



City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative

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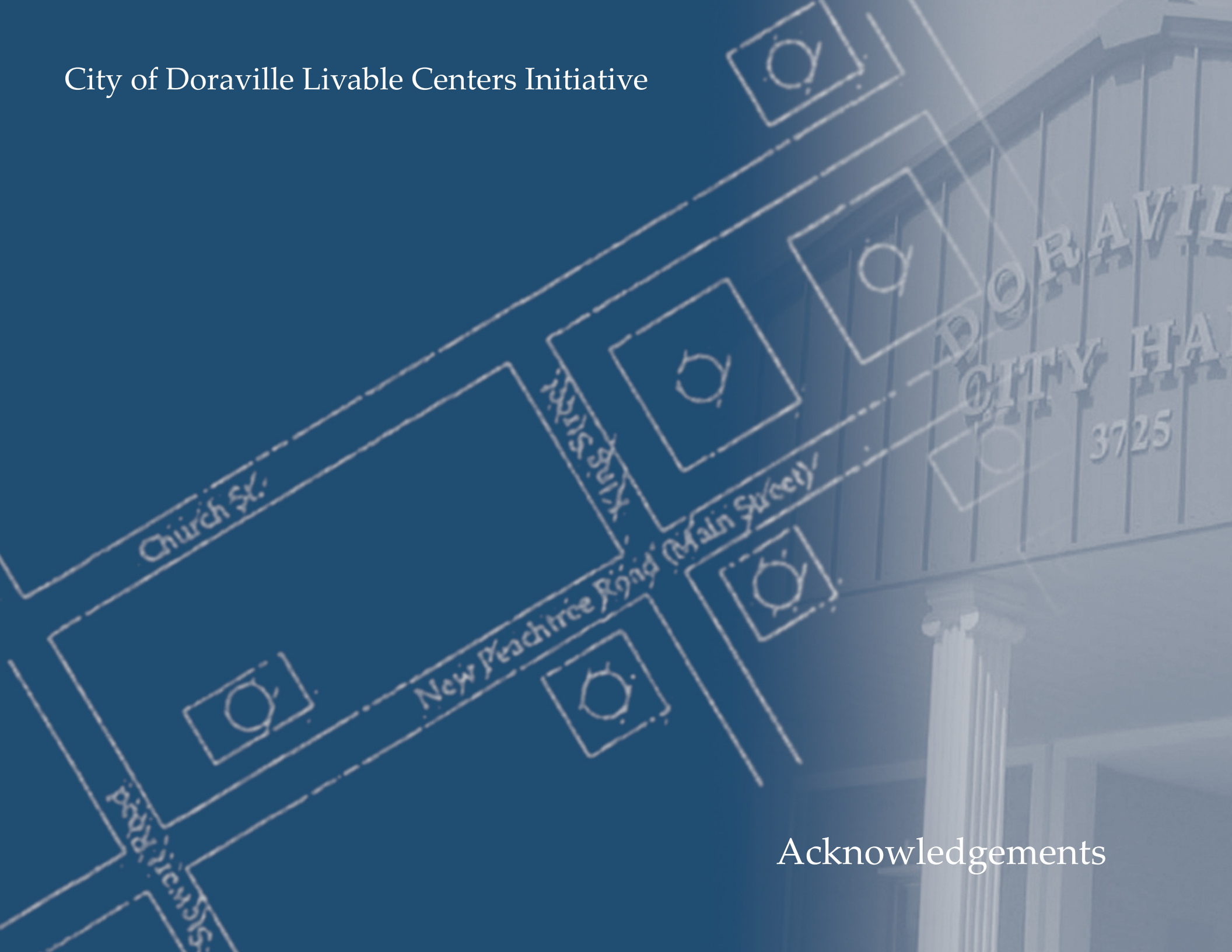
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City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



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Acknowledgements

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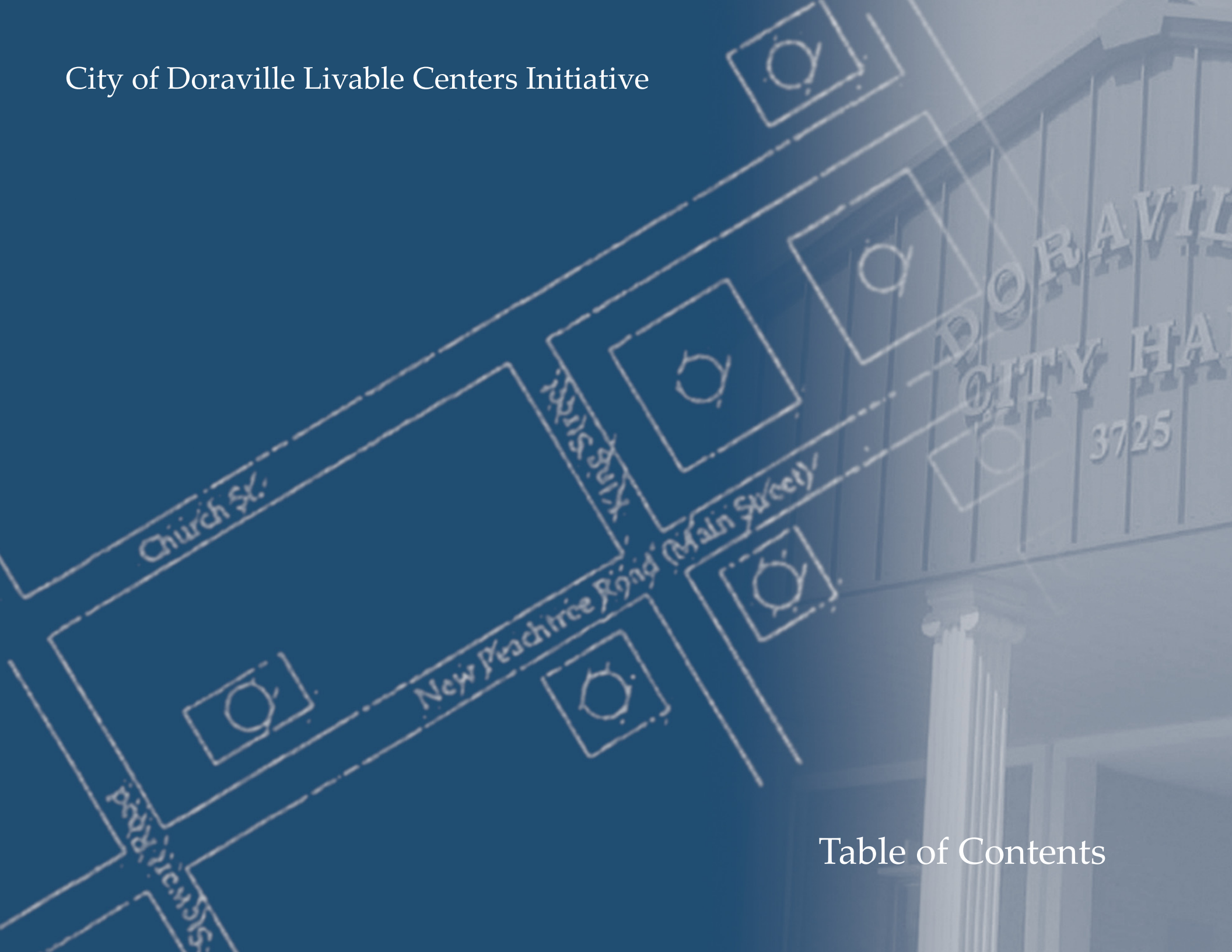


Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

1.0 Executive Summary	i
2.0 Overview	1
2.1 LCI Program	1
2.2 Planning Process	1
2.3 Study Area Description	3
2.4 A Multiethnic Community	3
3.0 Community Profile	5
3.1 Urban Design	5
3.2 Current Land Use	5
3.3 Zoning	7
3.4 Demographic Profile	7
3.5 Transportation	9
4.0 Issues and Opportunities	21
5.0 Vision and Goals	27
6.0 Recommendations	29
6.1 Policies	29
6.2 Organizing Plan	31
6.3 Town Center Concept	33
6.4 Importance of Civic Buildings	34
6.5 Relation to Comprehensive Plan	36
6.6 Relation to GM Plant	37
6.7 Planning Commission	39
7.0 Action Plan	41
7.1 Policy Changes	41
7.2 Public and Private Investment Strategy	43
7.3 Transportation Projects	46
7.4 Housing, Mixed Income Housing	49
7.5 Business Development and Non-Profits	51

7.6 Transportation Alternatives and Road Network	52
7.7 Coordination with other Public Entities	52
7.8 Organization and Management	54
7.9 Phasing of Projects	54
7.10 Monitoring and Evaluation Policy	55
8.0 List of Appendices	57
List of Figures	59
List of Tables	61

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



Executive Summary

1.0 Executive Summary

The City of Doraville is ripe for change. Residents, elected officials, business and property owners all sense that the time has come to move Doraville forward.

This Livable Centers Initiative Plan, funded by the City of Doraville and the Atlanta Regional Commission, lays out a framework for creating a true destination within Doraville's town center, in part by taking better advantage of the MARTA heavy rail station contained within it. Doraville can become more than "a good place to live" - it can become a good place to come alive.

Doraville's town center district is envisioned as a beautiful and enjoyable place for people to live, shop, commute, and participate in civic functions.

New townhomes, condominiums, and apartments will create new mixed-income places for people to live, energizing the streets of the town center and increasing the number of people who use transit in the region. New Peachtree Road will be lined with active retail uses, restaurants, and cafes, full of street life. New civic facilities will be located in key sites

and take on new architectural prominence to represent the pride of the city. New parks and greenspaces will complement the mix, making Doraville's town center not just a hub of activity but a place for community gathering and repose as well.

The other main district envisioned within the City of Doraville is a revitalized Buford Highway corridor. The activities of this renewed Buford Highway corridor will remain much as they currently are, with a focus on international retail activity and restaurants; however, the aesthetics and urban design will be much improved.

Trees and sidewalks will line Buford Highway, creating shade and increasing greenery in the corridor. Buildings will be multi-story and street oriented, with parking toward the rear, to create a friendly face to the public realm.

Major intersections will become concentrations of development, creating a sense of arrival into the city, and Buford Highway will be safer and easier to cross at these intersections. As aesthetics improve and as transit and pedestrian modes of travel become easier, Buford Highway businesses will find a greatly expanded market of visitors seeking



Figure E.1 "Main Street" example



Figure E.2 Transit place example

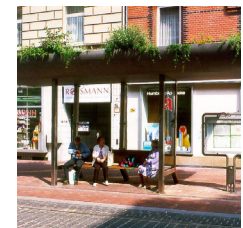
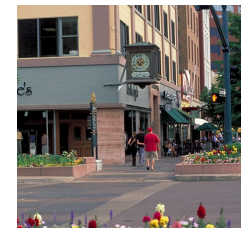


Figure E.3 - Pedestrian friendly urban areas

the treasured and unique international districts within the Atlanta region.

A pulse of economic revitalization will energize the city. Doraville will take advantage of its prime location, its unique access to transportation infrastructure, and its multicultural character to attract new-economy businesses to its town center.

Public-private partnerships, as well as public sector partnerships, will create opportunities for redevelopment and for the establishment of new and expanding businesses.



Figure E.4 Urban corridor example

The plan proposed a host of projects to help realize this vision for Doraville. Key among the recommendations is the need for adequate, professional staff to oversee LCI plan implementation. Familiarity with the details of the market is essential for collaborating with developers.

Improvements to the pedestrian environment are an essential part of the plan, with major streetscapes, pedestrian crossings, and sidewalks planned to create a true network of pedestrian access. New streets and new street alignments will improve access to the town center from other parts of Doraville, and increase the number of walkable routes.

Operational and safety improvements are planned for roadways and intersections to reduce congestion and reduce the incidence of vehicular accidents. A series of parks will serve to create a respite from the urban environment and to help invigorate the town center.

New and relocated public facilities will meet the public's demand for quality, accessible public services. The proposed projects illustrate the initiative the city can take in helping to shape its future.

The following is a brief description of the major sections of this Livable Centers Initiative report:

The **Overview** describes the Livable Centers Initiative Program, the planning process,

public participation, and the physical limits of the study area.

The **Community Profile** is a detailed description of current conditions in the study area, including urban design, current land uses, zoning regulations, pedestrian, vehicular, and transit conditions, real estate market conditions, and demographic profile.

Issues and Opportunities is a brief summary of the issues and opportunities that currently confront the study area. This list of issues and opportunities primarily comes from the ideas and concerns of residents and other community stakeholders.

Vision and Goals presents an overall, unifying vision for the study area, distilled from stakeholder input, and a series of goals that direct the implementation sections of the plan.

Recommendations include city policies regarding development and public and private investment, including the preferred future land use plan. Also included in this section is how the LCI plan relates to other planning activities of the city.

The **Action Plan** consists of a list of projects that the city can undertake to implement the LCI plan, as well as some guidance on how these projects might be implemented. Key considerations, coordination, and organization of implementation actions are emphasized.



Figure E.5 Dorville LCI Study Area

The list of projects itself is organized into two tables, a **5-Year Implementation Plan** and a **15-Year Implementation Plan**. The 5-Year Implementation Plan is included at the end of this section, while the 15-Year Implementation Plan is included in Appendix A.

Population and employment projections based on the Doraville LCI Town Center Master Plan are shown below. Table E-1 shows the population and employment projections in 5-year increments. Population and employment projections are based on the demographic and market analysis in Appendix D.

Table E.1 Doraville LCI Area Population and Employment Projections Summary

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population	1,252	3,565	5,878	8,190	10,503	12,816
Housing Units	284	995	1,706	2,418	3,129	3,840
Single Family	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townhomes	0	77	154	230	307	384
Multifamily	284	918	1,553	2,187	2,822	3,456
Employment						
Commercial Square Feet	1,920,000	2,259,600	2,599,200	2,938,800	3,278,400	3,618,000
Jobs	4,738	5,262	5,786	6,310	6,834	7,358

Table E.2 Doraville LCI Area 5-Year Implementation Plan Project List

Transportation Projects						
Project Name	Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Cost	Right-of-Way Year	Right-of-Way Cost
Town Center Area Intersection Improvements Central @ New Peachtree	New Peachtree at Central Avenue, New Peachtree at Park Avenue, Buford Highway at Park Avenue; ADA ramps, mast arm signals, pedestrian countdown timers, textured crosswalks, signage	Pedestrian	2006	\$74,000	2008	\$0
New Peachtree Roadway and Safety Enhancements	Non-Peak hour Parking on 4 lane segment, from South of MARTA station to Clearview Avenue. Striping, signage meters, signal optimization. Class 3 on-street bike route.	Roadway	2006	\$44,000	2008	\$0
MARTA Pedestrian Improvements	Improve signs directing to pedestrian entrances from Central and Park. Create a covered walkway from deck to station. Remove interior fencing, restrict fencing to outer perimeter of station and busway. Remove out-of-date signs.	Pedestrian	2006	\$2,500	2008	\$0
Shallowford Road and New Peachtree pedestrian and intersection safety improvements	Realign intersection of Shallowford Road and New Peachtree Road and improve pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, and signalization	Roadway/ Pedestrian	Complete	Complete	2008	\$100,000
New Peachtree Sidewalks - 4 Lane Area	Primary streetscape. sidewalks (10'), lighting, trees (30') street furniture. Consolidate telephone and cable with electric utilities	Pedestrian	2007	\$462,000	2009	\$270,000
Sidewalks to Schools	Improved sidewalks connecting Schools south of Buford Highway to Town Center, MARTA	Pedestrian	2008	\$40,000	2010	\$200,000
Central Avenue Sidewalks	Primary streetscape. sidewalks (10'), lighting, trees (30') street furniture	Pedestrian	2008	\$220,880	2010	\$210,000
Park Avenue Sidewalks	Primary Streetscape. sidewalks (10'), lighting, trees (30'), street furniture	Pedestrian	2008	\$216,480	2010	\$130,000
Buford Highway Streetscape	Install street trees every 30' on inside of sidewalk with property owner permission. Work with non-profit Trees Atlanta on tree installation. City will purchase trees, non-profit will install.	Pedestrian	2008	\$100,000	2010	\$0
Oakmont Avenue Extension	New 2 lane road with sidewalks connecting Buford Highway and New Peachtree, 2 Intersection improvements	Roadway/ Pedestrian	2008	\$240,000	2010	\$1,500,000
New Peachtree Sidewalks - 2 Lane/Shallowford Area	Primary streetscape. Sidewalks (8'), lighting, trees (30'), street furniture. Consolidate telephone and cable with electric utilities.	Pedestrian	2009	\$484,000	2011	\$460,000
Shallowford Road Sidewalks	Secondary Streetscape. sidewalks (8'), trees (30'), street furniture.	Pedestrian	2009	\$216,480	2011	\$700,000
MARTA Parking Deck	Develop 400 space parking deck to replace surface parking needed for redevelopment. Parking deck can replace old parking deck location.	Urban Design	2009	\$1,170,000	2011	\$0

Transportation Projects (continued)							
Project Name	Construction Year	Construction Cost	Total Project Cost	Cost Range	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source Match & Amount
Town Center Area Intersection Improvements Central @ New Peachtree	2009	\$370,000	\$444,000	High	City Staff, Dekalb County, GDOT	LCI	\$88,800
New Peachtree Roadway and Safety Enhancements	2009	\$220,000	\$264,000	High	City Staff	LCI	\$52,800
MARTA Pedestrian Improvements	2009	\$10,000	\$12,500	Low	MARTA	LCI	\$0
Shallowford Road and New Peachtree pedestrian and intersection safety improvements	2009	\$690,000	\$790,000	High	City Staff, Dekalb County	TIP/Doraville/HOST	\$790,000
New Peachtree Sidewalks - 4 Lane Area	2010	\$2,310,000	\$3,042,000	High	City Staff	LCI	\$608,400
Sidewalks to Schools	2011	\$200,000	\$440,000	High	City Staff	LCI	\$88,000
Central Avenue Sidewalks	2011	\$1,104,400	\$1,535,280	High	City Staff	LCI	\$307,056
Park Avenue Sidewalks	2011	\$1,082,400	\$1,428,880	High	City Staff	LCI	\$285,776
Buford Highway Streetscape	2011	\$200,000	\$300,000	High	City Staff	LCI	\$300,000
Oakmont Avenue Extension	2011	\$1,200,000	\$2,940,000	High	City Staff/GDOT	LCI	\$588,000
New Peachtree Sidewalks - 2 Lane/Shallowford Area	2012	\$2,420,000	\$3,364,000	High	City Staff	LCI	\$672,800
Shallowford Road Sidewalks	2012	\$199,267	\$999,267	High	City Staff	LCI	\$199,853
MARTA Parking Deck	2012	\$7,800,000	\$8,970,000	High	MARTA	LCI	\$0

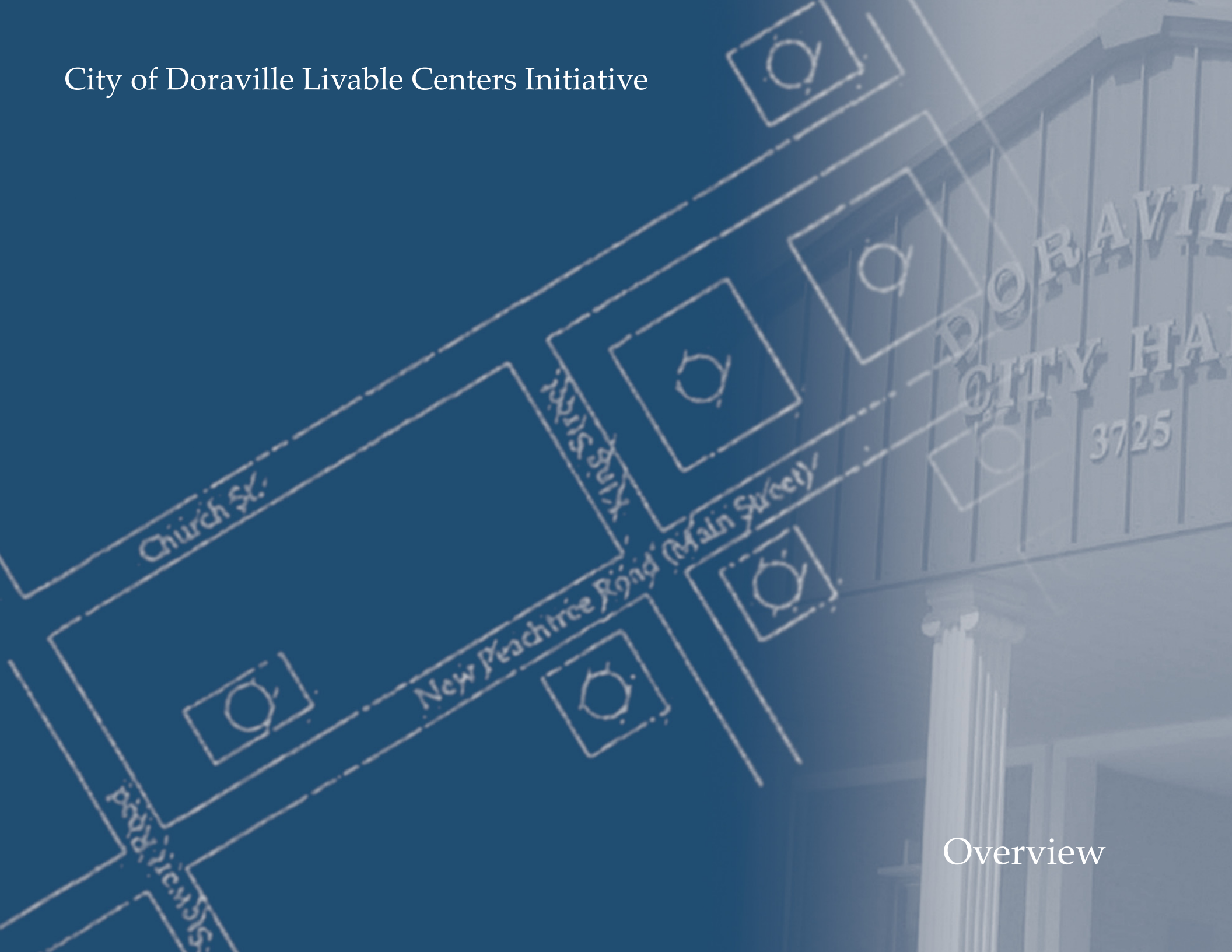
Table E.2 Doraville LCI Area 5-Year Implementation Plan Project List

Housing Projects						
Project Name	Description	Cost	Cost Range	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Affordable housing incentives	Integrate into zoning overlays. Coordinate with DeKalb County programs. Emphasize mixed income developments with part subsidized, part market rate projects. Explore senior affordable housing opportunities with non-profit developers.	None. Part of zoning overlay project.	Low	2006	City Staff/Community Development Corporations	Not applicable
Available property list	Prepare an inventory of existing sites/buildings within the core redevelopment area that includes ownership, condition, use, value of land, lease rates/terms, etc. Update regularly.	Staff time	Low	2006	City Staff	City Budget
Code enforcement strategy	Review current code and survey residents for code enforcement priorities. Educate citizens on the current code and provide a phone number and internet form for them to submit code complaints. Create a top ten list of trouble properties and focus on these properties until issues are resolved.	\$10,000 annual	Medium	2007	City Staff	City Budget
Other Local Initiatives						
Project Name	Description	Cost	Cost Range	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
New town center overlay + design guidelines	Regulate building location, orientation, height, bulk, parking location, mixed use, small business set aside, ground floor retail, streetscape requirements, materials, scale, banned uses. Town center area will be predominantly residential over retail and civic land uses.	\$50,000	Medium	2006	City Staff/Consultant/Georgia DCA	City Budget/Georgia DCA Office of Downtown Development
Public amenity design guidelines	Identify preferred style of sign system, lighting, furniture, trash cans, kiosks, etc. Consistent street furniture for entire study area. Can be part of the town center overlay project.	\$20,000	Low	2006	City Staff/Consultant/Georgia DCA	City Budget/Georgia DCA Office of Downtown Development
Developer development guidelines	New overlay guidelines should be summarized into an easy to understand, highly graphic document to illustrate design principles to developers. Document should be downloadable from city website.	Part of town center/Buford Hwy overlay cost	Low	2006-2008	City Staff/Consultant	Not applicable
Commercial rezoning	Rezone properties east of Buford Highway to be a maximum of 8 stories, permit mixed use, and create a transitional height plane to single family residential.	Staff resources	Low	2006	City Council	City Budget
Create downtown Doraville map and circulate	Create an illustrative, simplified map with major retail and civic destinations. Emphasize walking routes between destinations. Distribute the map at City Hall, the library, at the MARTA station and online. Update map annually.	\$3,000 annual	Low	2006	City Staff	City Budget
Create LCI plan pamphlet	Circulate LCI pamphlet to help developers and citizens understand the LCI vision and implementation plan.	\$2,000	Low	2006	City Staff	City Budget
Create staff positions for LCI implementation	Create 2 staff positions with qualified personnel to oversee LCI plan implementation. A community development director and a support person with grant-writing skills have often been used to fill this role.	\$60,000/ year	Medium	2006	City Council	City Budget
Redevelopment of New Peachtree	Prioritize early redevelopment on New Peachtree, Park, and Central corridors.	Staff resources	Low	2006-2010	City Staff	City Budget
Design gateway elements & sign system for key locations	Design and install gateway elements at identified locations.	\$20,000	Medium	2007	City Staff	City Budget
Establish planning commission for design review in overlay districts	A planning commission can review development proposals to ensure they are consistent with articulated design standards in overlays. The commission is purely advisory, with final decisions in the hands of city council. Planning commissions normally have monthly meetings and are staffed by citizen volunteers.	Staff resources	Low	2007	City Council/ City Staff	City Budget
Incorporate a 'Doraville International' section into existing newsletter	Include a section about the many cross-cultural offerings of Doraville, including restaurants, shops, events, non-profits, education, etc. Circulate the newsletter at City Hall, the library, and online.	Staff resources	Low	2007	City Staff, APACS	City Budget
Redevelopment of US post office parcel	Work with USPS to promote redevelopment of this key site.	Revenue generating	Low	2007	City Staff	Not applicable
Acquire Flowers Park parkland	Acquire current undeveloped land at northern edge of First Baptist for future park. Total park acreage approximately 1.0 acre, acquisition about 0.4 acre.	\$160,000	High	2008	City Council	DeKalb County Greenspace, Blank Foundation

Table E.2 Doraville LCI Area 5-Year Implementation Plan Project List

Other Local Initiatives						
Project Name	Description	Cost	Cost Range	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Brownfield testing and mitigation	Based on past land uses, compile a list of properties that may need brownfield testing. Prioritize list based on estimated risk and value for redevelopment. Work with county and US EPA to obtain resources for remediation.	Staff resources	High	2008	City Staff	EPA Brownfields Funds
Business recruitment strategy	Develop a business recruitment strategy based on competitive advantages of location, transportation access, and international image. Consider nearby resources such as Peachtree Dekalb Airport, Emory/CDC, and the International Village. Coordinate with available property list.	\$25,000	Medium	2008	City Staff/Georgia Tech Economic Development Institute	Dekalb Economic Development, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Korean Chamber of Commerce, City Budget
Buford Highway overlay + design guidelines	Regulate building location and orientation, mixed use, parking requirements, buffering requirements, streetscape requirements, signage, access management, interparcel access, bulk and height, materials, etc.	\$50,000	Medium	2008	City Staff/Consultant	City Budget
Police parking	Construct a parking area for police and other city vehicles on current pool site. Create landscaped buffers as appropriate to encourage development along edges. Because of poor access and visibility, this site is poorly suited to other uses.	\$300,000	High	2008	City Staff	City Budget
City center parking deck	Construct about 80 space parking deck between CPACS and the Police Station to replace parking lost to future Town Square Park and to meet needs of future government center.	\$1,200,000	High	2009	City Staff	City Budget/ Georgia DCA Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund/CDBG Funds
Interstate gateway	Create an entrance feature with planting design around Motors Industrial Way and I-285 ramp entrances and exts. Conduct regular maintenance. Coordinate with GDOT as necessary.	\$15,000	Low	2009	City Staff	City Budget/GDOT Transportation Enhancement Funds
Move utility lines off New Peachtree	Relocate or bury high-voltage utility lines off New Peachtree to alternate location. Coordinate with New Peachtree streetscape.	Unknown	Medium/High	2009	City Staff/Georgia Power	City Budget
Town Square Park	Design new town square park in parking area currently between city hall, the library, and the courthouse building. Find alternative parking location such as Salvation Army or civic center for library patrons, or construct parking deck (See 'city center parking deck' project in this list).	\$250,000	Medium	2009	City Staff	Dekalb County Green space, Blank Foundation
Annual Asian community day	Celebrate Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese and other Asian communities in town center area. Consider organizing a joint festival with Chamblee.	\$10,000 annual	Medium	2010	City Staff/ Volunteers	City Budget
Annual Hispanic community day	Celebrate Hispanic community in town center area. Consider joint festival with Chamblee.	\$10,000 annual	Medium	2010	City Staff/ Volunteers	City Budget
International shuttle	Support a jointly operated shuttle between Peachtree Dekalb Airport, Chamblee MARTA, International Village, Doraville MARTA, and the proposed Gwinnett County Chinatown on Peachtree Industrial.	\$50,000	Medium	2010	Private developers	Private/public partnership
Redevelopment of MARTA parcel	Work with MARTA to redevelop key surface parking areas into mixed use with first floor retail. Select a site along New Peachtree with easy access for MARTA patrons and Doraville city staff.	None	Low	2010	MARTA/City Staff	Not applicable
Sale of surplus land	Once necessary land is acquired and set aside for public facilities and parks, surplus city-owned land can be sold to promote private redevelopment of area. Possible early sites for surplus: UGA extension center, parking site east of Police Station. Public facility plans should be complete to ensure that sufficient land is in place for future public facilities.	Revenue generating	Low	2010	City Staff/City Council	Not applicable
Taxi regulation review	Review regulations governing taxis with public comment. Revise regulations as needed.	Staff resources	Low	2010	City Staff	Not applicable

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



Overview

2.0 Overview

Background

The goal of the 2005 Doraville LCI Town Center Plan is to develop a community-based framework that promotes and guides desired patterns of development. The public participation process allows the community to inventory community assets, identify challenges and opportunities, set goals and objectives, be engaged, and develop the land use and transportation strategies necessary to support the desired vision. The Doraville LCI Town Center Plan will serve as the City's strongest statement in directing future growth and shaping development in terms of land use, transportation, and urban design.

2.1 LCI Program

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) administers the Livable Centers Initiative as a regional effort to encourage diverse housing opportunities, mixed uses, and expanded mobility choices. The program also sets priorities for future transportation improvements in participating jurisdictions, while promoting the following goals:

1. Encouraging a diversity of medium to high-density, mixed income neighborhoods, employment, shopping and recreation choices.
2. Providing access to a range of travel modes including transit, roadways, walking and biking to enable access to all uses within the study area.
3. Encourage integration of uses and land use policy/regulation with transportation investments to maximize the use of alternate modes.
4. Increase the desirability of redevelopment of land served by existing infrastructure at transit stations, corridors, activity, and town centers through transportation investments.
5. Preserve historical characteristics and create community identity.
6. Develop a transportation investment program that reflects community needs.
7. Provide transportation infrastructure incentives for jurisdictions to implement the resulting study goals.
8. Provide for the implementation of regional quality growth policies and Best Development Practices in the study area.
9. Develop a local planning outreach process that promotes the involvement of all stakeholders, particularly low income, minority and traditionally underserved populations.

10. Provide planning funds to integrate land use policies and transportation investments with urban design tools.

The Doraville LCI plan draws overall guidance from the goals set by the ARC and refines them with the community specific goals that are found in the Vision and Goals section of this report.

2.2 Planning Process

The planning process was designed to build gradual consensus for a town center vision and implementation plan for the City of Doraville. The planning process proceeded in three phases. Phase 1 consisted of visioning and early issue identification. Phase 2 consisted of synthesizing input from various public forums into a unified vision with supporting goals and policies. Phase 3 consisted of creating a detailed implementation strategy, with specific projects identified and a schedule for implementation. Each of these phases involved public input, review, and comment.

Phase 1 (June 2005)

- Visioning
- Identified key issues and needs

Visioning asked the entire community to reflect on the question, "What do you want to be?"



Figure 2.1 - The Planning Process

The participatory nature was intended to create true “ownership” of strategic decisions and lay the groundwork for ongoing implementation. All of the public workshops encouraged free-flowing, creative, and open-ended discussions and participation by all citizens.

The beginning of the visioning process was the Kick-Off Meeting held on June 7 at Cary Reynolds Elementary School. During this meeting participants became familiar with Smart Growth concepts and



Figure 2.2 Focus Groups

identified primary Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Constraints for the study area.

On-line surveys provided the opportunity for more in-depth input from various stakeholder groups within the community. On-line surveys were summarized and helped to provide specific guidance on the priorities of the community for policy and implementation.

The Steering Committee also played a vital role helping the consultants reach out to the broader community and helped the planning team understand the pulse of the community. Steering Committee meetings were held on June 6 and July 14 during this part of the planning process.

Focus groups were held for the Hispanic community on June 25, for the Chinese community on August 19, and for the Korean community on August 20. These focus groups helped to overcome language and cultural barriers for key minority constituencies of the Doraville LCI study. The issues identified by these focus groups have been integrated into the overall vision and goals for the study.

Phase 2 (July 2005)

- Developed draft plan

Phase 2 was the development of the draft plan. The draft plan synthesized individual input from public meeting comments and

stakeholder interviews into a larger revitalization vision for a vibrant, pedestrian friendly, livable town center coordinated with other planning and implementation efforts, as well as initiatives from the private development community.

The highlight of Phase 2 was the Community Workshop held at the Doraville Civic Center on July 21. During this workshop, participants were able to create a land use, transportation, and public facilities plan for the study area based on their vision and desires. These designs were the basis for all of the subsequent proposals for the study area.

A Steering Committee meeting on August 11th reviewed the contents of the Community Workshop plans. In addition, the Steering Committee discussed implementation issues and participated in a Character Image Survey that helped guide design recommendations for the LCI plan.

Phase 3 (October 2005)

- Developed final plan
- Developed implementation schedule

Phase 3 included the preparation of the study document, the compilation of the overall work products, key recommendations, and an implementation plan. The five-year schedule of implementation actions includes lead responsibility, time

frame, potential funding sources and benchmark indicators with prioritized transportation improvements, economic development and redevelopment strategies, and necessary revisions to local regulatory policies or plans.

The key meeting for Phase 3 was the open house, when the public reviewed draft proposals and recommendations that reflected the public's input and direction from the previous phases of the plan. This open house allowed for revisions and feedback and helped the public understand how plan implementation will occur.

Before the open house, the Steering Committee previewed the draft recommendations on September 15 and October 13 and organized the open house so that both the public and the planning team received the most benefit out of the open house.

2.3 Study Area Description

The study area is 265 acres encompassing most of the civic uses in Doraville (including City Hall, the police station, and the library) as well as most of the land around the Doraville MARTA station (Figure E.5). Land use within the study area is primarily oriented around the two north-south corridors of Buford Highway and New Peachtree Road. The study area has strong boundaries/barriers to the

northeast and the northwest consisting of the rail lines (including MARTA's elevated guideway) and I-285. The southwestern boundary is the City of Chamblee, which has similar land use and transportation issues. The southeastern boundary of the study area is a series of single family neighborhoods that are very different in character from the study area proper.

2.4 A Multiethnic Community

The stakeholder groups in the Doraville LCI area are unusually diverse for the Atlanta area. The Buford Highway corridor of the Atlanta metropolitan area is recognized as being the most internationally diverse area in the region--the "Ellis Island of Atlanta."

Planning in a multi-ethnic community has its challenges. Different cultures may have different traditions of participation in government and in public meetings. Many people in immigrant communities may speak and read with limited English capabilities. Government, particularly in a small town, may not have the resources to reach out to various ethnic communities.

Additionally, Doraville presents some unique issues of its own. Local businesses predominantly cater to the Asian and Hispanic communities, even though the largest group of residents is Caucasian. The large immigrant populations in the

area have little in the way of resources or understanding of their host communities and many immigrants are constantly in search of temporary employment.

Within this multiethnic context, the planning team made several practical decisions about how to conduct the planning process. We decided that all those who commute, live, work, or shop in the study area should be involved in the planning process. We decided to enable broad involvement in the planning process as much as possible by conducting outreach in five languages and with multiple types of forums. The strongest plan is the one with the broadest support and public involvement. At the same time, we acknowledged that many of the social policy and community issues involved in a multi-ethnic community were beyond the scope of our study to address. We hoped to provide some direction for how to bring the diverse aspects of the Doraville community together, but at the same time, acknowledge that there are no simple or short term solutions.

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



Community Profile

3.0 Community Profile

3.1 Urban Design

Despite the diversity of activity and people within the study area, it is seriously lacking in people-friendly places. There are no places to comfortably stroll, pass time, or meet people. Businesses, civic activities, and non-profits are scattered through the study area and are disconnected with no unifying organization. Access focuses almost exclusively on the automobile, despite the strong transit resources of the area. Destinations within comfortable walking distance of the Doraville MARTA station are few and poorly marked.

The town center area of Doraville is focused on Park Avenue, where most of its civic uses are concentrated. Many stakeholders noted that Doraville government facilities are hard to find and located inefficiently. The layout of buildings does not respond to the unique topography of the area. Public access to government facilities is oriented towards the automobile, with each building having its own parking lot, often in front of the building. The arrangement of government buildings does not create places for people – there are no public places for people to meet, talk, and

spend time as they arrive at or depart from the government facilities located here.

The poor appearance of Buford Highway was a consistent theme of stakeholders throughout the study. Most people liked or appreciated the uses along Buford Highway, but they strongly disliked their appearance. Buford Highway suffers from a lack of pedestrian space, large and prominently located parking lots, a lack of greenery, buildings located far from the street, confusing traffic patterns, an excess of curb cuts, and uncoordinated signage. Individual business owners think that they are attracting business with visibility from the street and prominent signage. However, the visual appearance of Buford Highway is so disorienting that the only way to find a business is if you already know it is there. Moreover, new customers are deterred from coming to Buford Highway because of its appearance. An improved appearance would benefit the image of Doraville, local residents, and local business owners as well.

3.2 Current Land Use

The dominant land use in the study area is low density commercial. This land use is dominant along all three major corridors of Buford Highway, New Peachtree, and



Figure 3.1 Doraville town center



Figure 3.3 City of Doraville character



Figure 3.2 Doraville MARTA Station

Shallowford Road. The amount of low density commercial is much higher than in most study areas, and represents significant redevelopment opportunity.

Transportation-oriented land uses are also a significant proportion of land, mainly consisting of the MARTA station and surrounding parking areas.

Institutional and government uses are centered on Park Avenue, including a number of churches and non-profits nearby. Some churches and non-profits are in older buildings, others are in converted commercial buildings.

Some high density residential uses are in the southwest portion of the study area and in the neighboring city of Chamblee. These are mostly older, garden-style apartments.

Table 3.1 Existing Land Use Distribution

Land Use	Percent
Commercial Low Intensity	49%
Trans/Comm/ Utilities	29%
Institutional	12%
Residential-High Density	8%
Industrial	1%
Residential-Low Density	1%

Source: EDAW, 2005.

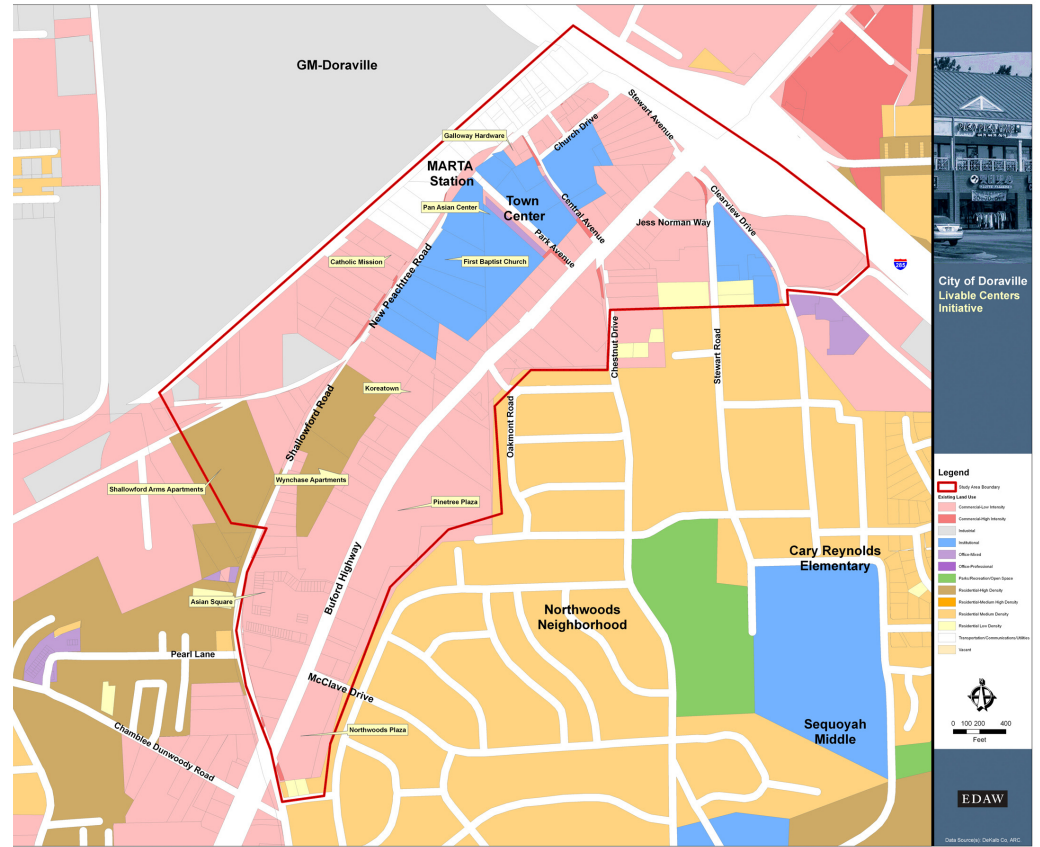


Figure 3.4 Existing land use in the study area

Development Opportunities

Almost all of the study area has potential for redevelopment. Most of the commercial land uses are low intensity and in older buildings that could be redeveloped into multi-story mixed use. The government and institutional land uses around the MARTA station are low density and do not take advantage of the

transit opportunity nearby. Government and institutional land uses could be consolidated making room for new development. None of the industrial uses in the study area serves as a significant employment base and so all are potential sites for redevelopment, though brownfield remediation may be an issue. The apartment complexes in the area are older

and relatively low density, so they present the opportunity for redevelopment as well.

The only land uses in the study area that are not suitable for redevelopment are the parking decks around the MARTA station, which provide parking for commuters coming in from the suburbs, and the Georgia Power substation, which encumbers a single parcel from redevelopment.

3.3 Zoning

Doraville last updated its zoning code in 1986, and its current zoning code does not reflect the most up-to-date planning concepts. The current zoning code mandates the separation of land uses and does not allow for mixed use zoning. Current zoning requires large setbacks from the street, high ratios of parking, and does not require the provision of pedestrian amenities. The concept of transit oriented development is not addressed. The current code does have buffering and screening requirements, but these requirements are not clearly illustrated and some of these requirements are not thoroughly enforced.

Doraville needs an updated zoning ordinance that requires the provision of adequate pedestrian amenities, permits mixed use, and creates incentives for transit-oriented and town center development typologies.

3.4 Demographic Profile

Retail and Residential Market Areas are the geographic areas from which the majority of potential customers and residents of new housing in the study area will emanate. The Retail Market Area is comprised of a “Local” (10-minute drive) and “Greater” (20-minute drive) area. The Residential Market Area is much larger, defined by a 20-mile radius. The center point for both the Retail and Residential Market Areas is the intersection of Buford Highway and Park Avenue.

The Local Retail Market Area population is estimated at 346,801; an estimated 1,501,926 persons reside within the Greater Retail Market Area; and the Residential Market Area encompasses a population of almost 2.8 million. Since 1990, growth within the Retail and Residential Market Areas has been strong (2.68% to 3.26% annually), similar to growth rates within the study area and City of Doraville.

Households within the study area and city are relatively large (4.33 and 3.33 persons, respectively), primarily due to a high share of ethnic households that tend to be larger.

Relative to the metropolitan statistical area (MSA), Retail and Residential Market Area households are generally young (median age of 33.3 to 33.8 years), affluent (median income of \$64,429 to \$65,016) and have a high share of Hispanic residents (11% to 25%).

Community Tapestry market segmentation data reveals that Retail and Residential Market Area households are generally upwardly mobile, established and affluent. Most work in professional jobs and dual income households are the norm. Younger market segments reflect a more urban and active lifestyle where purchases and activities are centered on entertainment and setting up their homes. Older and more established market segments have the wealth to maximize and enjoy their free time. Overall, Retail and Residential Market Area households have an urban orientation without the perceived drawbacks of living downtown.

Within the study area, there are an estimated 384 businesses that employ 4,738 workers. A large share of study area jobs (58%) are concentrated in the services sector, followed by the retail trade (17%), wholesale trade (10%), manufacturing (8%) and construction (6%). Almost 10,800 people work within one mile of the study area; about 30,000 people work within two miles; and almost 48,500 work within three miles, providing a significant daytime population.

Residential Profile

Housing tenure within the study area and City of Doraville is essentially split between rental and ownership. Not surprisingly, due to a high share of renter units, the study area and City of Doraville have a smaller share of single family detached units compared to the Residential Market Area and Atlanta MSA.

Housing value and rents within the study area and City are below Residential Market Area and MSA levels and units are generally older.

While condominium/loft development has not taken hold in Doraville, Chamblee's Mid-City District has successfully capitalized on this intown trend.

In only the past few years, several higher density loft and townhouse projects have been built or are in the process of being built. Absorptions have been strong, drawing a mix of young professionals and empty nesters who want a quality product that is accessible to downtown, without paying Buckhead/Midtown prices.

Rental development has been virtually absent from Chamblee's housing boom. Only one project is slated for development in the next year. A for-sale project that recently began sales was originally planned as rental: the developer changed the plan in anticipation of higher profits. Apartment communities within and surrounding the study area are generally older with limited amenities.

Retail Profile

The study area is located in Dorey's "Northeast Atlanta" submarket, within which there is an estimated 5.8 million square feet of retail space. Vacancy is reported at 4.5% with 261,308 square feet of available space. Available rent range is \$16.72 to \$18.64 per square foot.

The retail market along Buford Highway from Chamblee Dunwoody to Doraville Plaza is extremely tight despite the fact that some of the shopping centers are obsolete with marginal businesses. Leasing agents in the area say that it is difficult to find vacant space for new businesses with average leasing rates ranging from \$14 to \$16 per square foot.

Buford Highway's ethnic district is sometimes referred to as Atlanta's "Little Asia," reportedly hosting the greatest ethnically-owned concentration of businesses in the southeast. One of the interesting aspects of Buford Highway's international retail base is that it is truly multicultural (Japanese, Korean, Hispanic, Chinese, Taiwanese, etc.), which boosts retail sales by encouraging cross-ethnic traffic. Ethnically owned businesses have essentially transformed this segment of Buford Highway, creating a new identity for the area and occupying space that had almost been forgotten. Chamblee's highly anticipated 30-acre retail/office redevelopment project, International Village, will contribute to the area's burgeoning ethnic identity.

Office-Industrial Profile

Doraville is located close to three major metro Atlanta concentrations of office space: Central Perimeter, Peachtree Corners, and I-85 North/Inside I-285. The Central Perimeter is Atlanta's single largest concentration of office space, which has been suffering from relatively high vacancy rates over the past several years, thanks in large part to price-and-location-based compe-

tion for tenants from facilities in the Roswell/Alpharetta/GA 400 market to the north. To the east of Doraville, Peachtree Corners is beginning to experience vacancy problems as corporate decision-makers are increasingly moving their residences and offices north and east. To the south, I-85 North/Inside I-285 is comprised primarily of older buildings largely tenanted by governmental-and-related space users drawn by the market's access and low rents.

Doraville is situated in what Dorey's calls the "Northeast/I-85" industrial corridor. It contains a wide variety of industrial product types, including smaller, older, often functionally obsolescent distribution facilities, located within aging intown industrial districts, that are in some instances being converted to retail uses; diverse manufacturing and R&D facilities; and, moving east to Gwinnett County, the latest in big-box warehouse development. One of Doraville's most significant competitive assets in attracting industrial development is its location inside the Perimeter, where industrial space is increasingly rare.

3.5 Transportation

Roadway Network

The existing transportation system within the Doraville LCI study area includes a network of state and local roadways serving residential, business and regional transportation needs. The roadway network is illustrated in Figure 3.5.

Primary Roads

The dominant roadway in the study area is Buford Highway (State Route 13), a major arterial which bisects the study area from the southwest to the northeast. Buford Highway is a six-lane highway with a continuous two-way center left turn lane, with additional turning lanes at major intersections. Throughout the study area, Buford Highway is fronted by primarily commercial land uses with frequent driveways and access points. A wide center turn lane, which is marked to provide dedicated left turn lanes at major intersections, serves as an uncontrolled bi-directional turn lane in between major intersections. Due to the roadway's peculiar pedestrian conditions, the center-turn lane also serves as an improvised pedestrian refuge. The combination of the uncontrolled bi-directional turning movements, the frequent driveways, and the presence of pedestrians in the turn lane, creates unsafe conditions (see Figure 3.6).

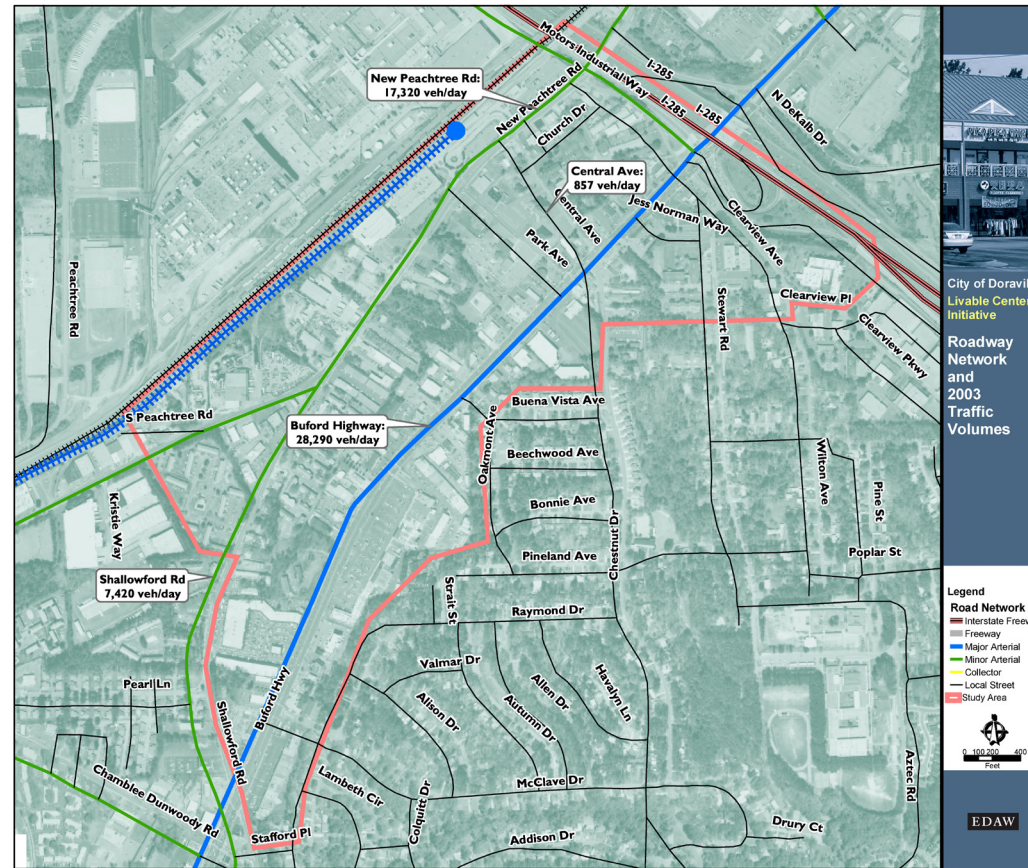


Figure 3.5 Existing roadway network and traffic volume counts

New Peachtree Road, a minor arterial, parallels Buford Highway approximately ¼ mile to the north. New Peachtree Road consists of two lanes in the southern half of the study area, and widens to four lanes with a center left turn lane near the MARTA rail station at Park Avenue. Shallowford Road, a two lane

minor arterial, also roughly parallels Buford Highway until it merges into New Peachtree Road. There are no major east-west arterials in the study area.

Pedestrian Facilities

The Doraville LCI study area has limited pedestrian facilities. Within the entire study area, only the half-mile portion of New Peachtree Road adjacent to the MARTA station has continuous sidewalks on both sides. Neither of the two roads which connect the Doraville Transit Center to Buford Highway, the area's dominant commercial corridor, has continuous sidewalks. The shoulders of most roadways in the study area have well-worn foot-paths, which indicate heavy pedestrian usage despite the lack of sidewalks.

During field visits, numerous pedestrians were seen walking within paved travel lanes on roadways. Buford Highway, the study area's primary commercial corridor, is characterized by a general lack of safe and convenient pedestrian facilities and crossings. Between 2000 and 2002, 13 pedestrians were struck by vehicles, 3 fatally, within the 1.1 mile stretch of Buford Highway within the Doraville LCI study area. Although there are six (6) signalized intersections with crosswalks on Buford Highway within the study area, a strong majority of pedestrians were observed to cross in-between marked crosswalks, even if close to a signalized crosswalk.

A map of Doraville's sidewalk inventory and pedestrian safety issues can be seen in Figure 3.6.

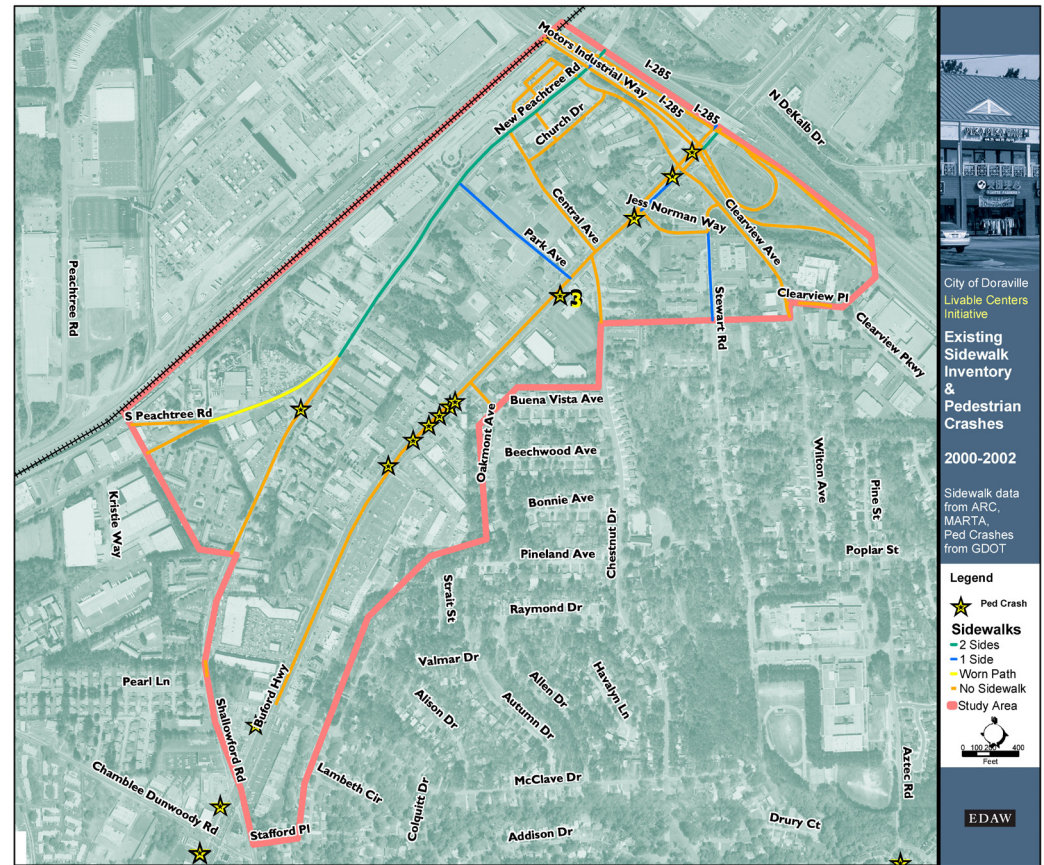


Figure 3.6 Existing sidewalk inventory and pedestrian crashes

Transit

Transit service in the Doraville LCI study area is provided by a variety of public transit operators, including the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), Gwinnett County Transit, as well as some private transit providers.

MARTA Rail

As the northeastern terminus of the MARTA rail system, Doraville MARTA station serves a major role as a commuter park-and-ride facility. The station has three (3) large parking

structures adjacent to the Doraville station, with 1,070 parking spaces.

MARTA serves the City of Atlanta, most of DeKalb and Fulton Counties, and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta Airport (most of which is in Clayton County), with heavy rail transit, bus transit, and demand response transit. In 2002, MARTA carried an average of 500,000 passengers per day. MARTA's rail headways are summarized in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 MARTA Rail Headway

Time Period	Airport/Doraville Line Headway
Weekday Rush	10 Minutes
Weekday Midday	10 Minutes
Weekday Evening	15 Minutes
Saturday	15 Minutes
Sunday	15-20 Minutes

Source: MARTA, 2005.

MARTA Bus

The Doraville LCI study area is served by four (4) MARTA bus routes, all of which stop at the Doraville transit center. Their schedules and operating statistics are shown in Appendix B. The four (4) buses operated by MARTA include the following:

- Route 39 - Buford Highway
Operates weekdays and weekends with a peak headway of 10 minutes
- Route 91 - Henderson Mill
Operates only weekdays with a peak headway of 40 minutes
- Route 104 - Winters Chapel
Operates only weekdays with a peak headway of 30 minutes
- Route 124 - Chamblee Tucker
Operates weekdays and Saturday with a peak headway of 21 minutes

MARTA Demand-Response (Paratransit) Service

MARTA operates 110 paratransit vans on an average of 275,000 hours per year. The paratransit service provides ADA-compliant transportation to eligible persons with disabilities, with service restricted to within ¾ miles of MARTA fixed routes.

Gwinnett County Transit

The Doraville LCI study area is served by one (1) Gwinnett County Transit bus route. Route 10 connects Gwinnett County Transit passengers to the MARTA system via a

connection at the Doraville Transit Station. The fare for a single ride is \$1.75. Operating statistics are detailed in Appendix B.

Royal Bus Lines

Royal Bus Lines provides transit service along eight miles of Buford Highway corridor between the Lindbergh Plaza and Doraville MARTA transit services. The Royal Service duplicates MARTA bus service along the same corridor. Royal operates 16 Minibuses and reports 60,000 passengers per month, an estimated 80% of whom are Hispanic. The fare is \$1.50, and buses operate from 4:30 AM to 8:00 PM.

Adame Central de Autobuses

Adame is a private intercity bus service that primarily serves the Hispanic community. Adame operates an intercity bus station at the intersection of Buford Highway and Chamblee-Dunwoody Road, immediately south of the study area. Adame offers daily bus service from Doraville/Chamblee to multiple cities in Mexico, by way of North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas.

Vehicular Crash Analysis

From 2000 through 2002 there were 879 vehicular crashes in the Doraville LCI study area. Of that total number, 716 of the crashes

occurred on Buford Highway, 449 of which occurred at one of the six intersections within the study area. The intersections in the Doraville study area with the highest crashes are as follows (Figure 3.7):

Buford Highway at:

- Motors Industrial Way (131 Crashes)
- Jesse Norman Way (76)
- Central Avenue (67)
- Park Avenue (70)
- McClave Drive (79)
- Shallowford Road (51)

New Peachtree Road at:

- Shallowford Road (25 Crashes)

Crash volume locations were analyzed to determine a crash rate which can be applied to determine the overall safety of specific road segments. The crash rate measures the number of crashes per 1 million vehicle miles traveled over a road segment.

The following road segments had significantly high crash rates for DeKalb County (above the 90th. percentile). Mil VMT = Million Vehicle Miles Traveled.

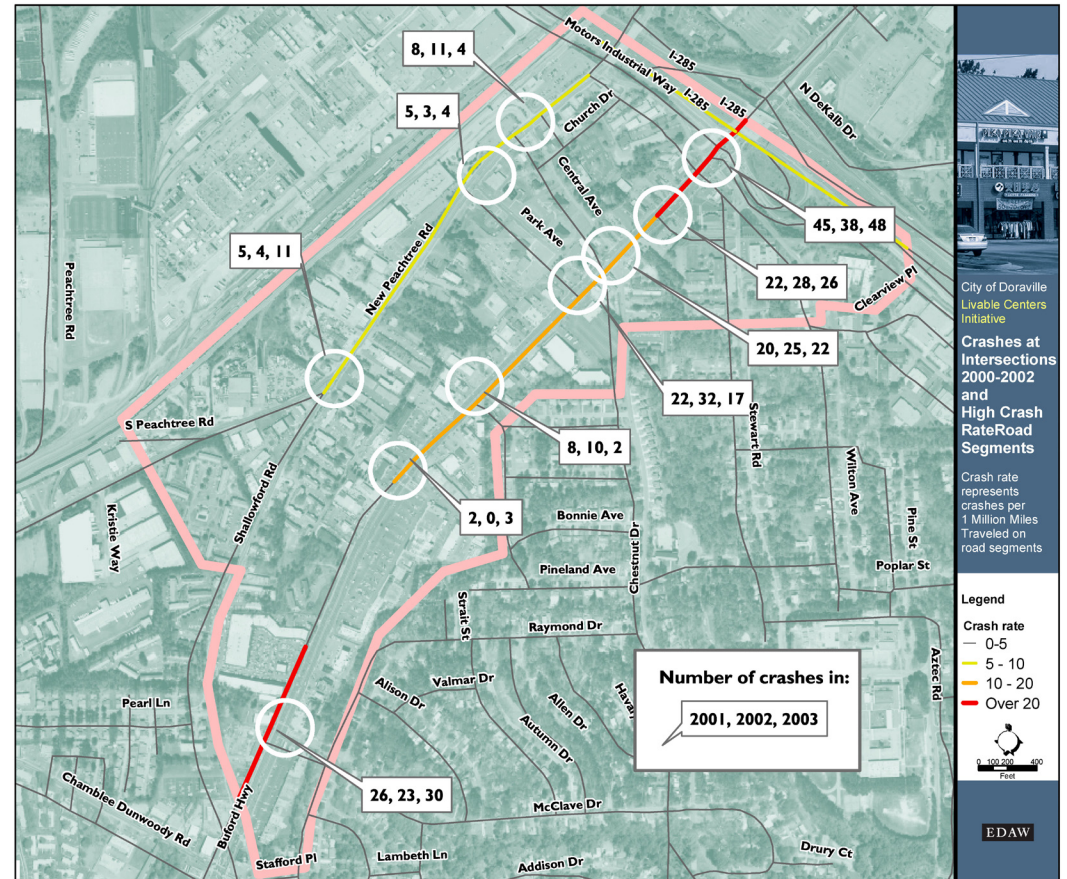


Figure 3.7 Vehicular crashes at intersections and crash rates

Buford Highway

- from I-285 to Jesse Norman Way
29.23 Crash/Mil VMT
- from Chamblee Dunwoody Road to McClave Avenue
28.10 Crash/Mil VMT

- from Jesse Norman Way to Oakmont Avenue
15.24 Crash/Mil VMT
- from Oakmont Way to Pine Tree Plaza Entrance
11.42 Crash/Mil VMT

New Peachtree Road

- from Shallowford Road to Park Avenue
8.28 Crash/Mil VMT
- from Park Avenue to Interstate 285
6.33 Crash/Mil VMT

Traffic Volumes

Historic Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) data for the study area were obtained from Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) database for the time period from 1997 to 2004.

AADT values were obtained from four different count stations on all major roadways within the LCI study area. These volumes are summarized in Table 3.3

A review of the historical count data revealed a significant drop in AADT on Buford Highway from 2002 to 2003.

Existing Capacity Analysis

The existing transportation system Levels of Service (LOS) and system needs based upon existing design and operating capacities is illustrated in Figure 3.8.

The capacity analysis indicates that under existing conditions, most roadways within the LCI study area are operating with LOS B or better with a few exceptions.

The section of Buford Highway adjacent to Motors Industrial Way operates at LOS E,

while Motors Industrial Way operates at LOS C. All of Interstate 285 operates at LOS F. These results suggest that, with some exceptions, observed and reported congestion problems within the LCI study area are related to operational issues, rather than inadequate capacity.

Table 3.3 GDOT Count Station Volumes

Road	Count Station Number	Cross Street	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Shallowford Road	3,612	S of New Peachtree	7,855	7,855	8,142	8,286	8,421	8,567	7,420	7,370
Buford Highway	3,103	S of Oakmont	33,645	34,241	30,557	34,643	34,682	35,487	28,920	27,880
New Peachtree Road	3,594	North of Central Avenue	14,600	14,527	17,657	16,514	16,979	17,272	17,320	15,070

Locations of ADT count stations are shown in Figure 3.5

2030 Capacity Analysis

Capacity analysis was performed for the future year 2030 using the Atlanta Regional Commission Travel Demand Model. Figure 3.9 illustrates the roadway LOS levels in the area.

The projected LOS for most of Buford Highway remains B or better, except for the portion adjacent to Motors Industrial Way and I-285, which is expected to be LOS F.

Shallowford Road is projected to operate at LOS C, and New Peachtree Road is projected to operate at LOS E. Motors Industrial Way is expected to operate at LOS F.

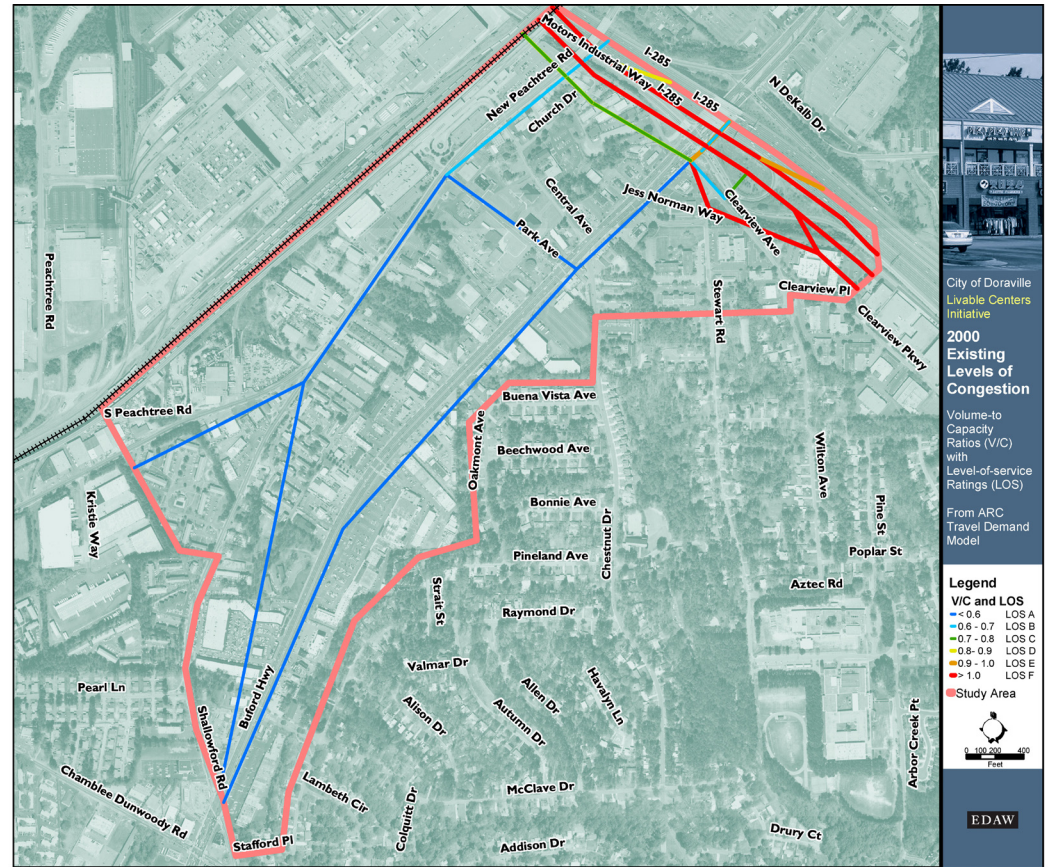


Figure 3.8 2000 Existing congestion

Mobility Issues

A unique and challenging characteristic of Doraville's transportation infrastructure is the preponderance of barriers to connectivity; some are necessitated by specialized transportation facilities such as the interstate and MARTA rail. Other barriers are caused by poor land use planning. These barriers inhibit travel by blocking direct access requiring counter-intuitive routing for seemingly simple trips. While those who regularly drive in Doraville may readily adapt to these barriers, they are significantly insurmountable to those who do not drive.

Barriers to Local Connectivity

The most significant barriers to local transportation connectivity in Doraville are large transportation and manufacturing facilities:

- Freight Rail Corridor
- MARTA's North-South Rail Line
- Interstate 285
- Doraville GM Plant

Barriers due to Land Use Planning

Doraville has developed along a unique street grid which provides three significant roadways providing north-south accessibility with no equivalent east-west connectors. This has the effect of creating



Figure 3.9 2030 Projected congestion

very long narrow “superblocks” which lack public access.

One example of such a superblock is the area bounded by Buford Highway, Shallowford

Road, New Peachtree Road and Park Avenue. The distance across the center of the block is only 600 feet, yet the distance required to move from one side to the other, using public right of ways, is over 6,000 feet. The lack of

connectivity in cases such as this contributes to increased auto dependence by making the use of alternative modes of transportation less attractive, and disproportionately impacts the elderly, children, and transit dependent-populations (Figure 3.10).

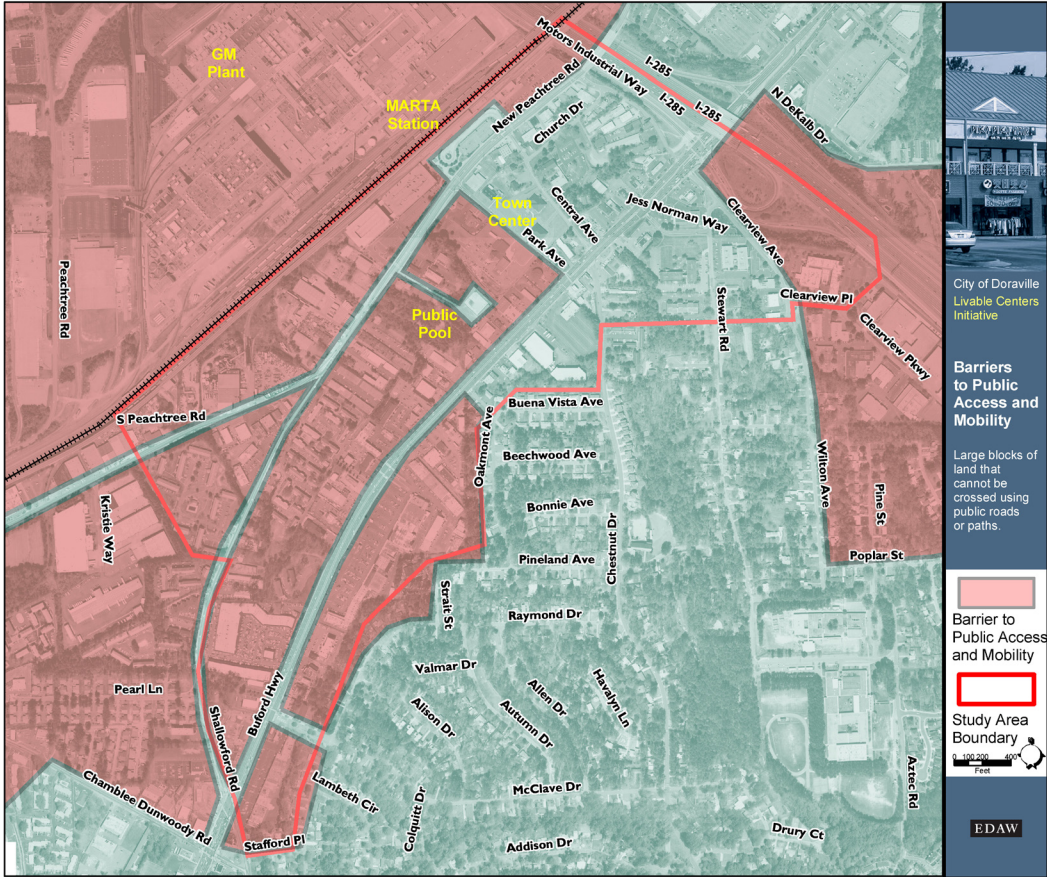


Figure 3.10 Barriers to public access and mobility

Another side-effect of poor connectivity is inefficiency and increased congestion due to short local trips that could be completed on foot or on local streets, which are converted into longer trips along arterials.

Identified Traffic and Transportation Issues

During the first phase of the Doraville LCI study public involvement process, members of the public were asked to identify transportation issues in the study area. The following issues were identified:

- Lack of sidewalks and condition of existing sidewalks
- Poor aesthetics and streetscaping on roadways
- Pedestrian safety
- Physical barriers impair mobility (especially Buford Highway and I-285)
- Traffic congestion
- Intersection alignment: Buford Highway at Clearview Avenue and Jesse Norman Way
- Bus access to MARTA Station

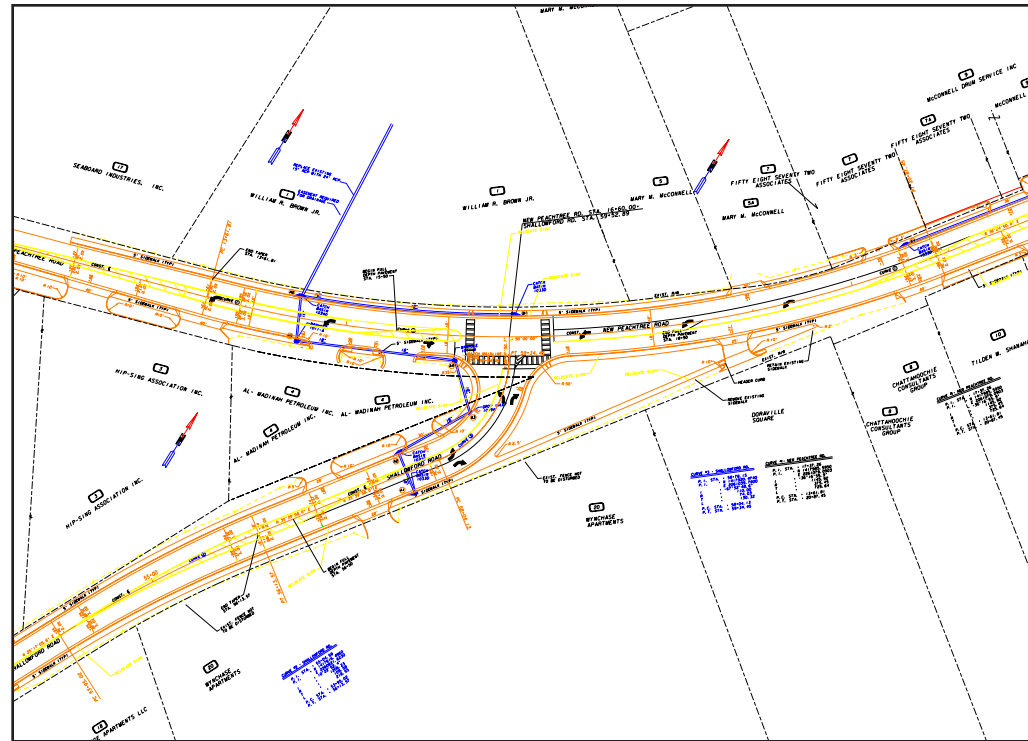


Figure 3.11 Shallowford Road and New Peachtree Road intersection design concept

Members of the public also expressed a desire to see the following:

- Improved sidewalks and bike trails
- Transit Oriented Development
- Improved streetscaping

Planned and Programmed Improvements

Buford Highway Pedestrian Improvements

GDOT is currently implementing an upgrade of pedestrian facilities along the length of Buford Highway from I-285 in Doraville to Sidney Marcus Drive in



Figure 3.12 Bus rapid transit examples

Atlanta. The first phase of the project will be from I-285 to Chamblee, which includes the Doraville LCI study area.

This phase of the project is expected to be completed by 2007. The improvements will include improved sidewalks on both sides and enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities, such as refuge islands in the median.

Shallowford Road and New Peachtree Road Intersection Improvement

The City of Doraville and DeKalb County have developed design plans to improve the intersection of Shallowford Road and New Peachtree Road to improve operations, safety, and pedestrian amenities. A schematic of the new design is included in Figure 3.11.

Fixed Guideway / Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

The Atlanta Regional Commission has included several bus rapid transit (BRT) projects in its Mobility 2030 plan, which will significantly impact DeKalb County's transportation network. Bus rapid transit is a transit concept in which standard or modified rubber-tired buses are operated in a manner similar to fixed-guideway rail vehicles, sometimes in fully or partially dedicated rights-of-way. In most cases, these

systems will have a major impact on transit use patterns.

Two different proposed BRT lines are planned that will pass through Doraville, most likely interfacing with the existing Doraville MARTA rail station.

- AR-901 I-285 NORTH BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) FROM PERIMETER CENTER AREA TO DORAVILLE MARTA STATION. Programmed for 2020.
- AR-910: SR 13 (BUFORD HIGHWAY) ARTERIAL BUS RAPID TRANSIT which will connect the Lindbergh MARTA Station to Gwinnett County along Buford Highway (SR 13). Programmed for 2026.

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



Issues and Opportunities

4.0 Issues and Opportunities

Opportunities

- MARTA station/Transit Oriented Development/ Regional transit hub

Doraville’s MARTA station is a major asset that the city has not yet been able to take full advantage of. As the end of the northeast line, the Doraville MARTA station is the primary transit connection for all of the suburbs north and east of Doraville. Feeder buses from Gwinnett County drop riders at this station, and many commuters drive to the Doraville MARTA station. Future plans will only enhance Doraville’s MARTA prominence in the transit system. Bus Rapid Transit is planned for Buford Highway and for I-285, with both lines connecting to the Doraville MARTA station. The high volume of riders and commuters stopping at the Doraville station creates an opportunity for the city to provide services to these commuters.

Additionally, the MARTA station creates the opportunity for transit oriented development (TOD) in the vicinity of the station. Shops, offices, and residences could be densely developed along an easily walkable network of streets near the station. Ample opportu-

nity exists for redevelopment along transit oriented development guidelines.

- Location

The study area has several other locational advantages. Just inside the perimeter, excellent transportation access is provided by nearby I-285, Buford Highway, I-85 and Peachtree Industrial. Commutes to major employment centers such as Buckhead and Perimeter Center are short. Entertainment, shopping, and cultural destinations are close at hand. Peachtree-Dekalb airport is just down the road, while Hartsfield Jackson international airport is within an hour by MARTA, providing access both to the country and the world. The study area presents one of the best combinations of transit, roadway, and airline transportation access in the region.

- Diversity

Doraville is notable for its ethnic diversity, with significant populations of Hispanics, Koreans, Chinese, and Vietnamese. Ethnic businesses that cater to these populations abound, and Buford Highway is a destination for ethnic communities residing throughout the southeast. These various communities have created numerous and vibrant small



Figure 4.1 Lindbergh MARTA Station TOD



Figure 4.2 Downtown Decatur MARTA Station



Figure 4.3 Doraville’s diversity

businesses that give the Buford Highway corridor its unique character. The businesses and activities that surround these ethnic communities serve unique markets and so thrive even in the midst of major competing commercial districts nearby.

As the world economy and the Atlanta economy become more international, those places that become adept at dealing with multiple ethnicities and cultures will have a competitive advantage. An international workforce capable of speaking many languages will be able to tap into new



Figure 4.4 Available commercial property

business opportunities in international trade and international markets. Those places that create a welcoming environment for many cultures will be best able to capitalize on the growth in international trade. Doraville already has a thriving international business community, and is home to many different cultural groups, so it is well-positioned to become a leading part of the region in international economic development.

- Redevelopment and economic development

Redevelopment of the study area is a priority for the community, local government, and other stakeholders. There is a wide consensus that lands around the MARTA station are underused and could be better developed in the interest of the community. New businesses and new stores created during redevelopment would create new economic and employment opportunities. Capitalizing on Doraville's function as a transit hub, a large customer base for convenience-based services is close at hand. New businesses could take advantage of Doraville's international flavor and access to airports. Business ideas that have been proposed for Doraville include import/export, information technology, biotech, trade schools, software, business services, and international fashion.

- Opportunity to increase development density and scale and more efficient land use patterns

Most of the current structures in the study are developed at low densities with large parking areas. Most of the buildings are old and in need of renovation. As land values continue to increase and as proximity to valuable transportation infrastructure becomes more important, redevelopment will likely come to Doraville. There is ample opportunity for denser, higher quality, better designed, mixed use developments.

- Active, high demand retail area with unique market

Although the Buford Highway area is often seen as unattractive, it is very successful from a business point of view. Occupancies are very high, as are land prices. Buford Highway serves some unique markets and so the businesses it provides are highly patronized and successful. There is likely sufficient demand to create more business opportunities in this area, with expanded services to both ethnic and mainstream communities.

If the aesthetics of the area are improved, an even broader market could be attracted to shopping, browsing, and dining in this unique commercial area.

- In-town redevelopment trends, housing types

The market for all types of housing inside the perimeter continues to be strong. Single family homes, townhomes, and condominiums are being rapidly purchased,

including in nearby Chamblee. The demand for apartments within walking distance of MARTA stations also appears to be high in this area. In short, the demand for all types of housing within the perimeter and in proximity to MARTA stations in particular is strong and there is ample opportunity for the provision of new housing choices in the study area.

- Defining a town center/destination/gathering places

The public voiced strong support for creating a well-defined town center for the use and enjoyment of Doraville’s residents and businesses. There is a need for a place for people to gather, stroll, and shop. The stakeholders imagine a destination within Doraville that is unique to Doraville, a place that is attractive, green, and friendly to people of all ages and backgrounds.

- Increase open space/public space/ green space

Closely related to the desire for a town center, is the desire for more green space within Doraville. Participants expressed concern that a careful eye be given to new opportunities for green space.

Currently the study area is highly developed and mostly with a high percentage of impervious surfaces. The public expressed a strong desire for new green space in the area. Parks and landscaping can help create visual relief from the proliferation of asphalt, fences, and disarray.

Issues

- Vision

Many stakeholders noted the lack of a unified vision for the future of the study area. This lack of a clear vision was identified by many as the central barrier to redevelopment and improvement in the study area. Doraville needs a vision and a clear set of guidelines to bring to developers to show how it wants to develop. Public improvements and initiatives with private developers need to be coordinated to be mutually reinforcing. Unified design standards and scale for the city center can help define the unique character for Doraville’s town center.

- Coordinated future land use

The current land use plan and zoning code are out of date. Land uses are segregated, and the arrangement of land uses could be improved. The arrangement of residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial uses could be better organized. Mixed use may be appropriate for much of the study area, but is currently not permitted.

- Staffing

Implementing a vision and plan for the downtown area of Doraville should be a full time job for a staff level position. Currently Doraville does not have a designated staff position to address implementation activities. In other cities, implementation is often overseen by a city manager or a community development director. Enforcement of code violations is also an issue and may need additional staff resources.

- Community facilities/Orientation

Many stakeholders noted that the community facilities located around the town center are hard to find, out-of-the way, and are in need of improvement. Although all of these facilities are located nearby and mostly along Park Avenue, most of the residents live on the other side of Buford Highway, and there is little visibility of the city center from Buford Highway. Community facilities such as the library and the pool are in need of expansion or upgrades. There is a need for better signs and orientation directing people to the various community and government facilities located there. Other stakeholders noted that Doraville’s community facilities should do a better job of providing services and outreach to its various minority communities. Others mentioned the desire for a larger civic center for meetings and community groups.

- Poor aesthetics

Much of the study area suffers from poor appearance. Large parking areas with little or no landscaping abound. Buildings are often deteriorated and arranged haphazardly, ignoring the street and the public realm. Many industrial areas and storage areas are poorly maintained and poorly screened, with rusting vehicles out in open view. Landscaping and streetscaping is spotty. There are no true public spaces – either plazas or more traditional parks – in the study area. Signs of various sizes, colors, materials, and heights proliferate and create visual clutter. Unsightly powerlines clutter the view on both New Peachtree and Buford Highway. Overall the poor aesthetics depress property values and redevelopment opportunity, and makes the town center area of Doraville unattractive to local residents.

- Poor pedestrian amenities

Pedestrian and bike facilities are lacking or inadequate. Sidewalks are intermittent and spotty in quality. Street furniture, seating, lighting, and trees are almost entirely absent. Street crossings are few and many function poorly. Many stakeholders noted that pedestrian crossing of Buford Highway is a particular safety hazard, one that creates great stress for pedestrians and drivers alike. Stakeholders have said repeatedly that improving the quality of the pedestrian

environment and providing better pedestrian amenities is a very high priority.

- Physical barriers – rail, I-285, Buford Highway

Strong barriers border the study area, making certain connections difficult. The rail lines to the northwest make connections to the Peachtree Industrial area poor. Interstate 285 creates a clear line of separation between the town center area and other areas to the north. Buford Highway is one of the prime barriers within the study area – it separates the town center area of Doraville from many of its residential neighborhoods. It also separates the neighborhoods from the Doraville MARTA station, making access more difficult. Buford Highway can be made safer and more pedestrian friendly, but due to its width and traffic volume, it will likely never be convenient for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross Buford Highway.

- Retail services do not meet the needs of all markets

Although there is a thriving business community for ethnic business, many of Doraville’s residents feel underserved in terms of retail businesses. In particular, many of Doraville residents would like to have a mainstream grocery store nearby, such as a Publix or a Kroger. Also, many of Doraville’s residents would like to see restaurants that serve more traditional American fare. There is ample opportunity in Doraville for businesses to

serve all of the residents with their distinct tastes and needs. It should be noted that for all of Doraville’s diversity, the largest racial group is in fact whites. Providing retail and convenience shopping opportunities for these residents can be an important part of the overall international mix of businesses and services of a revitalized Doraville.

- Brownfield reclamation

Some of the properties in the study area are current or former industrial properties and may need environmental testing and remediation. It is important that potential environmental hazards be identified and addressed as appropriate. Brownfield hazards may pose an obstacle to redevelopment of some properties and if not properly addressed could pose a hazard to human health and welfare. A careful strategy for addressing contaminated and potentially contaminated properties is essential.

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



Vision and Goals

5.0

5.0 Vision and Goals

Vision

The vision for the Doraville community is to return the Doraville Town Center to a destination within the Atlanta metropolitan region. To support this vision, the community has developed specific goals and objectives related to community character/urban design, transportation, land use, and economic development, described below:

Goals and Objectives

Establish a Community Character/Urban Design

- Promote the international character and diversity of the City of Doraville through architectural and landscape design as well as cultural festivals and programming
- Promote good urban design oriented to the public realm rather than suburban development types surrounded by large parking lots
- Create consistent gateways with buildings and/or signs at key locations to identify the

City of Doraville from Buford Highway and New Peachtree Road

- Create design guidelines to address site design elements such as architectural character, landscaping, parking lots, sidewalks, bus stops, and signs to improve the look of commercial corridors

Improve Transportation Options/Operations

- Create an integrated network of safe, efficient and convenient transportation options including transit (rail and bus), auto, truck, biking, and walking
- Identify opportunities for new streets to support and provide access to development opportunities within the study area
- Improve pedestrian access throughout the study area
- Reconfigure roadways/access management to improve traffic flow and operations
- Minimize the impact of truck traffic to the extent possible

Promote Efficient Land Uses

- Promote development densities to support mass transit options such as rail and bus

rapid transit

- Revised outdated zoning and land development codes to allow new land uses such as mixed use and transit-oriented development
- Create an integrated network of open spaces with new/expanded urban plazas, parks and greenways
- Ensure the integrity of existing neighborhoods and the commercial core by improving land use compatibility through better regulation and buffering

Energize Economic Development

- Create momentum for economic revitalization by redesigning civic/governmental area and improve public facilities (library and swimming pool)
 - Attract a diversity of employment options by integrating new job-generating activities
 - Prevent displacement of existing residents by providing mixed-income housing opportunities
 - Prevent displacement of existing businesses by providing a variety of light industrial/small business flex spaces

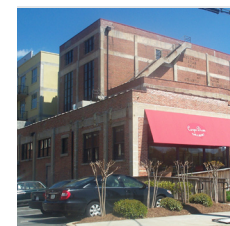
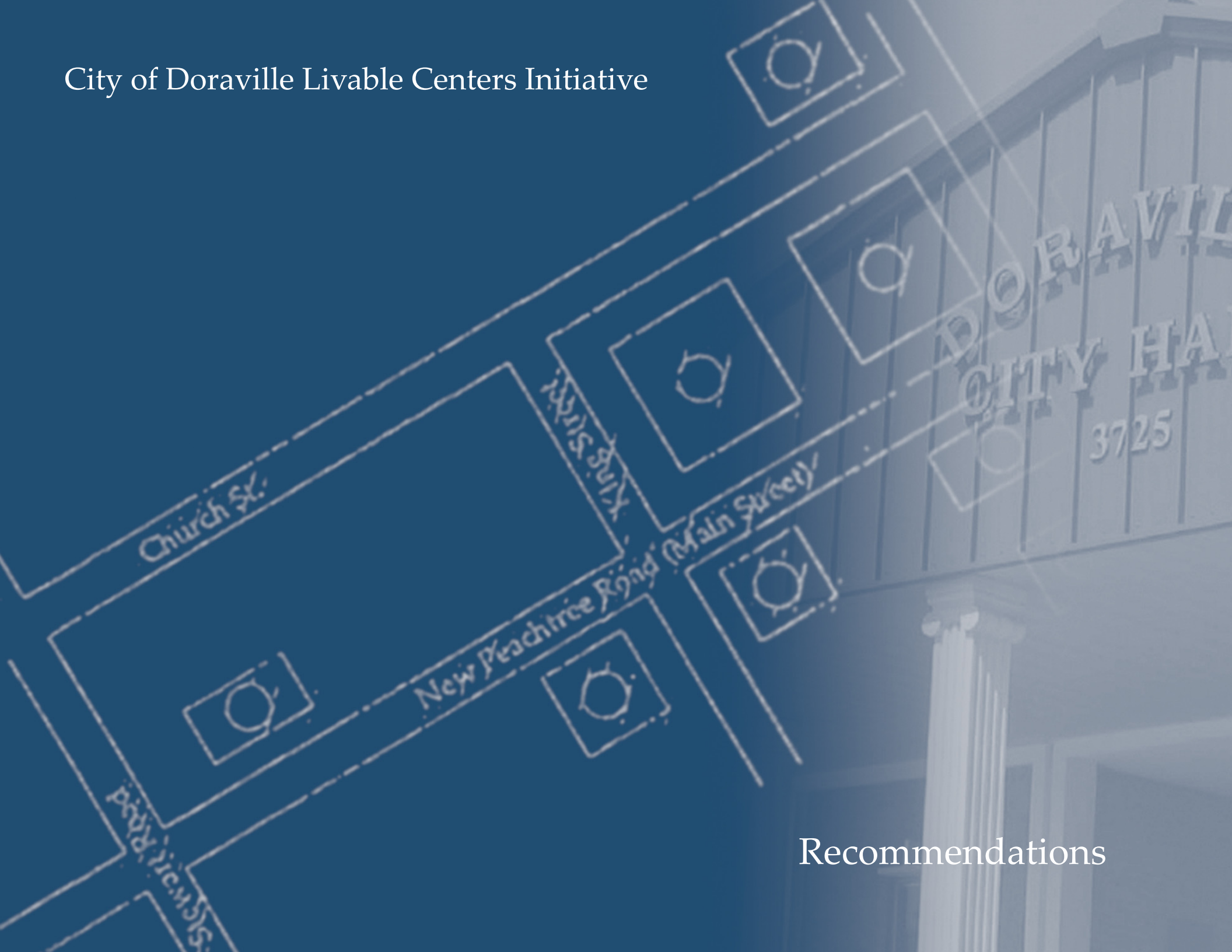


Figure 5.1 Town center character examples

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



Recommendations

6.0

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Policies

Urban Design

- Develop a town center with civic uses, open space, and diverse commercial uses connected by a pleasant pedestrian environment within easy and convenient walking distance of the Doraville MARTA station
- Integrate the MARTA station into the Doraville town center
- Create urban design standards for New Peachtree and Buford Highway
- Create gateways for the town center along New Peachtree and Buford Highway
- Create design guidelines to address site design elements such as architectural character, landscaping, parking lots, sidewalks, bus stops, and signs to improve the look of commercial corridors
- Create sign standards for Buford Highway and the town center area
- Promote relocation of power lines off of New Peachtree Road
- Incorporate interpretive exhibits of Doraville's history in the town center area

Land Use

- Make New Peachtree into Doraville's "Main Street" again with visible active retail uses on the first floor and residential uses above
- Reinforce the connection between New Peachtree and Buford Highway by promoting active retail and civic uses along Park Avenue.
- Encourage transit oriented development within walking distance of the MARTA station, especially convenience oriented shops, residences, offices, and civic uses.
- Promote mixed use throughout the study area, and especially near the MARTA station
- Promote dense residential and employment uses within walking distance of the MARTA station
- Update and enforce buffering standards for areas where commercial borders single-family residential land uses
- Revise the zoning ordinance to incorporate updated urban design standards
- Revise the zoning ordinance to encourage mixed use

Transportation

- Promote connectivity between MARTA, open space, commercial and residential areas with bike paths and walkways
- Create new streets to increase residents' access to the town center and increase connections between New Peachtree Road and Buford Highway
- Connect neighborhoods across Buford Highway with the proposed town center
- Upgrade the pedestrian infrastructure throughout the study area, focusing especially on New Peachtree Road, Park Avenue, and Buford Highway
- Add parallel parking wherever feasible throughout the town center
- Create street section standards for Buford Highway and New Peachtree Road
- Limit curb cuts along Buford Highway
- Create new streets and interparcel connections to take traffic off of Buford Highway
- Reduce the cluster of confusing intersections near Buford Highway/I-285 to improve traffic operations
- Support the development of a shuttle connecting Peachtree Dekalb Airport, International Village, Chamblee MARTA, Doraville MARTA and the Gwinnett Chinatown

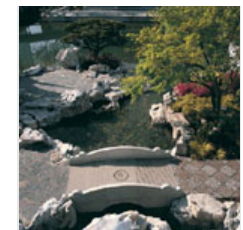
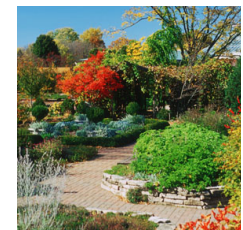


Figure 6.1 Town center destination examples

Redevelopment

- Create a brochure marketing Doraville's town center vision to developers. Make the brochure highly graphic with examples of desired types of development
- Make surplus government land available for redevelopment
- Coordinate redevelopment with key partners such as GDOT, MARTA and DeKalb County

Economic Development

- Recruit retail businesses to serve underserved residential markets
- Recruit new office businesses to the town center area that capitalize on transportation assets and Doraville's international character
- Encourage small scale commercial spaces to promote the strength of locally owned and operated businesses that cater to the local community
- Create a map of existing grocery stores to circulate to residents upon request
- Create a guide to Doraville that highlights the shopping opportunities present in the town

Community Facilities

- Develop new park space and gathering space in the town center
- Promote parks and plazas where community events can take place
- Consolidate government facilities into fewer buildings with a greater 'landmark' presence and consolidated parking
- Relocate the pool to the east side of Buford Highway, closer to single-family residential neighborhoods
- Create a larger civic center with spaces for use by non-profits, community groups, and conferences, all within easy walking distance of the MARTA station
- Improve community facilities such as the library, the pool, and the civic center
- Promote the affordability of new commercial space to non-profits

Environment

- Promote protection of natural waterways, such as the Nancy Creek and Peachtree Creek spring heads

Housing

- Increase the range of housing choices, including both high-end and affordable housing integrated into mixed income communities

Multicultural Understanding

- Promote multicultural understanding through events programming
- Create a Doraville marketing publication that promotes cross-cultural patronage of existing businesses
- Encourage all public facilities to reach out to all communities by conducting outreach programs and providing materials in multiple languages

Organizational

- Create a new staff position to oversee the implementation of the LCI plan and the upcoming comprehensive plan
- Coordinate with Chamblee, Norcross, and DeKalb County on land use planning issues and redevelopment

6.2 Organizing Plan

The organizing plan (Figure 6.2) for the Doraville LCI study area consists of recommendations for both land use and urban design. The LCI area is roughly organized into three districts: A town center district, centered on New Peachtree; the Buford Highway district, which is functionally a corridor; and a high density district north of Central Avenue and south of I-285.

The organizing plan brings a unique and visible presence of the City of Doraville to Buford Highway, the main thoroughfare in the area. Connections between Buford Highway and the Doraville MARTA station are strengthened and emphasized. New pedestrian and vehicular access from neighborhoods east of Buford Highway to the town center district is created, and existing access corridors are improved.

Public facilities are reorganized around new green spaces that can serve as gathering places for the community, and public facilities are located in prominent and defining locations for the town center. All of this serves to better connect Doraville

residents, business owners, and employees to their public facilities, including the MARTA station, and will increase Doraville's profile to those who travel through or do business in the city.

The town center district is conceived as a transit-oriented development district with a residential base. This transit-oriented development district serves multiple functions. The residential district will serve as a new ridership base for commuters taking MARTA rail to work, decreasing the demand for automobile travel in the region. Also, by providing moderately dense residential options within walking distance to convenience services and a MARTA station, affordable housing options, including options that do not require automobile ownership, will be increased. The transit-oriented development district will also serve MARTA patrons by providing convenience services within easy walking distance of the MARTA station. Finally the residential and retail components of the transit-oriented development district will help Doraville develop a sense of a true town center, with a variety of people and activity on its streets and in its parks.

Most of the town center district is envisioned as multi-story residential over retail. Densities should not be identical throughout the district, but should generally be higher north of Central Avenue and lower south of the intersection with Shallowford. Civic uses and parks will also make an important component of the town center district. Generally the plan calls for consolidating civic uses into several locations. A prominent location at the top of the hill on Central Avenue is envisioned as a location for a landmark, multi-function, civic building.

Some civic uses, such as the pool, are envisioned to be brought across Buford Highway so as to be closer to existing single family neighborhoods. Two parks are planned, a central town square park that will be ringed with active mixed use and civic uses, and a second park just to the south, called "Flowers Park." The integration of parks, mixed use development, and civic uses is key to realizing the vision for this town center district. Urban design will play a crucial role in creating active streets, mixing uses, and hiding from view parking facilities needed to accommodate new development.



Figure 6.2 Preferred land use plan

The Buford Highway district is planned as a two and three story commercial district with a focus on entertainment, restaurants, and ethnic shopping. As redevelopment happens, Buford Highway will become more pedestrian oriented, with buildings closer to the street and parking predominantly located to the rear and possibly in parking decks. In some cases, infill buildings can be built on existing surface parking areas without creating a parking scarcity. An enhanced public realm with sidewalks, benches, bus stops, and trees will make Buford Highway a more pleasant place to be. Also, a sense of entrance into the city of Doraville will be created by increasing development density at key intersections, such as the Park Avenue intersection and the proposed new Oakmont intersection.

The area north of Central Avenue is envisioned as a high-density residential and commercial district, with new professional and office uses that take advantage of visibility along I-285 and Doraville's excellent transportation access. The Central Avenue skyline could be a future landmark feature for Doraville's town center. Density should be concentrated west of Buford Highway, where the MARTA station with its multiple transit and bus lines will be within

walking distance. In this area development as high as 10 stories may be appropriate. East of Buford Highway, both high-density commercial and commercially-oriented mixed use are planned. Densities should transition from higher along I-285 (five to eight stories) to lower adjacent to the single family neighborhood (two to three stories). Buffers should be required where commercial or mixed use development adjoin single family neighborhoods.

6.3 Town Center Concept

The proposed land use plan carefully shapes the urban design of the town center area to meet the vision and goals of the LCI study. The key concept is developing Doraville's town center as a place with a distinct identity from the Buford Highway corridor. The land use plan does this by taking advantage of the unique topography of the area, by considering the orientation of the primary corridors of Buford Highway and New Peachtree, and by emphasizing the major connections between those corridors at Park and Central Avenue. The plan establishes a focal point at the top of the Central Avenue hill, organizes activity around a central town green, and creates connections across Buford Highway to draw people into the town center area.

The main features of the proposed land use plan include a prominent, hilltop location for a new multi-function civic building; a central, organizing greenspace ringed by mixed use development and framed by civic functions at either end; connections across Buford Highway from the town center into the residential areas to the east, anchored by a new plaza and new civic facilities; A re-orientation of Chestnut Street to run into Park Avenue, creating a more perpendicular intersection with Buford Highway; a clustering of main street, medium scale buildings on New Peachtree, Central, and Park Avenue; and high density development at the key intersection of Buford Highway and Park Avenue.

Making Doraville into a unique destination with its own distinctive character is the vision at the heart of this plan. Central and Park Avenues will be key pedestrian corridors in the new Doraville. They play a unique role in connecting one main street – Buford Highway – to another New Peachtree. Also because of their short length and relatively low traffic volumes, they will become avenues that are centers of pedestrian activity. For this to be realized, Central and Park will need to have a mix of uses in addition to civic uses – they will need to have retail, restaurants, businesses,

and residences to bring a variety of activity. The proposed town center green connects Central and Park Avenues, making cross traffic easier, and establishing a peaceful oasis for gathering in the midst of this new center of activity. A quiet, town center green on a hill side, pleasant pedestrian-oriented streets, a cluster of small town, active stores and businesses – all of this can be realized, but only if substantial change comes to the town center area. The desired image is reflected in the highly-rated main streets of Smyrna and Pikes Peak, Colorado.

The proposed land use plan also is intended to help spark redevelopment in the town center area. New parks and streetscapes create the framework around which new development can take place. Both new residential and commercial development can be encouraged by the development of well-designed, well located parks and greenspaces. This new development can take advantage of both the views onto the new greenspace and the inviting character of the greenspace itself. High quality, well organized civic uses can also serve to promote redevelopment, as commercial development seek key locations in proximity to civic destinations to represent their standing in the community. In short, the proposed land use plan will help spark new development in the Doraville town center area through the provision of new

green space and better organized civic buildings.

One of the key functions of the new land use plan is to create a distinctive Doraville presence on Buford Highway. The proposed civic building at the town hill location will be highly visible, especially if it is three or four stories in height and includes a distinctive tower or peak for its roofline. This new civic building alone could create a new image for the city. Furthermore, in a longer time frame, new civic buildings are planned for the east side of Doraville, arranged around an urban plaza. These new civic buildings will both bring government services closer to the people on the east side of Buford Highway, and will create a ‘bridge’ by bringing civic uses over to the other side of Buford Highway. The new civic facilities and plaza will emphasize the east-west axes of Park and Central, extending the town center across Buford Highway and furthering the sense of entrance into a unique community. The use of civic facilities to highlight Doraville’s town center will draw people into the town center area and help to re-establish Doraville as a destination for those traveling along Buford Highway.

6.4 Importance of Civic Buildings

Government buildings are more than places to conduct government business. They are symbols of the values and identity of the communities they represent.

Civic buildings can play an important role in defining public space and the identity of the community. Firstly, civic buildings should be in high visibility locations. Often they serve as landmarks and so as orientation features. Secondly, although adequate parking is important, its visibility should be minimized, while pedestrian access should be emphasized. A prominent pedestrian entrance should be available directly off of the sidewalk. Parking can be minimized by tucking it behind buildings or consolidating it in one or two parking decks. Thirdly, civic buildings should have a distinguished and historic character. They can give a community a sense of history and a link to the past. Also, they set models for the standard of architecture that a community aspires to. Cheap civic buildings encourage cheap private development nearby. Historic markers and monuments can accentuate the city’s connection to its civic past. Finally, great civic buildings are integrated into public spaces – for example, overlooking a town square or a mall. The interplay of civic buildings and public space is an important American tradition.

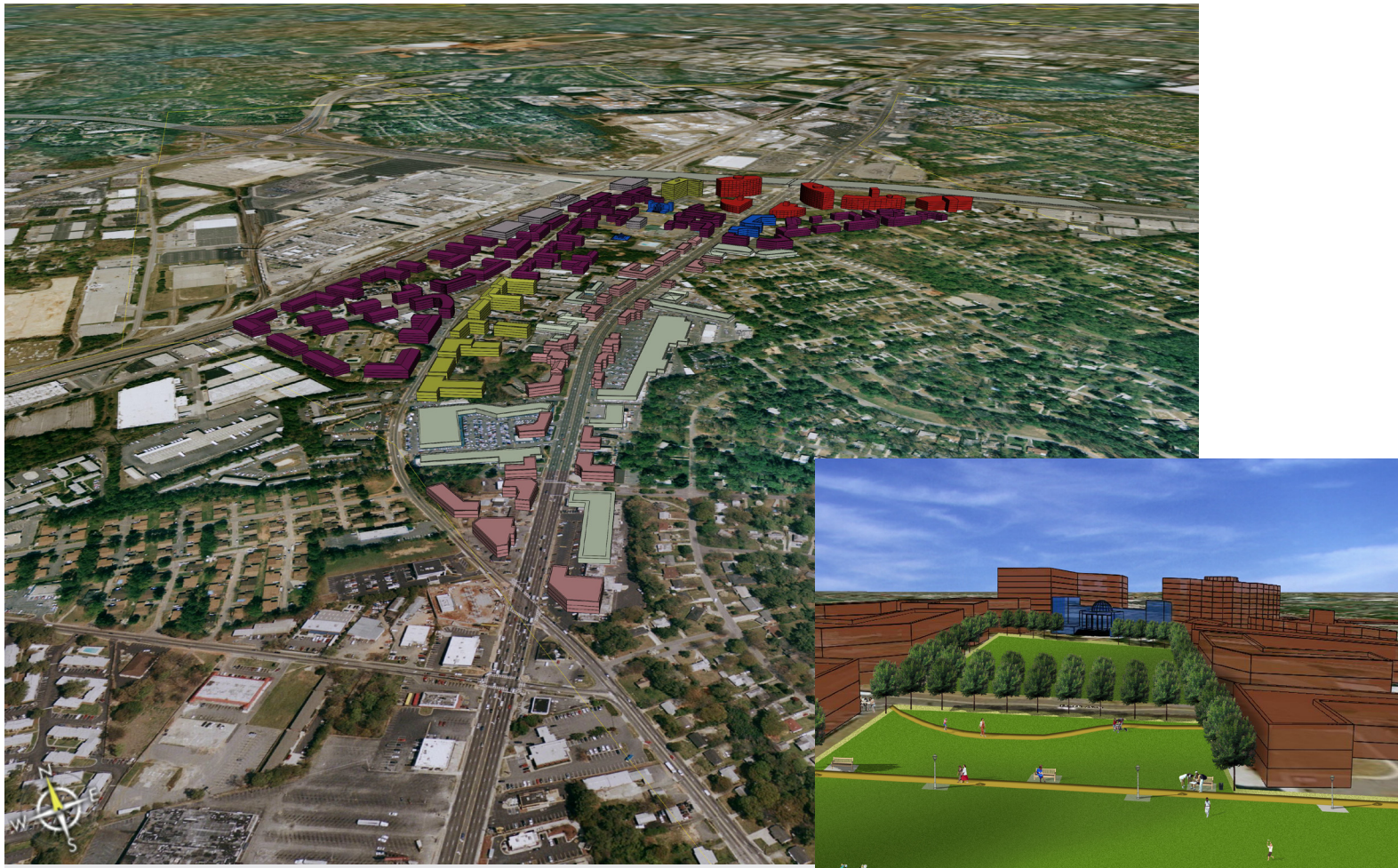


Figure 6.3 Illustrative urban form and town center concept

The citizens of Doraville were asked their opinions of the city's current public facilities, and for the most part, the opinions were that the public facilities could better express Doraville's identity. Here is a list of public comments on government facilities, paraphrased for brevity:

- Consolidate buildings and create a city center for activities
- Land is too valuable for these facilities
- Move everything up the hill across from the library
- Could be changed into a more condensed space with sidewalks, streetlamps, store fronts
- This area is a waste of space and underused
- Place police closer to MARTA, disburse police facilities
- This area is not at all inviting and not of the people
- More parking is needed for court house
- Improve and maintain pool area
- We need a community center suitable for art shows, weddings, etc.
- This area should be more pedestrian friendly
- The library is very underfunded, needs better and more materials and events
- The government area is very nice
- Make the post office a true community post office
- All of this is the wrong location

Overall, the comments reflected a desire for the consolidation and improvement of public facilities and for the redevelopment of much of the land currently reserved for civic uses.

This plan recommends a major, consolidated public facility at the top of Central Avenue in the location of the current civic center. This building should be three or four stories and have a unique defining tower or roof line. Multiple uses could be incorporated into this building including the current city hall, the court facilities, the civic center, the health clinic, and the various other scattered small facilities for the city. Public meeting and events space could be expanded. Parking on site should be limited to only a few reserved spaces and space for the handicapped. Most parking should be located in a less visible location, for example, down Church Street or in a parking deck adjacent to the Police Station. The building also should have an entrance off of the street and prominent facades facing both north to Central and south to the new town square. The goal is to create a building which the people of the city of Doraville can be proud of and which will inspire adjacent private development.

Once public facilities and parking areas are consolidated, substantial land will be freed up for private development. The city can sell this land to compensate for the cost of other public projects, while simultaneously promoting desired, mixed-use redevelopment patterns in the town center area.

6.5 Relation to Comprehensive Plan

The Doraville LCI Town Center plan addressed redevelopment, economic development, transportation, environmental, and public facilities for a small, focused area of Doraville. The comprehensive plan will look at the broader context for the whole city. In the comprehensive planning process, broader themes and issues may come up that are beyond the scope of the LCI study. Recommendations from this plan may need to be revised in the context of the broader themes and trends of the city as whole. However, the physical plan for the LCI Town Center area and the focus on creating a redeveloped town center with transit oriented development should not change. The LCI plan recommends revisions to the zoning code to permit mixed use, promote increased density around the transit station,

and promote improved urban design and pedestrian amenities. However, other zoning changes may be recommended in the context of the Comprehensive Plan. It may be best to create a special overlay district rather than attempting a wholesale rewrite of the zoning code, as more information about how to rewrite the zoning code may be available when the Comprehensive Plan is completed. The Comprehensive Plan may recommend several other areas for redevelopment.

As the historic town center with unique access to a MARTA station, the LCI study area will likely remain the highest priority for redevelopment. It is important that the city maintain clear priorities for its redevelopment planning, as different areas may compete for redevelopment and staff resources dedicated to redevelopment implementation are limited. Redevelopment of the LCI study area should continue to be a high priority for the city during and after the Comprehensive Plan.

6.6 Relation to GM Plant

There is a significant possibility that the GM plant may close sometime over the next several years. This could pose a challenge to the city of Doraville. Doraville's property tax base could be eroded and revenues could drop significantly. The large abandoned GM property would pose a major challenge to the government – what to do with the vacant property and how it might be redeveloped. Since the GM property is immediately on the other side of the MARTA station, many of the issues discussed in this LCI plan may apply to that area as well.

This plan does not attempt to plan for or address the issues of the possible GM plant closure. In such an event, flexibility will be needed on implementing the LCI plan in a way to minimize city expenditures and focus on the highest implementation priorities.

Proceeding with the LCI redevelopment plan may be valuable experience for dealing with the potential GM plant closure. Setting up appropriate regulations, increasing staff resources on redevelopment and economic development, and learning to work with developers may all be crucial

skills for the city to develop after a GM closure. Implementing the LCI plan will include major expenses for the city, but will also lay the ground for new development and new tax revenues. By working on LCI implementation, Doraville will be laying the groundwork for its economic future, and so will be more prepared in the eventuality of a closure of the GM plant.

Working on the LCI plan will help Doraville become vision-focused and future-oriented. Creating the future of Doraville is going to be an increasingly crucial task as the past fades away.

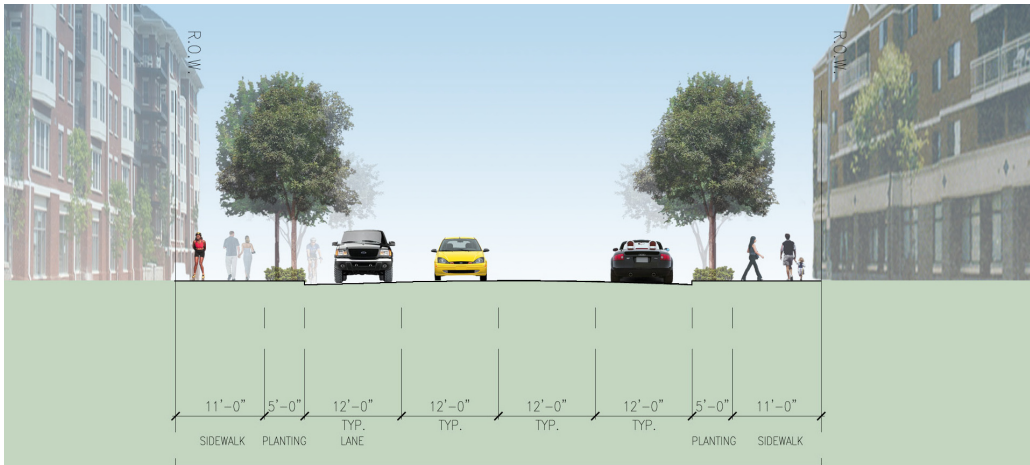


Figure 6.4 New Peachtree Road proposed cross-section

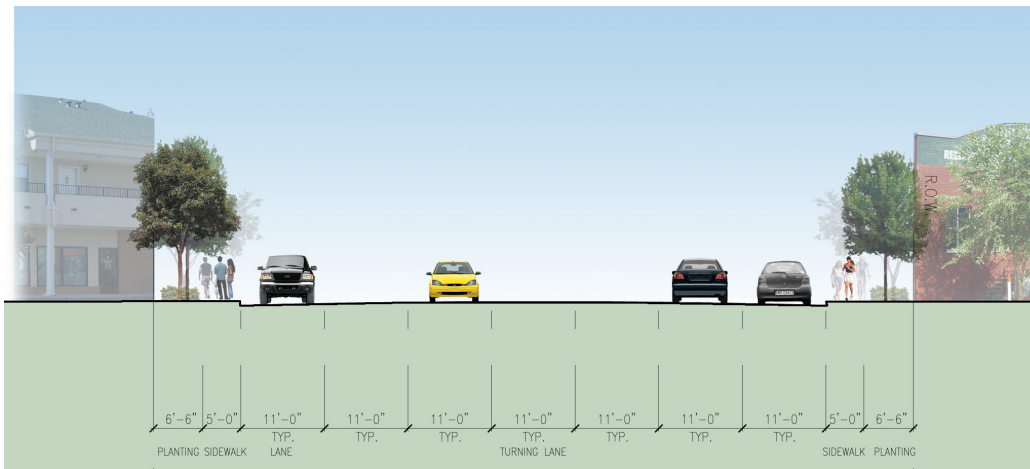


Figure 6.5 Buford Highway proposed cross-section



Figure 6.6 Buford Highway “before”



Figure 6.7 Buford Highway “after”

6.7 Planning Commission

The idea and role of a planning commission has been discussed in Doraville in recent months. A citizen-based, qualified planning commission can be a helpful tool in guiding development that is compatible with the city’s vision.

Planning commissions generally review development proposals in accordance with legally specified criteria. They may be able to vote on approving or denying a development proposal according to its suitability to the vision and urban design guidelines of the community. Planning commissions are a valuable tool for giving citizens a voice in reviewing development proposals, and helping a community stay true to its planning vision. Also, development review by planning commissions are an educational tool for developers, helping them understand community requirements and desires.

Ultimate authority for development approval generally remains with the City Council. Denied developments may be appealed and reviewed by the Council. However the City Council will generally be better informed because of the hearings conducted by the planning commission. Therefore, even though authority is retained by the City Council, citizen input is increased and developers are better informed of community requirements.

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



Action Plan

7.0 Action Plan

7.1 Policy Changes

Town Center Overlay

The town center overlay is fundamental to creating a new Doraville town center. The overlay, which will be implemented by an ordinance, will create the design guidelines that shape the character of future development. This overlay will make sure that new development contributes to the public realm and makes the town center an enjoyable place to be.

It is absolutely crucial that the overlay create standards for pedestrian-oriented buildings, that is buildings close to the street, with parking to the rear, and entrances directly off of the public sidewalks. In addition, the overlay should address:

- Boundaries of the overlay
- Permitted uses – which for the town center will predominantly be residential over ground floor retail
- Permitted building materials
- Permitted building styles
- Required pedestrian infrastructure (i.e. sidewalk and streetscape requirements)
- Required usable open space provision, including plazas and walkways
- Incentives for affordable housing
- Commercial space set asides for small business
- Location of utility wires
- Location and amount of required parking

Developing a town center overlay can be a simple or complex project. At its greatest, developing a town center overlay could be done by a specialized consultant with public participation and sample images from towns all over the US to create a unique image for Doraville. At its simplest, the town center overlay could be an imitation of similar overlays that other towns have already implemented with success. However, it is important to consider unique aspects of Doraville's town center, such as its location near a major transit stop, while developing the overlay ordinance.

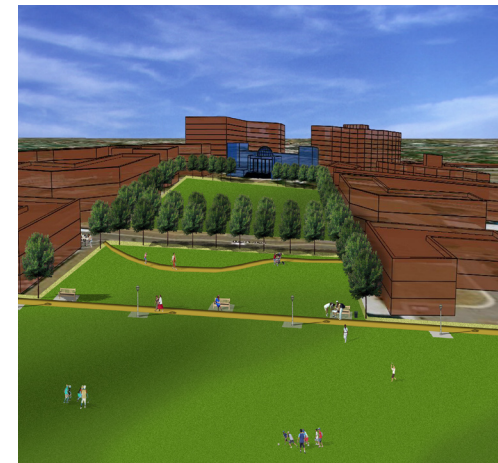


Figure 7.1 Town Center concept

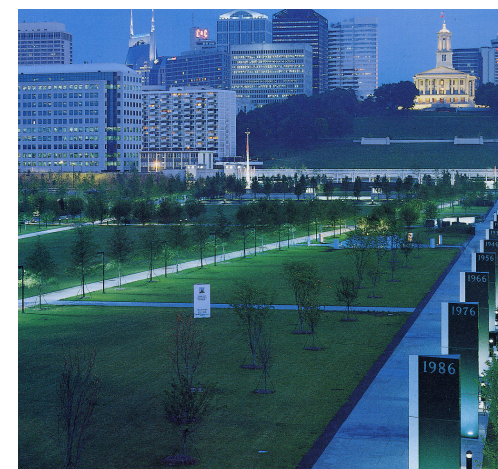


Figure 7.2 Town Center inspiration



Figure 7.3 Streetscapes

Further guidance for developing the town center overlay may be available from reviewing the results of the Character Image Survey performed during the plan. For more information about the Character Image Survey, please see Appendix A. During the Character Image Survey, the steering committee identified images that best represented their ideal 'main street' for Doraville. These images included the following characteristics:

- Trees and plantings
- Sidewalk dining
- Mixed use
- Light poles
- Well-marked crosswalks
- Buildings close to the street
- Pedestrian orientation
- Cleanliness
- Wide sidewalks
- Inviting store fronts
- Textured pavements
- On-street parking
- Awnings

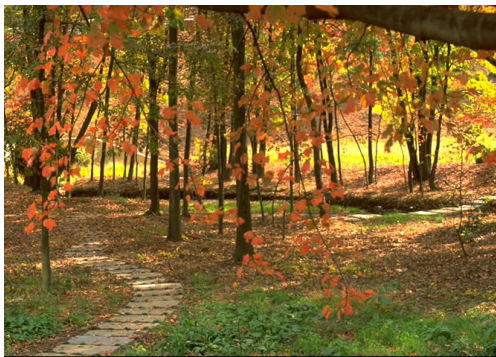


Figure 7.4 Flowers Park concept

Buford Highway Overlay

The Buford Highway overlay is fundamental to revitalizing the Buford Highway corridor in Doraville and remaking its image. The overlay, which will be implemented by an ordinance, will create the design guidelines that shape the character of future development. This overlay will make sure that new development contributes to the public realm, increases the pedestrian-friendliness of the Buford Highway corridor, and decreases the busy and confusing visual environment along the corridor.

It is crucial that the overlay create standards for pedestrian-oriented buildings, that is buildings close to the street, with parking to the rear or the side, and entrances directly off of the public sidewalks. In addition, the overlay should address:

- Boundaries of the overlay
- Sign standards
- Minimum separation between driveways and provisions for interparcel access
- Permitted uses – which for the Buford Highway will predominantly be commercial
- Permitted building materials
- Permitted building styles
- Required pedestrian infrastructure (i.e. sidewalk and streetscape requirements)
- Required usable open space provision
- Incentives for affordable housing, including recommendations for converting certain commercial lands to residential
- Location of utility wires
- Location and amount of required parking

Because of the high volume of small business owners on Buford Highway, public participation during the development of an overlay is a must. Business owners must be part of the process so that they see the overlay as an opportunity and not a threat. Also it must be made clear that the overlay will only apply to new development or substantial renovation, not to existing buildings.

Other Zoning Changes

It is recommended that zoning for the commercial area east of Buford Highway and north of the residential area be revised to create a gradual transition of densities from the interstate to the existing single family neighborhoods. Densities could range from

around eight stories adjacent to the interstate to two or three stories adjacent to single family properties. Reduced zoning east of Buford Highway will also shift the focus of new commercial development to the west of Buford Highway in the primary town center area and near the MARTA station.

Access Management Policy

A significant portion of the congestion and traffic safety issues observed in Doraville can be attributed to access management issues, specifically to improperly spaced intersections and driveways. Roadways serve contradictory purposes: to provide mobility between places, and provide access to places. A good access management policy will seek out a sensible balance between access and mobility, leading to increased safety for vehicles and pedestrians, decreased delay, decreased vehicle emissions, and aesthetic enhancements to the public realm.

It is recommended that Doraville establish an Access Management Policy to apply to all new development along roadways classified as Collector roads or higher. The policy should establish standards regarding the spacing and design of intersections and driveways. These standards should govern:

- Spacing and density of driveways and intersections,
- Appropriate clearance to separate access points from necessary traffic operation func-

tional areas, such as intersections and turn lane storage bays

- Sight distance minimums
- Geometric design of driveways
- Incentives for inter-parcel access
- Surfacing standards for pedestrian areas

7.2 Public and Private Investment Strategy

Redevelopment Phasing

The first phases of redevelopment should be concentrated on New Peachtree Road, Park Avenue, and Central Avenue. These areas present the most potential for redevelopment as they are close to the MARTA station and existing services. Also, the visible and psychological effect of redevelopment will be greater if it is concentrated in just a few areas, so this will create momentum for the redevelopment of Doraville.

Some key parcels along New Peachtree that could be redeveloped in the short term are the parcel used by the University of Georgia extension, the US Post Office facility parcel, and some of the areas currently used as surface parking by MARTA.

As new development takes place, it is important to coordinate this new development with the planned streetscape projects. Adequate right-of-way must be available to create new streetscapes as they are envisioned – generally requiring 10-15' of width for the pedestrian realm.

Excess Land Liquidation Strategy

As government facilities are consolidated, excess public lands may become available for redevelopment. But before the city sells any land, it should have a clear strategy for what land is needed for future community facilities and parks.

When the city sells excess land to developers, it has ability to exercise additional control over how the parcel will be redeveloped. The city can specify the desired urban design characteristics of the development, and the city can require that a certain percentage of units be set aside for affordable housing. By liquidating excess lands in this way, the city can meet its urban design and mixed income housing goals.

Streetscapes

Streetscapes improve the pedestrian environmental, increase the beauty of key corridors, and create an incentive for private investment. New streetscapes along key corridors send a signal to private developers that the city is seeking new development in that area. Public investment often serves as a catalyst for private investment. Investing in key streetscapes will help to reshape Doraville's image and spur new private investment.

Key streetscape projects include: New Peachtree, Park, Central, Buford Highway, and Shallowford Road.

The Buford Highway streetscape project is envisioned a bit differently than the other projects. Georgia Department of Transportation is already planning to build sidewalks along Buford Highway. Also, generally trees are not allowed within 8 feet of a major right-of-way like Buford Highway. The Buford Highway streetscape project is envisioned mainly as a greening project, with trees planted on the building side of the sidewalks to increase greenery and shade. It is likely that the only current location for such trees would be where existing parking spaces are now, so this can only be done with the permission of the property owners involved. Also, it is recommended that the city coordinate with a non-profit like Trees Atlanta to perform the planting to increase the sense of community involvement.

This project should be seen as part of a series of projects that will help revitalize the Buford Highway corridor by capitalizing on its unique characteristics, while improving aesthetics and making the corridor transit and pedestrian friendly. Other landscaping possibilities for Buford Highway to add greenery should also be explored.

Town Square Park

A town square park is proposed for the location between City Hall, the city court, and the library. Using this site to locate the town square has the advantage of requiring no land acquisition, siting the town square

park adjacent to major public facilities, and a prominent central location.

This is a key location because it is in the center of the city – near Buford Highway, near New Peachtree, and adjacent to Park Avenue. Also designing pedestrian access to the town square from Central Avenue will be important. This site would be a suitable location for a terraced park with greenery and excellent views to the south. This town square could become the central gathering place for the city, and help generate new development all around its edges. Its important that the town square be designed with future development along its edges in mind.

The main challenge with this location is that parking spaces for the library and some of the City Hall spaces will have to be replaced elsewhere. There are several potential solutions to this problem, including using existing parking at the Civic Center or at the Salvation Army. A long term solution is to build a new parking deck in the location between the Pan-Asian Center and the Police Station. The top of the parking deck could be used for performances or movies displayed to an audience sitting in the Town Square Park. Flowers Park

A second terraced park is recommended just north of First Baptist Church off of New Peachtree. This would be a small, 1-acre park to complement the town square park. The town square park and Flowers Park would

both be sited on opposing hill tops facing each other, creating an interesting visual connection between the parks. Both parks should feature plaza-type designs with ample seating, water features, and generous planting. This new park would serve as a key beautifying feature along New Peachtree and would help to spark new residential and mixed use development along its periphery.

A pedestrian path should connect the two parks, possibly routing through the proposed parking deck. These simple pedestrian paths connecting the proposed parks will help enliven the town center area.

Gateways

A gateway is any defining physical feature that creates a sense of entrance. Gateways serve as orientation features and also help define the character of a community. Gateways can be created by the arrangement of buildings, by unique landscape features, or by a simple system of signs. Whatever is used for a gateway it should be highly visible and easily identifiable. Generally a hierarchy of gateways is used, with larger markers for major entrances and smaller markers for minor entrances.

It is recommended that gateways be created along Buford Highway by allowing higher density at major intersections, such as Park Avenue and Buford Highway. This concept

can be integrated into the Buford Highway zoning overlay.

Recommended locations for gateways include New Peachtree and I-285, Buford Highway and I-285, Park Avenue and Buford Highway, and the entrances of New Peachtree and Buford Highway into Doraville from the south.

Public Amenity Design Guidelines

The City of Doraville can identify preferred design elements for the city, including lighting, signs, gateway features, benches, paving materials, water fountains, and so on. By selecting unique public amenities, and implementing them consistently throughout the city, Doraville can create a unique character. The city may wish to hire a qualified landscape architect in selecting its public amenity standards. It may be possible to hire a single consultant to create design guidelines for the town center area as well as help the city select standard public amenity features.

Consolidated Government Building

This plan recommends a major, consolidated public facility at the top of Central Avenue in the location of the current civic center. This building should be three or four stories and have a unique defining tower or roof line. Multiple uses could be incorporated into this building including the current city hall, the court facilities, the civic center, the health

clinic, and the various other scattered small facilities for the city. Public meeting and events space could be expanded. Parking on site should be limited to only a few reserved spaces and space for the handicapped. Most parking should be located in a less visible location, for example, down Church Street or in a parking deck adjacent to the Police Station. The building also should have as its main entrance a pedestrian entrance off of the sidewalk and prominent facades facing both north to Central and south to the new town square. The goal is to create a building which the people of the City of Doraville can be proud of and which will inspire adjacent private development.

Once public facilities and parking areas are consolidated, substantial land will be freed up for private development. The city can sell the surplus land to compensate for the cost of this project, while simultaneously promoting desired, mixed-use redevelopment in the town center area.

Civic Center

An enlarged and improved civic center could function as a location for both larger community meetings as well as small conferences and social gatherings. Several community groups expressed a desired for expanded meeting and event space in the city. By creating a space for small conferences and meetings within walking distance of the MARTA station, the city may become more attractive to new

businesses. An improved civic center could both serve community needs and spur new business development.

Before a major investment in an expanded civic center takes place, the city should conduct a study on what similar spaces are in the area to make sure the meeting and conference services provided are not redundant with existing facilities nearby.

Moving/Burying Utility Lines

Relocating utility lines off of New Peachtree would help to improve its prospects for redevelopment. Major utility lines are unsightly and can be a physical obstacle to new development.

The City of Doraville should coordinate with Georgia Power to understand its requirements and any assistance that Georgia Power may be able to provide with utility line relocation.

From an aesthetic point of view, the best option is to bury the utility lines. Costs and benefits must be carefully considered when weighing utility line burial versus relocation.

Also, the relocation of utility lines should be coordinated with the new streetscape for New Peachtree to make sure that streetscape work is not needlessly duplicated. The best scenario would involve the relocation of utility lines off of New Peachtree before streetscape work begins.

7.3 Transportation Projects

The Doraville LCI Study team has developed a list of transportation improvement recommendations based on an assessment of the areas existing transportation needs, the input received throughout the planning process, and the goals of the Living Centers Initiative Program. These recommendations will address these goals by:

- Reshaping the city’s transportation infrastructure to better serve pedestrians, transit users, and bicyclists
- Improving safety and operations for all modes of travel
- Supporting more sustainable land-use practices
- Promoting private and public redevelopment initiatives by providing transportation infrastructure

Doraville Town Center Pedestrian and Streetscape Improvements

This group of projects consists of improvements to enhance the pedestrian environment and pedestrian safety in the Doraville town center area and in the vicinity of the Doraville MARTA transit station. These improvements will support the proposed mixed-use, retail and civic land uses in this area. The key elements of this project include enhanced streetscapes, pedestrian crossing and signalization improvements at key intersections,

and the addition of curb-side parking during non-peak hours along New Peachtree Road.

1. Primary Streetscape Improvements:

- New Peachtree Road
- Central Avenue
- Park Avenue

Includes:

- 10-foot sidewalks
- Ornamental lighting
- Trees every 30 feet
- Furniture
- Curb and gutter
- Landscaping

2. Intersection and Pedestrian Crossing Improvements:

- New Peachtree Road @ Central Avenue
- New Peachtree Road @ Park Avenue
- Buford Highway @ Park Avenue
- Mid-block crosswalk on Park Avenue at City Hall

Includes:

- ADA Ramps
- Mast arm signals
- LED pedestrian countdown timers
- Textured crosswalks
- Signage

3. Town Center Area Local Sidewalk Improvements:

- Church Street
- King Ave



Figure 7.5 Boston’s Beacon Street - an example for new road connections at Oakmont Avenue and Pinetree Plaza

4. Signal Timing and Optimization (New Peachtree Road)

5. Consolidate Telephone and Cable Utilities

6. Option: Relocate High-Tension Power Lines

Oakmont Avenue Extension (New roadway connecting Buford Highway and New Peachtree Road)

This project addresses the lack of internal connectivity in Doraville by creating a proposed two (2) lane extension from existing Oakmont Avenue, connecting Buford Highway to New Peachtree Road, a distance of 1000’. The new roadway will improve pedestrian and vehicular access within the town center and MARTA Station area in addition to existing civic uses and potential

redevelopment areas. The proposed road utilizes existing intersections, and curves to accommodate the area's topography. The new connector road should be classified as a Collector Road and added to the City of Doraville's Comprehensive Plan.

Project elements:

- New two (2) lane roadway
- Sidewalks and streetscaping
- Improvement of existing intersections (2)
 - Buford Highway at Oakmont Avenue
 - Oakmont Avenue extension/south MARTA parking deck entrance at New Peachtree Road

"Pinetree Plaza" Extension (Proposed roadway connecting Buford Highway and Shallowford Road)

This project also addresses the lack of internal connectivity in Doraville by creating a proposed two (2) lane road, connecting Buford Highway to a new secondary activity center at Shallowford Road and New Peachtree Road, a distance of 720'. The new roadway will improve pedestrian and vehicular access between residential and retail areas. The new connector road should be classified as a Collector Road and added to the City of Doraville's Comprehensive Plan.

Project elements:

- New two (2) lane roadway
- Sidewalks and streetscaping
- New or Improved Intersections:

- Buford Highway at Pinetree Plaza Entrance (relocated)
- Pinetree Plaza Connector (new) at Shallowford Road

Shallowford Road (Pedestrian and streetscape improvements)

This project consists of improvements to enhance the pedestrian environment and pedestrian safety along Shallowford Road between Buford Highway and New Peachtree Road, a distance of 3300'. These improvements will support the proposed mixed-use, retail and civic land uses in this area.

Project elements:

- Secondary streetscape with 8' sidewalks
- Landscaping
- Trees
- Curb and gutter

Sidewalks to Schools

Improve pedestrian safety between Doraville Town Center/MARTA Transit Center area and neighborhood schools south of Buford Highway. Construct new sidewalks or link existing sidewalks to improve pedestrian safety on Stewart Road and Chestnut Drive south of Buford Highway (SR 13). Special attention should be paid to roadway portions adjacent to Buford Highway characterized by higher-traffic volumes and commercial land uses.

Some of these streets have been recommended for realignment as part of the upcoming Buford Highway SR13 Corridor Study. Sidewalk improvements plans should take into account any planned realignments.

Project elements:

- 6' sidewalks
- Grading as necessary

MARTA Parking Deck and Parking Area Improvements

The construction of a 400-space parking deck at the MARTA station (replacing a recently demolished structure) will allow the consolidation of existing surface parking lots. This will create an opportunity for redevelopment of property adjacent to New Peachtree Road.

Additional reconfiguration of driveways, pedestrian walkways, and fencing will improve accessibility to the transit station.

Buford Highway Safety and Operational Improvement Recommendations

Safety and congestion along the Buford Highway Corridor within the Doraville LCI study area is a major concern, particularly in the northern section of the corridor, from Park Avenue to Interstate 285. Traffic analysis and field observation confirmed numerous operational and safety shortcomings along this section of Buford Highway, including:

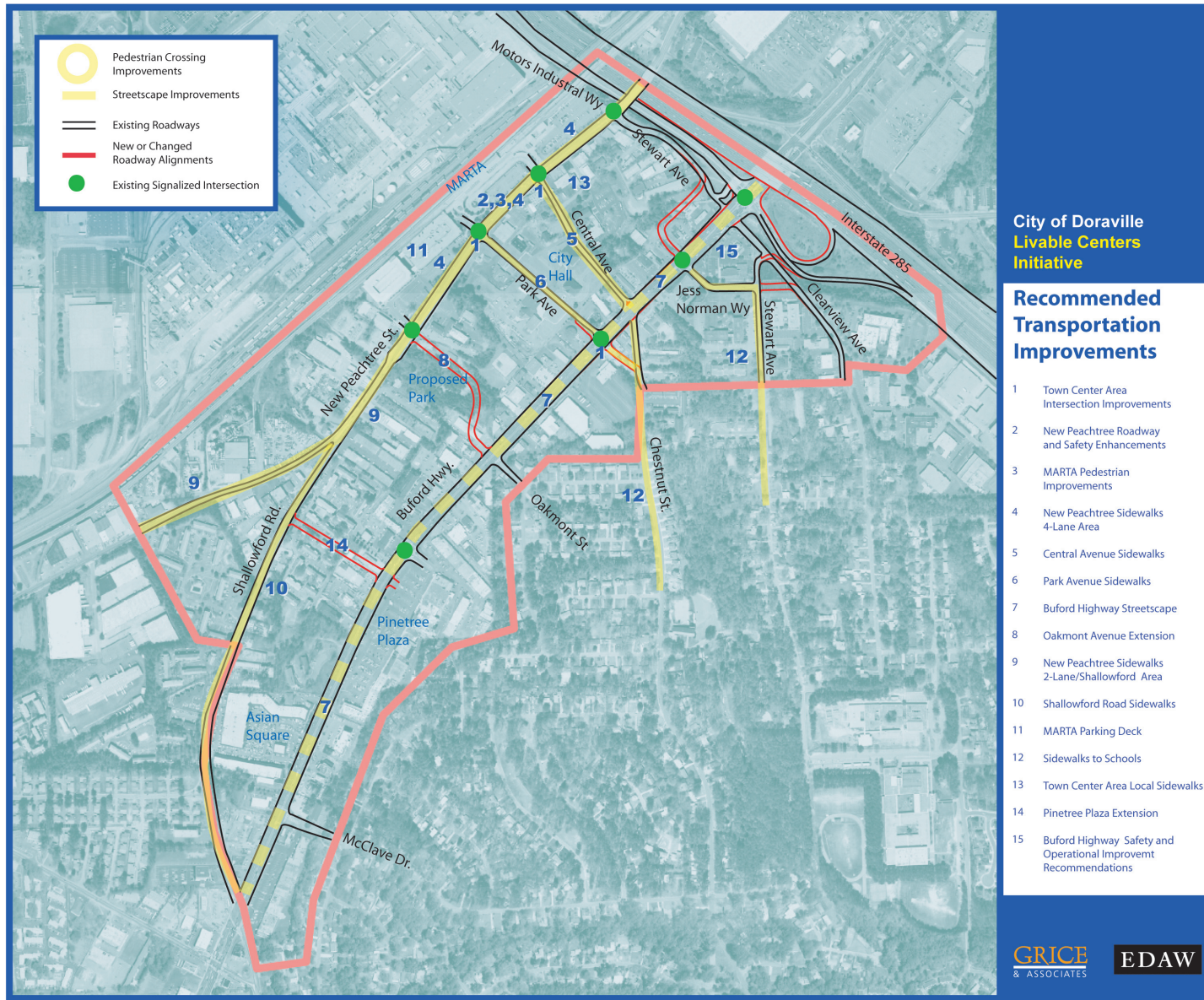


Figure 7.6 Doraville Town Center recommended transportation improvements

- Extremely high truck, vehicle and pedestrian crash rates
- Observed congestion despite relatively low volume-to-capacity ratios.
- Observed operational and safety issues.

Because the ARC has already commissioned a Buford Highway Corridor Study, the Doraville LCI study will only recommend design concepts to address these issues, while deferring to the upcoming corridor study to develop specific project recommendations and implementation strategies.

Additional Transportation Policy Recommendations

To further promote the goals of the Livable Centers Initiative program, it is recommended that Doraville adopt several policy positions in support of efforts that will contribute the LCI plan, including:

- Support the Proposed Long-Term Bus Rapid Transit Projects planned for Buford Highway (SR 13) and Interstate 285
- Support the adoption of a City of Doraville Access Management Policy
- Support the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Plan
- Adopt Transportation recommendations from the LCI Plan into the City of Doraville Comprehensive Plan
- Support the redevelopment of the Doraville MARTA Station surface parking lots

- Re-classify Park Avenue as a Collector Street.

Buford Highway Improvement Design Concepts:

A. Realign Stewart Avenue (north of Buford Highway) to align with the existing signalized intersection at Jess Norman Way, or require internal roadways of any significant redevelopment project to align with this intersection.

B. Add free-flow right turn lane from Buford Highway NB onto I-285 EB ramp.

C. Realign Clearview Avenue to align with Jess Norman Way. Remove segment of Clearview Avenue adjacent to Buford Highway. Remove remaining segment of Clearview Ave between Jess Norman Way and Buford Highway.

D. Consider reconfiguration of segment of Stewart Avenue north of Jess Norman Way into free-flow slip ramp onto I-285 EB Ramp. This will reduce turn movements at the intersection of Buford Highway and Motors Industrial way, however it will simultaneously create an incentive for motorists on Buford Highway to bypass that intersection by using local streets.

E. Limit turning movements to and from Central Avenue at Buford Highway to right-in/right-out only.

F. Realign Chestnut Street south of Buford Highway to align with existing signalized intersection at Park Avenue. Add turn lanes to Park Avenue.

Corridor-wide:

G. Address vertical line-of-sight issues along Buford Highway corridor resulting from rolling terrain, especially near pedestrian crossings.

H. Upgrade signal system technology with fiber interconnections.

I. Modify signal timing to improve traffic flow.

7.4 Housing, Mixed Income Housing

The City of Doraville can embark on a number of programs to ensure that the town center area develops with housing options for a range of incomes. Creating both high-income housing and workforce housing in an integrated community is an important goal of the LCI plan.

Density Bonuses for Affordable Housing

Density bonuses should be used in areas where multifamily housing development is permitted. Density bonuses allow developers to include additional density in their projects if they set aside a minimum percent of units for affordable housing. It is important to structure the incentive so that the developer

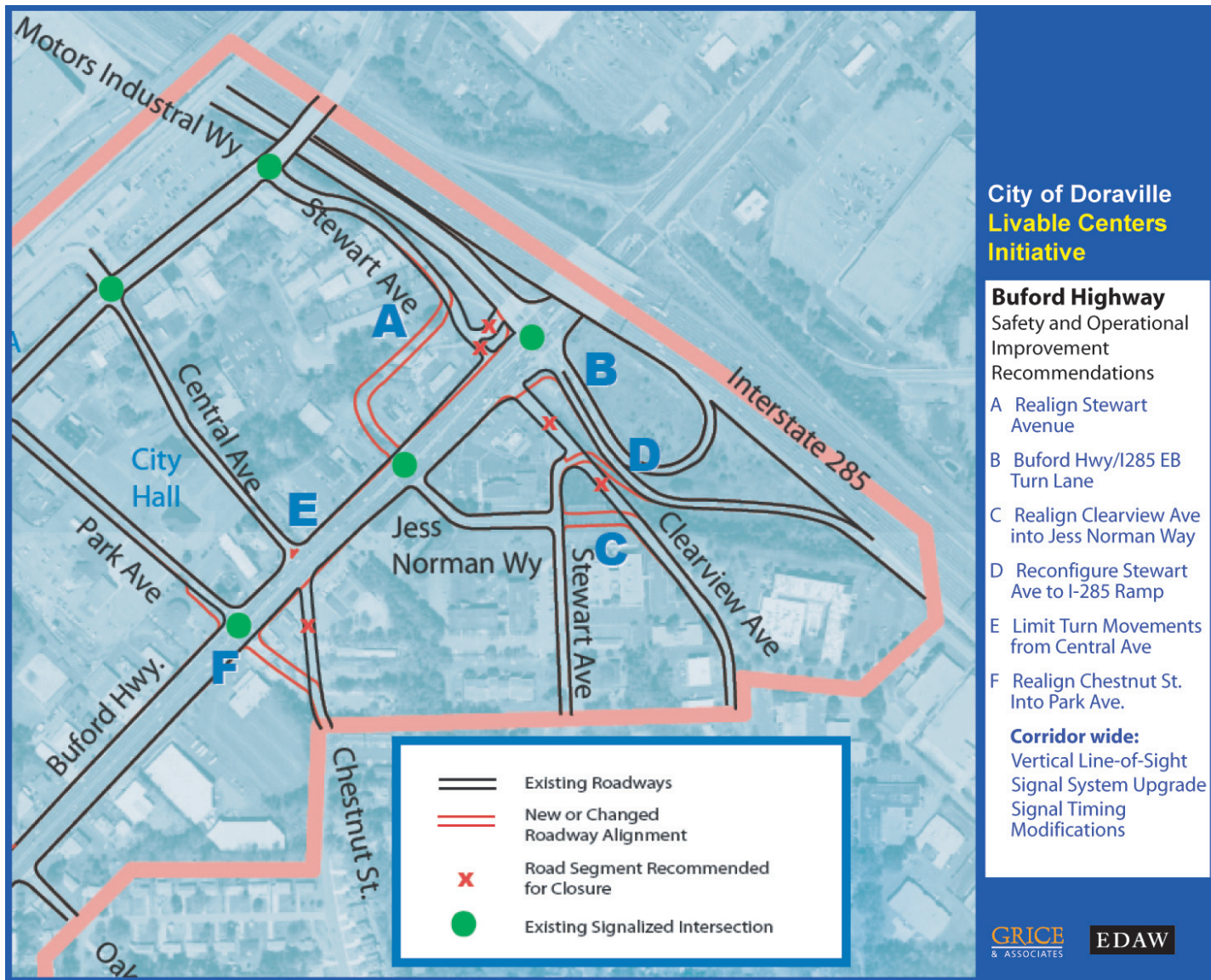


Figure 7.7 Proposed Buford Highway safety and operational improvements

will make more money overall by including affordable units in the project. Also, usually it is specified that affordable units must be built to the same level of size and quality as market rate units. Even with density bonuses, a clear maximum density should be specified in the zoning code.

Promote Location Efficient Mortgages

Location efficient mortgages allow home owners to take out larger loans if they live in close proximity to major transit service. The concept is that the lower transportation costs provided by using transit to commute allow a larger percentage of income to be spent on housing. The City of Doraville can assist new home buyers in the area by linking them up with banks that provide location efficient mortgages. This allows new home buyers to purchase more home for their money, by reducing household transportation costs. MARTA can be a good resource for finding more information on location efficient mortgages.

Allow Commercial Properties to be Redeveloped as Workforce Housing

Converting commercial lands to multifamily residential may increase the supply of land available for housing and so help decrease the cost. The City of Doraville can establish a process for permitting currently zoned commercial lands to be redeveloped as multi-family housing. This should be permitted

only in appropriate locations and only if there is a minimum set aside of affordable housing units. For example, in many locations in the study area, mixed use with residential over retail is required. In these areas, a multifamily development without a retail component would be inappropriate.

Permit Accessory Units with Townhomes

Certain areas of the study area may be zoned for townhomes. Townhomes may be developed with an accessory unit over the garage or in a similar location. Accessory units are a very good source of affordable housing that is well integrated into a mixed income housing environment. Permitting townhomes to be developed with accessory units that meet reasonable minimum standards is a good way to increase the supply of affordable housing in the area.

Surplus Lands have Affordable Housing Requirement

When the City of Doraville sells surplus lands to developers, it should require a minimum set aside for affordable housing as part of the proposal. Again this is a good way for the city to encourage mixed income housing in the study area.

Reduced Parking Requirements near MARTA

Construction of parking, especially deck parking, can add considerable cost to

residential development. By lowering the number of required parking spaces, the City of Doraville can increase the affordability of newly developed housing units. On the other hand, if inadequate parking is constructed that may force residents to vie for scarce on-street parking. At first, it is probably a good idea to require at least 1 parking space per bedroom until the area develops with more retail offerings. In the long run, lower parking requirements may be appropriate.

7.5 Business Development and Non-Profits

Business Recruitment Strategy

Doraville has an excellent location and unique advantages in the metro area. As land values rise, light industrial activity may become less viable and new business opportunities may become more appropriate. The City of Doraville can work with partners such as the Dekalb County Economic Development Department and Georgia Tech's Economic Development Institute to come up with a new economic development plan with a focus on recruiting new businesses to the city.

Small Business Promotion Strategy

The City may require that a certain percentage of commercial space in new development be offered as spaces under 3,000 square feet. The heart of Doraville's business community is a wide variety of small businesses in small spaces. By requiring that a certain percentage

of space be set aside for small businesses, small business can continue to grow and thrive as new development comes to the city.

Expanded Civic Center

Please see the description under “Public and Private Investment Strategy” above.

7.6 Transportation Alternatives and Road Network

International Shuttle

A shuttle service could connect the planned major ethnic oriented developments in the area. A new International Village is planned to the south in Chamblee. Also, a new Chinatown is planned to the north in Gwinnett County. Each of these new development is planned to connect with existing MARTA service. Private developers and the cities of Chamblee and Doraville could cooperate on funding an international shuttle between the Chamblee MARTA station, the International Village, the Doraville MARTA station, and the Gwinnett County Chinatown. This would create a single international corridor that is sure to be an attraction to visitors to metro Atlanta seeking out its ethnic neighborhoods.

Creating such a shuttle would also promote new development at intermediate locations along the way.

New Streets

A series of new streets and pedestrian connections is proposed to improve internal connectivity and the pedestrian network. Most of the new streets are between Buford Highway and New Peachtree to break up the massive superblock between Shallowford Road and Park Avenue. This will make pedestrian trips between Buford Highway and New Peachtree much easier and more convenient. Also neighborhood access to the town center area will be improved.

Asian Square Pedestrian Connection

The City of Doraville should work with the owners of Asian Square to create a safe pedestrian connection between Buford Highway and New Peachtree through the property, in a way that does not disturb local businesses. It should be pointed out that pedestrian traffic is a possible source of new customers as well.

If no arrangement can be made in the short term, the city should seek to require that a right-of-way between New Peachtree and Buford Highway be dedicated to the city when the parcel is redeveloped. As this would create new intersections close to existing intersections, this new street should not have signals at either end.

7.7 Coordination with other Public Entities

Dekalb County

Dekalb County should be an important partner in helping the small City of Doraville achieve some of its larger goals. The City of Doraville does not have an adequate budget to fund major mixed-income housing initiatives, so the city and the county should work together if they agree that an initiative is appropriate for the study area. For example, a low income senior housing project may be appropriate for the study area depending upon the goals of the city and the county.

The county can also provide assistance in helping the city develop its town center overlay. Dekalb County has recently worked on several Transit Oriented Developments, and many of its codes may be adaptable to Doraville’s needs. The experience of the county could be very useful in assisting Doraville to create its own unique town center transit oriented development pattern.

The city also needs assistance in funding some of its larger capital projects, such as the proposed new city hall and new parks. The city should be able to apply for some type of financial assistance for these major capital projects with the county.

Chambers of Commerce

The Korean-American and Georgia Hispanic Chambers of Commerce may be useful partners in the City of Doraville's economic development. These chambers may be able to assist the city to create its economic development plan and business recruitment strategy by capitalizing on its international character. Participation from each of these chambers can help Doraville tap into the economic energies driving the area to new development and new economic opportunity. Also, these chambers of commerce may be of assistance in organizing the cultural festivals recommended in the plan.

Georgia Department of Transportation

The City of Doraville must coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) on any proposed changes to Buford Highway, including pedestrian improvements, new signals, or intersection realignments. GDOT along with the Atlanta Regional Commission are beginning a corridor plan for Buford Highway in 2006, and the City of Doraville should play an active part in this plan. The planning consultant or staff for the city should play an active and engaged role in this planning process to make sure the city's interests are represented. In specific, the planning consultant for the city should understand the recommendations of the LCI plan for the Buford Highway corridor and promote their

implementation through the new Buford Highway corridor plan.

MARTA

One of the ways that MARTA can assist with the implementation of the LCI plan is by redeveloping surface parking areas near the pedestrian entrances across from Park and Central Avenues. The importance of at least some redevelopment in this area should not be underestimated. Currently the MARTA station creates a large blank space in the town center, with little activity and few people. This drains life from the town center. Even a small retail or commercial development would serve to draw MARTA patrons out of the station and into the city. This would help to activate New Peachtree, which is envisioned as the main street of the town center area.

Ideally, the Doraville station would be redeveloped into a transit plaza that is intergrated with the City of Doraville. This would bring transit patrons fully into the city, and encourage them to patronize local businesses. Also a transit plaza would become more than just an area to wait for buses, it could become a central hub of activity and economic opportunity. When the steering committee reviewed a series of transit places, they rated most highly the transit plaza of Pioneer Square in Portland, Oregon. This transit plaza has small shops, newspaper stands, planters, trees, a variety of sitting places and transportation information kiosks. A transit plaza can be far

more than a place to wait, it can be a central gathering place for the community. This is the untapped potential of the Doraville MARTA station.

MARTA can also improve its parking area, both to better serve its own customers and to simplify traffic patterns in the area. Currently MARTA's parking area has five driveways for three separate parking areas. Also if additional parking becomes necessary, then it could be provided by an additional parking deck in the place where the old deck stood. This would allow the frontage parcels along New Peachtree to remain available for infill development.

Another possible collaboration with MARTA could come in the area of shared parking. MARTA's parking decks are full in the morning and afternoon, but empty as the day goes along. MARTA has made a major investment in parking infrastructure, and this parking could be more efficiently used on evenings and weekends as well. The city may be able to negotiate with MARTA that local businesses be able to use MARTA's parking in the evenings for a reasonable fee. Also, when the city hosts major events, the city should be able to negotiate using MARTA's excess parking for its residents and visitors.

Bell South

Bell South also has a large parking deck in the area, which may not be fully utilized. The city can explore working with Bell South to use its parking deck if there is excess capacity. One possibility is that city employees could park at the deck, freeing up land currently used in surface parking. Another possibility is that if a new office building comes to Doraville's town center, that developer could negotiate the use of some of the Bell South parking spaces.

7.8 Organization and Management

Staffing

It is recommended that full time professional staff be added to the city to oversee LCI implementation. Implementing the LCI requires considerable project management time, communicating with developers, and coordinating with various public and private entities. The city will need to apply for grants to help fund many of the projects, such as the brownfield remediation program. Even overseeing the streetscape project implementation can be a complex and daunting task with considerable red tape.

In many other cities, a community development director oversees public work projects, proposed development, and

business development for a community. This type of position would be ideal to oversee LCI implementation. Another staff position that may be appropriate is a full-time or part-time grant writing position.

Planning Commission

A planning commission is recommended because as an organizational body it can help improve communication between developers and the community. The planning commission can help educate developers on the community's vision, and can help the community better articulate its requirements from new development over time. Regularly scheduled public meetings to review development proposals give the public an excellent forum for both learning about coming development and having an opportunity to comment on it.

Doraville Newsletter International Page

A new section in the existing newsletter can help existing residents become more familiar with the international businesses in Doraville. Residents can benefit because they will better understand what the businesses do and learn a bit about the different cultures that are represented in Doraville. Business owners can benefit because they can market to an expanded customer base. A little bit of knowledge may help everyone feel more comfortable with the variety of businesses and activities happening in their community.

Embrace Cultural Differences

The study area's ethnic diversity is one of its greatest assets; it is, however, also one of its greatest challenges. Marketing efforts will need to be sensitive not only to the message but also to the language. For Instance, "Hispanic" residents include a range of nationalities (South American, Central American, Mexican, etc.), each with variations in language and culture that could result in differences in interpretation. Consider working with small marketing groups that specialize in minority marketing to ensure that the message and language are on target. Also look for commonalities among various ethnic groups as well as core values. Finally, gaining the trust of the ethnic community will be key. A "bottom up" process that includes the involvement of ethnic leaders throughout the redevelopment process will better instill community buy in and long term success.

7.9 Phasing of Projects

Major changes are proposed to Doraville's community facilities. It is important that if this program is followed that it be pursued in an organized way. The following is a recommended sequence for land acquisitions and new facility constructions:

Public Facilities Projects

1. Design and build new town square green.
2. Construct city center parking deck.
3. Acquire land as needed, design, and build Flowers Park. Include pedestrian path to town square.
4. Build police parking area on current pool site.
5. Sell surplus city-owned lands, phase I.
6. Design and build consolidated government center on Central Avenue. Include necessary off-site parking.
7. Sell surplus city-owned lands, phase II.
8. Purchase lands on east side of Buford Highway for additional civic facilities.

9. Relocate public facilities as needed on new eastern site.

Transportation Projects

Many transportation projects are proposed. The following is a recommended sequence for implementing these inter-related transportation projects:

1. Realign the Shallowford Road and New Peachtree Intersection.

2. Construct pedestrian crossings along New Peachtree Road.

3. Construct Park and Central Avenue streetscapes.

4. Relocate utility poles off New Peachtree or bury utility lines.

5. Improve MARTA's parking area, consolidating entrances and exits. Decide which MARTA parcels are most appropriate for redevelopment.

6. Construct New Peachtree streetscape and configure New Peachtree for on-street parking.

7. Construct pedestrian crossings along Buford Highway.

8. Acquire land for and construct Oakmont Street extension.

9. Coordinate Buford Highway streetscape improvements.

10. Construct Shallowford Road streetscape.

11. Acquire land for and construct Pinetree Plaza connector.

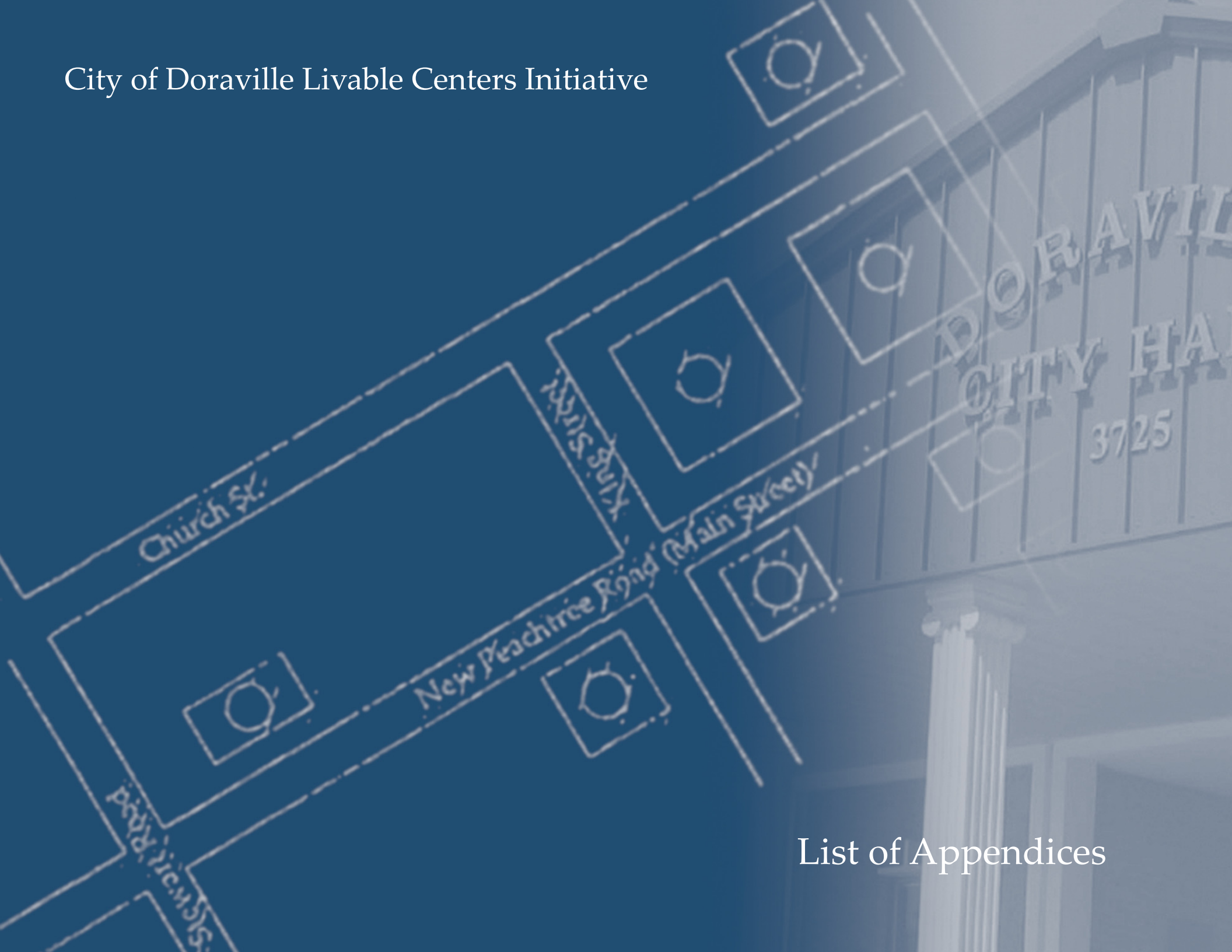
12. Construct other streetscape projects.

7.10 Monitoring and Evaluation Policy

At the end of every calendar year, the city staff in charge of implementing the LCI plan should issue an annual plan implementation report on the status of the plan. If no professional staff is overseeing plan implementation, the mayor should issue the annual report. The annual report should include a list of implementation projects from the 5-Year Implementation Plan on which progress has been made. The report should include a status of each project including city funds spent, grants applied for and won, construction approvals, and contracts entered into with public and private entities to advance projects. The report should also address the successes of the plan to date by reporting on the amount of proposed and completed new public and private development within the study area. The annual report should be circulated to city council, city staff, the planning commission, the Atlanta Regional Commission, and made publicly available.

The annual plan implementation report should be an opportunity to review and modify implementation strategy. The report should recommend which projects will continue to be implemented in the following year and any recommended changes in implementation strategy. Actions to be taken by staff and city council in the upcoming year should be identified. This will allow the city to continually adapt its plan implementation strategy to meet changing circumstances.

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



List of Appendices

8.0 List of Appendices

Appendix A - 5 and 15 Year Implementation
Project Lists

Appendix B - Public Participation

Appendix C - Transportation Report

Appendix D - Market and Demographics
Report

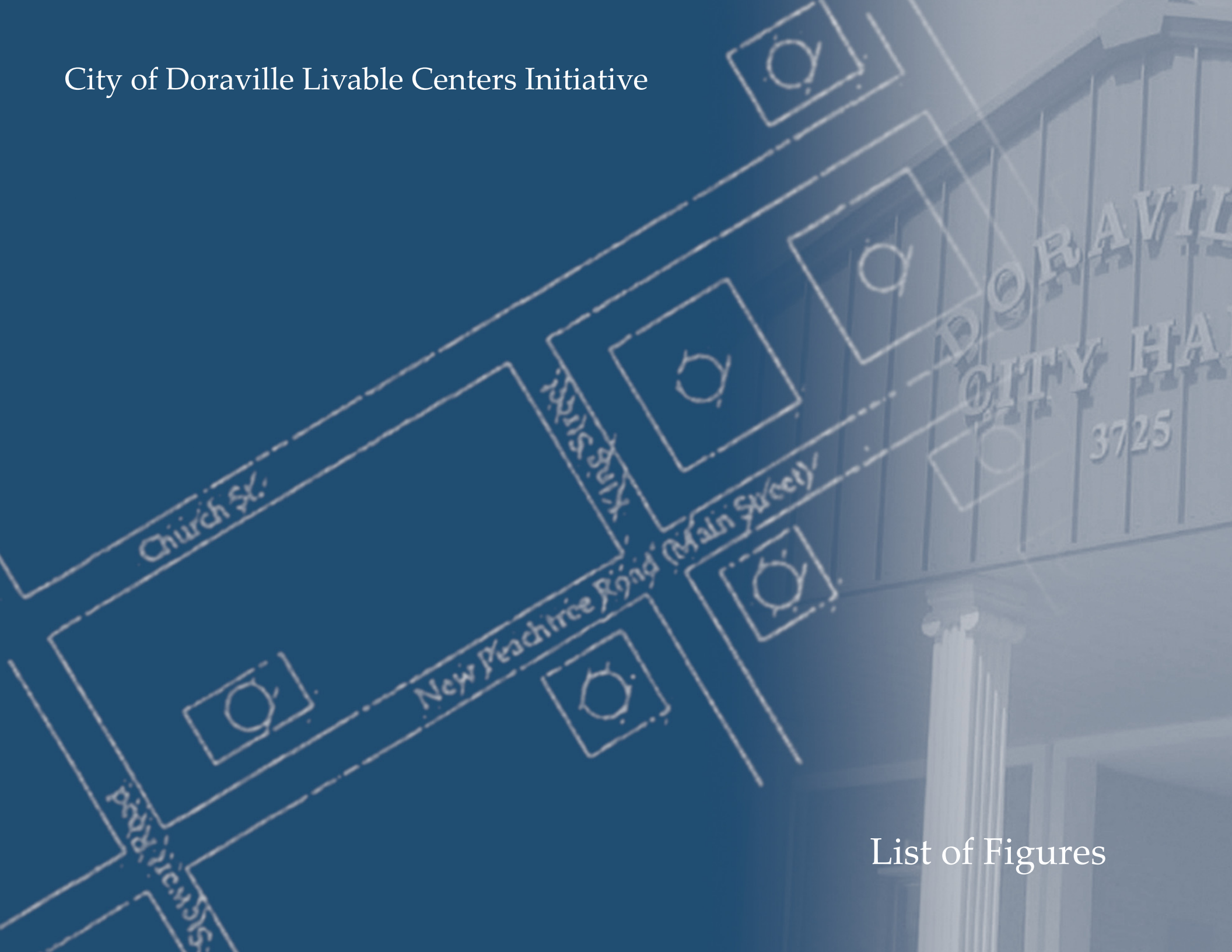
Appendix E - Redevelopment Guidelines

Appendix F - 25-Year Population, Employment
and Household Projections

Appendix G - Cost Estimate Methodology

Appendices are contained in a separate docu-
ment.

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative

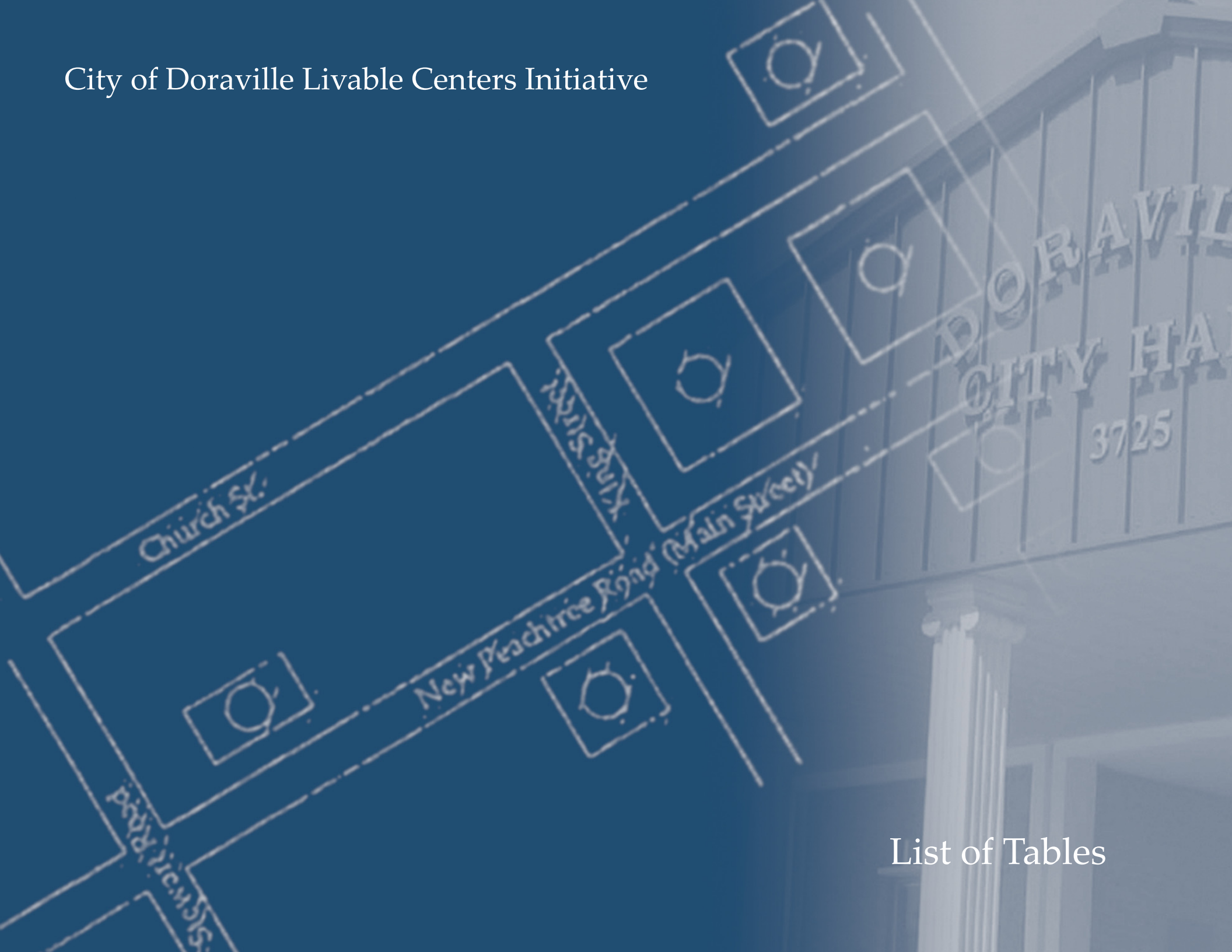


List of Figures

List of Figures

1.0 Executive Summary	i		
E.1 “Main Street” example	i		
E.2 Transit place example	i		
E.3 Pedestrian friendly urban areas	i		
E.4 Urban corridor example	ii		
E.5 Doraville LCI study area	iii		
2.0 Overview	1		
2.1 The Planning Process	1		
2.2 Focus Groups	2		
3.0 Community Profile	5		
3.1 Doraville Town Center	5		
3.2 Doraville MARTA Station	5		
3.3 City of Doraville character	5		
3.4 Existing land use in the study area	6		
3.5 Existing roadway network and traffic volume counts	9		
3.6 Existing sidewalk inventory and pedestrian crashes	10		
3.7 Vehicular crashes at intersections and crash rates	12		
3.8 2000 Existing congestion	14		
3.9 2030 Projected congestion	15		
3.10 Barriers to public access and mobility	16		
3.11 Shallowford and New Peachtree Road intersection design concept	17		
3.12 Bus rapid transit examples	18		
4.0 Issues and Opportunities	21		
4.1 Lindbergh MARTA Station TOD	21		
4.2 Downtown Decatur MARTA Station	21		
4.3 Doraville’s diversity	21		
4.4 Available commercial property	22		
5.0 Vision and Goals	27		
5.1 Town center character examples	27		
6.0 Recommendations	29		
6.1 Town center destination examples	29		
6.2 Preferred land use plan	32		
6.3 Illustrative urban form and town center concept	35		
6.4 Buford Highway proposed cross-section	38		
6.5 New Peachtree Road proposed cross-section	38		
6.6 Buford Highway “before”	39		
6.7 Buford Highway “after”	39		
7.0 Action Plan	41		
7.1 Town Center concept	41		
7.2 Town Center inspiration	41		
7.3 Streetscapes	41		
7.4 Flowers Park concept	42		
7.5 Boston’s Beacon Street - an example for new road connections at Oakmont Avenue and Pinetree Plaza	46		
7.6 Doraville Town Center recommended transportation improvements	48		
7.7 Proposed Buford Highway safety and operational improvements	50		

City of Doraville Livable Centers Initiative



List of Tables

List of Tables

1.0 Executive Summary	i
E.1 Doraville LCI Area Population and Employment Projections Summary	iv
E.2 Doraville LCI Area 5-Year Implementation Plan Project List	v
2.0 Overview	1
3.0 Community Profile	5
3.1 Existing Land Use Distribution	6
3.2 MARTA Rail Headway	11
3.3 GDOT Count Station Volumes	13
4.0 Issues and Opportunities	21
5.0 Vision and Goals	27
6.0 Recommendations	29
7.0 Action Plan	41



Church St.

New Peachtree Road

New Peachtree Road (Main Street)

Peachtree Road

DORAVILLE
CITY HALL
3725