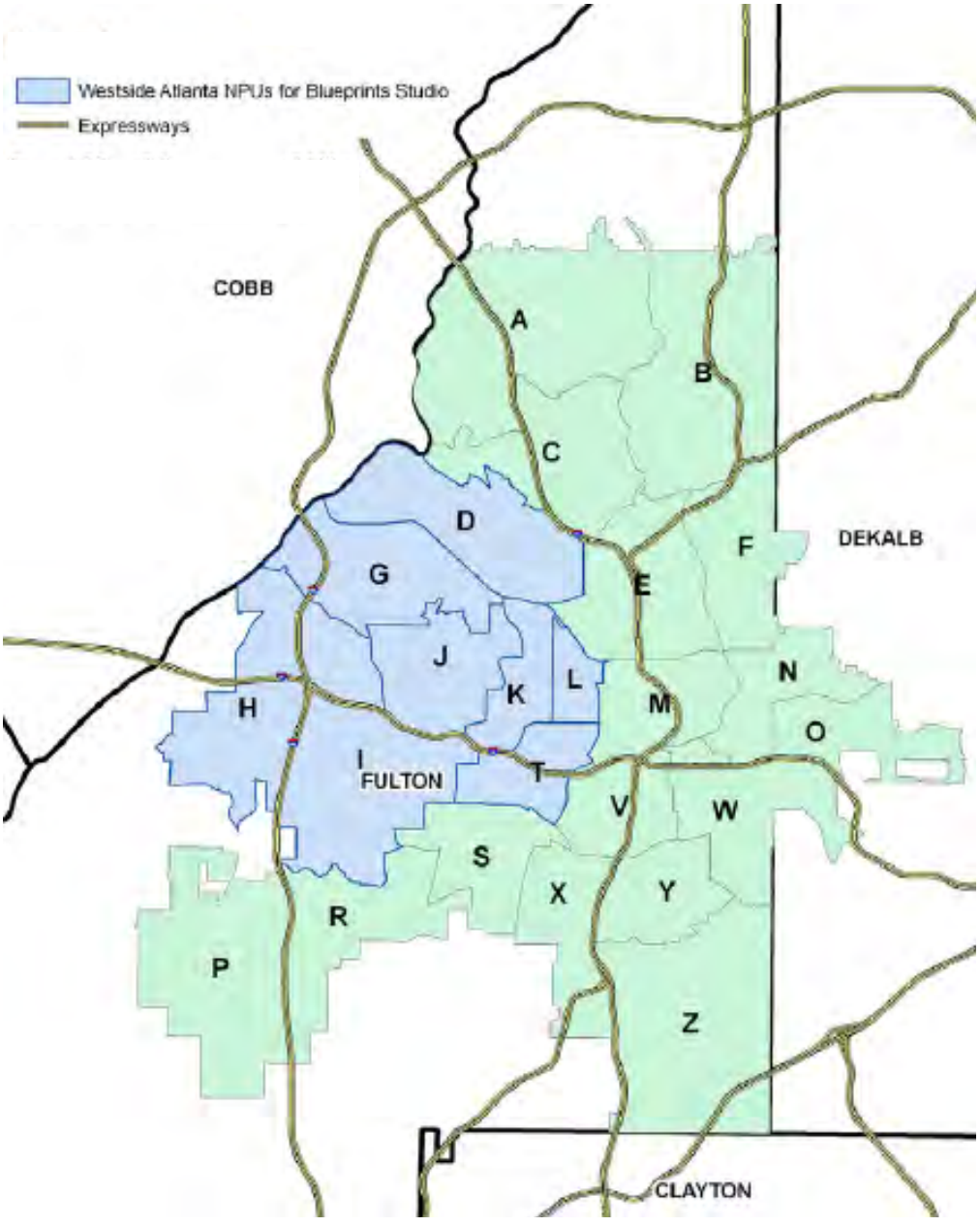
Westside Atlanta

Blueprints for Successful Communities

Fall 2007



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1.0 Executive Summary

Figure 1.0a: Westside Atlanta in Context

Source: GIS data provided by the Georgia Tech Center for GIS.

Figure 1.0b: Westside Atlanta Base Map

Source: GIS data provided by the Georgia Tech Center for GIS.

1.0 Executive Summary

The Georgia Conservancy's *Blueprints for Successful Communities* and the Georgia Institute of Technology's City and Regional Planning program have partnered together to create a community development study for the City of Atlanta's Westside communities. The *Blueprints* study area followed the boundaries defined by Atlanta BeltLine Inc., (ABI), in conjunction with its BeltLine planning process. The approximate physical boundaries of the study area are Northside Drive to the east, Interstate 20 to the south, Marietta Boulevard to the north and the city limits to the west. This area covers almost one quarter of the City of Atlanta and includes all or portions of Neighborhood Planning Units D, G, H, I, J, K, L and T. Refer to the Appendix for Figure 7.3a: West Atlanta Neighborhoods and Figure 7.3b: West Atlanta NPU Map.

Westside neighborhood members and community leaders were central to the *Blueprints* planning process and identified the assets, challenges, and community visions for the Westside. This process included a series of four community meetings as well as an all-day urban design charrette with students in Georgia Tech city planning and architecture studios.

Under the guidance of Georgia Tech Associate Professor Michael Dobbins, the planning and architecture studios explored Westside planning opportunities within the framework of Housing, Transportation, Land Use, and Environmental subgroups. The studios sought to balance development and redevelopment proposals with the preservation and enhancement of the Westside's existing assets. The overarching goal was to propose methods to encourage vibrant walkable and well-connected communities.

The studios reviewed existing Westside planning documents in an effort to synthesize plans that have been underway since the 1990's. Students explored the Westside by car, bike, and foot in order to document and experience existing conditions firsthand. This work was the starting point for exploring the Westside's resources, planning opportunities, and specific community recommendations for the future of the Westside. These recommendations have been included in this report as reference tools and guides for the Westside communities in their ongoing dialog and relationship with developers, city officials, citizen advocate organizations, the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA), the Atlanta Development Authority (ADA), Atlanta Beltline, Inc. (ABI), as well as the many other Westside stakeholders.

Four main areas of concern were identified during the *Blueprints* process. These topics include Land Use and Urban Design; Housing and Community Development; Transportation; and Environment. Within this report each area of concern is explored through the following sub-categories: existing conditions and issues; possibilities and resources; and recommended actions. In the remainder of this section, a summary of the general existing conditions in the study area will be discussed. This will be followed by a brief summary of how each of the four main areas of concern were explored during this process.

1.1 Existing Conditions

1.1.1 Industry & Commerce

Westside Atlanta was central to the economic rejuvenation that occurred in Atlanta after the Civil War. The Norfolk Southern Inman Yards and CSX railroad terminals that converge in this area attracted a heavy industry and warehousing district that supported the industrial needs of the region. Westside Atlanta flourished as an industrial hub through the 1960's, connecting

Atlanta with other commercial centers. However, economic and demographic trends of the mid-twentieth century led to changes within the Westside. People began to move to the suburbs in greater numbers and the area's core industries began to decline. Many of the industrial buildings were abandoned due to out-sourcing and changes in warehousing needs. The neighborhoods on Gun Club Road and Perry Road suffered from the location of a city landfill, which brought externalities such as odor and high volumes of truck traffic, which further compounded the heavy truck traffic associated with both the railroad yards and the Bellwood Quarry.

Figure 1.1a: Railroad Bridge

1.1.2 Infrastructure - Existing & Vacant Buildings

The closing of businesses and industries have left behind many vacant lots and buildings. Some are both visually stunning and architecturally significant. Community pride has led to the preservation of several historic landmarks within the Westside community. However, there exists great potential to further build on these community assets. Several buildings on the Historic Register are currently being renovated. One such gem is the old Carnegie Library on Donald L. Hollowell Parkway. The building directly behind the Carnegie Library is an abandoned school that the Board of Education plans to sell. This presents an opportunity to use historic preservation as a catalyst for redevelopment.

1.1.3 Neighborhoods & Churches

The Donald L. Hollowell Parkway, Hollywood Road, and Bolton Road corridors began to develop around 1872 when a streetcar line was extended from present day downtown Atlanta to the Chattahoochee River. These corridors created the thriving neighborhoods of Almond Park, Carey Park, Collier Heights, Center Hill Grove Park and Watts Road. Beautiful linear pocket parks can be found within several neighborhoods. Attractive churches and granite, brick and clapboard homes are found throughout the study area. The many churches within the study area provide examples of civic structures which are ingrained within the fabric of the existing neighborhoods.

Figure 1.1b: Paradise Baptist Church

Figure 1.1c: Church located in the study area

Figure 1.1d: Architecture within the study area

Figure 1.1e: Architecture within the study area

1.1.4 Parks

Due to new development and recent increases in Westside property values, communities are beginning to revisit the roles that greenspaces play within the community. Additionally, there is an interest in bringing multi-modal paths into the fabric of the community, connecting neighborhoods and creating alternative modes of travel. Neighborhood parks, such as Maddox Park shown here, are remarkable assets that are capable of both attracting and influencing the quality of new development.

Figure 1.1f: Maddox Park Pavilion

Figure 1.1g: Park space within the study area

1.1.5 Demographics

Population

According to the 2000 Census, there were 59,237 people located in the Westside Study Area. The population is mostly black (96.6%), with 2% white. For the total population, the median age is 36.25 years old. The Atlanta Regional Commission projects the population of the Westiside

to reach 87,724 people, an increase of 29.4%, by 2030. Refer to the Appendix Figures 7.3c and 7.3d for population density and percentage of black population maps.

Housing Units
In 2000 there were 22,580 housing units. The occupancy rate of these units (86%). Of these occupied units, 33% are owner-occupied and 53% are renter-occupied. The majority of occupied units are 1-person (26.7%) and 2-person households (23.3%). Of the vacant units, 30% are for rent and 6.5% are for sale. The remainder of the vacant housing units are abandoned by their owners.

Households & Families
As of 2000, there were 19,414 total households with 50,587 people in these households. The average household size was 2.49 people. Refer to the Appendix Figure 7.3e for the household income map.

1.1.6 Westside Atlanta Community Assets

- Population density is an asset near the eastern portion of the study area. It can support new development
- Presence of several MARTA train stations.
- Proximity to downtown Atlanta
- Close to sports facilities
- Wonderful traditional single family neighborhood character that needs to be preserved
- Historic Buildings
- Shady pocket parks in neighborhoods with houses that face onto these parks
- Strong community leaders and city council representatives
- Strong community and legal support systems, including Georgia Standup, Legal Aide Georgia, Atlanta Housing Association of Neighborhood-based Developers (AHAND), Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Georgia Conservancy

1.1.7 Westside Atlanta Community Challenges

- Lack of retail and large chain grocery stores in the area
- Concerns about slow police response times for burglaries
- Lack of affordable and accessible housing
- Bowen Homes, Bankhead Courts, and Hollywood Courts are closing in the study area, and many community members are being relocated – There is Community concern that vouchers are handed out with little guidance in meeting the challenges of relocation and reaching jobs in the city from new locations.
- New infill houses being built in single family neighborhoods are incompatible in scale and architecture with existing housing.
- Lack of affordable housing near the University area for students and educators
- Lack of mixed-use, condominiums and apartments near University area
- Not enough green space on the south side of the study area. Underutilized greenspace on the north side of the study area.
- Sidewalks not adequate or are in disrepair.
- Lack of MARTA bus shelters
- MARTA buses do not continue downtown. They stop at the MARTA Train Stations.

1.1.8 Westside Atlanta Community Vision

- Affordable housing for the poor and the very poor
- Accessible housing for the physically challenged
- Pedestrian friendly streetscapes throughout the Westside
- Additional MARTA bus shelters spaced along routes
- MARTA bus routes that carry riders into the city, and not just to the MARTA Station
- Case sensitive relocation by AHA of each individual or family having to move from public housing projects that are scheduled to be demolished and redeveloped
- Character of single family neighborhoods preserved, not just selected houses or public buildings
- Density around retail and commercial areas, leaving existing single-family residential areas intact and buffered from these areas
- Mixed-use development on the main roads and at busy intersections
- Blighted areas along main thoroughfares cleaned up
- Truck routes clearly defined and enforced
- Quality grocery stores
- Parks maintained and safety policies enforced
- Additional greenspace added to area, with emphasis on access to the new Westside Park and its proposed amenities
- Cleanup of old industrial sites and environmentally unsafe areas.

1.2 Land Use and Urban Design

The Westside study area is mostly comprised of single-family neighborhoods, with areas and corridors of industrial development scattered throughout the neighborhoods. Land use and urban design challenges for the Westside include a lack of shopping opportunities and amenities. Through the *Blueprints* process existing land use conditions were reviewed and possibilities for the addition of mixed-use development at busy intersections and along existing commercial corridors was explored.

Of additional concern is the planned closing of several public housing properties by the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA), including Bowen Homes, Hollywood Courts, and Bankhead Courts. This document contains proposed policies and community action plans that are intended to empower the Westside communities as they face decisions and challenges associated with the closing and eventual redevelopment of these housing properties.

Quality of Life Zoning, which has already been adopted by the City of Atlanta, and new housing types are explored within this report to give those with lower incomes better quality housing options and greater access to neighborhood amenities.

1.3 Housing and Community Development

Residential areas within the Westside study area are largely comprised of single-family neighborhoods of one-story ranch style homes built during the 1960s and 1970s. Within community meetings, residents voiced concerns about the types of infill housing being built within the study area. The prevention of "out-of-place" infill houses was a primary goal considered in the *Blueprints* process.

Additional housing and community development challenges in the Westside study area include the provision of low-income and affordable housing. The recent increase in infill development, as well as the impending displacement of over 2,000 Westside residents due to the planned closing of several public housing projects by the AHA has had an undeniable affect on housing affordability and neighborhood character within the Westside.

This report explores the opportunity to utilize Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) to provide Westside residents with single-family and multi-family housing options located in mixed-use nodes along corridors with close proximity to public transit.

1.4 Transportation

The existing transportation network on the Westside provides connections between neighborhoods, parks, schools, shopping centers, jobs, and other essential locations. In addition, the transportation network also provides regional connections to employment centers outside of the study area. Transit and roadways not only serve local residents and businesses but also traffic passing through the Westside. The studio considered the Westside's transportation network with the view that it should provide for the safe and efficient movement of not only cars, trucks, and buses, but also pedestrians and bicyclists.

Recommendations, within this report, include typologies for better understanding and managing the Westside's street network and explorations of rail transit options. A descriptive street typology provides a means to consider the street network as it interacts with the character of surrounding development. The descriptive typology reflects the idea that "design dictates use," in which street design is considered a primary influence on the actions of road users.

Existing Westside transit service, particularly rail transit, does not currently provide adequate transportation options for a growing and well-connected Westside. Transit proposals within this report focus on providing both local and regional connections. An extension of the MARTA line from Bankhead along Perry Boulevard to Cobb County is proposed. This extension represents a fulfillment of the promise of MARTA to extend rail to the former Perry Homes site, which is now the site of West Highlands.

Additionally, transit proposals are congruous with land use and housing recommendations to concentrate future development around transit nodes and preserve the character of the Westside's existing single-family neighborhoods. The Westside represents a real opportunity to create TODs around existing and proposed MARTA stations.

1.5 Environment

The Westside of Atlanta has a wealth of greenspace amenities. These include natural systems, such as Proctor Creek, as well as a variety of park facilities. Additionally, the Westside has several notable cemeteries that add to the area's greenspace holdings, while also preserving historic and cultural values. Greenspace amenities exist on both public and privately owned land and should be further protected through management of existing holdings and new acquisitions.

Management of parks on the Westside appears to focus largely upon active recreational values and uses. Consequently there is the opportunity to reassess how residents use and envision their greenspaces and the potential to place a greater emphasis on passive recreational

greenspace values of nature preserves and greenways. This has been explored in this report through the identification of undeveloped lands with environmental amenities that are adjacent to existing park holdings.

Community feedback during *Blueprints* meetings indicated support for greater preservation of natural systems within the Westside. As Proctor Creek runs along or through several city parks, there is the potential for city management to place greater emphasis on Proctor Creek as a natural connection within the Westside. Additionally, utility corridors that run from Westside Park to the Chattahoochee River present the opportunity for greater connectivity between Westside greenspaces and adjacent neighborhoods.

A significant Westside environmental issue is the prevalence of brownfield sites which can be found throughout the study area. The City of Atlanta has 46 sites on the Hazardous Site Inventory, 19 of which are located in the Westside study area. These hazardous sites are in various stages of cleanup and redevelopment. These cleanup efforts indicate an increasing economic interest in Westside Atlanta.

1.6 Conclusion

The proposed recommendations within this report were produced through a collaborative and multidisciplinary effort. Communication between the Westside Neighborhood Planning Units, the community and faith leaders, as well as the tremendous support and diplomatic efforts of the Georgia Conservancy provided the Georgia Tech studios with the opportunity to participate in the creation of a community vision for the Westside. It is the hope of those who have participated in this process that the final report becomes a tool that the Westside can utilize in further exploration, articulation, and implementation of this community vision.

*Prior to the publishing of this report the Atlanta Housing Authority completed the demolition of the following housing projects located in the Westside Communities:

- Bowen Homes
- Bankhead Courts
- Hollywood Courts
- Herndon Homes

2.0 Land Use and Urban Design

2.1 Existing Conditions and Issues

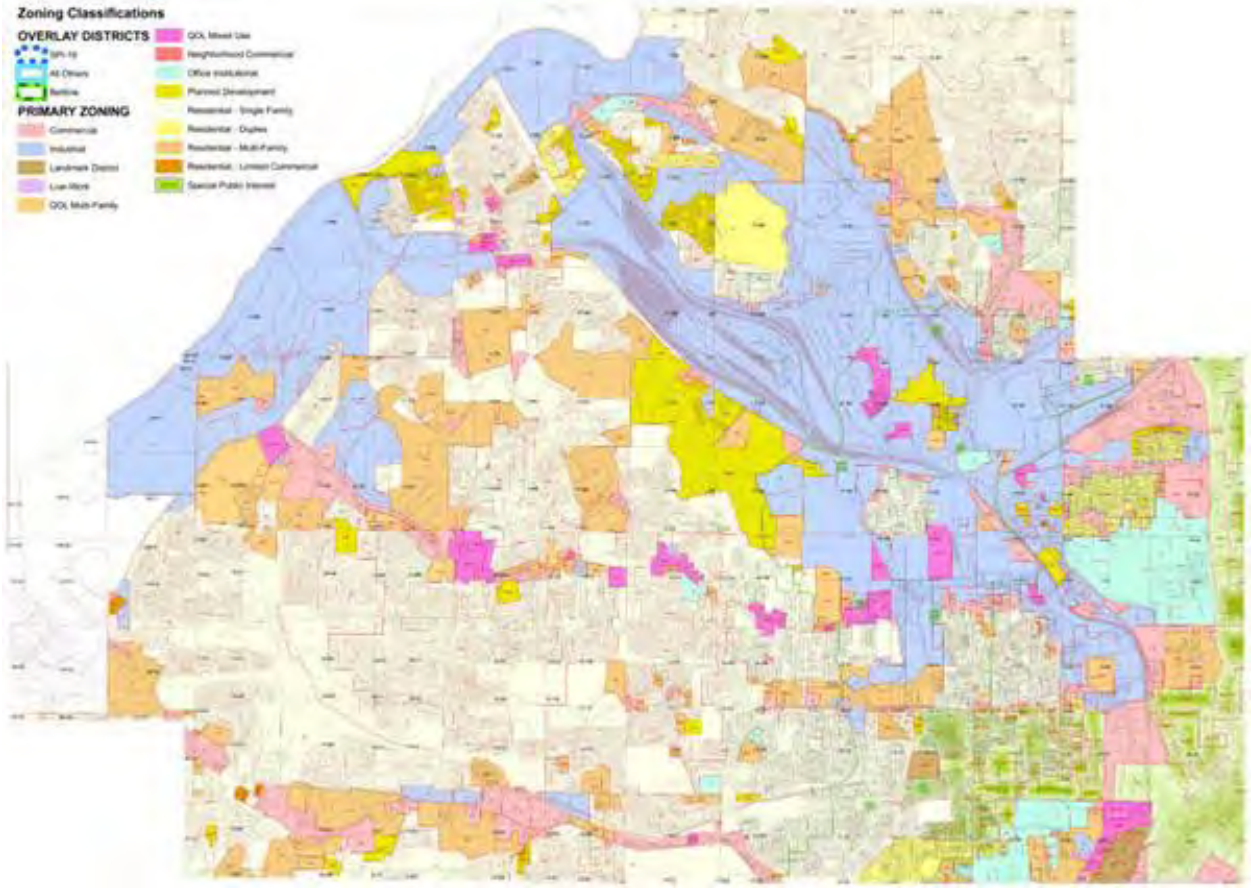

Figure 2.1a: Zoning of the City of Atlanta
Source: City of Atlanta, Bureau of Planning, 2007

2.1.1 Existing Zoning

Westside Atlanta is split into several distinct but general zoning classifications. In the neighborhoods closest to the central city core, there is a mix of Special Public Interest (SPI), residential, and industrial zoning, with limited commercial zoning. The areas west of downtown/midtown are mostly zoned residential, with commercial and quality of life zoning along specific east-west transit corridors. The northwest sector of the Westside extending primarily along the rail transit corridors are primarily zoned industrial, with scattered residential and multifamily zoning. Finally, between Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway and the main railroad industrial zone to the north is zoned mixed residential with a significant percentage being multifamily residential.

The conventional zoning that characterizes most of Westside Atlanta, tends to isolate residential, commercial, and industrial uses into distinctive zones. This approach to zoning has proven detrimental to city neighborhoods in a number of ways:

- Encourages dependence on vehicles and urban sprawl

- Fails to provide neighborhood residents with nearby amenities
- Discourages sidewalk infrastructure and creates a dangerous environment for pedestrians
- Increases traffic congestion
- Minimizes transportation options
- Creates visual blight

Figure 2.1b: Conventional Zoning Existing Condition
Courtesy: City of Atlanta

2.1.2 Quality of Life (QOL) Zoning

Recognizing the harmful effects, as stated above, the City of Atlanta has already put in place Quality of Life Zoning (QOL) in Westside Atlanta as part of the Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway Redevelopment Plan (Refer to Figure 7.3f in the Appendix for a map of the Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway Redevelopment Plan). According to the City of Atlanta Bureau of Planning, the purpose of Quality of Life Zoning is to correct a number of deficiencies in current zoning practice. These actions include:

- promoting aesthetics of the built environment
- safe, pleasant, and convenient pedestrian circulation and amenities
- transitions between urban densities to reinforce visual continuity and linkages
- desirable multi-family housing
- encouraging compatible mixtures of residential and commercial uses

QOL zoning also requires the implementation of certain design concepts that steer development away from a strip-mall mentality, which tends to intimidate potential patrons. Instead, the requirements of QOL zoning help create unique districts that are inviting and visually appealing to pedestrians. The new zoning includes specifications on sidewalk design, landscape buffering, building façade design, as well as parking and street design. Among these requirements are wide sidewalks with street furniture and trees, buildings that allow an entrance from the sidewalk, a minimum size for ground floor windows, a minimum building height of 18 feet, and the consolidation of driveways to make the area more pedestrian friendly. Refer to Figures 7.3g and 7.3h in the Appendix for QOL zoning images.

QOL zoning is comprised of five main zoning classifications. These are Neighborhood-Commercial, Live-Work, Mixed Residential-Commercial, Multi-Family Residential, and Special Public Interests. Each of these zoning classifications corresponds to a current range of zoning classifications.

- Neighborhood Commercial roughly corresponds to existing C1, C2
- Live-Work corresponds to I1, I2, C1
- Mixed Residential-Commercial corresponds to C1, C2, and C3
- Multi-Family corresponds to existing RG zoning.

Zoning Classification	Abbreviation	Function
Neighborhood Commercial	NC	Provides neighborhoods with close-at-hand goods and services, including neighborhood-scale retail, offices, and multifamily housing options
Mix Residential-Commercial	MRC	Provides commercial and multi-family uses at several different intensity levels
Live-Work	LW	Provides residents the opportunity to operate small shops and galleries out of townhomes, lofts, and apartment buildings
Multifamily-Residential	MR	Allows for several different levels of multifamily housing with small commercial uses allowed on the ground floor.
Special Public Interest District	SPI	Provide the highest density mixed-use areas, and are generally located around MARTA rail stations and in business centers.

Table 2.1c: Zoning Classifications

2.2 Possibilities and Resources

2.2.1 Quality of Life Zoning Possibilities:

Figure 2.2a: Quality of Life Zoning Possible Outcome
Courtesy: City of Atlanta

There is potential for Quality of Life Zoning expansion for the entire Westside study area. Conversion to QOL zoning would require initiative of the community and the support of Atlanta Bureau of Planning, as well as time and funding.

Currently commercial and mixed use zoning in the Westside study area are concentrated on east-west corridors with few defined north-south corridors. The informal north-south traffic corridors that exist in the Westside follow major roads through primarily residential-zoned neighborhoods. This presents a possible opportunity to form a more cohesive corridor framework which can allow major traffic routes to be reformed into mix-use commercial corridors. That would encourage economic activity as well as reduce the amount of vehicular traffic through purely residential neighborhoods.

Three corridors have been identified as possible areas which could potentially be rezoned through use of the QOL zoning ordinances to more specifically reflect their potential use as commercial centers. These corridors are denoted by a dotted red line in Figure 2.2b, and are located on the north-south corridors of West Lake Avenue, Chappell Road, and one of the current existing rail lines abutting Maddox Park between Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

Each of these corridors is a continuous connection between Hollowell Parkway and King Drive, and also passes through primarily residential neighborhoods directly zoned adjacent to the right

of way. Along these corridors, nodes of higher intensity QOL zoning can also be potentially placed at intersections, notably along Simpson Road.

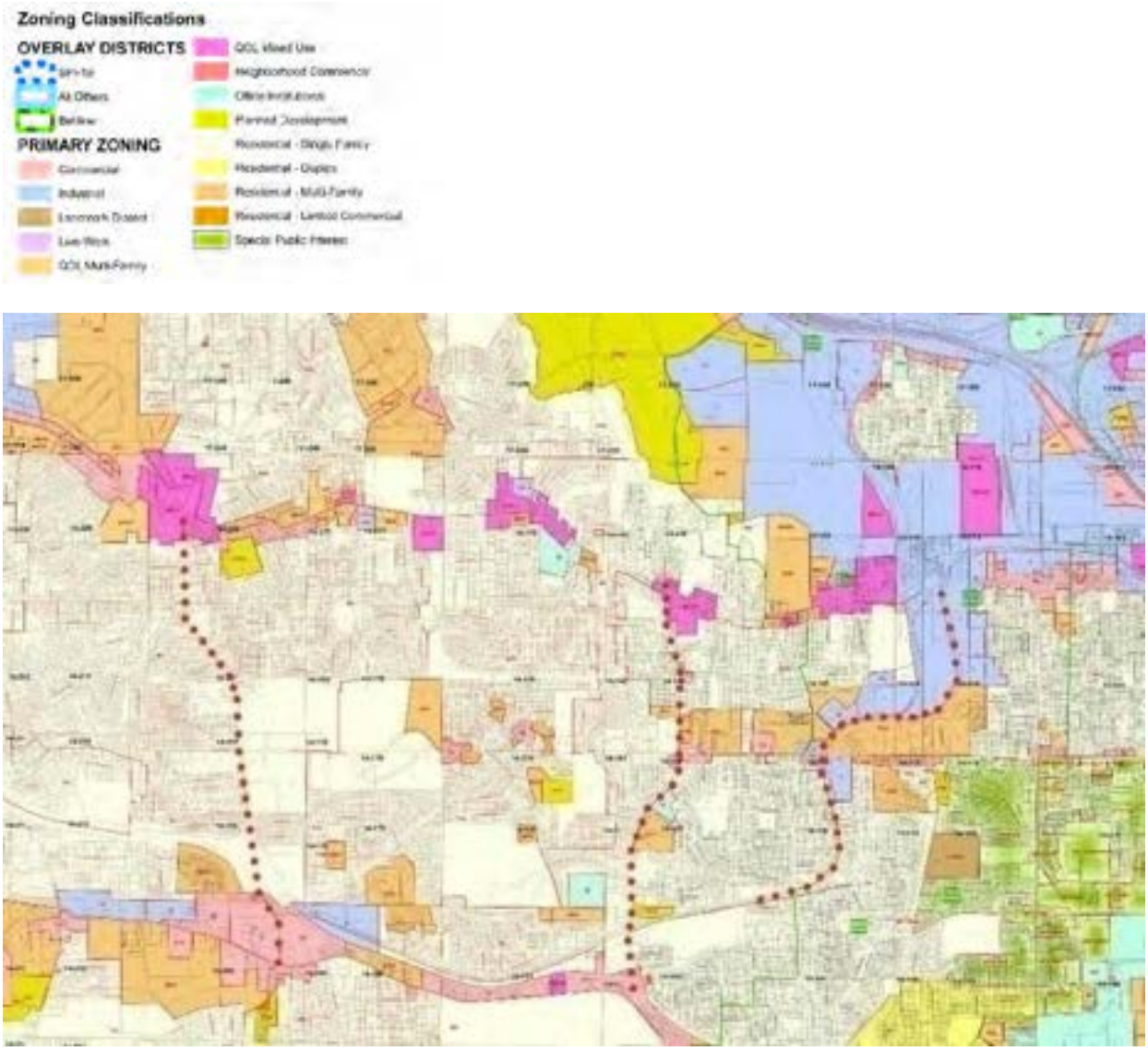

Figure 2.2b: Possible North-South zoning corridors for the Westside study area
Source: City of Atlanta, Bureau of Planning, 2007

2.2.2 Questions to be raised include:

- What do you want the neighborhood corridors to look like? Feel like? Act like?
- Is the rezoning of certain sections of residential neighborhoods a desirable idea, and if so, what is the time frame that such development rezoning can be achieved in?
- Who would fund these developments? Are there incentives that might be used?
- Have there already been feasibility studies conducted of these specific corridors that can be used as references for what these corridors could be?

2.3 Recommended Actions

2.3.1 Quality of Life Zoning

Any QOL zoning in the Westside district should be primarily low-to-mid-rise residential, with a maximum residential Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 3.196. Non-residential uses should be restricted to 20% of residential floor area and limited to the first floor. These uses should also be restricted in size to neighborhood-serving businesses. Certain nonresidential uses, such as truck stops, automobile service stations, funeral homes, car washes, and similar uses should be prohibited.

2.3.2 Transitional Height Plane Adjacent to "R" districts

All proposed MR and MRC districts are subject to the Transitional Height Plane requirements adjacent to R (Single-family) zoning districts. This ensures a step-down in building scale and prevents the blockage of light onto single-family homes.

2.3.3 Quality of Life (QOL) Corridors Actions:

- Simpson Road Node Proposals: In 2006, the City of Atlanta completed a Corridor Study Redevelopment Plan for Simpson Road. The community can utilize this plan to inform them of potential opportunities at the intersections ripe for nodal development. Refer to Figure 2.3a for an image from the Simpson Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan. The full report can be found online at www.atlantaga.gov.
- Urban Design Land Use Pattern Categories: In order to enhance the character of the various corridors and nodes that may be revitalized in the future, the Simpson Road Urban Design Land Use Pattern Categories, part of the City of Atlanta's Simpson Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan, can be designated as appropriate for proposed corridor and node development throughout the Westside. These land use patterns can enhance the character of the various corridors while maintaining the cultural heritage.
- Cluster Mixed-Use elements at major Nodes
- Incorporate new QOL zoning in the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Be sensitive to interactive relationship between land use and transportation
- Protect single family residential neighborhoods from high density development
- Preserve neighborhood character by encouraging appropriate infill development
- Provide affordable housing for the very low-income families making $20,000-$30,000/year.

Figure 2.3a:
2006 Simpson Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan
Courtesy: City of Atlanta

2.3.4 Recommendations for Implementation for Hollywood Road Area include:

- Establish a mixed-use development node in the corridor at the intersection of Hollywood Road and Bankhead Highway.
- Establish 2 smaller neighborhood nodes: 1 at the intersection of Hollywood Road, Bolton Road and Main Street and another at the intersection of Hollywood Road and Perry Boulevard.
- Encourage mixed-use development (retail/office/residential uses) at Hollywood Road and Bankhead Highway intersection to create the critical mass necessary to support a wider range of uses.
- Develop a minor gateway at Hollywood Road and Bankhead Highway.
- Re-use the Grove Plaza building for a restaurant.
- Ensure that various traffic and transportation projects get implemented.
- Provide bus shelters at certain locations with bus schedules posted.
- Encourage developers to review the development and investment opportunities for the corridor.
- Coordinate with One Stop Capital Shop to provide technical assistance to small businesses.

2.3.5 Guiding Principles of the Donald Lee Hollowell/Martin Luther King Jr. Tax Allocation District (TAD)

In 2006, the Atlanta Development Authority (ADA) and the City of Atlanta created the Donald Lee Hollowell/Martin Luther King Jr. TAD. This TAD was formed to incentivize private investment in commercial and residential development in the Westside of Atlanta. The full report can be found on ADA's website, www.atlantada.com. Below are some of the principles from this TAD that should be utilized throughout the Westside.

- Create appropriate transportation linkages between commercial corridors and the neighborhoods
- Create entryways to define, unify, and establish a distinct identity for the area
- Improve public safety
- Promote infill housing opportunities, reinvestment, and new housing construction
- Identify areas appropriate for medium density housing & single family housing rehabilitation
- Target specific commercial nodes for rehabilitation
- Create a transit-oriented mixed-use development node around the MARTA station
- Promote reutilization of abandoned or underutilized industrial and commercial buildings and maintain live/work opportunities
- Identify brownfield and vacant/underutilized properties with the aim of preparing them for redevelopment
- Assess the compatibility of land zoned for industrial uses with adjacent development
- Encourage preservation of natural resources
- Assess whether more park space is needed
- Promote economic development
- Provide support for small businesses
- The Hollowell/M.L. King TAD redevelopment plan also identifies three "activity nodes" as having significant development potential. These include:
    - Center Hill node
    - James Jackson Parkway node

    - Woodmere node
- Bankhead Courts and Bowen Homes have potential as mixed-income communities redeveloped along the AHA's HOPE VI model.
- Public Improvements to be made within the TAD include:
    - New parks and open spaces
    - Pathways and trails, many linking the area's parks
    - Roadway improvements and enhances
    - Sidewalk and pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements
    - Land assemblages and/or site preparation for private commercial and residential development
    - Construction of new public facilities
    - Improvements to the area's basic water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure

3.0 Housing and Community Development

3.1 Existing Conditions and Issues

3.1.1 Brief History of Atlanta Public Housing

The first housing projects in the United States were built in Atlanta during the Great Depression of the 1930's for a low income white population. After WWII, there was a dramatic expansion of public housing projects as low income neighborhoods were eliminated by new policies of expressway construction and Urban Renewal. Public housing in Atlanta remained segregated until 1968. Civil Rights legislation insured that those who were seeking to enter public housing would no longer be screened on the basis of race.

Atlanta's public housing projects increased in number until Atlanta had one of the highest concentrations of public housing residents per capita in the United States. The presence of other poor residents in the city gave Atlanta the second highest concentration of poverty in the country. In 1994 HUD named the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) one of the worst housing authorities
in the Nation. In 1994 Dr. Renee Glover became the new executive director of the AHA. One of her goals was to take advantage of the federal HOPE VI program funding to reduce the high concentrations of poverty through the demolition of the worst public housing projects and redevelopment of the sites with mixed-income housing.

3.1.2 HOPE VI

Under HOPE VI qualifying displaced residents would be able to either move back into the new development or use Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers to search for housing in the region. HOPE VI legislation made grants available to local housing authorities for the revitalization of the most distressed public housing. HOPE VI developments were not only subject to affordability, but accessibility requirements that prohibited discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities, such as the AHA. Federal requirements for HOPE VI mandated one-for-one replacement of any public housing that was torn down until Congress repealed this legislation in 1995.

Between 1996 and 2003 the AHA razed more than 5000 dilapidated apartments throughout the City and leveraged approximately $184 million of federal grants into roughly $2.5 billion of private investment, public improvements, and related economic activity.

The 10-year HOPE VI program was not reinstated by Congress in 2002. However, Atlanta's Housing Authority renamed their HOPE VI program the "Quality of Life Initiative." This initiative follows the model established by HOPE VI and will allow the more than 5000 residents of public housing projects that are slated for demolition the opportunity to escape an environment of concentrated poverty.

Within the Westside, Bowen Homes, Bankhead Courts, Hollywood Courts and Herndon Homes are slated to be demolished by 2010. As of February 2007, all four projects were more than 90% occupied. When demolition occurs, 1244 housing units will be gone and their occupants displaced (Atlanta Journal Constitution article, February 15, 2007). Refer to Figure 3.1a and Table 3.1a for information on these housing projects.

*Prior to the publishing of this report, the AHA has demolished the above mentioned housing projects.

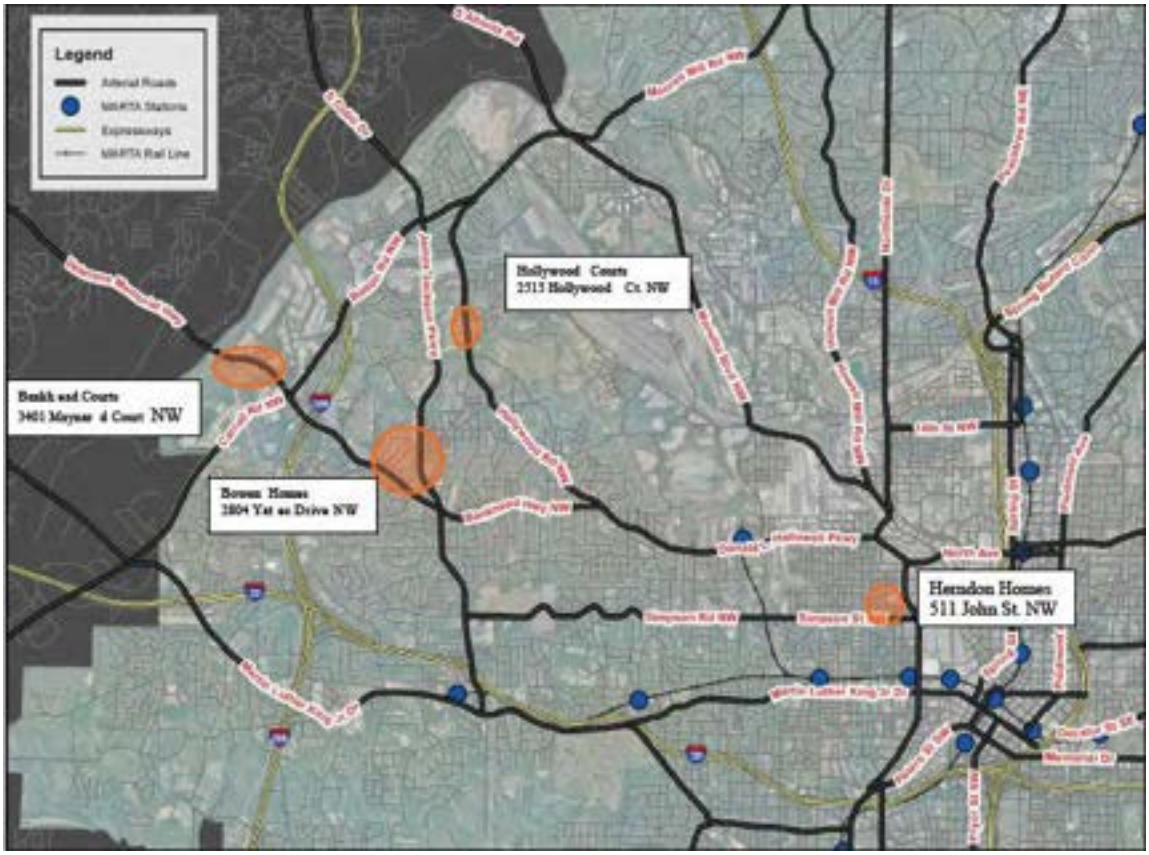

Figure 3.1a: Affordable and Public Housing
Source: GIS data provided by the Georgia Tech Center for GIS

PUBLIC HOUSING	CONSTRUCTION DATE	NUMBER OF UNITS	NUMBER OF RESIDENTS	OCCUPANCY RATE	AVERAGE RENT (PER MONTH)
Bowen Apartments 2804 Yates Drive, NW. Atlanta, GA 30318	1964	650	1,872	95.2%	$226
Bankhead Courts 3400 Maynard Drive, SW. Atlanta, GA 30331	1970	392	1,344	91.9%	$271
Herndon Apartments 511 John Street, NW. Atlanta, GA 30318	1941	273	629	99.3%	$250
Hollywood Courts 2515 Hollywood Court, NW. Atlanta, GA 30318	1969	202	600	99.0%	$252

Table 3.1a: Public Housing

3.1.3 Infill Development

According to community members at a *Blueprints* community meeting, many of the new houses being built are incompatible with existing single-family traditional neighborhoods. Infill development is not reflecting the character of the existing housing stock. Instead, the new housing stock is characterized by:

- Large front porches
- Driveways leading straight to the center of the house
- Out-of-scale, flat facades with little architectural detail
- Less expensive building materials, such as vinyl siding, standard windows etc.

Figure 3.1b: 398 West Lake Drive

Figure 3.1c: 1102 Simpson Road

3.2 Possibilities and Resources

3.2.1 West Highlands at Perry Boulevard Redevelopment

Figure 3.2a: West Highlands

Figure 3.2b: West Highlands Homes

Perry Homes was an ill-fated public housing project in northwest Atlanta. Economically and socially isolated, the deteriorating complex housed extremely low-income families which were predominantly single-women heads of household. In 2002, the 1,072 units of Perry Homes public housing were demolished.

The West Highlands Partnership was created to redevelop the housings projects including: the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA), the City of Atlanta, Columbia Residential, Brock Built Homes, Perry Golf Development, Fulton County, Georgia Power, YMCA, ABLE, 360 Housing, and the Atlanta Public Schools. The redevelopment of Perry Homes, now called West Highlands at Perry Boulevard was created, including:

- Number of Single Family Homes = 1,100 units
- Number of Multifamily Rental = 700 units
- Total Project Cost = $400 million
- Total Acreage = 460+ acres with 97 acres of greenspace
- Planned Community Amenities = 18-hole golf course, 3-acre Town Center Park, YMCA, Public Library, and School

West Highlands at Perry Boulevard is comprised of five housing developments:

- Columbia Estates-multifamily housing
- Columbia Heritage- senior housing
- Columbia Parc Citi- multifamily housing
- Columbia Crest- multifamily housing
- Columbia Grove- multifamily housing

3.2.2 Traditional Single-Family Neighborhoods

The majority of the Westside study area is composed of single-family houses built in the 1950s and 1960s. Some of the characteristics of the traditional single-family houses in these neighborhoods include:

- Single story
- Garage access offset on the front of the house
- Awnings
- Flat roof lines
- Screened front porches
- Use of iron for banisters; architectural detail, and screen doors, etc.

Residents at the *Blueprints* community meeting expressed interest in maintaining the character of their single-family traditional neighborhoods, while accommodating for other types of housing. The most advantageous placement of higher density housing units should be located along the major corridors near MARTA stations, and at major nodes within the Westside study area rather than scattered throughout the single family neighborhoods.

Figure 3.2c: 50 Morris Brown Drive

Figure 3.2e: 1417 North Avenue

3.2.3 Infill Development

When asked what type of housing is needed in the area, residents responded with:

- Affordable housing near the University area for both students and educators
- Mixed-use condos and apartments
- New housing near retail and commercial areas
- Apartment complexes to attract young people, which then attracts commercial activity

3.2.4 Community Vision

Residents would like to see the development of density around retail and commercial areas. This will help provide for the range of housing options needed in the area. Also, by focusing development, traditional single-family homes are preserved from redevelopment. Residents also wanted the development of mixed-use developments on the main roads.

3.3 Recommended Actions

3.3.1 Transit Oriented Development as a Solution for Housing

Given the needs and desires of the community, providing for an increase in density around major transit nodes and corridors would preserve the existing single family housing stock. The introduction of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) corresponds with the needs and wants of the community in regards to maintaining and creating housing stock, increasing density in pre-determined areas, and providing for an increase in transit options.

3.3.2 Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Regional planning techniques are being used to shape development into high-density, compact, mixed-use neighborhoods, towns and cities. TOD is the development of compact, pedestrian-friendly communities centered around high quality train systems. This makes it possible to live a higher quality of life without complete dependence on a car for mobility and survival. By focusing compact development around transit stations, TOD capitalizes on the value of public infrastructure investments and promotes sustainability. These development synergies promote increased transit ridership for transit agencies. In addition to increased ridership, TOD also is a successful tool for promoting local economic development, helping communities plan for sustainable growth, and increasing overall quality of life in a region.

The extension of the Proctor Creek MARTA line was proposed, but never realized. There have been many advocates for the extension of this MARTA line into Cobb County. Figure 3.3a demonstrates how the Proctor Creek line could look if extended. The benefits of such an extension will be discussed in the transit section of this report.

Figure 3.3b details the walkability of each existing and proposed MARTA station on the Westside of Atlanta. The interior radii are a walking distance of ¼ mile or 5 minutes from the MARTA station. The middle radii are a walking distance of ½ mile or 10 minutes. This is generally the accepted distance that people are willing to walk. The final exterior radii are a mile walk from the center of the station, or a 20 minute walk.

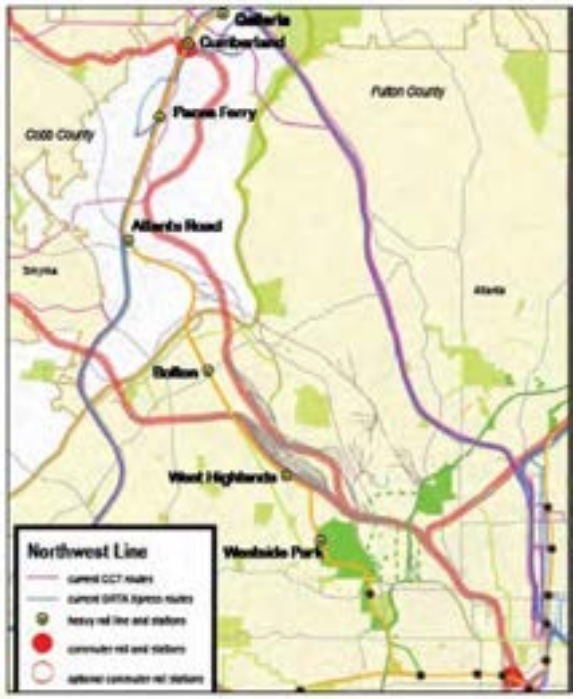

Figure 3.3a: MARTA Proctor Street Extension
Source: Ryan Gravel

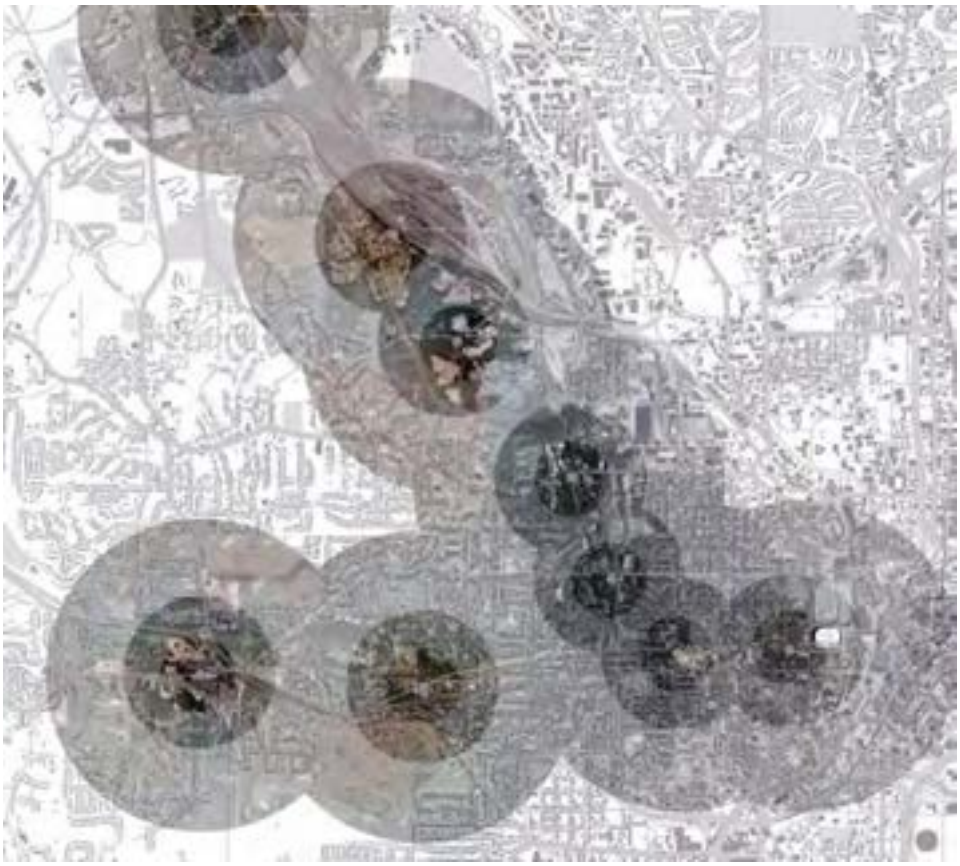

Figure 3.3b: TOD Walkability Map

3.3.3 Benefits of Transit Oriented Developments

- Better places to live, work, and play
- Increased mobility
- Increased transit ridership
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Reduced car accidents and injuries
- Reduced household spending on transportation
- Healthier lifestyles with more walking
- Higher, more stable property values
- Increased foot traffic and customers for area business
- Reduced dependence on foreign oil
- Reduced air pollution

3.3.4 Components of Transit Oriented Developments

- Walkable design in which the pedestrian has the highest priority
- Train stations as the prominent feature of town center
- Regional node containing a mixture of uses in close proximity including office, residential, retail, and civic uses
- High density, high quality development within a 10 minute walk surrounding the train station
- Collector support transit systems including streetcars, light rail, and buses
- Designed to include easy use of bicycles, scooters, and rollerblades as daily support transportation systems
- Reduced and managed parking inside 10 minute walk around town center/ train station

Refer to Figures 7.3j and 7.3k for images of example TODs.

3.3.5 Implementing Transit Oriented Developments

There are 4 main procedures by which a TOD may be implemented:

1. Specific Plan- Implements the comprehensive plan in 1 of 3 ways:
    - By acting as a policy statement that refines the general plan's policies with respect to a specific land area
    - By directly regulating land use
    - By combining detailed policies and regulations into a focused scheme of development
2. Planned Unit Development (PUD) - A PUD allows a local government to control the development of individual tracts of land by specifying the permissible form of development in accordance with the local PUD ordinance.
3. Development Agreements - Under this, local governments agree to "freeze" the regulations applicable to a particular parcel, often in consideration for substantial contributions by the landowner to public infrastructure, environmental mitigation, or affordable housing.
4. Capital Improvements Program (CIPs) - This provides the mechanism for staging/sequencing the transportation improvements needed to accommodate a TOD. CIPs usually include a list of transportation facilities that will be made available, when the facilities will be available, the funding mechanisms used to finance the facilities, and the capacity of the facilities in order to demonstrate the availability of future infrastructure to developers.

3.3.5 Transit Oriented Development in Georgia

Case Study: TOD at Lindbergh MARTA Station

As of 2007, MARTA had 9 TOD projects either being planned, in the negotiation stages, or under construction around its stations. These stations include Lenox, North Avenue, Medical Center, Chamblee, Sandy Springs, Avondale, King Memorial, Lakewood/Ft. McPherson, and Lindbergh Station.

MARTA's Lindbergh Station Development was the first development selected to pilot the Federal Transit Administration's 1997 Policy on Transit Joint Development, a project focused on policy revisions intended to encourage transit agencies to take a more active role in the development of station-area lands. Lindbergh Station also represents the first time a transit agency took the primary role in developing the properties surrounding the train station.

In 1998, MARTA put out a request for proposals (RFP) for the 47-acre site around the Lindbergh MARTA Station in Buckhead. The station was the second busiest station in the rail network, serving as the major bus transfer point for over 600 buses daily. The RFP called for intense residential and office mixed-use development:

- a program of over 2.4 million square feet of office space
- 225,000 square feet of retail space
- more than 700 residential units
- a 190-room hotel, and the required parking needed for this type of development.

3.3.6 Lessons Learned from Lindbergh Station

There were many lessons learned during the development of the Lindbergh TOD:

1. Community involvement is essential to creating good projects
2. Research shows that too much parking has a deleterious effect on transit ridership, aggravates traffic congestion, and drives up the cost of projects
3. TOD projects should be integrated into their surroundings and investments in pedestrian infrastructure and streetscape improvements are vital
4. Affordable housing needs to be a component of TOD
5. TOD cannot solve congestion and emissions problems without supportive policies and investments at the regional and state level

Figure 3.3g: Lindbergh Station
Source: http://www.theslatinreport.com/

Figure 3.3h: Lindbergh Station
Source: http://www.urbanenthusiast.com

3.3.6 Recommendations for AHA's Quality of Life Initiative

AHA's Quality of Life Initiative affects the entire population of distressed public housing developments, including the elderly, the ill, and other residents who would not adjust well to displacement. Case sensitive intervention by the AHA could go far in mitigating these concerns and challenges.

4.0 TRANSPORTATION

4.1 Existing Conditions and Issues

Figure 4.1a: Westside Atlanta MARTA Bus Routes

4.1.1 Public Transit

The existing public transportation framework in the Westside Communities consists of a heavy rail system and bus routes, but much is left to be desired. MARTA's Blue and Green Rail lines serve the area along with seven bus routes. The bus routes are as follows:

Route #	Route Name	Weekday Peak Frequency	Weekday Off-Peak Frequency
1	Coronet Way	20 min.	30 min.
26	Perry Blvd.	30 min.	30 min.
53	Grove Park	40 min	1 hour
58	Bolton Road	20 min.	30 min.
60	Hightower/ Moores Mill	15 min.	15 min.
50	Bankhead	20 min.	40 min.
59	Bankhead Court	40 min.	40 min.

Table 4.1a: Bus Frequency

While the bus system serves the area, the headways for some of the routes are long and may not be adequate for transit uses. With Westside communities being so vast and spread out, it is likely that servicing such a large area is difficult for MARTA. The long lag times are a deterrent for users, especially for those who have transportation choices. Increased transit ridership depends on increased density in areas that transit serves. In order for this to occur we recommended some alternative routes for expanding the public transportation infrastructure within Westside Atlanta. Currently, bus routes feed the rail system providing riders with a connection to the heavy rail system. This works from a system standpoint, but often times bus and rail connections have long lag times requiring riders to wait up to 40 minutes for a bus if they arrive just after the bus leaves the station.

The process of evaluating expanded transit for Westside Atlanta began with looking into the existing public transportation infrastructure on the Westside. It was clear that bus headways were too long in many cases. With significant rail and road infrastructure already in place, it became clear that a more substantial rail or bus rapid transit system is feasible on the Westside. Although much of the area does not currently have the density to support transit, there are many things that suggest that transit will be needed in the next 25 years as the area grows and becomes more densely populated. New developments are coming to the area, and new transit service would help to focus this development to specific transit-oriented modes.

4.1.2 Demographics

Another step in the analysis process was to look at the demographics of the area. Two of the demographic features we examined while analyzing the transit routes are:

- Household income
- Population under 18

Figure 4.1b shows that the route along Perry Boulevard (in pink) would serve a lower income population than would the route along Marietta Boulevard. Since lower income populations are often transit dependent, it is important that the transit system try to meet their needs so that all people have access to jobs, goods and services. Perry Boulevard would thus effectively serve the larger number of people needing transportation options.

Figure 4.1c illustrates the percentage of population under the age of 18. Often times youth under the age of 18 rely upon public transportation as their primary means of transportation because they often do not have access to vehicles. Many transit riders of this demographic take transit to school, to recreation and to jobs. Again the Perry Boulevard route (in pink) would serve a greater number of riders under 18.

The elderly population was also looked at in this analysis but their population in this portion of Atlanta was found to be quite small. In most cases the elderly population was less than 20%. However, the south side of the Inman Rail Yards, along Perry Boulevard, has a higher concentration of elderly people.

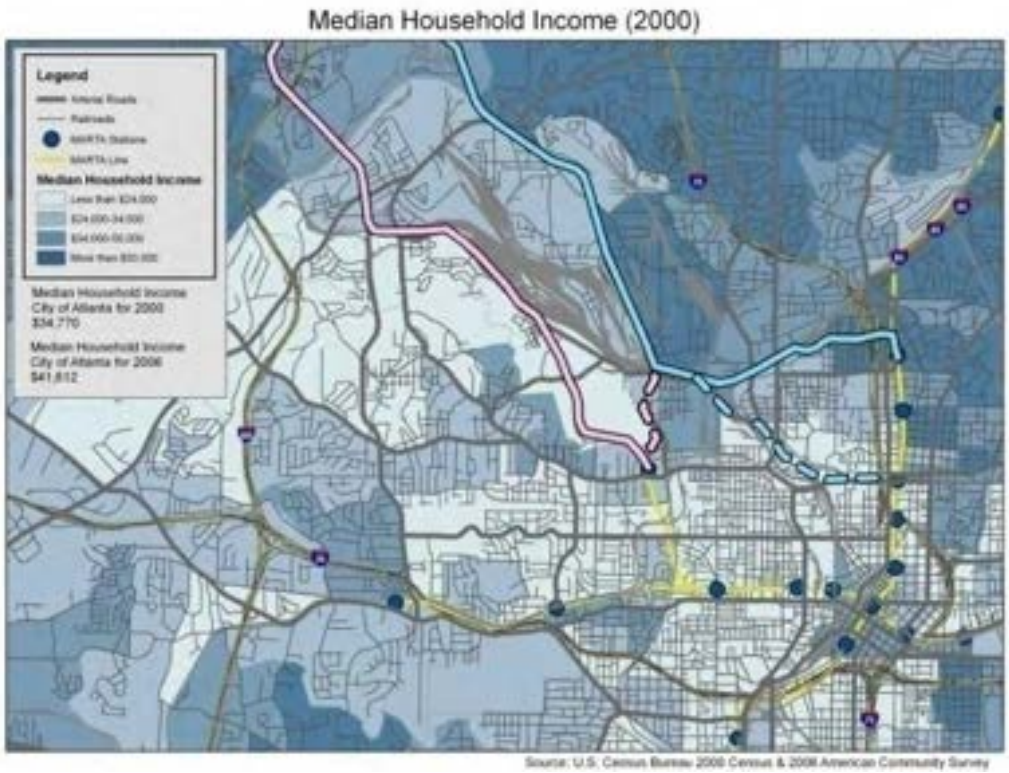

Figure 4.1b: Median Household Income (2000)
Source U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Census & 2006 American Community Survey

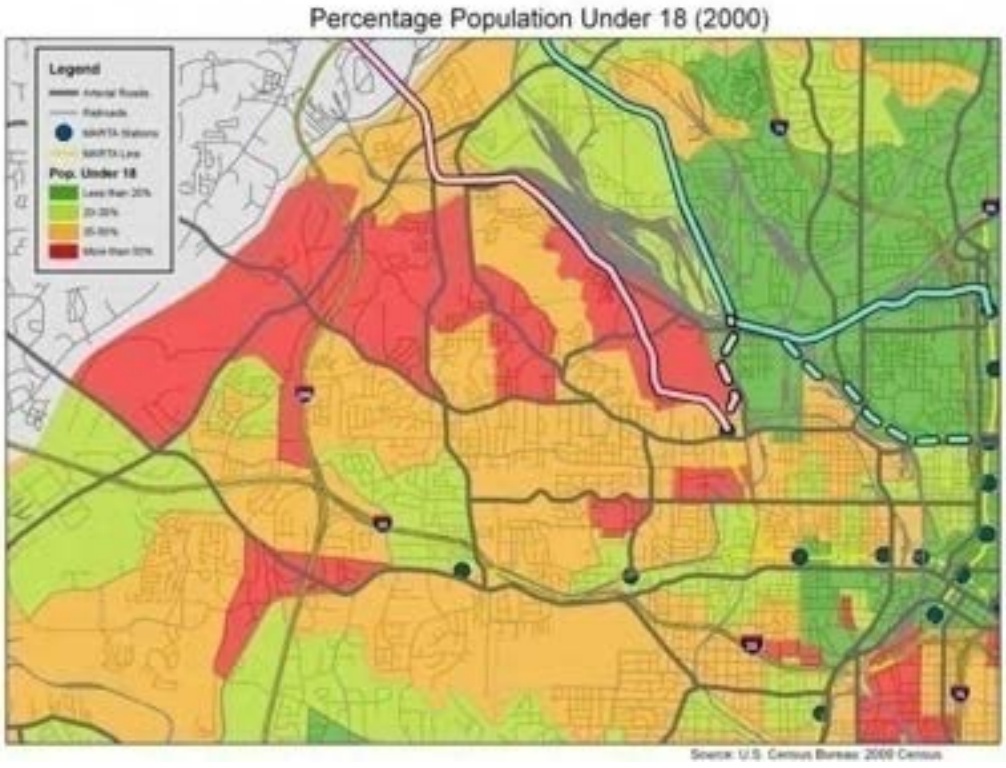

Figure 4.1c: Percentage Population Under 18 (2000)
Source U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Census

4.1.3 BeltLine Transit

Another consideration is the likelihood of the BeltLine serving part of this area. Upon discussion with people working on the BeltLine, it was clear that there are still numerous issues surrounding the routing of the BeltLine in this area. Due to the continued use of freight track in the corridor, it is clear that transit in this area will likely be many years away. Additionally, there is not a clear way for the BeltLine to connect with MARTA at this point in the planning process. Considering this, we looked at serving the Westside Park with a MARTA extension from the Bankhead station.

4.1.4 Westside Street Network

The Westside's street network provides connections between neighborhoods, parks, schools, shopping centers, jobs, and other essential locations. The streets serve as regional connectors as well as routes for thru-traffic that passes through the Westside. One way to better understand this network is through a functional classification system which assigns street types based on the type of traffic, traffic volume, the origins and the destinations that these routes serve. This offers a very car-oriented view of the streets.

A street network, however, must provide not only for the safe and efficient movement of cars, trucks and buses, but also pedestrians and bicyclists. Furthermore, not every street should look or feel the same. Often in the study area, the land use and the street design are not compatible. A descriptive street typology provides an alternative way to look at the street network. It shapes the streets to fit with the surrounding land use character, neighborhood, retail, industrial, etc., while providing for the needs of all road users. This descriptive typology reflects the idea that "design dictates use." Street design can encourage road users to act in a pedestrian way – like driving slowly through residential or commercial areas and more quickly through industrial areas – or discourage unintended users such as trucks from choosing the road altogether

4.1.5 Functional Street Classification

Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Designations
Roadways in the Westside study area are classified based on American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Functional Street Classification System for Urban Areas [1]. An urban area is a geographical place (with boundaries designated by State and local officials) with a population of at least 5,000. Urban areas can further be characterized as urbanized areas (population of 50,000 or greater) or small urban areas (population between 5,000 and 50,000). The map below shows the AASHTO functional classifications applied to streets in Westside Atlanta.

[1] Described in AASHTO's A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets 2004 (also known as the "Green Book") and GDOT's Design Manual

Figure 4.1d: AASHTO Functional Street Classifications for the Westside Study Area
Source: Fulton County Classification Map, GDOT Division of Planning, Data, and Intermodal Development

Streets in urban areas are classified as:

- Urban Interstate Principal Arterial – A principal arterial that is designated as an Interstate highway (Examples: I-285, I-20).
- Urban Freeways and Expressways – A principal arterial highway with full control of access (with preference given to through traffic) that is designed to provide high levels of safety and efficiency in moving high volumes of traffic at high speeds (Example: none in study area).
- Urban Principal Arterial – Streets that carry most of the trips entering and leaving the urban area as well as most of the through movements bypassing the central city (these are usually long-distance trips). The system typically carries important intra-urban and intercity bus routes as well. Finally, it provides continuity for all rural arterials that intercept the urban boundary (Example: Hollowell Parkway).
- Urban Minor Arterial – A street that intersects and supports the urban principal arterial system, accommodating moderate-length trips and providing greater levels of mobility and limited access to local development (Examples: Marietta Boulevard, James Jackson Parkway).
- Urban Collector Street – A street that provides land access and traffic circulation within residential, commercial, and industrial areas. It distributes trips from the arterial system to destinations and also collects traffic from local streets in residential neighborhoods and channels it into the arterial system. It may also carry local buses (Example: Simpson Road, Perry Boulevard).
- Urban Local Street – Any street not included in one of the higher systems that permits direct access to local land uses. It offers the lowest level of mobility, usually does not contain a bus route, and discourages through traffic (Examples: Marietta Road, Chappell Road).

City of Atlanta's Designations

The City of Atlanta's functional street classification also adheres to AASHTO's designations, although it does not distinguish between principal and minor arterials. In this case, an "arterial" street is one that provides for through trips (generally of longer duration than those carried by collectors and local streets) while balancing the need for access to abutting land (from GDOT Design Manual). Refer to Figure 7.3m in the Appendix for the GDOT and City of Atlanta Street Designation table.

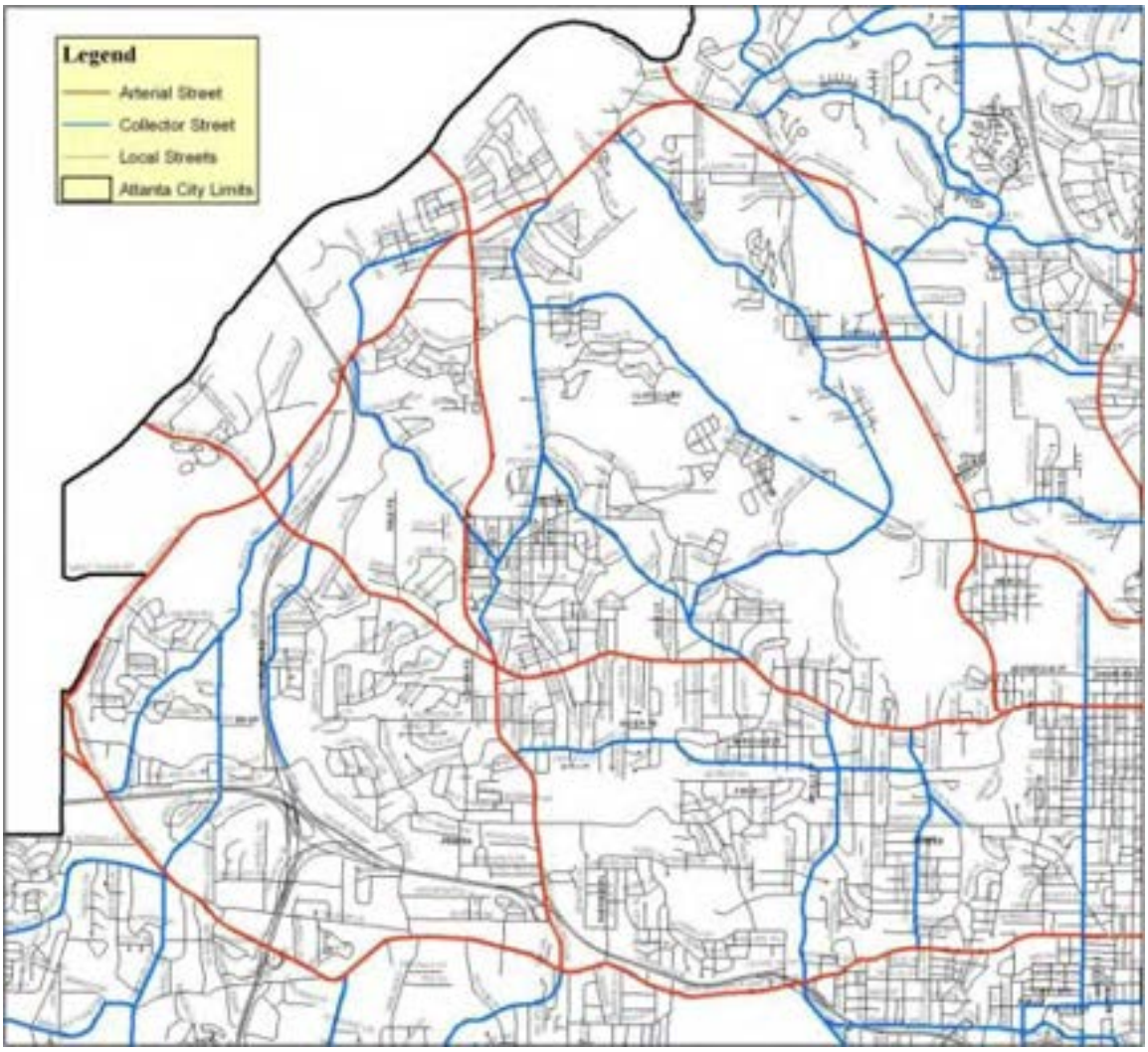

Figure 4.1e: Functional Street Classifications for the Westside Study Area

Source: City of Atlanta, Public Works Department

The functional classification provides guidance to transportation engineers when designing / improving streets. By considering the street's function in addition to anticipated traffic volumes, the designer can select the most efficient and cost effective design speed and geometric design to achieve the necessary level of service and provide for the mobility of anticipated users. As indicated by the class definitions, a functional classification refers only to vehicular use of the streets. Viewing the streets as "made for vehicles" with little regard for the environment they encounter or those they share the road with can lead to problems. Two specific issues that have been identified in the Westside are commuter cut-through traffic and

trucks on undesignated routes. Both of these issues will be addressed through the descriptive street typology.

4.1.6 Truck Traffic

Several designated truck routes pass through the Westside study area (refer to Figure 4.1f). These include:

- James Jackson Parkway (SR 280)
- Donald L. Hollowell Parkway (SR 8/US 278/US 78)
- Hollywood Road
- S. Atlanta Road
- Marietta Boulevard
- W. Marietta Street
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive (SR 139)

As of May 2006 (Ordinance 06-O-1039), both Bolton Road (from Fairburn Road to Marietta Boulevard) and Marietta Road (from Bolton Road to Barnett Drive) were removed from the City of Atlanta Truck Route Designation. The main reason cited for this change was the transformation of these corridors overtime into residential areas. All trucks greater than 30 feet in length or weighing over 18 tons are prohibited from using those routes, unless their specific destination is within one of the residential neighborhoods. An example of such an exception would be trucks from Lafarge Building Materials, Inc. According to City Councilmember Felicia Moore, Marietta Boulevard is a designated truck route. These changes are not yet indicated on the City of Atlanta truck route map or the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) map.

Despite the designation of truck routes, stakeholders reported heavy volumes of truck traffic on a variety of other streets in the study area, including Marietta Road and Perry Boulevard, both of which are highly residential in some sections. The Bolton / Moores Mill LCI Traffic / Circulation Study (2005) reported heavy vehicle percentages for roads in proximity to the rail yards – 17% on Marietta Road, 16-18% on Bolton Road, and 19% on Marietta Boulevard. These figures confirm the heavy truck traffic experienced by residents in the northern portion of the study area.

One explanation for high truck volumes on non-designated routes is the lack of prohibitive signage. For example, considerable volumes of truck traffic still access Bolton Road from I-285, which lacks signage before the Bolton exit. While a sign is present at the exit, trucks are given no prior warning to use Atlanta Road/Marietta Boulevard as an alternative to Bolton Road. Due to the partial interchange at I-285/Bolton Road, trucks are unable to re-enter I-285 once they have exited.

Stakeholders should work with their elected officials for additional signage.

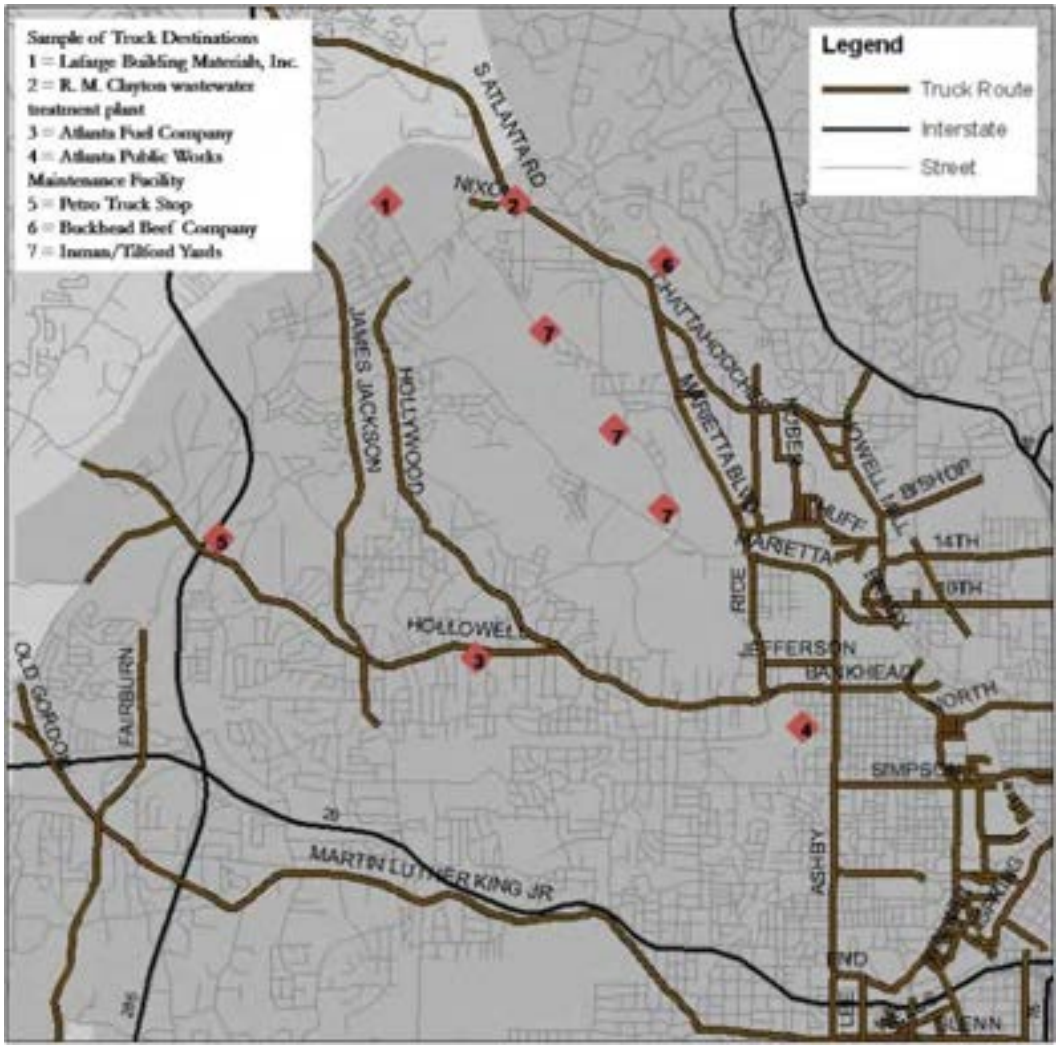

Figure 4.1f: Designated truck routes on the Westside of Atlanta
Source: City of Atlanta Truck Routes, 2001, updated based on recent truck traffic legislation by City Council

4.1.7 Existing Conditions Analysis of Westside Streets

Our analysis of the street system focused on the 22 streets as listed in table 4.1b. The streets were selected because they were:

- Major corridors/heavily traveled
- Characteristic of many streets in the study area
- Prone to change
- Specifically suggested by stakeholders.

Refer to Figures 4.1g – 4.1j for images of existing street conditions.

Figure 4.1g: Quiet residential along Chappell Road

Figure 4.1h: Commercial along Hollowell Parkway

Figure 4.1i: Industrial along Marietta Road

Figures 4.1j: Simpson Road Character- residential to commercial

The selected corridors are distributed throughout the study area and provide for travel in the East-West and North-South directions. The streets represent the full-range of functional classes. The streets reflect the varied character of the Westside's street network, from residential to commercial to industrial. A particular challenge for planning in the Westside is how these different street characters transition abruptly from one to another, often along the same corridor.

Table 4.1b summarizes existing conditions which have been used to analyze the Westside street system. Traffic counts were obtained from GDOT's Office of Transportation Data, *2006 Annual Average Daily Traffic Report (AADT)*. The count data provides an impression of how heavily used a route is on an average day. The posted speed limit was obtained through a windshield survey of the study area. Bus routes were obtained from MARTA while truck routes, state routes, and US routes were identified through a combination of City of Atlanta and GDOT resources. Sidewalk and bike suitability were both obtained from inventories completed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The character refers to the predominant land use classification along the corridor and was determined from examining current land use maps (available from the City of Atlanta) and conducting a windshield survey of existing character.

In addition to the information shown in the table, public feedback obtained from the *Blueprints* meetings and workshops, and recommendations from previous planning efforts were incorporated into the analysis.

Roadway	State Route?	US Route?	2006 Traffic Count (AADT)*	Posted Speed Limit	Bus route?	Truck Route?	Sidewalks	Bike Suitability	Character
Bolton Road	No	No	9990 (Bankhead) 13150 (Parrot Ave) 17210 (Jackson)	35	No	No	No	Medium (Difficult at intersections)	Vacant & Industrial
Browntown Road	No	No		30	Yes	No	No	N/A	Industrial to Residential (East to West)
Chappell Road	No	No			Yes	No	No	N/A	Residential
Donald L. Hollowell Parkway	8	278/78	15900 (I-285) 15060 (HE Holmes) 16700 (Hollywood) 13880 (Lindsey St)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Difficult	Residential & Commercial
Grove Park Place	No	No		N/A	No	No	No	Best to Medium	Open Space (Quarry lands to Grove Park)
Gunn Club Road	No	No		25	No	No	No	Medium	Vacant
Habershal Drive	No	No		25	No	No	No	N/A	Vacant/Industrial
HE Holmes Drive	280	No	14060 (MLK) 18180 (Simpson)		Yes	No	No	Medium to Difficult	Residential
Hollywood Road	No	No		35	Yes	Yes	Yes	Medium to Difficult	Mostly Residential
James Jackson Parkway	280	No	14490 (before Hollowell) 9330 (after Hollowell)	40 (50 N. of Bolton)	No	Yes	No	N/A	Industrial/wooded (N. of Browntown), Residential (S. of Browntown)
Johnson Road	No	No	1520	25 (35 E. of Proctor Creek)	No	No	No	Medium	Residential to Vacant to Industrial (South to North)
Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard	No	No	11760 (at Simpson) 7530 (at Bankhead) 5580 (at W Marietta)	35	Yes	No	No	N/A	Residential (S. of Hollowell), Industrial (N. of Hollowell)
Marietta Boulevard	No	No	17340	45	Yes	Yes	No	Medium	Industrial and Commercial
Marietta Road	No	No		35	No	No	Partial	Medium	Industrial (to West), Residential (to East)
Martin Luther King Jr. Drive	139	No	14300	35 (30 E. of Lowery)	Yes	Yes	Partial		Commercial to Residential to Commercial (East to West)\
North Avenue	No	No			Yes	No	No	N/A	Residential
Northwest Drive	No	No			Yes	No	Partial	Difficult	Residential and Vacant
Perry Boulevard	No	No	5710 (near Bolton) 6980 (near Marietta)		Yes	No	Partial	Difficult	Industrial and Residential
Peyton Road SW	No	No			Yes	No	No	N/A	Residential
Simpson Road	No	No	3980-7930		Yes (Northside to Chappell)	No	Partial	Medium	Commercial/Residential to Residential (W. Lake) to Commercial/Residential to Cemetery (East to West)
W. Marietta Street	No	No	12330	30-35	Yes (to Lowery)	Yes	No	Medium	Industrial
West Lake Avenue	No	No			Yes	No	No	Medium	Residential

Table 4.1b: Westside Atlanta Street Summary

*AADT traffic counts provide an estimate of the number of vehicles a road will carry on an average day (daily traffic volume). Traffic volumes will vary based on the types of road, number of lanes, surrounding land uses (type and density), and other factors. According to Chapter 6 of Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities (2006), typical traffic volumes range from 10,000-20,000 vehicles per day (vpd) on a minor arterial in a residential area. For a minor arterial in a commercial area, typical volumes range from 5,000-30,000 vpd. A collector could be expected to carry from 1,500-15,000 vpd with less variation based on

land use. From a pedestrian oriented perspective 2,000 vpd or less is considered light traffic while 16,000 vpd is considered heavy traffic (www.walkinginfo.org/pedsafe).

4.2 Possibilities and Resources

4.2.1 Public Transit

Figure 4.2a shows possible routes examined for Westside Atlanta. These routes were evaluated using demographic data and public input from stakeholders.

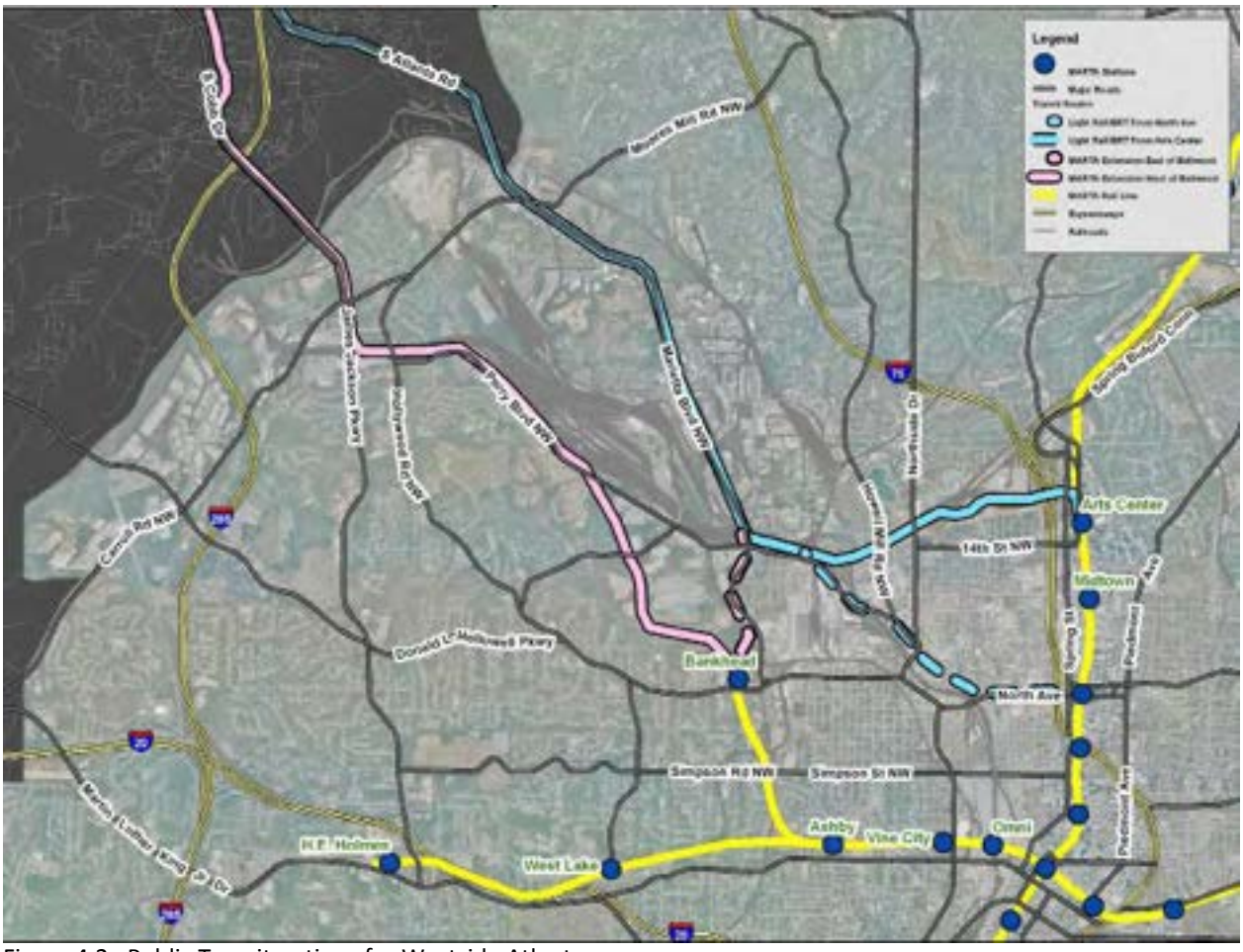

Figure 4.2a Public Transit options for Westside Atlanta

4.2.2 Public Input

Several public meetings were held to solicit input on the transit options currently available and the accompanying challenges. Throughout the public meetings, the option of extending MARTA along the Perry Boulevard corridor continued to rise to the top as being the most favored option. The reason for this being that Marietta Boulevard is seen as a throughway and not as a corridor that serves the neighborhoods on the Westside. Since Marietta Boulevard mainly serves truck traffic and industrial purposes rather than neighborhoods, it is not seen as viable for the type of transit that the community needs or for the types of infill development that would increase ridership.

4.2.3 Ridership Potential

Figure 4.2b and Table 4.2a show the number of workers that are employed in the downtown area that work within two miles of the proposed corridor. While this corridor is likely to attract additional riders through increased density, the figure shows that 7 percent of the workers downtown are coming from this single corridor. This amounts to a ridership potential of over 13,000 people. This includes only those people currently living in the area. If TOD policies are carried out, higher density could result in a much higher transit ridership. In addition, this analysis accounts for destinations downtown. If the plan is implemented as suggested, there would be the additional workplace destinations such as Emory University and the Atlanta Airport which would increase ridership potential even further.

Figure 4.2b: Longitudinal Household-Employer Dynamics

Workers Employed in Selection Area #1	2004	
	Count	Share
* All Jobs	195,664	100.0%
* All Jobs (Private Sector Only)	117,900	100.0%
* All Primary Jobs (Worker's highest paying job)	185,523	100.0%
* All Primary Jobs (Private Sector Only)	110,118	100.0%

Workers of Area #1 Living in Area #2	2004	
	Count	Share
* All Jobs	13,437	6.9%
* All Jobs (Private Sector Only)	10,053	8.5%
* All Primary Jobs (Worker's highest paying job)	12,633	6.8%
* All Primary Jobs (Private Sector Only)	9,369	8.5%

Table 4.2a: Longitudinal Household-Employer Dynamics

4.2.4 Historical Work

In 2002 the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) initiated a study of transportation possibilities within the Northwest Corridor. The eleven initial possibilities were ultimately narrowed down to three possible scenarios on the basis of practicality and feasibility. Northwest transportation possibilities include:

1. A light rail connection from North Avenue MARTA station through Westside Atlanta via Marietta Boulevard to Cobb County.
2. A bus rapid transit line to begin at the Arts Center MARTA station and to run essentially along the same corridor into Cobb County.
3. Expansion of bus transit on I-75 and the addition of bus-only lanes to accommodate bus rapid transit along that corridor.

GRTA ultimately selected the third option as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Despite this designation, the plan has not yet been formally implemented. Proponents of the transit options have cited population growth and increases in density within the Westside as justification for a reevaluation of Northwest Corridor transportation possibilities.

4.2.5 Expanding Transit Alternatives – Route Selection

In order to evaluate the transit options for Westside Atlanta, the alternatives were split into two categories. The first was to consider a light rail line that would run between Cobb County and Downtown Atlanta, stopping at several locations in the Westside. The second alternative was to extend the current MARTA system beyond the Bankhead terminus into the Westside along Perry Boulevard and further into Cobb County to Marietta.

Figures 4.2c – 4.2f show some of the characteristics of the Marietta Boulevard Corridor. While the Corridor is ideal from a technical perspective -right of way-, it does not efficiently serve the population of Westside Atlanta. Most of the population of the area is south of the Inman Rail Yards, making this corridor mainly ideal as a throughway rather than a viable transit option for the neighborhoods of the Westside.

Figure 4.2c: Map of Marietta Blvd. Corridor

Figure 4.2d: Much of the Marietta Blvd. Corridor includes right-of-ways of 60'-70'

Figure 4.2e: The Marietta Blvd. corridor serves the downtown employment center (seen in distance)

Figure 4.2f: The bridge at the Chattahoochee River would need to be resized to allow for future growth

4.2.6 Extension of MARTA

The extension of the MARTA line to Cobb County via the Perry Boulevard Corridor was another option considered. This option would serve the new West Highlands development as well as the proposed Westside Park. While it is increasingly likely that MARTA will not be expanded further with its current heavy-rail technology, it is likely that MARTA will seek other ways to expand its service. The concept of the Perry Boulevard route would likely be a light rail vehicle that could easily switch to the heavy "third rail" system currently used by MARTA. This concept could replace the current Proctor Creek line which currently runs on 10 minute headways during peak hours and 15 minute headways during non-peak hours. An additional advantage to this line is the ability to use the strip of land between the Inman Rail Yard and Perry Boulevard. Since the light rail technology is amenable to pedestrian traffic, this could encourage more pedestrian friendly areas along the route.
The route would tie into Cobb Drive and continue to Marietta, eventually joining up with the other proposed route. The connection to Cobb County is essential to obtain the ridership numbers necessary to sustain transit. There is potential for significant ridership from Marietta and Smyrna from medium density developments that have already occurred there, for example, Oakdale Road in Cobb County, several substantial developments could contribute to supporting this transit route.

4.2.7 Transit Technologies Considered

Light Rail
The light rail option allows for greater flexibility than its cousin heavy rail. The MARTA system in Atlanta is a heavy rail system. Heavy rail transit is defined by having a third rail that electrifies the train propulsion motors. This electrified third rail is located in the rail bed itself and presents a safety hazard for pedestrians. This means that the entire heavy rail system must be grade separated from the rest of transportation infrastructure. Light rail mitigates this problem and allows a heavy rail type train to be utilized in pedestrian environments. The electric power comes from overhead catenaries which eliminates the need for grade separated track. Track can simply be laid directly in or alongside the street.

Figure 4.2g: A new light rail system in Charlotte opened in a mostly industrial area this year

Bus Rapid Transit
Another alternative to light rail is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). This option allows for a less expensive way to move people rapidly through a corridor. This option makes sense only along the Marietta Boulevard corridor because of its already existing right-of-way. Essentially, this technology would consist of an articulated bus similar to the one shown that would have a dedicated guideway. The bus would operate in this guideway exclusively, separated from regular traffic. To capture the time savings of a transit vehicle, traffic signal priority is given to busses. This reduces the travel time along the corridor. Bus stops would be sheltered and consist of

Figure 4.2h: GPS technology enables riders to know when the next bus will be arriving

pay-before-you-board technology to decrease the time it takes to board and increase efficiency. The advantage to this approach is that it captures the benefits of a fixed guideway without the costs of light rail. The disadvantage is that people are less apt to ride a bus and often ridership numbers fall short of expectations. One way to make a transit ride more enjoyable is to allow the user to know precisely when their connecting bus or train will arrive. These systems are available now for relatively little cost. Refer to Figure 4.2h for an example of GPS technology providing the rider with bus arrival information.

Dual Mode Vehicle
A dual-mode vehicle could be used along the Perry Boulevard alignment. Dual-mode vehicles are essentially a combination of a light rail vehicle and a heavy rail vehicle. Since the track gauge (or width) is the same for light rail and heavy rail, the vehicle would simply change from electric power in the traditional MARTA system to the power provided by overhead lines. The primary advantage of this technology is that riders can seamlessly continue onto the rest of the MARTA rail system without having to change vehicles. This makes for much better customer satisfaction and shorter travel times throughout the corridor. The dual-mode technology has already been implemented in other places around the world, and could work as a solution to extending MARTA without having to spend the capital necessary to build heavy rail lines.

4.2.8 Street Design Features

The street typology, discussed previously, illustrates the types of street improvements that could be used to control how people experience different areas. The design features as described in Table 4.2b are suggestions - additional desired features could be added while others may be removed or modified due to right-of-way constraints. The features are meant to balance the needs of expected road users, or emphasize the needs of some over others when necessary.

The design features incorporate recommendations from the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) C*ontext Sensitive Solutions* (ITE's CSS) *in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities (2006)*. ITE's publication provides a supplement to other design guidelines like AASHTO, GDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), etc. to illustrate how "established guidance can be applied to roadway improvement projects to make them more compatible with community objectives and context in urban areas". While ITE's CSS guidelines are mostly based on AASHTO guidelines, they are also consistent with Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).

4.2.9 Westside Street Typology

As discussed earlier, a functional classification emphasizes vehicular road users. A descriptive street typology is a complimentary classification system that relates the roadway and roadside features to the character and land use of the corridor. For this reason, descriptive classifications can be applied to streets with different functional classifications. This can help to provide smoother transitions between streets with different functional classifications but similar land uses. It also allows for continuity of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The typology is not meant to replace the functional classification but rather to enhance it by further considering the interactions between the road and adjoining land uses, and providing for *all* road users. Refer to Table 4.2b.

Descriptive Classification	Functional Classification	Purpose	Recommended Features (at minimum)
Neighborhood Conservation	Minor Arterial Collector Local	Preserve the appearance and "feel" of residential streets, even those with high traffic volumes; discourage speeding and cut-through traffic; create connections with other neighborhoods and land uses	10-11' travel lanes; 6' sidewalks buffered by street trees (at least one side); on-street bike lanes or shared lanes; use of traffic calming devices; on-street parallel parking where desired
Greenway	Collector Local	Provide continuity of greenspace (between parks and between parks and neighborhoods) and calm traffic naturally with narrow travel lanes and heavy vegetation	10-11' travel lanes; 12' multipurpose path with 3' grass buffer; heavy landscaping adjacent to path; use of speed tables to slow traffic if necessary
Multi-modal Corridor	Minor Arterial Collector	Encourage pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use by reducing speeds and roadside improving amenities	11' travel lanes; 6-10' sidewalks with 5-6' bike lanes or 12' off-street multipurpose path; shade trees & street furniture (6-8'); well-marked bus stops with bus pullover at major stops
Industrial	Minor Arterial Collector	Provide a smoother transition from residential to industrial uses and vice versa	11-12' travel lanes; 6' sidewalks with 5' grass buffer
Commercial Core	Minor Arterial Collector	Balance access to commercial properties with need for continuous pedestrian and bicycle facilities	11' travel lanes; 6'-10' sidewalks; 6-8' landscaped buffer or street trees; on-street parallel parking where adequate right-of-way; 5-6' bike lanes or shared lanes; maximum access point density; interparcel connectivity
Mixed-Use Corridor	Minor Arterial Collector	Promote a pedestrian-scale environment in areas with residential and commercial development	11' travel lanes; 10' (minimum) sidewalks; street furniture and raised planters; on-street parallel parking; 5-6' bike lanes or shared lanes; prioritize underground utilities; special pavement treatments at intersections
Regional Throughway	Principal Arterial Minor Arterial	Serve commuters (personal vehicles and transit) and through truck traffic	12' travel lanes; 6' sidewalks serving commercial establishments; Truck only through lanes (optional); reserved right-of-way for fixed guideway transit (BRT or Light Rail)
Regional Boulevard	Principal Arterial Minor Arterial	Convey high volumes of all road users safely and with adequate level of service	11-12' lanes (depending on truck volumes); 14-18' planted median transitioning into left turn lane where needed; 6-10' sidewalks with 5' planting strip, 5-6' bike lanes; facilities at major bus stops, descriptive signage at all stops; prioritize underground utilities

Table 4.2b: Recommended Street Design Features

The descriptive typology presented in this report, and as discussed in section 4.3 Recommended Actions, was designed specifically for the Westside to represent the range of character areas that are encountered. The descriptive street typology provides a framework for creating a more seamless transportation system on the Westside that facilitates multi-modal travel. It can be used as a tool to define how Westside streets should function based on community needs and the needs of future development. The typology can be used to guide / inform future planning efforts like the City of Atlanta's Comprehensive Transportation Plan or Atlanta Regional Commission's Transportation Improvement Programs. The recommended design features could also be incorporated into future Community Benefit Agreements with developers.

As indicated by previous plans and public input, cut-through traffic, commuters and trucks, and speeding are major concerns in the study area, particularly in residential areas. Several of the recommended design features address these concerns.

- On-street parking and landscaping / street furniture visually narrow the roadway and make drivers take notice of other users, which can reduce speeds and improve driver alertness. Refer to Figure 4.2j.
- Traffic calming devices, neckdowns and speed tables as examples, not only contribute to lower traffic speeds, but may also reduce cut-through traffic by essentially creating a nuisance for drivers looking for a quick and easy shortcut. Refer to Figures 4.2k and 4.2m.
- Travel lane width should be as narrow as possible to provide traffic calming effects. Roadways with high truck and transit usage should have wider travel lanes (12') than those carrying primarily cars. High volume and high speed roadways with high bicycle demand should have at least 11' wide travel lanes to promote a greater sense of safety for cyclists. Refer to figures 4.2n and 4.2p.

Figure 4.2j: Ideal sidewalk, featuring street trees, street furniture, and sufficient usable sidewalk space

Figure 4.2k: Traffic calming neckdown or narrowing of the street, in this case, to one lane

Figure 4.2m: Traffic calming: speed table or raised crosswalk

Figure 4.2n: Cars and bicyclists sharing the road

Figure 4.2p: On-street bike lane with typical pavement markings

The transitions between street types are crucial to creating a seamless transportation system, and all of these transitions occur at intersections. ITE's guidelines for urban intersections include:

- 90 degree angles where possible.
- Adequate sight distance triangles for driver and non-driver visibility.
- Minimized pedestrian exposure to traffic (curb extensions, median refuge islands, etc.).
- Marked crosswalks at signalized intersections and at STOP sign-controlled intersections where there are high pedestrian volumes (textured pavement materials provide additional warning to drivers).
- Marked mid-block crossings where block length exceeds 400 feet.
- Striped bicycle lanes through the intersection approach and up to the stop line or crosswalk (improves cyclist safety).
- Properly designed channelizing islands to reduce conflict points, particularly for right-turns.

4.2.10 Applying the Typology to the Westside Communities

Each street included in the existing conditions study was assigned a descriptive typology based on the current and anticipated land use character of the corridor and the associated road users, volumes and types. The anticipated/desired character was determined from discussions with community members, the City of Atlanta's future land use maps, and other planning efforts. Suggested classifications, and how they relate to the functional classification, are displayed on Figure 4.2q and listed in the Table 4.2b.

As suggested earlier, the typology provides a way to guide road users to the proper streets by using different design features. The "Greenway" type provides a good illustration of this point. A greenway is recommended to have 10' – 11' travel lanes, 12' multi-purpose path with 3' vegetated buffer and possible traffic calming devices to slow through traffic. The emphasis on more "natural" features like heavy vegetation and a multi-use trail provides visual cues that the roadway leads to a park or other greenspace. Greenways provide a safe route for people to walk, bike, and push strollers. And because of a shared emphasis on the pedestrian/bike environment, Greenways work well in residential areas or can provide strong connections between neighborhoods and greenspace.

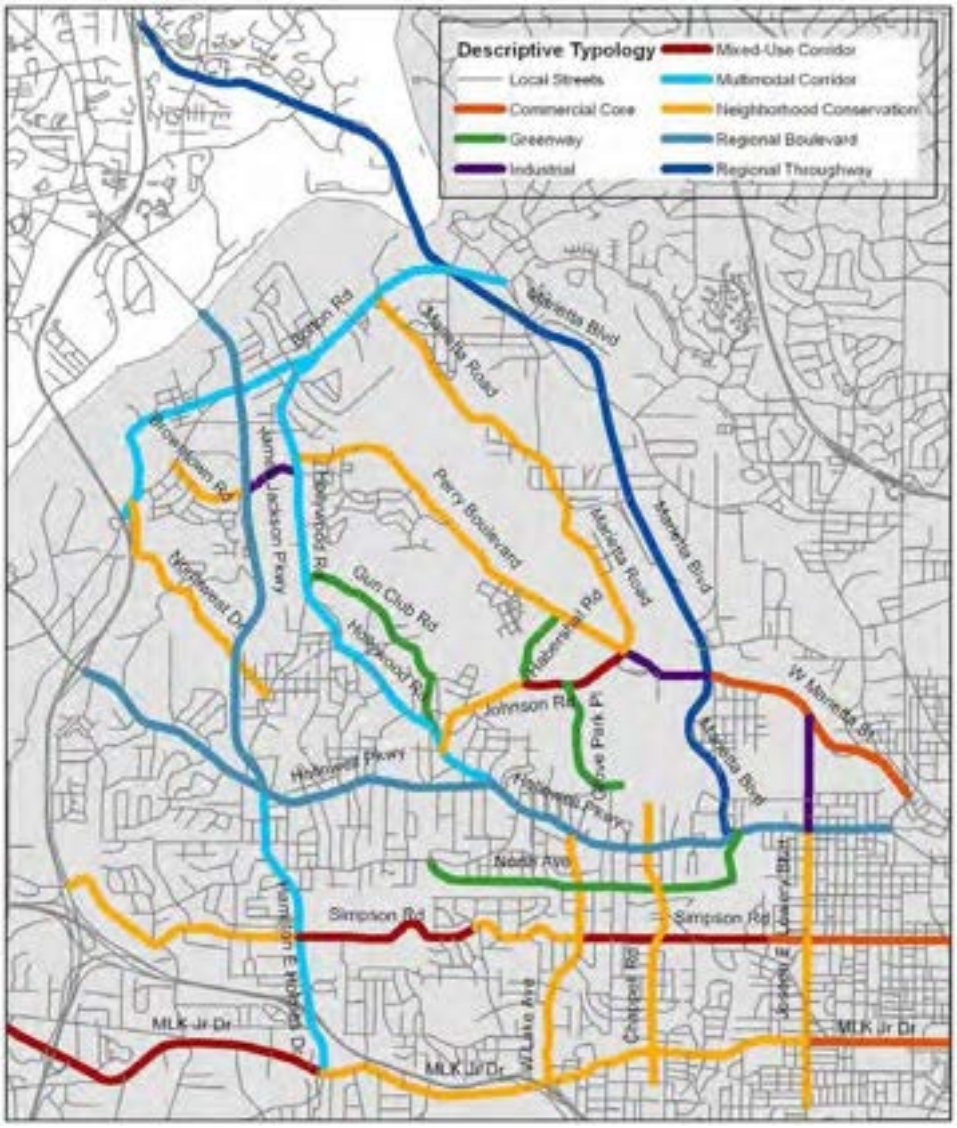

Figure 4.2q Proposed descriptive street typology assignments
Source: GIS data provided by the Georgia Tech Center for GIS

The streets detailed below are meant to serve as examples or templates for how other streets in the study area with comparable characteristics could be classified. The following examples will illustrate how and why a typology can be applied to roadways.

Johnson Road
South of Habershal, the street is coded as “Neighborhood Conservation” to preserve the dense single-family residential that currently exists. Consistent with Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.’s expectations for development along Westside Park, Johnson Road north of Habershal Drive is coded as “Mixed-Use Corridor.”

Grove Park Place
If re-opened, Grove Park Road could serve as a “Greenway”, consistent with its connections to multiple parks, with capacity to carry traffic between a development node at Bankhead Station and mixed-use development along Johnson Road. Grove Park could convey traffic between

Hollowell Parkway and Perry Boulevard, acting as a bypass of the residential areas along Johnson Road south of Habershal Drive. Refer to Figure 7.3n in the Appendix for proposed Grove Park Road redesign.

Perry Boulevard
Taking advantage of the traffic calming features that are consistent with "Neighborhood Conservation", streets could help to discourage cut-through traffic (specifically trucks) and reduce speeds. The "Neighborhood Conservation" designation could also fit well with future transit running along Perry Boulevard. In particular, residential development along Perry Boulevard could benefit from and provide the necessary densities for a light rail extension of the MARTA line (see the Public Transportation section for discussions of transit alternatives). Because light rail allows for safe pedestrian crossings, it would be consistent with the "Neighborhood Conservation" type.

Marietta Boulevard
As a newly designated truck route and a major commuter corridor, designation as a "Regional Throughway" is appropriate. This type de-emphasizes non-vehicular traffic (as heavy vehicles and high speeds make bicycle and pedestrian conditions dangerous) but also provides for improved commuter transit service between Cobb County and downtown Atlanta. The existing wide right-of-way is conducive to this designation.

Simpson Road
Through the *Simpson Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan* and the *Blueprints* planning process, the Westside community expressed the desire for more intensive retail and entertainment opportunities along portions of Simpson Road. Currently, Simpson Road has both single-family and multi-family residences. By applying "Mixed-Use Corridor" and "Neighborhood Conservation" to different segments, the community could preserve housing while providing for new development and transition smoothly between these uses. Refer to Figure 7.3p in the Appendix for proposed Simpson Road redesign.

4.3 Recommended Actions

4.3.1 Public Transit

After considering all the options, the most appropriate proposal for Westside Atlanta is to extend the existing MARTA line west of the proposed Westside Park, to West Highlands, along Perry Boulevard. This route is shown in Figure 4.3a. This alignment was the most favored among the stakeholders. Analysis indicated that this line serves the population the best. And because MARTA had originally planned to extend the Proctor Creek line to Perry Homes, the right-of-way between Bankhead and Perry Homes is still primarily owned by the City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Housing Authority. Long-time agreements are still in place to transfer ownership of the right-of-way when MARTA makes the decision to extend the line.

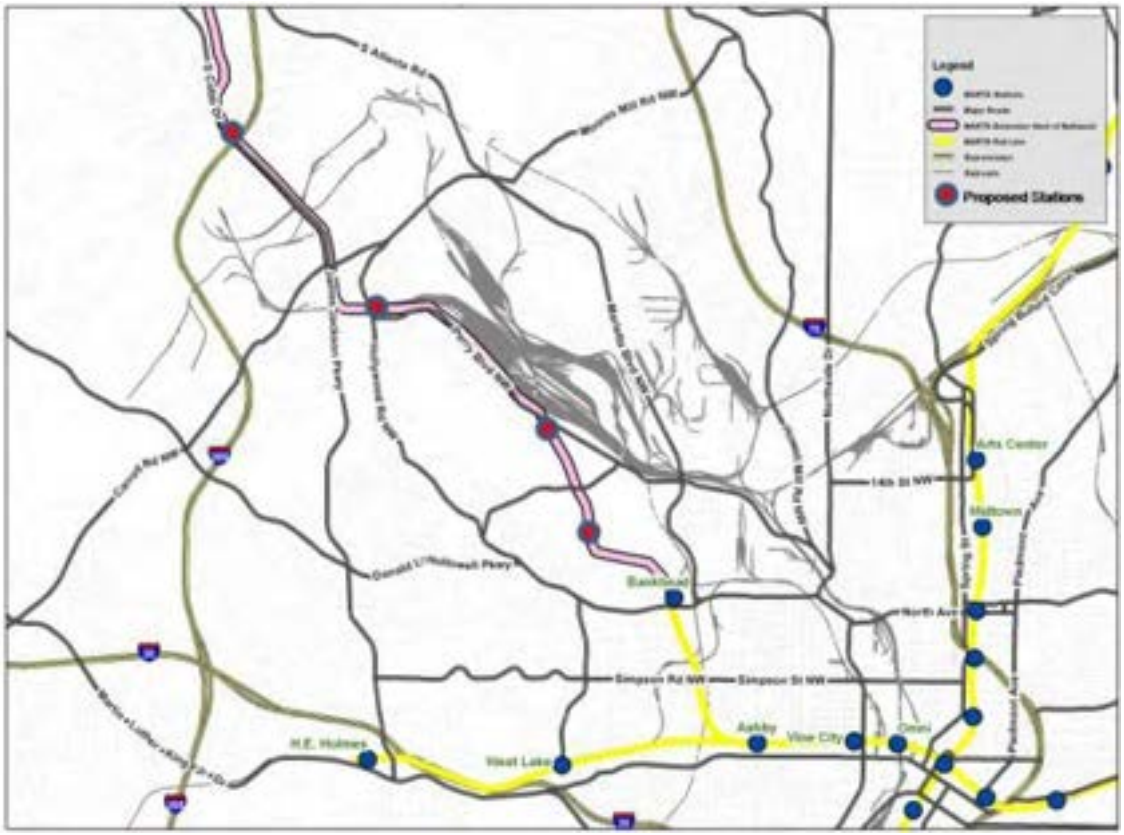

Figure 4.3a: Transit Proposal Westside Atlanta

4.3.2 Continuation to Cobb County

Extending the rail line into Cobb County will probably be a necessary component in the formula for the long-term success of the expansion. This would require cooperation between MARTA and Cobb County by either bringing Cobb County into MARTA's service area or creating an entirely new agency entirely to deal with regional transit issues. Extending the line into Cobb County would make sense in terms of ridership numbers and could have a positive effect on traffic congestion and commute times. Further study is needed, but the communities and developers on the Westside should start the conversation with MARTA. Refer to Figure 4.3b for a map of this recommended extension into Cobb County.

4.3.3 Transit Oriented Development

Because light rail is intended to generate higher density development around stations, it is recommended that park & ride lots not be located at every station. Perhaps a small parking area could be provided, but the primary goal of the station is to have higher density built around it. One way this could be accomplished is to follow the successful model implemented at Lindbergh Station.

At Lindbergh Station, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) was used to both enhance ridership and realize dense development around a transit station. In this case, MARTA purchased more land than necessary for the station. Subsequently, the land was leased to tenants to generate additional operating revenue. This could help to defray the costs of expansion.

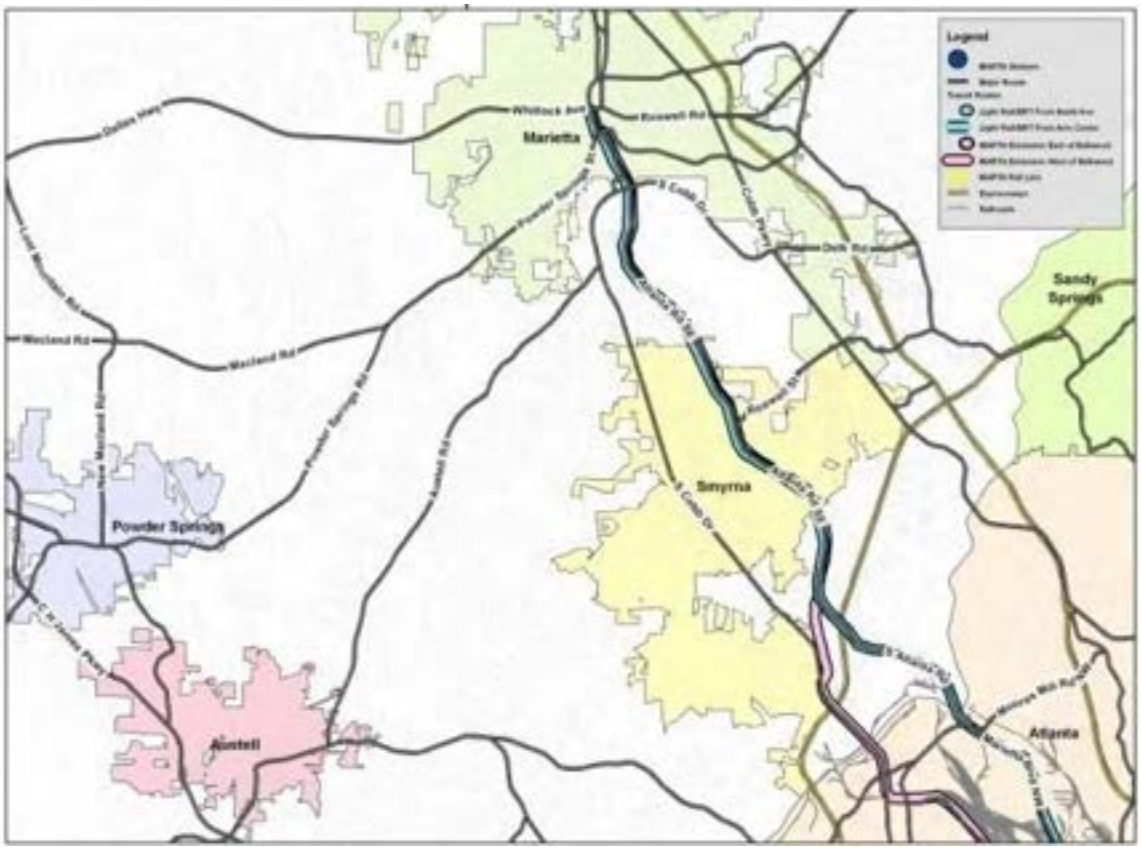

Figure 4.3b: Cobb County Transit Routes in Westside Atlanta.

4.3.4 Public Transportation Proposals

Currently MARTA operates a short route along the East-West line between Bankhead Station and Candler Park. On stops in-between every other train goes the entire length from Indian Creek to H.E. Holmes. Replacing the Proctor Creek timing slot with a dual mode vehicle is the preferred option.

Figure 4.3c: Potential route of service to Emory University area from the East-West MARTA line.

An additional benefit of using this timing slot is an abandoned tunnel just before the East Lake Station. This alignment may be able to be used in the future to serve the Emory University area. Mended together, this would create a connection from Cobb County, going through Westside Atlanta, stopping in Downtown, and terminating at Emory. Figure 4.3c shows the conceptual route the dual mode vehicle would travel once it leaves the east-west line just prior to East Lake Station.

4.3.5 Westside Street Typology

Descriptive Classification	Functional Classification	Examples Within Study Area	Purpose	Recommended Features (at minimum)
Neighborhood Conservation	Minor Arterial	MLK Jr. Dr (Lowery to HE Holmes), Lowery Blvd. (S. of Hollowell), West Lake Avenue	Preserve the appearance and "feel" of residential streets, even those with high traffic volumes, discourage speeding and cut-through traffic; create connections with other neighborhoods and land uses	10-11' travel lanes; 6' sidewalks buffered by street trees (at least one side); on-street bike lanes or shared lanes; use of traffic calming devices; on-street parallel parking where desired
	Collector	Browntown Rd (W. of James Jackson),Chappell Rd, Simpson Rd (W. of West Lake), Johnson Rd (S. of Habershal), Northwest Dr.		
	Local	Marietta Rd, Peyton Rd		
Greenway	Collector	North Avenue	Provide continuity of greenspace (between parks and between parks and neighborhoods) and calm traffic naturally with narrow travel lanes and heavy vegetation	10-11' travel lanes; 12' multipurpose path with 3' grass buffer; heavy landscaping adjacent to path; use of speed tables to slow traffic if necessary
	Local	Gunn Club Rd, Grove Park Place, Habershal Drive		
Multi-modal Corridor	Minor Arterial	Bolton Road, HE Holmes Drive	Encourage pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use by reducing speeds and roadside improving amenities	11' travel lanes; 6-10' sidewalks with 5-6' bike lanes or 12' off-street multipurpose path; shade trees & street furniture (6-8'); well-marked bus stops with bus pullover at major stops
	Collector	Hollywood Road		
Industrial	Minor Arterial	Lowery Blvd (N. of Hollowell), W. Marietta St. (W of Marietta Blvd)	Provide a smooth transition from residential to industrial uses and vice versa	11-12' travel lanes; 6' sidewalks with 5' grass buffer
	Collector	Browntown Road (E. of James Jackson)		
Commercial Core	Minor Arterial	MLK Jr. Drive (Norhtside to Lowery), W. Marietta St (East of Marietta Blvd)	Balance access to commercial properties with need for continuous pedestrian and bicycle facilities	11' travel lanes; 6-10' sidewalks; 6-8' landscaped buffer or street trees; on-street parallel parking where adequate right-of-way; 5-6' bike lanes or shared lanes; maximum access point density; interparcel connectivity
	Collector	Simpson Road (East of Lowery)		
Regional Thoroughway	Principal Arterial	N/A	Serve commuters (personal vehicles and transit) and through truck traffic	12' travel lanes; 6' sidewalks serving commercial establishments; truck only through lanes (optional); reserved right-of-way for fixed guideway transit (BRT or Light Rail)
	Minor Arterial	Marietta Blvd.		
Regional Boulevard	Principal Arterial	Hollowell Parkway	Convey high volumes of all road users safely and with adequate level of service	11-12' lanes; 14-18' planted median transitioning into left turn lane where needed; 6-10' sidewalks with 5' plaiting strip, 5-6' bike lanes; facilities at major bus stops, descriptive signage at all sops; prioritize underground utilities
	Minor Arterial	James Jackson Parkway		

Table 4.3a: Westside Street Typology

4.3.6 Westside Street Typology General Recommendations

- Better designate the official truck routes and prohibited truck routes and use targeted enforcement of the recent changes in truck route designations ($500 fine for trucks using Bolton Road or Marietta Road in violation of the truck traffic legislation). Specifically, proper signage is needed on I-285 *before* the Bolton Road exit to direct trucks to the Atlanta Road/Marietta Boulevard.
- Use the descriptive typology to guide the physical reconfiguration of the roadways during redevelopment and improvement efforts. It can be applied on top of the functional classification, which determines design speed and geometric design, as a way to address the character of the roadway and relate the road to the adjacent land uses both present and future. The typology as presented in this document can be discussed with developers, planners and project engineers to express how the roadways could be designed to fit with existing or expected land uses. Refer to Figures 7.3q - 7.3s in the Appendix for illustrations of proposed street redesign.
- As expressed by past plans, connectivity of the region is of concern and should be studied in depth. In particular neighborhoods and areas surrounding the proposed regional park. Re-opening Grove Park Road for example, could greatly improve connections between neighborhoods and park space, existing and proposed.
- In addition to those identified in past plans, the intersections of Northwest Drive with Bolton Road, James Jackson Parkway with Peyton Road, and Lowery Boulevard with Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard were identified by the community as problem intersections. Problem intersections should be prioritized for improvements. ITE's CSS guidelines should be consulted for the re-design of intersections.

4.3.7 Community Actions to Accomplish Recommendations

- Report truck traffic violations to the Atlanta Police Department
  - Zone 1 (South of Inman Yards): 404-799-2487
  - Zone 2 (North of Inman Yards): 404-848-7231
- Select transportation problems can be reported directly to the City of Atlanta, Office of Transportation:
  - Main office: 404-330-6501
  - Maintenance: 404-330-6654 (for repairs of streets, curbs, sidewalks, driveways, bridges, street signs, pavement marking and traffic signals)
  - Operations: 404-330-6589 (to report problems with a traffic signal or streetlight)
- Specific transportation concerns can also be addressed to City Council members. Ensure that Westside transportation issues (such as truck traffic and problem intersections) are considered by Connect Atlanta, the city-wide comprehensive transportation planning process. For more information on participating in the stakeholder committee and on upcoming public participation events, visit www.connectatlantaplan.com or call the hotline at 404.330.6800. The project staff can also be contacted directly:

  City of Atlanta Transportation Planning Division
  Phone: 404.330.6800

  Paul J. Moore, P.E. Atlanta Transportation Planning Group
  Phone: 404.541.6552 Email: pmoore@glatting.com

- Incorporate the typology design features into Community Benefits Agreements. A Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) is a legally enforceable contract signed by community groups and by a developer that addresses community concerns and needs. For more information on CBAs, please see the Appendix section of this report or consult Georgia Standup (www.gastandup.org/community_benefits.html).
- Consult ITE's Context Sensitive Solutions guidelines (www.ite.org/css/ and www.contextsensitivesolutions.org/content/topics/css_design/) for additional technical guidance in developing CBA requirements

4.3.8 Georgia Department of Transportation

- Take advantage of Georgia Department of Transportation's opportunities for public comment through its Public Outreach website. On this site, there is information on any project that was shared at an open house or public hearing beginning August 2004. It provides the opportunity to offer comments or ask questions about the projects. The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) can also be accessed through this site to search for federally funded projects and view information on those projects that span a period of three fiscal years.
  Website: http://tomcat2.dot.state.ga.us/PublicOutreach_ex/home/home.cfm
- A schedule of future GDOT open houses can be found at:
  http://www.dot.state.ga.us/specialsubjects/pim/index.shtml

4.3.9 Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)

- Subscribe to newsletters to receive updates on local and regional projects:
  http://www.atlantaregional.com/cps/rde/xchg/arc/hs.xsl/350_ENU_HTML.htm.
- Review transportation projects:
  http://www.atlantaregional.com/cps/rde/xchg/arc/hs.xsl/15_ENU_HTML.htm.
- Ask questions about ARC's regional transportation plan and other transportation initiatives:
  Transportation Planning Division
  Atlanta Regional Commission
  40 Courtland Street, NE
  Atlanta, GA, 30303
  Call: 404.463.3272 (Community Outreach) or 404.463.3100 (Main Office)

4.3.10 Westside Transportation Summary

Questions to ask yourself include:
- What are the major transportation problems in my neighborhood?
- Are trucks driving on undesignated routes?
- Can I walk, roll, or bike safely?
- Do cars speed through my neighborhood?
- Can I get where I need to go using MARTA?

Questions to ask planners include:
- Are the streets designed to meet everyone's needs?
- How can I report poor pedestrian or bike conditions?
  - Answer: Specific problems can be reported to PEDS (www.pedgs.org)
- How can I get involved in transportation planning?

- Answer: For public transit, contact the Transportation Planning Board (www.tpb.ga.gov)
- Answer: For all transportation issues, get involved in Connect Atlanta (www.connectatlantaplan.com)

Figure 4.3g: Westside Atlanta Transportation Summary

4.3.11 Additional Resources and Actions

Suggested Implementation Strategies
There must be continued discussion of the merits of this extension. Should stakeholders on the Westside wish to have improved transit options, it is recommended that a transit working group be formed consisting of a broad array of interests – homeowners, business owners, religious leaders, elected officials, etc. This group should engage MARTA and the Transit Planning Board in discussion about the merits of this new proposed route and dual-mode vehicles. This group is important because in order for transit discussions to carry forward, there must be a champion for expanded transit in the Westside. Without advocates for transit there will likely be no changes to the current level of service.

Coordination with Cobb County
Since this line will serve not only the Westside, but also continue into Cobb County, it will be critical to coordinate and work with the people who will be impacted by this change in Cobb County. Getting the support of these residents is crucial to the success. For this line to make sense from a ridership point of view, this link is necessary. Historically, suburban counties have

opposed transit, but going forward, they are becoming more and more amenable to the idea as the realization of high fuel prices and traffic congestion takes effect.

There are several high density developments along the route extending into Cobb County. There are several along Oakdale Road between Cobb Drive and Atlanta Road. More development is planned for the area, and it would be a great coalition to team with to support this route going into Cobb County.

Transit Planning Board Comment Period
www.tpb.ga.gov
City of Atlanta Comprehensive Transportation Plan
www.connectatlantaplan.com

5.0 ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Existing Conditions and Issues

Westside Atlanta has a wealth of greenspace amenities. These include both natural systems, such as Proctor Creek, as well as a variety of park facilities. Additionally, the Westside has several notable cemeteries that add to the area's greenspace holdings, while also preserving historic and cultural values. Greenspace amenities exist on both public and privately owned land and should be further protected through both management of existing holdings and new acquisitions. Refer to Figure 5.1a: Westside Atlanta Greenspace.

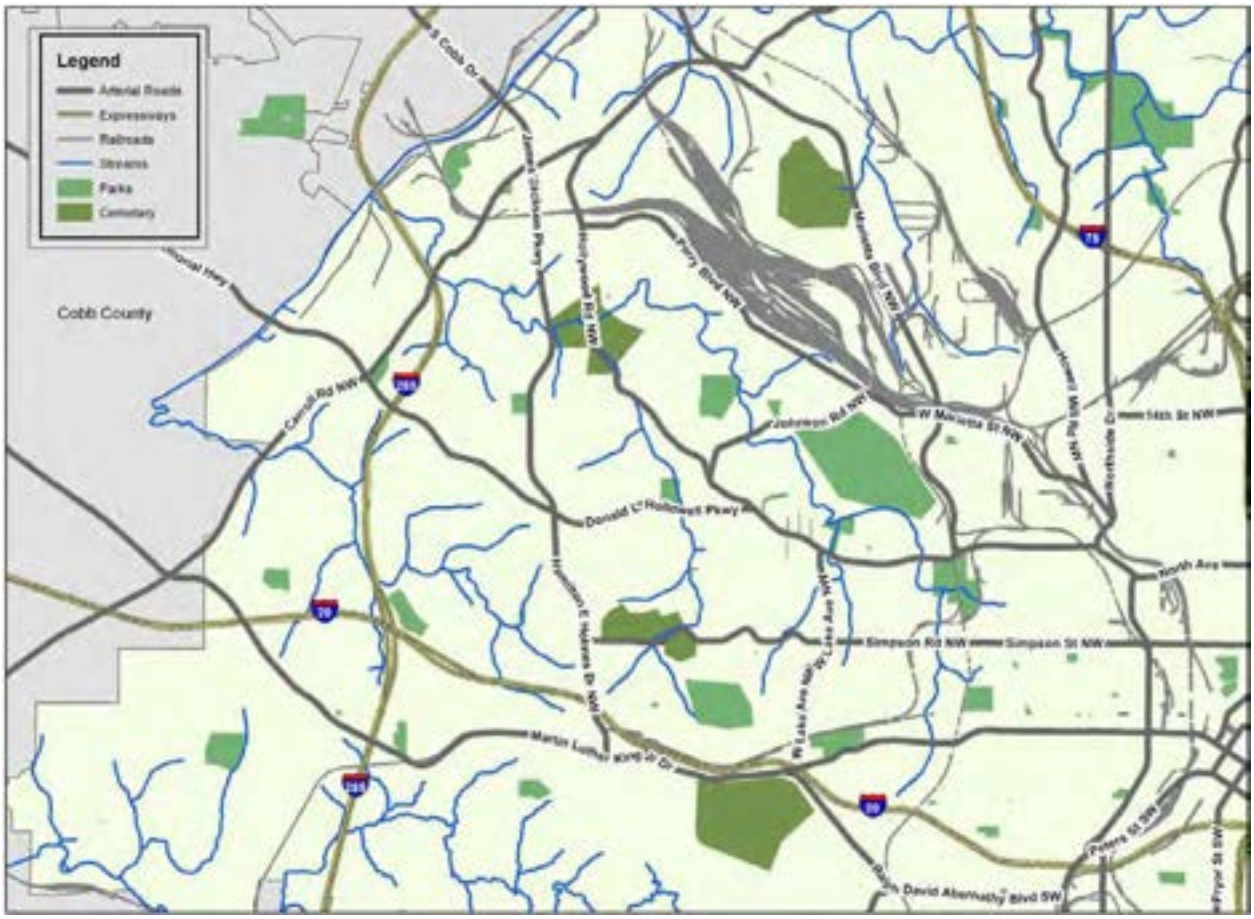

Figure 5.1a: Westside Atlanta Greenspace
Source: GIS data provided by the Georgia Tech Center for GIS

5.1.1 Westside Atlanta Parks

Westside Atlanta is home to numerous neighborhood greenspaces and is the future home of the largest regional park in the city. Unfortunately Westside residents are not aware of the resources surrounding them and simultaneously these greenspaces are scattered and isolated throughout the study area with no connectivity. Refer to Table 7.3t, in the Appendix, for a list of Westside Atlanta parks by district.

5.1.2 Greenspace Values

Preservation and management of community greenspace capitalizes on a variety of recreation, cultural, natural values and aesthetics and accommodates many different uses. The preservation of greenspace frequently occurs through:

- Management of existing parks, nature preserves, and streetscapes
- Environmental ordinances and zoning tools to preserve ecosystems
- Outright land acquisition and purchase of conservation easements
- **Recreation Values**
  - Active- athletic facilities and playgrounds
  - Passive- walking/hiking trails
- **Cultural and Historic Values**
  - Historic sites and landscapes
  - Preservation of relationship with nature/wilderness experience
  - Vernacular traditions and endemic community customs
- **Aesthetic Values**
  - Vistas- both naturally occurring and deliberately created
  - Public art
  - Formal design of parks and landscapes
  - Naturalesque design- "nature-like" settings

5.1.3 Greenspace Concepts

- **Greenspace**
  A term used to reference both parks and natural areas. Its specific meaning varies widely according to the context in which it is used. It can refer to undeveloped land of environmental value as well as to permanently preserved land. It is a very inclusive term that is frequently used to reference the plethora of environmental and cultural values associated with natural systems and undeveloped land.
- **Green Infrastructure**
  A strategic approach to land conservation that was coined to emphasize the value of ecological systems and processes as comparable to "grey infrastructure", which includes roads and sewers. As a concept it draws on the early-twentieth century parks movement as well as on conservation ecology's emphasis on the linking of natural areas to benefit biodiversity.
- **Greenways / Corridors**
  Greenspaces that are linear in nature. They often run along either waterways or transportation corridors as a connection between larger greenspaces. When discussing connectivity, it is helpful to consider whether the connectivity is intended for human use or for biodiversity and natural systems.

5.1.4 City of Atlanta Project Greenspace

The vision of Atlanta's Project Greenspace is the creation of a world-class greenspace system that connects people to parks, recreational facilities, natural areas, outdoor gathering places, streetscapes, and greenways. Project Greenspace builds on past parks and greenspace initiatives, including: the 1993 Parks, Open Space and Greenways Program, the 2005 Atlanta Park System Agenda, and the BeltLine Initiative.

5.1.5 Existing Park Typology

An inventory of existing and potential greenspace resources was prepared as part of Project Greenspace. This included mapping and description of the key greenspace components.

- **Regional Parks**
  Major park sites that draw a significant portion of users from outside of city limits and generally contain facilities that generate revenue.
- **Community Parks**
  Support organized programming with staff and facilities such as recreation centers, pools, picnic tables, or athletic complexes.
- **Neighborhood Parks**
  Serve local informal recreational needs. Typically contain wooded areas, fields for informal sports, basketball and tennis courts, and playgrounds / tot lots.
- **Block Parks**
  Small park sites containing limited amenities such as playgrounds / tot lots.
- **Garden Spots**
  Small landscaped areas, generally without amenities - typically traffic islands.
- **Nature Preserves**
  Primarily natural areas with amenities that facilitate environmental interpretation.
- **Greenway Trail**
  A Greenway Trail goes through a natural or lightly landscaped park and is meant to connect to other parks. Greenway trail properties may have a maximum total development of 10% of the property.
- **Conservation Parks**
  Areas that are both publicly accessible and managed for environmental protection purposes.
- **Special Facility**
  Sites within the park inventory that contain facilities not typically associated with parks.

Other Existing Parks and Open Spaces

- National Park Service Sites
- State and DeKalb County Parks
- Consent Degree Acquisitions/Greenways
- Golf Courses
- Cemeteries
- Schools and Universities

5.1.6 Atlanta's Drainage System

The dendritic pattern formed by rivers and streams is an important feature of Atlanta's greenspace system. This includes the 100-year flood plain as delineated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), additional flat lands adjacent to waterways, as well as steep slopes adjacent to waterways.

5.1.7 Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Environmentally sensitive areas within Project Greenspace discussions represent areas that have a high environmental sensitivity and/or are subject to development regulations. These include undeveloped land with extensive forest cover or located in close proximity to water bodies, steep slopes, and wetlands. Connectivity of parcels with existing community parks, schools, and

cemeteries, as well as the parcel size are important considerations for the prioritization of these areas. This “environmentally sensitive areas” designation excludes greenspaces that are already protected.

5.1.8 Greenspace Connections

The provision of linear connections facilitates access between and among the city’s greenspace resources. These include:

- **BeltLine Trails** - The proposed 33-mile loop trail system circles downtown and midtown areas of the city.
- **Multi-Use Trails -**In conjunction with the PATH Foundation the city has prepared a plan for the development of multi-use trails throughout the city.
- **Arterial Streets -** Streetscape improvements along the city’s arterial streets can foster better pedestrian and vehicle connection between greenspaces.
- **Bike Lanes -** Existing and proposed on-street bike networks increase greenspace connectivity.
- **Utility Corridors -** Utility corridors contain a significant amount of open space, frequently extend across long stretches of the city and maximize connections both for humans and wildlife.
- **Undeveloped Land -** Acquisition of strategically located undeveloped parcels could better connect existing greenspaces.

5.1.9 Proctor Creek Watershed

Proctor Creek is one of the seven stream drainage basins that feeds the Upper Chattahoochee River. It is bounded by Northside Drive, West Marietta Street, and Marietta Road to the north; Inman Yards, James Jackson Parkway to the south; Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Gordon Road to the southwest; Hightower Road, Bankhead Highway, and Interstate 285 to the west; and Peters Street and Murphy Avenue to the east. Refer to Figure 5.2a for a map of Proctor Creek.

Atlanta's roadway network and resulting development patterns are directly shaped by its watershed topography. Atlanta is the meeting point for ten stream drainage basins, which supply two distinctly-separate River basins - the Chattahoochee River and the Ocmulgee River. Each stream drainage basin watershed is bounded by ridgelines and plateaus, which cradle floodplain valleys where the headwaters of several tributary creeks originate in springs. These spring waters flow into the principal creek, which finally flows through a stream way corridor and floodplain to supply the river.

Figure 5.1b: Proctor Creek

Atlanta’s streams and drainage ways are potentially the City’s most valuable natural resources. Unfortunately, the City’s streams suffer from litter, pollution, and hydrologic impacts due to storm water runoff from impervious surfaces. Several efforts are underway to reclaim and protect Atlanta’s streams and watersheds including the Metro Atlanta Urban Watershed Initiative (MAUWI) and the Greenway Acquisition Project.

5.1.10 Introduction to Brownfields

A brownfield is a general term that applies to any property where soil or groundwater is contaminated with industrial chemicals, petroleum, or human waste. Brownfields are present everywhere and the contamination may not have always been created by the present use or user. Most commonly, brownfields include, but are not limited to gas stations, automobile service centers, agricultural operations, dry cleaners and manufacturing operations, all of which are prevalent in West Atlanta. EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. EPA's Brownfields Initiative strategies include funding pilot programs and other research efforts, clarifying liability issues, entering into partnerships, conducting outreach activities, developing job training programs, and addressing environmental justice concerns. In order to protect the public health, safety, and well-being of its citizens and to protect and enhance the quality of its environment, the State of Georgia has declared it to be the public policy of the state to encourage the clean up, reuse, and redevelopment of properties where there have been releases of hazardous waste, hazardous constituents, and hazardous substances, into the environment.

Brownfield Redevelopment is important because:

- It recycles old, under-utilized property to more beneficial uses.
- It helps to clean the environment.
- It creates jobs.
- It takes advantage of existing sewers and roads.
- It improves the value of the properties around it.

Despite growing interest and initial success some communities have experienced in redeveloping brownfields, many barriers remain. Uncertainties regarding liability and cleanup costs have discouraged potential developers from reusing old industrial sites. As a result, many brownfield sites remain abandoned, often presenting an eyesore or potential health hazard to the surrounding neighborhood.

5.1.11 The Problem with Brownfield

State and/or federal laws require many property owners to clean up contaminated soil and groundwater, but many other contaminated properties do not fall under any regulatory authority that can require cleanup. Additionally, many properties have been abandoned and there is no individual or entity that can be located and held responsible for the costly clean-up of a contaminated property. Many brownfields are abandoned or underutilized because cleanup can be expensive. To help address this issues and in an effort to restore these properties to support an economically viable use, many states have enacted brownfield laws or legislation. Brownfield laws streamline cleanup and improve redevelopment prospects.

5.1.12 Federal Brownfield Legislation

Brownfield sites raise a number of legal, financial and technical concerns for current or prospective owners. The federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act ("CERCLA" or "Superfund") imposes strict, joint and several liabilities for the full cleanup costs on past and current owners or operators of the contaminated property, among other parties. While the EPA first pursues those parties responsible for the pollution, present owners

may get stuck with part or the entire cleanup costs even if they did not cause the problem. Present owners may therefore be reluctant to perform the investigations necessary for sale and development because of the possibility of uncovering site contamination, which could result in their incurring liability for full cleanup costs.

All sites reported to the EPA as potential Superfund candidates are entered into Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System (CERCLIS). Historically, the EPA maintained information about these sites in the CERCLIS inventory regardless of their status, including sites where it was determined that no further Federal Superfund interest was warranted. This practice led to unintended barriers to the redevelopment of these properties specifically because sites listed in CERCLIS are often automatically considered risky by the lending industry, making it difficult for potential purchasers to secure loans to develop these properties. As a result, potential developers may shy away from these properties simply because they are in listed in CERCLIS. Refer to Table 7.3u, in the Appendix, for a list of Westside CERCLIS sites.

5.1.13 Brownfields Legislation in Georgia

Georgia's equivalent of a brownfields law is the Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act. The Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act has the stated goals of:

- Returning idle property and infrastructure to productive use
- Improving local tax revenues
- Returning jobs to city centers and industrial areas
- Renewing blighted communities
- Reducing urban sprawl.

The Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act attempts to accomplish these goals by limiting a brownfield purchaser's liability associated with present contamination in return for site investigation and soil cleanup. The soil contamination must be cleaned up to meet state standards and liability for groundwater remains with the seller, not the purchaser.

5.1.14 Georgia's Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act

Brownfield cleanup is voluntary. Buyers volunteer to clean up properties using their own money in exchange for becoming partners with the state's Environmental Protection Division (EPD). The EPD recognizes that brownfield cleanups will not happen unless they assist the developer in achieving its redevelopment goals. The Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act provides property tax benefits that allow for cost recovery. For a property owner or purchaser to initiate the process, the property must have a contaminant release, the applicant must not have been responsible for the release, pay the application fee of $3000 and create a Corrective Action Plan for soil cleanup and / or a Compliance Status Report. After initiating the process, the property owner must notify the EPD if they find additional contamination on their land. The EPD assesses potential risks to the surrounding community and supervises all aspects of the investigation and cleanup. Sites that need further investigation or cleanup are listed on the hazardous site inventory (HSI) and the state has created a "Superfund" to address the additional needs of these properties.

5.1.15 Current Brownfield Designations

The City of Atlanta has 46 sites on the Hazardous Site Inventory, 19 of which are located in the study area. Each of these sites are in various stages of cleanup and redevelopment, and reveals a strong interest in reviving the economic viability of Westside Atlanta. Closer inspection of the locations of these designated sites identifies specific areas of Westside Atlanta that developers have targeted for primarily residential redevelopment in previously industrial areas.

Although some of the designated sites are concentrated in certain areas, the "scattershot" locations of many designated properties demonstrate that the Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act could be used more efficiently to address underutilized areas.

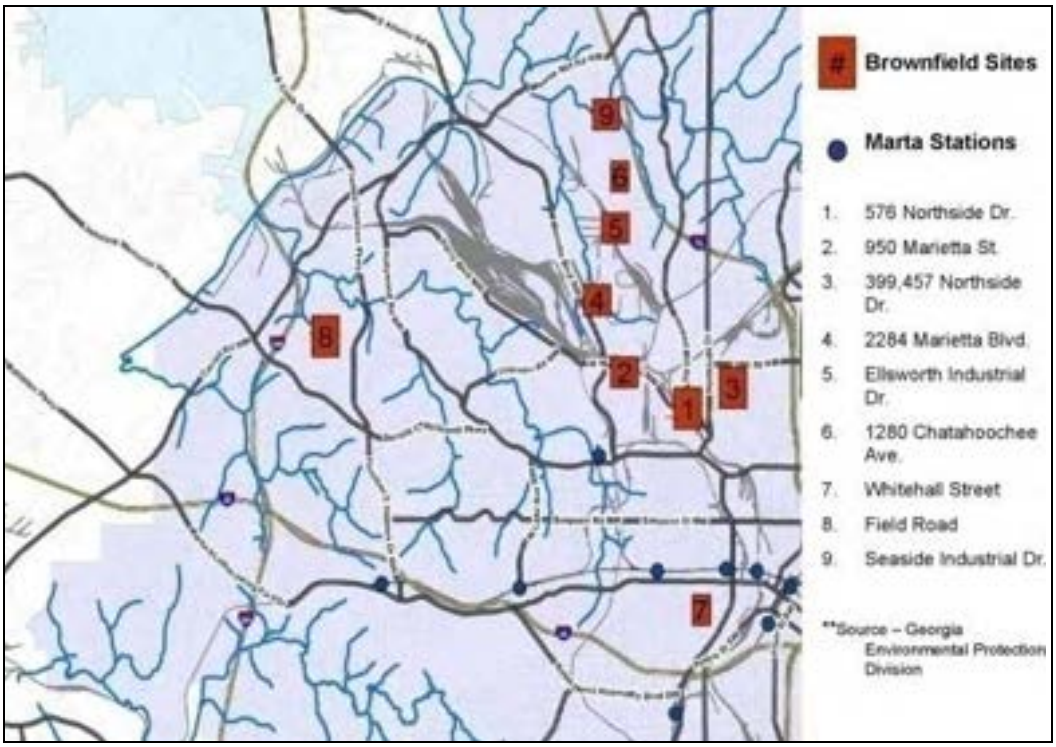

Figure 5.1c: Designated Brownfields and Superfund Sites

5.2 Possibilities and Resources

Management of parks on the Westside appears to focus largely upon active recreational values and uses. Consequently there is the potential to reassess how residents use and envision their greenspaces and the potential to place a greater emphasis on passive recreational greenspace values of nature preserves and greenways. Proctor Creek is an incredible resource for both nature interpretation and education as well as for aesthetic and passive recreational values. Proctor Creek runs along or through several city parks, offering the opportunity to begin giving greater attention to the creek itself prior to securing funding for new acquisitions. Maddox Park, Grove Park, and the currently closed Gun Club Park all have frontage on Proctor Creek. Additionally, Center Hill Park and Edwin Place Park contain or abut tributaries of Proctor Creek. These offer the potential to construct trails and interpretive signage that emphasize the Proctor Creek Watershed as an integral connection throughout the Westside's natural environment.

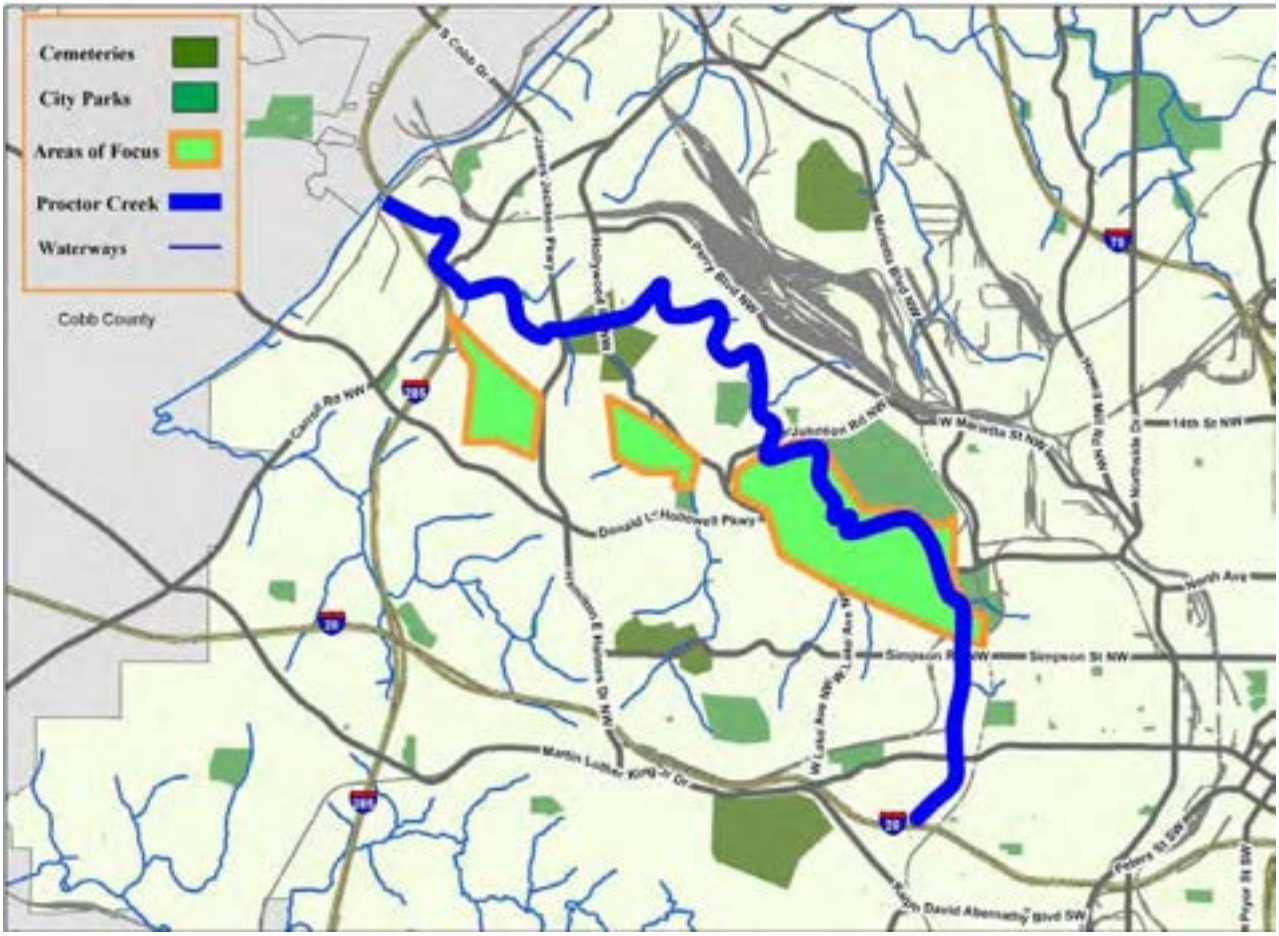

Figure 5.2a: Westside Greenspace Areas of Focus

5.2.1 Green Space Opportunities and Projects

Westside Park and Bellwood Lake on the BeltLine

In 2003, a newly proposed Atlanta transportation plan began to gain favor with city government and the private sector. This proposal, The BeltLine Redevelopment Plan, proposed to create a multi-modal ring around the city following existing rail lines. The BeltLine is one of the most comprehensive economic development efforts undertaken in the city's history. It has placed a new focus on Westside Atlanta as an integral and vital player in the overall economy and fabric of the city, bringing renewed community interest in preserving affordable workforce housing, pedestrian mobility, historic preservation, environmental remediation and corridor/nodal revitalization.

Figure 5.2b: Beltline

Amid the resurgence of interest in Westside Atlanta the Bellwood Quarry was purchased by the city in June of 2006. Trust for Public Land (TPL) views the Bellwood Quarry as one of the icons of their Emerald Necklace concept, a plan to connect and introduce new greenspace in conjunction with the Beltline development. This 300 acre tract of land will be transformed into the largest park in the city to be known as Westside Park, offering much-needed green space to neighboring communities. Westside Park calls for the conversion of the quarry into a lake within the park which will serve as a 50-acre drinking water reservoir. As with Hulsey Yard, transformation of the quarry into green space will require complex coordination among affected ownership and business interests. The proposed projects have a preliminary cost of land acquisition and development estimated between $200 and $400 million.

Figure 5.2c: Bellwood Quarry

West End Park

This park, located near the transit station and mall redevelopment could see more activity as a public plaza with open space.

Maddox Park
Maddox Park is located on 52 acres on the BeltLine and has the potential to increase to more than 119 acres, and was identified as one of the "jewels" in the TPL's Emerald Necklace.

Waterworks Park
Situated on a hilltop alongside the City of Atlanta's reservoir, Atlanta Waterworks on Howell Mill Road is an ideal setting for a public park. TPL's plan envisions changing the location of the fence in order to open the surrounding land to the public, similar to the situation at New York City's Central Park reservoir. A similar plan for Waterworks could add 204 acres of green space to the City.

Simpson Park/Simpson Road Mixed Use
TPL recommends building a BeltLine Transit/MARTA rail station below Simpson Road and creating a new green space "square" above the station followed by development of a new community around the station and the park. The proposed mixed-use project, estimated at 49 acres in total, includes 7 acres of green space.

5.2.2 Brownfield Redevelopment - Field Road Possibilities

One example of the numerous areas of Westside Atlanta that is ripe for redevelopment and utilization for another purpose is Field Road. Field Road is easily accessible from Donald E. Hollowell Drive and is proximal to I-285 and the Gun Club Road Landfill/Lincoln Cemetery area of Westside Atlanta. Additionally, the former Bowen Homes Development backs up to Field Road. At present, Field Road is divided into 21 parcels of varying size with 12 different owners. Smallwood Auto Parts and Lamb of God Baptist Church are the properties with existing uses.

Figure 5.2d: Smallwood Auto Parts on Field Road

The Watts Road Landfill has been closed and has been placed on the Hazardous Site Inventory. The landfill has been subdivided into 9 parcels and rezoned to allow for residential and commercial development, once the hazardous materials have been contained or cleaned-up. Watts Road Landfill designation as a brownfield along with rezoning of the site prompted an inquiry into the status of the other vacant properties along Field Road.

The Smallwood Auto Parts / Graveyard parcels, comprising over 20 acres, will clearly demand brownfield remediation prior to being put to a different use, but the scenic vistas of Atlanta and the natural growth present on the undeveloped and vacant parcels of Field Road make the area prime for redevelopment. Additionally, the minimal number of land owners and the rezoning and brownfield designation of the Watts Road Landfill will make the area a target for large-scale redevelopment.

Interested community members need to be cognizant of brownfield redevelopment in their area if they want to have any input into shaping the future of the site. Field Road is an ideal location for a variety of uses, but it may represent the greatest opportunity for Westside Atlanta to implement mixed-use / mixed-income development, greenspace preservation, and economic development in

one central location. Refer to Figures 7.3v and 7.3w, in the Appendix, for more information on Field Road.

5.2.3 Field Road & Greenspace Connectivity to Gun Club Road Landfill Site

Figure 5.2g: Westside Atlanta Potential Brownfield and Greenspace Connectivity

Another positive attribute of the Field Road property is its proximity to the Gun Club Road Landfill site and other undeveloped properties. This area presents a tremendous opportunity to preserve greenspace, incorporate recreational opportunities, and promote alternate modes of transportation. The Gun Club Road Landfill was closed in 1998 and comprises over 110 acres of developable land. The methane generated annually from the site has been contained and the vinyl chloride threat has been reduced to levels well within the EPA standards. Many potential uses have been proposed for the site, the most recent was for a golf course. The City of Atlanta, which owns the property, could not come to an agreement with the golf course developers and the future of the site is somewhat uncertain.

City of Atlanta employees, who wish to remain anonymous, revealed that the latest anticipated use is for a large-scale recreation center with athletic fields to accommodate many different athletic endeavors. This anticipated use, coupled with the site's proximity to Field Road and the closure of the Bowen Homes development, all support the remediation/redevelopment of Field Road and an attempt to incorporate surrounding undeveloped land into a unified system.

Figure 5.2e: Gun Club Road Landfill Redevelopment Site

The properties identified on Figure 5.2g identify parcels that would be ideal for municipal parks, a school-site, mixed-use development and a recreational center all

within walking distance of each other. The untapped potential for this area and the outside pressure from developers suggests that this area should become a “jewel of the Westside”.

Environmental and Brownfield Redevelopment Resources
- Georgia- Environmental Protection Division
- EPA-Brownfields and Revitalization Division
- Trust for Public Land
- Urban Land Institute
- Fanning Institute- University of Georgia
- Sustainability in Action

5.3 Recommended Actions

5.3.1 Westside Greenspace- Three Possibilities

Community feedback during *Blueprints* meetings indicated support for greater preservation of natural systems within the Westside. Improved greenspace management and additional acquisition of greenspace within the Westside were both emphasized. Due to the attention given to the development of the Westside Park within the Beltline planning process, greenspace possibilities considered during the *Blueprints* process focused on the greenspace needs of the Westside at-large, including the ways in which development of Westside Park will impact and potentially connect with other community greenspaces. Three possibilities are included within this section. Two of these possibilities identify wooded or environmentally sensitive lands that could add to the nature preserve components of the city’s existing holdings. The third possibility examines the existing connections between the Westside Park site and the adjacent city parks and neighborhoods, as well as those potentially provided by utility lines and Proctor Creek throughout the larger Westside area.

Option 1- Acquisition of Greenspace Adjacent to Bowen Homes

Figure 5.3a: Option 1- Acquisition of Greenspace Adjacent to Bowen Homes Map

A significant swath of potential greenspace exists north of Bowen Homes in an area that is bordered by Northwest Drive to the north, James Jackson Parkway to the east, and Field Road to the west. This land is heavily wooded, with a stream, several steep slopes, and a gravel road winding through portions of it. With the closure of Bowen Home, as well as the vacant brownfield sites adjacent to the site on Field Road, this area will likely experience significant redevelopment. A vital part of this redevelopment will be protection of existing tree canopy and greenspace for the benefit of the larger Westside community. This potential greenspace is unique in that it is adjacent to the existing A.D. Williams Park, which could provide access, and parking to the land. Additionally it could be accessed from Field Road, the existing Bowen Homes site, or from the corner of Northwest Drive and Watts Road. This potential greenspace seems most appropriate as a nature reserve for passive recreation.

Option 2- Acquisition of Greenspace along Proctor Creek Tributary

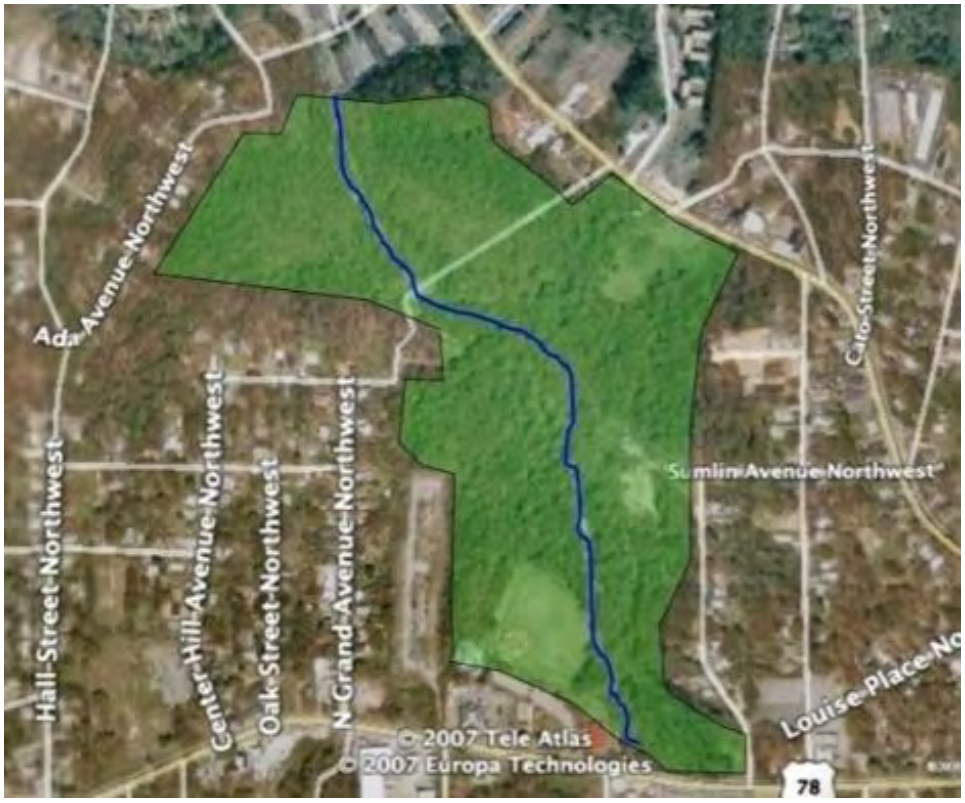

Figure 5.3b: Option 2- Acquisition of Greenspace along Proctor Creek Tributary Map

Community participants at the *Blueprints* workshop identified this parcel of land as possessing valuable greenspace potential. The undeveloped land is adjacent to the north edge of Center Hill Park and is bordered by North Grand Avenue, Hollywood Road, Brooks Avenue, and Ada Avenue. The area is heavily wooded, with the terrain sloping down to a tributary of Proctor Creek. This potential greenspace seems most appropriate as a nature reserve for passive recreation. Its connectivity and proximity to existing park facilities and parking would reduce the needs to construct access points within the environmentally sensitive land. Additionally, its potential for passive recreation would act to complement the existing active-recreational uses of Center Hill Park.

Option 3- Explore Utility Corridor and Proctor Creek Connecting the Westside

Figure 5.3c: Option 3- Explore Utility Corridor and Proctor Creek Connecting the Westside Map

Existing power lines and city-owned segments of Proctor Creek offer potential as corridors for passive recreation. The third greenspace option examines the existing connections between the western and southern edges of Westside Park with the adjacent neighborhoods and community parks. The sloping terrain and viewsheds of the utility corridor offer visual interest and athletic stimulation for cyclists and walkers. The existing rail bridge over Donald L. Hollowell Parkway could be utilized as a connection between Maddox Park and Westside Park. Additionally, the utility corridors run in close vicinity to small neighborhood parks that run north-south along Donald L. Hollowell Parkway, such as Edwin Park Place, North Evelyn Place, Gertrude Place, and Matilda Place. Connection between existing neighborhood parks and Westside Park recreation corridors should be emphasized within BeltLine planning efforts. This option would require the shifting of the CSX line to the east side of Maddox Park where there is an empty corridor. However, this option could create significant greenspace connectivity at minimal costs and would require minimal intervention to the existing state of the Westside Park site.

5.3.2 Actions to Preserve and Create Greenspace in the Westside

1. Participate in additional BeltLine planning activities to ensure incorporation of Westside community interests, such as connectivity between Westside Park amenities and adjacent communities and existing Westside parks.
2. Communicate with the city's Department of Parks and Recreation as well as with the Planning Department's Project Greenspace staff about potential greenspace acquisitions adjacent to Bowen Homes and Center Hill Park.
3. Communicate with the city's Tree Preservation Commission with concerns about enforcement of the Tree Protection Ordinance and protection of the Westside's tree canopy.

4. Explore community support for improved management of the cemeteries along Hollywood Road. Identify management and interpretive programs utilized elsewhere to incorporate cemeteries into the perceived greenspace and historic resources of the community.
5. Form a greenspace task force across NPU and neighborhood boundaries.

5.3.3 Greenspace Organizations and Resources

Organization	Website	Phone
Atlanta Beltline Inc.	www.beltline. org/	(404) 880 - 4100
City of Atlanta Project Greenspace	www.atlantagreenspace.com/	(404) 584 - 6271
Trees Atlanta	treesatlanta.org/	(404) 522 - 4097
Westside Watershed Alliance	www.wawaonline.org/	(404) 752 - 5385
Park Pride Grant Program	www.parkpride.org	(404) 817 - 7970
Keeping it Wild	www.keepingitwild.org/	(404) 872 - 8540 ext. 13

Table 5.3a: Greenspace Organizations and Resources

5.3.4 Recommendations for Addressing Brownfields in West Atlanta

Despite all of these efforts, there are countless properties in Westside Atlanta that will need to take advantage of the Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act in order to revitalize blighted and / or underutilized properties. Perhaps it is only a matter of time or a lack of understanding of the law and environmental liability, but serious time and effort must be invested in addressing the inordinate number of automobile repair shops, out-dated industrial uses, and boarded-up manufacturing facilities along the main transportation corridors in the study area.

This process is time-consuming and costly. These factors, coupled with the voluntary nature of initiating brownfield rehabilitation, have impeded any government agency or private entity from identifying all of the potential brownfield sites within the study area, but it is advisable for any concerned party to personally survey existing brownfields in order to participate in the redevelopment of these properties. Field Road is presented as a possible opportunity for redevelopment, but any rehabilitation and redevelopment of a brownfield site should incorporate community involvement.

5.3.5 Brownfield Conclusion

Brownfield redevelopment is an extremely volatile area of the law and redevelopment policy. Prior to any attempt to act upon or in reliance of the Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act, an interested party must keep abreast of the most recent developments in this area. Further material is available through Georgia's Environmental Protection Division (gaepd.org) and the Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act is available under O.C.G.A. § 12-8-200. It is important to note that the Georgia Hazardous Site Reuse and Redevelopment Act only applies to privately owned properties, so many other sites (IE: Bellwood Quarry and Maddox Park) that are under state or local control are not identified on the HSI, but entail extensive environmental remediation.

5.3.6 Designated Brownfields and Superfund Sites on the Westside

Address	Size	Proposed Use
576 Northside Drive	2.39 Acres	Type 1 – Residential
1380 West Marietta Street	3 Acres	Type 1 or 2 Residential
1401 Ellsworth Industrial Drive	3.6 Acres	Type 1 Residential
1275 Ellsworth Industrial Drive	5.77 Acres	Type 1 or 2 Residential
1280 Chattahoochee Avenue	8.98 Acres	Type 1 Residential
2284 Marietta Boulevard	2 Acres	Type 1 Residential
627,639,641 Whitehall Street	1.5 Acres	Type 3 or 4 Residential
950 Marietta Street	10.91 Acres	Type 1 or 2 Residential
1410 Ellsworth Industrial Drive	3.5 Acres	Type 1 Residential
Field Road Property – Parcel B	4.65 Acres	Type 1 Residential
921-951 West Marietta Street	2.48 Acres	Type 1 or 2 Residential
465 Peters Street	1 Acre	Type 2 Residential
1375 Seaside Industrial Dr. Parcel 1	3.12 Acres	Type 1 or 2 Residential
1375 Seaside Industrial Dr. Parcel 2	6.97 Acres	Type 1 Residential
1460 Ellsworth Industrial Blvd.	3.6 Acres	Type 1 Residential
1429 Fairmount Avenue	4.75 Acres	Type 1 or 2 Residential
399,457 Northside Dr.	8.59 Acres	Type 5 – Non-Residential
1600 Ellsworth Industrial Drive	16.45 Acres	Type 4 – Non-Residential

Table 5.3b: Westside Brownfields and Superfund Sites

Figure 5.3h: 1380 W. Marietta St. 3+ acres rezoned for Former Watts Road Landfill on Field Rd.

Figure 5.3i: Multi-Family Residential Use. 30+ acres rezoned for smaller residential and commercial development.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 Land Use & Urban Design

6.1.1 Short Term Goals

- Establish a physical framework for economic and residential development in the Westside through zoning.
- Establish an organizational framework through which the local communities can exert influence upon the development process.
- Disseminate knowledge of potential tools and incentives available for community as well as points at which they can find out more.

6.1.2 Mid Term Goals

- Streamline development incentives into a more cohesive and easily customized template that covers the entire lifetime of a development project.
- Monitor the results of and continue to adapt short term goals as needed.

6.1.3 Long Term Goals

- Streamline and improve community involvement and influence in the development of the Westside.
- Utilize zoning and finance tools in conjunction with each other to bring into being the community's vision for the future development of their homes.

6.2 Housing and Community Development

6.2.1 Long Term Goals

- Encourage MARTA to develop the Proctor Creek Line as a TOD.

6.3 Transportation

6.3.1 Short Term Goals

- Participate in the Transit Planning Board's public comment period from now until May 2008.
- Participate in the City of Atlanta's Comprehensive Transportation Plan (called Connect Atlanta). Public workshops will be held January-April 2008.
- Report truck traffic violations to the Atlanta Police Department
- Contact the City of Atlanta's Office of Transportation or a City Council Member with specific transportation concerns- truck route signage, intersection improvements, etc.
- Use the descriptive typology to guide the physical reconfiguration of the roadways during redevelopment and improvement efforts (also mid- and long-term actions).
- Reconcile the GDOT and COA functional street classifications through the Connect Atlanta planning process.
- Become involved with City of Atlanta, GDOT, and ARC planning activities.
- Incorporate concepts of the street typology into Community Benefits Agreements (also mid- and long-term actions).
- Comprehensive Transportation Plan is currently under development. Offers opportunities for public involvement.

6.3.2 Mid Term Goals

- Ensure progress with the MARTA rail extension.

- Encourage politicians to work to make public transportation more regional
- Coordinate with groups in Cobb County to ensure that there is a synergy of voices toward expanding public transportation.

6.3.3 Long Term Goals

- Advocate for transit funding at the state level.
- Ensure that Transit Oriented Development is being planned for stations that are in your area.

6.4 Environment

6.5.1 Short Term Goals

- Communicate with the Department of Parks and Recreation as well as with Project Greenspace about potential greenspace acquisitions, particularly pertaining to land adjacent to Bowen Homes and Center Hill Park.
- Report violations and concerns of the Tree Protection Ordinance to the Tree Preservation Commission.
- Participate in Beltline planning activities

6.5.2 Mid Term Goals

- Create a collective Greenspace Task Force across the NPU and neighborhood Boundaries.

6.5.3 Long Term Goals

- Encourage the reclamation and development of brownfield sites within the Westside communities.

7.0 APPENDIX

7.1 Community Benefit Agreement

Administration:
Community coalitions

Purpose:
Community Benefit Agreements are legally enforceable contracts negotiated between developers and community groups to set out a range of community benefits that the developer agrees to provide as part of the development process. In other words, the developer agrees to shape development in specific ways or provide certain benefits in exchange for the support of the community through the regulatory process. These benefits can include:

> *Living wage requirements, childcare, environmental protection, parks and recreational facility construction, affordable housing, "First Source" hiring systems, or other benefits.*

Use of CBAs can result in an inclusive process that results in enforceable and transparent agreements that are both efficient and charitable in outcome. However, they can also suffer from lack of organization, legal expenses, negotiation failure, and unfamiliarity with the concept of coalition agreement.

Possibilities:
Community Benefit Agreements represent a strong potential for a community to negotiate with developers in order to more fully integrate the community's needs and requirements. However, studies of CBA precedents has revealed a number of potential pitfalls in these agreements, as detailed above.

A possibility in applying CBAs already is under some use by various city organizations, including the Atlanta Beltline Inc., which encourages a single template CBA for the various neighborhoods under its study area which would help to ensure a modicum of uniformity and fairness. This is a measure which can be adapted to the entire Westside area as well. Coordination meetings between representatives of the disparate neighborhoods, NPUs, and economic bodies can create a template CBA as well as a common set of goals and visions that can help shape the Westside in a more cohesive manner.

Another possibility lies in the application and timing of CBAs. Since community benefit agreements are dependant both on the legal standing and time frame of the organizations involved, it is suggested that the neighborhoods form legal entities to represent them in these agreements. In most cases, the most general existing organizations available would be the NPUs, which are not legally binding entities within the city government. A streamlining process could be implemented to integrate NPUs more directly into the planning and permitting process. These steps include:

- According NPUs (or whichever entity is chosen as the neighborhood's representative) legal status within the city hierarchy.
- Integrating said entities into a certain point in the planning process when forming CBAs are still applicable and requiring adherence to them by developers in order to receive permitting approval.
- Integrate a local vision into the overarching Atlanta City Comprehensive Plan through community feedback and participation to further make the overall vision of the city and the vision of its inhabitants one and the same.

7.2 Suggested Contacts for Further Action

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Transit Planning Board
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Planner
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demory@atlantaregional.com

City of Atlanta
Transportation Planning Division
(404) 330-6800

Paul J. Moore, P.E.
Atlanta Transportation Planning Group
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pmoore@glatting,com

7.3 Maps and Figure

Figure 7.3a: West Atlanta Neighborhoods
Source: Georgia Tech Center for GIS

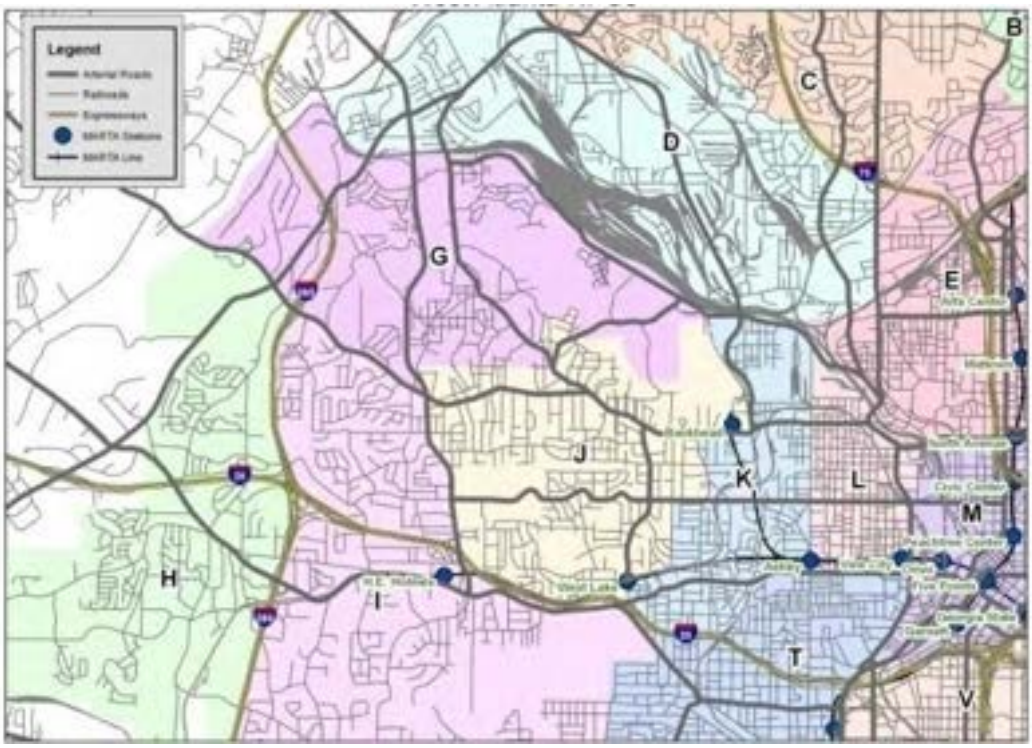

Figure 7.3b: West Atlanta NPU Map
Source: Georgia Tech Center for GIS

Figure 7.3c: Income by Block Group.
Source: GIS data provided by the Georgia Tech Center for GIS

Figure 7.3d:Population Density by Block Group
Source: GIS data provided by the Georgia Tech Center for GIS

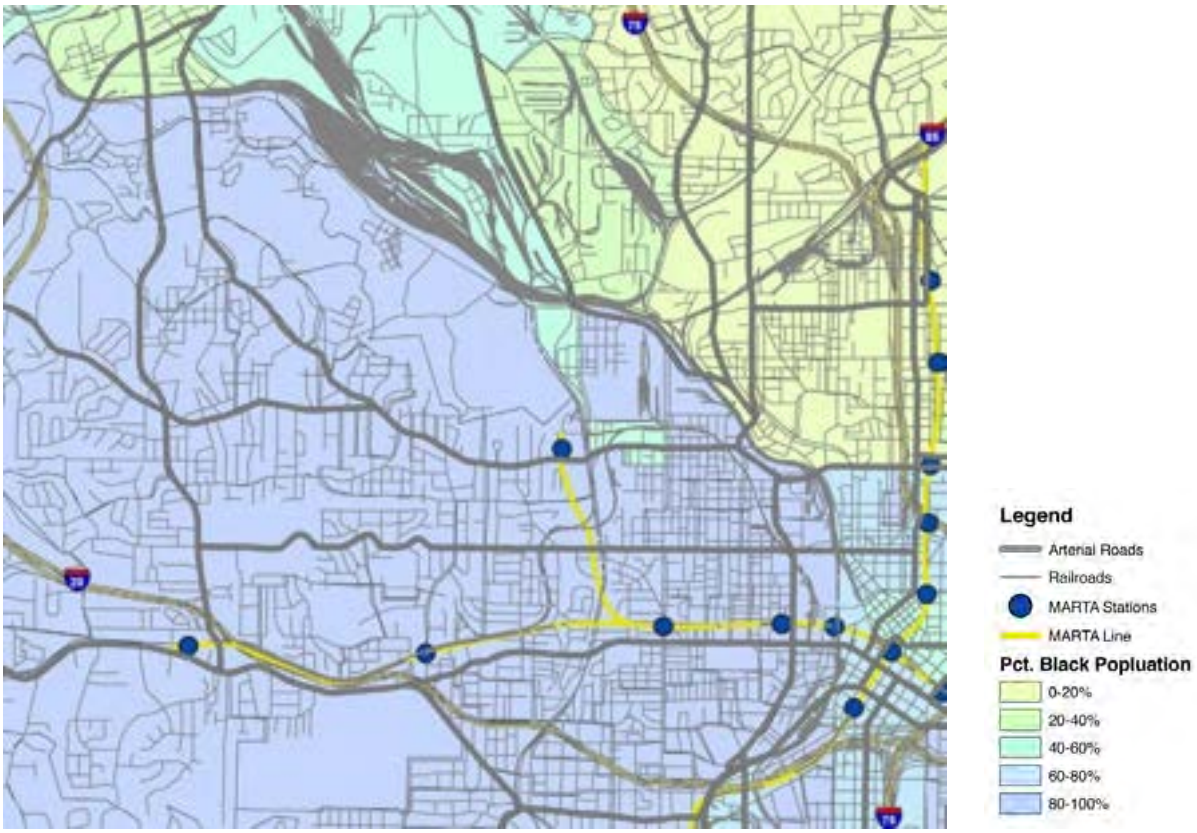

Figure 7.3e: Percentage of Black Population by Block Group
Source: GIS data provided by the Georgia Tech Center for GIS

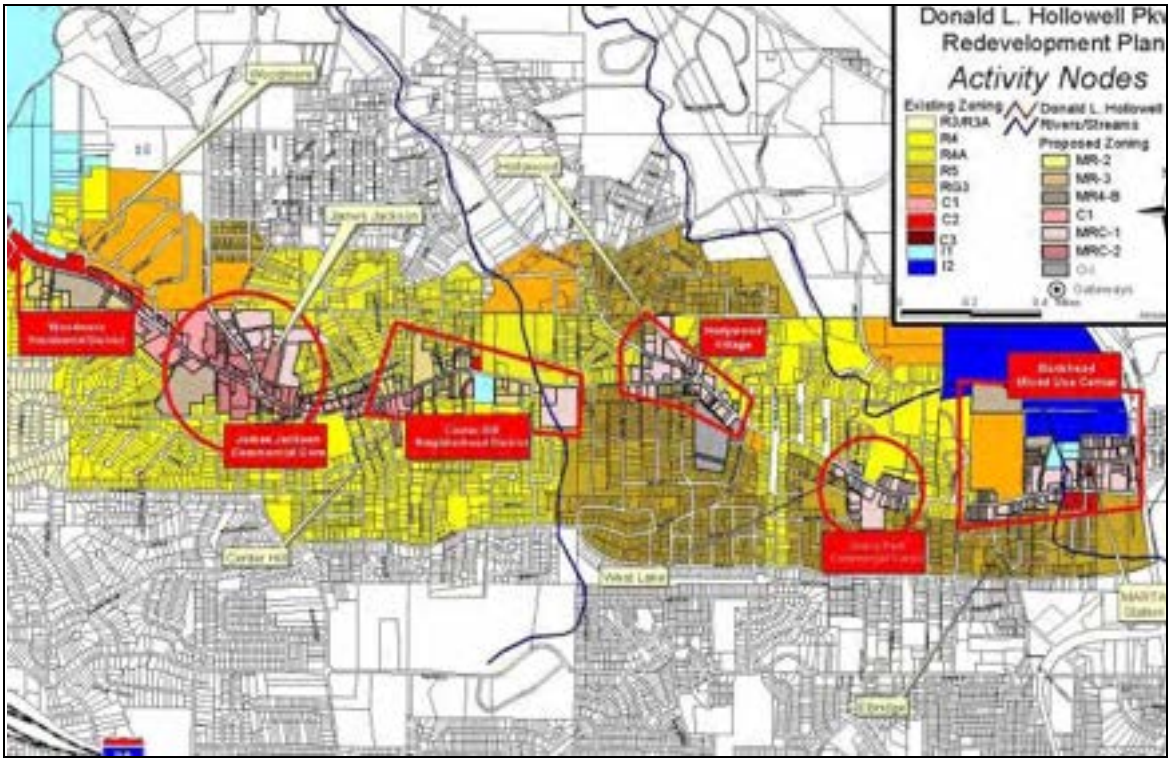

Figure 7.3f: Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway Redevelopment Plan
Courtesy: City of Atlanta

Figure 7.3g: Precedent imagery of QOL zoning
Source: City of Atlanta

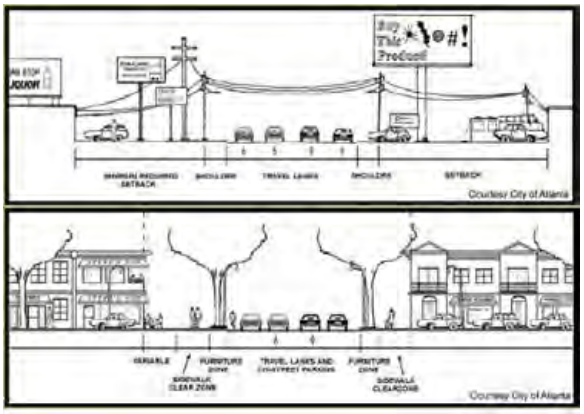

Figure 7.3h: Potential development imagery of QOL zoning
Source: City of Atlanta

Figure 7.3j: Example of TOD
Source: http://www.transitorienteddevelopment.org/

Figure 7.3k: Example of TOD
Source: http://www.mdot-realestate.org/tod.asp

STREET	GDOT CLASS	COA CLASS
Bolton Road	Minor Arterial	Arterial
Browntown Road	Collector	Local
Chappell Road	Collector	Collector
Donald L. Hollowell Parkway	Principal Arterial	Arterial
Grove Park Place	Local	Local
Gunn Club Road	Local	Local
Habershal Drive	Local	Local
HE Holmes Drive	Minor Arterial	Arterial
Hollywood Road	Collector	Collector
James Jackson Parkway	Minor Arterial	Arterial
Johnson Road	Collector	Collector
Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard	Minor Arterial	Collector
Marietta Boulevard	Minor Arterial	Arterial
Marietta Road	Local	Collector
MLK Jr. Drive	Minor Arterial	Arterial
North Avenue	Collector	Collector
Northwest Drive	Collector	Collector
Perry Boulevard	Collector	Collector
Peyton Road SW	Local	Collector
Simpson Rd.	Collector	Local
West Marietta Street	Minor Arterial	Arterial
West Lake Avenue	Minor Arterial	Collector

Figure 7.3m: GDOT & City of Atlanta Street Designations

Figure 7.3n: This is one possibility for how Grove Park Road could be extended above the current residential development to provide better connectivity between Hollowell Parkway and Johnson Road It would also provide opportunities for new residential development while maintaining the quiet feel of a "Greenway". A roundabout has been placed as a way to extend the park atmosphere directly into the roadway and create a node for where vehicle access and trail access can come together. The Georgia Power Right-of-way intersects this road to the north, offering a great opportunity for trail access to Westside Park.
Source: Travis Hampton, Georgia Tech College of Architecture

Figure 7.3p: Illustration of how Simpson Road could be transformed by applying design features from the typology
Source: Stephanie Nguyen, Georgia Tech College of Architecture

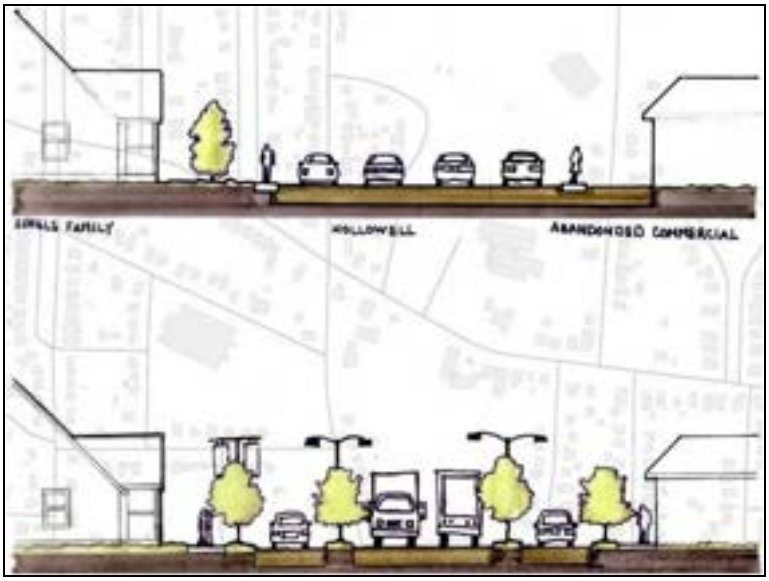

Figure 7.3q: Possible cross-section along Hollowell (bottom) that separates through truck traffic from other travel lanes. Top cross-section depicts existing conditions.
Source: Keith Smith, Georgia Tech College of Architecture

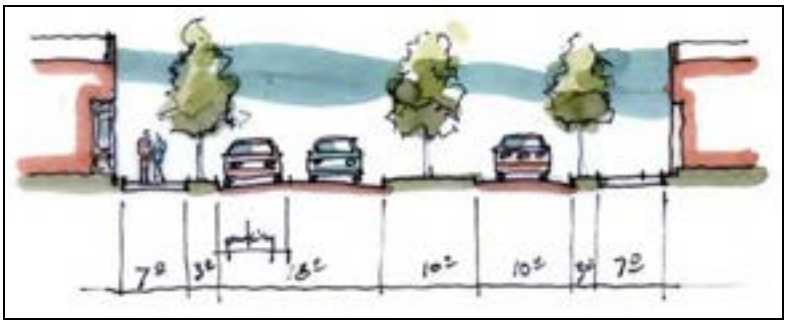

Figure 7.3r: Possible commercial core or mixed-use street with on-street parking, street trees, and wide sidewalks
Source: Paul Knight, Georgia Tech College of Architecture

Figure 7.3s: Potential alignment of an industrial street
Source: Hugh Veale, Georgia Tech College of Architecture

EPA ID	Site Name	Address
GAD051010205	A & D BARREL & DRUM CO INC	647 BANKHEAD AVE NW
GAD980556781	ESTECH GENERAL CHEMICALS	1551 MARIETTA RD
GA0000064865	HERNDON HOMES	511 JOHN STREET NW
GA0001758192	PAUL AVENUE CONTAMINATED SOIL	PAUL AVENUE
GAD003265550	SCHNEID I INC	1429 FAIRMONT AVE NW
GAD984288191	SOUTHERN STATES LANDFILL	OFF BOLTON ROAD AND COLLINS ROAD
GAD984279166	STILLHOUSE ROAD	3265 STILLHOUSE ROAD, N.W.
GAD003267192	ZEP MFG CO	1310 SEABOARD IND BLVD
GAD094066859	COLONIAL PRINTING INK CO	470 SW PARKWAY
GAD078107539	JOHNSON CONTROLS INC	4605 FULTON INDUSTRIAL BLVD SW
GAD984319756	SUN LABS	701 WHARTON CIRCLE SW

Table 7.3u: Westside Atlanta Federal Superfund Sites

District 3	District 4	District 9	District 10
• Maddox Park • Anderson Park • Verbena St. Play lot • Tremont Play lot • Grove Park • Washington Park • Mozley Park • Ashby Circle Play lot • Knight Park • Gertrude Place • JFK Park • Home Park • Charles L. Harper Memorial Park	• Adair Park (I,II) • Barbara A. McCoy Park • Bonnie Brae Park • Cleopas R. Johnson Park • Dean Rusk Park • Enota Place Play lot • Gordon-White Park • Howell Park • Oakland City Park • Outdoor Activity Center • Pittman Park • Ralph David Abernathy Plaza • Rosa L. Burney Park • Rose Circle Park • West End Park • Windsor Street Park	• Abner Place Park • A.D. Williams Park • Arlington Circle Play lot • Center Hill Park • Chattahoochee Park • Coronet Way Park • Edwin Place Park • English Park • Haynes Manor Park • Lillian Cooper Shepherd Park • Mantissa Street Park • Rockdale Park • Spink Collins Park • Underwood Hills Park • Whittier Mill Park	• Adamsville Gym Park • Adamsville Rec Center & Natatorium Park • Collier Heights Park • Cumberland Dale Creek • Harwell Heights Park • Herbert Greene Isabel Gates Webster Park • Lionel Hampton West Manor Park • Wilson Mill Park

Table 7.3t: Westside Atlanta Parks by District

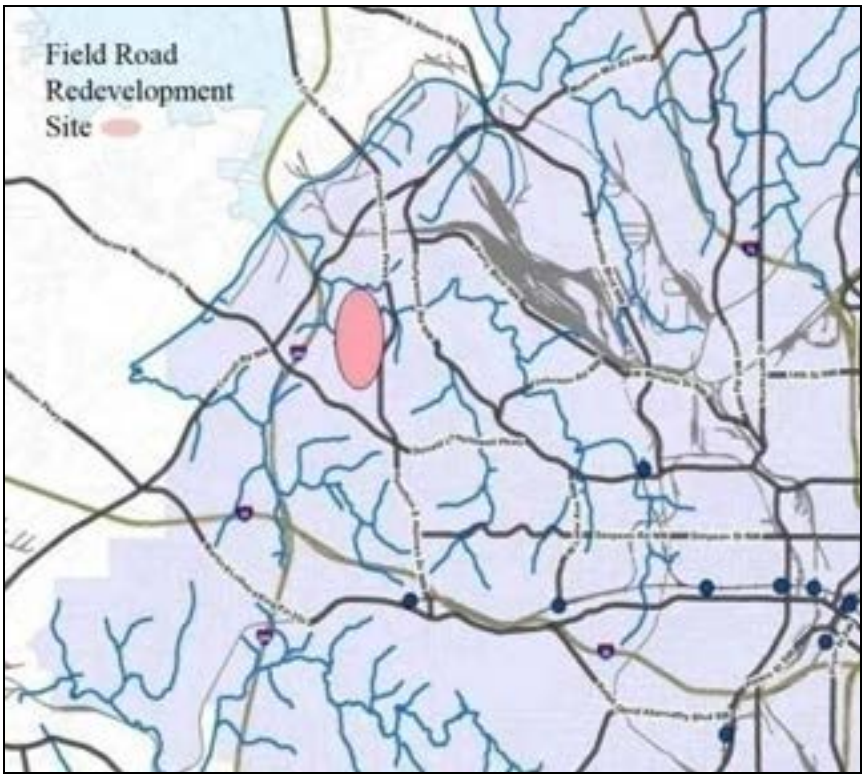

Figure 7.3v: Field Road Redevelopment

Field Road - Brownfield Redevelopment Site

Parcel ID	Size	Zoning	Present Use
17-0258-LL-1291	7.9	Industrial Small Tracts	Vacant Industrial Land
17-0258-LL-1309	11.5	Industrial Small Tracts	Vacant Industrial Land
17-0259-LL-0045	1.0232	Industrial Lots	Vacant Industrial Land
17-0259-LL-0110	1.584	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-0243	0.409	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-0508	0.5854	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-0839	1.1297	Industrial Lots	Vacant Industrial Land
17-0259-LL-0847	2.01	Industrial Small Tracts	Vacant Industrial Land
17-0259-LL-0961	2.5432	Commercial Small Tracts	Retail Single Occupancy
17-0259-LL-1001	0.8484	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1035	0.8484	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1126	0.5051	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1142	0.6371	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1158	1.2741	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1167	0.6371	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1225	0.8484	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1233	0.7035	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1324	2.0064	Industrial Lots	Vacant Industrial Land
17-0259-LL-1548	0.5035	Industrial Lots	Vacant Industrial Land
17-0259-LL-1597	5.48	Residential Small Tracts	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1605	0.2571	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1613	0.3481	Exempt - Churches	Church, Synagogue, Mosque
17-0259-LL-1621	0.2571	Residential Lots	Residential Vacant
17-0259-LL-1670	2.54	Industrial Small Tracts	Vacant Industrial Land

Table 7.3w: Field Road Brownfield Redevelopment

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Mitch Alexander, *NPU-H*
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Blueprints for Successful Communities is an education and technical assistance program of the Georgia Conservancy designed to facilitate community-based planning across the state. The program is committed to achieving successful communities by creating sound conservation and growth strategies, and building consensus for action.

Georgia is home to an abundance of natural and cultural resources. Our development patterns over the last 50 years present a very real threat to these resources and to quality of life as a whole. Sprawling, decentralized development, where people must depend on automobiles, is expensive for local governments to serve and has a staggering effect on the environment. Vehicle emissions create toxic air pollution. Stormwater runoff from asphalt poisons rivers and streams. Thousands of acres of farms, woodlands, and open space are lost to wasteful, non-sustainable forms of development.

The Georgia Conservancy partnered with the Urban Land Institute and the Greater Atlanta Homebuilders in 1995 to host its first *Blueprints for Successful Communities* symposium. Currently the Conservancy maintains an active partnership with thirteen organizations. These diverse organizations and their members provide a great deal of understanding and expertise in the relationships that exist between land use, public infrastructure, economic growth, and environmental quality.

Prior to the Westside Atlanta effort, *Blueprints* has addressed multi-jurisdictional watershed planning, heritage corridor preservation, location of commuter rail stations, inner city neighborhood issues, and other planning opportunities all through a collaborative planning process.

BLUEPRINTS PRINCIPLES

- *Maintain and enhance quality of life for residents of the community*
- *Employ regional strategies for transportation, land use, and economic growth*
- *Consider the effect of the built environment on the natural environment as well as history and culture*
- *Employ efficient land uses*

GEORGIA CONSERVANCY'S

BLUEPRINTS

FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES

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