



2.0 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and document existing issues and opportunities in the study area. The issues and opportunities are grouped into the following major topic areas:

- Real Estate Development;
- Land Use, Zoning, and Urban Design;
- Transportation; and
- Previous Plans and Studies.

These topic areas are addressed in detail throughout the chapter, and major observations for each area are provided at the conclusion of the corresponding section. The review of current conditions results in a baseline for further analysis. Ultimately, the inventory culminates in the Need and Purpose section of this chapter, which identifies and documents unmet needs for the Northside Drive Corridor. Later in the study process, these needs will form the basis for the evaluation of alternatives.

2.1 Real Estate Development Trends

This section provides an overview of current real estate development trends in the study area. A discussion on demographics, as well as a review of future population and employment projections in the study area is included. The focus of this section is on trends in the residential, office, and retail sectors.

2.1.1 Overview Of Current Development Conditions

The Deering Road Zone is characterized by three major office developments and a series of small retail and service-oriented business. Berkeley Heights, a mixed-use retail and apartment project is currently under construction at the entrance of the corridor at I-75. The well-established Loring Heights and Berkeley Park neighborhoods are also in this zone.

The 10th Street Zone is characterized by the Home Park neighborhood, which abuts Northside Drive and the Atlantic Station development. Midtown, to the east of the Downtown Connector, heavily influences prospective future uses in this zone. Georgia Tech is also a major influence on this zone.



The Northside 75 office park Northside/Bellemeade

The North Avenue Zone is characterized as an area of recent revitalization and will continue to attract future commercial and multi-family development. Northyards Business Park is a large



development containing rehabbed office space. The Georgia Tech North Avenue Research Campus is also a major development in the zone that continues to expand. Antioch Baptist Church North is engaged in a major redevelopment along Northside Drive with the Gateway apartments as a first phase in a larger mixed-use redevelopment. New residential and mixed-use development is occurring along the Marietta Street corridor in the zone. Large vacant parcels are available in this zone, which should attract additional major development.

The Vine City MARTA Station Zone includes the Vine City neighborhood to the west with substantial developable land currently being used as parking for Dome and Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) events directly on Northside Drive. In addition, the GWCC is constructing a major surface parking facility at the northeast corner of the intersection of Simpson Avenue and Northside Drive and is seeking state funding for a new parking deck on land it owns at the southwest corner of the intersection. The recently expanded GWCC has a secondary entrance on Northside Drive as well as a number of surface parking lots. This zone also includes the Historic Westside Village, which is about to begin a second major phase with a new development team working with the Atlanta Development Authority.

The McDaniel Street Zone is characterized by the substantial renovations and new construction occurring in the Castleberry Hill area, major developments associated with the Atlanta University Center members - Spelman College, Morris Brown College, Morehouse College and School of Medicine, and Clark-Atlanta University, and the redevelopment of several public housing projects into the mixed-income communities of Castleberry Hill and College Town.

2.1.2 Findings

Recent trends indicate a resurgence of development along Northside Drive and the western portion of the City of Atlanta. With increasing land costs in Midtown and Downtown, developers have been attracted to this corridor. In addition, the activity from large corporate and institutional entities such as Georgia Tech, as well as large scale developments including the Georgia Dome, GWCC, Northyards Business Park, and Atlantic Station have drawn attention to this corridor.



The M Street Development at Marietta/Northside

Simultaneously, the residents of the corridor have created detailed redevelopment plans for large areas including Vine City, English Avenue, Bankhead Highway and the Marietta Street Corridor. Major investments by the Atlanta Development Authority and the Atlanta Housing Authority with its development partners have begun the transformation of large areas of the corridor into new mixed-use developments. Major religious and educational institutions such as Antioch Baptist Church North and the Atlanta University Center have undertaken initiatives to attract new development into the area.



The H.J. Russell Company, with a long history in the neighborhood, and a new wave of developers and investors have made substantial investments in the corridor during the past decade and are poised to continue that investment in the near future.

Overall, the Northside Drive Corridor is experiencing an increase in office and business park demand stimulated by the significant new investment occurring along the corridor. This trend is expected to continue with the on-going development of Atlantic Station, and further development by Georgia Tech, the Atlanta University Center, and other major landowners.



The GWCC is a major institution in the corridor

Retail development is beginning to evolve with the addition of Atlantic Station, which will draw regional shopping as well as numerous residential projects creating demand for neighborhood shopping centers. The Atlantic Station development will bring 1.7 million square feet of new destination retail into the corridor, including the first IKEA home furnishings store in the southeast.

The Northside Drive Corridor is poised for the most significant period of new development in the past fifty years.

2.1.3 Demographics

The demographic characteristics of the corridor reflect the diversity of the City of Atlanta and its recent growth trends. The population is rapidly growing and combines a preponderance of young, single, well educated but moderate income renters, with an established base of low income, older homeowners and renters who have lived in the area for a long time.

In 2004, 41,031 people lived in the study area, which represents approximately 10 percent of the population of the City of Atlanta. (See Appendix A, Exhibit 1.) Population growth in the corridor was slightly stronger than the City of Atlanta during the 1990s, but has substantially outpaced the City’s rate of gain since 2000. Both the City of Atlanta and the corridor are anticipated to grow at a significantly slower rate than the Atlanta MSA, which continues to be one of the fastest growing regions in the nation.

The corridor is racially diverse, consistent with citywide trends. The majority of residents are African-American (53 percent), which is only slightly lower than the proportion of African-Americans in the city as a whole (58 percent). Whites account for 36 percent of the population in the corridor versus 35 percent citywide.



In 2004, 11,781 households were reported in the study area, which represents approximately 7 percent of the households in the City of Atlanta. (See Appendix A, Exhibit 1.) Household growth in the corridor was virtually non-existent during the 1990s, but has increased modestly since 2000, and is expected to grow at a similar rate as the city between 2004 and 2009. Household growth has been minimal in comparison to that experienced by the Atlanta MSA.

While the median age of the populations are fairly similar, the corridor has a large percentage of 18 to 24 year olds, 42 percent, compared to 12 percent in the City and 9 percent in the MSA. Nearly 60 percent of the population in the corridor is between 18 and 34 years of age. This is likely due in part, to the location of numerous higher educational institutions within the corridor.

Residents in the corridor combine a fairly high proportion of college graduates (20 percent) with a substantial number of residents who did not complete high school (26 percent). This reflects both the substantial poverty among a portion of the residents of the area combined with its proximity to some of the regions' major universities.

Occupationally, residents of the corridor reflect citywide trends, with a significant portion of residents in professional and management occupations, 39 percent, compared with 41 percent in the city and 38 percent for the MSA.

Average household size in the corridor, 2.2 persons per household, is slightly smaller than the 2.3 in the City and 2.7 in the MSA. This is due in part to the preponderance of one-person households - 43 percent in the corridor compared to 39 percent in the city and 23 percent in the MSA. The corridor reports a very low percentage of married persons, 15 percent compared to 24 percent in the City and 52 percent in the MSA.

Household incomes are significantly lower in the corridor in comparison to the City and MSA. The median household income in the corridor is \$24,618, compared to the City median of \$39,550 and the MSA's of \$58,250. The corridor's income represents 62 percent of the City's and 42 percent of the MSA's. Only 10 percent of corridor households have income over \$100,000, compared with 22 percent in the MSA and 18 percent in the City. Within the corridor 35 percent of households have incomes of less than \$15,000, compared to 23 percent in the City and 10 percent in the MSA.

A very high proportion of corridor households (78 percent) are renters compared to the City (56 percent) or the MSA (34 percent). This relates to the relatively fewer single-family housing units available in the corridor, 33 percent, compared to 47 percent in the city and 67 percent in the MSA.

2.1.3.1 Housing

Housing units are relatively old, renter-occupied and consist primarily of multi-family units. While the median value of homes is substantially higher than the MSA, the corridor has more than twice the percentage of homes below \$80,000 as the MSA.



Multi-family housing dominates in the corridor with 63 percent of all units in structures with 3 units or more and 14 percent in structures with 50 or more units. This compares to only 47 percent for the city and 28 percent in the MSA.

Approximately 65 percent of corridor housing was built before 1970. This is comparable to the city at 66 percent but differs substantially from the MSA at 27 percent. As will be discussed shortly, the age of the corridor’s housing stock should decrease dramatically due to the high level of new residential development, which has and is planned to occur.

The value of owner-occupied homes in the corridor averages \$161,017, approximately 12 percent higher than the city at \$144,185, and 21 percent above the MSA at \$133,385. This higher median housing value masks the bifurcation of house values in the corridor. Among owner-occupied units 31 percent are valued under \$80,000 compared to 28 percent for the city and 15 percent in the MSA. Thus, a large percentage of homeowners in the corridor live in modestly priced units, with a few higher priced units, largely confined to the northern most portions of the corridor and the lofts in Castleberry Hill.



The Gateway Apartments at Northside/Johns Street



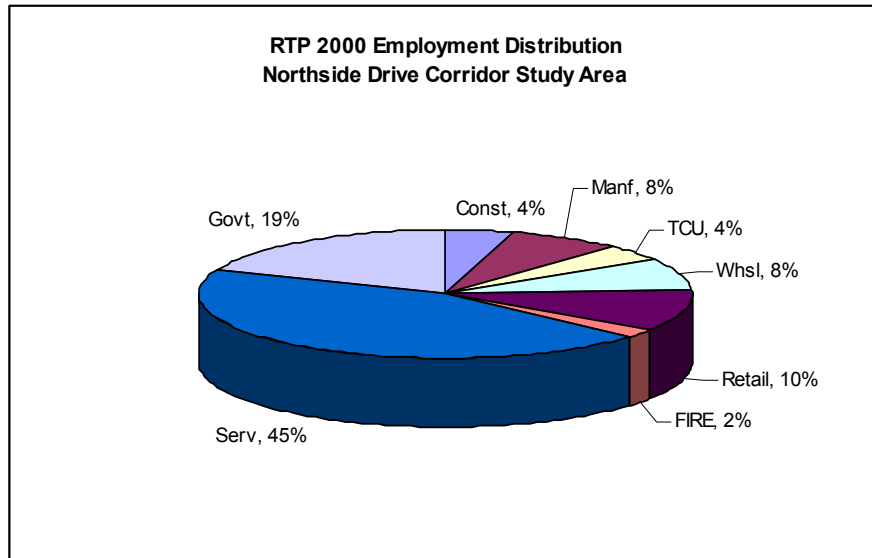
The Intown Lofts at Northside/Nelson

2.1.3.2 Employment

According to data compiled by the Atlanta Regional Commission, within the Northside Drive Corridor Study Area approximately 50,000 people were employed in 2000. Employment within the study area is heavily concentrated in the service sector (45 percent), followed by government (19 percent) and retail (10 percent).

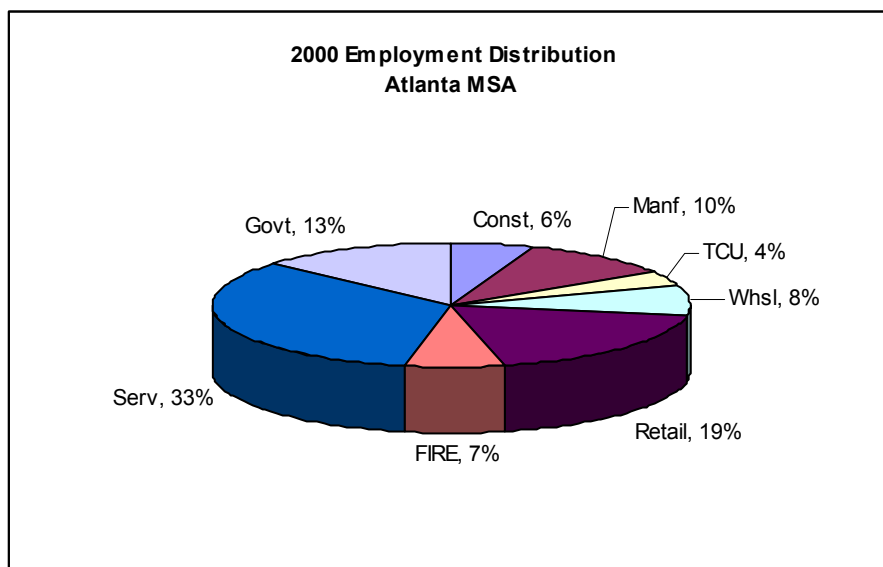


Figure 2-1: Employment Distribution (Northside Drive Study Area)



The service sector represented 22,200 jobs, government represented 9,400 jobs and retail represented 5,200 jobs in 2000. These trends are consistent with the character of retail and service development in the study area as well as the proximity to the large concentration of government jobs at the universities and local government facilities in the area including the Fulton County Jail and Sheriff's facilities.

Figure 2-2: 2000 Employment Distribution (Atlanta MSA)





In comparison to the MSA, the corridor has a higher percentage of jobs in the retail and finance, insurance and real estate (FIRE) sector, and a smaller percentage of jobs in government and services.

2.1.4 **Residential Sector**

The most dramatic development trend in the Northside Drive Corridor has been its renewed appeal as a residential location. This appeal is not confined to one or two zones but can generally be found throughout the corridor.

2.1.4.1 **Rental Housing**

According to Dale Henson Associates, who tracks the performance of Atlanta’s apartment market, the Northside Drive Corridor is located in two major apartment submarkets—Midtown/Brookwood and South Atlanta/SW Fulton County. During the period from 2001-2004 the Midtown/Brookwood submarket, which includes the portion of the corridor north of Marietta Street, saw substantial new rental housing starts and deliveries of new units. Absorption remained strong in the submarket allowing overall occupancies to increase from 90.2 percent in 2003 to 92.3 percent by 2004, during a time when metro occupancy levels were declining. The South Atlanta submarket which includes the portion of the corridor from Marietta Street south, experienced slower growth in new inventory and a more moderate pace of absorption. As a result, occupancies in the submarket deteriorated from 89.6 percent in 2001 to 81.5 percent by 2004.

During the past four years the Northside Drive Corridor attracted ten new rental projects with a total of 1,678 housing units. They are detailed in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Northside Drive Corridor New Rental Projects 2001 – 2004

Year	Project	Units
2001	Peaks at West Atlanta	214
2002	Alta West	265
	Columbia Estates	124
2003	The Peaks at MLK	76
	Northside Village	261
	M Street	308
	Park District Atlanta Commons	250
2004	Berkeley Heights	180
	Total	1,678

2.1.4.2 **For-Sale Housing**

New for-sale housing within the corridor is priced significantly above the value of existing housing with average sales prices declining slightly from 2003 to 2004. Data on home sales within three zip code areas that include the Northside Drive Corridor are shown in Table 2-2. In 2003 the average value of an existing home sale was \$148,392 and a new unit \$180,996. The



257 new units sold represented only 15 percent of all home sales in the corridor in 2003. In the first half of 2004, the average value of existing homes sold was \$119,867, a decrease of 19.2 percent. The median price of new units was \$212,548, which was an increase of 15 percent in the average sales price since 2003. Overall, the median sales price of all units in the corridor decreased by 7 percent from \$153,255 in 2003 to \$142,432 in 2004.

Table 2-2: Home Sales in the Northside Drive Corridor by Zip Code

Home Sales Data for Northside Drive Corridor Zip Codes 2003-2004									
		30318		30314		30313		Total Sales	Weighted Average
2004	New	Sales	189	7	180	376			
		Median	\$ 180,000	\$ 205,450	\$ 247,000		\$ 212,548		
	Existing	Sales	1,044	623	66	1,733			
		Median	\$ 132,500	\$ 86,500	\$ 235,000		\$ 119,867		
	All	Sales	1,233	630	246	2,109			
		Median	\$ 150,000	\$ 88,000	\$ 243,900		\$ 142,432		
2003	New	Sales	170	7	80	257			
		Median	\$ 166,900	\$ 169,000	\$ 212,000		\$ 180,996		
	Existing	Sales	858	554	54	1,466			
		Median	\$ 184,000	\$ 88,200	\$ 200,150		\$ 148,392		
	All	Sales	1,028	561	134	1,723			
		Median	\$ 172,900	\$ 88,950	\$ 205,000		\$ 153,255		

Source: Bleakly Advisory Group, *Atlanta-Journal Constitution*

The pace of home sales activity increased in the corridor from 2003 to 2004. In 2003 there were a total of 1,723 home sales in the corridor. During 2004, there were 2,109 home sales, a 22 percent increase over 2003. Both new homes and existing homes exhibited significant increases in sales activity during 2004.

2.1.4.3 Residential Development Trends

The Northside Drive Corridor will see a significant further expansion of its residential base during the next five years with over 9,473 units either recently developed, under construction or planned for future development. The development is spread throughout the corridor, with the residential development activity by zone shown in Table 2-3.



Table 2-3: New Residential Development by Zone

Zone	Units
Deering Road Zone	465
10th Street Zone	5,639
North Avenue Zone	1,615
Vine City MARTA Station Zone	0
McDaniel Street Zone	1,754

In terms of the development status, a large majority of the units are either in construction or will be developed shortly as shown in Table 2-4.

Table 2-4: Housing Units by Development Status

Development Status	Units
Recently Developed	1,686
Under Construction	2,966
Planned Development (1-2 years)	1,271
Future Development (3+ years)	3,550

The corridor is attracting a strong mix of housing types as shown in Table 2-5.

Table 2-5: Housing Units by Housing Type

Housing Type	Units
Rental apartments	2,937
For-sale condominiums	1,837
For-sale town homes	375
To be determined	4,324

The creation of 9,473 new residential units in the corridor will increase the housing inventory from 13,255 in 2000 to 22,728 by 2010 - a 72 percent increase over the decade.

2.1.5 Office Sector

The Northside Drive Corridor office sector represents a small component of the overall Atlanta office market. Along the corridor there is approximately 2.15 million square feet of multi-tenant office space. Most of the office space in the corridor was constructed in the 1970s and 1980s. However, there is renewed interest in the corridor as evidenced by the Northyards Business Park, Puritan Mill, and Atlantic Station developments. The inventory of space increased by approximately 25 percent in 2004 due to the addition of the SouthTrust Tower in the Atlantic Station development. While the majority of the space in the tower is leased to SouthTrust/Wachovia, the facility added significant new vacant space to the market, increasing overall market vacancy from 28 percent to 29 percent at the beginning of 2004 to 39 percent by the end of the second quarter.



There was net absorption during the 2nd quarter of 2004 of 280,000 square foot in the market area, which is the greatest amount during the past two years. Office lease rates in the market range from \$19.00 to \$23.50 per square foot for Class A space and \$15.00 to \$18.00 per square foot for Class B space. Lease rates have been essentially unchanged for the past two years. There is a total of 460,000 square feet of planned office development in the market area, the majority of which is within Atlantic Station.

Business Park and Flex Space represents an additional 2.2 million square feet within the study area. This space typically combines office with industrial uses and generally rents for lease rates substantially below the office sector. Vacancies in the market area's business parks are substantially less than in the office sector at 13 percent, with approximately 286,563 square feet available. Lease rates for space in business parks ranges from \$4.63 to \$5.09 per square foot.

The bulk of the existing office and building park inventory is located in the two northern segments of the corridor – the Deering Road Zone and the Tenth Street Zone. The existing office inventory is located in close proximity to Northside Drive and at Atlantic Station. The



An office park near Northside/Deering

business park and industrial inventory is located generally to the west of Northside Drive in the Chattahoochee Industrial Area along DeFoor and Chattahoochee Avenues. Significant additional office space is available in Northyards Business Park in the North Avenue Zone. Northyards Business Park was created from the renovation of 250,000+ square feet of former warehouse space. Georgia Tech has recently acquired significant additional land at its North Avenue Research Campus and in Northyards Business Park, which will be used to create additional research and incubator facilities.

New office development is dominated by the activities at Atlantic Station with the recently opened SouthTrust tower and an additional 460,000 square feet planned towards an ultimate build-out of approximately 6 million square feet of office space.

Overall, the Northside Drive Corridor is experiencing an increase in office and business park demand stimulated by the significant new investment occurring along the corridor. This trend is expected to continue with the on-going development of Atlantic Station, and further development by Georgia Tech and other major landowners.



2.1.6 Retail Sector

The Northside Corridor has not historically been a major retail corridor, with the bulk of its retailing occurring in small shops, restaurants, fast food/convenience outlets and local catering, the student market, home furnishing/home decorating sector, and services/retail related uses.

With the emergence of the area as a residential location, this pattern has begun to change from several dimensions. The renovation of former industrial space into the Bacchanalia/Taqueria Del Sol complex at the intersection of Howell Mill and Huff Roads signaled a significant retail revival occurring in the area. In the Vine City MARTA Station Zone, the arrival of a Publix grocery store as the anchor of the long hoped for creation of Historic Westside Village as a major commercial mixed-use area represented an important investment by a major retailer in the Northside Drive Corridor.



Paschal's, a retail business at Northside/Fair

In terms of future retail development, as with other land uses in the Northside Drive Corridor, Atlantic Station's planned major retail center will dominate future retail development, serving the needs of corridor residents, the broader in-town market and regional shoppers interested in the unique products of Atlanta's first IKEA home furnishings store and other distinct merchants. The incremental addition of modest amounts of ground floor retail in many of the residential and mixed-use projects will add significantly to the retail environment in the Northside Drive Corridor over the next several years, and represents an important addition of local service and convenience retail for new residents.

As a result of the influx of new residents the retail potential of the Northside Drive Corridor has an estimated retail potential of \$441 million. This represents approximately 6.5 percent of the \$6.8 billion overall retail potential of the City of Atlanta. Thus, there is a significant amount of potential retail demand already located in the corridor. As shown in Table 2-6, the largest segment of retail potential is for automotive purchases (23 percent) followed by eating and drinking establishments (17 percent) food stores (11 percent), general merchandise (11 percent) and other retailing (11 percent). As the residential base of the corridor grows significantly over the coming decades the retail potential of the area will grow significantly as well.



Table 2-6: Northside Drive Corridor Retail Sales Potential

NORTHSIDE DRIVE CORRIDOR RETAIL SALES POTENTIAL 2004		
<i>Major Retail Category</i>	<i>Sales Potential</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Apparel and Accessory Stores	\$ 26,688,993	6%
Automotive Dealers	\$ 100,747,014	23%
Automotive and Home Supply Stores	\$ 4,137,851	1%
Drug and Proprietary Stores	\$ 15,849,080	4%
Eating and Drinking Places	\$ 76,039,446	17%
Food Stores	\$ 50,312,245	11%
Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores	\$ 12,767,748	3%
Home Appliance, Television Stores	\$ 8,825,186	2%
Gasoline Service Stations	\$ 26,300,792	6%
General Merchandise (including Department Stores)	\$ 48,045,654	11%
Hardware, Lumber and Garden Stores	\$ 22,580,919	5%
Other retail	\$ 49,150,349	11%
Total Retail Sales Potential	\$ 441,445,277	100%

Source: Claritas, Bleakly Advisory Group

To provide some context for considering the existing retail potential of the area, the retail sales potential minus automotive purchases is \$340.7 million per year. If 70 percent of that potential could be captured by retail establishments inside the corridor, this level of sales would be sufficient to support over 1.3 million square feet of retail space, assuming an average sales per square foot of \$180 for all retail space. Thus, the retail potential of the corridor is substantial and is likely to grow significantly.

In terms of new additions to the retail inventory, a number of major projects are either under development or planned for the future. In the Deering Road Zone, Selig Enterprises is redeveloping the former Castlegate hotel and conference center site, into a major mixed-use project with 290,000 square feet of new retail space, to be anchored by Wal-Mart. The Berkeley Heights mixed-use development is planned for 21,000 square feet of retail space.

The 10th Street Zone includes Atlantic Station, which has a significant amount of planned retail space. As noted earlier, Atlantic Station’s major retail center is under construction. IKEA will be 1.2 million square feet in size when construction of the major home furnishings facility is complete. IKEA is located proximate to the intersection of 16th Street and Northside Drive. An additional 500,000 square feet of retail space is planned for future development in Atlantic Station.

The North Avenue Zone includes the Bottleworks Phase II has the potential of adding 138,000 square feet of mixed-use development with a major retail component, to be anchored by a major



home furnishings store and restaurant space on Marietta Street. In contrast, there is no new retail planned for the Vine City MARTA Station Zone.

The McDaniel Street Zone includes H.J. Russell’s Legacy at Castleberry project, with Paschal’s restaurant as an anchor of its first phase and the potential of up to 50,000 square feet of additional retail in the later phases of this major mixed-use development. The College Town development includes plans for 30,000 square feet of retail as part of the residential mixed-use core of the project.

2.1.7 ARC Growth Projections

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) estimates for current and future population, employment and households for the corridor and the MSA are presented in Table 2-7.

Table 2-7: ARC Population and Employment Projections

Atlanta MSA				Northside Drive Study Area			
	Population	Employment	Households		Population	Employment	Households
2000	3,630,560	2,067,000	1,356,058	2000	37,589	49,830	17,392
2005	3,847,924	2,195,515	na	2005	38,155	52,550	17,654
2010	4,141,662	2,385,496	na	2010	41,282	51,742	19,101
2030	5,871,024	3,309,903	na	2030	60,083	61,326	27,168
CAGR 2000-2005	1.2%	1.2%	na	CAGR 2000-2005	0.3%	1.1%	0.3%
CAGR 2000-2030	1.6%	1.6%	na	CAGR 2000-2030	1.6%	0.7%	1.5%
CAGR 2005-2030	1.7%	1.7%	na	CAGR 2005-2030	1.8%	0.6%	1.7%

Note: CAGR stands for Compound Annual Growth Rate.

Between 2000 and 2005, the corridor experienced minimal growth in population compared to the MSA. However, between 2005 and 2030, the population growth in the corridor is anticipated to be slightly greater than that experienced by the MSA, 1.8 percent compared to 1.7 percent on a compound annual basis.

Between 2000 and 2005, growth in employment for the corridor was approximately equal to the MSA. However, between 2005 and 2030, employment growth in the corridor is anticipated to be significantly less than that experienced by the MSA, 0.6 percent compared to 1.7 percent on a compound annual basis. Household growth in the corridor approximates population growth estimates.

Table 2-8 illustrates the total change and the annual additions resulting from the ARC population, employment, and household projections.



Table 2-8: Northside Drive Population, Employment, and Household Change

Northside Drive Study Area			
Change from 2000	Population	Employment	Households
Total Change			
2000-2005	566	2,720	262
2000-2030	3,693	1,912	1,447
2005 - 2030	22,494	11,496	9,776
Per Year Change			
2000-2005	113	544	52
2000-2030	369	191	145
2005 - 2030	750	383	326

Between 2000 and 2005, the ARC data indicates an increase of approximately 566 residents, or 262 households and 2,720 jobs. On an annual basis, this equates to an increase of 113 persons or 52 households and 544 jobs per year in the corridor.

Between 2005 and 2030, the ARC data indicates population will increase by approximately 22,494 persons, or 9,776 households and jobs will increase by 11,496. On an annual basis, this equates to an increase of 750 persons, or 326 households and 383 jobs. As previously mentioned, new housing units currently slated for the corridor total 9,473 by 2010. These housing units roughly fulfill the household growth projection 20 years early. With a total build-out of 6 million square feet planned at Atlantic Station, that development alone would provide space for approximately 7,500 employees (based on 800 square feet per employee). This one development accounts for 65 percent of space needs for 2030.

In comparison to historical development trends, the ARC growth projections appear to be accurate. Looking towards 2005 through 2030, however, as the corridor’s appeal and development momentum continues to increase, the ARC growth estimates appear to be too low.

2.1.8 Summary Observations

The Northside Drive Corridor Study Area is currently one of the most dynamic development areas of the City of Atlanta. The corridor combines a diverse set of neighborhoods, each with its own development history, that are increasingly tied together by the growth concentrating along Northside Drive. Research on area development trends indicate the recent period of strong development will likely continue during at least the next five years as numerous projects come to fruition. Some key observations about the Northside Drive Corridor follow.

2.1.8.1 *Demographics*

The corridor is home to over 41,000 residents and is projected to grow by an additional 3,085 by 2009. The current residents are racially diverse, young, with many college age residents, well educated and have modest incomes when compared to the city as a whole. Most of the residents are renters and work in service and governmental jobs. Given the great diversity of the corridor, there is also a significant population of older residents who rent or own modest homes in the area and live on limited incomes. Many of the residents of the area live in Atlanta Housing Authority developments.



2.1.8.2 Housing

The existing housing stock in the corridor tends to be old, in multifamily buildings with a substantial number of housing units of very modest value.

2.1.8.3 Employment

Approximately 50,000 people work in the corridor. The largest segment of jobs is in the service sector 45 percent, followed by government at 19 percent and retailing at 10 percent. The corridor is a major employment center within the city.

2.1.8.4 Residential Sector



Atlantic Station will continue to bring new development to Northside

The corridor is undergoing a period of rapid residential development. During the past decade the corridor attracted ten new rental housing projects with 1,678 units. During 2003-2004 more than 633 new for-sale units were sold in the corridor. While average home prices decreased by 7 percent over the 2003-2004 period, the total number of units sold increased by 22 percent. There is an estimated 9,473 units of new housing either recently delivered, under construction or planned for development in the corridor. These units are spread throughout the

corridor with the greatest concentration at Atlantic Station, along the Marietta Street Corridor and in the McDaniel Street Zone of the study area. Currently 2,966 units are under construction and an additional 4,821 are planned for future development. The creation of the 9,473 units will increase the existing housing inventory in the corridor by 72 percent.

2.1.8.5 Office Sector

The office sector is modest in size with 2.15 million square feet of office space and 2.2 million square feet of business park and flex space existing in the corridor. The bulk of that space is located in the Deering Road and 10th Street Zones. Atlantic Station will dominate the development of new office space in the corridor, with 517,000 square feet created in 2004, and an additional 460,000 square feet planned for development. At build-out, it will contain up to 6 million square feet of office space. The development of Northyards Business Park and Georgia Tech's North Avenue Research Campus is creating a second node of office activity in the North Avenue Zone.



2.1.8.6 Retail Sector

Traditionally the corridor has been home to many small retail business, restaurants and service establishments. Atlantic Station will bring destination retailing to the corridor through the creation of 1.7 million square feet of retail including the creation of the southeast's first IKEA home furnishings store. In addition, the proposed redevelopment of the Castlegate Hotel site as a Wal-Mart anchored retail center will add significant retail space. Retail is also a significant component of the many mixed-use projects being proposed within the corridor.

Development trends within the Northside Drive Corridor Study area indicate that the next several years will be a period of intense development as the growth in the City and region, comparatively moderate land costs, available development sites with strong regional access combine to attract significant new development to the area.

2.2 LAND USE, ZONING, AND URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

This section of the chapter assesses existing land uses, reviews the current zoning, and examines the existing urban design characteristics within the corridor. From this data, potential development opportunities are identified. Finally, this section reviews the City of Atlanta future land use plan and provides some observations that are important to shaping the future vision for the corridor.

2.2.1 Land Use Assessment

The existing land use assessment is a critical tool for understanding the best opportunities for preservation and redevelopment along the corridor. The assessment utilized a Geographic Information System (GIS) parcel database and land use categories derived from the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) SmartTrak Study, as well as information provided by field surveys. Parcels within a ¼ mile of Northside Drive were evaluated.

As shown in Table 2-9 and illustrated in Figures 2-1 thru 2-5, the study area contains roughly 3743 parcels covering approximately 1,767 acres representing 10 land use categories. The land use pattern fronting Northside Drive is diverse and ranges from sprawling low density commercial and office uses to single-family communities in various stages of stabilization and revitalization.



Figure 2-3: Existing Land Use (Deering Road Zone)

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available as a separate file.)



Figure 2-4: Existing Land Use (10th Street Zone)

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Figure 2-5: Existing Land Use (North Avenue Street Zone)

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Figure 2-6: Existing Land Use (Vine City MARTA Zone)

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Figure 2-7: Existing Land Use (McDaniel Street Zone)

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Table 2-9: Existing Land Use

Land Use Category	# of Parcels	Acres	% of Land Area
Institutional	214	335	19%
Industrial	209	241	14%
Commercial	418	228	13%
Multi-Family Residential	394	213	12%
Vacant	902	214	12%
Single-Family Residential	1287	190	11%
Parking/Utilities	181	197	11%
Mixed Use	75	84	5%
Office	57	58	3%
Open Space	6	8	0%
TOTAL	3743	1767	100%

Generally, the land uses along the east side of Northside Drive vary from those along the west side. Freight railroad lines connecting Atlanta to the Midsouth and Midwest structure much of the urban form of the west side. Heavy industrial uses are mostly concentrated along the rail lines with light industrial warehousing facilities (14%) immediately adjacent. Of the parking and utility parcels surveyed (11%), the most prominent facility is the Atlanta Waterworks facility. A significant stock of wholesale commercial enterprises and commercial districts are predominately located on the west side and have recently added business such as imports, catering, artists, graphic designers and architects that benefit from the proximity to downtown and intown neighborhoods.

Unlike the west side, the east side of Northside Drive is dominated by large-scale institutional uses (19%) represented by Georgia Tech and high profile downtown destinations including the GWCC and the Georgia Dome. Northside Drive is the major arterial used to access these major destinations and it is anticipated that the build out of the Atlantic Station mixed-use development with its new residential, office, retail and entertainment complex will also contribute to increased traffic along the corridor.

Five single-family neighborhoods (11%) have frontage along Northside Drive. These are dispersed throughout the corridor and over the past 10 to 15 years have experienced a strong surge of reinvestment. The individual land use assessments for each zone are described below.

The Deering Road Zone has a diversity of land uses. The Berkeley Park and Loring Heights neighborhoods flank either side of Northside Drive, which makes it the only zone containing two single-family communities. The Atlanta Waterworks water treatment facility also fronts Northside Drive. Lush landscaping that was once open for public use surrounds the site. The Berkeley Heights mixed-use complex is currently under construction at the intersection of Northside Drive and Bellemeade Street. The Atlantic Station mixed-use development is also under construction and will have a major impact on the corridor with its several hundred housing



units, commercial and entertainment district, and office towers upon completion. The Deering Road Zone also contains office uses that occur in two distinct forms - single story low-density professional office suites compared to mid-rise high-density buildings present at the Northside 75 office park. Commercial and warehouse facilities are concentrated along Bishop Street while conventional retail and conveniences such as grocery stores, banks, and fast food establishments are along Howell Mill Road.

The largest landowner in the 10th Street Zone is Georgia Tech. The campus is bounded by 10th Street, Northside Drive and Marietta Street. Like the other zones, there is at least one single-family neighborhood within the 10th Street Zone. The Home Park neighborhood, unlike the other single-family neighborhoods located along the Northside Drive corridor, spans both sides of Northside Drive and has two distinct characters. The east side is a single-family community, while the west side is a commercial and warehouse district adjacent to the CSX railroad corridor. This contains artist studios, graphic design businesses and printing shops located in adaptive reuse projects. In addition, there are a few fast food restaurants intermixed with gas stations, auto repair shops and specialty stores fronting the corridor. Near Marietta Street there are several recently constructed multi-family residential developments represented by loft-like Alta West apartments on Howell Mill and M Street apartments developed on the Central Metals site.

The North Avenue Zone is flanked by large-scale industrial properties surrounded by surface parking and commercial uses including underutilized strip centers and repair shops. The Northyards Business Park and Mean Street office development are adjacent to the CSX rail line that runs along this portion of the corridor. This zone has recently experienced new investment in the area consisting of the Georgia Tech North Avenue Research facility and the Antioch Baptist Church mixed-use development. The English Avenue neighborhood is the single-family community located in this zone and will likely benefit from the increased development interest along this section of the corridor. The Atlanta Housing Authority's Herndon Homes is immediately adjacent to surface parking for the GWCC, the Northyards Business Park and a site for a future Georgia Tech research facility.

The Vine City MARTA Zone is bounded by two regional attractions, the GWCC and the Georgia Dome, on the east and the Vine City single-family neighborhood to the west. Due to its proximity to downtown, the Vine City community fears the encroachment of the Central Business District into the neighborhood. In an effort to protect the community from development pressure and define a 20-year vision for future growth and development, the Vine City community completed a redevelopment and zoning plan in the summer of 2004, which has been adopted by Atlanta City Council. The frontage of Northside Drive consists of several surface parking lots that currently serve events scheduled at the GWCC and the Georgia Dome. The Vine City MARTA Zone is unlike the other zones in that it is the only one containing a MARTA rail station.



The Georgia Dome is a major land use in the Vine City MARTA Zone

The Atlanta University Center institutions to the west, and large multi-family housing developments and the Castleberry Hills neighborhood to the east characterize the McDaniel Street Zone. This zone has also seen major reinvestment in recent years including the Village at Castleberry Hill, which was developed on the site of the former John Hope Homes as a mixed-use community through the HOPE VI grant program. Additional multi-family residential development along the corridor includes University Homes, Northside Plaza apartments and Friendship Baptist Church Apartments. The HJ Russell & Company headquarters is located at the intersection of Fair Street and Northside Drive. This company was instrumental in developing a mixed-use development including a hotel and the new Pascal's Restaurant and several hundred housing units across Fair Street from the headquarters. Castleberry Hill, a turn of the century warehouse district, is an architecturally rich area that is becoming an urban residential neighborhood with shops, restaurants, galleries and street life. The Atlanta Baking Company is the major industrial use fronting Northside Drive.

2.2.2 Zoning

The City of Atlanta regulates the development of all real property through the use of zoning, which legally controls height, density, setbacks, parking, etc. In general, there are four main zoning districts along the Northside Drive corridor including Residential (R), Commercial (C), Industrial (I), and Office /Institutional (OI), all at varying densities. The existing zoning is shown on Figures 2-8 thru 2-12.



Figure 2-8: Existing Zoning (Deering Road Zone)

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Figure 2-9: Existing Zoning (10th Street Zone)

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Figure 2-10: Existing Zoning (North Avenue Street Zone)

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Figure 2-11: Existing Zoning (Vine City MARTA Zone)

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Figure 2-12: Existing Zoning (McDaniel Street Zone)

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The existing zoning closely correlates with the existing land use of properties along the corridor. The industrial zoning districts mostly front Northside Drive and follow the railroad corridor. The commercial zoning is concentrated on Howell Mill and at key intersections that currently contain typical convenience retail, such as fast food establishments, personal services, and repair and specialty shops. Georgia Tech, the Atlanta University Center and the mid-rise office development near I-75 have institutional zoning classifications. The single-family residential zoning districts are within the Berkeley Park, Loring Heights, Home Park and English Avenue neighborhoods. The Vine City neighborhood is covered by Special Public Interest (SPI) Zoning District 11, which includes the following sub-areas:

- Single-family residential,
- Multi-family residential,
- University-related,
- Neighborhood commercial, and
- Mixed-use.

In addition, SPI 11 regulations provide a framework of urban design regulations for the neighborhood.

2.2.3 Urban Design Assessment

The urban design analysis documents the existing elements that contribute to the aesthetics, connectivity and pedestrian orientation along the corridor. This assessment yields several issues including the following:

- Connectivity breaks,
- Physical barriers,
- Potential greenway trails,
- Gateways,
- Neighborhood entrances,
- Landmarks,
- Corridor views, and
- Intersection issues.

The urban design assessment is shown on Figures 2-13 thru 2-17.



There are several locations identified to have a lack of access or connectivity breaks to and from Northside Drive. In most instances roadways once existed, but due to development along Northside Drive, they were terminated. This specifically occurs at the bridge that connects DL Hollowell Parkway to Marietta Street.

Physical barriers including large retaining walls, privacy walls and security fencing are noted along the corridor. The obstructions often deter pedestrian movements and lessen the aesthetics of the corridor.



Figure 2-13: Urban Design Assessment (Deering Road Zone)

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Figure 2-14: Urban Design Assessment (10th Street Zone)

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Figure 2-15: Urban Design Assessment (North Avenue Street Zone)

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Figure 2-16: Urban Design Assessment (Vine City MARTA Zone)

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Figure 2-17: Urban Design Assessment (McDaniel Street Zone)

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The PATH Foundation has an east west bike facility that currently runs along Carter Street in the Vine City community connecting west of Lowery Boulevard at Washington Park to Downtown Atlanta. The Vine City Redevelopment Plan recommends enhancements to this existing system to improve the visibility and encourage increased utilization. In addition, there are discussions to develop the abandoned railroad that runs through the heart of the English Avenue neighborhood into a greenway trail.

Currently along the corridor are significant intersections or structures that have a strong visual presence and could potentially serve as a gateway. Although it is often overlooked, the railroad overpass in the Deering Road Zone serves as a gateway for the corridor. Additional gateways on Northside Drive occur at the CSX crossings, Marietta Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, and at McDaniel Street.

As previously mentioned, five single-family neighborhoods abut Northside Drive with major neighborhood entries off the corridor. In most cases these neighborhood entries are not marked with signage or identity markers and are along major arterials, which serve as east/west connectors.

Northside Drive serves several major landmarks west of downtown. These landmarks include Georgia Tech, the GWCC and the Georgia Dome, and the Atlanta University Center institutions and facilities to name a few. These, in addition to other key places of interest along the corridor are identified on the Urban Design Analysis maps.

The 4-mile corridor has diverse elevations that yield spectacular corridor views. The northern section, specifically in the Deering Road Zone is at the highest elevation thus resulting in impressive views of Downtown looking south and views of Buckhead looking north. In the North Avenue Zone, westward views overlooking Downtown are visible from the abandoned bridge at DL Hollowell Parkway/ Northside Drive. Similar views are also noted at the highpoint of Northside Drive at North Avenue. Additional skyline views of downtown are located on Northside Drive at Simpson Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in the Vine City MARTA Zone.

2.2.4 Potential Development Opportunities



A redevelopment opportunity near Northside/North

Identifying potential development opportunities is the first step to estimating physical growth potential along the Northside Drive corridor, which may include recommendations for façade improvements to existing structures, development of new open space, infill development on vacant lots or redevelopment of underutilized areas. These recommendations will be developed as a result of an interactive design charrette scheduled to occur later during the Northside Drive planning process. Figures 2-18 thru 2-22 show the potential development opportunities.



Figure 2-18: Potential Development Opportunities (Deering Road Zone)

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Figure 2-19: Potential Development Opportunities (10th Street Zone)

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Figure 2-20: Potential Development Opportunities (North Avenue Street Zone)

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Figure 2-21: Potential Development Opportunities (Vine City MARTA Zone)

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Figure 2-22: Potential Development Opportunities (McDaniel Street Zone)

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Recent development activity has occurred or is underway in each of the zones along the Northside Drive Corridor. Some of the larger developments include the Atlantic Station mixed use development, M Street Apartments at Marietta Street, Mean Street Lofts, Northyards, Historic Westside Village, and the Legacy Mixed-Use Project (containing Pascal's Restaurant).

Even though substantial development activity has recently occurred along the corridor, there are areas that have an opportunity for increased investment. Specifically, there is a significant amount of vacant and undeveloped land within each zone. Based on the physical surveys, there are properties identified that are not at their "highest and best use" either currently or assuming improvements to adjacent properties. In some cases properties identified as potential areas for change may be very large parcels with a structure surrounded by large surface parking lots. The existing developments and developments that are planned or underway along the Northside Drive corridor are identified on the series of Potential Development Opportunities maps.

2.2.5 Existing City Of Atlanta 15-Year Land Use Plan

The 15-Year Land Use Map is used to guide development that meets with the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) goals and objects established for the City of Atlanta. In general, the future land use along the Northside Drive corridor as outlined in the current CDP concentrates industrial uses along the rail lines. Low Density Commercial districts are located in areas that currently contain retail/commercial and office uses. All of the single-family neighborhoods contain a Single Family Residential designation except for Home Park and Castleberry Hill, which are designated Low Density Residential and Low Density Commercial respectively. The Office/Institutional future land use designations are assigned to the major institutional uses along the corridor including Georgia Tech and the Atlanta University Center. The GWCC and the Georgia Dome have a High Density Commercial designation.

In order to ensure the implementation of future development proposed in this planning effort, it would be necessary to make recommendations for specific changes to the City of Atlanta's 15-Year Land Use Map, which is shown on Figures 2-23 thru 2-27.



Figure 2-23: Future Land Use (Deering Road Zone)

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Figure 2-24: Future Land Use (10th Street Zone)

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Figure 2-25: Future Land Use (North Avenue Street Zone)

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Figure 2-26: Future Land Use (Vine City MARTA Zone)

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Figure 2-27: Future Land Use (McDaniel Street Zone)

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2.2.6 Observations

Due to the diverse existing land use pattern, character and density along the corridor, the corridor is an ideal candidate for a live, work and play community. The existing single-family neighborhoods coupled with the new residential development, both under construction and proposed, will strengthen the residential fabric of the corridor. In addition, the viable existing industrial and commercial uses in conjunction with the new office and research facilities will contribute to the continued development of a major employment center within the City of Atlanta. Finally, new opportunities for passive and active public spaces along the corridor will provide needed recreational options for existing and future residents.

With new development occurring along Northside Drive, there are opportunities to enhance the livability along the corridor by strengthening land uses and urban design. This is particularly true for the development and redevelopment opportunities on vacant and underutilized properties, where there are few existing physical constraints.

2.3 Transportation

This section will assess existing transportation infrastructure and provide an overview of transit service in the study area. Traffic conditions and travel patterns in the study area will also be examined to include an analysis of safety and accidents data for the corridor. Finally, future projects programmed in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and the RTP will be discussed.

2.3.1 Roadway Characteristics

Northside Drive is an urban principal arterial and is included on the U.S. Highway System, as well as the Georgia State Highway System as US 41 and SR 13, respectively. The speed limit throughout the corridor is 35 mph. Currently, Northside Drive consists of two to three travel lanes in each direction throughout the corridor. The Deering Road Zone has two travel lanes in each direction, with additional left turn lanes at key intersections, such as Bellemeade Avenue and Deering Road. The Deering Road Zone also includes an interchange at I-75 that provides both and SOV and HOV access. This interchange is one of the few in the Atlanta Region to include metering on ramp access to the interstate. From 17th Street to 14th Street, the 10th Street Zone has two travel lanes in each direction, with additional left turn lanes at 17th Street. South of 14th Street, The 10th Street Zone has three travel lanes in each direction, as does the North Avenue Zone. Within the



Northside at Nelson looking north



Vine City MARTA Zone, the corridor is three travel lanes in each direction and includes a continuous left turn lane. The McDaniel Street Zone also has three travel lanes in each direction.

2.3.1.1 Signalized Intersections

There are 19 signalized intersections in the corridor. There is an average of roughly 4 signals per mile, or approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile between each signal. This figure does not include the multiple signals at Northside Drive/Hemphill Avenue/14th Street or Northside Drive/North Avenue. Those complex intersections are considered one entity and the signals are controlled together.

2.3.1.2 Traffic Control Infrastructure

The existing traffic signals in the corridor are coordinated with 170 type controllers installed in 336 controller cabinets; however, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is in the midst of upgrading controllers along all state routes to the 2070L model. These new controllers will be installed on Northside Drive at some point in the future; however, no schedule has been established at this time.

The controllers are interconnected with fiber optics to a central system in the Atlanta Traffic Control Center. This provides the capability to support signal coordination and other Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in the corridor.

All signals in the corridor are currently pre-timed; they are non-actuated. This means the signals are not traffic responsive. During the evening peak, each signal cycle is 110 seconds. During the morning peak, each signal cycle is 100 seconds. The evening peak period runs from 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm and the morning peak period begins at 6:45 am and ends at 9:30 am. The signal cycle during the off-peak periods is 90 seconds.

2.3.1.3 Access Management

There is no access management plan in the corridor at this time. There are no shared driveways and each individual business has at least one curb cut. Several businesses within the corridor have two or more curb cuts. Medians are non-existent throughout the corridor, with the exception of the Vine City MARTA and McDaniel Street Zones, which include a center left turn lane.

2.3.1.4 Roadway Geometrics and Signage

Several areas of the corridor have steep grades, especially the Deering Road Zone and the northern end of the 10th Street Zone. Additionally, there are sharp curves on Northside Drive in the North Avenue Zone where it crosses Marietta Street, DL Hollowell Parkway (formerly named Bankhead Highway), and North Avenue. There are also a number of intersections with obsolete geometric configuration and design (e.g., turning radii, sight-lines, etc.). Directional and wayfinding signage along the corridor is also limited. Taken together these existing features make the corridor very difficult to navigate for regular users and visitors alike. This issue is particularly important given the large number of institutions that generate event traffic in the corridor.



2.3.1.5 **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**



*Broken sidewalks at
Northside/14th Street*

Bicycle infrastructure in the corridor is non-existent. There are no bicycle lanes, route signage, or wide curb lanes along Northside Drive.

In contrast to bicycle facilities sidewalks are present throughout most of the corridor; however, some of the sidewalk segments have deficiencies. These include not meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act standards for handicap accessibility and poor pavement condition. Sidewalks are intermittent in the Deering Road Zone between I-75 and Deering Road. Moving south along the corridor through the Deering Road Zone, sidewalks are in good condition and wider than five feet until Hemphill Avenue, where the condition deteriorates slightly and the width reduces to approximately five feet. In the 10th Street Zone, sidewalks are not present along the northbound portion of Northside Drive between Marietta Street and Tech Parkway. This forces pedestrians traveling north to cross the street and use the southbound sidewalks.

The sidewalks in the worst condition are in the North Avenue Zone between Marietta Street and North Avenue. Sidewalks next to the northbound travel lanes are especially dilapidated. Pavement is cracked, no buffer exists between the sidewalk and the travel lanes, and a large fence with overgrown weeds dominates this section of the corridor. In contrast, sidewalks in the Vine City MARTA Zone that parallel the GWCC and the Georgia Dome are in excellent condition. In this section of the corridor the sidewalks are very well maintained. Additionally, the sidewalks adjacent to the northbound travel lanes are over 10 feet wide. Sidewalks in the McDaniel Street Zone are generally in suitable condition, with some areas including a small grass buffer between the road and sidewalk.

2.3.2 **Transit Services**

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) provides both rail and bus service in the study area at this time; however, there are some significant issues with the existing coverage from the point of view of serving transit trips in the corridor. One concern is that the rail line runs from east to west, while the corridor is oriented from north to south. Another concern is that bus service in the corridor, while quite robust, does not connect corridor destinations directly – no route provides continuous local bus service along the full length of the corridor. Figure 2-27-A shows the current bus service as described below.

Route #37 begins at Midtown MARTA Station and travels along on 10th Street to Hemphill Avenue. At the intersection of Hemphill Avenue and Northside Drive, it continues north onto Northside Drive. There is one stop on Northside Drive. Next, it makes a brief detour onto Bishop Street in order to make a stop on Mecaslin Street. Route #37 then travels westbound on Deering



Road and continues northbound upon returning to Northside Drive. After turning left onto Bellemeade Avenue, the route exits the corridor providing connections to several neighborhoods on the west side of I-75.

Route #51 is eastbound on Simpson Street as it enters the study area. It then turns right onto Northside Drive southbound and makes a stop at the Vine City MARTA Station. With the exception of Sundays, Route #51 continues its service onto Carter Street and then Northside Drive southbound. It makes a loop around Greensferry Avenue, with a stop at the intersection of Lawshe Street and Fair Street before returning to Northside Drive.

Route #11 begins at Garibaldi Street and travels northbound to McDaniel Street. It serves the Five Points MARTA Station and terminates at Bankhead MARTA Station. It briefly travels along Northside Drive between Simpson and Kennedy Streets. The route then leaves the corridor on Kennedy Street.

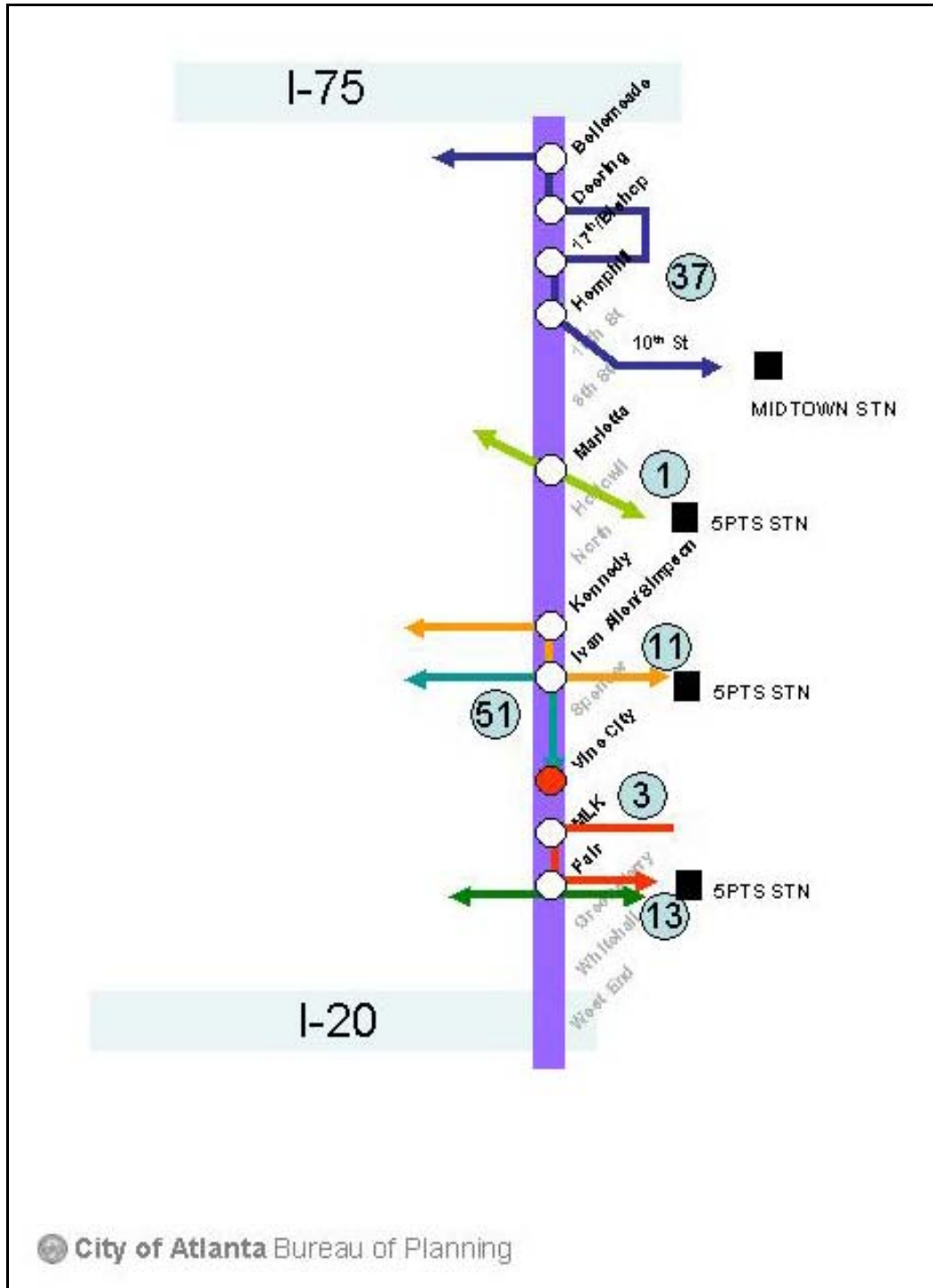
Route #1 begins at the Georgia State MARTA Station and travels westbound on Decatur Street, continuing on to Marietta Street. This route does not directly serve Northside Drive; however it traverses the intersection of Northside Drive and Howell Mill Road and makes a stop one block north at the intersection of Marietta Street and Howell Mill Road.

Route #3 traverses the southern portion of the study area near I-20. It begins at Hamilton E. Holmes Station and travels east on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive where it turns south onto Northside Drive. It follows Northside Drive to Fair Street where it turns east into Castleberry Hill and later connects to Peachtree Street.

Route #13 begins at the West Lake MARTA Station and eventually terminates at the North Avenue MARTA Station. This route is known to mainly serve the patrons of Atlanta University Center and Georgia Tech.



Figure 2-27-A: Existing Transit Service





2.3.2.1 Transit Ridership

Currently, there are a total of 16,877 average daily boardings on the bus routes that traverse the study area. The following table details the average daily boardings and headways for routes passing through the corridor.

Table 2-10: Ridership and Operating Characteristics of MARTA Bus Routes

Route Number	Average Weekday Boardings	Headways (in minutes)				
		Peak	Base	Evening	Saturday	Sunday
1	1,763	15	40	60	40	76
3	3,751	22	30	30	30	45
11	3,496	12	25	50	17	40-55
13	3,318	15	21	30	30	27
37	1,249	20	36	30	50	50
51	3,300	16	20	24	20	40

The Vine City MARTA station, which is on the West Line with proximity to the Georgia Dome and GWCC, is the only rail station in the corridor. Average weekday boardings at the station are 1,532 for the period of July 2003 to July 2004. In comparison to other MARTA stations, Vine City ranks 33rd out of 38 stations in terms of patronage. Average daily boardings are forecast to increase to approximately 2,700 by 2030.

2.3.3 Freight and Passenger Rail

There are three active freight rail lines in the corridor, which are owned and operated by CSX and Norfolk Southern railroads. An active rail line is defined for this analysis as having volumes of more than 10 trains per day. In the Deering Road Zone, the CSX railroad crosses over Northside Drive on a bridge just south of Bellemeade Street (See Figure 2-3). The main Norfolk Southern railroad crossing is on a bridge just north of Hemphill Street in the 10th Street Zone (See Figure 2-4). In addition to freight traffic, two Amtrak passenger trains per day use this overpass and provide service to Charlotte and New Orleans. Further south in the North Avenue zone, Northside Drive bridges over another rail line that is shared by both railroad companies near Marietta Street (See Figure 2-5). In the McDaniel Street Zone, there is another shared rail line that crosses Northside Drive. The crossing is on a bridge just north of I-20 (See Figure 2-7).



The abandoned Bankhead Highway Bridge over Norfolk Southern Railroad



There are also several inactive or abandoned railroads within the study area.

2.3.4 Traffic Conditions

In order to comprehensively evaluate traffic conditions in the corridor, two complementary approaches were used. The first approach used Synchro traffic modeling software and existing traffic counts to determine the level of service (LOS) for key intersections in the corridor. The second approach used data from Skycomp, Inc. produced for GDOT, along with the ARC travel demand model output to analyze traffic conditions between intersections.

2.3.4.1 **Assessment of Intersection Level of Service**

In this study, the methodology used for evaluating traffic operations at each intersection is based on criteria set forth in the Transportation Research Board’s Highway Capacity Manual, 2000 Edition (HCM 2000). Synchro software, which emulates HCM 2000 methodology, was used for the analysis.

For signalized intersections, it is necessary to consider both capacity and LOS in order to evaluate the overall operation of the intersection. The capacity analysis of an intersection is performed by comparing the volume of traffic using the various lane groups at the intersection to the capacity of those lane groups. This results in a volume/capacity (v/c) ratio for each lane group. A v/c greater than 1.0 is an indication that the volume of traffic exceeds available capacity of the intersection and may result in temporary excesses in demand and delay. Although the capacity of the entire intersection is not defined, a composite v/c ratio for the sum of the critical lane groups within the intersection is computed. This composite v/c ratio is an indication of the overall intersection sufficiency.

LOS for a signalized intersection is defined in terms of average controlled delay per vehicle, which is composed of initial deceleration delay, queue move-up time, stopped delay, and final acceleration delay. Table 2-11 presents LOS criteria for signalized intersections as they are defined by average controlled delay. LOS A indicates operations with very low controlled delay, while LOS F describes operations with extremely high average controlled delay. LOS E is typically considered to be the limit of acceptable delay; however it should be noted that the acceptable level of LOS is a policy decision. In some urban areas lower LOS is considered acceptable.

Table 2-11: Level of Service Criteria for Signalized Intersections

<u>Level of Service</u>	<u>Controlled Delay Per Vehicle (sec)</u>
A	≤ 10.0
B	> 10.0 and ≤20.0
C	> 20.0 and ≤35.0
D	> 35.0 and ≤55.0
E	> 55.0 and ≤80.0
F	> 80.0

Source: 2000 Highway Capacity Manual



Existing Traffic Operations

Existing turning movement counts were performed at the critical intersections located in the corridor. These intersections were identified based on existing traffic volumes, input from the stakeholders and field surveys. In addition to traffic counts, intersection geometric data and traffic signal phasing data were obtained. The intersections included in the study area are as follows:

- I-75 NB Exit Ramp;
- Deering Road;
- 17th Street;
- Hemphill Avenue;
- 14th Street;
- 10th Street;
- Marietta Street;
- DL Hollowell Parkway;
- Lambert Avenue;
- North Avenue;
- Simpson Street;
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive; and
- McDaniel Street.

Turning movement counts were performed between October 19, 2004 and October 26, 2004. All turning movement counts were recorded during the weekday morning and evening peak times between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., respectively. The four consecutive 15-minute interval volumes that summed to produce the highest volume at each intersection were then determined.

Existing traffic operations were analyzed at the intersections in accordance with HCM methodology. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 2-12.

Table 2-12: 2004 Intersection Level of Service

Zone	Northside Drive at	2004 Level of Service	
		AM Peak	PM Peak
Deering Road	I-75 NB Exit Ramp	B	B
Deering Road	Deering Road	A	B
10th Street	17th Street	C	C
10th Street	Hemphill Avenue	C	C
10th Street	14th Street	C	C
10th Street	10th Street	B	C
North Avenue	Marietta Street	D	F
North Avenue	DL Hollowell Parkway	B	D
North Avenue	Lambert Avenue	C	D
North Avenue	North Avenue	B	C
Vine City MARTA	Simpson Street	C	D
McDaniel Street	Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive	C	C
McDaniel Street	McDaniel Street	C	B



Currently, the Deering Road Zone has the best intersection LOS in the corridor. It is anticipated that this will change in the future as Atlantic Station completes its build out. The North Avenue Zone is the only zone that contains an intersection with LOS F in the PM peak period. Due to its current failing status, this intersection may warrant special attention.

2.3.4.2 Existing Traffic Volumes Between Intersections

To better understand the issues related to travel demand, an analysis of traffic along the corridor is necessary. Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts were collected for segments of the corridor beginning in 1997. These counts represent the number of vehicles passing a certain point of a given segment for an average weekday 24-hour period. The segments along the corridor were divided by GDOT based on the location of permanent count stations. Table 2-13 displays the AADT from 1997-2002.

Table 2-13: Corridor AADT

Segment		AADT Volumes						Avg Annual Change
From	To	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	
14th	I-75	--	24394	24182	25200	23657	24206	-0.1%
Marietta	Ethel	21548	23750	26995	26129	26614	27231	4.4%
@ DL Hollowell Pkwy.		17509	20557	25610	20493	21200	19470	1.8%
Lambert	Travis	18842	19887	24775	20520	23274	23403	4.0%
Simpson	North	26672	19608	32406	28114	28911	29582	1.8%
Markham	Thurmond	22570	21751	27097	22862	25904	26505	2.9%
Chapel	Peters	8635	7258	7614	8792	8268	8411	-0.4%

Credit: Georgia Institute of Technology, City and Regional Planning Program

Note the highest growth in traffic during the six-year period was between Ethel Street and Lambert Street, which experienced about a 4% average annual growth in traffic volume. Major thoroughfares that intersect this segment include North Avenue, DL Hollowell Parkway, Marietta Street, and 10th Street. DL Hollowell Parkway and Marietta Street are important connectors to the downtown and midtown major activity centers, while 10th Street and North Avenue represent the general north and south boundaries of Georgia Tech. Marietta Street is also the gateway for a large percentage of heavy truck traffic along the corridor. The segment including the Georgia Dome and GWCC experienced almost 3% annual growth in traffic volume, in part due to the expansion of GWCC facilities and an increased number of events and attendance at the Georgia Dome.

2.3.4.3 Future Traffic Conditions

Using the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) travel demand model volume to capacity (V/C) ratios, were determined for 2030. From the V/C ratio data, LOS for various segments of Northside Drive was determined. Traffic volumes, V/C ratios, and LOS are presented here for the evening peak period only, because traffic volumes are heaviest during this period.



In 2030, LOS in the corridor is acceptable in most zones. In the Deering Road Zone, LOS remain varies between D and E. At 4:00 pm the Deering Road Zone is at LOS D, which deteriorates to LOS E at 5:00 pm and goes back to LOS D at 6:00 pm. Of the five zones, the 10th Street Zone registers the worst LOS. At 4:00 pm, travel conditions are at LOS E. By 5:00 pm, travel conditions deteriorate to LOS F, and this continues through the 6:00 pm hour. Figure 2-28 on the next page provides a detailed overview of LOS in the corridor by time of day.

It should be noted that the consultant team concluded that the forecast conditions for 2030 presented in this section are underestimated. Future conditions will more likely be worse than forecast by the ARC travel demand model. This is based on the corridor demographic and redevelopment growth trends presented earlier in Section 2.1. As a result, city staff and the consultant team generated a refined set of 2030 demographic projections for use in the study analysis. These are discussed in Chapter 3.



Figure 2-28: Northside Drive LOS by Time of Day

(Please replace this blank page with the color figure referenced above,
available as a separate file.)



2.3.5 Congestion Management System (CMS)

The primary function of the CMS is to monitor and identify congested locations within the region. ARC has developed a Congestion Monitoring Network (CMN) based on the V/C ratio. The CMN identifies all of the roadway facilities in the region that experience considerable levels of congestion currently or in the future.

The Northside Drive corridor is part of the 2004 Congestion Monitoring Network (CMN). Poor signal timing and poor intersection geometrics are listed as causes of congestion in the CMS. Additionally, Northside Drive ranks 71 out of 73 most congested facilities in the Atlanta region. As previously mentioned, the relatively low ranking for the corridor in the CMS is likely due to the underestimated future congestion using the travel demand model.

2.3.6 Safety and Accident Assessment

To assess the relative safety of Northside Drive, the accident rate per million vehicle miles traveled on Northside Drive will be compared with the rate of accidents per million vehicle miles for similar facility types statewide. First, the accident data for Northside Drive was acquired from GDOT. Next, the statewide accident data by facility type was also acquired. Table 2-14 shows the Northside Drive accident rates by segment compared to the statewide average.

Table 2-14: 2002 Northside Drive Accident Rates by Segment

Segment		2002 Accident Rate per Million VMT	
From	To	Northside Drive	State Average
I-75	14 th Street	10.76	4.19
Ethel Street	Marietta Street	37.68	4.19
DL Hollowell Parkway	Lambert Street	9.26	4.19
North Avenue	Simpson Street	11.22	4.19
Thurmond Street	Tatnall Street	21.31	4.19
Chapel Street	Peters Street	43.25	4.19

As illustrated in Table 2-15, the accident rate for all zones of Northside Drive is higher than the statewide average rate on urban principal arterials on the National Highway System. The Deering Road Zone had the second lowest accident rate of the corridor, but is still 2.6 times higher than the statewide rate. Moving south along the corridor, the 10th Street Zone had the second highest accident rate in the corridor, at 9.0 times the statewide rate. The north end of the North Avenue Zone had the lowest accident rate, at 2.2 times the state average. In comparison, the south end of the zone had an accident rate that was 2.7 times the state average. The Vine City Zone fell in the middle, with an accident rate 5.1 times the state average. In contrast, the McDaniel Street Zone had the highest accident rate of all the zones in the corridor at 10.3 times the statewide average.



In addition to an analysis of accident rates, locations along the corridor with a high number of accidents were examined. The following table ranks the top ten locations in the corridor by total number of accidents.

Table 2-15: 2002 Northside Drive High Accident Locations

Zone	Location	Crashes	
		2000-2003	Injuries
Vine City MARTA Station	@ Georgia Dome Entrance	208	86
10th Street Zone	Just North of Hemphill Street	146	56
10th Street Zone	Between 11th Street and Ethel Street	139	68
10th Street Zone	@ Hampton Street	125	57
McDaniel Street Zone	@ Trenholm Street	111	105
Vine City MARTA Station	North of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive	96	39
North Avenue Zone	@ Western Avenue	91	33
McDaniel Street Zone	@ Nelson Street	73	40
Deering Road Zone	@ Green Street	71	26
Deering Road Zone	Just North of the I-75 Southbound Exit Ramp	63	20

Leading the list of high accident locations is Northside Drive at the Georgia Dome entrance. This location has an elevated level of event traffic, thus the high number of crashes may be due to drivers and pedestrians unfamiliar with the area. The 10th Street Zone had three high accident locations, which is expected because it had a high accident rate, as previously discussed. Rounding out the top five is Northside Drive at Trenholm Street. This intersection may warrant special attention, because an extraordinary 95 percent of crashes resulted in injuries.

2.3.7 Planned Improvements

There are several projects within the study area that are included in the Mobility 2030 RTP and 2005 – 2010 TIP project list.. These projects are given in Table 2-16 below.



Table 2-16: TIP and RTP Projects

ARC Project ID	Status	Project Limits	Type of Improvement
AR-268B	Construction	Lovejoy to Atlanta	Commuter Rail
AR-269B	Construction	Athens to Downtown Atlanta	Commuter Rail
AR-438	Construction	I-75 (I-85 to Wade Green Rd)	Ramp Meters
AR-450D	Long Range	Inner Core Northwest Quadrant	Bicycle-Pedestrian Facility
AR-450D1	Long Range	Inner Core Northwest Quadrant	Fixed Guideway Transit - New Starts
AR-450D2	Long Range	Inner Core Northwest Quadrant	Fixed Guideway Transit - Bus
AR-909B	Programmed	Cumberland to Arts Center along US 41/Marietta Boulevard	Arterial Transit Service
AT-186	PE	Norfolk Southern Rail North of US 78/278	Bridge Upgrade
AT-187	Long Range	CSX Rail South of Bellemeade Ave	Bridge Upgrade
AT-188B	Construction	Marietta Street to Northside Drive	Roadway

2.3.8 Observations

Based on the previous description of transportation conditions, several opportunities exist for improving mobility and accessibility in the Northside Drive Corridor. These include low-cost enhancements that build upon existing and proposed corridor infrastructure including signal equipment, turn lanes and automated traveler information signs signs. Such improvements can be completed in the short-term. The corridor also warrants higher cost improvements that require longer times to implement. These may include the addition of travel lanes, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian elements.

Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies are ideal for short-term implementation. TSM strategies include signal timing and optimization, intersection improvements and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) enhancements. Both the existing 170 type controllers in the corridor and the 2070L controllers they are currently being upgraded to are compatible with several TSM strategies and offer options for integration with ITS. The fiber optic interconnect is also an important component to support TSM and ITS enhancements. TSM improvements can also address minor intersection geometrics, access management, and signage and wayfinding issues along the corridor.

The lack of bicycle infrastructure in the corridor, such as bicycle lanes, greenway trails and bicycle racks is an issue. An opportunity exists to create bicycle facilities in the corridor. These opportunities could be addressed in the short term, but are likely to require a more long-term approach. In contrast to bicycle conditions, pedestrian conditions are somewhat acceptable in



most areas; however, opportunities to add or enhance existing sidewalks to make them more handicap accessible are available throughout the entire corridor. Opportunities for improvement become even more viable as support infrastructure related to development and redevelopment projects occurs along the corridor.

Currently, existing transit services in the corridor are focused on providing feeder service for MARTA rail stations. There is an opportunity to provide enhanced local transit services that increase mobility within the corridor. These opportunities may involve a combination of short term strategies focused on the introduction of new routes, and longer-term strategies such as bus rapid transit and streetcar technologies.

High levels of freight rail activity in the Deering Road, 10th Street and McDaniel Street zones present a challenge with regard to rebuilding any of the rail overpasses to accommodate transportation improvements deemed necessary in this study.

In 2030, both the Deering Road and 10th Street Zones in the northern section of the corridor have an undesirable LOS according to the ARC travel demand model. In contrast, LOS in the southern portion of the corridor is acceptable. There is more opportunity for capacity enhancing projects in the northern end of the corridor. Capacity enhancing projects are generally long term.

Due to its presence on the CMN, additional SOV capacity on Northside Drive can be justified and added to the RTP as improvement projects along the corridor. Projects that increase SOV capacity are generally long term.

The 10th Street and McDaniel Street Zones had the highest accident rates in the corridor. Additionally, the McDaniel Street Zone featured the location with high number of injuries. Another location in the corridor with a high number of accidents is the Vine City MARTA Zone at Georgia Dome Entrance. Thus, there is an opportunity to increase safety in the corridor, as all zones had accident rates higher than the statewide average. Intersection projects can play a major role in improving corridor safety.

Finally, based on a review of the TIP and RTP, there are no significant projects planned for the corridor. This includes both roadway and transit projects. Therefore, there is an opportunity to coordinate the implementation of any project concepts arising from the Northside Drive Transportation Study. Coordination efforts will include GDOT and GRTA as part of the Governor's Fast Forward Initiative, as well as, ARC and other planning partners in the adoption of Mobility 2030, the continuation of the LCI program, and the ongoing regional planning process.



2.4 Previous Plans and Studies

The Northside Drive corridor encompasses numerous intown neighborhoods. Many of these communities have completed comprehensive community based plans in an effort to proactively define the vision for the future. To some degree, almost every plan anticipated and incorporated Northside Drive in to their vision that support and strengthen the development of the Northside Drive Study.

2.4.1 Blueprint for the Greater Atlanta University Center Community

In light of citywide neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment activity, the Blueprint for the Greater Atlanta University Center Community (GAUCC) details the results of a community development process conducted for a large, interdependent area in southwest Atlanta. The area consists of the Atlanta University Center institutions and seven surrounding, but integrally linked, neighborhoods. The Blueprint focused on the development desires of the community and the AUC institutions and identified housing, economic development and public improvement projects that the University Community Development Corporation (UCDC) would undertake in ten study areas including Ashby Street, West End, West End/ Holderness, University Homes, transitional growth zones for the AUC institutions, Carter Street, Ashby Street, Lawton Street and Langhorne St.

The Blueprint acknowledges Northside Drive as one of the major gateways into the Atlanta University Center and envisions increasing visibility for the institutions from the corridor. Spelman College has recently purchased property on Chapel Street to expand the campus for institutional/ student services.

2.4.2 Terminus (2004)

Terminus is the origin and historic heart of the City of Atlanta, and the location of the proposed Multimodal Passenger Terminal (MMPT). In March and April of 2004, Terminus was studied as one of five targeted focus areas included in the Imagine Downtown planning and visioning process. The MMPT is envisioned as a potential transportation hub that could transform the surrounding blocks into a city within a city. The advent of a centralized, landmark station that included commuter bus, intercity bus and intercity rail tied to the existing MARTA system would create one of the strongest commercial building sites in the region, as well as a complementary base of higher density residential development.

The plan calls for a new commercial core surrounding the MMPT and tied into the terminal by a below grade concourse system; in addition, a new urban retail village would be developed adjacent to the Georgia Dome fronting Northside Drive which would contain convenience retail, specialty shops, and restaurants.



2.4.3 Northwest Atlanta Framework Plan (2000)

The Northwest Atlanta Framework Plan was completed in 2000 for the City of Atlanta and incorporated study areas including DL Hollowell Parkway, Bolton Road/Marietta Boulevard, Perry Boulevard/Hollywood Road, and Chattahoochee Avenue. The study area largely contains industrial uses and vacant/underutilized land, with several quickly growing neighborhoods interspersed throughout. The purposes of this study were to develop a vision for these corridors, establish a framework for guiding growth, improve corridor access, provide opportunities for retail, and stimulate development. The study designates 4,700 acres for residential use, and promotes smart growth and livable communities by creating 8 smart growth strategies. In addition, the plan recommends the creation of mixed-use development, as well as the preservation of the active industrial sites within the study area and the conversion of vacant or underutilized industrial land, where appropriate. Finally, the study advocates capitalizing on existing environmental assets such as the Chattahoochee River and Proctor Creek to create new parks, open-space linkages, and recreational facilities.

Transportation issues were also addressed by recommending various intersection and roadway improvements and the incorporation of new gateways throughout the study area. These recommendations include widening DL Hollowell Parkway from its current four-lane design between Harwell Road and Northside Drive.

2.4.4 English Avenue Redevelopment Plan (1998)

The English Avenue Redevelopment Plan addresses the needs for the English Avenue neighborhood, an inner-city neighborhood that has seen a drop in population and an increase in vacant parcels and dilapidated structures over recent years. Located in the North Avenue Zone, the area has seen renewed development attention due to its adjacency to the Georgia Dome, GWCC, and the Atlanta University Center. The plan supports new community sponsored initiatives that address comprehensive approaches to land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and public safety improvements. The goals of the plan are to preserve residential integrity and stability, prevent intrusion of non-residential land uses and restrict those uses to appropriate areas. In particular, parking and circulation issues specific to the Georgia Dome and GWCC are of a major concern to the neighborhood. The plan looks to minimize those effects wherever possible through transportation improvements and parking regulations.

Recommendations pertaining to Northside Drive include:

- Widening Northside Drive to better accommodate Georgia Dome and GWCC traffic;
- Establishing a landscape buffer between GWCC parking and the neighborhood at Northside Drive and Simpson Road; and
- Developing low-density commercial frontage on Northside Drive that is compatible in character to the adjacent single-family residential community.



2.4.5 Central Atlanta Action Plan (1999)

The Central Atlanta Action Plan (CA2P) is a strategic, streamlined action plan created to spur economic investment and development in Downtown Atlanta. CA2P was prepared by Central Atlanta Progress in cooperation with the City of Atlanta and financed in part by a generous grant from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation. The plan goals are to build upon the downtown revitalization legacies of previous central area studies and the Centennial Olympic Games, and to capitalize on current favorable demographic and development trends. It calls for improving the pedestrian environment, urban design, and network of open and green-spaces in downtown. In addition, the plan recommends heightening the visibility of Downtown's heritage while also addressing transportation concerns, such as roadway and parking conditions, bicycle and pedestrian systems, and public transit issues.

The plan recommendations relative to Northside Drive include:

- Conduct a GDOT, City of Atlanta, MARTA and ARC sponsored study to identify Northside Drive improvements;
- Improve MARTA rail stations and bus stops including the Vine City MARTA Station;
- Maintain parks and plazas (Johnson Park on Northside Drive is included in the plan); and
- Support preservation efforts of businesses and neighborhood associations in Castleberry Hill.

2.4.5.1 *Central Atlanta Transportation Study (1999)*

The Central Atlanta Transportation Study (CATS) – one element of the larger CA2P study – was conducted in 1999 by Central Atlanta Progress and is an update of a 1988 study to re-evaluate transportation strategies based on more recent development and travel trends. In particular, the imminent redevelopment activity on the western side of downtown required an assessment of current and planned transportation systems. The CATS mission is to support a balanced, complete and integrated transportation system that encourages sustainable development patterns in Downtown Atlanta. The CATS study assesses current transportation conditions and addresses anticipated future mobility needs within the areas of redevelopment and throughout the entire central Atlanta area. Recommendations included roadway and intersection improvements, interstate access enhancements, regulation of parking, and public transit improvements. In addition, the pedestrian environment was studied and streetscape and signage improvements were recommended, as well as increased pedestrian amenities including bike paths.

Recommendations related to the Northside Drive corridor include:

- Investigate the long-term needs of Northside Drive from I-75 to I-20;
- Reconstruct and improve the Alexander Street east-west corridor;
- Establish a shuttle from Atlantic Station to Arts Center; and
- Pursue a northwest rail line from Atlantic Station to Arts Center or the MMPT.



2.4.6 Castleberry Hill Neighborhood Master Plan (2000)

The Castleberry Hill Neighborhood Master Plan, completed in 2000, seeks to promote and preserve economic development and a variety of housing opportunities, and to encourage an economically and culturally diverse population in Castleberry Hill. Castleberry Hill is a unique and historic intown neighborhood that has seen an increase in development in recent years. The Castleberry Hill development plan consists of well-defined programs and projects including the formation of a community development corporation (CDC); the establishment of pedestrian-friendly streetscapes; strategies for addressing a variety of transportation and parking concerns; and the construction of a park, greenway and community center. No specific recommendations for Northside Drive were identified in this plan.

2.4.7 Greater Home Park Master Plan (2002)

The Greater Home Park Master Plan was completed in 2002 and is intended to serve as the vehicle for Home Park, in concert with its neighbors, to create a greater community of communities. The plan builds upon the theme of the contemporary urban village surrounded by, and strengthened by, the Georgia Tech campus, Midtown Atlanta, the emerging west side warehouse district, and Downtown Atlanta. Goals of the plan include encouraging development that enhances the multi-faceted character of Home Park; creating internal and external linkages that enable convenient but controlled access to amenities and services; and adding green space for public gathering and recreation.

The Greater Home Park Master Plan has several recommendations pertaining to Northside Drive, which include:

- Identifying redevelopment opportunities and refining the street grid in the existing warehouse district west of Northside Drive; and
- Implementing streetscape enhancements such as wider sidewalks, lighting and street furniture along Northside Drive to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment.

2.4.8 Vine City Redevelopment Plan (2004)

The Vine City Redevelopment Plan was completed in 2004. This plan was a joint effort of the Vine City Civic Association, community leaders, residents, and business and property owners. Over the past 30 years, Vine City, one of Atlanta's oldest inner-city neighborhoods, has experienced a loss of population, property disinvestment, and general economic decline. In addition, major flooding in 2003 destroyed many homes in the neighborhood and the area has since been designated as a Flood Recovery Area by the City of Atlanta. The plan calls for a large amount of single-family infill on existing vacant lots, as well as several new multi-family developments, including senior housing. New mixed-use projects were identified, mostly occurring on the edges on the neighborhood specifically on Northside Drive. In addition, the plan calls for a large amount of new open space and transportation improvements to several streets.

The plan addresses Northside Drive with recommendations for new mixed-use projects on existing surface parking lots. It also addresses parking issues generated by the neighborhood's



adjacency to the Georgia Dome and calls for a new parking deck with ground-floor retail space at the northeast corner of Vine City. Streetscape improvements along the western side of Northside Drive are recommended to enhance pedestrian safety and mobility. These improvements include wider sidewalks (minimum 15 feet), street trees, furniture, lighting, crosswalks and possibly a median.

2.4.9 JSA-McGill LCI (2003)

In 2003 CAP was the recipient of a planning grant through the ARC Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program. The LCI focused on long-term development strategies for the Jones-Simpson-Alexander-McGill Corridor (JSA-McGill). The JSA-McGill LCI study provides future land use, open space and transportation plans to enhance the livability, connectivity and mobility within the study area. Recommendations included developing new open space that serves to give the area an urban design focus and assure private investors of public commitment; implementing a live/work future land use classification for buildings with frontage on two streets; and targeted residential and retail mixed-use development with supportive transportation improvements.

The plan specifically recommended new streetscape improvements extending from Civic Center MARTA Station to the future World of Coca-Cola site along West Peachtree and Simpson Streets terminating at Northside Drive. ARC has funded these improvements.

2.4.10 Upper Westside LCI (2005)

The Upper Westside LCI was completed in February 2005. This study developed a set of improvements and strategies to create a more pedestrian oriented, livable area in the redeveloping industrial and neighborhood zone west of Northside Drive and north of Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway.

The plan recommends many improvements along Northside Drive between Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway and 14th Street. These include pedestrian improvements at intersections, new roadway connections and streetscaping.

2.4.11 Berkeley Park Blueprints Plan (2005)

The Berkeley Park Blueprints Plan was completed in March 2005 with the assistance of the Georgia Conservancy. Although the plan has been reviewed by the planning team by the time of this writing, this neighborhood plan was completed too late to be fully integrated into this study. This plan, however, does attempt to capture many of the recommendations of the Berkeley Park plan with regard to Northside Drive.



2.5 Summary of Issues and Opportunities

Opportunities to implement transportation projects in the corridor exist. TSM projects, bicycle and pedestrian opportunities, enhancements to transit service, and safety improvements are specific examples of opportunities in the corridor. Transportation improvements must be coordinated with and supportive of real estate development trends and land-use recommendations.

Currently, the corridor is one of the most dynamic development areas in the City of Atlanta. As such, it is undergoing a rapid increase in residential development. Additionally, the corridor is also a major employment center within the City.

Atlantic Station, located in the northern portion of the corridor, will dominate office market in the corridor. In addition to Atlantic Station, an office node is emerging in the southern part of the corridor at North Avenue. This node includes Northyards Business Park and Georgia Tech North Avenue Research Campus.

Transportation and land use opportunities are presented by the real estate market conditions in the corridor. As development occurs in the corridor, transportation infrastructure will be necessary to support it. Additionally, land use regulations that reflect market conditions will be required.

Change in land use on the Atlantic Station site, from abandoned steel mill to massive mixed-use development affects transportation needs and the real estate market in the corridor. Simultaneously, other nearby development is taking place, notably the redevelopment of the former Castlegate Hotel site and a new residential development on the Northwest corner of the Northside Drive and Bellemeade Avenue. In the southern end of the corridor, development activity includes several mixed-use projects with large residential components, such as M Street and the Antioch Baptist Church mixed use development.

Land use in the corridor is responding to market pressures by becoming denser over time. An opportunity exists to integrate transportation and land use plans with market conditions.



2.6 Study Purpose and Need

Twelve proposed purpose and need statements for the study have been drafted based on thorough review and analysis of the data and information presented in the Issues and Opportunities chapter. Additionally, the Core Team provided input to the proposed purpose and need statements. These statements are divided into transportation and mobility, land use, and urban design categories. The statements are listed below:

Transportation and Mobility:

1. To facilitate local trip-making there is a NEED to provide improved connections between activity centers within the corridor;
2. Due to the number of activity centers within the corridor there is a NEED to provide improved connections and access to the regional transportation system;
3. Given the increasing residential base in the corridor there is an NEED to provide access from the corridor to regional activity centers;
4. In order to support the number of large institutions and industrial land uses in the corridor, there is a NEED to efficiently move freight along Northside Drive; and
5. Given the high level of anticipated growth over the next decade there is a NEED to significantly increase the ability of the Northside Drive corridor to accommodate increased travel demand for all modes of transportation.

Land Use:

6. There is a NEED to provide and preserve land uses that support and enhance existing neighborhoods including businesses, public parks and open space;
7. Due to the growth trends and proximity to the urban core of Atlanta there is a NEED to develop land along the corridor to higher and better uses;
8. There is a NEED to preserve, protect and strengthen existing neighborhoods, institutions and cultural resources;
9. To maintain the balance of jobs and housing in the corridor, there is a NEED to provide a range of housing options, specifically for low to moderate income populations; and
10. There is a NEED to diversify the employment base to provide an adequate match of jobs and housing.

Urban Design:

11. Due to substandard roadway design and a lack of signage there is a NEED to make the corridor more user-friendly for commuters, residents and visitors; and
12. Given the trends towards mixed and higher intensity residential uses in the corridor there is a NEED to provide a lively, pedestrian-oriented, and aesthetically pleasing street environment.