiction. Within DeKalb County, fiber optic communications and closed circuit television (CCTV) camera coverage exists from North Druid Hills Road to Oakcliff Road, just beyond I-285. Additionally, the City of Atlanta operates a CCTV camera at Sidney Marcus Boulevard. Finally, there is a programmed project that will expand ITS into Gwinnett County from the DeKalb County line to Sugarloaf Parkway.

Specific ITS applications that should be considered for the corridor include:

- Fiber Optic Communications – Fill in existing gaps (Sidney Marcus Boulevard to North Druid Hills Road and Oakcliff Road to DeKalb/Gwinnett county line). An existing programmed project should provide coverage in Gwinnett County.
- Changeable Message Signs – Provide northbound and southbound signs near I-285 that can display traveler information pertaining to I-285. An existing programmed project should provide signs in Gwinnett County that could display travel time information generated by vehicle detection devices.
- Closed Circuit Television Cameras – Upgrade existing CCTVs and communication devices to the new Ethernet architecture. An existing programmed project should provide coverage in Gwinnett County.
- Vehicle Detection - Provide coverage in DeKalb County and the City of Atlanta. An existing programmed project should provide coverage in Gwinnett County.
- Signal Upgrades – Replace existing cabinet/controller assemblies and add intersection video detection at traffic signals in the corridor.
- Preemption/Priority Control – Add this feature at traffic signals along the corridor and outfit transit and emergency responder vehicles with emitters.
- Transit/Traveler Information – Install audio and sign systems at BRT stops to communicate schedule and system information.

► ***Intersection Safety Projects***

As part of the corridor needs assessment, traffic safety was evaluated. Locations were flagged that experienced higher crash frequencies than was found overall in the corridor. A site safety field inspection was conducted at these locations to determine the root causes of crashes and to develop cost effective countermeasures to reduce the number of crashes. The locations reviewed included Buford Highway at Sidney Marcus Boulevard, Lenox Road, North Druid Hills Road, Jimmy Carter Boulevard, and Beaver Ruin Road. The inspection team included study team staff and representatives from GDOT's Office of Traffic Safety and Design and District 7 (Metro) Traffic Operations. The recommendations have already been submitted to GDOT District 7 office, which will implement recommended maintenance projects such as refreshing pavement markings, and cleaning and/or removing signs. The following provides an overview of the recommended projects.

Buford Highway at:

Jimmy Carter Boulevard

- Clean dirty signs and replace faded signs for both post mounted signs on the shoulders and the overhead signs mounted on span wires.
- Refresh all pavement markings (longitudinal striping and symbols).
- Install new raised pavement markers.
- Reduce the width of the wide upstream section of the median on Buford Highway on the north side of the intersection. This will allow left turning traffic to queue back into the center two-way left turn lane instead of queuing into the southbound through lane.
- Construct dual left turn lanes on both approaches of Buford Highway with protected only left turn phases.

North Druid Hills Road

- Clean dirty signs and replace faded signs for both post mounted signs on the shoulders and the overhead signs mounted on span wires.
- The worn pavement markings (longitudinal striping and symbols) will be refreshed when the road is resurfaced in early 2007, and new raised pavement markers will be installed.
- Remove the yield (R2-2) sign from the southeast quadrant.
- The MARTA bus stop on the north side of the intersection for southbound buses should be relocated or removed due to the very narrow earth shoulder, rock outcropping and natural spring water. There is another MARTA stop 600 feet to the north, and the faded sign for this bus stop should be replaced.
- Reconstruct/lengthen the westbound dual left turn lane and construct dual left turn lanes for the other three approaches. A capacity analysis should be performed to determine if the existing pavement could be remarked to provide the dual left turn lanes.

Lenox Road

- Clean dirty signs and replace faded signs for both post mounted signs on the shoulders and the overhead signs mounted on span wires.
- The worn pavement markings (longitudinal striping and symbols) will be refreshed when the road is resurfaced in early 2007, and new raised pavement markers will be installed.
- Rebuild the drainage structure (drop inlet) in the southwest quadrant.
- Install pedestrian heads and push buttons for east-west pedestrian traffic on the south side of the intersection.
- Install trailblazing signs for I-85 and SR 400 on existing overhead sign assemblies.

Longer Range Solutions:

- Implement a triple left turn from Cheshire Bridge Road (westbound) onto Buford Highway (southbound). A capacity analysis is needed to determine if the existing pavement on Cheshire Bridge Road can be remarked. Changes will be needed on Buford Highway to receive the triple left turn movements.
- Implement dual left turn movements on the other three approaches.

Beaver Ruin Road

- Remove the yield sign (R1-2) from the southwest quadrant.
- Clean dirty signs and replace faded signs for both shoulder mounted signs on posts and the overhead signs on span wires.
- Install pedestrian heads and pushbuttons to accommodate east-west pedestrian travel crossing Buford Highway along the north side of the intersection.
- Refresh all pavement markings (longitudinal striping and symbols).
- Install new raised pavement markers.
- Determine the installation date for the red-light-running system and track the before/after crash data.

Sidney Marcus Boulevard

- Clean dirty signs and replace faded signs for both post mounted signs on the shoulders and the overhead signs mounted on span wires.
- The worn pavement markings (longitudinal striping and symbols) will be refreshed when the road is resurfaced in early 2007, and new raised pavement markers will be installed.
- Eliminate pedestrian crossings, which are extremely rare. Buford Highway to the south is limited access and southbound pedestrian traffic is prohibited. I-85 is located to the east and blocks pedestrian travel in that direction. Signing should be installed on the south side of Sidney Marcus Boulevard, at southbound off ramp from SR 400, to allow eastbound pedestrians to cross to the north side of Sidney Marcus Boulevard. This will effectively eliminate the pedestrian movement crossing Sidney Marcus at Buford Highway.

► ***Operational Changes on Dresden Drive, Clairmont Road, and Briarwood Road***

A corridor operations simulation for the study was performed on one critical intersection along the corridor: the intersection of Buford Highway and Clairmont Road. Upstream and downstream intersections at Dresden Drive and Briarwood Road were included in the analysis to provide sufficient input for the modeling effort. The results of the analysis indicated some operational changes would result in better intersection LOS at these locations. The specific recommendations are included in the VISSIM report.

► ***Context Sensitive Design***

Prompted by public input, it is recommended that future roadway projects in the corridor integrate a 'context sensitive design' process. A context sensitive design approach is presented in the FHWA publication *Flexibility in Highway Design,* which was developed following the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995. Initially, demonstration programs were developed in five states to integrate context sensitivity into roadway design: Connecticut, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, and Utah. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has embraced context sensitive design and integrated it into their roadway design process. As stated in the MnDOT Design Policy, context sensitive design promotes six key principles and measures of success:[1]

Key Principles

1. Balance safety, mobility, community, and environmental goals in all projects.
2. Involve the public and affected agencies early and continuously.
3. Use an interdisciplinary team tailored to project needs.
4. Address all modes of travel.
5. Apply flexibility inherent in design standards.
6. Incorporate aesthetics as an integral part of good design.

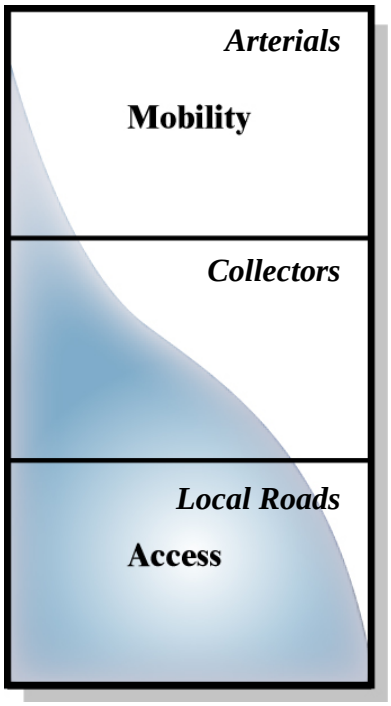
Measures of Success

1. Community acceptance
2. Environmental compatibility
3. Engineering and technical functionality
4. Financial feasibility
5. Timeliness of delivery
6. Commitment beyond the project

Adopting a context sensitive design approach for the corridor complements the land use recommendations herein.

[1] Minnesota Department of Transportation, *Design Policy-Design Excellence through Context Sensitive Design and Solutions* (October 17, 2006), www.dot.state.mn.us/tecsup/tmemo/active/tm06/19ts07.pdf.

3.3.2 Roadway Programs, Policies, and Strategies



Buford Highway is classified by GDOT as a principal and minor arterial. In a system where local streets provide the greatest access to land and arterials provide the greatest mobility, when arterials begin to provide greater access to land parcels, the mobility on the arterial is compromised (see inset).

One of the challenges cited for the corridor is the frequent spacing of driveways and access points. As noted in the *Baseline Conditions Report*, the corridor averages 20 to 40 driveways per mile, depending on the segment. The greatest density of driveways is found between I-285 and Oakcliff Road, with 35 to 40 driveways per mile. To aid corridor mobility, additional policies, programs, and strategies such as access management are recommended.

► ***Access Management Plan and Strategies***

> *Access management is the systematic control of the location, spacing, design, and operation of driveways, median openings, interchanges, and street connections to a roadway…The purpose of access management is to provide vehicular access to land development in a manner that preserves the safety and efficiency of the transportation system.*[2]

Although developing a detailed access management plan is beyond the scope of this planning study, it is recommended that a corridor access management plan be developed for Buford Highway. The access management plan should be comprehensive and multi-jurisdictional, so that a consistent approach is applied throughout the corridor. Georgia guidelines for access onto state facilities are specified in GDOT's *Regulations for Driveway and Encroachment Control*. The importance of managing access along Buford Highway is underscored by the conflicts created between vehicles, pedestrians, and transit users because there are so many access points. In addition, there is a lack of connectivity between adjacent parcels.

Specific tools for access management include both roadway design approaches and land use controls. For Buford Highway, access management tools that should be considered to preserve the corridor for travel include:

- Multi-jurisdictional access management program and plan
- Driveway consolidation and establishment of minimum driveway spacing
- Locating driveways away from intersections

[2] Transportation Research Board, *Access Management Manual* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 2003), p. 3.

- Interparcel access requirements
- Construction of secondary roadway network and parallel access roads to provide access off of Buford Highway
- Landscaped or raised medians
- Integrating access management into other planning activities (such as land use plans, zoning and planning regulations, codes and standards)

► ***Change the Name of Buford Highway to Reflect its Unique, International Character***

Focusing on Buford Highway as a main street, changing the name of the corridor to reflect its unique status in the Atlanta region as a center for international culture and regional destination could be considered. This name change could include all or a portion of the corridor. For instance, the portion of the corridor inside I-285 could be renamed to reflect its multicultural character. The process for identifying a new name for the corridor should include the many jurisdictions and stakeholders as well as identify the limits of the name change. Costs to local businesses and potential impacts on emergency services should be considered during this process.

3.4 Transit Recommendations

Existing local transit services in the Buford Highway corridor are provided by MARTA, Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) and the private provider Royal Bus/Georgia Bus. The major MARTA route is Route 39, which extends from the Lindbergh rail station to the Doraville rail station. Portions of the corridor are also served by MARTA Routes 70, 90, and 139. The MARTA Northeast Rail line also passes through portions of the study area. GCT operates Route 10, which serves Buford Highway between Oakcliff Road and North Berkeley Lake Road. Two other GCT Routes, which serve smaller segments of the corridor, are Routes 20 and 30.

Compared to some of the other corridors in the region, the Buford Highway corridor already is actively served by regional transit providers. The corridor study; however, could not provide detailed recommendations on any particular service changes, since a detailed transit operations study would be required to do so and is beyond the scope of this study. The corridor study focused on major elements of providing existing transit and considered what was planned and programmed in the *Mobility 2030 RTP*.

3.4.1 Transit Projects

3.4.1.1 *Mobility 2030 RTP* Projects

The following major transit projects are included in the RTP. Their inclusion has influenced the breadth and scale of recommendations included in this plan. The projects that have the most relevance to the corridor include AR-910, arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and the accompanying transit ITS improvements (M-AR-383C).

- AR-902A/B - I-285 East BRT from Doraville MARTA station to I-20 East (2030)
- AR-905A/B - I-85 North BRT from Doraville MARTA station to Sugarloaf Pkwy. (2025)
- AR-910 - SR 13 (Buford Highway) Arterial BRT from Pleasant Hill Rd. to MARTA Lindbergh Station (2030)
- M-AR-283C - Signal Improvements to support BRT Movement along Memorial Drive and Buford Highway (2007)

No changes to the operating assumptions were made for the Buford Highway BRT from the 2030 RTP. The existing assumptions for modeling are that the peak operating headways are ten minutes and off-peak headways are 30 minutes. The planned BRT stop locations were reviewed in light of the needs assessment report, and no changes were proposed. The BRT stop locations include: Pleasant Hill/Gwinnett Place Mall, Pleasant Hill and Buford Highway, Old Norcross Road, Jimmy Carter Boulevard, Amwiler Road, Oakcliff Road, Doraville MARTA Rail Station, Chamblee-Tucker Road, Dresden Drive, Clairmont Road, Briarwood Road, N. Druid Hills Road, Shady Valley Drive/Lenox Road, Sidney Marcus Boulevard, Piedmont Road, and Lindbergh Station. Patrons could transfer between the local bus service and the BRT at the BRT stations.

3.4.1.2 New Projects

► ***Convert Outside Lanes on Buford Highway to Dedicated Bus Lanes from Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Shallowford Road***

It is recommended that bus lanes be constructed on Buford Highway from Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Shallowford Road, by converting general purpose lanes. This would provide better transit operations for the planned BRT and existing local bus service. Although the bus lanes would reduce the general purpose travel lanes to two lanes in each direction, model testing indicated that acceptable vehicular mobility is maintained. Overall, the addition of bus lanes in the corridor is seen as a means to provide a more favorable operating environment for buses as well as encourage transit-oriented development. The Buford Highway corridor was identified in a MARTA *BRT Corridor Identification Study* as one of the top five corridors in the MARTA service area for BRT service.

The planning concept presented herein provides one possible alignment option for BRT service, converting the outer travel lanes in each direction to a dedicated bus lane, as illustrated in Figure 3-3. This approach is seen as a relatively low cost way to provide an enhanced operating environment for transit. However, a number of possible alignments, cross-sections, or configurations are possible. A two-way busway could be constructed on one side with a four lane parallel roadway. The busway could also assume a center position, with the roadway travel lanes on the outside. However, this may not be advisable for safety reasons. A detailed evaluation will be required during the preliminary engineering/concept design phase, which would include an alternatives identification and evaluation to identify the best operating configuration. As a basis for comparison, the General Accounting Office found in 2000 that the capital costs for BRT construction indicate an average cost of $700,000 per mile for BRT on

arterial streets, $9 million per mile for BRT operating in a high occupancy vehicle lane, and $13.5 million per mile for BRT operating in an exclusive busway.[3]

Figure 3-3:
Bus Lane Illustration

► ***BRT queue jumper lanes / bus pullouts on Buford Highway from Oakcliff Road to Pleasant Hill Road***

At this time, exclusive BRT lanes have not been considered for Buford Highway outside of I-285. To improve transit operations, queue jumper lanes are recommended. Queue jumper lanes are separate travel lanes that allow buses to pass queued traffic at intersections. Queue jumper lanes are often used in tandem with bus signal priority to allow buses to advance through intersections and improve route travel times.

► ***Transit ITS Infrastructure on Buford Highway***

As indicated in the roadway recommendations, a number of ITS applications are recommended for the Buford Highway corridor. Specific transit ITS applications include traffic signal preemption/priority control and providing real-time traveler information at bus stops.

3.4.2 Transit Programs, Policies, and Strategies

The field review conducted at the beginning of the study indicated that amenities for transit patrons are limited in the corridor. Although nearly all bus stops for both the MARTA and GCT systems are marked with signage, the types of amenities offered at bus stops vary greatly. Most

[3] United States General Accounting Office, *Mass Transit: Bus Rapid Transit Shows Promise* (Washington, D.C., September 2001), p 4.

amenities are provided inside I-285. The bus stops outside of I-285 generally lack amenities. It is recommended that a program be developed to improve existing bus stops. Improvements could include installation of proper signage and paved pads, benches, covered shelters over the paved pads, landscaping, route/schedule information, and bicycle racks (see Figure 3-4). When BRT is implemented in the corridor, BRT bus stations will be developed in conjunction with the service.

Figure 3-4:
Bus Stop Improvement

3.5 Bicycle / Pedestrian Recommendations

The needs assessment found that infrastructure for pedestrian and bicycle travel in the corridor is severely lacking. A few pedestrian improvements are planned or programmed within the study area.

- DK-324C - SR 13 (Buford Highway) from North Druid Hills Rd. to Chamblee Tucker Rd. (2010)
- DK-AR-229 - Chamblee MARTA station area pedestrian improvements (2010)
- DK-AR-BP055 - US 23 (Clairmont Road) from North Druid Hills Rd. to Buford Highway (2010)
- GW-AR-BP107 - SR 120 (West Lawrenceville Street) from Buford Highway to Duluth Middle School and Duluth High School (2010)
- GW-AR-BP108 - US 23 (Buford Highway) at SR 120 (2010)

Pedestrian improvements have been designed for Buford Highway and are currently under construction in DeKalb County by GDOT. The first phase of the project extends from North Shallowford Terrace to I-285. The improvements include five foot sidewalks on both sides of Buford Highway, four mid-block crossings, and improved street lighting. The second phase of the project, which should be under construction within two years, extends from the Fulton county line to North Shallowford Terrace. In this section, the improvements include five foot sidewalks on both sides of Buford Highway; designated crossings north of Clairmont Road at Plaza Fiesta (near Children's Healthcare of Atlanta), between Dresden Drive and Bragg Street, and south of Woodside Way; improved street lighting; and landscaped medians along Buford Highway from the Fulton County line to Clairmont Road. In addition, a pedestrian bridge is planned near the Latin American Association.

3.5.1 Bicycle / Pedestrian Projects

Although the projects underway, planned and programmed do provide needed pedestrian infrastructure, additional pedestrian facilities have been identified to fill gaps and provide better overall connectivity. Recommendations for bicycle facilities have also been developed. Recommended bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects are illustrated in Figure 3-5 and discussed below. The need and purpose for the bicycle and pedestrian facility projects is to improve safety, access, mobility, and connectivity for non-motorized modes as well as encourage alternative mode use in the Buford Highway corridor.

► ***Increased Pedestrian Zones/Buffers and Sidewalk Widths***

Increased pedestrian zone, buffers and sidewalk widths are recommended for both sides of Buford Highway from Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Oakcliff Road, on the east side of Buford Highway from Oakcliff Road to Beaver Ruin Road, and from Pleasant Hill Road to SR 120. This recommendation is to provide better and safer conditions for pedestrians using Buford Highway.

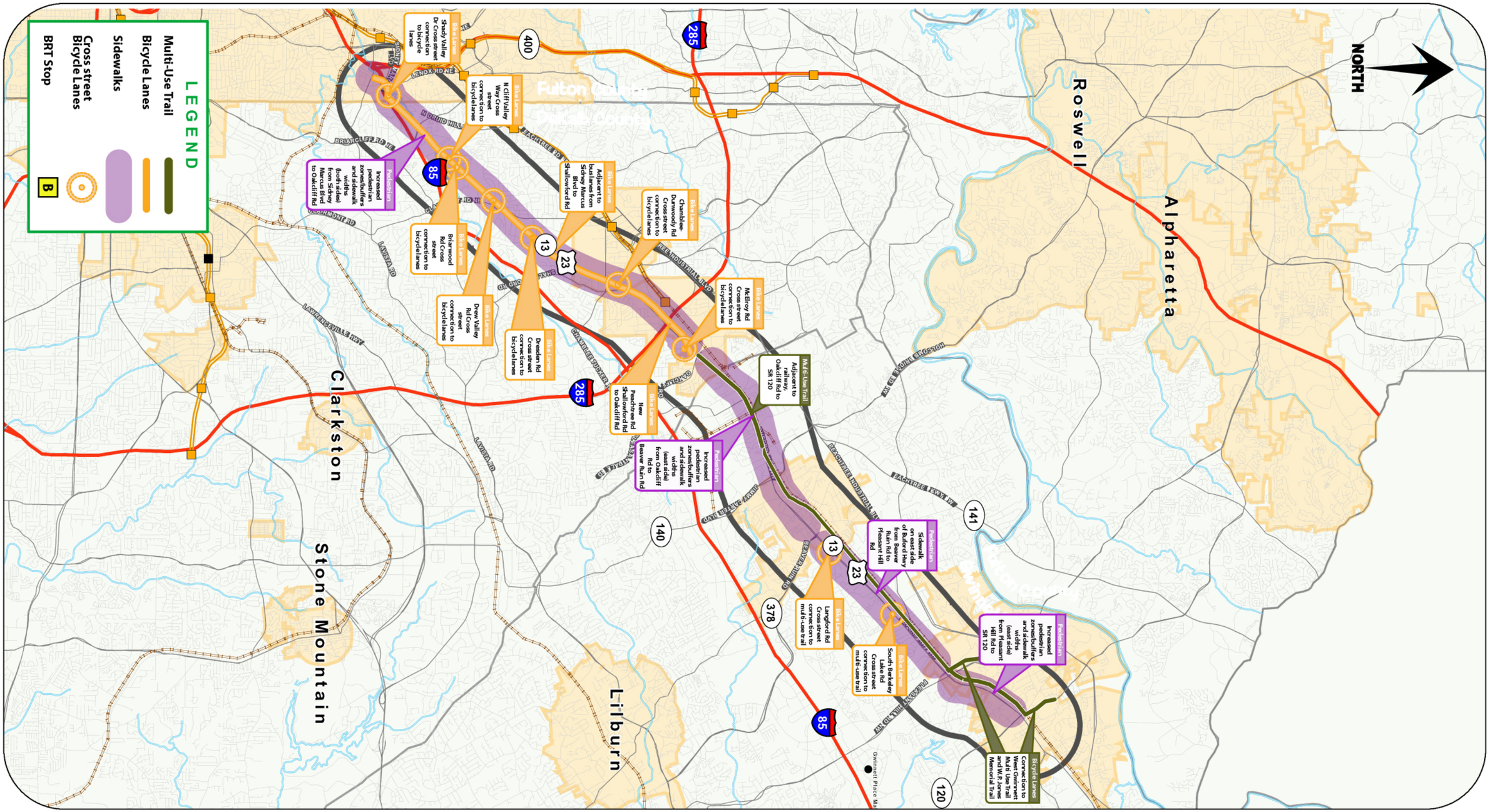
The sidewalks should be a minimum of eight feet in width (to allow two people to walk side by side comfortably). Trees and other landscaping should be incorporated wherever possible to add shade, separate the pedestrian and vehicular realms, and increase pedestrian safety by lowering curbside vehicular speeds. Streetscapes and other pedestrian paths should be adequately linked to transit access points, open spaces, and entrances to retail and commercial establishments.

► ***Sidewalks on Buford Highway***

Sidewalks are recommended for the east side of Buford Highway from Beaver Ruin Road to Pleasant Hill Road. This sidewalk project is needed to fill a gap in the existing sidewalk network.

► ***Bicycle Lanes Adjacent to Bus Lanes on Buford Highway***

As the concept for bus lanes is developed for Buford Highway, bicycle lanes are recommended within the cross-section from Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Shallowford Road.



LEGEND

- EXPRESSWAYS
- MAJOR ROADS
- RAILROADS
- RIVERS & STREAMS
- MARTA STATIONS
- MARTA RAILWAYS
- BUFORD HWY STUDY AREA

February, 2006

0 1 2 Miles

FIGURE 3-5
RECOMMENDED
BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN
PROJECTS

► ***Multi-use Trail Adjacent to Buford Highway and Existing Rail Line***

A multi-use trail is recommended adjacent to the existing railroad line paralleling the west side of Buford Highway from Oakcliff Road to SR 120. The multi-use trail would connect to the existing W.P. Jones and West Gwinnett trails. The multi-use trail would provide a facility for both pedestrians and bicyclists. The development of the multi-use trail adjacent to the rail corridor provides a safer zone for pedestrians and bicyclists. This project could be phased, giving the southern sections higher priority, where bicycle and pedestrian demand is considered to be the greatest.

► ***Bicycle Lanes on New Peachtree Road***

Bicycle lanes are recommended for New Peachtree Road from Shallowford Road to Oakcliff Road, which will connect to the multi-use trail and provide a continuous bicycle network within corridor. Ideally, five-foot wide bicycle lanes should be incorporated into the roadway along the curbside, with appropriate striping, directional signage and unimpeded flow. If dedicated bicycle lanes are not accommodated within the cross-section, a minimum of 12-foot share-the-road lanes should be included, with appropriate designated vehicular signage. Bicycle racks should be installed at entrances to major destinations.

► ***Bicycle Lanes on Cross-streets***

Bicycle lanes are recommended on cross-streets to connect the corridor and multi-use trail. Proposed cross-street connections include: Shady Valley Drive, N. Cliff Valley Way, Briarwood Road, Drew Valley Road, Dresden Road, Chamblee-Dunwoody Road, McElroy Road, Langford Road, and South Berkeley Lake Road.

3.5.2 Bicycle / Pedestrian Programs, Policies, and Strategies

To improve the corridor for pedestrian and bicycle use, the following programs and policies are recommended.

► ***Adopt Design Standards for Sidewalks and Pedestrian Zones***

Design standards should be developed to increase sidewalk widths and create larger pedestrian zones and increase buffers to separate vehicular traffic from pedestrians.

► ***Develop Design Standards for the Multi-Use Trail***

Design standards should be developed for the multi-use trail to include distance marker signage, trail maps, trail etiquette rules and regulations signage, dashed centerline stripes, and stop stripes at intersections. At street intersections, bollards in combination with signage, painted crosswalks and rumble strips should be utilized to alert and limit vehicular access. To ensure a secure operating environment, the multi-use trail should include lighting, where needed, as well as emergency telephones. A plan for monitoring and patrolling the trail should also be developed.

The following safety design measures, from *Rails with Trails* by the Rails to Trails Conservancy, should be considered in design and construction standards of rails with trails:

- Provide adequate distance between track and trail
- Provide grade separation
- Provide safe rail crossings with proper striping and markings
- Provide proper warning signage for trail users
- Use accepted design guideline standards for all aspects of design and detailing (national and state)
- Use professional review to decrease liability
- Adhere to maintenance standards
- Insure the trail provides trail users with rules, regulations and adequate enforcement
- Monitor conditions
- Keep written records of all maintenance activities
- Use fencing barriers to channel trail users toward legal crossings for 200 feet on each side of the crossing to prevent shortcuts

► ***Provide Pedestrian and Bicycle Access across Buford Highway***

Provide pedestrian and bicycle access across streets and intersections through the use of refuge islands, medians, pork chop islands and intersection islands.

► ***Consolidate Driveways and Adopt Shared Parking Requirements***

Frequent driveways cause problems for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as motorists. Consolidate driveways to improve safety and accessibility. Implement shared parking requirements to provide a better pedestrian-scaled environment.

► ***Update Cross-walks and Signalized Intersections***

Survey all existing and proposed traffic signal intersections to ensure they meet Americans with Disability Act (ADA) guidelines and include crosswalks, pedestrian/bicyclist signage, pedestrian/bicyclist actuated signals, and lighting.

► ***Improve Mid-Block Crossing Locations***

Upgrade and develop all existing and proposed mid-block crossings to meet ADA guidelines and include crosswalks, pedestrian/bicyclist signage, split signal pedestrian/bicyclist actuated signals, refuge medians and lighting.

► ***Develop Bicycle Facility Network***

Connect the recommended bicycle facility improvements to a bicycle facility network on roadways parallel and perpendicular to Buford Highway.

► ***Site Transit Stops in Safe Locations***

Examine existing and proposed transit stop locations to ensure they provide pedestrian and bicyclist access and are in safe locations. Locate transit stops to be in close proximity to pedestrian/bicycle crossings.

► ***Improve Transit Stop Amenities***

Provide existing and proposed transit stop waiting areas with appropriate amenities based on patron demand. Provide ADA accessible sidewalks and ramps at all transit stops.

► ***Provide Pedestrian Scale Lighting and Furnishings***

Provide pedestrian scale lighting and site furnishings like benches, trash receptacles and bicycle parking at appropriate locations.

► ***Provide Landscaped Medians***

Provide barrier via landscaped medians to discourage illegal pedestrian crossings and to assist in enhancing scale, character, and beautification of corridor.

► ***Consider Pedestrian Circulation in Land Use Regulations***

Ensure that land use regulations include specifications to provide safe pedestrian access to existing and proposed building entrances and activity centers.

► ***Develop Pedestrian and Cyclist Rest Areas***

Develop standard rest areas or plazas for pedestrians and cyclists near activity centers and town centers.

► ***Provide Pedestrian and Bicycle Signage***

Install different types of signage (way finding, location maps and bilingual) where applicable in order to improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety.

► ***Develop Educational Programs***

Develop educational programs on pedestrian and bicycle safety and regulations.

► ***Provide Enforcement***

Establish and enhance the enforcement of pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular laws and safety.

3.6 Land Use

The land use recommendations take into account the recommended transportation projects developed for the Buford Highway corridor. The following provides land strategies to utilize in concert with transportation improvements.

3.6.1 Recommended Land Use Strategies

3.6.1.1 Anticipating Redevelopment

Just as it is important to anticipate and plan for new growth along the corridor, it is also important to be realistic about the function of properties on Buford Highway, the unique nature of its businesses and users, its proximity to I-85 and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and its long-term sustainability as a highway that is shared by automobiles, public transit, and pedestrians alike. Just as it is not practicable to replace all the strip malls and industrial sites on Buford Highway with high-rise condominiums and office buildings, it is also not fitting to forbid future low-density commercial growth from occurring. It is, therefore, imperative to not only seek a balance of mid- to high-rise development and future low-density growth, but also institute guidelines for transitioning between these high and low densities.

3.6.1.2 Creating Activity Centers[4]

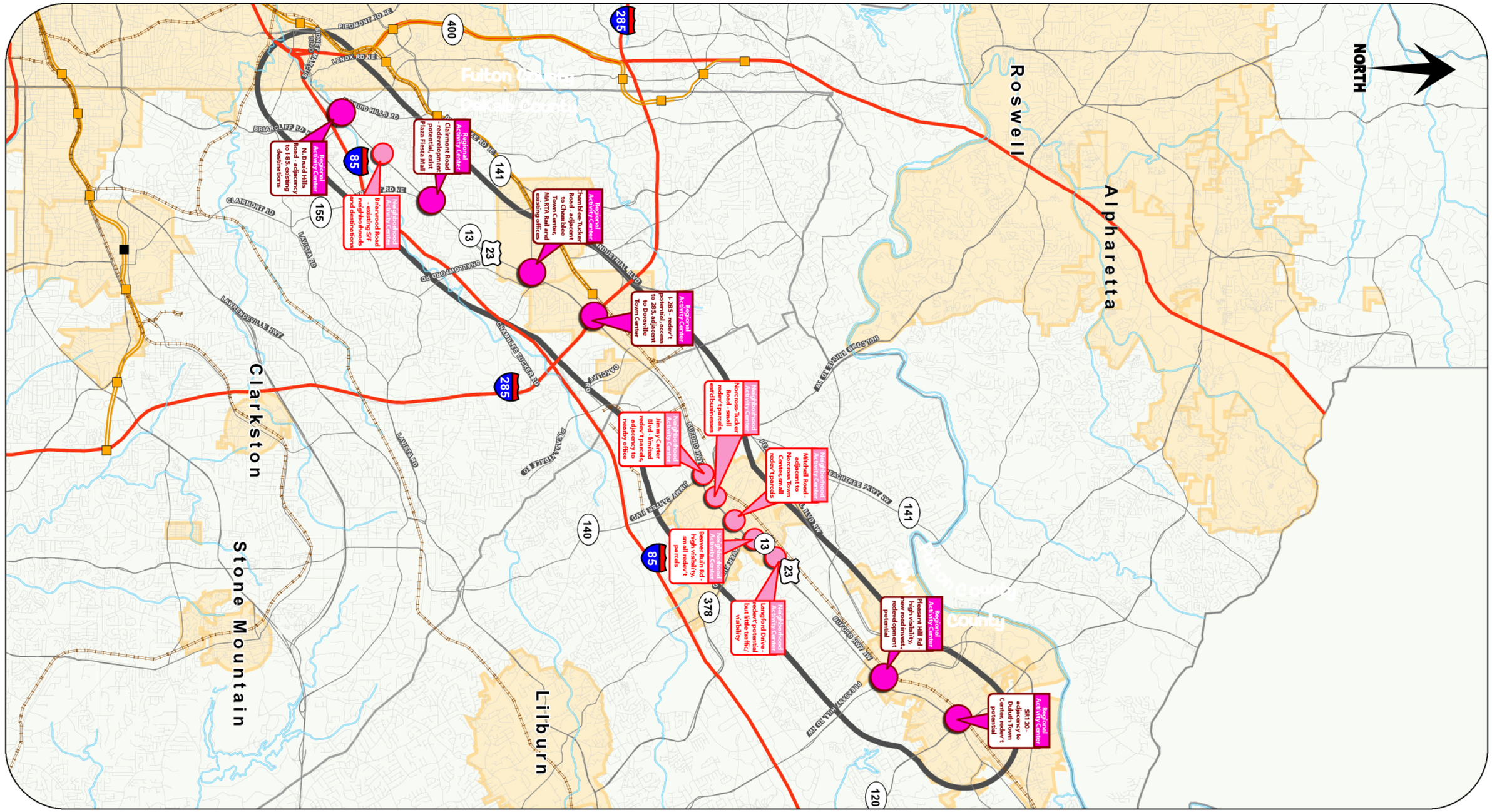
It is important to focus density and activity at strategic nodes along the corridor, Activity Centers. Ideally these are areas that already have a stable destination currently in place, display significant development opportunities, are situated at major intersections, or are adjacent to other centers, public spaces or transit stations. These areas would ideally be targeted for mixed-use development, with a high priority on affordable housing. There are many different configurations and sizes that these types of nodes can take. For instance, an area with large existing destinations, significant development opportunities or high traffic visibility and volumes might be targeted as a future Regional Center. By contrast, an area that currently demonstrates lower traffic volumes, smaller future development sites and smaller commercial anchors might be considered a future Neighborhood Center. A Regional Center would likely serve a broader audience (citywide or regional), whereas a Neighborhood Center would likely serve more physically adjacent neighborhoods or communities.

[4] Note: As defined in the ARC Regional Development Plan (RDP), an Activity Center is an area that includes office, retail, service, residential or civic uses that create a central focus for a larger area. Activity centers may or may not have a historical or political jurisdiction as the basis of their location. Large activity centers have significant amounts of office, retail, industrial or service employment. An activity center also has generally recognizable boundaries. Within ARC's regional place and development matrix used for *Envision6*, regional mixed use activity centers on average have a residential density of 30 households/acre and an employment density of 70 jobs/acre. A Town Center typically represents the historic center of a municipality. These areas were historically the center of the community and had a mix of commercial and civic uses. A town center should have a recognizable boundary. Town centers may also be low intensity centers that serve a local area. They have a mixture of residential and commercial uses. Within ARC's regional place and development matrix used for *Envision6*, a mixed use Town Center has, on average, a residential density of 15 households/acre and an employment density of 13 jobs/acre.

Figure 3-6 exhibits one possible configuration at a potential Activity Center located at an existing major cross street. As shown, mixed-use development abuts the street, with parking placed in the rear of parcels. Consolidated access points are located away from the major intersection. These access streets allow vehicles to enter new developments away from congestion and conflicts associated with these intersections. In many cases where existing single-family or other low-density residential exists adjacent to these nodes, the height and bulk of new development transitions down to these lower scales. The area between a new five-story building at a major intersection and one to two story residential could be unified by two to three story multi-family developments or townhomes. It may be possible to incorporate green space or local serving retail within these new developments. In some cases, it may also be necessary to be sensitive to existing conservation areas and floodplains. An overarching assumption is that these Activity Centers will also be co-located with BRT transit stations.

Figure 3-6:
Activity Node Illustration

As is indicated in the Development Analysis/Opportunities Maps in the *Needs Assessment Report*, there are many activity nodes along the corridor today. Smaller-scale Neighborhood Centers would likely be located adjacent to the Regional Centers but accessed from the service roads by local traffic. Several potential locations for activity nodes are presented below, which have been identified based on transportation and land use analysis as well as stakeholder input. A summary illustration is provided in Figure 3-7.



LEGEND

- EXPRESSWAYS
- MAJOR ROADS
- RAILROADS
- RIVERS & STREAMS
- MARTA STATIONS
- MARTA RAILWAYS
- BUFORD HWY STUDY AREA

Multimodal Corridor Study
Buford Highway

February, 2006

0 1 2 Miles

FIGURE 3-7
LAND USE
RECOMMENDATIONS

ARC

Potential Regional Centers

Buford Highway at:

- North Druid Hills Road - At this location, several substantial long-term development opportunities exist. This location is close to I-85 on the south side, and there are a large number of residential households on the north side of the intersection.

- Clairmont Road - At Clairmont Road, the unusual geometry of roadway crossings has created a multitude of underutilized properties and vacant sites. Immediately adjacent to this intersection is the sizeable Plaza Fiesta Mall, which currently serves as a regional shopping destination. Clairmont Road also serves as an important north-south axis that stretches for many miles in both directions.

- Chamblee-Tucker Road - This location is adjacent to the fast-growing Chamblee Town Center, the nearby Chamblee MARTA rail station and the Peachtree-DeKalb Airport. The intersection also boasts several other destinations such as the Centers for Disease Control (which has recently expanded on a nearby site), a BellSouth office (now AT&T) and a bustling weekend flea market.

- I-285 - At this location, numerous highly visible, easily-accessible, transit- accessible and redevelopable parcels converge. This location exhibits comparatively few existing destinations and nearby households and many, highly visible development opportunities. These include the soon-to-be-vacant General Motors site in Doraville, areas around the Doraville MARTA rail station, aging strip commercial parcels and large industrial brownfield sites.

- Pleasant Hill Road - Although the intersection is currently under construction to provide grade separation from Buford Highway and the rail line, the high visibility, high traffic volumes, surplus of underutilized properties and adjacent greenfield sites show potential for large-scale future development.

- SR120 - This location in Duluth is a highly-traveled cross-street, surrounded by underutilized low-density commercial parcels. New development could be integrated with existing goods, services and public spaces in the adjacent Duluth historic town center.

Potential Neighborhood Centers

Buford Highway at:

- Briarwood Road - The large amount of adjacent single-family and multi-family uses, combined with existing local commercial centers and MARTA bus service, suggests that this area could be poised as a locally-serving commercial center.

- Jimmy Carter Boulevard - Existing railroad lines and high tension power lines impede major development at this location. However, heavy traffic volumes and the close proximity to nearby office and warehouse employment centers suggest that the intersection would do well as a locally-serving retail center.

- Norcross-Tucker Road - Like its neighbor Jimmy Carter Boulevard, the intersection at Norcross-Tucker Road has several small, redevelopable parcels that coexist with existing established goods and services. Its location between the rail line and power line easement, limits the size of developable parcels.
- Mitchell Road - This location is adjacent to the Norcross town center. At Mitchell Road, there is potential to include new townhome or multi-family residential development, mid-density commercial or a gateway feature leading to downtown Norcross.

- Beaver Ruin Road - Beaver Ruin road is a highly-traveled cross-street with underutilized parcels (gas stations, strip commercial) and a significant amount of redevelopment potential.

- Langford Drive - This location is bordered by underutilized commercial parcels and large industrial sites on a less-traveled cross-street.

3.6.1.3 Focusing and Connecting Open Space

It is imperative from a livability and quality-of-life standpoint that open space areas within or adjacent to the corridor become integrated strategically with both new and existing neighborhoods and destinations. Other than a handful of small parks, a small recreational center and a cemetery, there is an extremely small amount of useable open space available to those who currently live and work in the study area. However, many opportunities exist along Buford Highway for reclaiming abandoned or unused space for future use as parks, plazas and greenway trails. There is potential for implementing green space within future developments by including explicit open space requirements and detailed design standards.

The abundance of existing parking lots in the Buford Highway corridor provides opportunities for future open space reclamation. As new development occurs at higher densities, it will be possible to integrate shared parking decks in new construction. This may leave leftover space from previous surface lots that can then be turned into open space. Similarly, as smaller parcels become consolidated for new development, it will be possible to include significant amounts of open space via zoning and design requirements. These new open spaces can then be tied into ongoing streetscapes, forming a network of pedestrian and bicycle paths connected to lawn areas, plazas and fountains, shaded seating and resting areas, picnic areas, dog parks and various recreational spaces. It will be important to locate open spaces accessible to nearby existing residential neighborhoods and MARTA rail stations as well as future BRT stops and access points.

3.6.1.4 “Pruning” Retail Land

Retail sites along Buford Highway have developed in a piecemeal approach over time, allowing the market to dictate the locations, types, sizes and configurations of commercial sites

individually. This has led to, among other problems, a surplus of parking lots and an over saturation of retail uses. As these sites get redeveloped over time, it will be important to strategically integrate new buildings and uses on current low-density commercial sites. In some cases, this will mean retaining the structure of and access for current businesses. Pruning retail land back will, in this case, include strategically constructing new, higher density development on existing retail sites, utilizing shared parking and common access points. This will also mean eliminating redundancies of retail types by introducing new uses such as housing and office development. Specifically, areas between identified activity nodes should be transitioned to other types of uses. The focus of retail should be at the nodes. A comprehensive future land use plan for the corridor will be the primary tool for implementing these changes.

3.6.1.5 Preserving Natural Resources

Since much of the corridor has been developed, it will be important to designate existing undeveloped properties as preservation or conservation areas. The bulk of such areas currently exist north of I-285, between scattered warehouses and industrial sites. Preserving such areas from future development can be achieved by creating a future land use plan that studies and documents such sites and adopting zoning standards that allow higher densities to be built in strategic areas.

3.6.2 The Transportation Linkage

3.6.2.1 Local Access Network

Although Buford Highway may one day include dedicated transit lanes, medians, lower vehicular speeds and wide sidewalks, it will probably always be considered a thoroughfare. In this regard, it will be important to maintain and enhance local access to neighborhoods, existing businesses, existing town centers, transit stations and new development so as not to impede flow directly on Buford Highway. The typical cross-section diagram (Figure 3-6) illustrates several local access points that could link many of these components. For instance, although multiple curb cuts directly on Buford Highway could be consolidated into shared access points away from main intersections, access to existing residential streets will need to be maintained and strategically integrated into new networks. Physical layouts of new developments will likely incorporate rear-entry and structured parking, which will also be integrated into these circulation systems. Installation of medians will make left turns difficult, so right-in/right-out configurations could be used to improve flow. Overall, attempts should be made to focus shared ingress and egress points into activity centers as far away from traffic conflicts associated with intersections at major cross streets.

3.6.2.2 Pedestrian and Bicycle System

Buford Highway currently experiences a significant amount of pedestrian traffic, but the pedestrian infrastructure is fragmented, incomplete and narrow. It will be imperative that pedestrian paths include adequate infrastructure. Future sidewalks should be a minimum of eight feet in width, to allow for a buffer and permit two people to walk side by side comfortably. Street trees and other landscaping should be incorporated wherever possible to add shade,

separate the pedestrian and vehicular realms, and increase pedestrian safety by lowering curbside vehicular speeds. Streetscapes and other pedestrian paths should be adequately linked to transit access points, open spaces, and entries to retail and commercial establishments.

Ideally, five-foot wide bicycle lanes should also be incorporated into the roadway along the curbside, with appropriate striping, directional signage and unimpeded flow. If dedicated bicycle lanes are not accommodated within the cross-section, a minimum of 12-foot share-the-road lanes should be included with appropriate designated vehicular signage. Bicycle racks should be installed at entrances to major destinations.

3.6.2.3 Corridor Design Standards

Corridor design standards will need to be formalized in order to achieve the desired goals. Overall, cross-street intersection geometries will need to be considered and redesigned, as necessary, in order to improve mobility between Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and I-85. At the same time, installation of medians, new open spaces and significant pedestrian paths will mean that adequate crosswalks, pedestrian signals, pedestrian refuges, on-street parking and bulb-outs will need to be accommodated, just as lanes, striping and signage will need to be reworked to accommodate new vehicular turning movements.

3.6.2.4 Access Management Standards

It will be essential to create an access management strategy to direct access on Buford Highway. Wherever possible, there should be inter-parcel connectivity and consolidated driveways to minimize curb cuts. This will increase traffic operations and safety as well as enhance the pedestrian environment. Overall, attempts should be made to focus shared ingress and egress points into activity centers as far away from traffic conflicts associated with intersections at major cross-streets.

Specific tools for access management include both roadway design approaches and land use controls. As indicated previously, access management tools that should be considered to preserve the corridor for travel include developing a multi-jurisdictional access management program and plan, managing driveway spacing, providing interparcel connections, creating secondary roadway networks at activity centers, providing landscape treatments, and integrating access management into the land use and zoning codes and regulations.

3.7 Public Input

Public and stakeholder meetings have been conducted to review and comment on the final plan recommendations. The following provides an overview of comments received from stakeholders and the public.

Public information meetings were conducted to provide an opportunity to review and comment on the recommended projects on January 18, 25 and February 6, 2007. Meeting participants were asked to share their opinions and impressions of the recommended roadway, transit,

bicycle, and pedestrian improvements. Attendees also identified their priority projects. The following presents a summary of the comments received for each set of recommendations.

Roadway - Comments received at the three public meetings varied by location. At the meeting conducted in Duluth, Georgia, participants expressed concern about extending Peachtree Industrial Boulevard as a limited access facility. It was thought that this project, as proposed, would negatively impact local businesses and the community. Alternate approaches suggested included improving Buford Highway, widening 141, widening Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, and improving the I-85 corridor. In general, there was support for improving the cross-corridor connections at all meetings; however, at one meeting participants suggested that there should be BRT service on Jimmy Carter Boulevard in lieu of widening. Other comments included providing streetscaping and landscaped medians. On the southern portion of the corridor, participants expressed concern about cut-through traffic between I-85 and Buford Highway.

Land Use - The meeting participants generally supported the land use recommendations for the corridor.

Transit - The participants generally agreed with the transit recommendations for the corridor.

Bicycle and Pedestrian - The participants generally agreed with the bicycle/pedestrian recommendations for the corridor, though there were mixed reactions about the multi-use trail. Concerns were expressed that bicyclists and pedestrians should have separate facilities, and the multi-use trail would have mixed modes. Others thought the multi-use trail could provide an economic generator. Those representing bicyclist interests indicated a preference for bicycle lanes and funding for bicycle facilities.

Meeting participants identified the following top priorities, based on identified projects and vision for the corridor.

January 18, 2007 Meeting

- Grade separation of Buford Highway at Jimmy Carter Boulevard
- Multi-use trail from Oakcliff Road to SR 120
- Realignment of Beaver Ruin Road and Langford Road/Medlock Bridge Road to provide a more direct connection

The group also expressed support for the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard extension as a grade-separated facility.

January 25, 2007 Meeting

- Synchronize traffic lights between North Druid Hills and Shallowford Road
- Add textured bicycle lanes and pedestrian crossings
- Create more connectivity to Buford Highway
- Add bicycle lanes on Clairmont Road, Oakcliff Road, and Briarcliff Road

February 6, 2007 Meeting

The main priority, identified by meeting participants, was to look for opportunities to revisit the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard recommendation in order to avoid negative impacts to the existing communities and businesses along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.

4.0 COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

In order for the Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study recommendations to be implemented, each project will require sponsorship and funding and integration in the RTP and TIP. Once a project is programmed, it can then progress to preliminary engineering and concept design. For any federally-funded project, this also means that most projects will be subject to environmental evaluation per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As a preface to this process, an initial screening was conducted to review potential impacts to historic, cultural, and natural environments from the recommended projects. This review used readily available databases, and no field verification was conducted. As projects progress and construction limits are better defined, a thorough environmental evaluation can be conducted in each respective project's area of potential effect.

4.1 National and Georgia Register of Historic Places Resources

4.1.1 Methodology

4.1.1.1 Resources Listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

In identifying NRHP-listed resources for the screening process, data was collected from a variety of sources; however, no field verification was conducted for this screening level analysis. Data collected from the National Register Information System was combined and cross-referenced with data supplied by the NRHP website, wwwnationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com. The information provided in the screening process on historic resources includes resources that have been determined eligible by the State Historic Preservation officer for the National Register of Historic Places.

4.1.1.2 Properties Identified as Potentially Eligible for the NRHP

The data used to identify aboveground resources potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP came from the Georgia's Natural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources GIS (NAHRGIS) available at www.ito.uga.edu/nahgris. The system contains the most recent county surveys conducted for the Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division. The county surveys deposited at the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) were also reviewed for the purpose of this screening, as were the identified resource files, also maintained by the SHPO. A comprehensive file search at the SHPO was conducted for the purpose of this screening report.

4.1.2 Regulatory Compliance

4.1.2.1 National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) promotes and encourages the preservation of prehistoric and historic resources. A historic resource/property is a prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Section 106 of the Act requires that all agencies of the federal government with direct or indirect jurisdiction over a proposed federal or federally assisted undertaking take into account the potential of the proposed undertaking to cause effect to historically significant resources. Regulations for carrying out Section 106 and compliance with NHPA are provided in 36 CFR 800.

4.1.2.2 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended

Historic resources/properties are considered part of the cultural environment and need to be identified within the impact region of a proposed undertaking under direct or indirect jurisdiction of an agency of the federal government. Historic resources/properties are defined in 16 U.S.C. 470(w) as the following:

> *…any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion on the National Register, including artifacts, records, and material remains related to such a property or resource.*

The consideration of these type resources is recorded in the environmental document prepared for compliance with NEPA. NEPA is the nation's policy for the protection of the environment, which includes the human environment and natural environment. NEPA protects social, cultural, natural, and physical resources. NEPA seeks to encourage a balance between man and the environment by supporting efforts that prevent the damage or destruction of the environment and biosphere. Section 102(2) of NEPA contains "action forcing" regulations to ensure federal agencies comply with the letter and spirit of the Act. Section 102(2) calls for the identification of all environmental resources within a potentially impacted region and consideration of direct or indirect effects to identified resources when any agency of the federal government has direct or indirect jurisdiction over a proposed undertaking. Regulations for how Section 102(2) is implemented by federal agencies, for compliance with NEPA, are provided in 40 CFR 1500.

4.1.2.3 Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966

Section 4(f) is codified in 49 U.S.C. 303 and 23 U.S.C. 138. Section 4(f) requires the consideration of recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic resources in transportation and transit project development. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) implement the law through regulations in 23 CFR 771.135. Section 4(f) applies in all instances when a proposed undertaking is funded or requires approval by an agency of the U.S. DOT, including FHWA. Section 4(f) evaluation is required when it is determined that a transportation or transit project poses the "use" or "constructive use" of a protected resource.

4.1.3 Analysis of the Buford Highway Corridor

4.1.3.1 Resources Listed on the NRHP

Two properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places were identified as a result of the preliminary screening within the Buford Highway (see Table 4-1).

Table 4-1:
Resources Listed on the NRHP within the Buford Highway Corridor

Resource Name	Location
Norcross Historic District	Off US 23/Buford Highway in Norcross, Gwinnett County, Georgia
Mechanicsville School	At the Intersection of 3rd Street and Florida Avenue in Norcross, Gwinnett County, Georgia

4.1.3.2 Properties Identified as Potentially Eligible for the NRHP

Thirty-one properties identified as potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP were identified as result of preliminary screening within the Buford Highway corridor (see Table 4-2).

Table 4-2:
Properties Potentially Eligible for the NRHP within the Buford Highway Corridor

Resource Address	SHPO Survey File Name and Number
5921 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 04 005
5911 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 04 006
5770 South Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 05 002
5899 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 04 007
South Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 05 005
South Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 05 006
5856 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 05 011
5936 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 05 021
5944 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 05 022
6000/5998 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 310 05 028
3775 Central Avenue Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 311 01 006
6010 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 321 02 002
6038/6028 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 321 02 004
6044-6046 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 321 03 004
2697 Church Street Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 321 05 008
2702 Church Street Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 321 06 009

Table 4-2:
Properties Potentially Eligible for the NRHP within the Buford Highway Corridor

Resource Address	SHPO Survey File Name and Number
3816 Rogers Street Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 321 07 001
6056 New Peachtree Road Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 321 07 003
Flowers Road at School Drive Doraville, GA	DeKalb - 18 321 10 003
130 Howell Street Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 89
Religious Property Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 88
Railroad Street Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 87
3637 Lawrenceville Road Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 86
3606 Lawrenceville Road Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 85
3601 Lawrenceville Road Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 84
122 Lawrenceville Road Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 83
Peachtree Street Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 82
3167 Peachtree Street Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 81
Al Drive Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 80
37 Lawrenceville Road Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 79
Single-Family Residential Property Duluth, GA	Gwinnett - 53

4.2 Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S.

4.2.1 Methodology

An assessment of Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S. present within the study corridor was performed using United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps. Jurisdictional Waters include rivers, streams, creeks, wetlands, and open waters (lakes and ponds).

4.2.1.1 Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S within Screening Area

Background research of the study area identified approximately nine named streams, four wetland areas, and five open waters within or adjacent to the corridor study area. The named streams identified are Peachtree Creek, North Fork Peachtree Creek, Beaver Ruin Creek, Shetley Creek, Bromolow Creek, Sweetwater Creek, Suwanee Creek, Brushy Creek, and Level Creek. There are also numerous small, unnamed streams and tributaries throughout the corridor study area.

The Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S. are abundant within the study area; however, there are no highly concentrated areas. Based on this initial screening, it appears that the presence of Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S. would not prohibit implementation of proposed projects.

4.2.1.2 Regulatory Compliance

Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S. are defined by 33 CFR Section 328.3(b) and are protected by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1344), which is administered and enforced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). Section 404 of the Clean Water Act establishes a program regulating the discharge of dredged and fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Activities in waters of the U.S. that are regulated under this program include fills for development, water resource projects (such as dams and levees), infrastructure development (such as highways and airports), and conversion of wetlands to uplands for farming and forestry. An ACOE permit would be required for structures or work in or affecting navigable waters of the United States including wetlands. The term "individual permit" means an ACOE authorization that is issued following a case-by-case evaluation of a specific structure or work in accordance with the procedures of this regulation and 33 CFR Part 325, and a determination that the proposed structure or work is in the public interest pursuant to 33 CFR Part 320. The term "general permit" means an ACOE authorization that is issued on a nationwide or regional basis for a category or categories of activities when: 1) those activities are substantially similar in nature and cause only minimal individual and cumulative environmental impacts; or 2) the general permit would result in avoiding unnecessary duplication of the regulatory control exercised by another federal, state, or local agency provided it has been determined that the environmental consequences of the action are individually and cumulatively minimal (see 33 CFR Part 325.2(e) and 33 CFR Part 330).

The term, "303(d) list," is short for the list of impaired waters (stream segments, lakes) that the Clean Water Act requires all states to submit for EPA approval every two years (even-numbered years). The states identify all waters where required pollution controls are not sufficient to attain or maintain applicable water quality standards and rank the waters taking into account the uses of the water and severity of the pollution problem. Level Creek, Peachtree Creek, North Fork Peachtree Creek, and Suwanee Creek, are 303(d) listed waterbodies due to excess levels of pathogens.

The State of Georgia requires a minimum 25-foot stream buffer to be maintained on all state waters. However, county and local stream buffer ordinances may also apply and could increase the required minimum buffer width.

4.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

4.3.1 Methodology

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) County Listings of Threatened and Endangered Species for DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett Counties were reviewed to determine the proposed project's potential impact to protected species. This data was obtained from the Georgia Department of Natural Resource Natural Heritage Program (DNR) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) protected species websites. Species with federal or state listing as 'endangered', 'threatened', or 'candidate' are included in this discussion.

The DNR and FWS lists identify the following species occurring in each county:

DeKalb County

- Altamaha shiner (*Cyprinella xaenura*)
- Flatrock Onion (*Allium speculae*)
- Pool sprite (*Amphianthus pusillus*)
- Georgia aster (*Aster georgianus*)
- Black-spored quillwort (*Isoetes melanospora*)
- Ozark bunchflower (*Melanthium woodii*)
- Indian Olive (*Nestronia umbellula*)
- Bay starvine (*Schisandra glabra*)
- Granite stonecrop (*Sedum pusillum*)
- Piedmont barren strawberry (*Waldsteinia lobata*)
- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
- Bluestripe shiner (*Cyprinella callitaenia*)

Fulton County

- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
- Bluestripe shiner (*Cyprinella callitaenia*)
- Cherokee Darter (*Etheostoma scotti*)
- Highscale shiner (*Notropis hypsilepis*)
- Gulf moccasinshell mussel (*Medionidus pencillatus*)
- Shiny-rayed pocketbook mussel (*Lampsillis subangulata*)
- Bachman's sparrow (*Aimophilia aestivalis*)
- Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)
- Bay star-vine (*Schisandra glabra*)
- Piedmont barren strawberry (*Waldsteinia lobata*)
- Georgia aster (*Aster georgianus*)
- Pink ladyslipper (*Cypripedium acaule*)
- Large-flowered yellow ladyslipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum var. pubescens*)
- Harper's heartleaf (*Hexastylis shuttleworthii var. harperi*)

Gwinnett County

- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
- Bluestripe shiner (*Cyprinella callitaenia*)
- Bay star-vine (*Schisandra glabra*)
- Black-spored quillwort (*Isoetes melanospora*)
- Golden seal (*Hydrastis canadensis*)
- Granite stonecrop (*Sedum pusillum*)
- Piedmont barren strawberry (*Waldsteinia lobata*)
- Pool sprite (*Amphianthus pusillus*)
- Georgia aster (*Aster georgianus*)

- Pink ladyslipper (*Cypripedium acaule*)
- Large-flowered yellow ladyslipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum var. pubescens*)
- Ozark bunchflower (*Melanthium woodii*)

The DNR response letter identified the presence of the following species within three miles of the corridor study area:

1. Bay starvine (*Schisandra glabra*) approximately one mile south of the beginning of the study corridor in Fulton County.
2. Bay starvine (*Schisandra glabra*) approximately 2.5 miles south of the beginning of the study corridor in Fulton County.
3. Bay starvine (*Schisandra glabra*) approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the beginning of the study corridor in Fulton County.
4. American ginseng approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the beginning of the study corridor in Fulton County.
5. Bay starvine (*Schisandra glabra*) approximately 2.0 miles west of Chamblee-Tucker Road in DeKalb County.
6. American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) approximately one-half mile from Duluth in Gwinnett County.

4.3.2 Potential Areas of Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat

Potential habitat for threatened and endangered species may include forested areas, wetlands, streams, creeks, and rivers. No field investigation was conducted; therefore, the presence of endangered species and/or their habitats cannot be verified.

4.3.3 Regulatory Compliance

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) is administered by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric (NOAA) – Fisheries. Section 7 of the ESA directs all federal agencies to use their existing authorities to conserve threatened and endangered species and, in consultation with the FWS, to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize listed species or destroy or adversely modify critical habitat. Section 7 applies to management of federal lands as well as other federal actions that may affect listed species, such as federal approval of private activities through the issuance of federal permits, licenses, or other actions. All federal agencies are required to protect listed species and their habitats.

Additionally, The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 must be considered in project planning. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act implements various treaties and conventions between the U.S. and Canada, Japan, Mexico and the former Soviet Union for the protection of migratory birds. Under the Act, taking, killing or possessing migratory birds is unlawful. Bridges, culverts, and structures capable of supporting migratory species and their nests would need to be examined for the presence of protected migratory species prior to any demolition or reconstruction.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Implementation Program was developed to identify resources and actions necessary to implement recommended projects. The Implementation Program presents project costs, funding sources, agency responsibilities, and recommended time periods as well as program implementation considerations.

Planning level cost estimates were developed for the transportation project recommendations. The primary means for generating the cost estimates was the ARC *2006 Cost Update Tool*. Planning level assumptions regarding design and construction were made where needed so that cost estimates could be developed. Unit costs for bicycle lanes and multi-use trails were derived based on field and project experience. Costs for ITS improvements were developed based on the current state of the practice and recent bid prices in Georgia. More detailed costs estimates would need to be prepared, prior to implementation, as part of the preliminary engineering phase, following this study.

5.1 Existing ARC Programmed and Planned Projects

Table 5-1 lists the current ARC programmed and planned projects that are in or cross the corridor study area from the *Mobility 2030 RTP*. This list reflects the costs identified in the *FY 2006-2011 TIP* update approved in February 2006, with cost estimate revisions from December 2006. The total cost of all projects is $2.4 Billion. The source of funding for the identified projects is 71 percent federal, seven percent state, 21 percent local, and one percent bond funds. Local funding identified includes project matches from the City of Chamblee ($102,688), City of Duluth ($403,000), DeKalb County ($160,000), and Gwinnett County ($12,714,220). GRTA is identified as the source of local match for $486,275,000, and GDOT is identified as the source for local match for $1,000,000. Table 5-2 shows the investment specified for each study area county and for study area projects, as compared to the entire 2030 RTP and *FY 2006-2011 TIP*. It should be noted that $1,936,655,000 of study area project funds are allocated to multi-county projects, so they cannot be attributed to any one county.

Table 5-1:
Planned and Programmed Projects in the Mobility 2030 RTP and FY 2006-2011 TIP (using December 2006 updated cost information)

ARC Project Number	Description/Location	Project Type	Sponsor	Location	Length (miles)	Network Year	Federal	State	Local	Bond	Total
AR-902A	I-285 East Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Doraville MARTA station to I-20 East	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GRTA	DeKalb County	14.26	2030	$186,200,000		$200,000,000		$386,200,000
AR-902B	I-285 East Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Doraville MARTA station to I-20 East	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GRTA	Multi-County	14.26	2030	$13,800,000				$13,800,000
AR-905A	I-85 North Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Doraville MARTA station to Sugarloaf Pkwy.	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GRTA	Multi-County	14.22	2025	$252,275,000		$270,975,000		$523,250,000
AR-905B	I-85 North Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Doraville MARTA station to Sugarloaf Pkwy.	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GRTA	Multi-County	32	2025	$18,700,000				$18,700,000
AR-910	SR 13 (Buford Highway) Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Pleasant Hill Rd. to MARTA Lindbergh Station	Arterial BRT	GRTA	Multi-County	17	2030	$12,750,000		$15,300,000		$28,050,000
AR-H-300	I-285 North HOV Lanes from I-75 North to I-85 North, 2 or 4 lanes	HOV Lanes	GDOT	Multi-County	13.1	2020	$1,170,657,100	$152,197,900		$30,000,000	$1,352,855,000
DK-076	East Roxboro Road from Buford Highway to Rockhaven Circle, widen 2 to 4 lanes	Roadway Capacity	GDOT	DeKalb County	0.71	2020	$27,079,400	$6,769,760			$33,849,160
DK-324C	SR 13 (Buford Highway) from North Druid Hills Rd. to Chamblee Tucker Rd.	Pedestrian Facility	DeKalb County	DeKalb County	4.7	2010	$3,260,000	$815,000			$4,075,000
DK-AR-229	Chamblee MARTA Station Area Improvements	Pedestrian Facility	City of Chamblee	DeKalb County	N/A	2010	$410,752		$102,688		$513,440
DK-AR-BP055	US 23 (Clairmont Road) from North Druid Hills Rd. to Buford Highway	Pedestrian Facility	DeKalb County	DeKalb County	3.3	2010	$640,000		$160,000		$800,000

Table 5-1:
Planned and Programmed Projects in the Mobility 2030 RTP and FY 2006-2011 TIP (using December 2006 updated cost information)

ARC Project Number	Description/Location	Project Type	Sponsor	Location	Length (miles)	Network Year	Federal	State	Local	Bond	Total
GW-099A	US 23 (Buford Highway): Segment 1 from Old Peachtree Rd. to Sugarloaf Pkwy., widen 2 to 4 lanes	Roadway Capacity	GDOT	Gwinnett County	2	2020	$13,200,000	$3,300,000	$1,000,000		$17,500,000
GW-271A	Pleasant Hill Road from Old Norcross Rd. to US 23/Buford Highway, widen 4 to 6 lanes	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	1.75	2010			$6,000,000		$6,000,000
GW-271B	Pleasant Hill Road from US 23/Buford Highway to Chattahoochee River, widen 4 to 6 lanes	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	1.77	2030	$20,240,000		$5,060,200		$25,300,200
GW-300	US 23 (Buford Highway) ATMS from DeKalb County line to Sugarloaf Pkwy.	ITS-Smart Corridor	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	11	2010	$1,864,000		$466,000		$2,330,000
GW-304	Sugarloaf Parkway ATMS from SR 20 to Peachtree Industrial Blvd.	ITS-Smart Corridor	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	12	2010	$1,404,000		$443,250		$1,847,250
GW-324	SR 378 (Beaver Ruin Rd) ATMS from Buford Highway to US 29	ITS-Smart Corridor	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	6.45	2010	$1,319,200		$506,770		$1,825,970
GW-326	Pleasant Hill Road ATMS from Steve Reynolds Blvd. to Fulton County line	ITS-Smart Corridor	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	4	2010	$952,000		$238,000		$1,190,000
GW-AR-BP107	SR 120 (West Lawrenceville Street) from Buford Highway to Duluth Middle School and Duluth High School	Pedestrian Facility	City of Duluth	Gwinnett County	0.1	2010	$496,000		$124,000		$620,000
GW-AR-BP108	US 23 (Buford Highway) at SR 120	Pedestrian Facility	City of Duluth	Gwinnett County	N/A	2010	$496,000		$279,000		$775,000
M-AR-283C	Signal Improvements to support BRT Movement Along Memorial Drive and Buford Highway	ITS-Smart Corridor	MARTA	DeKalb County	N/A	2007	$1,842,000				$1,842,000
Total							**$1,727,585,452**	**$163,082,660**	**$500,654,908**	**$30,000,000**	**$2,421,323,020**

Table 5-2:
RTP and TIP Investment by County

Jurisdiction	Study Area Projects		Entire 2030 RTP & *FY 2006-2011 TIP*	Percent of Study Area Projects to Total County Investment
	Total Investment	Percent of Total	Total Investment	
DeKalb	$427,279,600	18%	$2,437,443,184	17.5%
Gwinnett	$57,388,420	2%	$2,555,748,472	2.2%
Multi-County	$1,936,655,000	80%	n/a	n/a
Total	$2,421,323,020	100%	n/a	n/a

5.2 Recommended New Project Prioritization, Costs and Phasing

The Implementation Program is grouped into tables for short-term, mid-term, and long-range projects. Each table provides the project description, modification/improvement, length, category, type, jurisdiction/sponsor, estimated cost, and network year. The planning level costs presented include capital costs, design and engineering, construction and estimated rights-of-way, where applicable. The cost estimates do not include operating or maintenance costs.

Table 5-3 contains short range projects for the 2008 through 2013 TIP, Table 5-4 contains mid-term projects for the 2014 through 2020 time period, and Table 5-5 contains long range projects for the 2021 through 2030 time period. The estimated funding shares identified for state and local participation are based on examining similar projects in the *Mobility 2030 RTP*. Until each project has an identified sponsor, precise funding mechanisms cannot be determined.

One funding mechanism that has been very popular with local jurisdictions has been the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) program. Through a voter referendum, counties can issue a SPLOST referendum to provide dedicated one percent sales tax revenue to fund infrastructure investments. Gwinnett County currently has a SPLOST program in place. Gwinnett County's SPLOST was approved November 2, 2004 and is anticipated to raise $550 million, some of which is allocated for transportation infrastructure. DeKalb County has not employed the SPLOST for general projects. The county participates in a Homestead Option Sales Tax (HOST) program, and these funds may be used for infrastructure investments. A $79 million transportation bond program was approved in 2005, specifically to fund transportation projects. A list of additional potential funding programs that may be suitable for identified projects is presented in Appendix C.

Table 5-3:
Projects for TIP Implementation (2008-2013)

Description			Project Specifications			Cost Estimate		
Roadway / Location	**Modification / Improvement**	**Limits**	**Length (Miles)**	**Improvement Type**	**Jurisdiction(s)**	**Total Cost**	**State Share Estimate**	**Local Share Estimate**
Buford Highway	Intersection modification	Jimmy Carter Boulevard		Safety	Gwinnett County, Norcross	$7,000	$1,400	
Buford Highway	Intersection modification, turning lanes	North Druid Hills Road		Safety	DeKalb County	$130,000	$26,000	
Buford Highway	Intersection modification, turning lanes	Lenox Road		Safety	Atlanta	$160,000	$32,000	
Adjacent to Buford Highway	Multi-use trail on west side of Buford Highway between Buford Highway and railroad, with spur connections to W.P. Jones and West Gwinnett trails	Oakcliff Road to SR 120	11.1	Bicycle / Pedestrian	Gwinnett County, Doraville, Norcross, Duluth	$3,500,000		$3,500,000
New Peachtree Road	Bicycle lanes, connecting to multi-use trail	Shallowford Road to Oakcliff Road	3.0	Bicycle	Doraville	$4,200,000		$4,200,000
Buford Highway	Increased pedestrian zones/buffers and sidewalk widths	Sidney Marcus Blvd. to Oakcliff Road (both sides), Oakcliff Road to Beaver Ruin Road (east side), Pleasant Hill Road to SR 120 (east side)	22.9	Pedestrian	DeKalb County, Gwinnett County, Atlanta, Chamblee Doraville, Norcross, Duluth	$4,600,000		$920,000
Buford Highway	Sidewalk on east side of Buford Highway	Beaver Ruin Road to Pleasant Hill Road	3.6	Pedestrian	Gwinnett County, Norcross, Duluth	$800,000		$160,000
Total						$13,397,000	$59,400	$8,780,000

Table 5-4:
Projects for Mid-Range Implementation (2014-2020)

Description			Project Specifications			Cost Estimate		
Roadway / Location	**Modification / Improvement**	**Limits**	**Length (Miles)**	**Improvement Type**	**Jurisdiction(s)**	**Total Cost**	**State Share Estimate**	**Local Share Estimate**
Jimmy Carter Boulevard	Widen from 4 to 6 lanes	Buford Highway to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	1.5	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County, Norcross	$9,200,000	$1,840,000	
Buford Highway	Grade separate intersection	Jimmy Carter Boulevard		Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County, Norcross	$12,800,000	$2,560,000	
Beaver Ruin Road, Hopkins Mill Road	Realign to improve connection	I-85 to Hopkins Mill Road	0.3	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County	$2,100,000		$2,100,000
South Cemetery Street	Extension to Mitchell Road	South Cemetery Street to Mitchell Road	0.2	Roadway Capacity	Norcross	$1,400,000		$1,400,000
Buford Highway	ITS (Fiber optic communications, changeable message signs, closed circuit TV cameras, vehicle detection, and signal upgrades)	Various locations		ITS	DeKalb County Atlanta	$3,000,000		$600,000
Various locations	Bicycle lanes on cross-streets to Buford Highway to connect to Buford Highway bicycle lanes and multi-use trail	Shady Valley Drive, N. Cliff Valley Way, Briarwood Road, Drew Valley Road, Dresden Road, Chamblee-Dunwoody Road, McElroy Road, Langford Road, South Berkeley Lake Road	4.5	Bicycle	DeKalb County, Gwinnett County, Atlanta, Chamblee Doraville, Norcross,	$6,200,000		$6,200,000
Total						$34,700,000	$4,400,000	$10,300,000

Table 5-5:
Projects for Long-Range Implementation (2021-2030)

Description			Project Specifications			Cost Estimate		
Roadway / Location	**Modification / Improvement**	**Limits**	**Length (Miles)**	**Improvement Type**	**Jurisdiction(s)**	**Total Cost**	**State Share Estimate**	**Local Share Estimate**
Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	Extend 4-lane limited access highway	Holcomb Bridge Road to Sugarloaf Parkway	9.9	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County, Norcross, Duluth	$114,700,000		$22,940,000
Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	New 2-lane service access roads parallel to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	Holcomb Bridge Road to Sugarloaf Parkway	9.9	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County, Norcross, Duluth	$134,100,000		$26,820,000
Beaver Ruin Road, Langford Road, Medlock Bridge Road	Realign to improve connection	I-85 to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard	0.7	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County, Norcross	$1,600,000		$1,600,000
Button Gwinnett Drive	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes	Pleasantdale Road to Buford Highway	2.2	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County	$14,300,000		$14,300,000
Buford Highway	Intersection improvements (turning lanes)	Dresden Drive, Clairmont Road, and Briarwood Road		Roadway Operations	DeKalb County	$576,000	$115,200	
Buford Highway	Convert outside lanes to dedicated busway	Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Shallowford Road	6.2	Transit	DeKalb County, Atlanta, Chamblee, Doraville	TBD		
Buford Highway	BRT queue jumper lanes / bus pullouts at 5 locations	Oakcliff Road to Pleasant Hill Road		Transit	Gwinnett County, Doraville, Norcross, Duluth	$1,000,000		$200,000
Buford Highway	Transit ITS (traffic signal preemption/priority control, traveler information)	Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Pleasant Hill Road	16.3	Transit/ITS	DeKalb County, Gwinnett County, Atlanta, Chamblee Doraville, Norcross, Duluth	$700,000		$140,000
Buford Highway	Bicycle lanes adjacent to busway	Sidney Marcus Boulevard to Shallowford Road	5.4	Bicycle	DeKalb County, Atlanta, Chamblee, Doraville	$7,500,000		$7,500,000
Total						$274,476,000	$115,200	$73,500,000

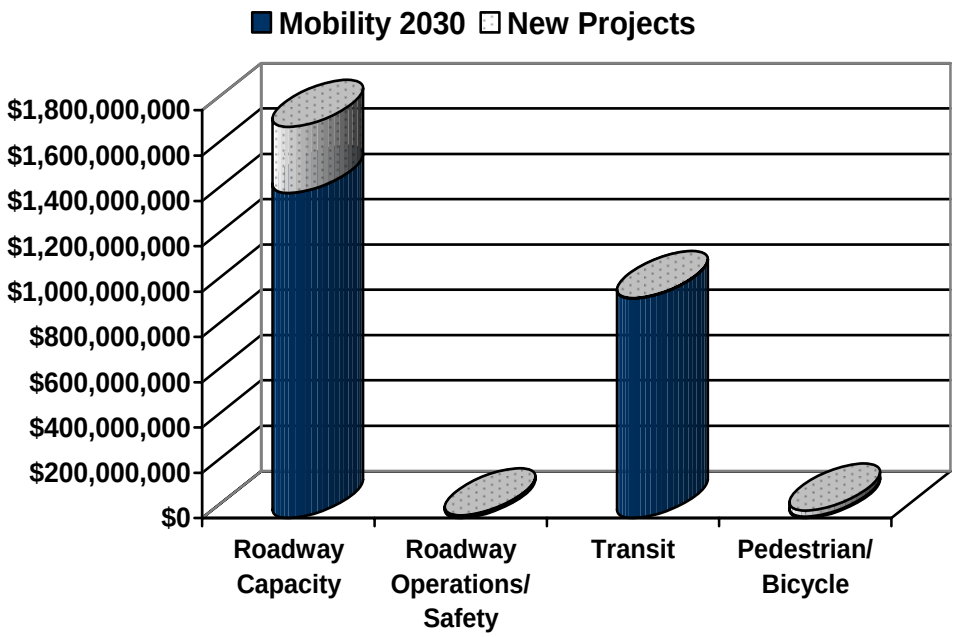
The total cost of the implementation program is approximately $322,573,000 through 2030. The breakdown by time period and funding source is shown in Table 5-6. By funding category, the source of funding for the total program is 70 percent federal, one percent state, and 29 percent local.

Table 5-6:
Implementation Program Summary

	Estimated Funding Share by Source		
Time Period	**Federal**	**State**	**Local**
2008-2013	$4,557,600	$59,400	$8,780,000
2014-2020	$20,000,000	$4,400,000	$10,300,000
2021-2030	$200,860,800	$115,200	$73,500,000
Total	**$225,418,400**	**$4,574,600**	**$92,580,000**

Figure 5-1 shows the planned, programmed and recommended investment by category for projects in the corridor study area. The new projects build upon what is already in the RTP and do not replace it. The greatest overall investment for the recommended projects is in roadway capacity and pedestrian/bicycle facility projects.

Figure 5-1:
Mobility 2030 and Recommended Projects by Category



5.3 Implementation Considerations

In order for any of the projects presented in this plan to move forward, a sponsor must be identified and specific funding details identified. Each project also requires incorporation into the ARC long range transportation plan and planning process. This may include additional testing in the regional travel demand model as well as an air quality conformity determination, if

applicable. The current TIP cycle is 2008 through 2013. The current long range plan effort is the *Envision6 Regional Transportation Plan*.

According to GDOT's *2005-2035 Statewide Transportation Plan Update*, total transportation fund revenues are forecasted to be $86.1 billion for the 30-year plan period, while the total cost of the build/financially unconstrained scenario is $160 billion, indicating a potential $74 billion state shortfall. In light of an anticipated discrepancy, identifying and sustaining funding for corridor improvements will be one of the fundamental challenges for improving the Buford Highway corridor. Likewise, the metro region is anticipating an approximate $5.7 billion gap in transportation funding ($4.4 billion FHWA, $1.3 billion FTA), as projected by ARC in February 2007.

Throughout the study, it has become evident that in a corridor such as Buford Highway, in order for a corridor plan to be adopted and implemented, multiple jurisdictions would need to coordinate on priorities and funding. As presented in the *Interim Report*, local jurisdictions have a number of financial mechanisms to support program implementation. Ongoing coordination amongst the jurisdictions is recommended to champion this plan. Additional considerations by category are presented below.

5.3.1 Roadway

Roadway capacity recommendations include improving mobility along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard as well as improving cross-corridor connections between I-85, Buford Highway, and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The purpose of improving these connections is to provide regional mobility. Although some stakeholders in communities along Buford Highway have expressed support for the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard improvements, others are concerned about potential negative impacts to adjacent communities and businesses. In lieu of extending the limited access cross-section, grade separation of major intersections could be explored. Although not tested, it is thought that grade separations alone would not result in as great as an improvement for mobility. An additional consideration will be how proposed grade separations would impact adjacent land use. Further study is required to evaluate potential impacts.

Additional capacity issues were cited by stakeholders on SR 141, Johns Creek, SR 120 and north of Rogers Bridge Road, which were not investigated in the Buford Highway corridor study. As a follow-up to the Buford Highway corridor study, mobility needs should be examined in the areas north and west of Duluth.

5.3.2 Transit

The recommended transit bus lanes were identified to support an existing planned project, BRT on Buford Highway. No operator was identified when this project was incorporated into the long range plan. The proposed routing extends from the MARTA Lindbergh station to Gwinnett Place Mall and crosses through two transit service areas, MARTA and Gwinnett County Transit. Currently, most cross-jurisdictional service in the region is commuter bus service. With the creation of the regional Transit Planning Board (TPB), it is anticipated that pending regional services will be reviewed through an ongoing regional transit planning process.

5.3.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The first step toward implementation of the bicycle/pedestrian facilities is the adoption of the recommendations of this report by the local jurisdictions and ARC for inclusion in local and regional transportation and bicycle/pedestrian plans. ARC is considering the recommendations proposed herein in preparation of the *Regional Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan*. The next step is to seek, where appropriate, partnerships with and resources from public, not-for-profit, and/or other private organizations to maximize funding alternatives, public engagement, and development of bicycle/pedestrian facilities. Public and private sector individuals or groups should be identified to forward and promote the facilities. In addition, a maintenance program and funding sources for the program will need to be established prior to the construction of bicycle/pedestrian facilities. In implementing different components of the bicycle/pedestrian recommendations, such as the multi-use trail, a segment/phase within the corridor should be identified that will be successful and serve as an example or model for future phases.

It is important to note that in a study completed by Rails to Trails Conservancy, rails with trails were found to be safer than busy highways with sidewalks, and fewer incidents were reported. Other observed benefits identified by the study included:

- Doubles value of rail corridor
- Provides extra transportation choices for users
- Supports railways by enhancing access to rail stations
- Provides corridor beautification
- Reduces trespassing along railroad
- Reduces vandalism
- Increases ridership of transit

In Georgia, the Silver Comet Trail from Atlanta west to the Alabama state line is a good example of a successful rails with trails project. The project has been successful because it provides a connection to the existing Chief Ladiga greenway trail system in Alabama. It provides an alternative method of transportation for the growing counties of Cobb, Paulding, and Polk. It provides a new greenspace for nearby and distant residents that otherwise would not have occurred without the rails with trails program. In addition, it provides an opportunity to witness natural features such as Brushy Mountain and historic manmade features such as the historic township of VanWert, Georgia. Table 5-7 provides a list of potential partners, funding sources, and resources for the recommended bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

Table 5-7:
Pedestrian / Bicycle Facility Partners, Funding Sources and Resources

Potential Partners	• PATH Foundation • Developers/Homeowner Associations • Volunteers – adopt-a-trail participants or sponsors • Endowment from philanthropic or other sources • Local Governments • Board of Educations • County and City Library System • County and City Departments • Bicycle Organizations
Funding Sources	• County Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) • Impact Fees (Local) • State Funds/Local Representative • Federal Funds/Congressional District • Georgia DNR, Division of Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites – Recreation Trails Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund • Georgia Department of Transportation – Safe Routes to School Program, Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program
Resources and References	• The PATH Foundation (www.pathfoundation.org) • Rails with Trails, Rails to Trails Conservancy • Georgia Department of Transportation (www.dot.state.ga.us) • Georgia Department of Natural Resources Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division (www.gastateparks.org) • American Trails (www.americantrails.org)

5.3.4 Land Use

5.3.4.1 Catalytic Projects: Development Projects

In order to establish a precedent for new development on Buford Highway, it will be important to identify key nodes as priority projects. There are many ways to determine what areas should be targeted first. One way is to align new development with transportation improvement phases. For instance, if early phases of new transit and streetscape infrastructure are put into place in the southern section of Buford Highway, then that is likely where one might look into pushing new development projects. In that case, parcels at the intersections of North Druid Hills, Briarwood Road and Clairmont Road might be given higher priority because of their locations at key cross streets and future BRT stops. Another way to prioritize development projects would be to focus on areas near existing town centers. For instance, Chamblee, Doraville, Norcross and Duluth all have increasing amounts of interest from residents, workers, shoppers and developers alike in future development activity near existing town centers. In these cases, it might make sense to focus on Chamblee-Tucker Road, I-285, Mitchell Road and SR 120 because of the proximity to areas that already have significant amounts of growth.

5.3.4.2 Catalytic Projects: Public Improvement Projects

As mentioned earlier, Buford Highway is in desperate need of public space improvements. Although there are not a lot of existing open spaces that could be targeted for such projects, existing sidewalks and pedestrian routes would be ideal candidates for streetscape improvements. Most major intersections would benefit from more clearly delineated crosswalks and upgraded pedestrian signals. New future development at activity centers will also help bring about higher standards for public improvements along Buford Highway. Overall, though, the most crucial projects needed for the corridor are streetscapes, new and wider sidewalks, crosswalk and signal improvements, bus shelters, seating areas, pedestrian lighting and landscaping.

5.3.4.3 Zoning Modifications: Mixed Use Districts

Urbanizing communities across the U.S. are revising their zoning regulations to support mixed-use growth and accompanying transit connections. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), as it is often called, involves a mix of uses at key transit stations. Density is usually increased around these areas, getting progressively less dense away from the transit node. A key element of TOD is making pedestrian and bicycle facilities welcoming and attractive. TODs generally have a lower parking-to-occupant ratio than typical suburban development forms. Since research finds that housing densities of at least seven to ten units per acre are required to support transit, higher residential densities will need to be accommodated to make the transit investment work. There are several ways to revise zoning standards to accommodate such mixed-use/transit-oriented districts.

One method of amending such regulations is overlay zoning. An overlay zone applies supplemental provisions to a specific area within an existing zoning district. Although this is independent of requirements to the existing land use, if the two zones conflict, the stricter of the two is enforced. Although such overlay districts would focus in on developing guidelines and codes specific to mixed-use areas, such a district would not be possible to apply to the entire corridor. With that in mind, it will be important to prioritize development areas and work towards amending regulations for those locations first. This type of strategy is generally advantageous in order to “start from scratch,” excluding earlier regulations and is typically easier to draft than overlay ordinances.

Another option for accommodating new mixed-use districts within the study area would be to create an entirely new zoning classification. In this case, a jurisdiction would need to add a mixed-use or similar category as a new zoning category and specifically customize development standards within it to achieve desired objectives. Such provisions could include parking requirement reductions, open space requirements, affordable housing subsidies, density bonuses, building setbacks, building height specifications or signage standards.

Yet another method of instigating zoning modifications to allow mixed-use development is to allow existing jurisdictions to incorporate sections of Buford Highway into overlay or other districts that are already in place. For example, many cities immediately adjacent to the corridor such as Norcross and Doraville have already been through LCI studies and have up-to-date zoning regulations in place. Depending on the size of the area in question and proximity to an

existing town center, it may be appropriate to expand existing overlay or other districts southward to Buford Highway.

Although the cities of Chamblee, Doraville, Norcross and Duluth all have various commercial and residential zoning classifications, none of these jurisdictions include a mixed-use zoning category. A good first step in the process of redeveloping higher densities and adopting smart-growth principles on Buford Highway would be to revise such zoning categories in concert with amending city boundaries to include areas directly on the corridor. It is also worth noting that Fulton, DeKalb and Gwinnett all have mixed-use land use and zoning categories in place. Therefore, if considering future mixed-use or overlay districts, the appropriate steps would need to be taken at the city and/or neighborhood level more so than the county level.

5.3.4.4 Zoning Modifications: Form-Based Codes

Revised zoning regulations will include codes that dictate the placement of a building on a site, height limitations in relation to adjacent properties and neighborhoods, signage standards and floor-to-area ratios (F.A.R.). For instance, a jurisdiction may decide to allow between four and six stories at a given mixed-use node but require a transitional height for development between that node and an adjacent one to two story single-family neighborhood. This would become a form-based zoning code and in that case, would probably yield a small multi-family or townhome development. This type of code is also effective in ensuring that such activity centers have street presence. A maximum setback from the street can be established within the zoning code. In some cases, it may also be important to establish standards for the relationship between a building and the size of the site. In such as case, F.A.R. would dictate that the mass of a building be appropriate for the size of the development parcel.

There are many areas along the corridor that are either working towards such codes or already have them in place. The Chamblee, Doraville, Norcross and Duluth LCIs have already developed such codes, which have subsequently been incorporated into zoning ordinances. The Lilburn/Indian Trail LCI has also recently outlined similar codes. These should all be used as precedents for formulating form-based codes for the Buford Highway corridor.

5.3.4.5 Zoning Modifications: Architectural Standards

Standards should also be put into place that specify types of building material appropriate for a particular area (glass, steel, brick, wood siding, etc.). These types of architectural standards help maintain that new development fit in with its existing context. For instance, it may be necessary to specify a minimum/maximum amount of glazing (windows/glass) required on the façade of a new building in order to make it fit in with an adjacent development. By involving the community with these types of decisions up front, it also allows new development to be more easily accepted by future customers or patrons. Although it is crucial that overall architectural standards for the entire corridor be established, considering that the corridor varies functionally and aesthetically by location, it would be beneficial to adopt more specific standards by district or location throughout the study area.

5.3.4.6 Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding is a legal document describing an agreement between parties to enact a common line of action. In this case, it would be a treaty declaring that each jurisdiction along the corridor understands and agrees to the common interests expressed in the Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Plan. This document would lack the binding power of a contract but would hold the party in question accountable if implementation efforts were not followed in the future. The first step towards creating a Memorandum of Understanding for the Buford Highway corridor would be the adoption of a specific set of Corridor Design Standards by all jurisdictions. This would ensure that Gwinnett County, DeKalb County, Fulton County, the City of Atlanta, the City of Chamblee, the City of Doraville, the City of Norcross, City of Berkeley Lake and the City of Duluth coordinate efforts toward enacting policies, zoning modifications, land use plans, supplemental studies and outreach efforts in order to implement the goals outlined in this plan (see Appendix D for examples).

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The transportation planning process for the Buford Highway corridor does not end with the documentation of this study. The following provides a brief overview of future activities related to intergovernmental planning, coordination and program monitoring.

6.1 Local and Regional Planning Coordination

Although this planning process and resulting documentation were initiated by ARC, the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), ARC does not build roads, bridges, sidewalks, nor does it operate transit services. As a planning body, ARC can assist local governments with staff resources. It can also direct the recommended projects through the metropolitan planning process. It is the responsibility of the MPO to develop a RTP and short range transportation implementation program, governed by federal legislation and regulation. It will be the responsibility of the local jurisdictions to advance the plan recommendations.

The legislative origin of metropolitan transportation planning was the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962, which required federally funded highway projects be the result of a "continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative planning process." The federal legislation and regulations have evolved over time. The most recent transportation bill, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (Public Law 109-59), continues to direct metropolitan transportation planning processes through federal regulations promulgated by the Federal Highway Administration in Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 450.300, Subpart C, "Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming."

As indicated earlier in this plan, the ARC is undertaking an update of the RTP, dubbed *Envision6*. Since the Atlanta MPO area is in air quality nonattainment for ozone and particulate matter, the RTP is subject to an air quality conformity determination in accordance with the Clean Air Act and Environmental Protection Agency regulations under 40 CFR, part 51. Conformity determination would apply to any recommended project that would potentially increase emissions in the region, such as the cross-corridor roadway capacity additions.

Additional studies that ARC has recently undertaken may influence implementation of these plan recommendations, including the *Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan* and the *Atlanta Region Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan*. Coordination between studies has been periodic and ongoing throughout the Multimodal Corridor Study process.

Ongoing plan activities include:

- Coordinating local jurisdictions, ARC, and GDOT to advance projects in future RTP updates;
- Ensuring projects are implemented in a logical sequence to maximize benefits and utilize scarce resources efficiently;

- Initiating intergovernmental coordination activities to ensure transportation projects, policies, and programs are compatible; and
- Developing a monitoring program to provide feedback to refine future improvements.

6.2 Next Steps

At the conclusion of the Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study, there are several key steps that need to be taken, which are beyond the scope of this study but paramount in implementing the transportation program and stated land use goals and recommendations in the future. Those next steps include:

- Establish a multi-jurisdictional working group to discuss and review land use opportunities and transportation implementation in corridors
- Build support for and execute a corridor Memorandum of Understanding
- Where appropriate, seek funding through LCI or ARC Community Choices for further study
- Apply for funding from potential funding sources for transportation projects
- Specify near and long-term zoning and comprehensive plan changes needed to support the plan and identify any specific land use and zoning conflicts with study recommendations within each jurisdiction
- Consider the need for tax allocation district (TAD) or community improvement district (CID) to assist in both transportation and land use implementation and decision making
- Conduct a land use policy summit along the corridor, potentially led by ARC land use staff, following the conclusion of the study
- Outreach to communities, business owners, and other users of the corridor to build consensus for recommended programs and policies

Appendices

Appendix A:
Public Outreach Documentation

Buford Highway Multimodal Corridor Study
Public Outreach Documentation Compendium

The following list provides a summary of public outreach documentation contained in Appendix A. Due to the size of the public outreach document, it is saved separately. Copies of Appendix A may be obtained from the Atlanta Regional Commission.

May 2006 Public Meetings
Flyer
Advertisements
Press Release
Boards
Agenda
Comment Form
Meeting Notes
Presentation
Comments

January 2007 Public Meetings
Flyer
Press Advisory
Advertisement
Meeting Notes
Presentation
Comments

Leadership Briefings
Invitation (April 6, 2006)
Save the date notice (September 2006)
Agenda (April 6, 2006)
Presentation (April 6, 2006)
Handouts (April 6, 2006)
Meeting Notes (April 6, 2006)

January 2006 Stakeholder Advisory Group
Invitation
Presentation
Handout: Roles
Meeting Notes

April 2006 Stakeholder Advisory Group
Save the date notice
Agenda
Presentation
Handout: Goals
Meeting Notes

August 2006 Stakeholder Advisory Group
Save the date notices
Agenda
Presentation

Handouts
Meeting Notes

September 2006 Stakeholder Advisory Group
Save the date notice
Agenda
Presentation
Meeting Notes

January 2007 Stakeholder Advisory Group
Invitation
Handouts

September 2006 Focus Group
Flyer
Correspondence
Summary
Appendices A-I

Public Involvement Plan
Plan
Framework

Fact Sheet
1 – English
2 – English, Spanish, Chinese
3 - English
4 - English

Comments Received
Email
Web
Other

Contact Lists
MMCS
Stakeholder Advisory Group

Articles
News articles

Website Screen Shots
Buford Highway MMCS Website

Stakeholder Outreach
Notes

ARC Presentations
TCC / TAQC Meeting Presentations

Appendix B:
Mobility 2030 RTP
Planned and Programmed Projects

Planned and Programmed Projects in the Mobility 2030 RTP and FY 2006-2011 TIP

ARC Project Number	GDOT PI Number	Description/Location	Project Type	Sponsor	Location	Length (miles)	Network Year	Total
AR-902A	N/A	I-285 East Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Doraville MARTA station to I-20 East	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GRTA	DeKalb County	14.26	2030	$386,200,000
AR-902B	N/A	I-285 East Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Doraville MARTA station to I-20 East	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GRTA	Multi-County	14.26	2030	$13,800,000
AR-905A	N/A	I-85 North Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Doraville MARTA station to Sugarloaf Pkwy.	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GRTA	Multi-County	14.22	2025	$523,250,000
AR-905B	N/A	I-85 North Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Doraville MARTA station to Sugarloaf Pkwy.	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	GRTA	Multi-County	32	2025	$18,700,000
AR-910	N/A	SR 13 (Buford Highway) Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Pleasant Hill Rd. to MARTA Lindbergh Station	Arterial BRT	GRTA	Multi-County	17	2030	$28,050,000
AR-H-300	0001758	I-285 North HOV Lanes from I-75 North to I-85 North, 2 or 4 lanes	HOV Lanes	GDOT	Multi-County	13.1	2020	$1,352,855,000
DK-076	0000737	East Roxboro Road from Buford Highway to Rockhaven Circle, widen 2 to 4 lanes	Roadway Capacity	GDOT	DeKalb County	0.71	2020	$33,849,160
DK-324C	0002902	SR 13 (Buford Highway) from North Druid Hills Rd. to Chamblee Tucker Rd.	Pedestrian Facility	DeKalb County	DeKalb County	4.7	2010	$4,075,000
DK-AR-229	0004478	Chamblee MARTA Station Area Improvements	Pedestrian Facility	City of Chamblee	DeKalb County	N/A	2010	$513,440
DK-AR-BP055	0002903	US 23 (Clairmont Road) from North Druid Hills Rd. to Buford Highway	Pedestrian Facility	DeKalb County	DeKalb County	3.3	2010	$800,000
GW-099A	132360-	US 23 (Buford Highway): Segment 1 from Old Peachtree Rd. to Sugarloaf Pkwy., widen 2 to 4 lanes	Roadway Capacity	GDOT	Gwinnett County	2	2020	$17,500,000
GW-271A	0006922	Pleasant Hill Road from Old Norcross Rd. to US 23/Buford Highway, widen 4 to 6 lanes	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	1.75	2010	$6,000,000
GW-271B	0006922	Pleasant Hill Road from US 23/Buford Highway to Chattahoochee River, widen 4 to 6 lanes	Roadway Capacity	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	1.77	2030	$25,300,200
GW-300	0006825	US 23 (Buford Highway) ATMS from DeKalb County line to Sugarloaf Pkwy.	ITS-Smart Corridor	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	11	2010	$2,330,000
GW-304	0006829	Sugarloaf Parkway ATMS from SR 20 to Peachtree Industrial Blvd.	ITS-Smart Corridor	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	12	2010	$1,847,250
GW-324	0005688	SR 378 (Beaver Ruin Rd) ATMS from Buford Highway to US 29	ITS-Smart Corridor	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	6.45	2010	$1,825,970
GW-326	0006823	Pleasant Hill Road ATMS from Steve Reynolds Blvd. to Fulton County line	ITS-Smart Corridor	Gwinnett County	Gwinnett County	4	2010	$1,190,000

ARC Project Number	GDOT PI Number	Description/Location	Project Type	Sponsor	Location	Length (miles)	Network Year	Total
GW-AR-BP107	0006839	SR 120 (West Lawrenceville Street) from Buford Highway to Duluth Middle School and Duluth High School	Pedestrian Facility	City of Duluth	Gwinnett County	0.1	2010	$620,000
GW-AR-BP108	0007100	US 23 (Buford Highway) at SR 120	Pedestrian Facility	City of Duluth	Gwinnett County	N/A	2010	$775,000
M-AR-283C	N/A	Signal Improvements to support BRT Movement Along Memorial Drive and Buford Highway	ITS-Smart Corridor	MARTA	DeKalb County	N/A	2007	$1,842,000
Total								**$2,421,323,020**

Appendix C:
Potential Funding Sources

Federal Funding

Federal funding source information and project descriptions were obtained from GDOT's website and from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding tables and fact sheets on highway provisions, located on the FHWA website (www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/). Information on transit grant programs was obtained from the Federal Transit Administration's grants and financing website (www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants_financing_263.html).

It is important to note that although numerous federal grant programs are in existence, only those programs that have potential applicability to the specific strategies identified as part of the recommendations are presented.

Roadway Programs

Surface Transportation Program (STP) – The STP program provides flexible funding that may be used by states and localities for projects on any federal-aid highway, including the National Highway System (NHS), bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intra-city and intercity bus terminals and facilities.

Transportation Enhancement Program (TE) – Transportation enhancements are transportation-related activities that are designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the nation's intermodal transportation system. The TE program provides for the implementation of a variety of non-traditional projects, with examples ranging from the restoration of historic transportation facilities, to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, landscaping and scenic beautification, and mitigation of water pollution from highway runoff.

Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (HBRRP) – The HBRRP program provides funds to assist the states in their programs to replace or rehabilitate deficient highway bridges and seismic retrofit of bridges located on any public road.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) – The primary purpose of the CMAQ program is to fund projects and programs in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), and small particulate matter (PM-10), which reduce transportation related emissions.

Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP) – The TCSP program provides funding for a comprehensive initiative including planning grants, implementation grants, and research to investigate and address the relationships between transportation and community and system preservation and to identify private sector-based initiatives.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) – The HSIP program authorizes a new core federal-aid funding program beginning in fiscal year 2006 to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. The focus is on safety improvements at intersections, pavement and shoulder widening, roadway warning devices, installation of skid-resistant surfaces, highway signage, pavement markings, traffic control devices at high-accident

locations, crash data collection and analysis systems, and roadside or construction work zone safety features.

Equity Bonus Program – The Equity Bonus program provides funding to states based on equity considerations. These include a minimum rate of return on contributions to the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund, and a minimum increase relative to the average dollar amount of apportionments under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Selected states are guaranteed a share of apportionments and High Priority Projects not less than the state's average annual share under TEA-21.

Highways for LIFE Pilot Program (HfL) – The purpose of the HfL pilot program is to advance longer-lasting highway infrastructure using innovations to accomplish the fast construction of efficient and safe highways and bridges. High priority is given for technologies supporting prefabricated bridge systems and construction work zone safety improvements; planning and development through right-of-way acquisition, design and construction; introduction of high-performance construction materials; projects employing innovative financing and contracting practices.

State Infrastructure Bank Program (SIB) – The SIB program gives states the capacity to increase the efficiency of their transportation investment and significantly leverage federal resources by attracting non-federal public and private investment. The program provides greater flexibility to the states by allowing other types of project assistance in addition to grant assistance. SIBs provide various forms of non-grant assistance to public or private entities for eligible projects, including below-market rate subordinate loans, interest rate buy-downs on third party loans, and guarantees and other forms of credit enhancement.

Surface Transportation Research, Development & Deployment Program (STRDD) – The STRDD program funds surface transportation research, development, and technology deployment activities to promote innovation in transportation infrastructure, services, and operations.

Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) – TIFIA provides federal credit assistance to major transportation investments of critical national or regional importance, such as intermodal facilities, border crossing infrastructure, expansion of multi-state highway trade corridors, and other investments with regional and national benefits. The TIFIA credit program is designed to fill market gaps and leverage substantial private co-investment by providing supplemental and subordinate capital.

Transit Programs

Urbanized Area Formula Program – This program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes federal resources available to urbanized areas and to governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Eligible purposes include planning, engineering design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement of buses, overhaul of buses,

rebuilding of buses, crime prevention and security equipment and construction of maintenance and passenger facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software. All preventive maintenance and some ADA complementary paratransit service are considered capital costs.

Fixed Guideway Modernization – Eligible purposes for these monies are capital projects to modernize or improve existing fixed guideway systems, including purchase and rehabilitation of rolling stock, track, line equipment, structures, signals and communications, power equipment and substations, passenger stations and terminals, security equipment and systems, maintenance facilities and equipment, operational support equipment including computer hardware and software, system extensions, and preventive maintenance.

Section 5309 – Bus and Bus Related Facilities Program – The transit capital investment program (49 U.S.C. 5309) provides capital assistance for three primary activities: new and replacement buses and facilities; modernization of existing rail systems; and new fixed guideway systems. Eligible purposes are acquisition of buses for fleet and service expansion, bus maintenance and administrative facilities, transfer facilities, bus malls, transportation centers, intermodal terminals, park-and-ride stations, acquisition of replacement vehicles, bus rebuilds, bus preventive maintenance, passenger amenities such as passenger shelters and bus stop signs, accessory and miscellaneous equipment such as mobile radio units, supervisory vehicles, fare boxes, computers, shop and garage equipment, and costs incurred in arranging innovative financing for eligible projects.

State Funding

State funding comes from the motor fuel tax, general fund appropriations, and bonds. Additional funding comes from state license tax fees, title registrations and motor carrier fuels tax.

Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) – The major sources of transportation funding are derived from the motor fuel tax. This tax is comprised of a federal contribution of 18.4 cents, a state contribution of 7.5 cents and the three percent state sales tax. The federal portion is deposited into a trust fund account, the Highway Trust Fund. The state funds described in the following sections are used to match FHWA funds for state projects, and to provide funds for local projects through the Local Assistance Road Program (LARP) and the state aid program.

Bonds – In addition to MFT revenues and general fund appropriations, GDOT uses bond proceeds to finance its transportation program. Since GDOT does not have the authority to issue bonds, either the state (through general obligation bonds) or the State Road and Tollway Authority (through guaranteed revenue bonds) issues the bonds, and then GDOT pays them back using MFT revenues.

Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle Bonds (GARVEE) – GARVEE bonds are state issued bonds repayable with future federal-aid. GARVEE bonds are not specifically funded through the appropriations process; instead this is a finance mechanism that allows states to bond against future federal appropriations beyond the six-year cycle.

State General Obligation Bonds (GO Bonds) and Guaranteed Revenue Bonds (GRB) – GO and GRB bonds are two other bond types used by states. These bonds are financing mechanisms used throughout the country in which a state sells bonds to expedite the construction of federally-approved transportation projects. The bond debt is paid back over time with federal funds that are due to the state.

GO and GRB bonds are backed by the credit of the state of Georgia (rather than the federal government); the main difference between them is the source of funds used for payback. As part of the Governor's *Fast Forward Bonding Program*, GRB debt is paid back with a portion of MFT revenues received over the next 20 years. GO bonds are paid back with a combination of state general funds and MFT revenues, the portion of which is determined by the governor and the Georgia General Assembly on an annual basis. Some of these bonds are to be paid back over five years and some will be paid back over 20 years.

General Fund Appropriations – MFT receipts are used to pay for highway-related debt service, operating and maintenance expenditures (which are not eligible for federal funding), capital programs, and matching federal funds. Therefore, GDOT receives annual appropriations from the general fund to complement its transportation trust fund revenue.

Local Funding

The local share for funding transportation projects can come from a variety of sources. Local share is normally made in the form of cash; however, in some cases the local share can be made in the form of in-kind services or contributions (e.g. use of local forces for grading or utility relocation, right-of-way donations). Typically, local share comes from three main sources: general fund, ad valorem taxes (property taxes), or sales taxes dedicated specifically for transportation improvements. For capital expenses, general revenue or capital improvement bonds may be considered as a local share source.

Public-Private Partnerships – Large local employers could have a financial interest in the investing in local transportation improvements. Consideration should be given to identifying these potential partners.

Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) Funding – Georgia law allows local jurisdictions as of July 1, 1985 to use SPLOST proceeds for capital improvement projects that would otherwise be paid for with general fund and property tax revenues.

Local Taxes – A dedicated property tax designated specifically for transportation projects could be assessed. A dedicated millage levy could offset local funding costs.

Special Benefit Assessment Districts – To capture benefits associated with enhanced real estate development partially attributable to improvements in transportation corridors, many jurisdictions create special assessment districts. Often called a Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) or a Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU), a special assessment is charged upon real estate deriving a special benefit from a nearby capital improvement that is used to cover debt service for the improvement.

Appendix D:
Memorandum of Understanding Examples

A. US-1 MOU (NORTH CAROLINA)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
CONCERNING THE US-1 TRANSPORTATION / LAND USE STUDY

BACKGROUND

Between November 2005 and September 2006, a project to study the US-1 Corridor between Interstate Highway 540 in Wake County and US Highway 1A in Franklin County was funded by the North Carolina Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (Capital Area MPO), the City of Raleigh, Town of Wake Forest, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), and the Triangle Transit Authority (TTA). [The term "Corridor" in this Memorandum refers the area lying roughly within one thousand feet in either direction of the centerline of the US-1 right of way between the highway's intersections with Interstate 540 in Wake County, and with US-1A in Franklin County.]

Increased development pressures along the Corridor, and the resulting vehicular burdens, have stressed the roadway's capability to serve as a reliable transportation facility for its many users. Moreover, all parties recognized four key factors: 1) considerable physical improvement will be required to address corridor issues; 2) current and foreseeable future land uses along the Corridor need to be evaluated <u>before</u> making any capital investment in improving the roadway itself, 3) the need to preserve future right-of-way and ensure connections to existing and new developments must be addressed, and 4) transportation planning must seek to include balanced, multi-modal improvements.

Beginning with this broad consensus, the Capital Area MPO, the City of Raleigh, the Town of Wake Forest, NCDOT and TTA hired the consulting firm of RS&H to perform this study. The contract for these planning services was executed in November 2005; and the consultant's analysis began shortly thereafter.

Public Information Workshops were held in the Town of Wake Forest on March 14, 2006 and July 27, 2006. The consultant's work has been guided by a steering committee comprised of representatives of all municipalities and counties having land use planning jurisdiction over property along the Corridor. Also included in this steering committee were representatives of economic development, the Wake County Public School System, private sector and neighboring planning organizations affected by the US-1's capacity, NCDOT, and the four transit organizations that have or can provide service to the area. In particular, corresponding to various Corridor segments show the existing and proposed land uses for each segment. These segment maps also display the recommended improvements to the US-1 roadway and to roads and streets connected to US-1 within the Corridor.

UNDERSTANDING

1. **Parties to this Understanding:**

The Parties are:

a) The municipalities and the counties having direct jurisdiction over 1) land use ordinances and determinations of whether land uses within the US-1 Corridor Study Area are in compliance with such ordinances; or 2) public investments along the corridor.

b) The inter-governmental planning organizations having administrative duties for transportation planning along the US-1 Corridor.

c) The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

2. **Corridor Plan Recommendations:** Each Party commits to accept the recommendations as compiled within the US 1 Corridor Study Report and to ensure that consistent and compatible land use decisions are made within the Party's jurisdiction as well as extraterritorial jurisdiction along the corridor.

3. **Transportation Management:** Each Party recognizes the current limitations to the transportation infrastructure, and therefore commits to a multi-jurisdictional approach to address transportation improvements. The transportation improvements include and are not limited to:

   a. access management and cross-sectional expansions,
   b. multi-modal improvements (bicycle-pedestrian, transit, etc),
   c. site planning standards for the corridor and its frontage/backage road system, and
   d. creating a local connectivity plan for local road access as a complement to improvements along US-1.

4. **Inducements to Other Parties:** Each Party understands that a commitment to its respective component of the US-1 Corridor Plan has induced other Parties to make like commitments for its respective segments of the US-1 Corridor Plan insofar as that Party has jurisdiction over the land uses within its US-1 Corridor Plan segment.

5. **Future Collaboration Among Parties:** The US-1 Corridor Plan designates that certain areas along the Corridor require collaboration where their land use jurisdiction boundaries of parties abut. In such cases, each Party commits its best efforts to undertake that collaborative planning, including providing direction to its planning staff and/ or consultants involved in such planning purposes.

6. **Council of Planning:** The Parties agree that, over time, periodic reviews of the land uses and public investment along the Corridor will be required. Mindful of future growth and planned transportation improvements, in the spirit of effective collaboration and prudent long-range planning, the Parties agree to establish a Council of Planning for the Corridor. This Council shall be chosen from but not limited to the members of the Capital Area MPO, and shall be comprised of at least one representative from each Party, knowledgeable in regional planning issues. The Council will serve as an advisory group, and will meet periodically to:

1) Review all land use developments and transportation projects of regional significance, working in tandem with the NCDOT District Engineer. [The term "regional significance" in this Memorandum of Understanding refers to land-use and highway projects that will have a major impact on congestion and travel movements (i.e. interchange construction, "big box" retail, single-family subdivisions of or above one-hundred lots, etc].

2) Review any changes to the US-1 Corridor Plan, and will coordinate community involvement activities when necessary to ensure the integrity of the Plan.

3) Develop and/or update a Comprehensive Land Use Plan that covers the corridor which shall include but is not limited to (a) proposed land uses along the corridor which are consistent and compatible with the transportation recommendations (b) a local connectivity plan, and (c) a series of best practice access management and development standards.

Members listed in this document shall incorporate the Council of Planning advisory role into their development review process.

7. **Future Actions Affecting Land Uses Along the Corridor:** All parties recognize that future governmental entities may not be contractually bound by the adoption of this Memorandum of Understanding. In recognition of this limitation, the Parties commit to periodically review the status of land use and public investment decisions along the Corridor. The Parties, in good faith, further commit to: **1)** review the recommendations of the Council of Planning; and **2)** meet periodically with other Parties regarding emerging issues along the Corridor. The intent of these periodic meetings is to promote discussions of municipal and/or county goals, plans and strategies for maintaining effective development patterns, public investment and transportation flow along US-1.

SR74 - TRI-COUNTY ALLIANCE MOU(GA)

CONGESTION RELIEF ACCORD
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

I. INTRODUCTION

A. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is recognized by the South Fulton Community Improvement District (CID), Coweta County, Fayette County, Fulton County, City of Peachtree City, City of Senoia, Town of Tyrone, City of Union City and City of Fairburn.
B. This MOU addresses the basic relationship of how multiple jurisdictions are impacted by regional components within the transportation system and addresses the need for a collaborative effort to highlight and resolve specific congestion problems.

II. PURPOSE

Traffic congestion is a major problem in South Metro Atlanta. Congestion impacts not only commute times, but it also hinders economic development. The parties listed within the MOU understand that certain improvement measures would improve traffic for all jurisdictions.

The projects included in the MOU are:

A. Improvements to the State Route 74/I-85 interchange
B. Implementation of a half diamond northward on to I-85 from State Route 92
C. Implementation of van pooling and park and ride lot site identification
D. Representation from the jurisdictions within South Metro Atlanta on the Atlanta Regional Commission's Regional Freight Study

III. AUTHORITY

The aforementioned projects lie within South Fulton County, Georgia Department of Transportation District 7. However, the governmental bodies within Georgia Department of Transportation District 3 are equally impacted by the congestion generated with the projects listed. Therefore, if the congestion problems are left unresolved, the impacts will be felt sub-regionally.

IV. ROLES OF PARTIES AND STAKEHOLDERS

A. For all parties to recognize the significance of the aforementioned projects through the signing of this MOU.
B. For all parties to work in unison with the Georgia Department of Transportation and State Elected Officials to expedite the planning, engineering, and funding process for the aforementioned projects.

It is agreed that nothing contained herein shall obligate the parties within this MOU for any of the responsibilities of planning, engineering or funding of the aforementioned projects.

Appendix E:
Corridor Land Use Case Studies

CASE STUDIES

Las Vegas Boulevard North (Las Vegas, NV)

Although culturally and climactically different from the study area in Atlanta, Las Vegas Boulevard displays several similarities to Buford Highway. The corridor includes dedicated BRT lanes and was the first to receive federal funding for BRT (historically, such funding has only been awarded to rail systems). The MAX system, as it is called, began in June of 2004 and has undergone several upgrades since its inception. The boulevard is similar to the Buford Highway condition in that it is essentially a secondary corridor to a parallel interstate system, I-15, much like Buford Highway's relationship to I-85. Las Vegas Boulevard North is also a corridor saturated with low-density commercial sites and aging strip malls, backed by vast single-family neighborhoods. Las Vegas Boulevard North is one of the region's busiest arterials, connecting residents of North Las Vegas to employment and service centers, including the resort areas along the Las Vegas Strip, Nellis Air Force Base and the City of North Las Vegas' Civic Center. Like potential activity centers along Buford Highway, the MAX's north- and southbound transit stops (which are spaced roughly one mile apart) are situated at major cross-streets, most of which have existing commercial or retail destinations.

The *Las Vegas Metropolitan Area Express MAX BRT Demonstration Project* outlines a future land use plan that, like Buford Highway, spans several jurisdictions. Overall, it includes low-density development with "opportunities for enhancement around station areas" (mixed-use development nodes). Although MAX resulted in a 25 percent increase in corridor transit ridership and reduced travel times by half (article 7-3, *Las Vegas Metropolitan Area Express MAX BRT Demonstration Project* report) over the first year of service, the city has been unable to do much in the way of implementing or attracting developers to key development sites along the corridor. This has perhaps much to do with the fact that the system has only been running for just over two years, but it remains to be seen whether developers will embrace the MAX as a long-term investment that will significantly benefit the quality of life for future residents and users along the corridor.

Memorial Drive/MLK Jr. Drive Area Revitalization Study

This roughly 2.5-mile corridor study, completed in December of 2003, has many similarities to the Buford Highway study. At the time, the corridor (which is undergoing significant redevelopment) suffered from a prevalence of abandoned industries, vacant lots, aging strip retail and poor connectivity due to adjacent interstate right-of-way (I-20 immediately to the south). Also, like Buford Highway, Memorial Drive has an abundance of nearby residential neighborhoods but few directly on the corridor. Although it didn't include a heavy public transportation element, the goals of the study were very similar to the Buford Highway corridor study: 1) the development of viable retail and commercial opportunities while striking a balance between local services and regional concerns, 2) development of housing of various densities, while maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods, 3) development of a pedestrian-oriented corridor with easy and safe links to public transit, 4) development of urban open spaces and upgrade/renovate existing ones, and 5) development of urban, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use buildings at key intersections, protecting existing neighborhoods from pressures for inappropriate growth and density.

The lesson from the Memorial Drive/MLK Jr. Drive Study that is perhaps most beneficial to Buford Highway is that of creating subarea plans. Since existing parcels along the corridor all have different aesthetic and programmatic traits, it makes sense to distinguish each common area into a particular planning subarea. For example, since areas along the west end of Memorial Drive have an abundance of civic uses, the Capitol Cultural and Office District was designated for planning purposes. In this case, efforts were made to identify sites for future cultural facilities, office spaces, public spaces and shared parking. Further east along Memorial Drive, a similar subarea was created for the Grant Park area, which was dominated by a historic residential core with aging strip commercial on the fringes. By specifying height limitations and an urban street wall, future development abutting Memorial Drive is already being developed oriented to local pedestrian traffic and respecting the architecture and scale of the existing neighborhood.

With these precedents in mind, it would be possible to create similar planning subareas at proposed activity centers along Buford Highway. For instance, the area around Chamblee-Tucker Road might be studied as a potential office activity node, taking cues from nearby Center for Disease Control and Bellsouth office development. This type of use would be appropriate because it would not compete with retail and commercial uses at the nearby Chamblee Town Center. Another subarea along Buford Highway might be the node at I-285, where a saturation of redundant strip retail sites and large development opportunities are common. Here, by lumping these common areas together, a large retail/commercial district to be established drawing from the benefits of having immediate access to and high visibility from I-285.