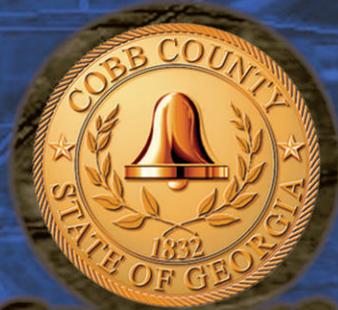


AUSTELL ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY

LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE

July 2007



Cobb County...Expect the Best!



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I. Executive Summary

A. Study Purpose and Scope

The Austell Road Corridor Livable Centers Initiative Study is a multi-disciplinary planning study carried out by Cobb County with partial funding from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). Its purpose is to develop an implementable plan that will serve as a blueprint for addressing transportation, land use, economic development and community design issues in a holistic way. The vision motivating this effort is to revive the spirit and strength of this street and the neighborhoods, businesses and activity centers that it links together. The study supports the implementation of the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan by seeking to:

- Engage all stakeholders in the planning process and encourage partnerships between the public and private sectors in both planning and implementation.
- Link land use and transportation to improve mobility and economic efficiency in the corridor.
- Identify multi-modal transportation enhancements to balance the transportation system.
- Arrest economic decline and encourage redevelopment of vacant and underutilized commercial centers.
- Encourage appropriate infill opportunities.
- Increase the diversity of housing and support housing choices for current and future residents.
- Improve land use balance and transportation system efficiency in the corridor by creating vibrant, mixed-use development.
- Establish a sense of place that will instill neighborhood pride and ownership in the corridor.

The Austell Road LCI Study has been developed to meet these goals by providing:

- A 25-year redevelopment plan for the corridor that balances transportation and land use improvements to improve the quality of life for the

COBB COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

The Cobb County Planning Commission provided comments on the study at their June 26, 2007 meeting, which was accepted by the BOC at the July 24, 2007 meeting.

These comments include converting certain portions recommended for High Density Residential (HDR) areas and certain portions recommended as Community Activity Center (CAC) to be adjusted to Low or Medium Density Residential zones. They also advise that the redevelopment of Gospel Harvester Church and Southminster Presbyterian Church should not include expanding retail into surrounding residential areas. The language recommending alterations to the ROD has been altered to exclude any particular density threshold reference. Finally, the commission recommends that more medical office use be encouraged in the area around the hospital.

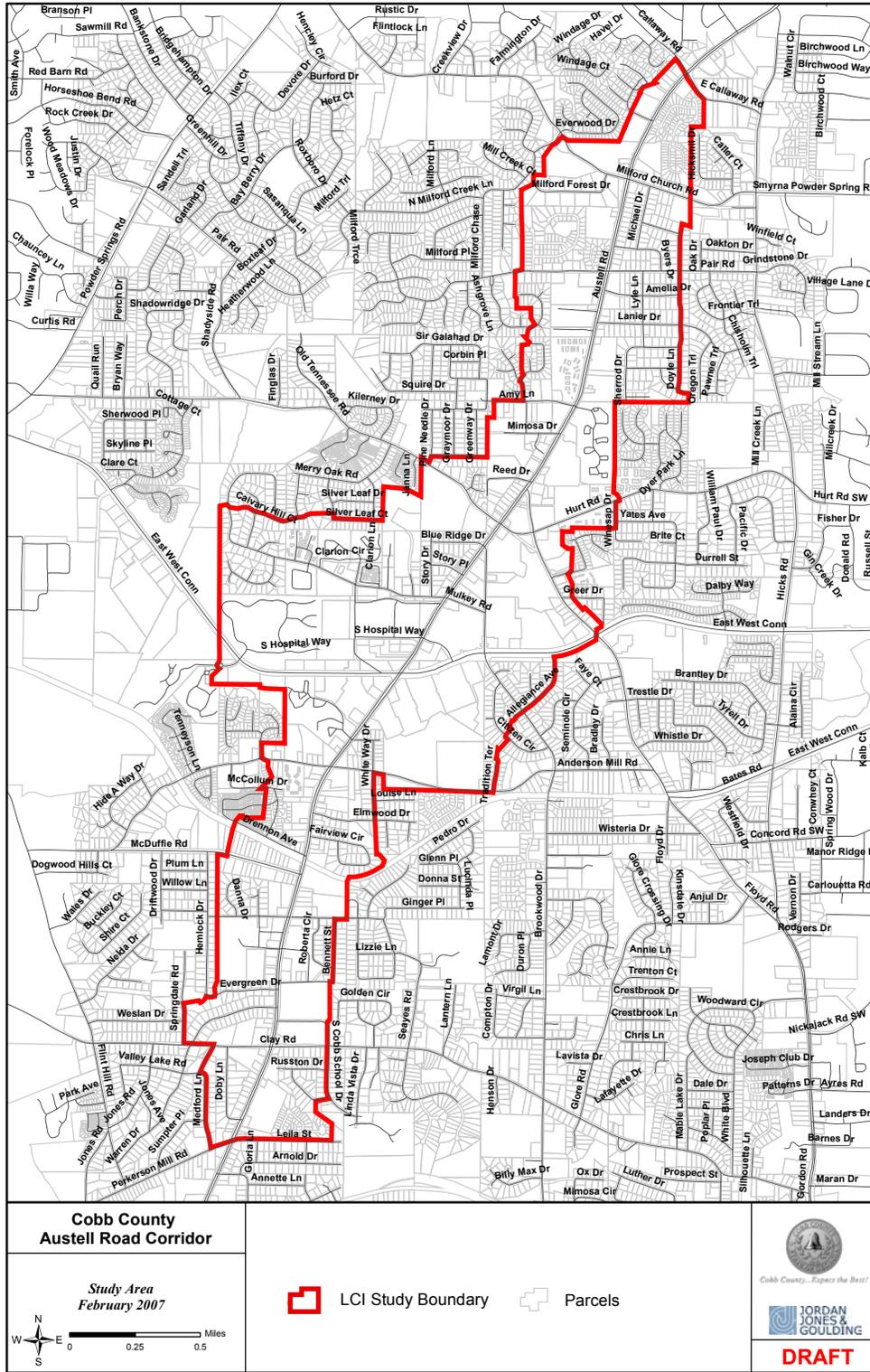
Complete text of the planning commission's recommendations, as supported by the BOC, can be found in Appendix G, which is also referenced throughout the study at applicable points.

-
- people who live, work, shop and conduct business along the corridor.
- A 5-year strategy of local actions, including a prioritized list of recommended transportation improvement projects, preliminary budgets, and community development programs that will support the study area goals.
 - Recommendations on revisions to Cobb County's Comprehensive Plan, zoning and land use regulations and design standards for the study area.

B. The Study Area

The study area for the Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative Study is a four-mile long segment of Austell Road stretching from Leila Street to Callaway Road. The study area is approximately ½ mile in width; see **Figure I-1**. At the center of the study area is the intersection of Austell Road and the East-West Connector.

Figure I-1: Austell Road LCI Study Area



The Austell Road Corridor faces several challenges that are addressed in this study:

- Severe traffic congestion – Due to commuting patterns, the roadway’s intersection with the East-West Connector, the presence of several large retail centers, and the location of WellStar Cobb Hospital, the corridor experiences high levels of traffic congestion and delay during morning and evening rush hours.
- Traffic safety – The corridor is a challenging one for both autos and pedestrians. The intersection of Austell Road and East-West Connector has the highest accident rate in the state of Georgia.
- Economic decline – As the corridor’s importance as a transportation route has increased, the vibrancy of many of the older strip centers along it has decreased. Many stores have closed or relocated and some properties have a dilapidated look.
- Lack of community identity – This part of Cobb County once had an identity linked to the history of Milford community, but most of that historic image has been lost to commercial sprawl – large, unattractive signs; featureless parking lots; vacant storefronts; neglected maintenance of rights-of-way; a barren concrete median; overhead powerlines; and chain-link-fenced detention ponds in front yards.



Empty Big Box Retail Along Hurt Road

At the same time, this corridor has several important assets that are opportunities for redevelopment:

- Stable residential neighborhoods – In contrast to the run-down appearance of many of the retail uses along Austell Road, the residential areas located just behind are, for the most part, strong, well-maintained neighborhoods. Most residential uses in the corridor are older, mature, low-density single family neighborhoods. Additionally, due to proximity to the hospital, a number of residential developments in the corridor cater to senior citizens, such as the Presbyterian Village Retirement Community.
- Community institutions – WellStar Hospital is in the center of the study area with 347 beds and 2,264 employees. The South Cobb Government Center is located in the southern portion of the corridor. In addition, there are three public schools – Sanders Primary and Intermediate Schools, and South Cobb High School – and several churches.
- The Silver Comet Trail – This is a multi-use trail of regional proportions, stretching from Smyrna to Alabama’s Chief Ladiga Trail. It passes through the southern end of the study area; however, there is currently no access to this recreational amenity provided in the Austell Road Corridor.
- Development opportunities – There are several well-placed tracts of vacant land, a number of aging commercial centers, and other underutilized tracts (such as the two mobile home parks) that should provide ample opportunities for development and redevelopment in this corridor.



Land for Sale Along Austell Road



Cobb WellStar Hospital

C. The Planning Process

The Austell Road LCI Study was completed over a period of 10 months, beginning in October 2006 and ending in July 2007. Direction for the study came in three tiers. The first tier was the Project Management Team, consisting of technical staff from the Cobb County Department of Transportation, Cobb County Community Development Department and Cobb County Economic Development Department. The second tier, the

Core Team, consisted of an array of stakeholders that included representatives of homeowner groups, businesses and community institutions. Finally, the general public was actively engaged throughout the process. Outreach included a project website, newsletters and flyers that were distributed throughout the study area. The county also erected signs and used public-access TV announcements to publicize meetings.

Opportunities for hands-on public engagement included:

- A Public Kick Off meeting held on November 16, 2006 to introduce the study to the community and gather information through a Community Preference Survey, an opinion survey and two discussion groups.
- A two-day long Public Workshop held on January 25 and 27, 2007 that attracted over 170 participants through a series of solution-oriented sessions on land use, transportation and community design that culminated in a conceptual plan for the corridor.
- A Public Open House on March 12, 2007 to present preliminary recommendations and gather feedback from the community.
- Finally, the Conceptual Plan and recommendations are presented for review by the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners in public hearings.

In addition to these input sessions, the consultants also conducted a series of 15 interviews with business leaders and other key stakeholders in the community.



Community Design Workshop

D. Future Changes in the Austell Road Corridor

According to market research and demographic projections for the study area, and assuming there are appropriate incentives for redevelopment recommended in this report, there will be a steady increase in housing and employment in the Austell Road study area. In all, there should be an increase of over 1,000 new housing units in the next 10 years and about 2,500 new housing units built by 2031.

New households will generally be older and wealthier than the population in the corridor today. Some will be choosing this area because they work at the hospital. Many others will be retired or empty-nesters who are looking for housing options close to the hospital. Most will have household incomes over \$75,000 and will prefer owner-occupied housing to rental housing. In addition, there will be about 2,900 new employees and about 1 million square feet of additional medical office and retail construction in the study area in the next 25 years. Much of this will consist of mixed-use development taking the place of some of the older retail centers that are currently losing tenants. Leading retail opportunities include furniture, electronics, building materials, garden equipment and high-quality restaurants. Another likely market opportunity will be for one or more new mid-priced hotels that would be attracted to a mixed-use development.

The housing and commercial growth and redevelopment will doubtless increase traffic activity in this already congested corridor. Traffic forecasts indicate that most of the Austell Road Corridor will be operating at levels of traffic that is beyond its design capacity in the next 10 to 25 years. This is likely to happen for a variety of reasons, not just due to redevelopment in the immediate area. Much of the increase in traffic will occur due to increased through-traffic in the corridor, derived from growth happening in adjoining areas that feed into Austell Road and the East-West Connector. It is very important that much of the planned redevelopment occurs in the form of mixed-use developments that provide more opportunities for walking, transit and short vehicular trips.

E. Study Findings

In any case, traffic congestion will become even more severe than it is today in the Austell Road Corridor. Many strategies will be needed to prepare for this future situation.

- There will be a need to move quickly and make intersection and signalization improvements that are already programmed for the area in order to improve the safety and operational efficiency of existing streets and intersections.
- It will be necessary to increase the number of intersections that are upgraded with turn lanes and signal replacement.
- Intersections need to be designed to accommodate pedestrians by providing more and wider sidewalks, and by installing crosswalks and count-down signals for pedestrian crossings.
- It will be important to employ strategies that encourage more walking, biking and the use of public transportation. This includes extending sidewalks connecting Austell Road, the hospital, major retail centers, and schools to the surrounding neighborhoods and developing several safe and convenient access points to the Silver Comet Trail.
- It will also be important to provide alternative routes to by-pass critical intersections like Austell Road and East-West Connector so as to allow for smoother traffic circulation through and within the area.
- On the land use side, it will also be important to re-work the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance to encourage more mixed-use developments and to

ensure that they are designed to encourage better internal traffic management, walkability and compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.

- To implement this strategy there need to be incentives to develop new “catalyst” sites that form gateways into the corridor, and to develop another major catalyst area for redevelopment in the vicinity of the Hurt Road/Floyd Road/Austell Road intersections.
- Conscious attention to aesthetics, better code enforcement and specific community design standards are needed to establish a theme for the area that will contribute to a sense of place and community pride in improving the vitality of the study area.
- Additional strategies are needed to increase the community’s organizational and financing capacity so that needed improvements will find local champions to ensure that they are completed on time.



Examples of Mixed-Use Centers

F. Recommendations

The recommendations of this study fall into five areas:

1. Transportation improvements for all modes of travel;
2. Better land use regulations and incentives;
3. Community design features;
4. Neighborhood preservation and housing; and
5. Community organization strategies.

Section VI.E. of the Final Report contains a five-year program of projects to accomplish these recommendations.

1. Transportation Improvements

- SPLOST Projects – There are already a number of SPLOST traffic improvements that need to be implemented in the corridor as soon as possible. These include widening Callaway Road from Austell Road to Powder Springs Road and building the Mulkey Road Connector near the hospital. There are also seven very important intersection improvements slated for this stretch of Austell Road.
- New Intersection Improvements – For the best potential effect on congestion, improvements to 14 additional intersections will be needed. These intersections include eight intersections on Austell Road, three on the East-West Connector, and several more on smaller, collector streets in the area. They can be seen in **Figure I-2**.
- Connectivity and Road Network Improvements – Along with the intersection improvements, new road connections will be needed in order to distribute traffic more efficiently, to bypass congestion hot spots and to relieve traffic back-ups on the major streets. These proposed new connections can be viewed in **Figure I-2** and include the realignment of Hurt Road, Floyd Road and Brookwood Drive Extension, as well as more extensions of Mulkey Road to form a loop system that bypasses the Austell Road/East-West Connector intersection.
- Access Management Strategies – Access management strategies include setting standards for driveway designs and driveway spacing, and requiring interparcel driveway connections between new commercial properties developed in the corridor. Traffic calming is also needed on several streets, such as Warren Road and Anderson Road, to lessen the speed of through-traffic.
- Pedestrian Improvements – New sidewalks and pedestrian countdown signals are needed to provide safe and welcoming environments for pedestrians. These improvements are shown in **Figure I-2**. They include building the missing segments of sidewalks that would fill gaps in the existing system and improve pedestrian access to public schools and other important destinations.
- Bicycle Improvements – The emphasis here involves providing six safe and convenient access points to the Silver Comet Trail. The largest such trailhead would be one that is combined with a public park, a small parking lot and a dog park adjacent to the intersection of the Silver Comet Trail with Austell Road. Refer to **Figure I-2**.
- Transit Improvements – Another area of concern with the Austell Road Corridor is the improvement of public transportation service and facilities. A list of

possibilities to provide extended service to the corridor can be seen in **Figure I-3**. The list includes two transit routes: a possible new CCT route down Austell Road to the Holmes MARTA Station and another CCT route extension down Floyd Road to Cumberland Mall. In addition, GRTA plans to locate a Park-and-Ride lot along the corridor. The proposed CCT route would extend down Austell Road to Veterans Memorial Highway and/or Mableton Parkway and then to the Cumberland Mall Transfer Center or Holmes MARTA Station. This study recommends a location of the proposed Park-and-Ride lot on the redeveloped site of Heritage Hills Shopping Center off Hurt Road. Section VI.E. contains a five-year program of projects.

2. Land Use Regulations and Incentives

- Recommended Changes to the Future Land Use Map – A number of changes to the Future Land Use Map are recommended. These are primarily changes along Austell Road that would promote more opportunities for redeveloping owner-occupied senior housing and mixed-use development. In addition, the new Silver Comet Trail park site is recommended for designation as “Parks and Recreation” on the Future Land Use Map.¹
- Recommended Changes to the Zoning Ordinance – The County’s Redevelopment Overlay District can be improved to provide stronger incentives for redevelopment that provides a grid street pattern, and offers more public spaces and amenities. The ROD ordinance should be amended to incorporate more design controls to encourage mixed-use redevelopment with access management strategies and to be more compatible with adjacent neighborhoods. **Figure I-4** illustrates proposed expansions to the ROD boundaries on Austell Road. The additional ROD areas would facilitate the development of the designated “catalyst” sites, transforming underutilized and deteriorated commercial property into new, vibrant mixed-use communities.

3. Community Design Features

- Austell Road Streetscape – Participants in the Community Design Workshop expressed a strong desire to see the streetscape of Austell Road improved with a landscaped median consistent with other sections of Austell Road and other median-divided arterial streets in Cobb County. This can best be accomplished by applying the county’s current urban design standards to this section of Austell Road, incorporating consistent landscape and sidewalk standards throughout its length as various intersection improvements are made. Because Austell Road is a state route, a design variance may be required from Georgia DOT. **See Figure I-5**.
- Design Plans for “Catalyst” Sites – This study includes exemplary site plans to guide redevelopment of three of the designated “catalyst” sites. They illustrate what could be developed in accordance with the proposed changes to the ROD

¹ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

map and text in the Zoning Ordinance. An example is shown in **Figure I-6**. It illustrates the concept of walkable mixed-use development that incorporates a mixture of owned housing for seniors and singles; a gridded street network in the redevelopment plan; new public streets to relieve existing traffic jams; and highly visible public spaces and landscaping that will create a signature identity for the area. The other site plans, developed in this process to demonstrate positive community design principles, include redevelopment plans for the former Target and Fred's shopping plaza, and for Austell Plaza on the south end of the corridor.

4. Neighborhood Preservation and Housing Improvements

As housing ages and traffic increases, the neighborhoods that line the Austell Road corridor face several challenges to their survival that must be addressed:

- Better Land Use Transitions – As commercial property along Austell Road is redeveloped into mixed-use developments, the area adjacent to residential neighborhoods will need transitions established. Examples are a step-down in use, a step-down in building height, and the use of broad landscape buffers. These transitions must be established on the redeveloped property at the time of zoning and site plan approval.
- Infill Development Regulations – Infill, rehabilitation and replacement of aging and/or deteriorated residential property is a desirable part of the renewal process in neighborhoods. However, to alleviate the pressure to tear down existing single-family homes and replace them with residential forms that are out of scale with the neighborhood, enforceable infill development standards are needed to guide compatible infill development.
- Code Enforcement – Residents in the Community Design Workshop stressed that a lack of code enforcement was one of the problems in the area. Code enforcement helps guard against the negative impacts of neglected absentee-owned property. To address this issue the Cobb County Police Departments' Quality of Life Unit has already begun working in the community and the County is considering adopting a Quality of Life Code to assist with enforcement issues. To further these efforts, the County can train neighborhood leaders in the principles of code enforcement. These leaders can be employed as informal agents to report code violations and support the County in achieving code compliance.
- Rehabilitation Loans to Homeowners – In some cases, housing may be deteriorating either because of an elderly resident's lack of resources or the effects of a soft housing market. The County should consider making available grants and revolving loans to provide financial assistance to low- and moderate-income and elderly homeowners in order to maintain high housing quality, affordable housing, and to encourage elderly residents to "age in place."
- Traffic Calming – Neighborhood sidewalks and traffic calming on selected streets will also help shore up neighborhood quality as further development occurs along Austell Road.

5. Community Organization Strategies

Partnerships are vital to the success of any community development or redevelopment effort. Partnerships allow everyone to leverage their strengths and mitigate weaknesses. A culture of collaboration needs to become a permanent element in the civic culture of the Austell Road Corridor. Potential partnerships efforts that can support the implementation of Austell Road LCI Study include:

- Creation of a Neighborhood Stabilization Team – An association of county, neighborhood and non-profit groups whose focus is to coordinate community activities for repairing and maintaining the current housing stock and to encourage appropriate new development in the corridor.
- Develop a Business Association – This organization should be focused on the Austell Road Corridor and can be partnered with the existing Austell and South Cobb Business Associations.
- Partnering with Existing Community Organizations – Pursuing more active support from the non-profits in the area, such as churches, civic associations, neighborhood associations, business associations and historic preservation groups.

G. Conclusions

The central goal of this study is to present a plan for the Austell Road Corridor that will create a vibrant environment where people want to be. This requires a “sea change” in the past trends and a new vision that has just been kindled. However, this kind of transformation process will require linking a variety of strategies in a sustained, comprehensive effort in which the “whole is greater than the sum of the parts.”

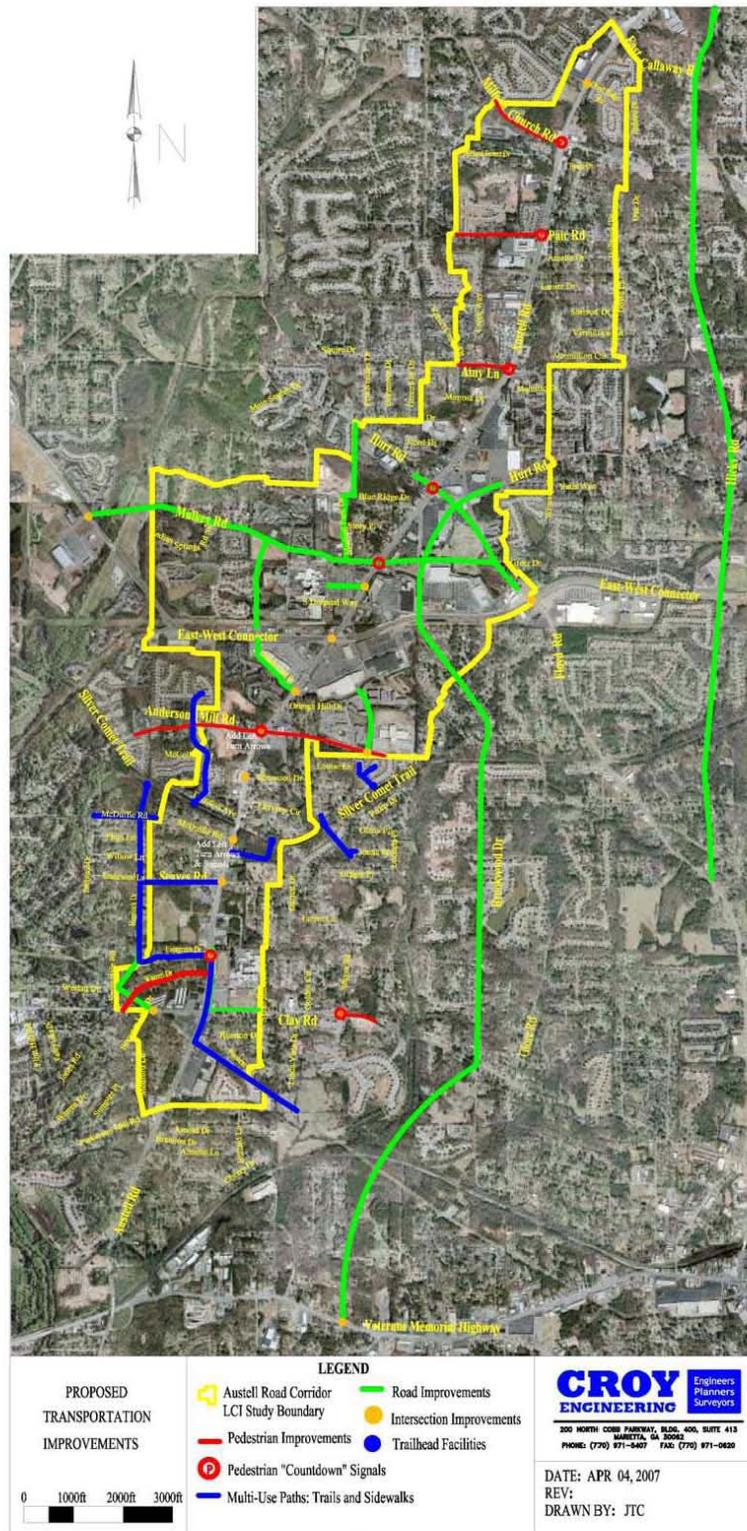
An improved corridor centered on a truly multi-modal roadway with a network of efficient connections to adjacent land uses offers abundant possibilities for area neighborhoods, businesses and Cobb County. For example, enhancing transit linkages and pedestrian connections between the hospital, major retailers, schools, parks and neighborhoods will improve mobility, employment, education and shopping options for the study area’s residents and businesses. In conjunction with attractive, safe streetscapes, these and other roadway improvements will reinforce the corridor’s image as a business and service destination of choice.

Innovative redevelopment of aged retail centers into appropriately scaled mixed-use developments will create vital live-work-play centers while reducing auto dependence. Traffic management and road design strategies are presented to reclaim the corridor for pedestrian and neighborhood use as well as its service as one of the county’s major commute routes. Clearly defined gateways at each end of the corridor will signal renewal and sense of place, and involvement of all residents should yield a greater collaboration in support of the corridor’s new functions and image.

Recent and projected changes in the corridor’s demographics and economy dictate that the time for initiating proactive change in this corridor is urgent. This study presents a coordinated plan with targeted public and private reinvestment grounded in extensive community participation sessions that can stem the corridor’s decline. Fostering reinvestment for long-term stability will benefit both the residents of the corridor as well as the entire county.

Finally, the best way to strengthen communities is to create opportunities for citizens to work collaboratively on the challenges that shape their community. Accomplishing this task requires both political leadership and citizen education. This study has set both the vision and the implementation framework for this task.

**Figure I-2:
Recommended
Transportation
Improvements**



**Figure I-3:
Recommended
Transit Improvements**

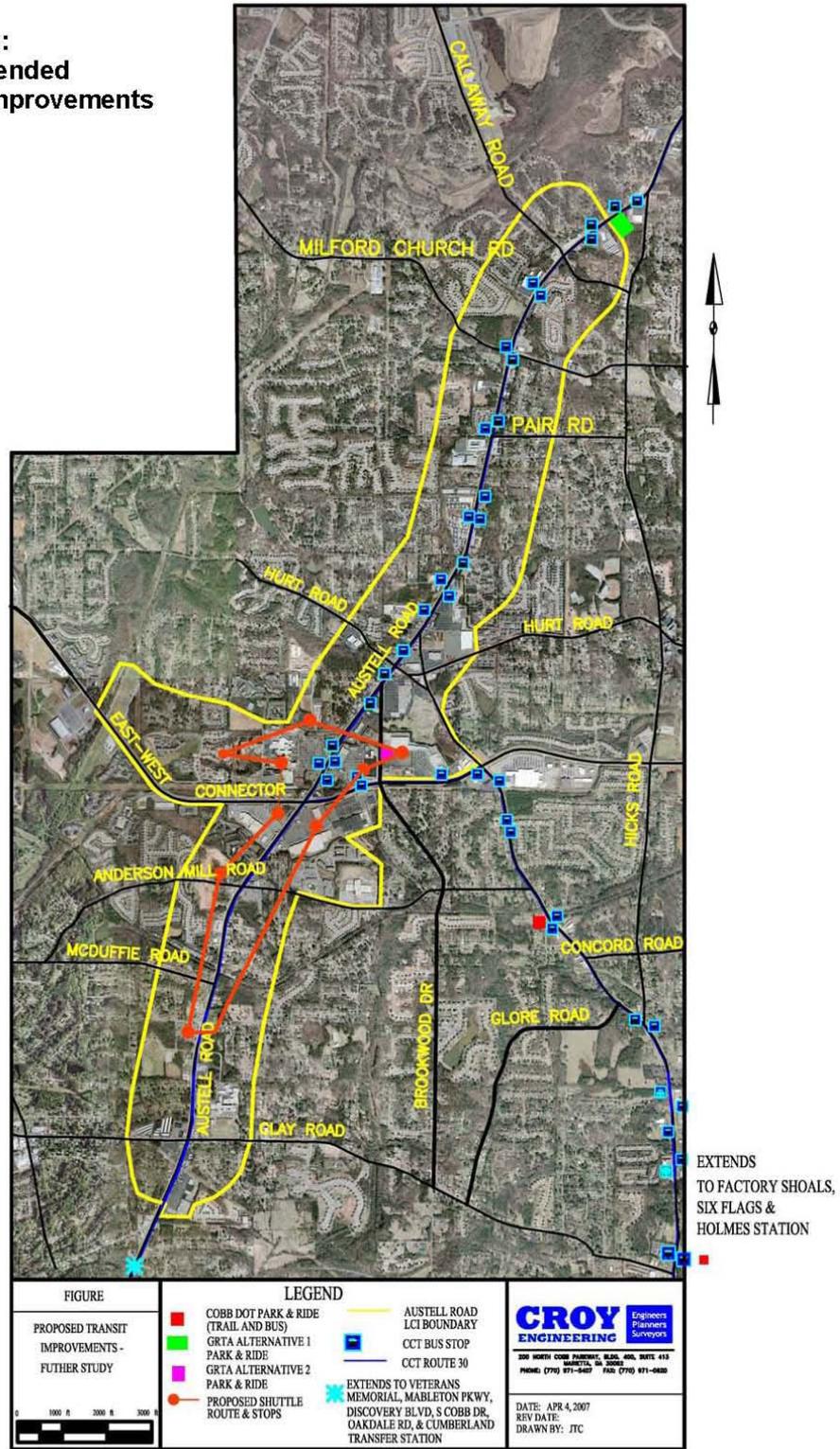


Figure I-4: Proposed ROD Boundary Expansion

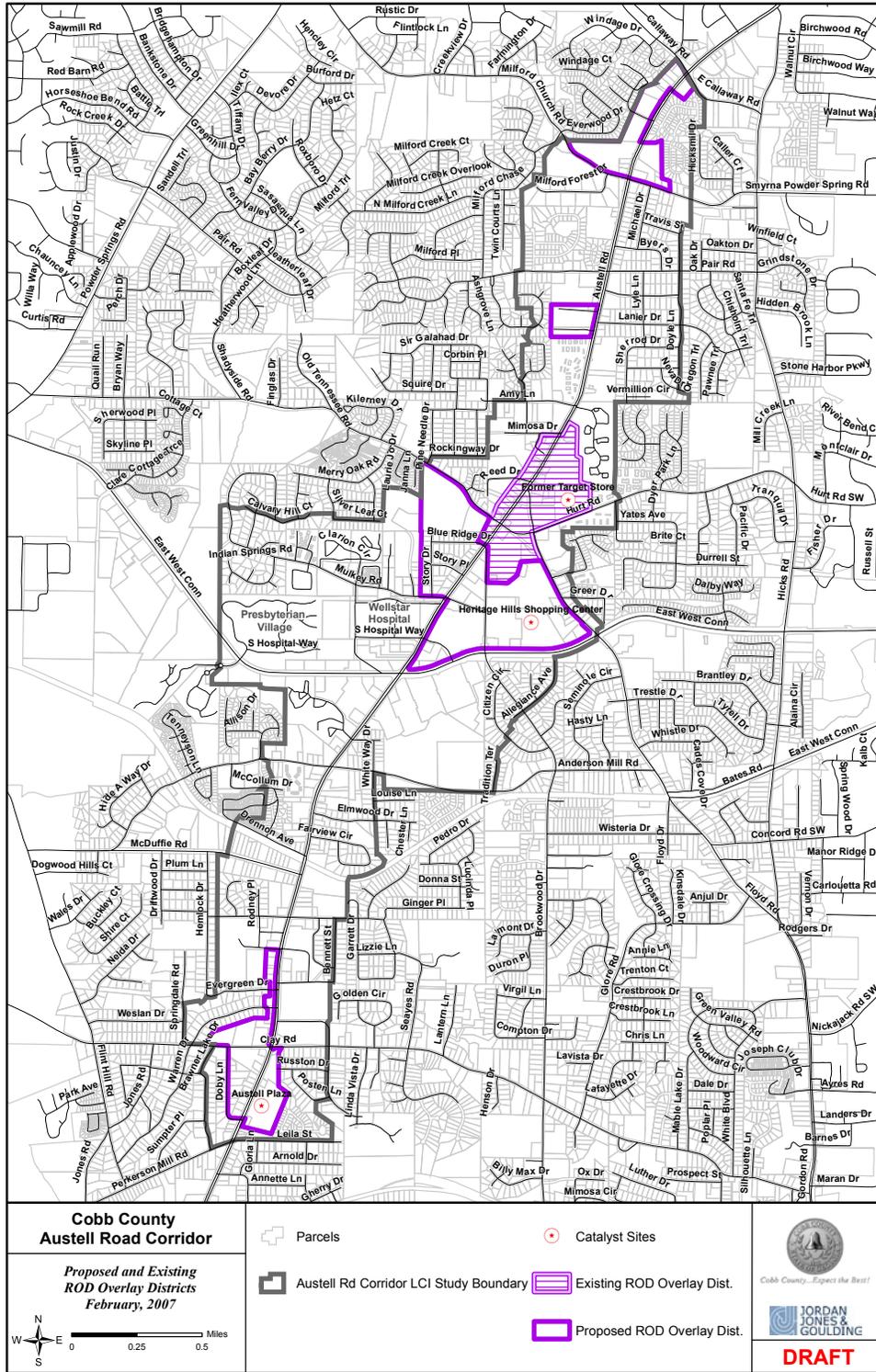


Figure I-5: Proposed Streetscape

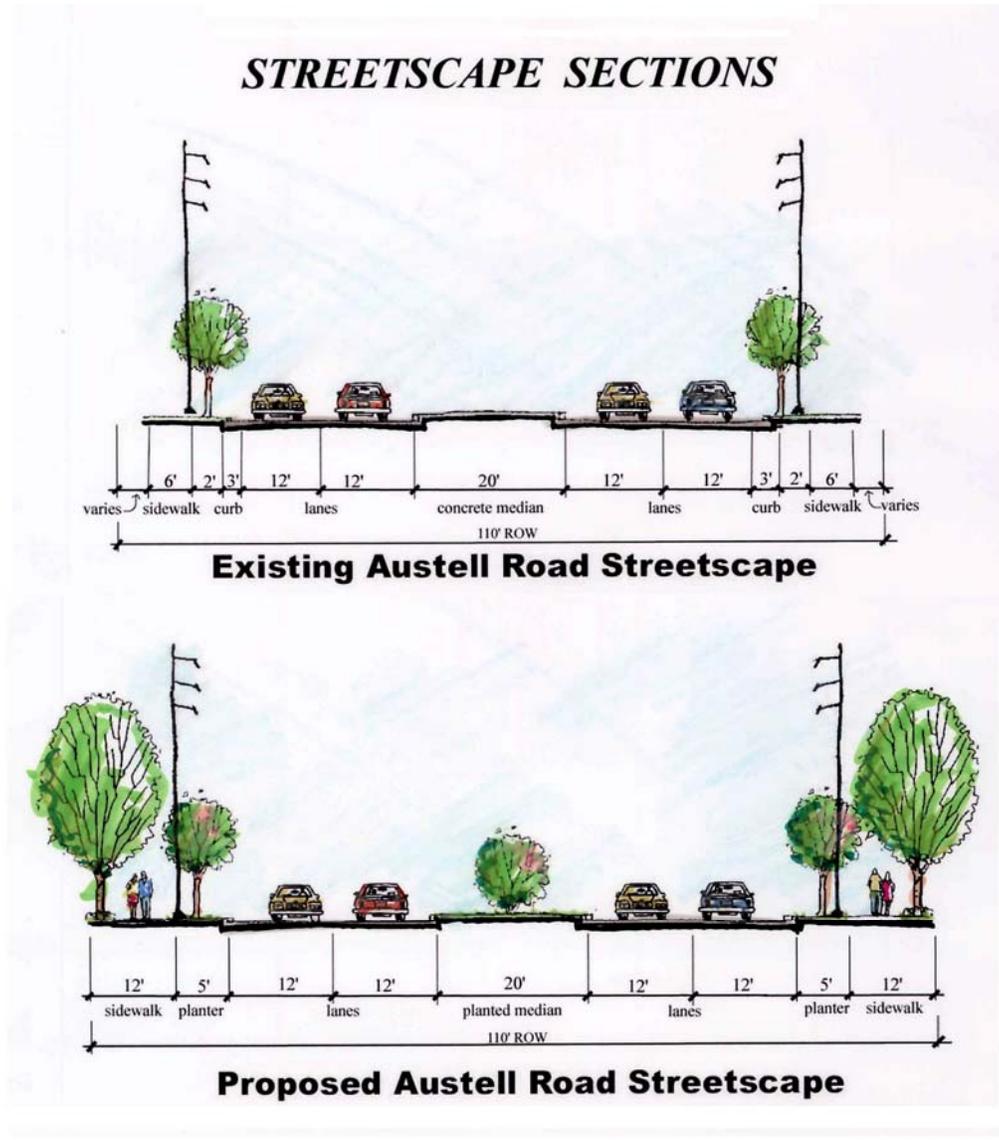
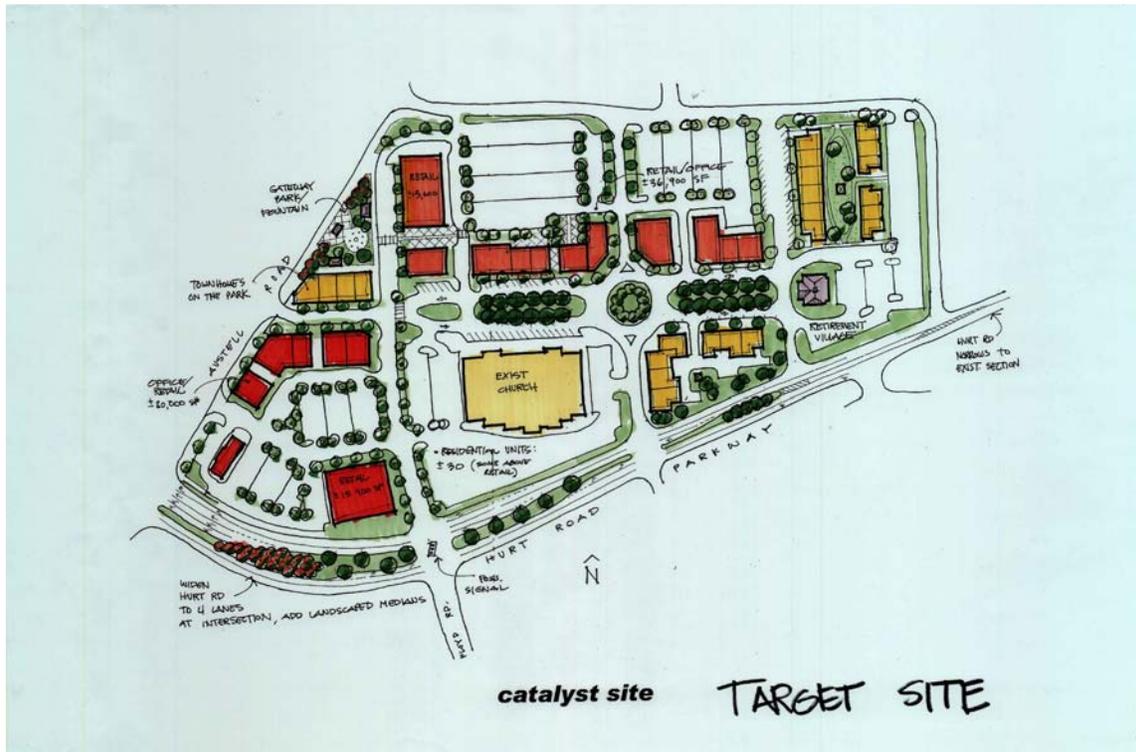


Figure I-6: Conceptual Redevelopment of Target Site



II. Study Overview

The Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative Study (LCI) was undertaken by Cobb County with partial funding from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The ARC began the LCI program in 2000 to encourage local jurisdictions in metro Atlanta to plan and implement strategies that result in more attractive, sustainable and livable communities. The primary purpose of the program is to foster a balance of land development and transportation services that can reduce vehicle miles traveled and improve air quality at the regional level.

The Austell Road LCI Study supports this purpose while furthering implementation of many of the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan's goals:

- Engaging all stakeholders in the planning process and encouraging partnerships between the public and private sectors in both planning and implementation.
- Linking land use and transportation to improve mobility and economic efficiency in the corridor.
- Identifying multi-modal transportation enhancements to balance the transportation system.
- Arresting economic decline and encouraging redevelopment of vacant and underutilized commercial centers.
- Encouraging appropriate infill opportunities.
- Increasing the diversity of housing and supporting housing choices for current and future residents.
- Improving land use balance and transportation system efficiency in the corridor by creating vibrant, mixed-use development.
- Establishing a sense of place that will instill neighborhood pride and ownership in the corridor.

The result is a redevelopment plan for the Austell Road Corridor that balances transportation and land use improvements in order to create a more sustainable community for the people who live, work, shop and conduct business there. This plan is supported by a five-year strategy of local actions including a prioritized list of recommended transportation improvement projects, preliminary budgets, and community development programs that will support the study area goals. The strategy also includes recommendations on revisions to Cobb County's Comprehensive Plan, zoning and land use regulations and design standards for the study area.

A. The Study Area

The study area for the Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative Study is a four-mile segment of Austell Road stretching from Leila Street to Callaway Road. The study area is ½ mile in width (See **Figure II-1**). At the center of the Study Area is Austell Road, an approximately four-lane arterial thoroughfare with concrete medians. Due to commuting patterns, the roadway's intersection with the East-West Connector, the presence of newer large retail centers, and the location of WellStar Cobb Hospital and adjacent medical

offices, the corridor experiences high traffic volumes, especially during morning and evening rush hours.

Owing to the major employment presence on the corridor (the hospital) and the roadways' strategic location as a link between the cities of Atlanta, Austell and Marietta, the Cobb County transit service is present and thriving. Cobb Community Transit (CCT) Route #30, which serves the area connecting the MARTA–Holmes Station and the Marietta Transfer Center has the second highest annual ridership of CCT's fixed routes.

As the corridor's importance as a transportation route has increased, the vibrancy of many of the older strip centers along it has decreased. Many stores have closed or relocated and some properties have a dilapidated look. In contrast to the rundown appearance of many of the retail uses along Austell Road, the residential areas located just behind are, for the most part, strong, well-maintained neighborhoods. Most residential uses in the corridor are older, mature, low-density single family neighborhoods. However in recent years, more moderate density single-family subdivisions have developed and there are a few large-scale multi-family complexes. The residential areas in the corridor are supported by the presence of three schools: Sanders Primary and Intermediate Schools, and South Cobb High School. Additionally, due to proximity to the hospital, a number of residential developments in the corridor cater to senior citizens, such as the Presbyterian Village Retirement Community.

The Silver Comet Trail, a multi-use trail reaching from Smyrna to Alabama's Chief Ladiga Trail, passes through the southern end of the study area; however, there is currently no access to this recreational amenity provided in the Austell Road Corridor.

B. The Study Purpose

The overall purpose of this study is to present a plan for the corridor that will provide for a multi-modal roadway with efficient connections to adjacent land uses, which are improved and supported to create a vibrant environment where people want to be.

An improved corridor offers abundant possibilities for area neighborhoods, businesses and Cobb County. For example, enhancing transit linkages and pedestrian connections between the hospital, major retailers, schools, parks and neighborhoods will improve mobility, employment education, and shopping options for the study area's residents and businesses. In conjunction with attractive, safe streetscapes, these and other roadway improvements will reinforce the corridor's image as a business and service destination of choice.

Innovative redevelopment of aged retail centers into appropriately scaled mixed-use developments will create vital live-work-play centers while reducing auto dependence. Traffic management and road design strategies are presented to reclaim the corridor for pedestrian and neighborhood use as well as its service as one of the county's major commute routes. Clearly defined gateways at each end of the corridor will signal renewal and sense of place, and involvement of all residents should yield a greater collaboration in support of the corridor's new functions and image.

Recent and projected changes in the corridor’s demographics and economy dictate that the time for initiating proactive change in this corridor is urgent. This study presents a coordinated plan with targeted public and private reinvestment grounded in extensive community participation sessions that can stem the corridor’s decline. Fostering reinvestment for long-term stability will benefit both the residents of the corridor as well as the entire county.

The Austell Road LCI Study addresses each of the 10 study objectives found in **Table II-1**. These objectives are requirements of the Atlanta Regional Commission’s Livable Centers Initiatives and are incorporated in the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Figure II-1: Austell Road LCI Study Area

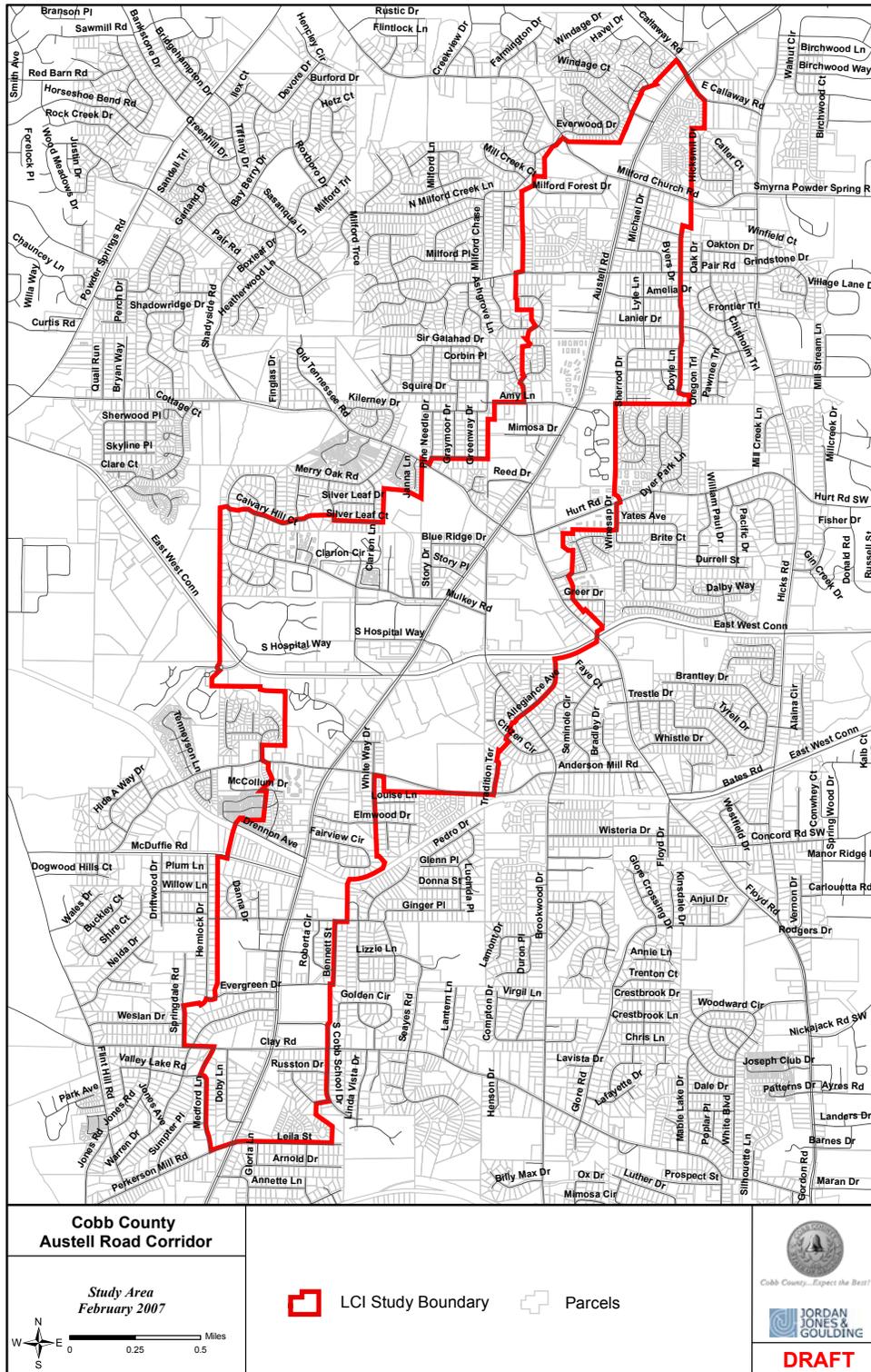


Table II-1: ARC LCI Study Objectives

Objective	How Addressed
Efficiency/feasibility of land uses and mix appropriate for future growth, including new and/or revised land use regulations needed to complete the development program.	The Austell Road LCI plan promotes a greater efficiency and feasibility of land uses within the corridor. The plan identifies a number of opportunities for better connecting existing uses to one another as well as new uses that should be developed, such as mixed use centers. Current Cobb County zoning regulations and land use plans provide a regulatory structure that is generally supportive of the plans outlined in this study. However, revisions and additions to existing plans and regulations necessary for the implementation of the corridor redevelopment plans are identified.
Transportation demand reduction measures.	The Austell Road Corridor is a heavily congested roadway carrying heavy commuter traffic in addition to local traffic. By integrating mixed-use centers into the corridor and filling in gaps in the existing pedestrian network, the plan provides opportunities for making short trips on foot.
Internal mobility requirements – traffic calming; pedestrian circulation; transit circulation; and bicycle circulation, including safety and security of pedestrians.	Filling in the gaps in the sidewalk network along Austell Road and implementing recommended transit, roadway, signalization, intersection and median improvements will increase pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular mobility in the Austell Road Corridor. Improved landscaping and sidewalks will encourage pedestrian activity as will the development of mixed-use centers with consolidated access points and parking located within or in the rear of the centers. The creation of a new trailhead for the Silver Comet Trail will encourage biking.
Mixed-income housing, job/housing match, and social issues.	The mixed-use development projects proposed for the Austell Road Corridor are designed to offer a variety of housing types and price points suitable for young singles, families and seniors. Additionally, a number of initiatives and actions have been identified to address social issues in the corridor such as the development of a neighborhood watch program and a revolving loan program to assist seniors with home maintenance.

Table II-1: ARC LCI Study Objectives (continued)

Objective	How Addressed
Continuity of local streets in study area and development of a network of minor roads.	Along with the intersection improvements, new road creation is key for creating better connectivity throughout the corridor and helping to ease congestion volumes. A number of extensions of minor roadways in the study area are recommended to address this issue. Additionally, recommended design for redevelopment sites includes the creation of internal grid networks.
Need/identification of future transit circulation systems.	Cobb County Transit (CCT) provides bus service along Austell Road with only one route. A connection of CCT's Route 30 with the WellStar Cobb Hospital, which is located near the heart of the corridor and would travel east and west, is recommended. CCT's Route 70 provides transit service along the East-West Connector
Connectivity of transportation system to other centers.	The proposed connection with CCT Route 30 will provide a connection to the Cumberland activity center while the creation of a new trailhead for the Silver Comet Trail will connect the study area to centers across the region.
Center development organization and management, promotion and economic restructuring.	Successful redevelopment of the Austell Road Corridor requires collaboration between Cobb County DOT and the County's Planning and Economic Development Departments, as well as GDOT, CCT and the development and real estate communities. The plan includes recommendations for the development of a number of organizations and task forces to oversee plan implementation.
Stakeholder participation/support.	An extensive public participation effort was undertaken as part of the planning process. Efforts such as door-to-door flyer delivery and translation of publicity materials into Spanish were included to promote the involvement of traditionally underserved populations.
Public and private investment policy.	A number of "catalyst sites" were identified throughout the Austell Road Corridor. Developer-driven redevelopment of these sites will help develop a grid network, as well as bring land uses closer together to reduce VMT. The proposed transportation investments and land use regulation changes will leverage public actions and funds to attract private development.

C. The Study Process

The Austell Road LCI study was completed over a period of seven months, beginning in October 2006 and ending in April 2007. The process had three key components: Public Outreach and Data Gathering, Community Design and Analysis, and Development of Recommendations as shown in **Figure II-2**.

Figure II-2: Austell Road LCI Project Schedule

Task	2006			2007			
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Public Outreach and Data Gathering		★		Kick Off Meeting			
Community Design and Analysis				★		Design Workshop	
Development of Recommendations						★	

Open House

Community participation was a given strong emphasis in the planning process. In addition to the three public meetings noted above, a Core Team of community stakeholders convened four times and numerous interviews were conducted with community stakeholders. Please see **Appendices B – F** for detailed discussions of each public involvement effort.

A survey tool was also employed in the public participation effort. This survey was distributed at the November 16, 2006 Public Kick-Off meeting. Approximately 41 completed surveys were received. These surveys showed that the majority of respondents were long-term residents of the corridor; 64% had lived in the area for a decade or longer. The survey also provided the consultant team with a snapshot of the perceived strengths and challenges of the Austell Road Corridor:

Strengths

- Location
- Presence of Hospital
- Availability of shopping, restaurants

Challenges

- Traffic
- Redevelopment (needed)
- Crime

Additionally, respondents provided input on the types of development they felt to be appropriate and inappropriate for the area.

Appropriate Residential

- Single Family Homes
- Senior Living
- Condos/Housing over Retail

Inappropriate Residential

- Apartments
- Low Income / Section 8 Housing
- Expensive Housing – gated, large lots

Appropriate businesses

Restaurants and Cafes

Specialty Retail, Boutiques, Pet Store

Medical and Professional Services

Inappropriate Businesses

Auto Related – car lots and tire stores

Bars, Clubs, Liquor & Package Stores

Adult Entertainment Establishments

The survey and results can be found in **Appendix C**.

III. Inventory and Analysis of Existing Conditions

A. Socioeconomics and Real Estate Market Conditions

The following is a summary of the market analysis report completed and previously submitted to Cobb County in January 2007 by Ackerman & Company, a member of the consultant team for this study. The market analysis was conducted during November and December 2006 and reflects existing conditions in the study area at that time.

The Austell Road LCI study area is located in the South Cobb Superdistrict as defined by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The Austell Road trade area covers a three-mile radius from the intersection of Austell Road and the East-West Connector. This area is centrally located between the communities of Marietta to the north, Austell to the south, Smyrna to the east and Powder Springs to the west. It represents the primary area from which the corridor could potentially attract residents and customers

1. Demographics

Approximately 7,600 people reside in the Austell Road study area. The population has been growing at a steady annual rate (2.7%) and is projected to increase by nearly 500 people over the next 5 years (2006 – 2011). Although the study area is more of a business corridor than a residential corridor, the projected residential growth for the area seems a bit low due to the current development momentum.

The population of the study area tends to be married and family oriented, with an average household size of 2.65. The population is mixed in terms of age and race. Residents of the study area are well educated (20.6% hold college degrees) and are employed in a variety of occupations. The average work commute for corridor residents is more than 30 minutes, an indication of a bedroom-community lifestyle. This is despite the fact that the job-housing ratio for the corridor is heavier on jobs than housing, with 2.59 jobs per household.

The LCI study area includes 2,700 households. Incomes are middle-class, averaging \$56,000 per year. Only 9.8% earn over \$100,000 annually. The vast majority of householders reside in owner-occupied units (62.1%) with a median house value of approximate \$136,000. Housing structures are older, with a median age of more than 20 years; less than 15% of housing units in the study area have been built since 1999.

The population within the study area represents 14% of the trade-area population (55,000). Trade-area residents share many characteristics with study-area residents: mixed ages and races, family-oriented and middle class. The minority population is growing at a much faster rate than the population as a whole, particularly among Hispanics and African Americans, who are expected to account for half of the approximately 3,000 residents projected for the trade area in the next 5 years. The incomes and house values are higher in the trade area compared to the study area, due to the influence of Smyrna and Vinings to the east.

Table III-1: Current Demographic Profile

	Austell Road LCI Study Area	Trade Area (3-Mile Radius)
Population		
2006 (Estimate)	7,625	55,527
2011 (Projection)	8,106	58,545
Annual % Change		
1990 – 2006	2.7%	2.4%
2006 – 2011	1.2%	1.1%
2006 Estimates		
% Under 18	26.0%	26.8%
% 65+	12.9%	10.7%
% Minority	55.3%	52.9%
Median Age	35.7	35.9
Households	2,722	19,640
Avg. Household Size	2.65	2.78
% Owner Occupied Housing	62.10%	78.30%
Median House Value	\$136,438	\$146,850
Avg. Household Income	\$56,151	\$63,929
Employment	7,043	17,007
% Retail Trade	36.2%	35.5%
% Health Services	40.6%	19.9%
Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (11/2006)		

More than 17,000 people work in the trade area, of which 41% (7,043) work in the Austell Road study area (See **Table III-2**). Services and retail trade comprise more than three-quarters of the jobs, which is consistent with suburban communities. Health services are a dominant employment sector, due to the location of WellStar Cobb Hospital in the study area. This daytime population boosts demand for restaurants and retail services throughout the study area along Austell Road and the East-West Connector.

Table III-2: Austell Road Study Area and Trade Area Employment

Industry Sector	Austell Road LCI Study Area	Trade Area (3-Mile Radius)
Agriculture	15	154
Mining	0	0
Construction	99	878
Manufacturing	289	1,024
Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities	134	480
Wholesale Trade	81	405
Retail Trade	2,553	6,029
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	159	651
Services (total)	3,649	7,266
Hotel and Lodging	0	7
Personal Services	208	863
Business Services	64	519
Health Services	2,860	3,387
Legal Services	16	30
Educational Services	248	1,489
Social Services	107	375
Other Services	146	596
Public Administration	64	120

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (11/2006)

2. Housing Market Analysis

In the assessment of the Austell Road LCI housing market, for sale, for rent and senior housing options were considered. Research included collection of residential permits, house sales activity, apartment market trends and project performance, and senior housing facilities data. Additionally, interviews were conducted with residential realtors and developers active in the area.

a. Existing Housing Inventory:

Based on 2006 estimates of U.S. Census data, the LCI study area has an inventory of 2,863 residential units that include a wider array of housing types. The existing stock is balanced between owner-occupied (62%) and renter-occupied (38%). Most housing units are single-family (65%), but higher density multi-family housing is also well represented in the corridor (34%). The remaining 1% is attributed to the few mobile homes in the study area concentrated in the Orange Acres and Westbrook Park mobile home parks. The housing stock is older with median age of more than 20 years; 55% of the units were built between 1950 and 1979. Approximately 13% of the homes are valued at over \$200,000 but only 2.7% are valued over \$300,000.

Despite the older median age of housing in the LCI study area, the corridor is experiencing new home sales volume. In fall 2006 there were 10 active for-sale communities. However, in comparison to Cobb County as a whole, the average price of new homes in the corridor is lower: mid-\$100,000s vs. mid-\$200,000s.

-
- 5 single-family subdivisions totaling 282 units: 3 priced in the mid- to high- \$100,00s, 2 starting in the \$300,000s.
 - 3 townhouse communities totaling 203 units with prices from the \$200,000s
 - 2 ranch condominium projects starting with prices starting from the \$170,000s and \$270,000s:

One specific community in the area worth noting is Barnes Mill, located east of the study area on the East-West connector. This subdivision is a high-quality community offering a range of housing types (higher-end traditional homes, townhouses and ranch condominiums) with a full amenity package. This community illustrates the willingness of people to pay more for high quality in the market area, partly due to spillover from the much higher prices area of Smyrna and Vinings to the east.

There are 7 rental communities (1,826 units) in the Austell Road market area that have been developed since the 1980s. They are well occupied with a rate of 95.3%. Two of these communities, Alta Mill and Tramore Village, are considered higher-quality Class A properties with 762 units and average rents of \$890/month. The other 5 rental communities (1,064 units) are Class B properties geared toward lower-income residents. The average rent of \$0.82 per square foot captured for the Class A properties is lower than the county's Class A average of \$0.89 per square foot. This indicates that the study area is not strong enough to support new apartment construction without subsidized financing.

Consistent with the demographic trends presented previously, there are many housing options for senior citizens in the Austell Road corridor area, including ranch condominiums, apartments, assisted living facilities and nursing homes. The corridor is popular among seniors due to the health care offered at the hospital as well as the shopping and dining choices in the area. One of the newest senior housing trends is continuing care retirement communities, "CCRSs," which provide a full range of housing options ranging from independent living to assisted living to nursing care all in one community. Presbyterian Village, located adjacent to WellStar Cobb Hospital, is a CCRS. The 60-acre campus-style development includes 283 units in 6 separate care levels. The community currently has a waiting list, indicating that there is pent-up demand for this housing product in the market area.

3. Commercial Market Analysis

The commercial market for the Austell Road LCI area consists primarily of retail and office development. The research completed by Ackerman & Company for this study focused on an inventory and assessment of projects in the Austell Road trade area (encompassing a three-mile radius). Aggregate market trends, primary tenants/users, retail trade potential and job composition and growth were among the factors considered. Additionally, interviews were conducted with active commercial brokers/developers and officials at WellStar Cobb Hospital.

a. Existing Market Conditions – Retail

The Cobb County retail market is focused on three specific submarkets: Cumberland/East Cobb, Kennesaw/Northwest Cobb and Austell. The Austell market area is the smallest submarket with 4.5 million square feet, representing 17% of the county's retail space. The Austell submarket spills over into the Fulton Industrial area across the county line, but the majority of retail space falls on the Cobb County side of this market. The Austell submarket has experienced lower occupancy (82.5% vs. 87.9%) and lower rents compared to the county as a whole.

The Austell submarket is served by a full array of tenants, including large discounters (there are two Wal-Marts), eight grocery stores, and big-box apparel and specialty stores. In the past 5 years the trade area has also begun to attract full-service restaurants; there are now 12 moderate to mid-priced full service restaurants in the trade area, including Longhorn Steakhouse, Red Lobster, and Ted's Montana Grill.

There are 27 shopping centers in the Austell Road trade area, totaling 3 million square feet of space. This results in a ratio of 54 square feet per person, which is notably higher than the average for Cobb County (39.5 square feet per person) and metro Atlanta (36.6 square feet per person). This ratio indicated that the Austell Road market is significantly overbuilt. The LCI study area by itself accounts for 1.5 million square feet of retail space (half of trade area total) in 10 shopping centers. These statistics do not include freestanding retail buildings, which add an estimated 500,000 square feet of space to the trade area.

Most of the retail space in the trade is concentrated at the intersection of Austell Road and the East-West Connector, extending north to Hurt Road and west to Floyd Road; 7 study area shopping centers (91.36 million square feet) are located in and around this triangle. The average shopping center size is 111,200 square feet. New centers tend to be very large, anchored with big-box tenants or smaller, unanchored strip or specialty centers. The largest is East-West Commons (450,000 square feet) anchored by Target and Lowes. The shopping centers are well occupied despite the amount of space per person. The overall occupancy rate in the trade area is 91.1%, but it is stronger for centers in the LCI study area (97%) than outside (85%).

The LCI study area includes three competitive shopping centers, based on their age, condition and tenancy (See **Table III-3**). Within the three-mile radius trade area another six centers are considered competitive. The remaining centers (18) are leased, but struggling with lower quality tenants.

Table III-3: Competitive Shopping Centers Austell Rd. LCI Study Area

Project	Year Built	Sq. Ft.	Occupancy Rate	Anchor Tenants
Brookwood Square	1990	253,448	100%	Home Depot, Marshalls, Staples
East-West Commons	1999	450,000	99.8%	Target, Lowes, T.J. Maxx, Borders, Etc.
East-West Crossing	2001	150,000	100%	Kohl's, Ross, Rack Room Shoes
TOTAL		853,448		

Source: Ackerman/JJG

b. Existing Market Conditions – Office

Office space in the Austell Road area is focused on the area immediately surrounding WellStar Cobb Hospital, which is the driver for office space in the market area. The hospital has a good occupancy rate of 72.3%, compared to the county average of 56.6%, and is profitable. However, according to hospital officials, its profitability is deteriorating due to a decline in managed care and an increase in indigent care.

A total of 32 office buildings are located in and around the hospital campus. These buildings total 580,000 square feet. The majority of the buildings (29, or 555,600 square feet) are medical office buildings, indicating the importance of the hospital in this market. The office market is well leased with an occupancy rate of 92%. The following table (III-4) summarizes the medical office market. Only six properties have been developed since 1990, including two currently under construction: 1) A free-standing building for Kaiser Permanente (60,000 square feet) and 2) Group VI Medical Park, a multi-tenant property comprising 22,500 square feet.

Table III-4: Medical Office Market Summary

	No. of Properties	Total Sq. Ft.	% of Total	Average Sq. Ft.
Year Built				
Before 1980	14	128,720	23.2%	9,194
1980s	7	219,050	39.4%	31,293
1990s	2	64,496	11.6%	32,248
2000s	6	143,362	25.8%	23,894
Class				
A	2	82,500	14.8%	41,250
B	10	254,978	45.9%	25,498
C	17	218,150	39.3%	12,832
Type				
Single-Tenant	18	295,702	53.2%	16,428
Multi-Tenant	11	259,926	46.8%	23,630
TOTAL	29	555,628	100%	19,160

Source: Ackerman/JJG

B. Existing Land Use

A windshield survey was conducted in December 2006 to accurately assess the existing land uses within the corridor. The pattern of land uses found is characteristic of many suburban corridors throughout the region and nation. Austell Road was the first paved road in Cobb County and one of the first to develop in a suburban fashion in the 1960s. Commercial strip development lines the major arterial roads, with residential development found along quieter streets behind. The highest intensity land uses (hospital, apartments, condominiums, large shopping centers) are found at the intersection of the most significant roadways, Austell Road and the East-West Connector. As is typical around many hospitals there is a large agglomeration of medical offices in close proximity to WellStar Cobb Hospital.

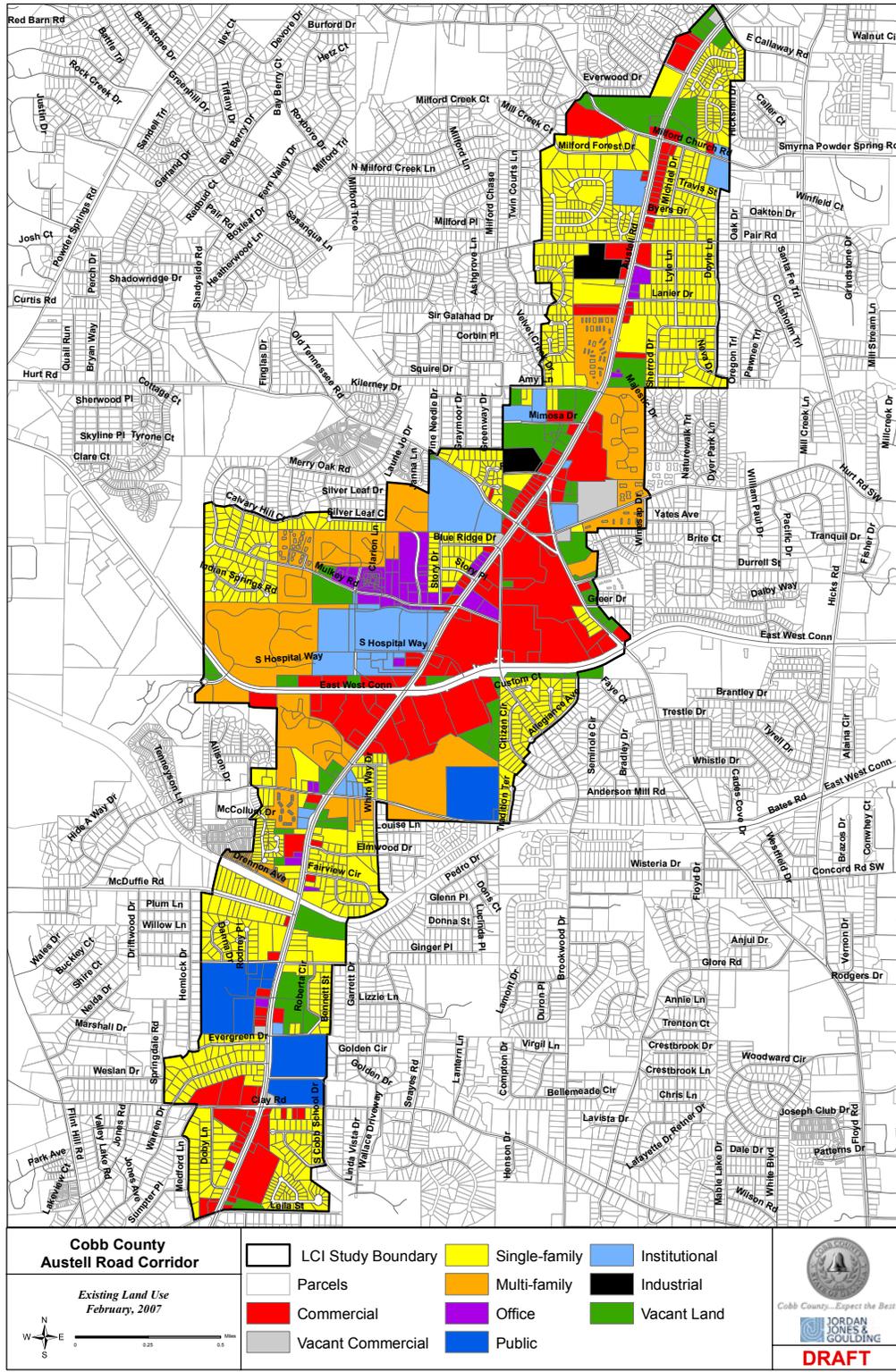
A considerable portion of the homes in the study area were built during the suburban expansion of the 1950s and 1960s. These homes are primarily one-story ranch-style residences. Some of the original homes abutting Austell Road have been converted to retail or office uses. There is also a significant amount of newer single-family homes that have been built in recent decades.

The following **Table III-5** provides acreages and percent of total existing land uses in the corridor (See **Figure III-1** for Map of Existing Land Use). Single-family residential uses predominate in the study area. Commercial and multi-family residential uses also comprise a significant portion of the corridor. The area is predominately developed, with only 133 acres, or 8.3% of the total land area remaining vacant. In spite of the corridor’s high degree of build-out, there are still numerous redevelopment possibilities. In addition to vacant sites there are opportunities for the redevelopment of both vacant and currently occupied commercial areas.

Table III-5: Existing Land Use by Acres and Percent

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total
Single-Family Residential	605.4	38%
Commercial	314	19.5%
Multi-Family Residential	278.8	17.3%
Vacant Land	133.4	8.3%
Institutional	118.1	7.3%
Public	81.2	5%
Office	46.2	3%
Industrial	16.2	1%
Vacant Commercial	15.1	1%
Total	1,608.4	100%

Figure III-1: Existing Land Use



1. Single-Family Residential

The most prevalent land use within the corridor is single-family detached residential, which comprises 38% of the study area. Within this category exists a great variety of housing styles, ages and lot sizes. A considerable portion of homes are one-story brick ranches built in the 1950s and 1960s. However, some of these homes that front directly onto Austell Road have been converted to commercial use. Newer homes built in recent decades are also prevalent. Many of the newer homes are multi-story and feature facades of vinyl siding and brick. Typical lot sizes are approximately a quarter to a third-acre for newer single family developments and half-acre for neighborhoods dating back to the 1950s and 1960s. A notable exception to this is the recent large-lot subdivision at Milford Forest Drive in the northern portion of the study area, in which lot sizes are just under two acres. The majority of the single-family neighborhoods in the corridor are stable and well-maintained. Some neighborhoods exhibiting poor maintenance can be found along Mulkey Road, in proximity to the hospital. Within the corridor there is a great variety of single-family housing costs, ranging from mobile homes to large multi-story brick homes.



Diversity in types, styles, and prices of single-family homes.

2. Commercial

The second most common land use in the study area is commercial, comprising 19.5% of the study area. There are commercial uses dispersed along the Austell Road Corridor, with a large agglomeration at the intersection of Austell Road with the East-West Connector and in the triangle formed by Floyd Road, Austell Road and the East-West Connector. This area contains numerous big-box chain retailers including Kohl's, Lowes, Target, Borders, Home Depot and Office Depot. There is also significant commercial development in the southern portion of the study area adjacent to Austell Road from Clay Road to Leila Street. A large component of this is Austell Plaza, a 120,000 square foot shopping center that houses discount merchandisers Big Lots and Citi Trends.

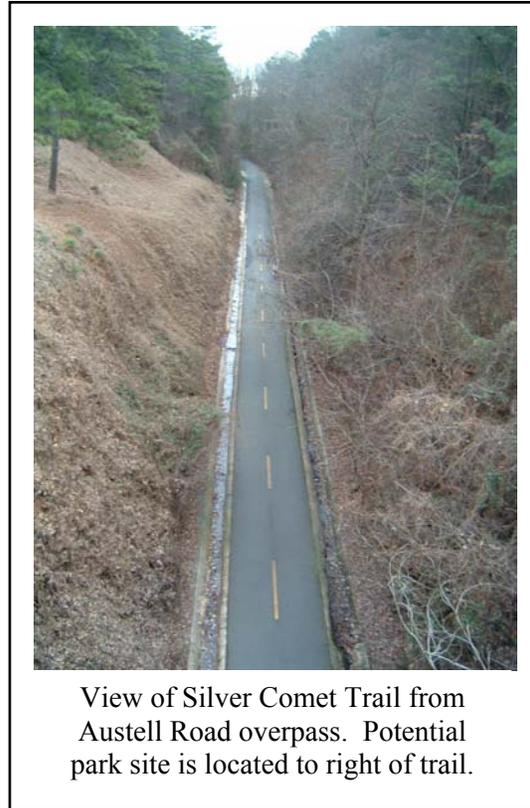
3. Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family residences comprise 278.8 acres or 17.3% of the study area. Large components of this include the Presbyterian Village, a continuing-care retirement community adjacent to WellStar Cobb Hospital. Other sizable components include the Ivy Commons and Alta Mill apartment complexes. New Duplexes or Ranch Condos are also included in this category. Townhomes can be found on Drennon

Avenue and Anderson Mill Road. A cluster of condominium and apartment complexes can also be found on Mulkey Road.

4. Vacant Land

Approximately 8.3% of the study area is comprised of vacant land. Several large parcels of vacant land still remain in the corridor. Two are located at the intersection of Milford Church Road and Austell Road. These parcels occupy the northeast and northwest corners and wrap around a gas station and corner drug store. Another large parcel is located just north of South Cobb High School. It is currently zoned for commercial use and abuts an automobile-parts business. Another sizable parcel is located just south of the Silver Comet Trail fronting Austell Road. This 9.2-acre site was identified by the public as an ideal location for a community park. Currently there is no access from the corridor to the trail. The trail runs underneath Austell Road and is disconnected by a treacherous grade separation. A park in this location could provide access to the trail, trail parking, and other community assets, like a dog park.



5. Institutional

Institutional uses comprise 7.3% of the study area. WellStar Cobb Hospital is by far the largest institutional land use. Religious institutions comprise the remainder of the uses and include Gospel Harvester, Milford Baptist, Highest Praise, Orange Hill Baptist, Southminster Presbyterian and La Luz Del Mundo Churches.

6. Public

Public land uses comprise 81.2 acres or 5% of the study area. The corridor contains three large public facilities, all of which are found in the southern portion of the study area. They include the South Cobb Government Center, South Cobb High School and Sanders Elementary. The government center serves many public functions; it contains a police precinct, fire station, tag office, community meeting rooms, and a government business office.

7. Office

Office land uses comprise 46.2 acres or 3% of the study area. They include converted single-family homes abutting Austell Road, a well as new construction. The vast

majority of office uses in the corridor are medical or doctor's offices. As expected a large grouping of these offices are found adjacent to WellStar Cobb Hospital, along Mulkey Road and Medical Park Drive.

8. Industrial

The study area contains very little industrial land, with only two parcels having this designation. The two parcels total 16.2 acres or approximately 1% of the study area. The operations are of light intensity and do not produce significant noxious fumes, truck traffic or noise pollution. Both are located in the northern portion of the study area on Pair Road and Reed Drive.

9. Vacant Commercial

Vacant commercial sites consist of 15.1 acres or approximately 1% of the study area. The sites range in size from large abandoned "big-box" stores (10-plus acres) to vacant corner gas stations (0.7-.09 acres). These sites are referred to as "greyfields" for their large expanses of empty parking lots. The largest and most notable greyfield is the vacant Target store on Hurt Road. These sites offer prime opportunities for redevelopment and reinvestment in the corridor.



Vacant Target site, a prime example of a "greyfield" offering redevelopment opportunities.

10. Existing Urban Design Conditions

Existing urban design conditions within the commercially developed portions of the study area are generally what could be considered a suburban “code-scape,” referring to how each parcel is designed to meet development requirements as set by local jurisdictions. In many cases, it is apparent how local codes have changed over time since older commercial strip centers and stand-alone sites show the signs of having no stormwater, tree, landscape and sign ordinances during their time of development. These sites are treeless expanses of parking areas. Newer development shows the effect of adding these kinds of codes. Parking areas are studded with young shade trees, sidewalks and buffers are constructed along right-of-ways and property lines, and detention ponds are prominent within each individual site, surrounded by a chain link fence. Newer signs are placed at heights more consistent with each other, although there is no particular continuity of materials or graphic cohesiveness of sign design within the study area. The existing streetscape of Austell Road within the study area is particularly barren, with concrete medians, narrow sidewalks and little right-of-way landscaping. The approximately 110-foot wide corridor contains 6-foot sidewalks, 2-foot planting strips, a 20-foot concrete median and a variable strip for utility pole placement.



Image shows a typical parking area of an older commercial center in the corridor. Note the lack of trees, parking lot islands for utilities and landscaping and sidewalks.



Existing sidewalk at the edge of the study area showing a landscaped median and private landscaping outside the right-of-way. The proposed roadway section (see Chapter V) relocates the sidewalk to the edge of right-of-way, adding small trees between the sidewalk and curb.



Older parking areas developed under landscape and tree ordinances show the effect of parking lot plantings over time. These trees provide a streetscape within an existing development.



Newer shopping plazas show the effect of more broad landscape standards. Over time this parking area will have significant shade.



Typical of new developments is the appearance of individual detention ponds. These appear to be hazards and typically do not have an appealing design.



This image shows a newer shopping center without any pedestrian access between the street and buildings, making pedestrian access hostile and confusing.

C. Existing Transportation Systems and Conditions

1. Roadway Characteristics

a. Roadway Network Profile

The roadway network within the Austell Road LCI study area primarily consists of four arterials and several major and minor collectors. The primary roadways within the study area are Austell Road, which runs north-south, and the East-West Connector. Other prominent roadways include Floyd Road, Clay Road, Brookwood Drive, Hurt Road, Milford Church Road and Callaway Road. Of these roadways, only Austell Road is a state roadway (designated as State Road 5).

b. Number of Lanes

Austell Road and the East-West Connector are four-lane divided roadways with additional turn lanes at various intersections throughout their entire length within the study area. All other roadways within the study area are two-lane roadways.

c. Access Management

The entire lengths of Austell Road and the East-West Connector within the study area are divided by either a concrete or grass median, which restricts left-turn movements along the roadways. The roadways are also characterized by an excessive number of ingress and egress points to adjacent properties. Due to the divided median, almost all of these access points are restricted to “right-in, right-out” turn movements. Median types and turn lanes along both roadways are provided in **Figures III-2 and III-3**.

d. Roadway Connectivity

Roadway connectivity is an important factor because it enhances multiple means of access to surrounding land uses without the necessity to access these uses via Austell Road. As a result, overall travel conditions along Austell Road can be improved. In general, the Austell Road Corridor is characterized by poor connectivity due to the overall lack of parallel roadways in close proximity to Austell Road and the proliferation of cul-de-sacs and limited ingress and egress points in surrounding residential areas.

e. Functional Classifications

Functional classifications, reflecting the primary function of each roadway in the overall hierarchy of Cobb County’s roadway network, were assigned by the Cobb County Department of Transportation (DOT) during the preparation of Cobb County’s 2006 Major Thoroughfare Plan. Roadways are designated as arterials, major collectors and minor collectors. **Table III-6** lists designated roads within the study area. A map of the roadway functional classifications is shown in **Figure III-4**. A general description of these roadway classifications is provided below:

- Freeways provide for rapid and efficient movement of large volumes of through-traffic between areas and across the entire urban area. They are not intended to provide direct access to abutting properties.
- Arterials also provide for through-traffic movement. However, while direct access to abutting properties is allowed, these roads do have restrictions relating to driveways and access roadways. The minimum right-of-way for Cobb County arterials is 100 feet.
- Collectors provide for traffic movement between arterial and local streets as well as direct access to abutting properties. The distinction between major and minor collectors is based on the density of the land area the collector serves and its relationship to the overall arterial system. The minimum right-of-way for a major collector is 80 feet and 60 feet for a minor collector.

Table III-6: Functional Classification of Roadways –

Austell Road LCI Study Area

Arterials	Major Collectors	Minor Collectors
Austell Road	Hurt Road	Callaway Road (east of Austell Road)
East-West Connector	Brookwood Drive	Pair Road
Clay Road	Milford Church Road	Anderson Mill Road
Floyd Road	Callaway Road (west of Austell Road)	McDuffie Road

Figure III-2: N. Austell Road Study Area Medians and Turn Lanes

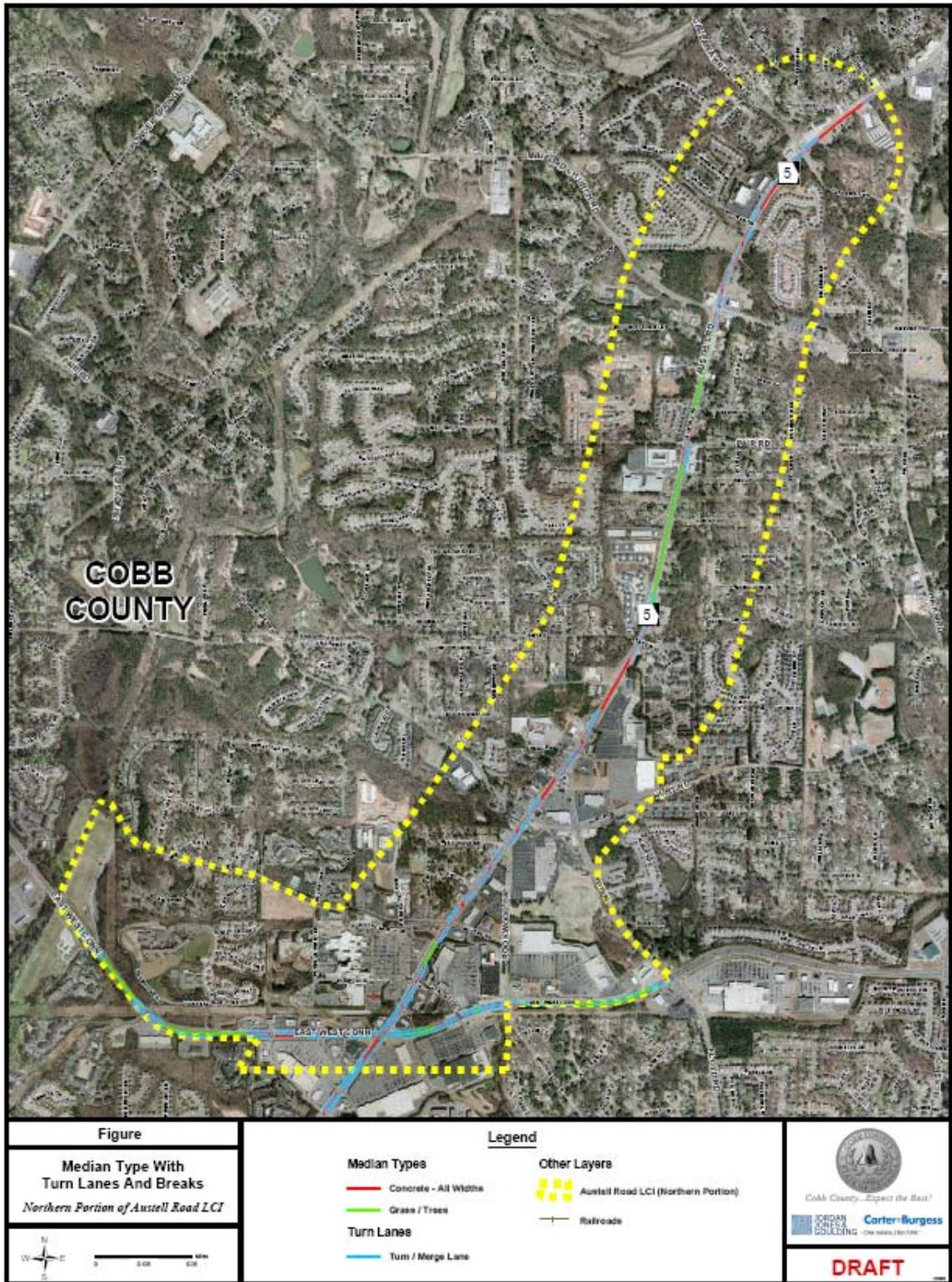


Figure III-3: S. Austell Road Study Area Medians and Turn Lanes

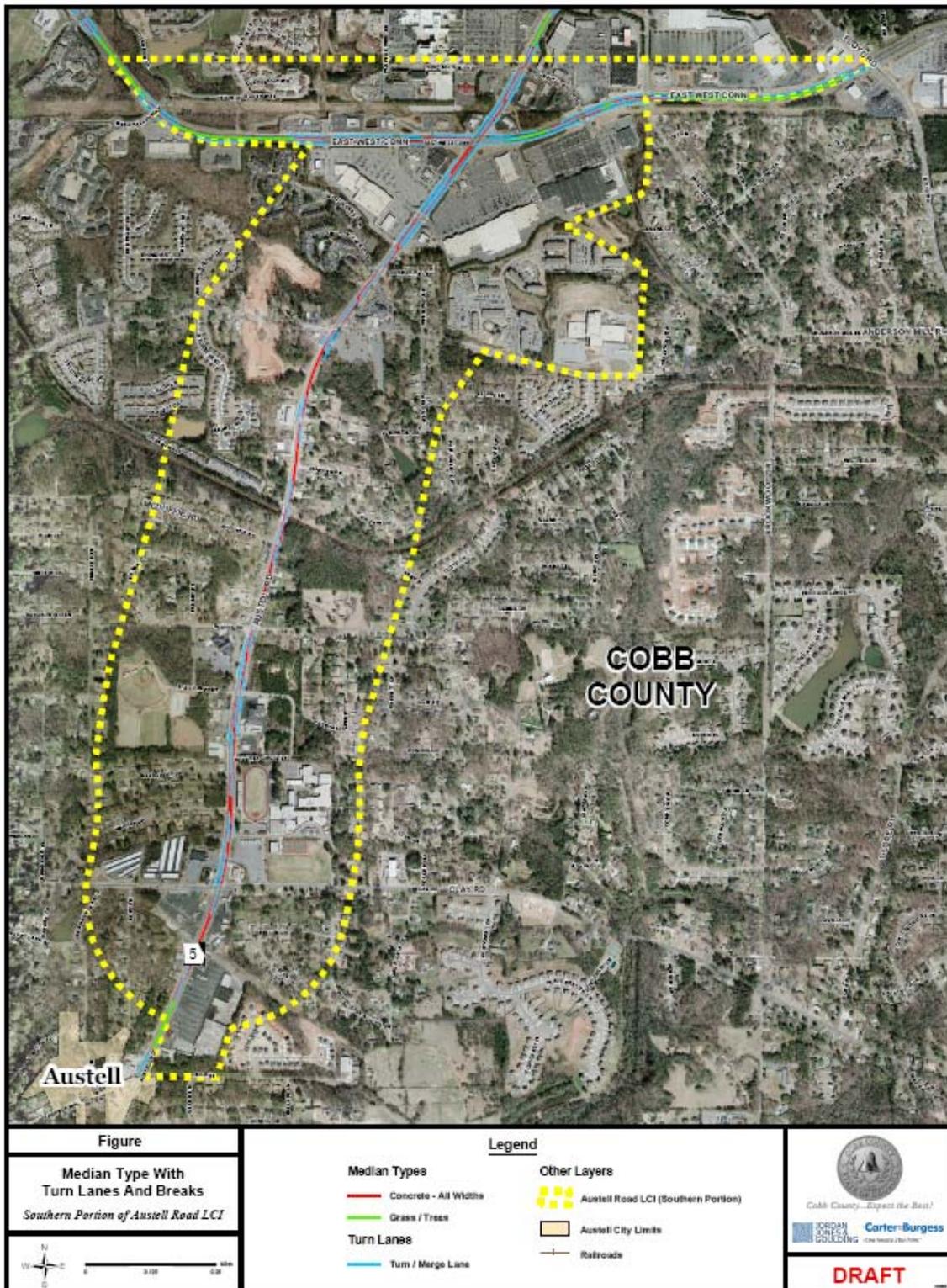
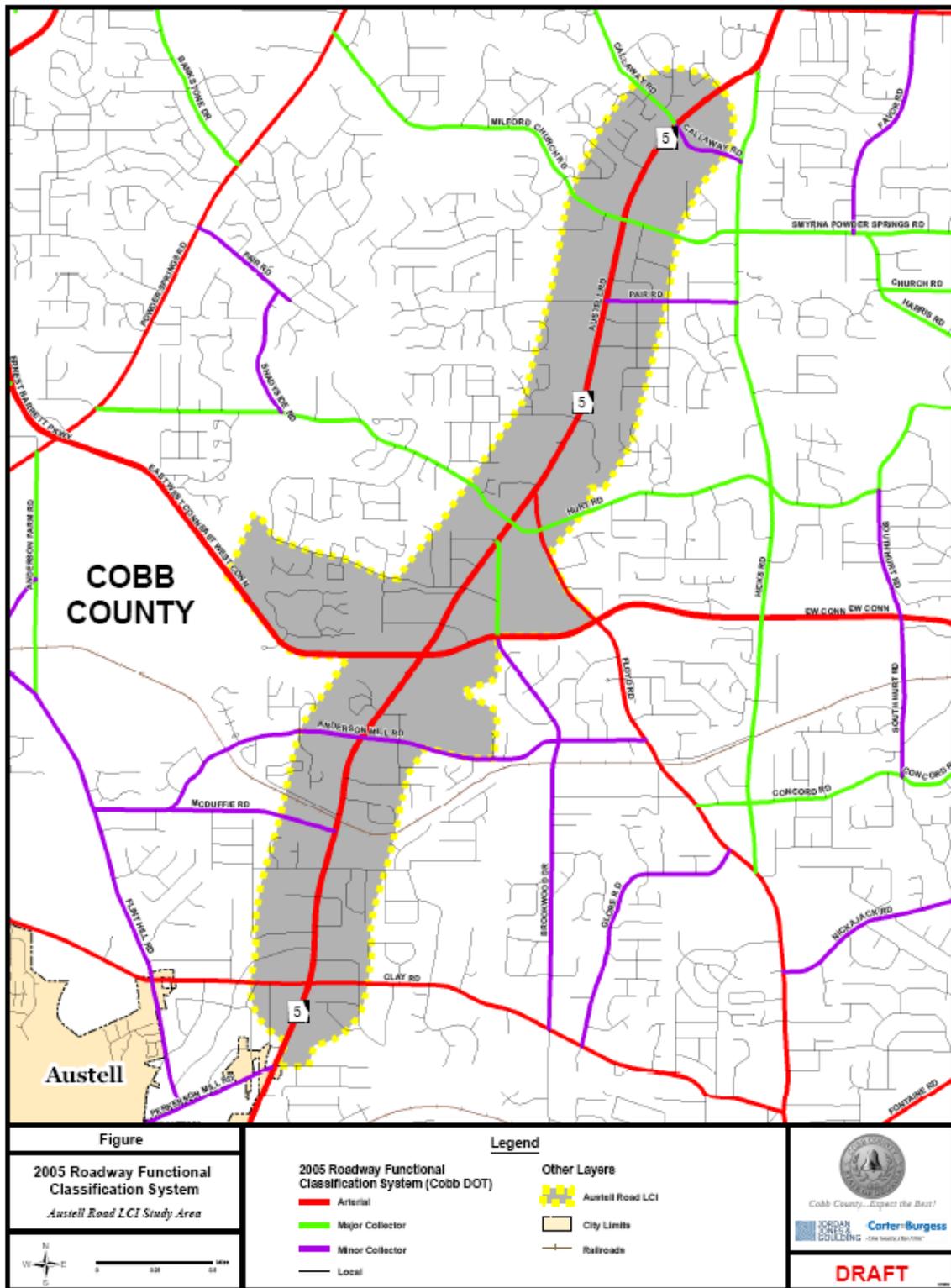


Figure III-4: Austell Road Study Area Roadway Classification



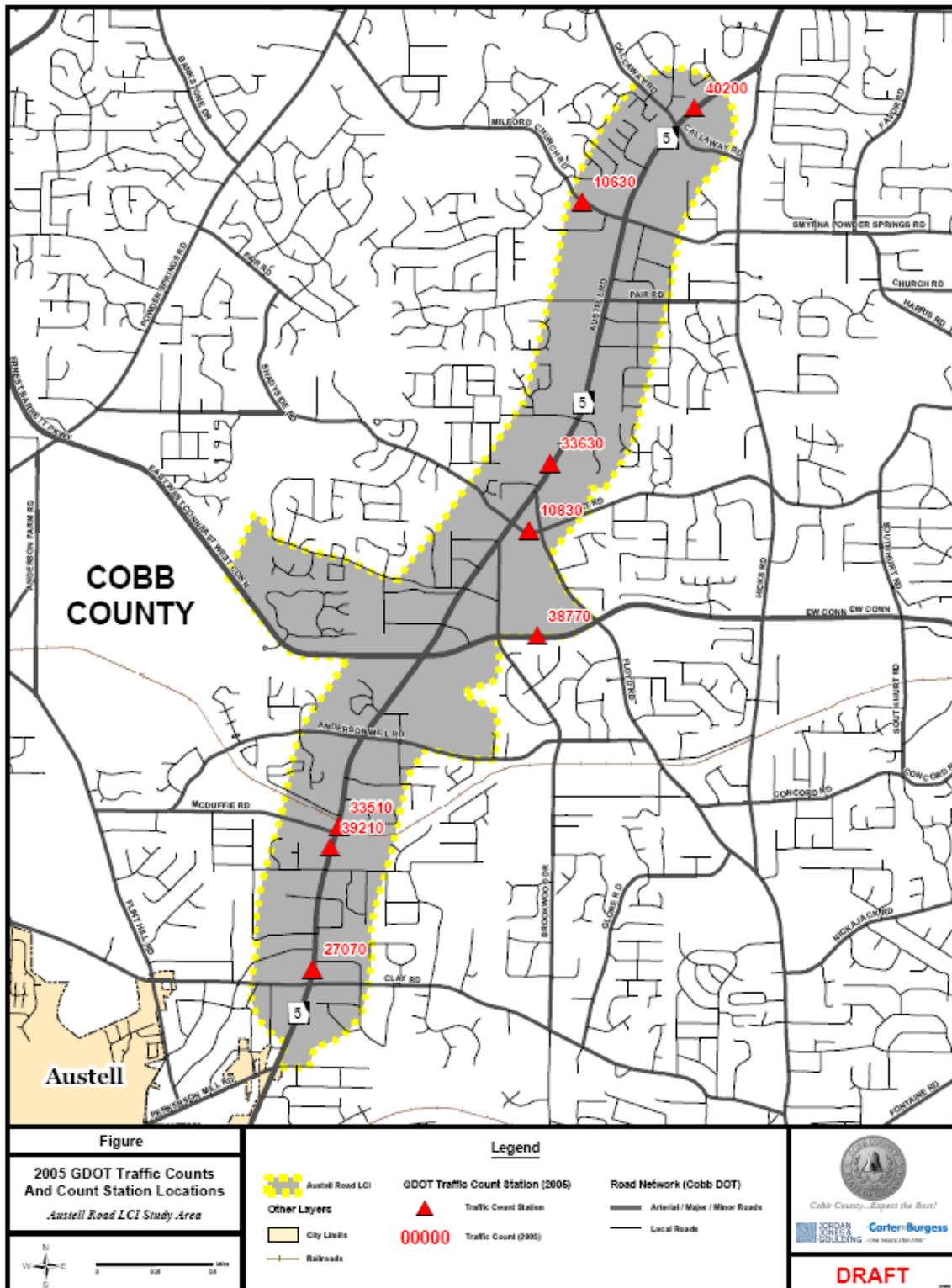
f. Traffic Volumes

There are eight traffic count locations monitored by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) within the study area. Pursuant to these counts, the following roadway volumes were observed within the study area:

- Two-way traffic volumes along Austell Road range from 27,000 vehicles per day (vpd) at the southern portion of the study area near Clay Road to 42,000 vpd at its northern end near Callaway Road. In general, volumes observed along most of the roadway are slightly under 40,000 vpd.
- Traffic counts along the East-West Connector near the intersection with Austell Road were slightly under 40,000 vpd.
- Traffic counts along two other intersecting roadways of Austell Road, Milford Church Road and Hurt Road were slightly under 11,000 vpd.

A map of the traffic count totals in 2005 is provided in **Figure III-5**.

Figure III-5: Austell Road Study Area 2005 Traffic Counts



g. Roadway Level of Service

Level of Service (LOS) is a letter designation used to describe traffic operating conditions, on a declining scale from A to F. LOS A represents free-flow traffic conditions while LOS F represents extreme delays with stopped traffic conditions. Service flow at LOS E is the value that corresponds to the flow rate being at the full design capacity of the facility. For most design and planning purposes, service flow rates of LOS D or C are generally considered as acceptable levels of service, as they ensure a more acceptable quality of service to facility users.

To reflect the most congested time frame, P.M. peak hour LOS was inventoried through use of the regional travel demand model developed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The roadway congestion levels along the roadway segments within the Austell Road LCI study area are represented graphically in **Figure III-6**. As shown, the major findings of this analysis include:

- The P.M. peak hour congestion level on Austell Road is LOS D along most segments with the exception of the segments north of Callaway Road and between Seayes Road and Clay Road, which operate at LOS E.
- The East-West Connector operates at LOS E west of Austell Road and at LOS D or better east of Austell Road.
- Callaway Road currently operates at LOS F west of Austell Road.
- Hurt Road operates at LOS D throughout much of its length, but the segment between Floyd Road and Brookwood Drive operates at LOS F and is the most congested roadway segment in the study area.
- Clay Road generally operates at LOS D.
- Milford Church Road operates at LOS E west of Austell Road and LOS D east of Austell Road.
- The segment of Floyd Road between Austell Road and Hurt Road operates at LOS D.

h. Intersection Level of Service

Synchro Software (Version 6) was used to develop existing intersection LOS for the study area. Synchro A.M. and P.M. peak hour models were developed in 2002 for the Austell Road Corridor between Sandtown Road and Perkerson Mill Road and for the East-West Connector corridor between Macedonia Road and Hicks Road as part of the Cobb County Signal Timing Project. The respective A.M. and P.M. peak hour models for the Austell Road and East-West Connector corridors were merged. The intersections of Brookwood Road at Mulkey Road and Floyd Road at Hurt Road were also added to the Synchro models. Additional traffic count data and intersection lane geometry was also collected for these two intersections.

The current year A.M. and P.M. peak hour volumes in the Synchro models were developed by comparing the base year 2002 traffic volumes with year 2007 projected traffic volumes provided by Cobb County DOT. Expansion factors were calculated for the A.M. and P.M. peak hours to grow the traffic from year 2002 volumes to current volumes.

Figure III-6: Austell Road Study Area 2005 LOS

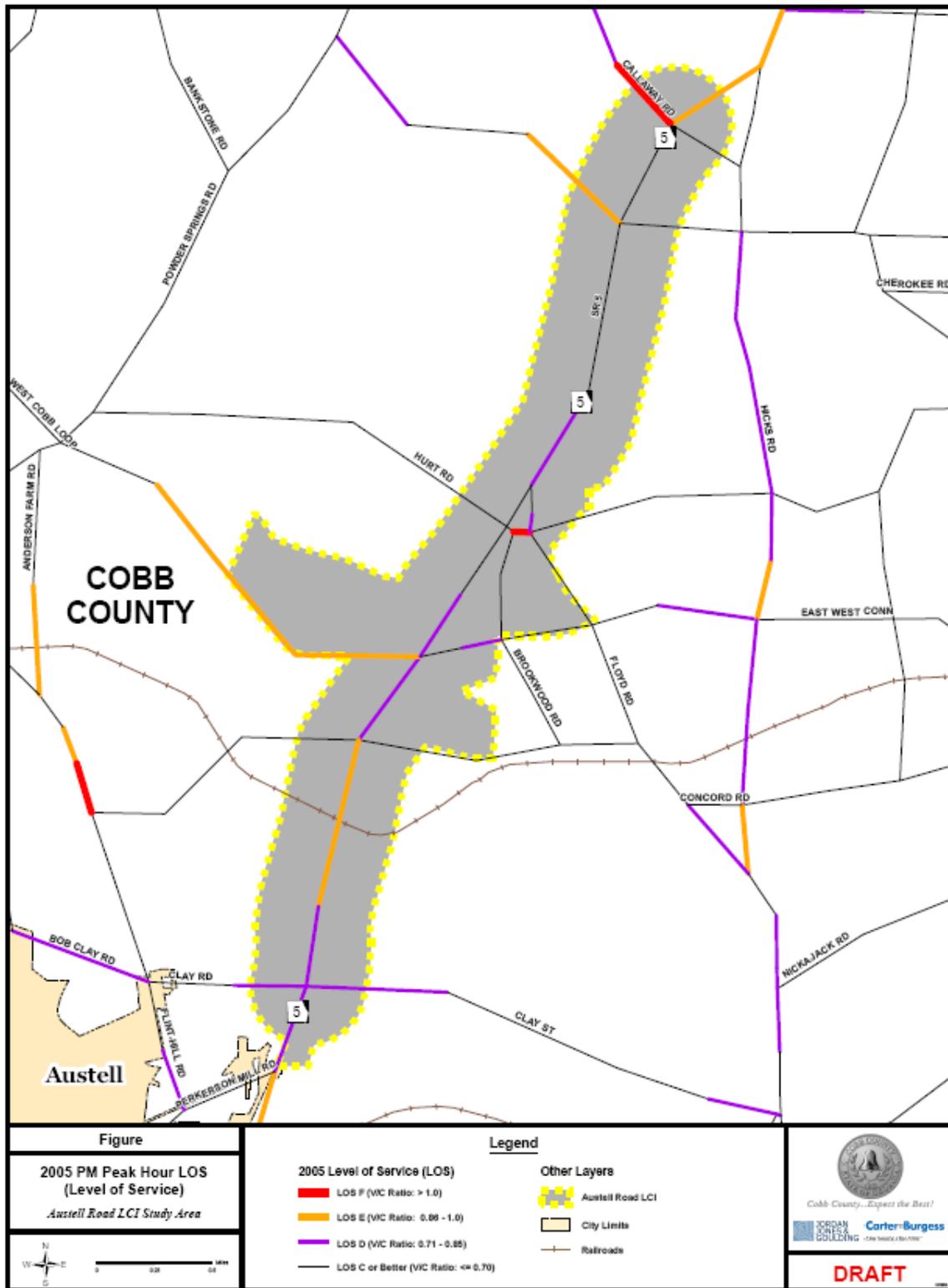


Table III-6 shows the results of the intersection operations analysis for existing conditions. As shown, of the two main thoroughfares in the study area, intersections along East-West Connector function slightly better than those along Austell Road. The intersection with the most congested conditions is Austell Road at East-West Connector, which operates at LOS F during both the A.M. and P.M. peak periods. The Austell Road intersections at Milford Church Road, Hurt Road and Anderson Mill Road and the intersection of East-West Connector at Floyd Road also have peak hour LOS of D or worse.

Table III-6: Existing Intersection Level of Service

Intersection	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)
Austell Rd @ Callaway Rd	C	33.7	D	42.8
Austell Rd @ Milford Church Rd.	F	83.2	E	67.6
Austell Rd @ Pair Rd.	C	23.0	B	18.5
Austell Rd @ Amy Lane.	B	19.8	B	11.4
Austell Rd @ Hurt Rd.	E	58.2	E	64.2
Austell Rd @ Mulkey Rd.	B	17.2	C	32.0
Austell Rd @ Hospital So.Dr.	A	7.8	C	30.5
Austell Rd @ East West Conn.	F	135.9	F	110.1
Austell Rd @ E W Commons	A	4.0	B	18.2
Austell Rd @ Anderson Mill Rd.	D	49.4	D	52.7
Austell Rd @ Seays Rd.	A	4.9	A	3.9
Austell Rd @ Clay Rd.	C	23.0	D	53.1
Austell Rd @ Austell Plaza	A	2.7	A	2.9
Austell Rd @ Perkerson Mill Rd.	C	29.2	B	12.2
East West Conn. @ Tramore Pk	A	2.3	A	7.9
East West Conn. @ Champion Dr.	A	8.9	B	19.7
East West Conn. @ IHOP	A	3.9	B	14.9
East West Conn. @ Lowes	B	11.2	B	11.5
East West Conn. @ Brookwood Dr.	B	16.6	C	30.2
East West Conn. @ Floyd Rd.	D	41.5	D	48.5
East West Conn. @ Mulkey Rd.	A	4.6	A	6.0
East West Conn. @ Hurt Rd.	B	15.7	B	14.5

i. Accident Information

Austell Road is considered as a “high crash” roadway based on GDOT statistical analysis of roadways statewide. There are numerous high-accident locations along Austell Road, which include:

- East-West Connector
- Milford Church Road
- Pair Road
- Amy Lane
- Floyd Road

-
- Blue Ridge Drive
 - Hospital South Drive
 - Anderson Mill Road
 - Clay Road

Maps of the high-crash locations along Austell Road are provided in **Figures III-7** and **III-8**. Many of the safety issues along the corridor are due to the excessive number of curb cuts along the roadway. Of these locations, the intersection of Austell Road at East-West Connector has the highest number of accidents in the study area. Between 2002 and 2005, a total of 517 crashes were reported at this location, which ranks it among one of the highest crash locations statewide.

2. Transit Service Characteristics

a. Route Information and Stops

The Austell Road LCI study area is served by Cobb Community Transit (CCT). Route 30, runs from the MARTA Holmes Station to the Marietta Transfer Center via Austell Road, the East-West Connector and Floyd Road. A map of this transit route along with its stop locations throughout the corridor is provided in **Figure III-9**. As shown, there are 26 stops along this route within the study area along Austell Road and the East-West Connector. The major stops are at the WellStar Cobb Hospital and the retail areas along the East-West Connector.

b. Ridership

Ridership along this transit route is one of the highest of all operated by CCT. In 2006, ridership along the route averaged over 64,000 per month for a total of 777,392. This represents a 17.3% increase over the total 2005 ridership of 662,738. Monthly ridership totals for 2006 are also shown in **Figure III-9**. Each weekday, an average of 2,567 persons board the Route 30 bus with another 1,661 patrons riding every Saturday (CCT Transit Planning Study, May 2006, pp. 3-4). The three stops with the greatest average daily boardings are on Austell Road at Hospital Drive North and South and on the East-West Connector at Floyd Road. Except for Route 10, Route 30 has the greatest ridership for CCT.

3. Bike and Pedestrian Characteristics

a. Sidewalk and Crosswalk Inventory

Maps of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the study area are provided in **Figures III-10** and **III-11**. As shown, sidewalks exist along the entire length of Austell Road within the study area on both sides of the roadway north of the East-West Connector. South of the East-West Connector, sidewalks exist along the entire length of the west side of the roadway until Clay Road. South of Clay Road, sidewalks exist only on the eastern side of Austell Road. Between Callaway Road and Pair Road, several lengths of sidewalk are in disrepair and are less than the required five-foot wide standard, especially on the west side of Austell Road. South

of Pair Road along the Austell Road Corridor, sidewalks are a minimum of five feet wide.

Several intersecting and parallel roadways to Austell Road have sidewalks on at least one side of the roadway. These roadways include the East-West Connector, Callaway Road, Milford Church Road, Pair Road, Brookwood Drive, Hurt Road, Floyd Road, Anderson Mill Road and Clay Road.

The Silver Comet Trail is the only multi-use trail facility in the study area. It begins at the corner of South Cobb Drive and the East-West Connector at the Publix Supermarket shopping center. It is a 60-mile long converted rail-trail that meets the Chief Ladiga Trail at the Alabama state line. The Silver Comet Trail is paved all the way to Rockmart with a 12-mile gap between there and Cedartown. The final segment of about nine miles, from Cedartown to the Alabama state line, is paved.

At milepost 4.20 is a trailhead facility located at Floyd Road. The Floyd Road Trailhead is the largest trailhead on the Silver Comet Trail and provides parking for 100 cars, including refreshments, services and merchandise at the “Silver Comet Trail Depot.” Traveling west from the Floyd Road Trailhead for about 0.4 miles, the trail crosses Brookwood Avenue and then it again crosses Anderson Mill Road after another 1.0 miles of trail. After Floyd Road, the closest trailhead is over four miles to the west near Powder Springs.

b. Identification of Gaps

Sidewalks are inconsistent throughout the Austell Road Corridor. Starting in the south, there are sidewalk gaps on the south side of Clay Road east and west from Austell Road. Gaps on Austell Road’s southeast side will need to be filled because of their close proximity to the high school. The East-West Connector is peppered with gaps on both sides of the road. Most of the connector roads throughout the corridor have gaps or they are void of sidewalks altogether. North of the East-West Connector the corridor experiences heavy gaps on Hurt Road, Pair Road, Milford Church Road and Callaway Road.

c. Accessibility of Transit Stops

The major problem with the pedestrian accessibility to transit stops is sidewalk gaps in the sidewalk network along both arterials and collectors. When sidewalk gaps are closed, transit accessibility should improve.

Figure III-8: S. Austell Road Study Area High Crash Locations

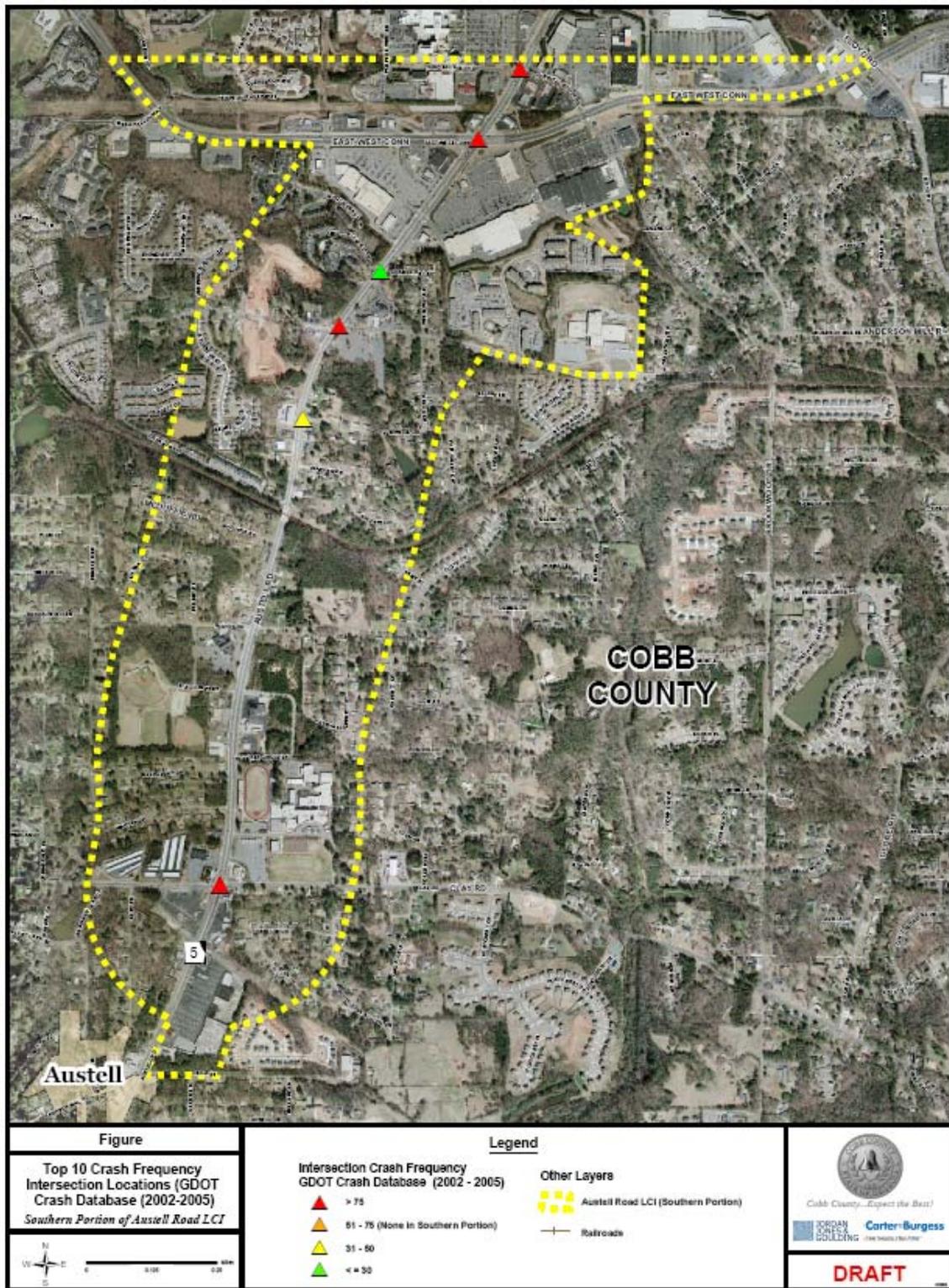


Figure III-9: Transit Routes and Ridership

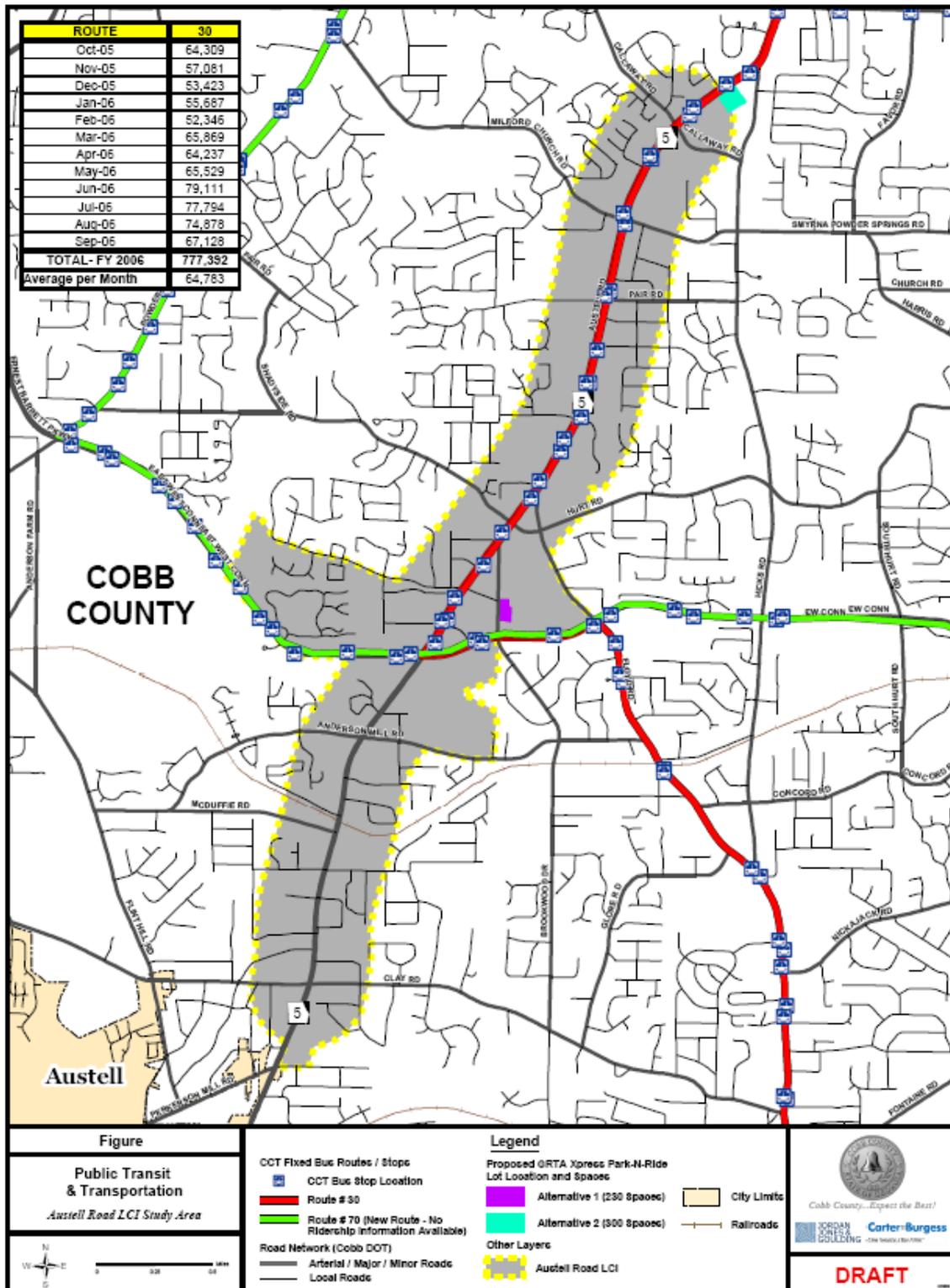


Figure III-10: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities N. Austell Road Study Area

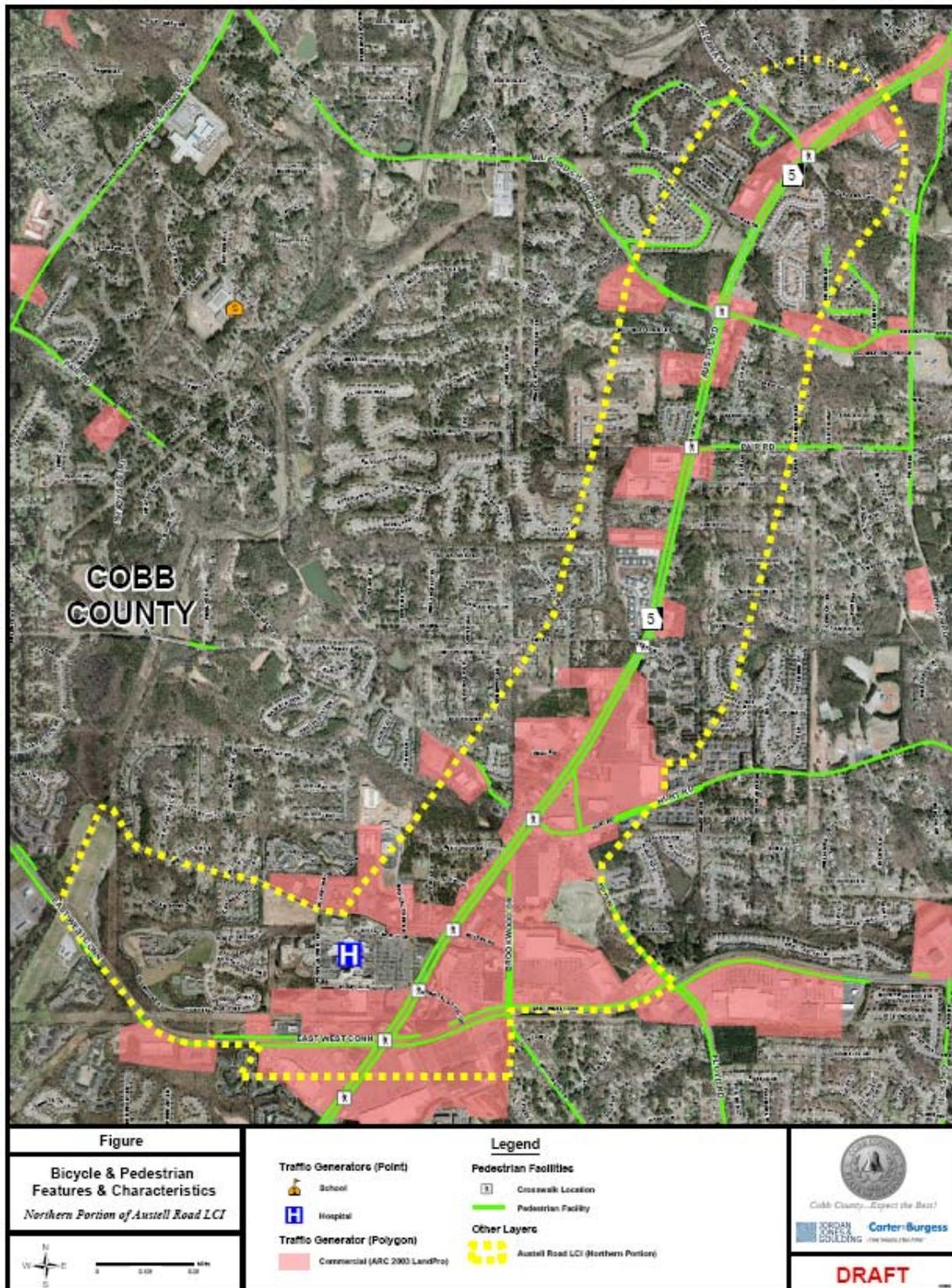
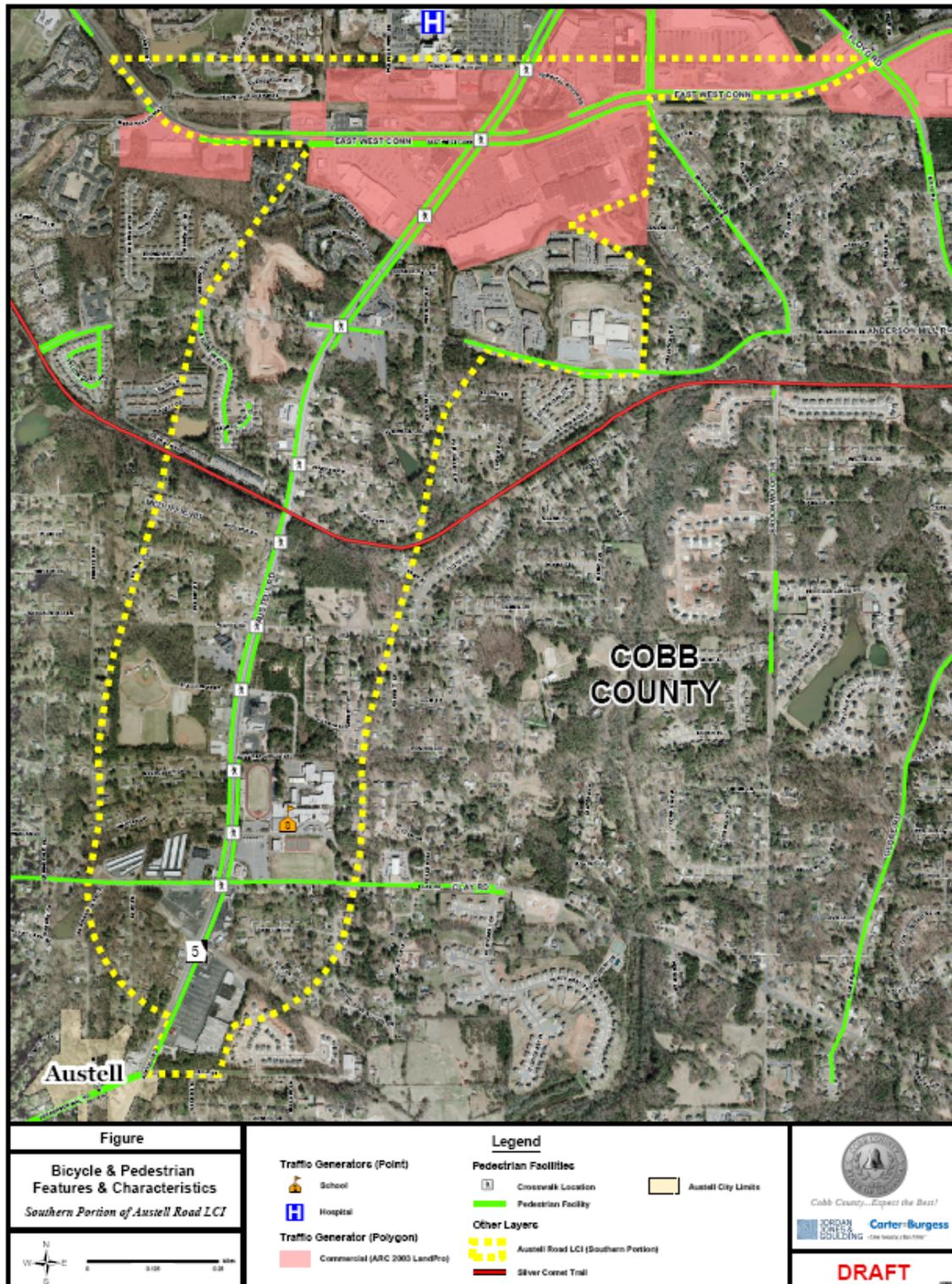


Figure III-11: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities S. Austell Road Study Area



d. Connectivity Analysis

Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is an important component to the transportation network because it enhances access to businesses, neighborhoods and healthcare services along Austell Road and promotes more active lifestyles. While there are several roadways with pedestrian facilities, there are significant shortfalls in the pedestrian connectivity of the study area. One of the most noteworthy obstacles to pedestrian travel is the fact that the roadways accessing the adjacent residential areas within the Austell Road LCI Corridor are almost completely void of sidewalks. As a result, there are several crosswalks located along Austell Road with no pedestrian access to these areas. North of the East-West Connector, this shortfall is magnified by the fact that transit stops along Austell Road have very little if any pedestrian accessibility. In the south, sidewalk absence is also a significant problem and creates very little pedestrian connectivity to the Silver Comet Trail from adjacent residential areas. The significant gaps in sidewalks that exist along the eastern side of Austell Road between Anderson Mill Road and South Cobb High School present a challenge for pedestrians trying to access the high school. Also, pedestrian signals are missing from several major intersections, and without installation there will continue to be significant pedestrian threats.

Other significant shortfalls in pedestrian and bicycle accessibility within the study area include:

- Overall lack of roadway connectivity hindering opportunities for bicycle travel;
- Lack of sidewalks providing access to South Cobb High School from surrounding residential areas;
- Lack of sidewalks providing access to commercial uses and WellStar Cobb Hospital along Austell Road and from surrounding residential areas;
- Lack of sidewalks along the western side of Austell Road south of Clay Road;
- Sidewalk gap on the northern side of the East-West Connector near the Austell Road intersection;
- Lack of sidewalks along McDuffie Road;
- Sidewalk gaps along Anderson Mill Road;
- Sidewalk gaps along Hurt Road; and
- Lack of sidewalks along most segments of Callaway Road.

e. Bicycle and Pedestrian Accident Information

Bicycle and pedestrian accident information was obtained for the years 2002 through 2005 from the GDOT crash database. The locations where these accidents occurred are presented in **Figures III-12** and **III-13**. The highest concentration of bicycle and pedestrian accidents along Austell Road occurred along the segment from the East-West Connector to Mimosa Drive. Furthermore, all but one of the bicycle accidents along Austell Road occurred on the East-West Connector.

Figure III-12: Bicycle & Pedestrian Accident Locations N. Austell Road Study Area

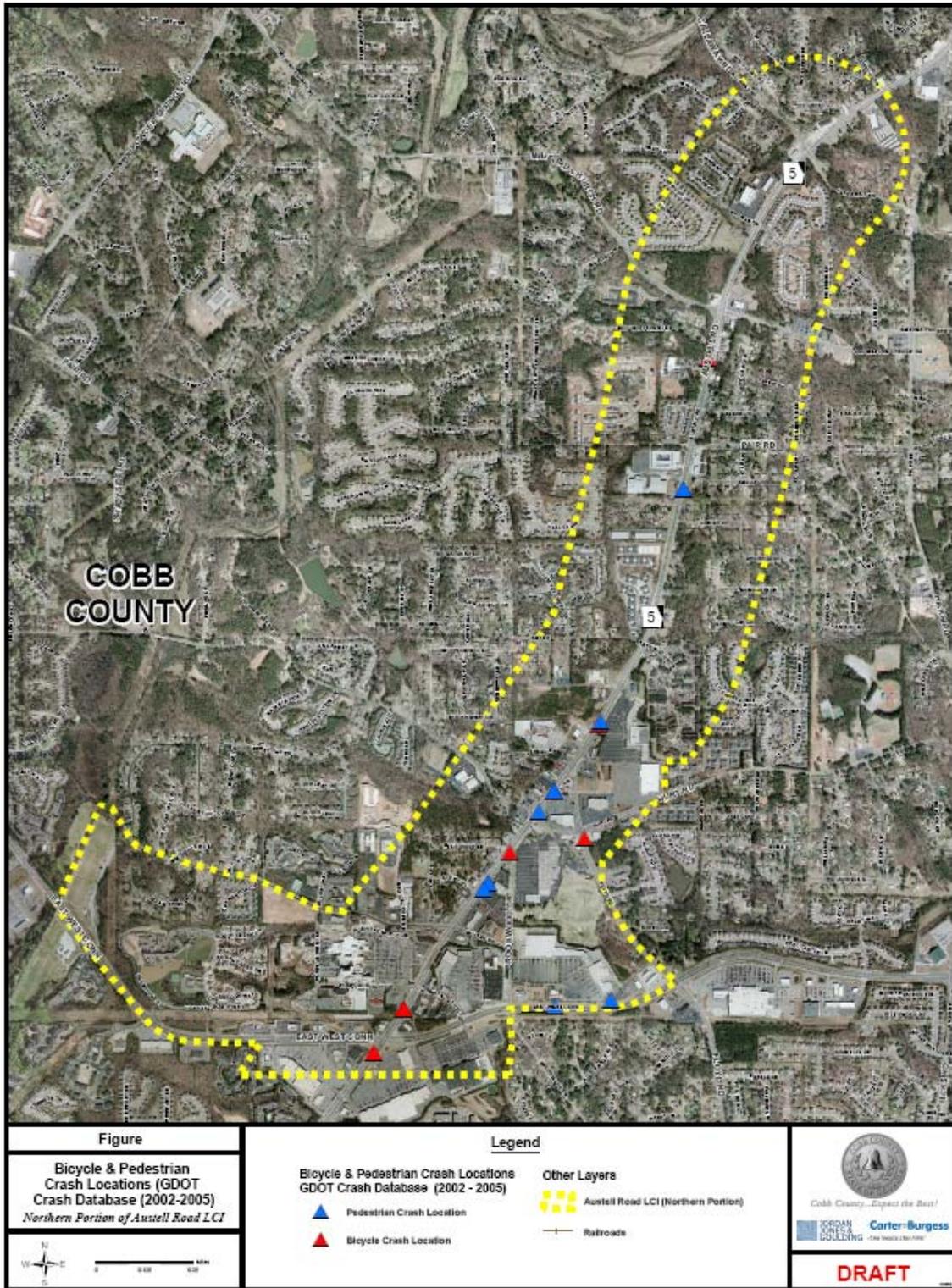
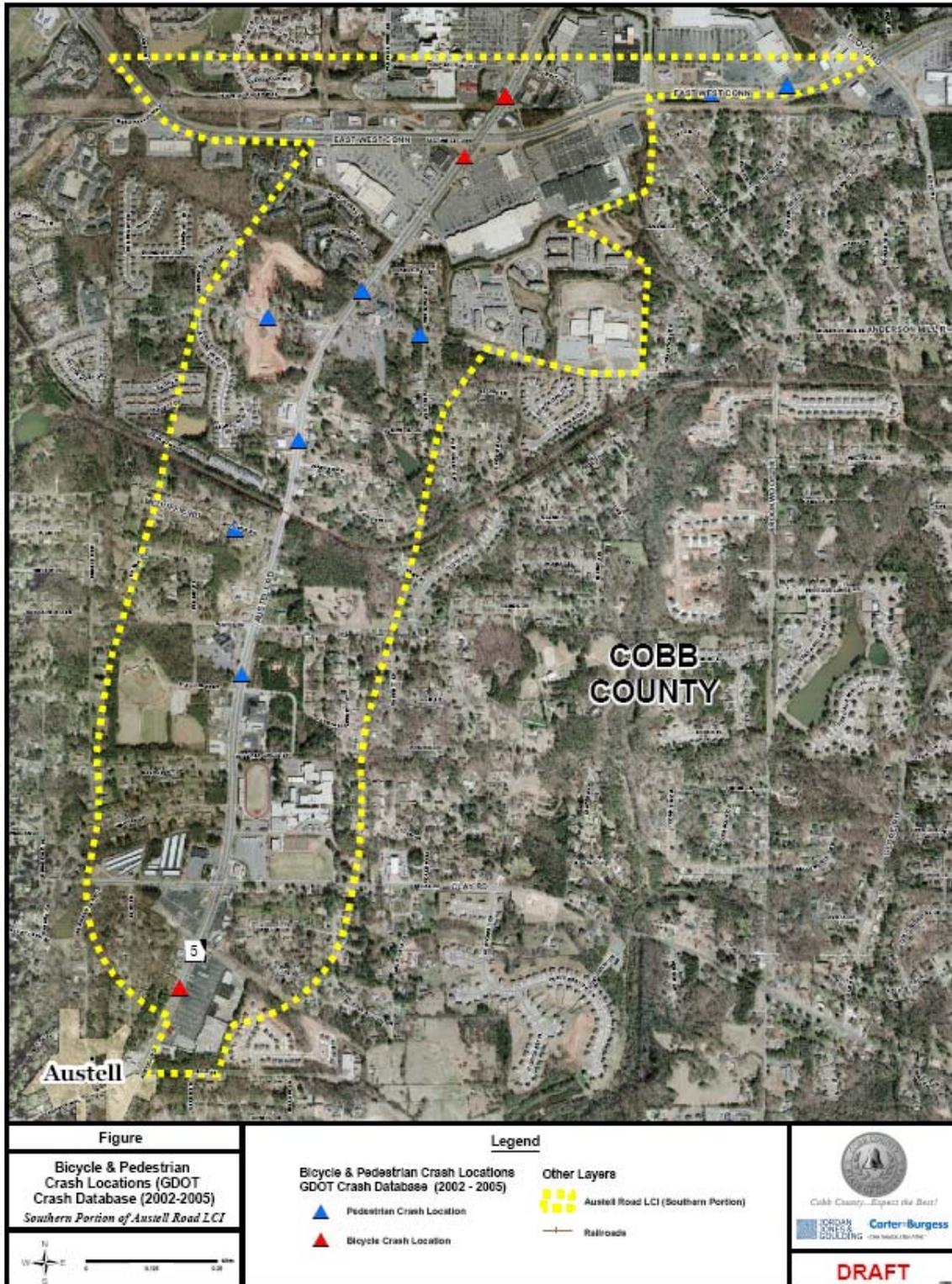


Figure III-13: Bicycle & Pedestrian Accident Locations S. Austell Road Study Area



IV. Analysis of the Future

A. Socioeconomic Change and Real Estate Opportunities

There is market support for a variety of development opportunities in the Austell Road LCI study area. The area offers a good location within metro Atlanta and is a reasonable distance to large employment centers in Marietta and the Cumberland/Galleria area. The area's access and traffic volume along the East-West Connector and Austell Road are attractive attributes for retail development while WellStar Cobb hospital is a primary economic driver for the area. The study area is within a trade area that is expected to grow in population and employment, in turn generating a demand for real estate. The following summary of anticipated socioeconomic change and real estate opportunities draws heavily on the Austell Road LCI Market Analysis, submitted to Cobb County in January 2007 and completed by Ackerman & Company, a member of the consultant team.

1. Market Opportunities

New household formation is an important demand indicator for residential and commercial uses. According to the housing market analysis, 1,031 new households are projected for the LCI trade area during the next 5 years. Generally the population is expected to get older and wealthier. Approximately 900 new householders (92%) will earn in excess of \$75,000. These households can afford house prices in excess of \$250,000, a price range that is somewhat lacking in the current market. Over 1,500 new householders are expected to be retirees aged 45 years and older, which may indicate an emerging preference for downsized homes. This includes seniors (age 65 and older) who represent nearly half of new householders and who also offer good incomes to support new residential development that meets their needs. Younger households (aged 25 – 44) that tend to be in their child-rearing years are projected to experience a significant decline. However the youngest householders (under 25 years) are forecasted to add 153 households; the challenge is to keep them in the community on a longer-term basis.

a. Residential Market Opportunities

There are many trends affecting today's residential market that should be considered in the Austell Road LCI study area:

- Seniors and emerging seniors do not want to live in "senior" specific developments. They want walkable communities, single-level living, and other design elements that take their safety and accessibility into consideration. Developments with low maintenance options will be particularly attractive to this population.
- Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) provide an alternative to the traditional residential subdivision. TND communities have enjoyed growing popularity and success throughout the southeastern United States. While this was considered a new phenomenon 10 years ago, there are numerous examples of successful TND communities throughout the Atlanta metro area and in Cobb County. While not for everyone, they offer walkable streets, neighborhood parks and gathering areas, with individual lots being much smaller than historically seen in the

suburbs. These developments can be exceptionally successful when they are developed with a retail element or proximity to retail development.

- “Mini” mansions can be developed as part of TND developments. These mini-mansions are developed to house four living units. Similar to quad developments of the past, these newer versions fit well visually within single-family neighborhoods.
- As America’s first-tier suburbs are declining, there is a growing awareness of elements that can promote sustainability in development. These include the use of quality materials for all housing price points, design that encourages a sense of community and ownership – not only of one’s “lot and house” but of the surrounding community – and diversity of housing choices to foster multi-generational communities.
- Low-density development remains desirable for a sector of the population and should continue to be provided and located away from commercial and retail nodes.

Considering the trends and projections that show households in the study area are expected to become older, wealthier and more diverse in the next five years, a number of housing opportunities have been identified for the study area. During the short term (the next five years) demand will be predominantly for “for sale” housing, including senior housing. Two types of housing products are specifically attractive for this market: higher density housing and mixed-use development. A variety of higher-density concepts – neo-traditional developments, zero-lot-line/cluster homes, town houses and condominiums – would have market appeal to a number of variety of market segments, including young couples and families as well as empty nesters and retirees. There are opportunities to develop these types of projects on vacant tracts and/or redevelopment sites throughout the study area. The market would also support at least one group housing project geared towards seniors, such as an assisted living facility.

In the next five years the market area will support at least one significant mixed-use residential/commercial project. This type of project is ideally suited on the site(s) of older, underperforming shopping centers located along the corridor, such as the former Target center, Heritage Hills, or Austell Plaza. A portion of the project would consist of ground-level retail or office space with townhouses or condominium units developed above and behind the retail space. Other commercial and higher-density residential uses, including single-family units, could also be part of the mix. There does not appear to be an opportunity for additional rental housing in the study area in the short term; however, the demand for traditional high-density apartments is expected to resume in the long term.

b. Commercial Market Opportunities

A retail-gap analysis was performed for the Austell Road trade area based on the market analysis. This type of analysis provides an indication of supply-demand equilibrium based on retail sales. There is a demand for \$82.2 million, but this is primarily in the area of motor vehicles, parts and dealers, which are not likely to locate in West Cobb given their current Cobb market concentrations in Marietta and

Kennesaw/Town Center. Positive gaps are also seen in the areas of furniture, electronics, building materials and garden equipment, as well as food service and drinking venues. These positive gaps represent opportunities for future retail development in the LCI study area.

Retail and office demand is derived by residents and employees in the trade area. Income is also an important factor. During the next 5 years, the trade area is expected to add more than 3,000 new residents and 1,000 new households. Income is also expected to grow with the average household earning approximately \$67,300 in 2011. Additionally, the trade area has more than 1,500 business establishments with total employment exceeding 17,000, three-quarters of which are in the retail trade and service sectors. Although employment forecasts for the trade area are not available from private data sources (i.e. Claritas), it is expected that employment in the area will grow by at least 900 to 1,000 new jobs in the next 5 years, assuming a nominal growth rate in the 1.0% range.

Retail is also driven by tenant location decisions, whether there is market support or not. Types of tenants notably missing from the market area include sporting goods, entertainment, housewares and electronics. All of these tenants might include such brands as Dick's Sporting Goods, The Sports Authority, Dave & Buster's, Barnes & Noble, Bed Bath & Beyond, Linens & Things, Best Buy, Circuit City and H.H. Gregg. The market could also support additional mid-priced, full-service restaurants, including Applebee's, Bahama Breeze, Buffalo's, Chipotle Grill, Gordon Biersch Brewery, Jock's & Jill's, Ryan's Steakhouse, Ruby Tuesday and Smoke Bones.

Several older or abandoned shopping centers along the Austell Road Corridor should be targeted for redevelopment, as shown in **Table IV-1**. These older shopping centers should be targeted for mixed-use development that would include residential as well as commercial uses. The net effect is a smaller amount of commercial space in the short-term, but more households to support the existing and future commercial space. The amount of new commercial space to be developed would depend on the ability to draw anchor tenants, but the market should support at least one-third to half of the space removed from the market in new construction and/or redevelopment (177,281 to 265,921 square feet).

Table IV-1: Shopping Centers with Redevelopment Potential

Project	Acres	Year Built	Sq. Ft.	Occupancy Rate	Anchor Tenants
Austell Plaza	11.84	1992	120,000	91.6%	Big Lots, Dollar General, Citi Trends
Austell Floyd Plaza	3.79	1969	35,260	100.0%	Fred's, Ocean Fish Market, U Haul
Heritage Hills	21.60	1990	226,583	97.4%	Food Depot, Hobby Lobby, Dollar Tree
Former Target S/C	10.21	N/A	150,000	0.0%	Vacant
TOTAL	47.44		531,843		

Source: Ackerman/JJG

Investment in significant new office development in the LCI study area warrants some caution. Market conditions are currently weak and there is a lack of executive-level housing to support a significant amount of office demand. The office market will continue to focus on medical rather than conventional space, now and in the foreseeable future, because the primary office driver is WellStar Cobb Hospital. However, medical market specialists advise that there is not a lot of pent-up demand for medical office space in the market area, despite the high occupancy rate. Since nearly all the newer space on the market is for lease, there may be a short-term opportunity for Williamsburg-style office condominiums geared toward small medical and professional service tenants, with individual units ranging in size from 1,200 to 2,400 square feet. During the next five years, there should be demand to support the recent construction pace of approximately 10,000 to 15,000 square feet of new office development per year, including both single-tenant and multi-tenant options.

The market analysis prepared by Ackerman & Company also identified the need for another type of commercial use: hotels. The market area's first hotel, a Holiday Inn Express located on the East-West Connector just west of the LCI study area, reportedly chose this location due to potential demand generated by the hospital. During the next 5 years, there could be an opportunity for another mid-priced, limited services 80–100 room hotel. Potential brands include Hampton Inn and Ramada Limited, among others.

2. Projected Change in Housing, Population and Employment

Table IV–2 provides a summary of the change in population, housing and employment for the Austell Road LCI study area that can be expected with implementation of this study. Recommendations for the next five years (short-term) and through 2031 (long term) are provided.

Table IV-2: Projection of Future Population, Housing and Employment

	Current 2006	5 Years 2011	10 Years 2016	15 Years 2021	20 years 2026	25 years 2031	Annual Avg./Yr.
Population	7,625	8,669	9,713	10,777	11,782	12,693	202.7
Population in Group Quarters	421	477	534	593	648	698	11.1
Population in Households	7,204	8,192	9,179	10,184	11,134	11,995	191.6
Households (Occupied Housing Units)	2,722	3,151	3,809	4,311	4,809	5,289	102.7
Persons per Household	2.65	2.60	2.55	2.50	2.45	2.40	---
Single Family Units	1,761	2,017	2,400	2,673	2,934	3,173	56.5
% Single- Family Units	65.0	64.0	63.0	62.0	61.0	60.0	---
Multi-Family Units	960	1,134	1,409	1,638	1,876	2,115	46.2
% Multi- Family Units	35.0%	36.0%	37.0%	38.0%	39.0%	40.0%	---
Employment	7,043	7,221	7,684	8,380	9,139	9,967	117.0
Est. Sq. Ft. of Non- Residential Development (400 SF pre employee)	2,890,000	2,888,338	3,073,429	3,351,932	3,655,673	3,986,937	43,878

Sources: Claritas (2006) and Ackerman/JJG (Projections)

Employment is expected to grow slowly in the short term (2006-2011) as commercial sites that have been losing tenants are gradually identified for redevelopment, demolished, and rebuilt. However, in the long term the LCI study area is anticipated to have a healthy increase in employment (+ 2,924 jobs by 2031) due to the influence of the encompassing trade area and the continued push of development to the west of Atlanta.

The redevelopment of declining and vacant retail sites into mixed-use projects and additional residential development on limited greenfield sites will add a number of housing units to the LCI study area in the short (5-year) and mid (10-year) term; 429 new units are expected by 2011 and an additional 658 units are anticipated by 2016. After the identified catalyst sites are redeveloped, the addition of housing will taper

off due the increasing build-out of the study area. An additional 1,480 units are expected between 2016 and 2031, resulting in a total gain of over 2,500 units.

New housing units, especially housing products designed appropriately for the growing senior population and vibrant mixed-use centers, will attract residents to the LCI study area. A population increase of 1,044 residents is expected by 2011 and the area will add a total of over 5,000 new residents from 2006 to 2031.

3. Jobs-Housing Match

Jobs-housing balance compares the available housing and available jobs within a community. When jobs and housing are co-located and matched in terms of employment mix and cost-of-housing in an area, workers have the opportunity to drive shorter distances and reduce vehicle miles traveled, alleviating traffic congestion. Additionally, combining a compatible mix of employment and housing can provide the opportunity for some employees to walk or bike to work. It also increases the effectiveness of local transit service. **Table IV-5** provides a projection of the jobs-to-housing ratio for the Austell Road LCI study area.

Ideal jobs-to-housing ratios will vary from community to community depending on the workforce participation of residents; however, a range from 1.3:1 to 1.7:1 generally implies balance. This range is based on an average of 1.5 workers per household since many households have 2 members in the workforce while others have none. When the current ratio of jobs-to-housing in the LCI study area is compared to the standard range it becomes apparent that the Austell Road Corridor is currently skewed towards the employment side of the equation, but is expected to become more balanced in the next 25 years.

The current “jobs-heavy” mix is partially due to the location of Cobb WellStar Hospital in the corridor, but it is also impacted by the high ratio of retail space per resident. The recommended redevelopment of a number of existing retail centers into mixed-use centers will help bring the corridor into balance, as indicated by the decreasing ratio shown in **Table IV-3**. Housing that is brought into the community should be diverse, providing both moderately priced units appropriate for young families and retail and health service workers, and higher-end residences to house doctors working at the hospital.

Table IV-3: Projection of Jobs-Housing Balance

	Current 2006	5 Years 2011	10 Years 2016	15 Years 2021	20 Years 2026	25 Years 2031
Job-Housing Balance	2.59	2.29	2.02	1.94	1.90	1.88

Source: Claritas (92006) and Ackerman/JJG

4. Social Issues

There are a number of social issues that have also had an impact on the Austell Road Corridor and must be addressed for revitalization efforts to be successful. In the course of this study crime was continuously cited as a reason for the corridor's decline. There is some crime along the corridor, mostly confined to the southern end of the study area. According to local police, most crimes are burglary and property crimes rather than person-to-person. The average age of perpetrators is between 14 and 17. Additionally, the police have confirmed that there is gang activity in the area, which has been the source of graffiti in the corridor. The presence of gangs combined with the fact that high-school aged children are committing most crimes in the corridor suggests that there is a lack of activities to engage community youth. By including additional spaces for recreation centers (such as Boys and Girls clubs or a YMCA branch that could cater to teens) and parks in the future development plan for the corridor, the community is taking a step towards addressing this issue. However, police presence in the corridor will also be paramount to continuing the recent decline in crime. The Cobb County Police Crime Suppression Unit that is in place should be continued, and the Quality of Life Unit should be continually called upon to address graffiti and property code violations.

The poor performance of local schools is another factor contributing to perception of decline in the Austell Road area (based on Georgia High School Graduation Writing Test and Georgia High School Graduation Test scores, and average yearly progress status). This situation is exacerbated by the fact that developers have been building homes in the same price range (mid- to high-\$100s) for the past decade, stymieing improvement. New households with school-aged children are unlikely to move into the area due to school performance and the lack of housing appropriate for growing families, and local households with children reaching school age are likely to move away from the corridor because there are few opportunities to upgrade their housing, and better schools can be found elsewhere in Cobb County.

Without young families staying or moving into the area, the Austell Road Corridor has grayed. In 2006 the median age of study area residents was 35.7 and 15.4% of households were headed by persons over 65; by 2011, 17.1% of households are anticipated to be over 65. The high percentage of senior households in the area presents other social issues. Some seniors remain in their homes, rather than moving to retirement communities, as they age. This decision may be based on a desire for independence and/or a lack of means. However, living on a fixed income may prevent these households from making necessary repairs or conducting routine maintenance on their homes, adding to the rundown look of area neighborhoods. Increasing the availability of a variety of housing choices appropriate for seniors and ensuring that these units are designed appropriately and affordable are two goals included in the plan for the corridor.

Additionally, plans to encourage the development of higher-end homes in the corridor will help balance the area's demographics by creating opportunities for middle- and

upper-income families with children to reside in the corridor. If these families can be attracted to the area, the schools may improve and turnover in enrollment will decrease.

5. Mixed-Income Housing

The Austell Road housing market will continue to support middle-income housing, currently priced in the \$200,000s, which is generally affordable to householders earning at least \$50,000 annually. This price point has been successfully developed in the area in a variety of product types, ranging from traditional single-family homes to higher-density townhouses and ranch condominiums. As previously mentioned, there is potential to push the market on the upper end, with houses priced from the \$300,000s, to create a more well-rounded community. The majority of new householders projected for the market area will earn in excess of \$75,000 and they can afford homes in the higher price point. Conversely it is important to maintain housing affordability in the community. Although there is abundant affordable housing in both the LCI study area and the trade area, many affordable units are of older stock. Development of new affordable housing should be encouraged to create a well-balanced community. There is also a market need for market-rate and affordable senior housing in the form of assisted living facilities and independent living apartments. These projects could be developed in a mixed-income concept.

Table IV-4: Assessment of Housing Affordability

Annual Household Income	Maximum Annual Income	Max. Monthly Income for Housing (30%)	Equivalent House Price*
Less than \$15,000	\$15,000	\$375	\$59,332
\$15,000-24,999	\$25,000	\$625	\$98,887
\$25,000-34,999	\$35,000	\$875	\$138,441
\$35,000-49,999	\$50,000	\$1,250	\$97,773
\$50,000-74,999	\$75,000	\$1,875	\$296,660
\$75,000-99,999	\$100,000	\$2,500	\$395,546
\$100,000-149,999	\$150,000	\$3,750	\$593,319
\$150,000-249,999	\$250,000	\$6,250	\$998,866
\$250,000-499,999	\$500,000	\$12,500	\$1,977,731
Average Household Income – LCI Study Area			
2006	\$56,151	\$1,404	\$222,103
Average Household Income – Trade Area			
2006	\$63,929	\$1,598	\$252,869
<i>Sources: Claritas (Household Income) and Ackerman/JJG</i>			
<i>* Based on a 95% loan at 7% interest for 30 years.</i>			

B. Future Transportation Issues and Performance

1. Roadway System 2030 Baseline Characteristics

a. Planned and Programmed Roadway Improvements

There are two capacity or new roadway improvements planned within the study area through 2030. They are:

Roadway/Intersection Improvement	From/To	Source of Funds	Status
Callaway Road (Widen to 3 lanes)	Austell Road to Powder Springs Road	SPLOST	Begin Engineering October 2008 with Construction July 2011
Mulkey Road Connector (New 2 lane road)	Mulkey Road to East-West Connector	SPLOST	Design Complete – Construction Summer 2007

In addition to these improvements, there are several intersection improvements (in P&E) along Austell Road that are programmed to occur through the year 2012 at the following locations:

- East-West Connector
- Callaway Road
- Milford Church Road
- Floyd Road
- Hurt Road
- Hospital South Drive
- Clay Road

A map of the proposed improvements is included in **Figure IV-1**.

b. Projected Roadway Level of Service

The projected baseline 2030 Level of Service (LOS) to measure future congestion levels in the study area was derived through the use of the ARC regional travel demand model, which bases its forecasts upon currently planned future land uses, projected levels of growth, and the completion of aforementioned planned improvements. Consistent with the analysis of existing conditions, the 2030 P.M. Peak Hour LOS was utilized to determine future levels of congestion.

The projected 2030 P.M. Peak Hour LOS for the study area roadways is provided in **Figure IV-2**. Overall, congestion levels throughout the study area are projected to increase. As shown, the major findings of this analysis include:

- The P.M. Peak Hour congestion level is projected to be LOS E along most segments of Austell Road within the study area. The exceptions include LOS

D for segments near Hurt Road and LOS F congestion levels north of Clay Road and south of the East-West Connector.

- The East-West Connector is projected to operate at LOS F west of Austell Road and at LOS D and E east of Austell Road.
- Callaway Road is projected to operate at LOS E through the study area and LOS F near Powder Springs Road.
- The segments of Hurt Road between Austell Road and Floyd Road and near Powder Springs Road are projected to operate at LOS F. The segments east of Floyd Road are projected to operate at LOS D.
- Segments of Clay Road within the study area are projected to operate at LOS D, but segments east of the study area and near Flint Hill Road are projected to operate at LOS F.
- The portion of Milford Church Road within the study area is projected to operate at LOS D west of Austell Road and LOS E east of Austell Road, but segments east of Hicks Road and near Powder Springs Road are projected to operate at LOS F.

Figure IV-1: Proposed Transportation Improvements

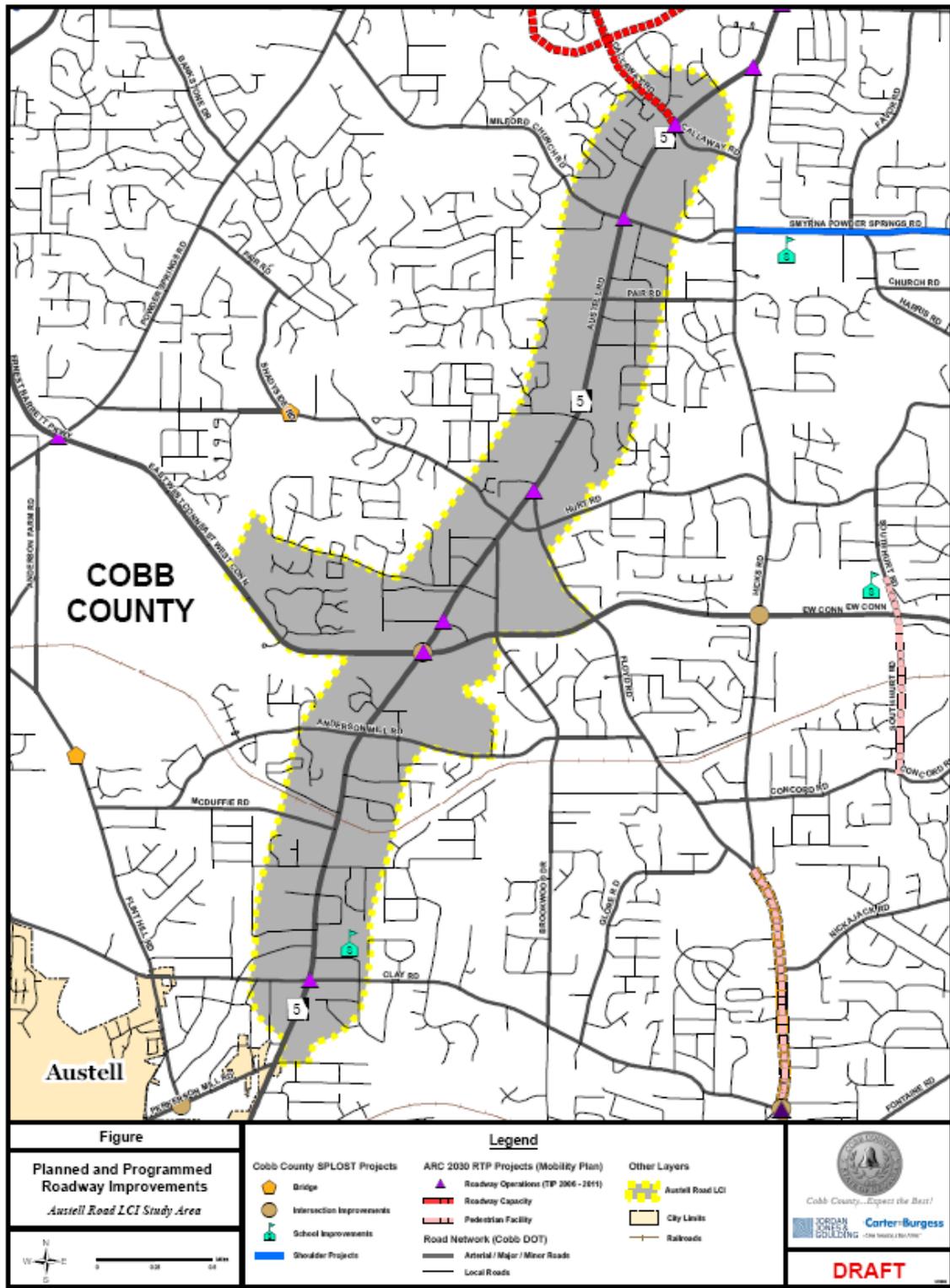
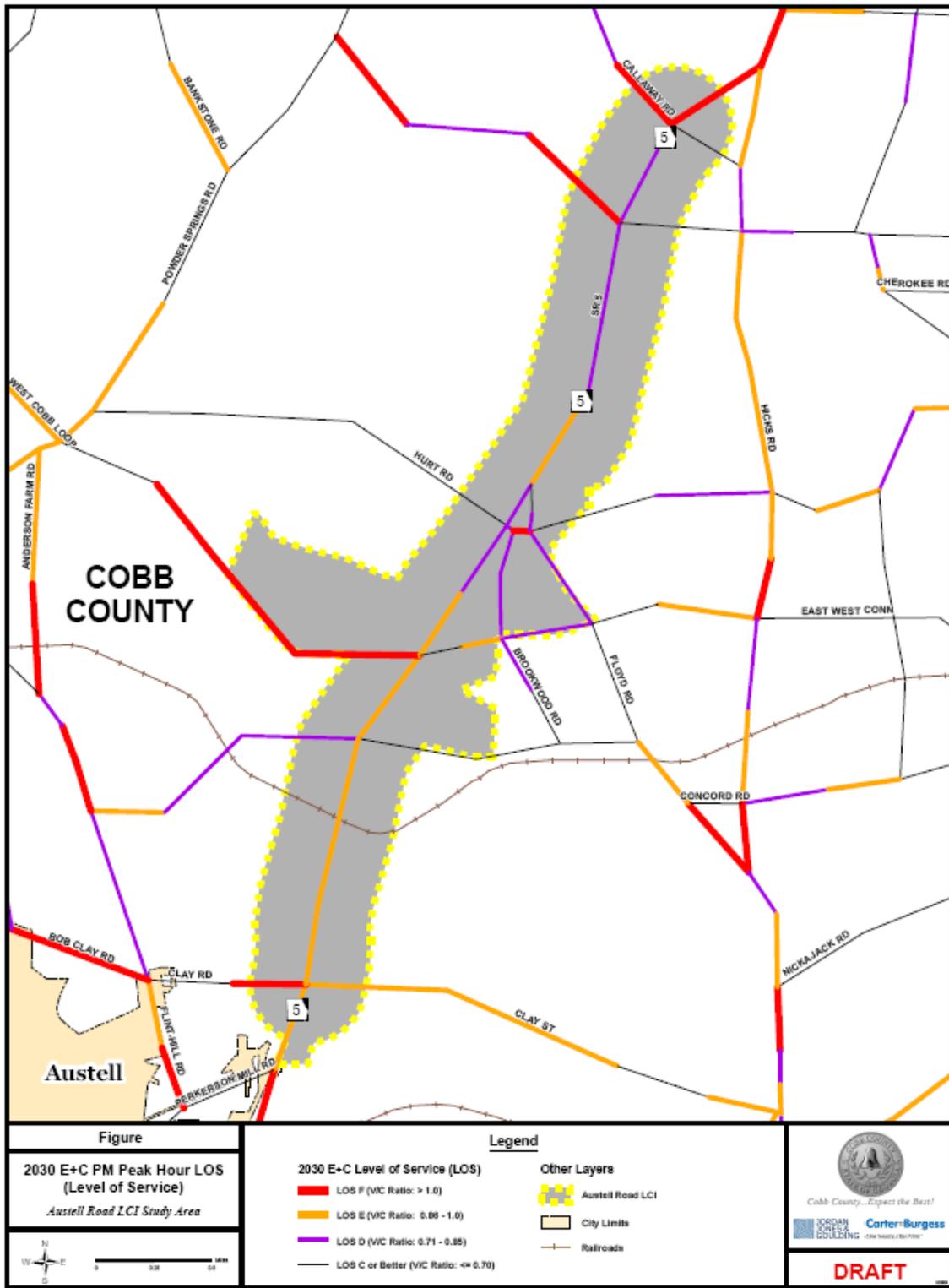


Figure IV-2: Projected 2030 Peak Hour LOS



c. Projected Intersection Level of Service

The year 2002 A.M. and P.M. peak hour volumes in the Synchro models were grown to current traffic volumes by comparing the year 2002 traffic volumes with year 2007 projected traffic volumes provided by Cobb County DOT. Expansion factors were calculated for the A.M. and P.M. peak hours to grow the traffic from year 2002 traffic volumes to current year 2007 traffic volumes. The year 2007 traffic volumes were further grown to future year 2030 traffic volumes by applying a 1.6 percent per year growth factor, as used in the Cobb Transportation Plan.

Table IV-5 lists the results of the intersection operations analysis for the future year 2030 baseline conditions. With the exception of Austell Road at Seayes Road, Brookwood Drive at Mulkey Road, Floyd Road at Hurt Road, Austell Road at Austell Plaza, and Austell Road at Amy Lane, all intersections will operate at overall LOS E or F during at least one of the peak hours, with poorer functionality during the P.M. peak hour.

Table IV-5: Intersection Operations Analysis: 2030 Baseline Conditions

Intersection	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)
Austell Rd @ Callaway Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Milford Church Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Pair Rd.	F	> 80	E	71.4
Austell Rd @ Amy Ln.	D	53.7	D	50.0
Austell Rd @ Hurt Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Mulkey Rd.	D	37.3	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Hospital South Dr.	C	20.5	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ East West Conn.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ E W Commons	D	52.9	E	78.5
Austell Rd @ Anderson Mill Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Seayes Rd.	B	11.2	B	12.4
Austell Rd @ Clay Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Austell Plaza	A	6.3	C	27.8
Austell Rd @ Peakerson Mill Rd.	F	> 80	E	71.2
East West Conn @ Tramore Pk.	E	77.2	F	> 80
East West Conn @ Champion Dr.	F	> 80	F	> 80
East West Conn @ IHOP	E	59.6	F	> 80
East West Conn @ Lowe's	F	> 80	D	50.4
East West Conn @ Brookwood Dr.	E	75.2	F	> 80
East West Conn @ Floyd Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Brookwood Dr @ Mulkey Rd.	A	5.2	A	7.6
Floyd Rd. @ Hurt Rd.	C	26.7	C	32.2

2. Transit System 2030 Baseline Characteristics

a. Planned Enhancements

The CCT Transit Planning Study was completed in May 2006 and recommends the following potential transit enhancements that would impact CCT route service within the study area:

- Route 30 – Increase weekday peak-hour frequency from 30 to 15 minutes, increase Saturday frequency from 60 to 30 minutes, extend service hours from 9:55 P.M. to 12:30 A.M., and extend off-peak service to Cobb County Recreation Center on Six Flags Drive.
- Route 70 – Extend from South Atlanta Road via East-West Connector to WellStar Cobb Hospital, extend service to Marietta Transfer Center, and eliminate segment from South Atlanta Road to Holmes MARTA Station.

The study also recommended new weekday demand response service for northwest and southwest Cobb County. In addition, the CCT Transit Planning Study recommends extending paratransit service hours and expanding service where no service is provided. For Route 30, the study recommends extending weekday service from 9:55 P.M. to 12:30 A.M.

Cobb Community Transit and the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority recently expanded bus services from the city into unincorporated Austell (Route 475). The GRTA is investigating two park-and-ride lot locations, one at the northern end of the corridor and the other at the Floyd/Hurt Road area. Since the southern location provides better access for east-to-west movement and is located closer to retail and medical facilities, it is preferred. The GRTA express route would board passengers at the Park-and-Ride lot at Floyd and Hurt Roads. The new route is being offered in response to increased ridership along CCT Route 30.

b. Projected Ridership Demand

Ridership demand has steadily increased for both Route 30 and Route 70. Although both are experiencing increasing demand, only Route 30 boasts the second-best number of revenue hours and boarding numbers in the Cobb Community Transit system. Route 70, on the other hand, is not as successful and is being closely monitored by CCT. Weekday boarding averages for Route 30 in 2003 were 2,140 and grew to 2,567 by 2005. This was a total change of 427 riders over two years. For Route 30, Saturday's daily count in 2003 was 1,364 and two years later increased by 297 people to 1,661. The opposite can be said about Route 70. In 2003, on a weekday, the route sustained 291 people. That number did increase two years later to 312 people, a change of 21 people per weekday. On Saturdays in 2003, the number of people boarding was 81 but then increased to 133 by 2005. CCT already plans on increasing the operating time for Route 30 due to projected population increases and

nearly tapped capacity at current usage levels. Also, Route 70 was realigned in October 2006 to increase its ridership numbers and assist Route 30.

3. Bicycle and Pedestrian Characteristics

a. Planned Improvements

Planned improvements within the Austell Road LCI Corridor include improvements to the accessibility and quality of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Sidewalk gaps will be filled to impact accessibility and transit shelters will be improved to enhance quality and increase ridership. Additionally, the sidewalks in the northern portion of the corridor should be replaced or repaired to comply with ADA standards for five-foot-wide sidewalks. As part of the urban design standards and streetscape plan, transit shelters should be upgraded to conform to the character of the area and the design standards.

4. Impact of Proposed Land Use Changes on Transportation System

a. Impact on Austell Road and Adjacent Routes

Considering the future conditions under the LCI recommendations, the projected baseline future conditions for 2030 were adjusted to reflect population and employment changes that would result from the land use changes proposed in the Austell Road LCI. Consistent with the analysis of existing conditions, the 2030 P.M. Peak Hour LOS was utilized to determine future levels of congestion.

The projected 2030 P.M. Peak Hour LOS for the LCI area's roadways is provided in **Figure IV-3**. Overall, congestion levels throughout the study area are projected to be higher with the proposed land use changes recommended in the study than under future baseline conditions. As shown, the major findings of this analysis include:

- The P.M. peak hour congestion level is projected to be LOS F along most segments of Austell Road within the study area. The exceptions include LOS E projections for segments near Hurt Road and Callaway Road. These levels represent slightly more congested levels than under future baseline conditions.
- The East-West Connector is projected to operate under very similar conditions to the projections under baseline conditions, with LOS F west of Austell Road and LOS D and E east of Austell Road.
- Callaway Road is projected to operate at LOS D and E throughout its stretch within the study area.
- The segments of Hurt Road between Austell Road and Floyd Road and near Powder Springs Road are projected to operate at LOS F. The segments east of Floyd Road are projected to operate at LOS D.
- Congestion levels on segments of Clay Road within the study area are projected to worsen with the proposed land use changes. Clay Road will operate at LOS F throughout the study area, with the exception of the segment just east of Austell Road, which is projected to operate at LOS E. The segment near Flint Hill Road is projected to operate at LOS D.

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- All segments of Milford Church Road within the study area are projected to operate at LOS F.

b. Land Use / Transportation System Efficiency

Using the population and employment data for existing year 2000, year 2030 baseline conditions, and the adjusted data pursuant to the land use changes recommended as part of the Austell Road LCI, a growth rate was calculated for the 30-year period for projected population and employment increases. Population and employment in the study area is expected to increase at a rate of 2.3 percent per year. As previously discussed, traffic volumes are expected to increase at a rate of 1.6 percent per year during the corresponding period. A generalized traffic-to-population-and-employment ratio was calculated to be 0.77, i.e. for every 1 percent increase in population and employment, traffic volumes will increase by 0.77 percent. A comparison of the year 2030 baseline and land use scenario population and employment data showed that the updated scenario was 9.5 percent higher. Applying the generalized ratio of 0.77, the traffic volumes would be 7 percent higher. The year 2030 baseline A.M. and P.M. Peak Hour volumes in the Synchro models were expanded by a factor of 1.07 to develop the 2030 conditions under the recommended land uses for the Austell Road LCI.

The relationship of transportation to land use is essential to improving the mobility along the Austell Road Corridor. To make the transportation system more efficient requires land use changes that reduce trip generation and increase alternative modes of transportation. Another problem with the current state of the Austell Road Corridor is connectivity. Through land use changes, a grid pattern of interconnecting avenues, boulevards and streets will provide greater mobility and increased circulation. This is accomplished through greater mixed-use development, senior housing with services built into the neighborhood development, and convenient transit stops and routes.

Table IV-6 displays the results of the intersection operations analysis for the future year 2030 conditions under the Austell Road LCI land uses. As is shown, with the exception of Austell Road at Seayes Road, Brookwood Drive at Mulkey Road, and Austell Road at Austell Plaza, all intersections will operate at overall LOS E or worse during at least one of the peak hours. This is the same as the results of the Synchro results from the 2030 baseline conditions with the following exceptions:

- Austell Road and Amy Lane: LOS worsens from LOS E to LOS F during both peak periods.
- Austell Road and East-West Commons: A.M. Peak Hour of LOS D and P.M. peak hour LOS E worsens to LOS F during both Peak Hours.
- Austell Road at Perkerson Mill Road: P.M. Peak Hour LOS E worsens to LOS F.
- East-West Connector at Tramore Park: A.M. Peak Hour LOS E worsens to LOS F.
- East-West Connector at IHOP entrance: A.M. Peak Hour LOS E worsens to LOS F.

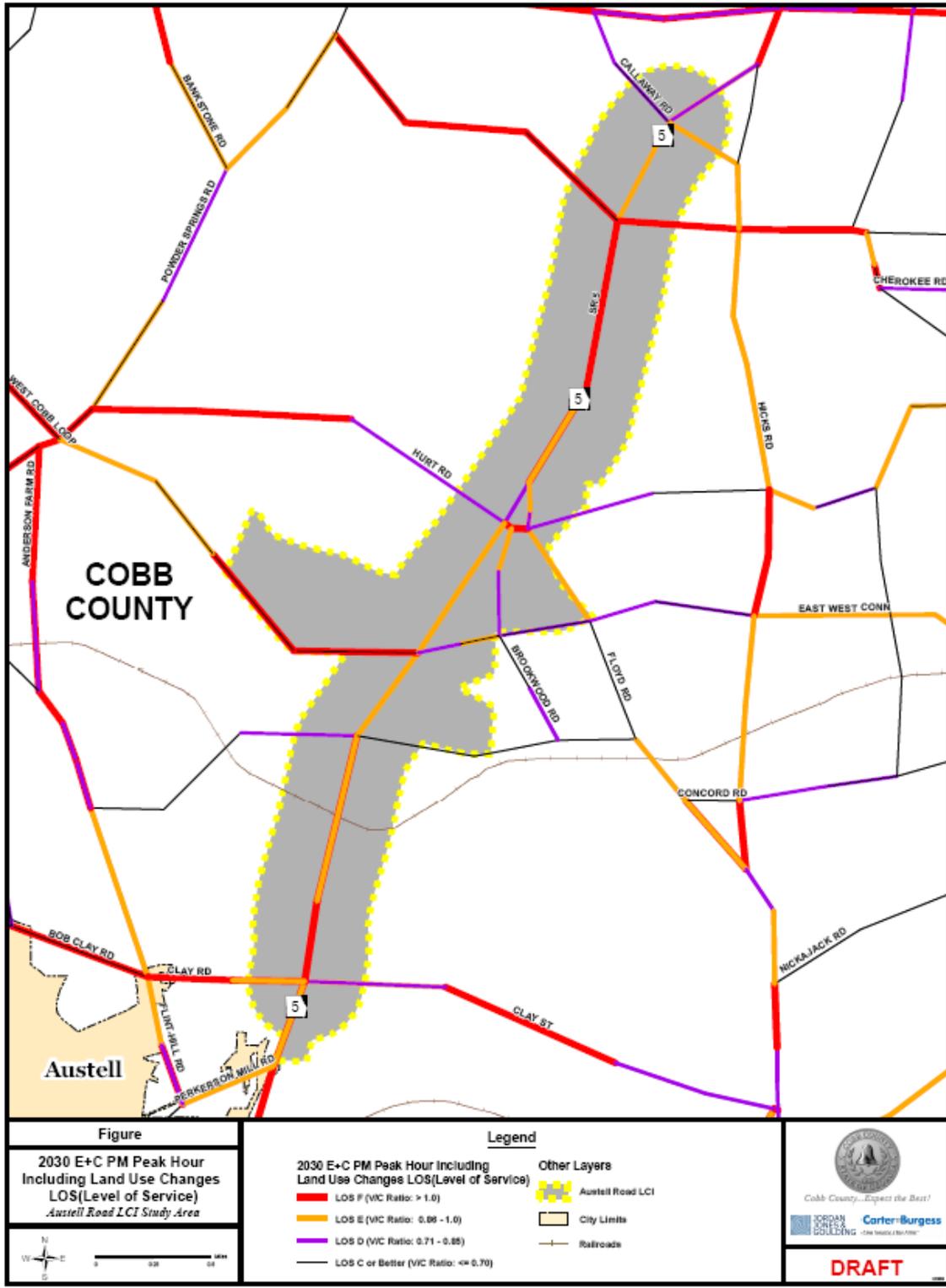
- East-West Connector at Lowe’s entrance: P.M. Peak Hour LOS D worsens to LOS E.
- East-West Connector at Brookwood Drive: A.M. Peak Hour LOS E worsens to LOS F.
- Floyd Road and Hurt Road: P.M. Peak Hour LOS C worsens to LOS E.

The proposed transportation improvements are designed to relieve congestion along the Austell Road Corridor. As the area redevelops, a transportation grid network should be built into all new developments, and a network of interconnecting streets and roads should be designed as an interconnecting system of roads and streets looping around the East-West Connector/Austell Road area.

Table IV-6: Future Year 2030 Levels of Service With Redevelopment

Intersection	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)
Austell Rd @ Callaway Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Milford Church Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Pair Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Amy Ln.	E	74.5	E	71.0
Austell Rd @ Hurt Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Mulkey Rd.	D	40.7	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Hospital South Dr.	C	24.2	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ East West Conn.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ E W Commons	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Anderson Mill Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Seayes Rd.	B	13.0	B	18.3
Austell Rd @ Clay Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Austell Rd @ Austell Plaza	A	7.2	C	33.5
Austell Rd @ Peakerson Mill Rd.	F	> 80	E	71.2
East West Conn @ Tramore Pk.	F	> 80	F	> 80
East West Conn @ Champion Dr.	F	> 80	F	> 80
East West Conn @ IHOP	F	> 80	F	> 80
East West Conn @ Lowe’s	F	> 80	E	75.3
East West Conn @ Brookwood Dr.	F	> 80	F	> 80
East West Conn @ Floyd Rd.	F	> 80	F	> 80
Brookwood Dr @ Mulkey Rd.	A	5.3	A	8.3
Floyd Rd. @ Hurt Rd.	C	31.3	E	62.5

Figure IV-3: Projected Peak Hour LOS with Recommended Land Use Changes



c. Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a term applied to a broad range of strategies that are primarily intended to reduce and reshape demand of the transportation system. TDM promotes increased efficiency of the transportation systems and resources by promoting and providing a range of local or regional travel-related choices to influence individual travel behavior by mode, time, frequency, trip length, cost or route. TDM means demand-side strategies (as opposed to supply-side strategies such as new lane construction) that are intended to affect how, if and when the transportation system is used.

Ridesharing is a TDM tool that includes carpools, vanpools, ride matching services and other techniques for reducing commutes to work or school. Private companies, non-profit groups or individuals can offer ridesharing options.

Employer-based programs are among the most effective transportation demand management (TDM) programs, since the program can be tailored to the commute needs of employees at their specific place of work.

Employers can offer opportunities for their workers to avoid congestion through options such as alternative work schedules or telecommuting. Employers are also in a position to influence employee commute choices with incentives (bus passes) or through the removal of disincentives that encourage drive-alone commutes (such as the provision of unlimited parking). Numerous studies have shown that parking fees, telecommuting, flexible work hour provisions (including compressed work weeks), guaranteed-ride-home programs, and incentives for alternate modes of transportation all can be effective in reducing SOVs. In addition, programs that encourage carpooling and vanpooling have proven successful in a number of localities, particularly if vans are provided.

Traffic incidents and road construction projects can create lengthy traffic delays. Advance planning, mitigation programs and effective public notice can ease congestion and allow motorists to choose alternate routes. To reduce the impacts of incidents on safety and congestion, traffic incident management is the process of coordinating the resources of a number of different agencies and private companies to detect, respond to, and clear traffic incidents as quickly as possible while protecting the safety of on-scene responders and the traveling public.

V. Recommendations & Implementation Strategies

A. *Transportation System Improvements*

1. **Traffic Operations Improvements**

Included in traffic operations improvements are intersection improvements. For the best potential effect on congestion, improvements on 14 intersections will need to be completed. These intersections, listed from south to north, are as follows and can be seen in **Figure V-1**:

1. Brookwood Drive and Veterans Memorial Highway (as a result of the Brookwood Drive extension recommended below. Note: This improvement is beyond the boundaries of the study area.)
2. Clay Road and Extended Hemlock Drive west of Austell Road
3. Clay Road and Seayes Road
4. Austell Road and Evergreen Drive
5. Austell Road and Seayes Road
6. Austell Road and McDuffie Road
7. Austell Road and Elmwood Road
8. Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road
9. Anderson Mill Road and the new Sanders Elementary Road
10. Austell Road and Lincoln Crest Drive
11. East-West Connector and Austell Road
12. East-West Connector and Floyd Road
13. Austell Road and the new WellStar Cobb Hospital Entrance located north of South Hospital Way and south of Mulkey Road
14. East-West Connector and Mulkey Road Extension
15. Austell Road and Crest Ridge Drive

2. **Connectivity and Road Network Improvements**

Along with the intersection improvements, new road creation is key to creating better connectivity throughout the corridor and helping ease congestion volumes. The network of new roads and the extension of existing roads are proposed to form an interconnected loop around the heavily congested portion of Austell Road just north of and just south of its intersection with the East-West Connector. This will increase mobility and reduce congestion in the corridor. Roads proposed to be improved are listed from south to north below and can be viewed in **Figure V-1**:

1. Brookwood Drive Extension.
2. Hemlock Drive Extension.
3. Parallel access road on the north side of Clay Road to serve the high school queue.
4. Hicks Road improvements.
5. Creation of road supporting Sanders Elementary.

-
6. Extension of Lincoln Crest Drive from Austell Road to East-West Connector, in line with the new Mulkey Road Connector.
 7. Mulkey Road extensions and connectors.
 8. New WellStar Cobb Hospital entrance.
 9. Hurt Road re-alignment.
 10. Floyd Road re-alignment.

3. Access Management Plan (AMP)

a. Project Overview

Austell Road functions as a principal urban arterial located in southwestern Cobb County, west of Interstate 75 and north of Interstate 20. The Austell Road LCI Corridor is approximately four miles long, ½ mile wide, and centered along Austell Road, located between the cities of Marietta and Austell. The LCI corridor runs from Leila Street in the south to Callaway Road in the north. Within the corridor's boundaries are an abundance of mixed-use areas supported by four main arterials and several major and minor collectors. The arterial roads are Clay Road, Austell Road, the East-West Connector and Floyd Road. Major collector roads include Concord Road, Hicks Road, Hurt Road, Milford Church Road and Callaway Road west of Austell Road. Minor Collectors are McDuffie Road, Anderson Mill Road, Pair Road and Callaway Road east of Austell Road.

b. Project Approach

A proactive Access Management Plan is needed to protect the corridor's ability to serve through and local traffic. The many problems facing the corridor today and in the future must be addressed. Consideration should be paid to turn lanes and signals, median breaks, curb placement, sidewalk placement, driveway placement and collector depth and width. With analysis followed by corrective implementation, the corresponding decreases in access problems will be ample enough to stem the growing congestion problem.

c. Land Use Issues Affecting Access Management

Current land use in the corridor consists of a mix of commercial, single-family and multi-family uses. The commercial land uses are concentrated in the center of the corridor in mostly strip commercial sites along Austell Road. Single-family housing is situated in clusters in the north and the south of the corridor, while multi-family uses are grouped behind the commercial area in the center of the corridor. The future land use map shows extensive re-development, both of the central core and along Austell Road, from its current state into Community Activity Centers. In the north and the south, new development plans of low-density residential designs are dominant.

d. Geometric Characteristics

There are 13 signalized intersections along the 4-mile segment of Austell Road. Nine of these intersections are scheduled to be improved due to low LOS and safety problems. Of those intersections, the six within the LCI corridor are:

1. Austell Road/East-West Connector

-
2. Austell Road / Clay Road
 3. Austell Road / Hospital South Drive
 4. Austell Road / Hurt Road
 5. Austell Road / Floyd Road
 6. Austell Road / Milford Church Road
 7. Austell Road / Callaway Road

Along with the 13 intersections, countless driveways extend northbound and southbound along the corridor. As stated in the LCI's plan, a re-alignment of Hurt Road and Floyd Road will take place to increase connectivity within the corridor.

e. Current and Future Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Services

The current level of bicycle, pedestrian and transit services are problematic at best. The LCI corridor is supported by a hiking and bicycle trail – the Silver Comet Trail. The trail extends east-to-west across the southern part of the corridor between the East-West Connector and Clay Road. Other pedestrian walkways and bicycle trails are sporadic and spread out along the corridor and do not provide unrestricted movement. In the LCI plan, a concerted effort will take place to connect all trails and walkways to help promote a pedestrian and bicyclist environment that will be safe and comfortable. Also, street crossings at all major intersections are recommended to be redesigned with pedestrian countdown technology to assist in creating a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. Cobb County Transit (CCT) provides bus service along the corridor with two routes. Route 30 travels through the corridor along Austell Road starting at the Marietta Transfer Station and travels south to the H.E. Holmes MARTA Station. Route 70, which began operating in October 2007, provides a connection between Power Springs Road and Cumberland Mall via the East-West Connector.

f. Current and Future Traffic Operational Data and Projections

The current traffic operational data tell a story of rising traffic volumes nearing limits of capacity. The current levels of service on roads in the corridor range from LOS D to F with the majority in the LOS D range. With increasing population expected in the future for Cobb County, LOS levels are only expected to deteriorate. It is also projected that LOS E and F will dominate the corridor by 2030. Only a strong access management plan, in coordination with structural improvements within the corridor, will be able to alleviate the projected surge in traffic volumes.

g. Access Management

Access Management techniques are designed to improve operational efficiency of roadways without adding lane capacity. Managing access to and from arterials will influence the volume of congestion on collectors and arterials. The processes by which this is accomplished have in the past produced substantial improvements, while being extremely cost-effective. These processes include driveway management, median management, and access roads. Access Management is extremely applicable to the Austell Road Corridor's problems and is the focus of this study.

The Austell Road AMP provides an opportunity to delineate between different levels of access control on the arterial network, while at the same time maintaining the predominant role of Austell Road to move through traffic safely and efficiently. The types of specific guidelines that the Austell Road AMP will describe include:

Access Management Concern	Implementation
Treatment of Un-signalized Intersections	Left Turn Lanes Right Turn Lanes
Access to Arterial Roads	Corner Clearance Number of Driveways Design of Internal Subdivision Road Network Use of Medians
Access Locations	Minimum Driveway Spacing Centerline Alignments Angle of Intersection
Access Operations	Mutual Shared Driveways Design Treatments

According to the Transportation Research Board (2003), access management on major roadways helps maintain desired speeds and reduce delays, while increasing the number of access points and signals on a roadway results in increased delays. The effects of specific access management techniques on roadway capacity, summarized below from the TRB Access Management Manual, show improvements in safety and operational conditions based on a synthesis of research (not location-specific applications):

Access Management Measure	Effects
Add a continuous two-way left turn lane on arterial roadway	30% increase in roadway capacity
Add a non-traversable median on an arterial roadway	30% increase in capacity
Add left-turn bay	25% increase in capacity
Prohibition of on-street parking	30% increase in traffic flow

Source: TRB (2003)

Left Turns

The safety benefits of left-turn lanes are well documented. The reduction in crash rates resulting from installation of left-turn lanes is substantial (although right-angle crash rates vary at un-signalized intersections). Left-turn lanes also benefit highway operations by delay reductions to through-traffic.

The Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) indicates the need for left-turn lanes — where space permits when left-turn volumes exceed 100 vehicles per hour (vph) — and recommends dual left-turn lanes when volumes exceed 300 vph. Various standards also exist regarding the length of left-turn lanes. The standards are based on several factors including vehicle speed and traffic volume and are

designed to allow turning vehicles to leave the travel lane, slow down and turn, resulting in a queue at the intersection.

Right Turns

Similar design standards are used for right-turn lanes. Right-turn lanes are considered needed at new commercial entrances and at the entrances to new residential subdivisions where heavy turning volume is anticipated. Where numerous commercial or residential driveways exist in close proximity, consideration should be given to using an expanded right shoulder as a continuous turn/auxiliary lane. Care should be taken, however, to ensure that such a treatment does not create an impediment to bicycle, pedestrian or transit accommodations.

Median

The provision of a non-traversable median that separates opposing traffic effectively limits left-turns on a roadway. The selection of an appropriate median type provides for safe and fluid travel along Austell Road and other arterials. In selecting a median type, a balance is required between allowing access to adjacent properties and providing capacity for through-traffic and appropriate travel speeds.

By separating oncoming traffic, and by managing turning movements, non-traversable medians yield safer and better operated corridors. Safety data have shown that crash rates due to medians can be reduced by as much as 35 percent, since wide non-traversable medians prevent cross-over crashes, facilitate left-turns from or to a side street, and provide refuge for pedestrians crossing the street.

Signal Spacing and Timing

The spacing of signalized intersections dramatically impacts safety and traffic operations. Signal spacing controls include the frequency of signals and uniform spacing. This technique is useful in managing access in the developed and developing parts of the Austell Road Corridor, particularly where several traffic signals already exist.

Optimal spacing depends on travel speed and cycle length. Research data indicates that as speed and cycle length increases, so does desired spacing. In all cases, signal timing should be coordinated to facilitate traffic flow. Development should be carefully planned to avoid the proliferation of new traffic signals, and to ensure that minimum spacing standards are maintained. Local zoning plays a significant role in managing the intensity of development and redevelopment that will occur. As the Austell Road Corridor experiences infill and redevelopment, existing driveways and circulation patterns should be reconfigured to complement the signal system to the maximum extent. This may involve closing existing driveways, rerouting traffic to other arterials and providing inter-parcel connections.

Inter-Parcel Connection/Internal Roadway System

Inter-parcel connections for both pedestrians and motorists can limit short trips on Austell Road. These often take the form of simple driveway and sidewalk connections between commercial sites, so that traffic moving from one to the other need not access Austell Road.

Large residential and commercial developments/redevelopments can also be planned to provide a minimum number of access points on the main highway by internalizing private driveways on local subdivision streets, which in turn connect to a feeder road that has direct and full access onto the main highway. It is important to also plan for future growth of residential development by planning for interconnections of the development with adjacent (potentially undeveloped) properties. This will ensure that the best and fullest use of the existing access point on the main highway is utilized.

New commercial and large residential developments should only be allowed to have indirect access onto Austell Road or restricted right-in/right-out access, with the full access point on the side street. This should be done when a driveway is anticipated to have an adverse effect on traffic safety and operations.

h. General Purpose Capacity Expansion

Capacity expansion directly impacts congestion by the construction of additional roadway capacity. The creation of general-purpose lanes is completed on the individual road level and could be implemented within the Austell Road Corridor. Concerns of rights-of-way and current road width must be addressed before such a plan is feasible.

i. Access Management Guidelines

Access management will increase the functionality of roads within the Austell Road Corridor by servicing through and local traffic, while ensuring safe access to adjacent land. Poor access management indicators include higher than expected crash rates, excessive travel times, poor levels of service and numerous driveways located close together. These indicators are present throughout the Austell Road Corridor. Access management within the Austell Road Corridor will integrate management principles along with land use and other elements of corridor planning to resolve the current and future transportation problems and needs. Access management is implemented via development proposals, local zoning and subdivision regulations, local driveway permit processes, and by implementing specific capital improvements to roadways. Below are five benefits of access management:

1. The improvement of traffic safety and vehicular crash rates;
2. Shorter travel times and reduced travel costs;
3. Increases in capacity of roadways;
4. Enhancement of the value of private land development and improvements to access to property; and

5. Improvements to the overall aesthetics of the community.

j. Current and Future Problems and Solutions

Throughout the Austell Road Corridor there exist capacity and traffic-flow problems that will continue into the future with increasing severity unless steps are taken to increase roadway capacity and divert traffic. Current problems, if not fixed, will be amplified in the future and include the following: unnecessary median breaks; inadequate corner radius space where a collector accesses the arterials; curb placements; collector roads of inadequate width and depth; numerous driveways; absent turn lanes; and an unsafe bicycle and pedestrian environment.

Median breaks, as stated by Cobb County DOT, should generally only be provided at public road intersections or at driveways shared by businesses, and not be provided for access to individual businesses or residences along arterials. The number of median breaks along arterials should be kept to a minimum since they add conflict points and detract from safety. Raised medians fully separate opposing traffic, define where turns and crossings are allowed, and provide a safe refuge for pedestrians. Analyzing the corridor brings to light the multitude of median breaks and the problems that they help create. The Cobb County DOT guidelines on median breaks should be followed and those median breaks that do not qualify should be closed. In the future, land use designs should correspond with Cobb County DOT guidelines and businesses should share driveways if they wish to construct a median break near their business.

Another dominant problem the corridor faces is the design and placement of the entry point from collector to arterial. Some of the collector streets' entry points into the arterial are poorly designed, making the oncoming vehicle slow almost to a stop before making the entry turn. This design flaw greatly increases the vehicle crash rate because vehicles already on the arterial cannot stop in time to allow the slower entering vehicles' entry and acceleration. The solution to this problem is the redesign of collector entryways into the arterial. If collector roads are widened and the angle of intersection at the mouth is increased, then entering vehicles will be permitted to enter the arterial at a higher speed and crash rates will decrease. In the future, when designing new land uses, consideration should be given to the design and width of collector road entry points along the arterial. Not only should the entry points from collector roads onto arterials be examined and possibly redesigned, we should also analyze the "throat" length of the main collectors and how to better accommodate the large amount of traffic inflows. Implementation of adequate collector road depth and width will enhance capacity of the roadway network dramatically. Numerous driveways currently dot the corridor causing traffic congestion and safety hazards. The Georgia DOT, in its *Access Management Manual*, has many restrictions and guidelines pertaining to access management and driveways. Some of these guidelines are listed below:

- **Sight Distance:** One of the most important actions a community can take to assure that its arterials will be safe to motorists and pedestrians is to require a

safe distance for residential and non-residential development. Sight distance is the length of road visible to the driver. The safe distance for low- and medium-volume driveways should be large enough to allow vehicles on Austell Road to slow down to a reasonable speed – but not stop – to avoid a collision with vehicles exiting a driveway. The safe sight distance for high-volume driveways should be higher to allow a greater margin of safety. Ensuring that a safe driveway will be built is far easier during the development review process than after the development has been approved.

- **Minimum Distance Between Driveways:** Keeping a minimum distance between driveways along Austell Road minimizes the number of access points that a driver must monitor. This simplifies the driving task and reduces the opportunities for conflicts and crashes. Spacing requirements should be based on speed limits, the class of roadway, or the amount of traffic generated by the development, among other factors.
- **Maximum Number of Driveways per Lot:** Regulating the maximum number of driveways per property frontage limits the number of conflict points and provides drivers additional time and distance to execute their maneuvers.
- **Corner Clearances:** Establishing a minimum distance on Austell Road between a driveway and an intersection can increase the likelihood of crashes and minimize the interruptions to the flow of traffic. Inadequate clearances between driveways and intersections create many conflict points within too small an area. Ideally, corner clearances on major roadways should be the same as driveway spacing requirements.
- **Driveway Characteristics:** Guidelines for minimum turn radius, driveway width and driveway slope are important because they help the slower turning traffic move off Austell Road more quickly, and help the traffic leaving the driveway turn and enter the stream of traffic more efficiently. Throat length, the depth of the formal entrance way, varies according to the number of trips generated by the land use.

As redevelopment takes place within the Austell Road Corridor, measures should be implemented to consolidate driveways. When this is accomplished, congestion and crash rates will decrease because of less crossing traffic. Throughout the system, absent turn lanes contribute to longer travel times and increased crash rates. These turn lanes, right or left, need to be addressed and created either by signalization, striping or the construction of new lanes. The last current problem, which will continue to escalate in the future unless steps are taken to ameliorate it, is the unsafe bicycle and pedestrian environment. The only trail that supports such movement is the Silver Comet Trail and it is not functional for travel north and south. Under the LCI improvements, efforts to conjoin all pathways, sidewalks and servicing facilities will be realized. These pathways should, however, be offset from the main arterial and supporting collectors. Also, under the LCI, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly crosswalks will extend through all major intersections. This effort to promote non-vehicular travel will decrease congestion and crash rates due to the decrease in local traffic.

k. Access Management Plan Recommendations

The analysis of the Austell Road Corridor involved current and future LOS, traffic volumes, roadway capacity, crash data, circulation configurations, connectivity and land use. In addition, Cobb DOT and LCI standards were considered throughout the plan. Georgia DOT's *Access Management Manual* was not in effect when permits were granted for the current proliferation of driveways and access points in the corridor. As new development and redevelopment takes place, the strategies described in this Access Management Plan are recommended for the proper management of the Austell Road Corridor. Their implementation will improve safety for vehicles as well as pedestrians/bicyclists, maintain current speeds while decreasing travel time, improve access points and decrease conflict points, and raise connectivity throughout the system.

4. Traffic Calming

Traffic calming areas have also been identified and proposed to help decrease vehicular and pedestrian conflicts. Traffic calming could include speed humps on residential streets, such as Warren Road, and regulatory signage, recorded speed warning signs, and striping along public roads. These areas are listed below and displayed in **Figure V-1**:

- Traffic Calming on Warren Road from Clay Road to Austell Road.
- Traffic Calming along Anderson Mill Road to Sanders Elementary.

5. Transit Service Improvements

Another area of concern with the Austell Road Corridor is the Transit Facilities. A list of possibilities has been compiled to provide extended service to the corridor. With an addition to public transit volume, private vehicular traffic will decrease substantially. These improvements can be seen in **Figure V-2** and are given below:

- Possible privately-operated local shuttle with 8-10 stops that runs between the hospital, medical offices, shopping centers, pharmacies and senior facilities such as Presbyterian Village. This recommendation would further the Transportation Demand Management goals of the Austell Road LCI Study.
- Cobb Community Transit to investigate a possible new CCT route down Austell Road to Factory Shoals, Six Flags Drive, Mableton Parkway, and then to Holmes Station, as well as an extension of another segment of CCT down Floyd Road to Oakdale Road, Highlands Parkway and Cumberland Mall.
- Locate GRTA Park and Ride Lots along the corridor.
- Locate Cobb DOT Park-and-Ride lots, for buses and trails, along the corridor.

6. Pedestrian System Improvements

A need for pedestrian-focused improvements has been found throughout the corridor. Sidewalks and pedestrian countdown signals have proven to promote safe and welcoming environments for pedestrians. These improvements are listed below and shown in **Figure V-1**.

a. Sidewalk Improvements

-
- Clay Road east of Seayes Road/Clay Road intersection
 - Anderson Mill Road crossing Austell Road
 - Amy Lane west of Austell Road
 - Pair Road west of Austell Road
 - Southside of Milford Church Road west of Austell Road
 - Close all gaps in existing sidewalk connections
 - Add new sidewalks to new roadway projects

b. Pedestrian Countdown Signals

- Clay Road and Seayes Road
- Austell Road and Evergreen Drive
- Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road
- Austell Road and Mulkey Road
- Austell Road and Hurt Road
- Austell Road and Amy Lane
- Austell Road and Pair Road
- Austell Road and Milford Church Road

7. Bicycle System Improvements

Another major concern is the lack of bicycle paths and trailhead facilities adjoining the Silver Comet Trail. Efforts to enhance the connectivity of the multi-use paths and trails should be undertaken. Most trailheads will include full facilities (parking lots, bathrooms, benches, tables and bike racks), while those in neighborhoods will include open areas, lighting and picnic facilities. Full facilities also include landscaping, parking and restrooms. Trail signage and wayfinding along corridor roads will be provided to direct the public to the trail and trailhead facilities. Refer to **Figure V-1** to see improvements that include the following:

- “Southern Park” northwest to Austell Road, then north to the Austell Road and Evergreen intersection.
- Austell Road and Evergreen intersection west to Hemlock.
- North along Hemlock to a Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail.
- Austell and Seayes Road to Hemlock.
- Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail west of Austell Road, north crossing over Anderson Mill Road into the neighborhood.
- Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail north forking into neighborhood.
- With the connected paths and trailhead facilities, local vehicular travel will decrease and congestion will ease. Also, pedestrians will have safe, visually pleasing paths to enjoy and travel.

Figure V-1: Proposed Transportation Improvements

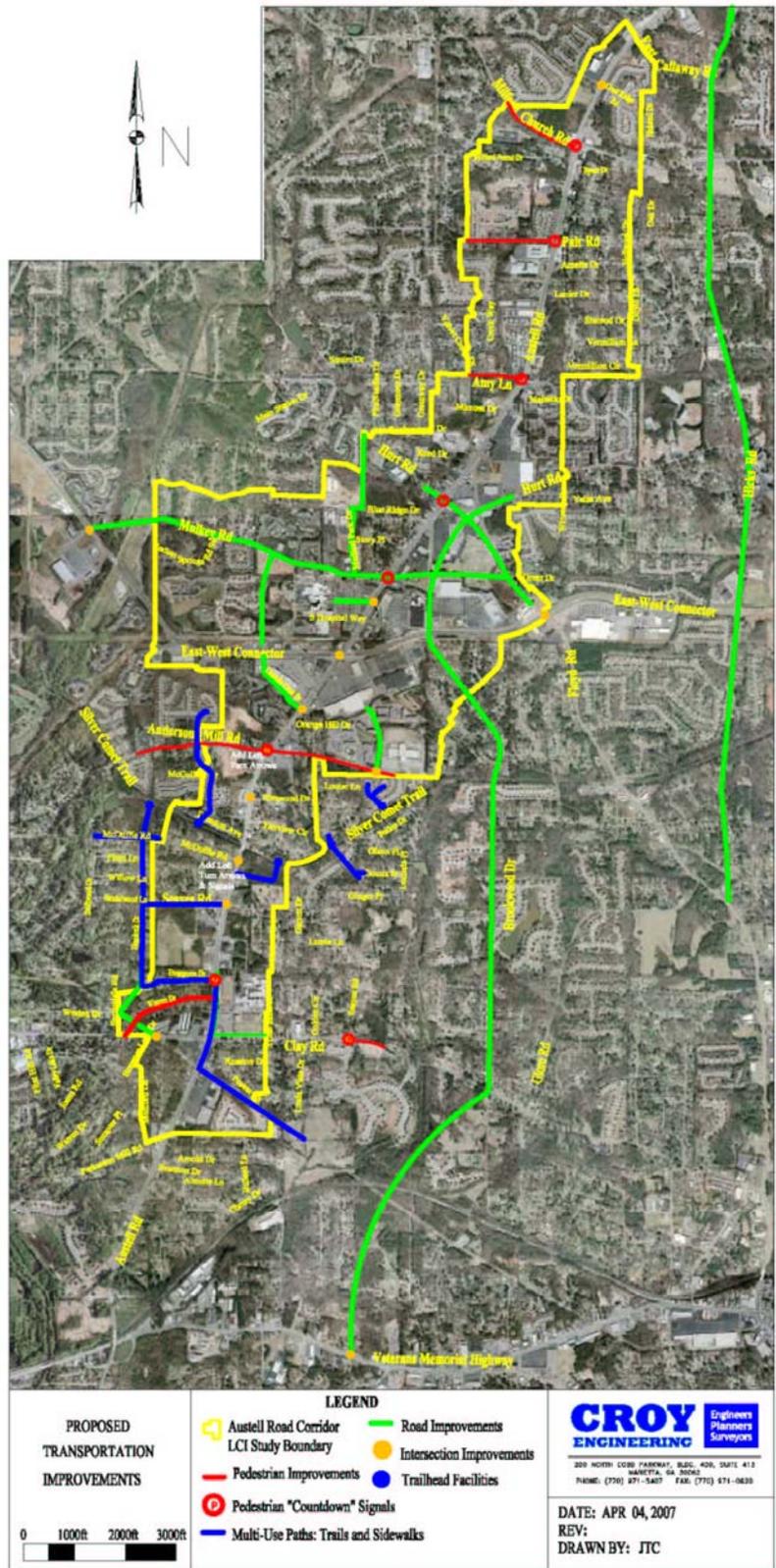


Figure V-A-1

Figure V-2: Proposed Transit Improvements

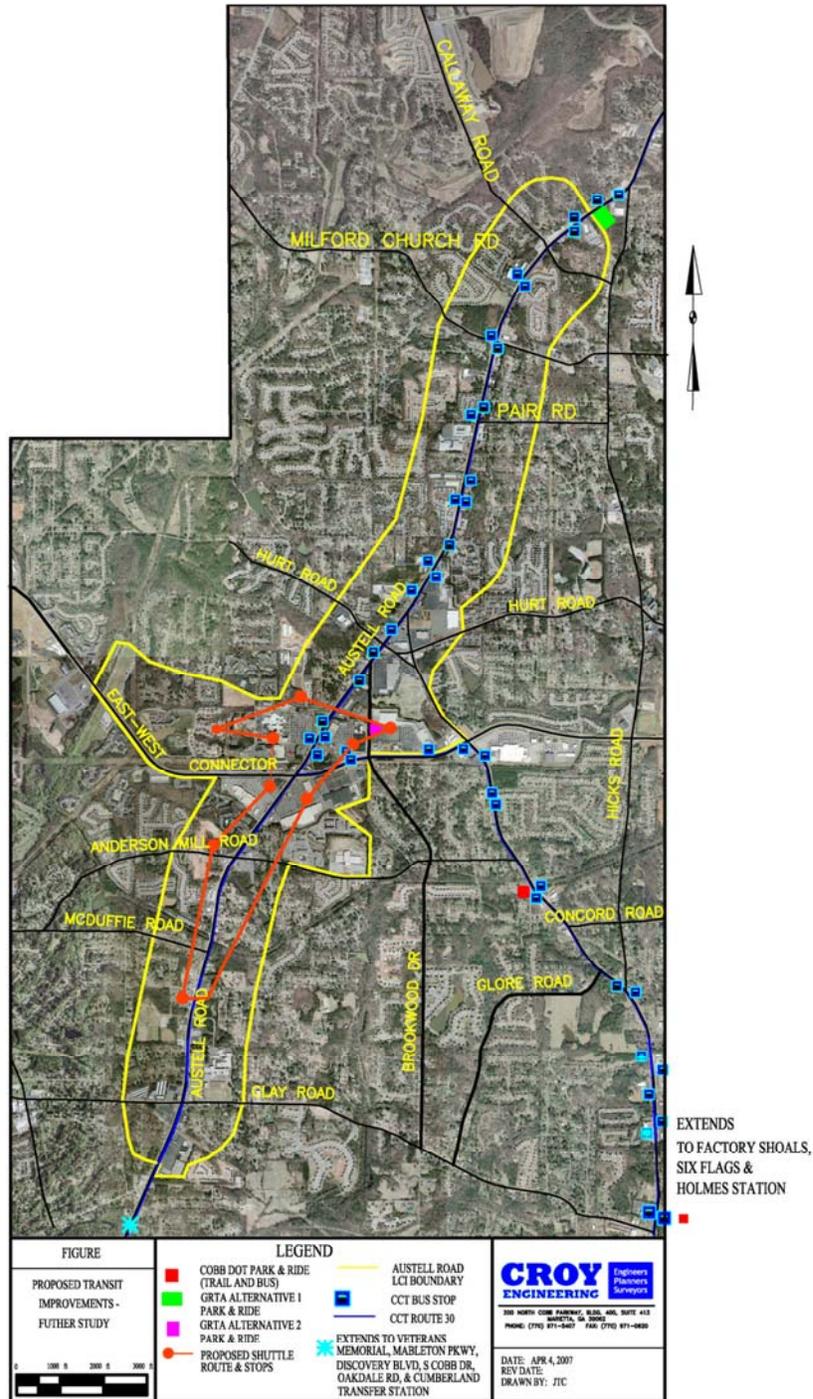


FIGURE V-A-2

B. Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan is a component of a comprehensive plan that provides a parcel-specific guide to how a community should develop. It is intended to steer current rezoning and redevelopment decisions. Each future land use category is tied to appropriate zoning categories. It is important to note that changes in future land use designations do not affect the current underlying zoning of a property. Future land use designations are only factored when the rezoning of a parcel is requested by a property owner.

Through the planning process the public has identified future land uses they would like to see in specific areas of the corridor. In order to permit the public's desired land uses, changes are required to Cobb County's Future Land Use Map. A Recommended Future Land Use Map was created that reflects these changes (see **Figure V-3**). It is the recommendation of this study that the Recommended Future Land Use Map for the corridor replace the County's existing Future Land Use Map for the area, as the former accurately reflects the way in which residents would like to see the area develop.

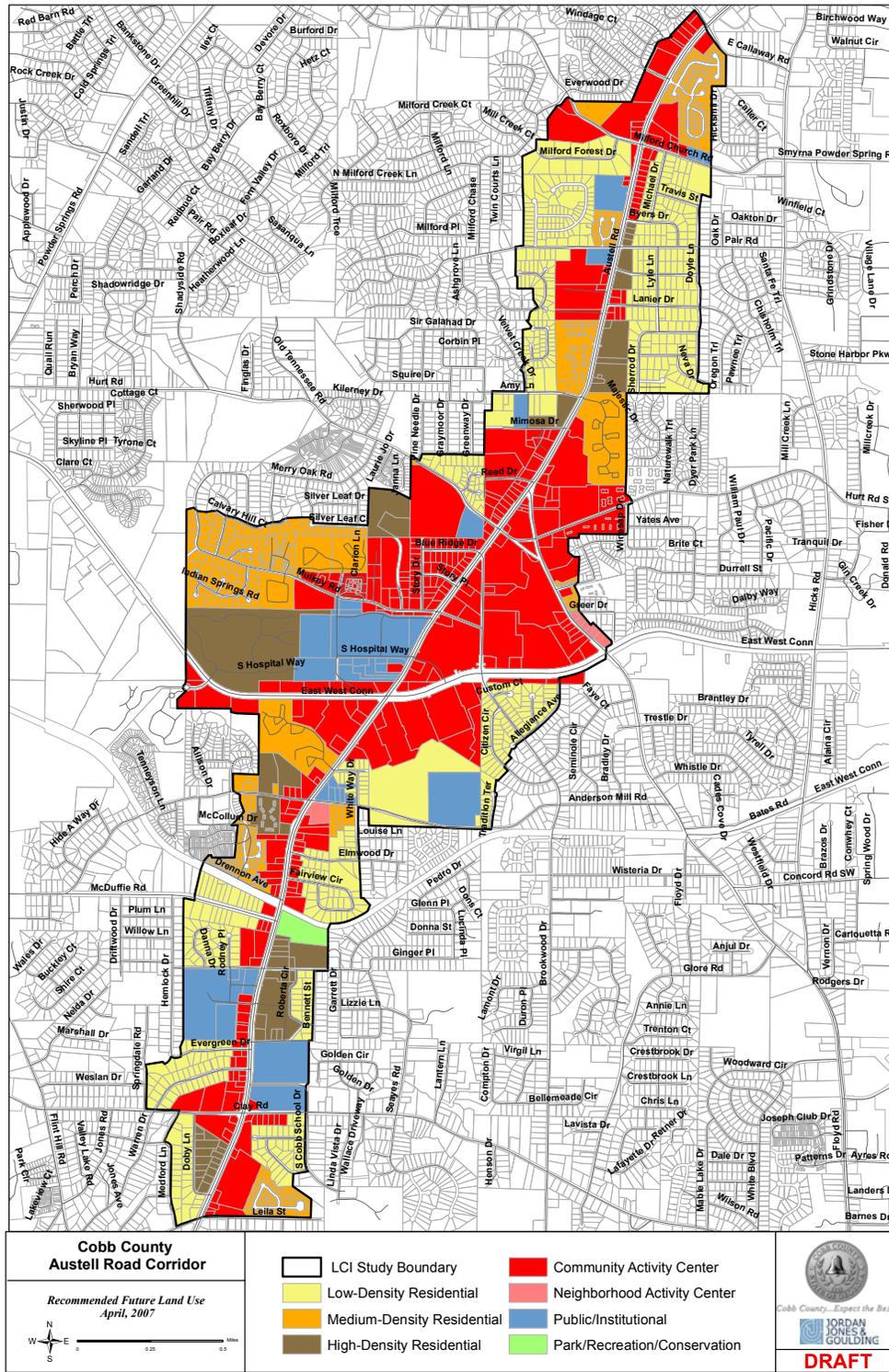
1. Future Land Use Planning Process

The Recommended Future Land Use Plan was created through a process that involved a high degree of public participation with several rounds of public input. It began on the first day of the public workshop. Members of the public were asked to identify "Hard Areas," "Soft Areas" and "Catalyst Sites," (see **Figure V-4**). Hard areas are land uses that are not anticipated to change significantly over the next 25 years. Examples of these include stable single-family neighborhoods, WellStar Cobb Hospital and new commercial areas. Soft areas are land uses that are expected to change in the next 25 years. Examples of these include vacant commercial structures, homes fronting Austell Road and vacant land. Catalyst sites were also identified; these include properties that have the potential to spur redevelopment and serve as trendsetters for the corridor.

With the hard areas previously determined, residents focused on identifying what future land uses they would like to see in the soft areas and catalyst sites. The results of these discussions were used to create a Conceptual Land Use Plan. After its creation the Conceptual Land Use Plan was brought back to residents on the second day of the public workshop to obtain feedback on whether the plan accurately reflected their intentions. Additional comments were received and further changes were made to the map. After this, additional comments and revisions were received from staff and elected officials to ensure the plan was politically viable and would likely be accepted by elected officials.

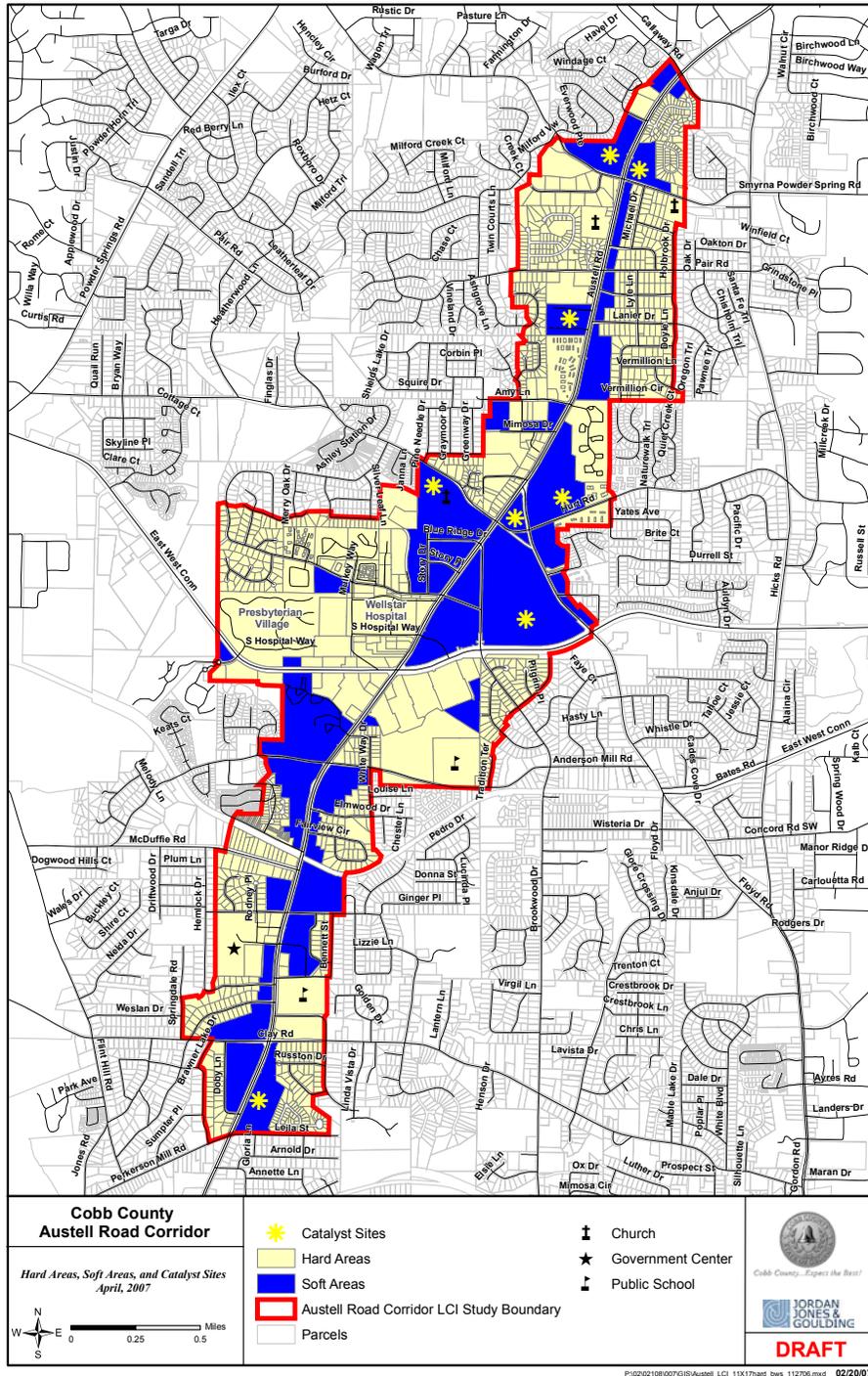
At the open house held on March 12, 2007, a draft Recommended Future Land Use Map was presented to the public. Additional public comments were received and corresponding revisions were made. Numerous rounds of comments and revisions have resulted in the Recommended Future Land Use Map (**Figure V-3**).

Figure V-3: Recommended Future Land Use²



² See Appendix G for Planning Commission Recommendations concerning this map.

Figure V-4: Austell Road Hard Areas, Soft Areas and Catalyst Sites³



³ See Appendix G for Planning Commission Recommendations concerning this map.

2. Recommended Changes to the Future Land Use Plan

The majority of future land uses in the corridor have remained unchanged from the County's adopted Future Land Use Plan. The recommended changes are described in detail in the following section, starting in the northern portion of the study area and working towards the south. These changes are illustrated in **Figure V-5**.

a. High-Density Residential in Northern Study Area:⁴

The public has identified areas in the northern study area as being ideal for additional high-density residential development, with densities ranging from 5 to 12 units per acre. Owner-occupied townhouses were the favored outcome from input received during the study process; additionally, a variety of types of senior housing developments are appropriate in this area. Real-estate market studies have suggested there is a surplus of retail and commercially-zoned property within the corridor. Scaling back from the current Community Activity Center (which permits many commercial and office uses) designation to high-density residential in this area would help balance the ratio of commercial-to-residential land in the corridor. It would also help achieve the recommendations of the *2001 Austell Road Corridor Study*, which promotes nodal commercial development and advocates against continuous strip commercial development along the corridor. Changes from the Community Activity Center (CAC) to a high-density residential designation were made to the following areas:

- Parcels abutting Austell Road south of Byers Drive to Lyle Lane, including the parcel directly to the south of Lyle Lane.⁵
- Parcels abutting Austell Road directly north of Ivy Commons Apartments.
- The parcel abutting Austell Road between Amy Lane and Mimosa Drive, in addition to the parcel directly to the west, fronting on Mimosa Drive.

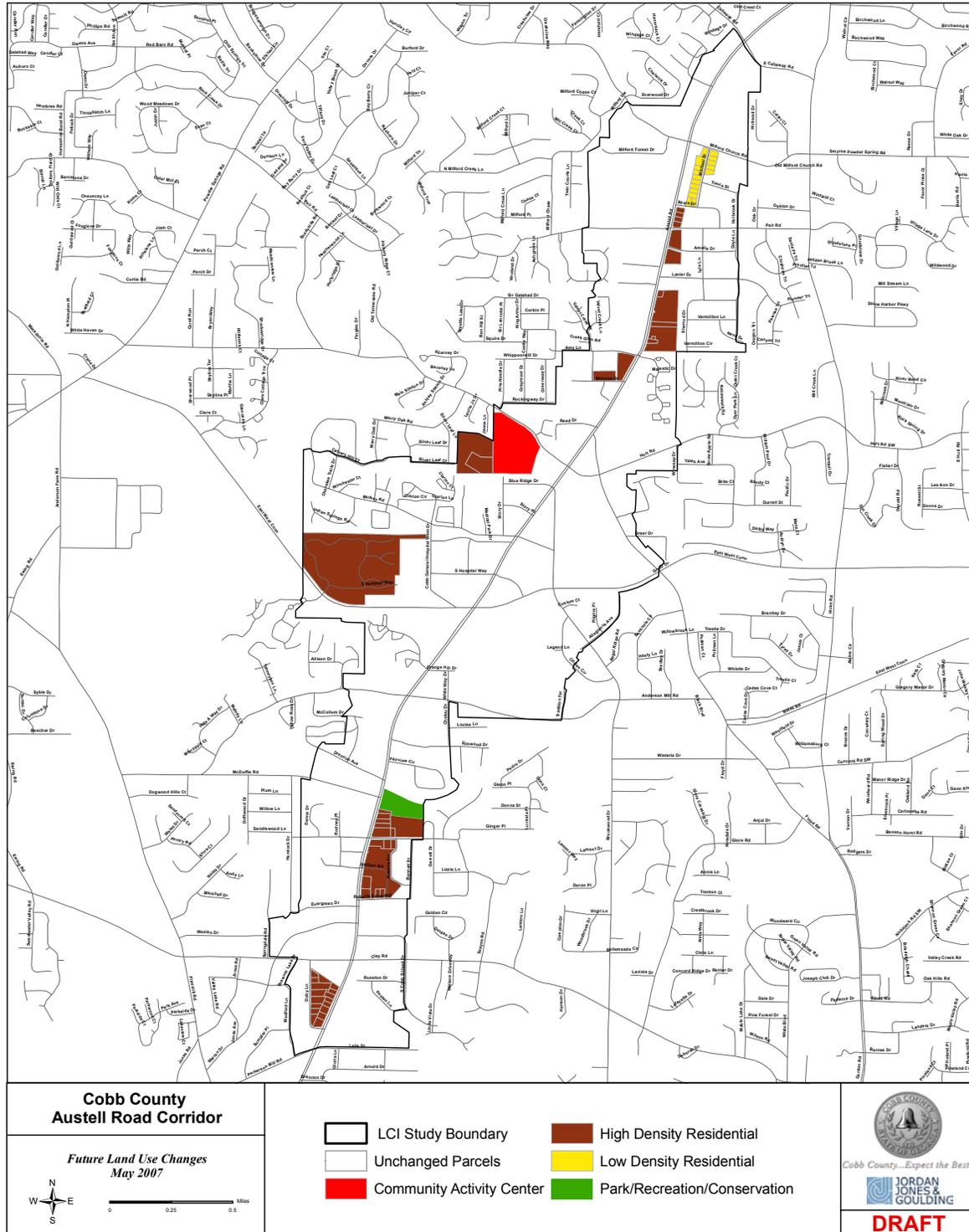
The appropriate densities for each site will vary depending on the site and type of development proposed.⁶ Therefore, it is recommended that densities greater than those allowed by existing policy be considered for new owner-occupied developments on a case-by-case basis. New high-density developments should be designed with a high level of pedestrian orientation including sidewalks, crosswalks and on-street parking when right-of-way permits. Additionally they should include amenities to encourage the use of public spaces such as decorative paving, human scale street lighting, benches, and landscaping. To ensure the continued stability and desirability of the adjacent single-family residential areas, new developments should be designed with moderate height (three stories maximum) and include buffers (landscaping, fences, berms, etc.) to shield the spillover of light and noise and maintain privacy.

⁴ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

⁵ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

⁶ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

Figure V-5: Recommended Changes to Cobb County Future Land Use Map⁷



⁷ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

b. Community Activity Center for Gospel Harvester Church Site:

Through the public involvement process the Gospel Harvester Church site was identified as a prime location for a catalyst site that could serve as a trendsetter and spur redevelopment in the study area. The owner of the site was present at the public meetings and was supportive of redeveloping a portion of the property to include a mixture of uses including medical offices, assisted living and other residential uses. The continuation of Story Drive or Medical Park Drive through the property was seen as a way to facilitate the redevelopment of the site. The extension of these roads would also meet the goals of residents who desire an interconnected grid of streets that would take traffic pressure off of the main thoroughfare. The recommended Future Land Use Map changes the church site from a Public/Institutional designation to a CAC designation. This new designation would permit mixed-use development and potentially allows the property to be considered as a catalyst site in the future.⁸

c. Change Multi-Family from CAC to High-Density Residential:⁹

Two areas of the study area currently contain multi-family developments and are designated as CAC on the County's Future Land Use Map. These sites include the Presbyterian Village, a continuing care retirement community, and a multi-family apartment complex located at the terminus of Medical Park Drive. The sites are currently high-density residential and this should be mirrored on the Future Land Use map with a high-density residential designation (5 to 12 units per acre). This more accurately reflects the future land uses of the parcels in the long-term. In the highly unlikely event these sites are redeveloped, this will also guard against the addition of further retail uses in the corridor, which is allowable under the CAC designation.

d. Park Site from CAC to Park/Recreation/Conservation:

At the public workshop residents identified the need for additional park space within the corridor. A parcel of vacant land directly south of the Silver Comet Trail was identified as an ideal place for a park. There is currently no access to the Silver Comet Trail from the study area. The trail is separated from the road by a steep grade change. A park in this location would provide trail access for corridor residents. This park would serve double-duty by offering additional greenspace in the corridor, as well as expanding access to one of the largest recreational facilities in the region. This site may also be appropriate for a dog park, which residents strongly desire. It is recommended that the County give serious consideration to this site in their park space acquisition plans. The future land use for the parcel has been changed from CAC to Park/Recreation/Conservation in order to facilitate this transition.¹⁰

⁸ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

⁹ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

¹⁰ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

Conceptual Park Plan



e. High Density Residential in the Southern Study Area:¹¹

The public desired additional high-density residential land uses in the southern portion of the study area. Owner-occupied townhouses were the preferred development outcome. These areas include the parcels bounded by Doby Lane and Austell Road, as well as the area south of the proposed park site to the southern leg of Stallion Parkway. Commercial uses adjacent to the park site were viewed as being incompatible, facilitating the change from CAC to high-density residential designation. The public desired the preservation of a portion of the greenspace on the large vacant parcel surrounding Stallion Parkway with its eventual development. This could be achieved with a designation of high-density residential. Changing the designations from CAC to high-density residential uses

¹¹ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

in these areas also reduces the opportunities for additional commercial development in the corridor.¹²

f. Community Activity Center Areas Remaining Unchanged:

It is important to note that even though many areas designated CAC have not changed between the two maps, the public has explicitly stated their preferred development outcome for some of these areas, and this should be factored in when making future zoning decisions. The CAC designation permits a variety of commercial, office and mixed-use land uses. All of these uses are not suitable for every area designated CAC. The public has identified sites appropriate for mixed-use development in the Conceptual Land Use Plan, as well as areas suitable for additional medical office space in the vicinity of the hospital. The Conceptual Land Use Plan, **Figure V-4**, should be consulted when rezoning or redevelopment decisions are considered in CAC areas to determine the public's preferred outcome.¹³

C. Community Design and Streetscapes

Based on community input sessions, those participating suggested improvements not only within the corridor, but also for any proposed new developments to pay better attention to building details and to invest more in streetscape and curb appeal. These improvements led to several proposed community design improvement projects. The main public projects would be the acquisition of a critical parcel adjacent to where the Silver Comet Trail passes under Austell Road. The preference was to see this acquired for future community use as greenspace or as a dog park and trailhead. The other public project was to provide streetscape improvements to Austell Road in order to make the corridor more aesthetically pleasing.

1. Silver Comet Trailhead/Dog Park

The parcel to the south of the Silver Comet Trail on Austell Road was noted by the community participants as a major greenspace acquisition site. The concept plan for this parcel showed two alternatives, one with partial residential development and one as a trailhead park. The general consensus of participants was to preserve the entire parcel as parkland. The park concept calls for a small parking area developed within the existing topography to protect a massive amount of vegetation, so that the parking area could be designed to be located within the trees for shade. Adjacent to the parking lot would be a wide, paved trail connection to the Silver Comet Trail, community playground, outdoor classroom seating area and an approximately two-acre dog park. An entry road would lead into the site from Austell Road and would maintain as much vegetation on-site as possible, except for required grading for the road and parking area.

¹² See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

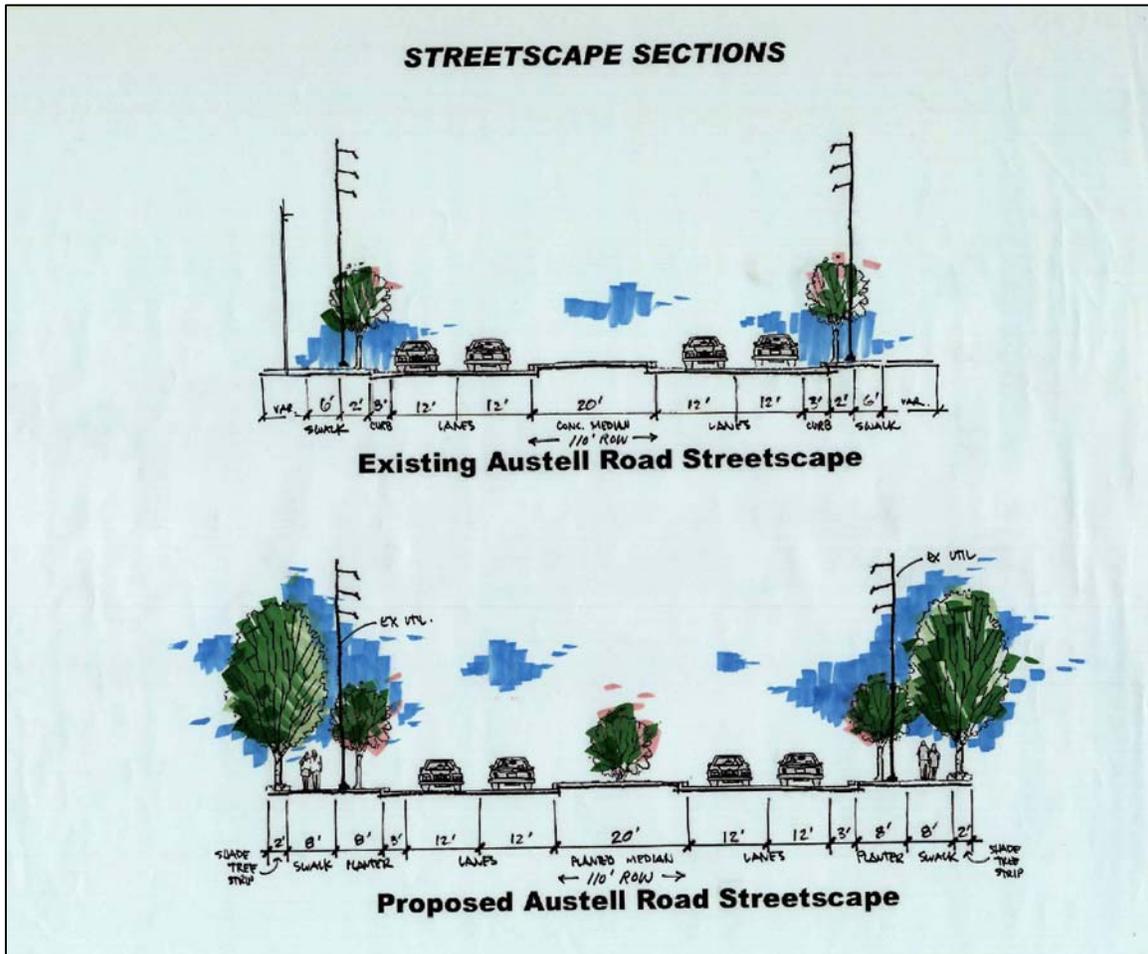
¹³ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

Conceptual Park Plan



2. Austell Road Streetscape

The proposed section of Austell Road includes removal of the concrete median and replacing it with landscaping and small flowering street trees. The trees specified should meet Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) guidelines for traffic clear zones, since Austell Road is a state route and any improvements will require approval from GDOT. Sidewalks should be widened where possible to eight feet, and relocated toward the back of the right-of-way, leaving a two-foot shoulder for tree plantings. An eight-foot-wide planter would be located between the sidewalk and curb, and planted with small flowering trees where possible. Existing utility poles would remain in place. Special pedestrian light poles were not considered a necessity except where low-light areas exist within the corridor, so that more streetscape funding could go to replacing the concrete median and relocating sidewalks.



D. Catalyst Sites

Several vacant or aging commercial shopping centers were targeted by community participants as eye-sores in the corridor that should be heavily targeted by the County for redevelopment. The design team created conceptual site plans for these “catalyst sites” in order to communicate traditional urban design principles to workshop attendees so they would be able to visualize higher densities, pedestrian connectivity and mixed-use development. Three catalyst sites were selected: the vacant Target and Fred’s shopping plaza on the north end of the study area, Heritage Hills Shopping Center, and Austell Plaza on the south end of the corridor.

1. Target Site

The Target site concept plan transforms an outdated shopping center into a more walkable mixed-use development, placing buildings within an internal street system that provides convenient on-street parking and larger parking areas behind buildings. The upper floors of the mixed-use portion of the development could be residential town homes, live-work units, office space or even additional retail use. A retirement community is suggested on the eastern portion of the plan. A central spine with a large landscaped median would provide the central greenspace to create a “Main

Street"-like area with sidewalk cafes and shopping. It would also promote pedestrian movement in the center rather than making the entire design respond to automobile orientation. The site works with some existing buildings, such as an existing church converted from an old movie theater. Floyd Road would be reoriented as an internal street in the development, and a triangular portion of the site on Austell Road would be reserved as gateway greenspace. Hurt Road is anticipated to have capacity and landscape improvements at its intersection with Austell Road.



Conceptual Building Program for Old Target Site

Site Size:	10.2 Acres
Greenspace:	10% greenspace = 1 acre
Maximum Height:	6 stories
Residential:	200 condos @ 1,400 sq. ft./unit (280,000 sq. ft.)
Commercial:	100 room hotel @ 100,000 sq. ft. 60,000 sq. ft. retail/restaurant/commercial services
Total Square Footage:	440,000 sq. ft.
FAR:	1.00
Parking:	640 spaces in a deck
Population:	490 in 200 housing units
Employment:	240

2. Heritage Hills

The Heritage Hills site concept is based on the kind of density the area could plausibly handle in the near future, as reflected in the market analysis prepared for this study. The densities proposed would require structured parking for some residential development, allowing the Heritage Hills site to be redeveloped into a mixed-use community complete with greenspaces and town squares, a street system with on-street parking and areas for a proposed park-ride lot. Existing trees in the development would be preserved as these areas are developed into the internal street system. The mix of uses would include town homes, assisted living and/or retirement housing, retail, offices, restaurants and a hotel.

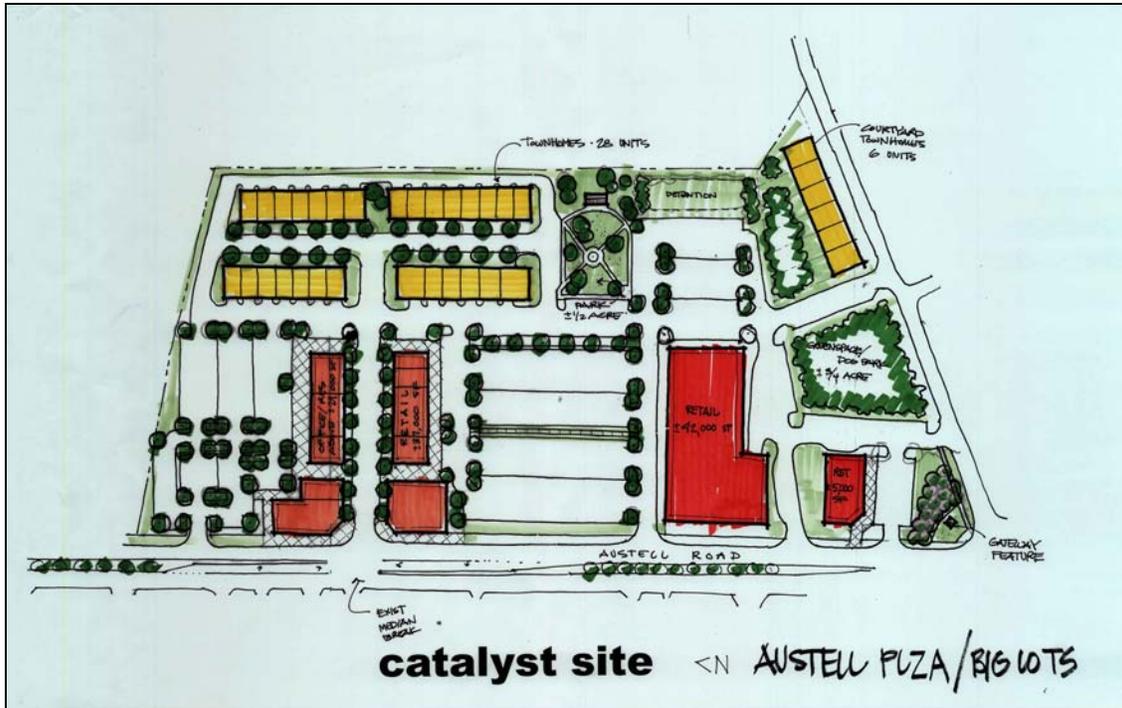


Conceptual Building Program for Heritage Hills

Site Size	27.1 acres
Greenspace	10% greenspace/common plaza (2.7 acres)
Maximum Height:	6 stories
Residential:	250 retirement units @ 1,250 sq. ft./unit (312,500 sq. ft.) 250 condos @ 1,400 sq. ft./unit (350,000 sq. ft.) 50 town houses @ 2500 sq. ft./unit (125,000 sq. ft.)
Commercial:	Medical Offices – 100,000 sq. ft. (in 2-4 buildings) 100 room hotel @ 1,000 sq. ft./room = 100,000 sq. ft. 150,000 sq. ft. retail/restaurant/commercial services
Population:	1,034 in 550 housing units / Employment = 794
	1,137,500 total sq. ft. with a 0.96 FAR and 1,600 parking spaces in deck

3. Austell Plaza

The Austell Plaza site, relatively small compared to the other sites, would be redeveloped into a similar pedestrian-oriented retail core with a 34-unit town home community located at the rear of the property, providing a residential transition between retail commercial and single-family residential. In addition to adding residential and mixed-use components to the site, over an acre of usable greenspace is provided for passive recreation or public greens or plazas. Retail sites are also provided for stand-alone drugstores, restaurants or banks, as well as a two-story “Main Street” area with on-street parking and sidewalks, and parking lot to the rear.

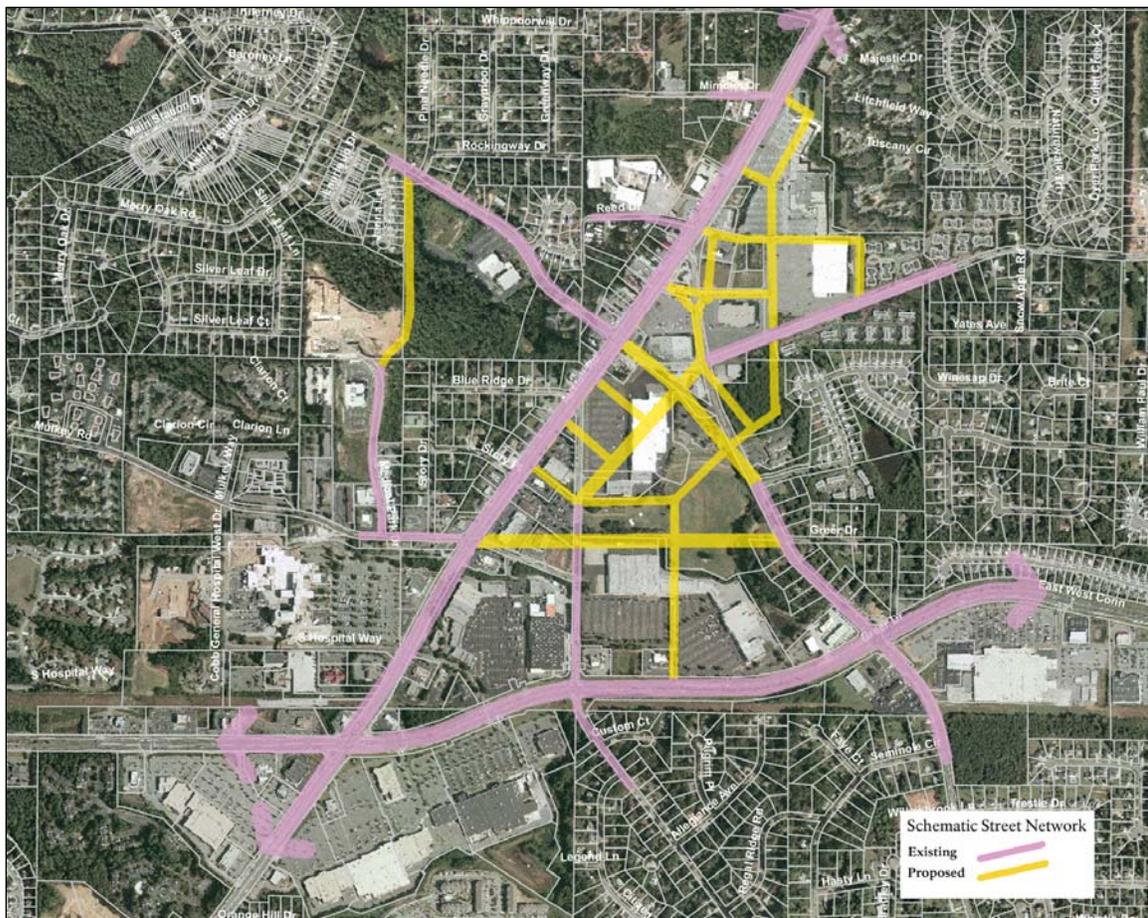


Conceptual Building Program for Old Target Site

Site Size:	11.84 acres
Greenspace:	10% greenspace = 1.2 acres
Maximum Height:	4 stories
Residential:	150 condos @ 1,400 sq. ft./unit = 210,000 sq. ft. 50 townhomes @ 2,500 sq. ft./unit = 125,000 sq. ft.
Commercial:	50,000 sq. ft. retail/restaurant/commercial services
Total Square Footage:	385,000 sq. ft.
FAR:	0.75
Parking:	500 spaces – partially decked
Population:	490 in 200 housing units
Employment:	100

4. Creating the Street Grid

Key components of each of these catalyst sites is creating the “bones” of a street grid network and having development focus on each street, instead of there being a large expanse of parking lot separating the street from the proposed use, like in a typical strip mall. It is important to ensure that any redevelopment of large parcels in the Austell Road area not just follow interparcel access standards, but provide for an interconnected network of streets that can be continued to each development site. As the grid becomes more interconnected with new development, more and better options appear for traffic and pedestrians. The more these options parallel heavily used routes like Austell Road and the East-West Connector, the more likely local traffic will wind their way through the street system instead of causing further congestion within the corridor. It would be important to require new development to follow a predetermined location for the street grid.



Schematic Diagram of Proposed Street Network

VI. Implementation

A. Regulatory Strategies and Incentives

1. Cobb County Comprehensive Plan

The Cobb County Comprehensive Plan serves as a blueprint for how the county should develop over a 20-year timeframe. It is a policy document that guides and informs decision makers regarding land use, development and zoning decisions. The recommendations from the *Austell Road Corridor LCI Study* should be fully incorporated into the County's comprehensive plan. Inclusion in the plan, whether in the appendix or in existing or new sections, adds weight to recommendations contained in this study and provides an increased likelihood of realization.

The County is currently in the process of updating their comprehensive plan to the year 2030. In the likely event this study is accepted by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners, it should be incorporated in the current comprehensive plan, whether it is the 1995-2015 plan (last amended in January 2006) or the updated 2030 plan.

The updated 2030 plan will be drafted under the new guidelines for comprehensive plans established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in 2005. The new guidelines require the declaration of issues and opportunities, implementation strategies and a short-term work program. The short-term work program identifies the time-frame, cost estimate, responsible party and funding source for planning activities over a five-year period. It may be helpful to incorporate specific issues, recommended actions and implementation strategies presented in this study into appropriate sections of the comprehensive plan. Adding recommended actions to the short-term work program increases the likelihood of their realization by tying them to responsible parties and funding sources.

In the 2006 plan, a previous corridor study (*2001 Austell Road Corridor Study*) is included as a component of the plan. This LCI study builds on this previous planning effort by offering a continuation, expansion and deeper analysis of the study area.

a. 2001 Austell Road Corridor Study

In 2001, Cobb County staff produced a corridor study of Austell Road. The main purpose of the document was to study existing conditions and trends rather than serve as a master plan for improvements. The intent was to build upon the stable residential base while examining opportunities for improvements in corridor aesthetics, business mix and a reduction of potential land use conflicts between residential and commercial development. County staff was directed to conduct this study in light of recent increases in residential zoning requests in the area.

The study area included parcels abutting Austell Road from the East-West Connector north to South Cobb Drive. The study provides detailed information on housing and population within the corridor. The 2001 plan recommends five future land use map

and text amendments, median improvements, as well as additional input from stakeholders. Prior to major land use changes in the corridor, the study recommended further discussion with property owners, developers, real estate brokers and residents.

The LCI study serves as a continuation of the 2001 study, as it follows recommendations for enhanced stakeholder involvement. It provides a greater depth of analysis, including future transportation forecasts and real estate market studies. It also goes a step beyond the previous study by providing a master plan for improvements.

2. Cobb County Zoning Ordinance

The Cobb County Zoning Ordinance contains a total of 41 zoning districts. Twenty-two of these zoning districts are for residential development, ten are for commercial development, five are for office development, two are for industrial development and two are overlay districts. Mixed-use development is allowed in six of these districts. However, the mixed-use districts are primarily intended for use in “greenfield” development. These mixed-use districts presume a unitary plan of ownership or control that is not feasible in most redevelopment projects.

The primary vehicle for redevelopment in Cobb County is currently the Redevelopment Overlay District (ROD), described in Section 134-221.2. An overlay district can provide the level of control that is needed to unify a number of separate properties into an integrated redevelopment plan. The stated purpose of the ROD is “to provide locations for redevelopment of commercial, office, and residential uses which are pedestrian-oriented and developed at a community or regional activity center scale and intensity as identified for each specific site or corridor via the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan...”

The ROD was adopted in 2006 and is currently authorized for use in the following four areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan:

- Austell Road/Hurt Road/Floyd Road area (See **Figure VI-1**)
- South Cobb Parkway, north of I-285 to Terrell Mill Road
- Sandy Plains Road, between East Piedmont Road and Post Oak Tritt Road
- Old Mableton Area, between Veterans Memorial Highway and Clay Road

The ROD Overlay can be used only for property that has at least five acres and is currently zoned (or proposed to be zoned) in the following zoning districts:

- LRO – Low-Rise Office
- LRC – Limited Retail Commercial
- NRC – Neighborhood Retail Commercial
- O&I – Office and Institutional
- CRC – Community Retail Commercial
- RMR – Residential Mid-rise
- OMR – Office Mid-rise
- OHR – Office High-rise
- NS – Neighborhood Shopping

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- PSC – Planned Shopping Center
 - TS – Tourist Services
 - GC – General Commercial
 - RM-12 – Multi-family Residential, up to 12 units per acre
 - RM-16 – Multi-family Residential, up to 16 units per acre

Permitted uses listed in Section 134-221.2(3) include an array of commercial and retail uses like banks, residential, commercial retail, neighborhood retail, hotels, medical laboratories and professional offices; and residential uses that include single-family attached and detached dwelling units, condominiums and multi-family dwelling units. The ROD stipulates that redevelopment proposals must provide a mixture of residential and non-residential land uses. A minimum of 20 percent of the proposed land uses must be non-residential. In addition, 10 percent of the proposed residential units must be “workforce” housing intended for households earning no more than 80 percent of the Atlanta MSA median household income.

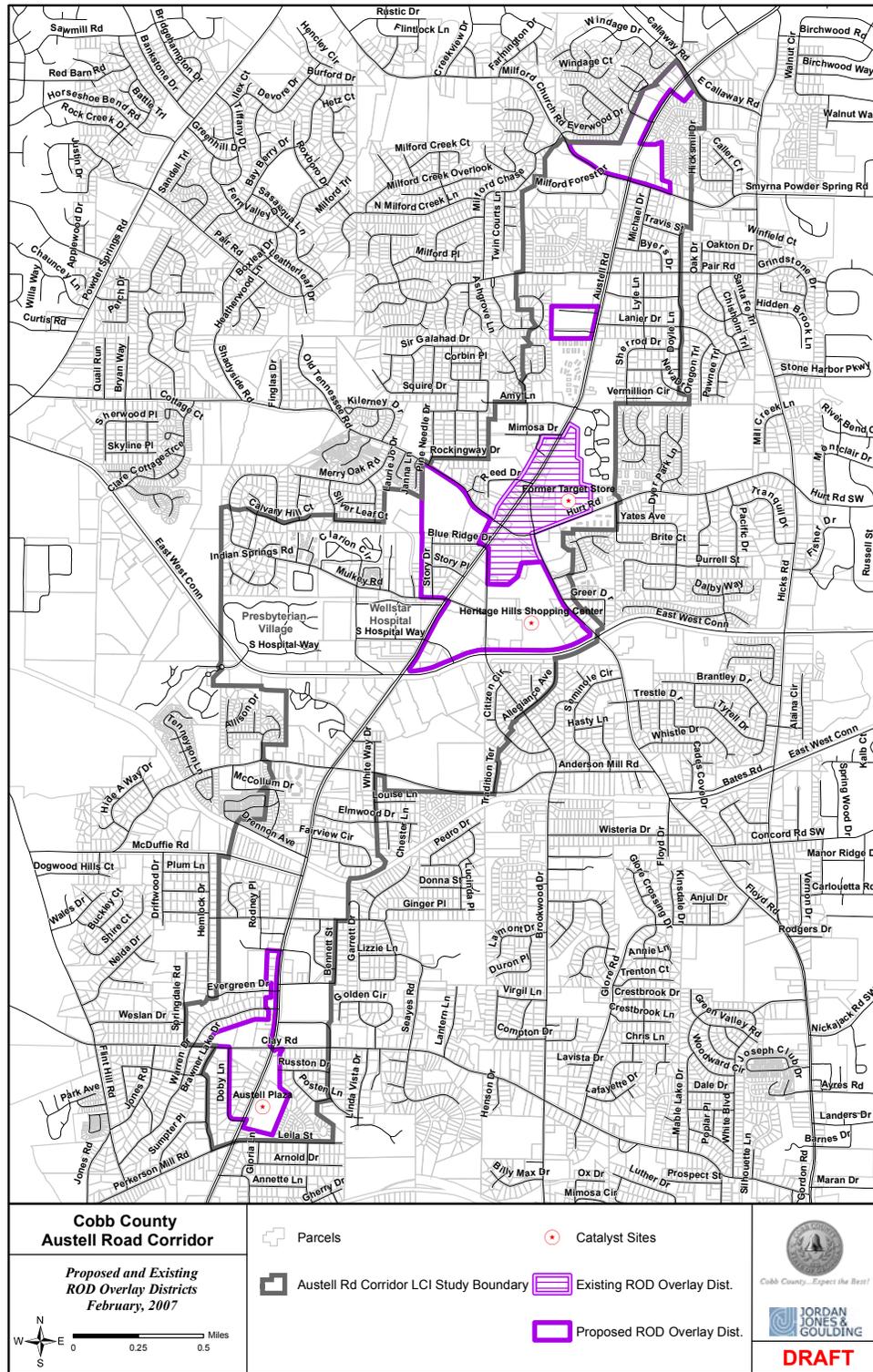
The advantages of the ROD include:

- Mixed-use development is allowed.
- Site development standards are flexible and based on an approved Concept Plan.
- Minimum lot sizes and building setbacks do not apply – buildings are to be oriented to the street with a contiguous and consistent building edge along a public sidewalk.
- Building height is “to be designed to provide compatibility with adjacent uses”; however, no standards for “compatibility” are given in the ordinance.
- Minimum off-street parking standards are reduced by 20 percent when parking is shared between adjacent uses; an additional 10 percent reduction may be approved by the Director of Community Development.
- Tree density units required in the tree preservation and replacement ordinance may be reduced by 10 percent if xeriscape is implemented.

Although not stated in the ordinance, it is assumed that the ROD does not change the density allowed in the base zoning districts.

However, in order to implement the land use recommendations of the Austell Road LCI, it is desirable to expand the existing ROD area in the Austell-Road/Hurt Road/Floyd Road area and add additional areas where the ROD may be employed within the corridor. This would result in encompassing other areas that were identified for potential mixed-use development and redevelopment in the Conceptual Land Use Plan. The recommended ROD area for the Austell Road Corridor is shown in **Figure VI-1**.

Figure VI-1: Existing and Proposed ROD District



In addition, in order to better implement the study goals for the redevelopment of existing commercial property into mixed-use development, the ROD ordinance should be further modified as follows:

1. Add definitions. There should be specific definitions for important terms such as “mixed use,” “compatible,” “xeriscape,” and “open space.”
2. Since there are no building setback provisions, it is necessary to provide for a minimum spacing between buildings, such as 15 feet.
3. Provide specific standards for architectural treatment of parking structures, specifying that their façades should either not be visible from a public street or be of a similar building material and articulation as occupied buildings. Include retail façades on the ground floor of parking structures that open onto public streets.
4. Prohibit drive-through windows.
5. If building façades are to be placed along the street, modify sign regulations to prohibit freestanding signs larger than 12 square feet and taller than 6 feet. Encourage pedestrian-oriented signs such as wall signs, canopy signs, awning signs, suspended signs, marquee signs, window signs and others.
6. Require all site plans to include a Multi-modal Access Plan. A Multi-modal Access Plan provides the overall, multi-property framework that is essential for achieving a pedestrian-oriented district. It has the following features:
 - A Multi-modal Access Plan covers more than the immediate site – it shows the entire street right-of-way, extending across the street to the driveways and building entrances on adjacent properties.
 - It shows access to the site and through the site, connecting to adjacent building entrances for all modes: pedestrians, bikes, transit and automobiles.
 - It shows pedestrian crosswalks and signals needed at adjacent intersections.
 - If there is an off-site transit stop within 500 feet of the site, it shows continuous pedestrian facilities from each building on the subject site all the way to the transit stop.
 - If there is a transit stop on the site, it shows pedestrian connections from the transit stop to adjacent tracts of land.
 - If there are two or more occupied buildings on the site, it shows pedestrian entrances and the sidewalks connecting each building to the others, and sidewalks from each building to the street.
 - If there are parking lots or parking decks on the site, it shows safe, continuous pedestrian ways through the parking lot to building entrances.
 - If there is more than one use and more than one parking area, it shows interparcel connections and cross-access easements between parking areas that enable shared parking.
 - If there are off-site bicycle trails or lanes within 500 feet of the site, it shows connections from these off-site facilities to the subject site.
 - It shows specific entrance and routing for service vehicles (goods delivery and refuse collection).
 - It shows the minimal number of auto access points (see **Table VI-1**).

- It includes the required clearance of driveways from intersecting streets per *GDOT Driveway Manual: Regulations for Driveway and Encroachment Control*.
- It shows minimum sight distances along the highway for the design speed per GDOT.

Table VI-1: Vehicular Access Points

Type of Development	Minimum Number of Vehicular Access Points to Public Streets
Residential, under 30 units	1
Residential, 30 units or more	2
Non-residential, less than 50 required parking spaces	1
Non-residential, 50-299 required parking spaces	2
Non-residential, 300-999 required parking spaces	3
Non-residential, 1,000 or more required parking spaces	4 or more

In addition to the above enhancements, the ROD needs a new section to address the catalyst sites. Catalyst sites would include those identified in this report as well as others that may be nominated by the property owner and approved by action of the Board of Commissioners based on findings such as the following:

- The catalyst site occupies a critical location within the ROD that serves either as the potential focal point or the gateway for the overall redevelopment overlay district;
- The current condition of the catalyst site is a detriment to the area, so that it represents a compelling redevelopment need;
- The redevelopment of the catalyst site will spur on redevelopment of other, less-prominent sites within the ROD; and
- Without redevelopment of the catalyst site, other redevelopment would be unlikely.

Additional design requirements for the ROD could include the following:

- A minimum of 10 percent of the site’s land area should be devoted to outdoor public space, including a plaza, square or green.
- There should be specific design standards for the public space to ensure that it is well-located, attractive, well-landscaped and a safe “signature” space.

-
- The site area should be developed with interconnecting streets and sidewalks designed on a grid not larger than 600 feet on a side.
 - The maximum length of a building façade should be 250 feet to encourage pedestrian circulation throughout the development.
 - There should be design standards for buildings that require quality materials and workmanship, pedestrian-oriented storefronts and pleasing, well-articulated building massing.
 - The development should be required to prepare a traffic impact study to identify the impacts on levels of service of the surrounding streets, and should include recommendations for necessary improvements to maintain the current level of service. The traffic impact study should also identify strategies to increase access by bike, pedestrians and transit while reducing use of single-occupant autos.

Finally, there should be density incentives and increased building height allowed for specified improvements, including:

- Public space that is in excess of 10 percent of the land area of the site;
- Public dedication and construction of new connecting streets, transit or bike/pedestrian facilities that are part of the LCI Conceptual Plan;
- More than 30 percent of the occupied floor area consists of owner-occupied housing;
- More than 50 percent of the parking is provided in a structured deck that meets architectural standards of the ROD.

Density incentives are appropriate for catalyst sites in order to promote mixed-use, walkability and real estate feasibility. The real estate market analysis upon which this study was based showed that many key properties in the study area are on the market for prices in excess of \$300,000 per acre. At these prices, it is likely that, to be feasible, redevelopment will need to be authorized at densities exceeding 30 units per acre,¹⁴ or a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in excess of 1.0. Density at this level is also necessary in order to make it feasible to provide structured parking in lieu of surface parking.

B. Community Capacity Strategies

In order to ensure community participation in the Austell Road LCI Study, several forums were established to form an aggressive outreach effort. As a result of this comprehensive outreach effort, significant public support and approval was achieved.

The Austell Road Corridor offers significant diversity ranging from single- and multi-family communities, small to large retail properties, educational institutions, government offices, and medical and industrial facilities. Because of the wide range of interests and features within this corridor, the successful implementation of this plan rests largely on the continued involvement of the community through the implementation phase. Continuing to engage the Austell Road community will build on the momentum that was

¹⁴ See Planning Commission Recommendations in Appendix G.

created in the planning phase and ensure that once the plan is accepted by Cobb County, implementation can move forward immediately.

However, continued community interest and involvement is unlikely to happen unless there is a strong organization in charge of the continued promotion of redevelopment efforts. To continue the public interest in planning for the redevelopment of the Austell Road Corridor, the existing Austell Road LCI Core Team could be continued and developed into a formal organization or Redevelopment Task Force for the corridor.

The role of this group would be:

- To monitor the implementation;
- To mobilize support for the recommendations; and
- To help mobilize financial resources.

It is suggested that the County Manager determine the individuals appropriate to serve on this implementation committee and designate a County employee to provide support to the committee.

Partnerships are vital to the success of any community development or redevelopment effort. Partnerships allow everyone to leverage their strengths and mitigate weaknesses. A culture of collaboration needs to become a permanent element in the civic culture of the Austell Road Corridor. Potential partnerships efforts that can support the implementation of Austell Road LCI Study include:

- Creation of a Neighborhood Stabilization Team – an association of county, neighborhood and non-profit groups that would coordinate activities for repairing and maintaining the current housing stock and to encourage appropriate new development in the corridor.
- Develop a Business Association for the Austell Road Corridor that is partnered with the existing Austell and South Cobb Business Associations.
- Pursue more active support from the non-profits in the area, such as civic associations, neighborhood associations, business associations and historic preservation groups.
- Involve local churches, schools, and large employers such as WellStar Cobb Hospital in developing, supporting, and funding programs and facilities for the area's teens, such as Boys and Girls clubs or a YMCA branch.

Promotion is essential to realizing the capacity to implement this plan. Sending out a positive message about Austell Road is important for both internal and external constituencies. As projects outlined in this plan are accomplished, highlighting even the small successes will help spur interest and build momentum for future redevelopment success. Promotional efforts that would support implementation of the Austell Road LCI Study include:

- Holding a series of workshops showcasing corridor plans and improvement schedules for realtors and local developers. One opportunity for this type of promotion is the "LCI Development Forums" sponsored by the ARC on a regular basis to promote LCI study areas. These forums bring developers to the table

with communities to discuss the potential real estate opportunities in LCI study areas. The Cobb County Community Development Department should take responsibility for representing the Austell Road Corridor LCI study area at these forums.

- Host a Redevelopment Summit for community leaders, particularly those that attended the project kick-off meeting. Report progress and provide status updates on what is happening in the Austell Road Corridor, and any other ongoing redevelopment efforts in the southwest portion of Cobb County. Include at least one representative from an outside organization as a speaker to bring their experience and lessons learned to the forum.
- Establish a Neighborhood Watch to encompass both residential and commercial properties in the corridor. Coordinate patrols within the corridor during off-hours to deter vandalism, theft and burglary.
- Host a “Day of Dialogue” on community development, leadership and capacity building for community leaders in the Austell Road area.

C. Housing and Neighborhood Preservation Strategies

Throughout the Austell Road LCI study area there are mature single-family neighborhoods sitting behind the commercial property fronting Austell Road. As these neighborhoods have aged and long-term residents have sold properties, commercial uses have begun to encroach upon the neighborhoods. Additionally, as traffic congestion has increased, many area commuters have sought out time-saving short cuts, which often bring heavy traffic onto residential streets. To stem this tide of commercial and vehicular encroachment and stabilize and improve the quality of the area’s neighborhoods, preservation strategies and actions are necessary.

To alleviate negative impacts from adjacent commercial properties, transitions are necessary. These transitions can take a number of forms, including, for instance, inserting lower-intensity land uses between commercial properties and neighborhoods. Instead of having single-family homes adjacent to commercial properties, town homes or greenspaces can be used as transitions. Additionally, buffers of trees or landscaping should be mandatory between neighboring land uses of differing intensities. The size and materials required for the buffer should vary depending on the abutting land uses – the greater the difference in intensity, the larger and more opaque materials should be.

The height of adjacent land uses can also have an impact on the corridor’s older single-family subdivisions. Many of these subdivisions are comprised of one-story ranch homes that can be dwarfed by multi-story buildings, causing privacy and lighting issues. Requiring new development adjacent to these subdivisions to employ step-down height planes on the rear of buildings will address this issue. Infill development regulations can also address this issue in addition to ensuring rehabilitated properties and tear-down situations do not create new structures that are incompatible in massing or design.

While limiting the visual effects of abutting land uses on single-family neighborhoods is important, it is also necessary to make sure these neighborhoods are not cut off from new development. Connecting the older neighborhoods to new development via sidewalks,

trails and street networks will encourage walking for short trips (thus reducing VMT) and will add to sense of community. However, connectivity should not encourage cut-through traffic or speeding through neighborhoods. The following traffic calming measures could be employed to prevent this from happening:

- Narrowing standard vehicle travel lanes in neighborhoods.
- Installation of frequent stop signs.
- Allowing on-street parking.
- Installing raised speed tables on long through-streets.
- Marking crosswalks on primary pedestrian routes through neighborhoods.
- Installing traffic islands or diverters in the center of wide streets.

As noted in the previous section on social issues, households in the Austell Road study area are aging, which may result in deferred maintenance of homes as older householders transition to fixed incomes. A program of grants or revolving loans could be useful in helping low-income seniors “age in place” and keep their homes from appearing dilapidated or falling into disrepair and becoming unsafe.

D. Funding Strategies

Funding is a fundamental component of any redevelopment effort. The real goal is to successfully leverage limited funds. Most often the public sector needs to make targeted investments in an area first, in order to spur further private development. Cobb County will need to make infrastructure improvements, among taking other actions, within the Austell Road Corridor to create a catalyst to attract private developers’ interest.

1. Funding from the Livable Centers Initiative Program

There are two forms of funding available from the Atlanta Regional Commission under the LCI Program: Transportation Project Funding and Supplemental Study funding.

LCI Transportation Project Implementation Funding.

In March of 2000, ARC approved an allocation of \$5 million over 5 years to fund the study portion of the program. ARC also approved \$350 million for priority funding of transportation projects resulting from the LCI studies. The ARC Board, in December 2004, extended the LCI program to include another \$5 million for 5 additional years of planning studies and added \$150 million for priority funding of transportation projects (for a total commitment of over \$500 million).

These funds are federal highway transportation funds (L230 Surface Transportation Program) and require a local match. Eligible projects must be clearly defined in the LCI study and must serve a well-defined mobility, accessibility and /or safety function. In addition, ARC favors projects that have the potential to prevent or relieve traffic congestion. ARC also places emphasis on projects that have a regional significance. Only two projects per LCI study area may be accepted in any given funding cycle. The minimum total project cost for LCI funding is \$500,000 and the maximum is \$4 million.

The application process involves three stages: project pre-qualification, project refinement (concept studies), and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding commitments by ARC, GDOT and the local government.

LCI Supplemental Study Program

The LCI Supplemental Study Program provides LCI communities with up to \$40,000 (50/50 match) for additional planning studies that help refine or extend the original LCI study in ways that will lead to more successful implementation. Examples of these studies are access management, design guidelines, or meeting the growing needs for affordable housing or projects targeted to serve the aging population.

2. Other Funding

In addition to pursuing LCI funds, the County should consider other funding strategies, such as these;

- Pursue a variety of outside funding sources aside from the County, including historic preservation funding, federal housing assistance funding, formation of a Tax Allocation District (TAD), formation of a Community Improvement District (CID), CDBG funds, HOME funds, a variety of loan funds from DCA, and grant and foundation monies.
- Review the prioritization of the County general funds to see whether a dedication of some of those monies would be better leveraged in the implementation of the Austell Road LCI Study.
- Leverage the funds used to increase the possibility of funding for other projects.
- Encourage the creation of local lending programs, through both government and private sector support, to create pride and stability in neighborhoods and provide incentives for business redevelopment.
- Explore the potential to draw from the county SPLOST funds.
- Pursue Local Development Fund monies from DCA, which provides matching grants for community improvement activities.
- Apply for Redevelopment Fund assistance from DCA for redevelopment projects.
- Establish a Tax Allocation District (TAD) for underutilized, abandoned or blighted property in the Austell Road Corridor. TAD designation allows tax rates to be “frozen” at the current status. All revenues collected above the frozen rate based on property improvements are allocated only for improvements within the district itself.
- Create a series of re-investment zones that allow homeowners’ tax abatements to be applied to real property for improvements and rehabilitation of housing in the community.
- Seek funding from the “Housing Rehabilitation Program” (HUD) that will preserve the existing housing stock and provide safe, decent and sanitary affordable housing for low and moderate-income homeowners through rehabilitation of substandard single-family homes.
- Establish a Community Improvement District (CID) for the Austell Road Corridor. District designation is obtained when the majority of property

owners agree to tax themselves to provide dedicated revenue, which is usually used for infrastructure improvements and cleaning and maintenance services.

E. Five Year Program of Projects

The following pages contain the costs, program years, funding sources and responsibilities for transportation projects, housing initiatives and various other projects and initiatives for the Austell Road LCI study area that have been identified and further described within the preceding plan document.

Transportation Projects Listed by Priority Status

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount
High Priority Projects											
Roadway Improvements											
Mulkey Road Extensions	Extend Mulkey road west to East-west	2008	\$300,000	2009	\$1,000,000.00	2010	\$3,100,000	\$4,400,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$880,000
Mulkey Road Extensions	Extend Mulkey Road east to Floyd Road	2008	\$70,000	2009	\$200,000.00	2010	\$700,000	\$970,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$194,000
Mulkey Road Improvements	Add third middle lane to existing Mulkey Road	2008	\$140,000	2009	\$1,100,000.00	2010	\$1,400,000	\$2,640,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$528,000
Extension of Lincoln Crest Dr. from Austell Road to E-W Connector aligned with new Mulkey Road connector	New Roadway	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$1,400,000.00	2010	\$1,000,000	\$2,500,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$500,000
Sub-TOTAL			\$610,000		\$3,700,000.00		\$6,200,000	\$10,510,000			\$2,102,000

Transportation Projects Listed by Priority Status

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
Intersection Improvements/Signalization												
Clay Road and Extended Hemlock Drive west of Austell Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Clay Road and Seayes Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Austell Road and Evergreen Drive	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Austell Road and Seayes Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Austell Road and McDuffie Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Austell Road and Elmwood Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Anderson Mill Road and the new Sanders Elementary Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Austell Road and Lincoln Crest Drive	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
East-West Connector and Austell Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$200,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$1,600,000	\$1,800,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$360,000	
East-West Connector and Floyd Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Sub-TOTAL			\$1,200,000		\$0.00		\$10,600,000	\$11,800,000			\$2,360,000	
Median Improvements												
Throughout Austell Road Corridor	Congestion improvements	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$750,000	\$850,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County, GDOT \$170,000	

Transportation Projects Listed by Priority Status

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
Mobility/Pedestrian Improvements												
Multi Use Path Connections to Silver Comet Trail	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$110,000	2009	\$275,000.00	2010	\$1,100,000	\$1,485,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$297,000	
North along Hemlock to Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$25,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$250,000	\$275,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$55,000	
Austell and Seayes Road to Hemlock Dr. Trailhead	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$25,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$250,000	\$275,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$55,000	
Trailhead Facility E. of Austell Rd. south, then west connecting to Austell Rd.	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$25,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$250,000	\$275,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$55,000	
Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail SE connecting to Donna St.	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$25,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$250,000	\$275,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$55,000	
at Silver Comet Trail west of Austell Road north crossing over Anderson Mill Road into neighborhood	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$10,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$100,000	\$110,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$22,000	
Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail north forking into neighborhood	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$10,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$100,000	\$110,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$22,000	
Sub-TOTAL			\$230,000		\$275,000.00		\$2,300,000	\$2,805,000			\$561,000	
TOTAL HIGH PRIORITY			\$2,140,000		\$3,975,000.00		\$19,850,000	\$25,965,000			\$5,193,000	

Transportation Projects Listed by Priority Status

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
Medium Priority Projects												
Intersection Improvements/Signalization												
Austell Rd. and new WellStar Cobb Hospital Entrance north of S.Hospital Way and south of Mulkey Rd.	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2013	\$100,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
East-West Connector and Mulkey Road Extension	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2013	\$100,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Austell Road and Crest Ridge Drive	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2013	\$100,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Clay Road and Seayes Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	
Austell Road and Evergreen Drive Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	
Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	
Austell Road and Mulkey Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	
Austell Road and Hurt Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	

Transportation Projects Listed by Priority Status

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
Intersection Improvements/Signalization												
Austell Road and Amy Lane Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	
Austell Road and Pair Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	
Austell Road and Milford Church Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	
Sub-TOTAL			\$620,000		\$0.00		\$3,660,000	\$4,280,000			\$600,000	
Roadway Improvements												
Hemlock Drive Extension	New Roadway	2013	\$32,000	2014	\$800,000.00	2015	\$320,000	\$1,152,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$230,400	
Parallel access road on north side of Clay Road to serve high school school bus queue	New Roadway	2013	\$35,000	2014	\$75,000.00	2015	\$352,000	\$462,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$92,400	
Sanders Elementary Road Creation	New Roadway parallel to school and heading north from Clay Road	2013	\$60,000	2014	\$1,500,000.00	2015	\$583,000	\$2,143,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$428,600	
New WellStar Cobb Hospital Entrance	New Roadway and intersection	2013	\$25,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$200,000	\$225,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$0	
Sub-TOTAL			\$152,000		\$2,375,000.00		\$1,455,000	\$3,982,000			\$751,400	

Transportation Projects Listed by Priority Status

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
Mobility/Pedestrian Improvements												
Clay Road east of Seayes Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$5,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$50,000	\$55,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Warren Drive from Clay Road to Austell Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$15,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$120,000	\$135,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Anderson Mill Road crossing Austell Road to Sanders Elementary	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$10,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$100,000	\$110,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Amy Lane west of Austell Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$10,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$80,000	\$90,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Pair Road west of Austell Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$20,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$120,000	\$140,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Milford Church Road west of Austell Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$10,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$100,000	\$110,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Sub-TOTAL			\$70,000		\$0.00		\$570,000	\$640,000				\$0
Transit Facilities												
Cobb Community Transit to Investigate possible new CCT route down Austell Rd. to Factory Shoals, Six Flags Dr., then to Holmes Station and extension of another segment of CCT down Floyd Rd. to Oakdale Rd., Highlands Pkwy., and Cumberland Mall	Study	2009	\$100,000	N/A	\$0.00	N/A	\$0	\$100,000	County	County	CCT	\$0
TOTAL MEDIUM PRIORITY			\$942,000		\$2,375,000.00		\$5,685,000	\$9,002,000				\$1,351,400

Transportation Projects Listed by Priority Status

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount
Catalyst Projects											
Roadway Improvements											
Hurt Road re-alignment	New Roadway to realign Hurt Rd. with Brookwood Road (north of East-west Connector)	2013	\$70,000	2014	\$200,000.00	2015	\$700,000	\$970,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$194,000
Floyd Road re-alignment	New Roadway realign Floyd Rd. with Hurt Rd. (north of East-west Connector)	2013	\$70,000	2014	\$200,000.00	2015	\$700,000	\$970,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$194,000
TOTAL CATALYST PROJECTS			\$140,000		\$400,000.00		\$1,400,000	\$1,940,000			\$388,000

Transportation Projects Listed by Priority Status

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
Long-Range Transportation Projects												
Roadway Improvements												
Brookwood Drive Extension	New Roadway extend Brookwood south to Veterans Memorial Drive	2015	\$200,000	2016	\$1,200,000.00	2017	\$2,000,000	\$3,400,000	County	RTP Long-Term	County \$680,000	
Hicks Road Improvements	Improve existing road	2015	\$700,000	2016	\$3,500,000.00	2017	\$7,000,000	\$11,200,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County \$2,240,000	
Sub-TOTAL			\$900,000		\$4,700,000.00		\$9,000,000	\$14,600,000			\$2,920,000	
Intersection Improvements/ Signalization												
Brookwood Drive and Veterans Memorial Highway	Intersection , turn lanes and signalization	2015	\$100,000	2016	\$0.00	2017	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	RTP Long-Term	County \$200,000	
Transit Facilities												
Possible privately-operated local shuttle with 8-10 stops that runs between the hospital, medical offices, shopping centers, pharmacies, and senior facilities such as Presbyterian Village	Study	2010	\$100,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$100,000	County	CCT	CCT + Private \$0	
TOTAL LONG RANGE			\$1,100,000		\$4,700,000.00		\$9,900,000	\$15,700,000			\$3,120,000	
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS			\$4,322,000		\$11,450,000.00		\$36,835,000	\$52,607,000			\$10,052,400	

Housing Projects/Initiatives

Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Develop a Neighborhood Watch for the Austell Road corridor	Staff Time	ongoing	County / Citizens / Law Enforcement	NA
Develop a Neighborhood Stabilization Team to help maintain existing housing stock and encourage appropriate infill housing	Staff Time	ongoing	County	NA
Develop infill development standards - especially for housing	Staff Time	2008	County	NA
Increase code enforcement in Austell Road LCI study area to reduce negative impacts of absentee landlords	Staff Time	ongoing	County	County
Develop a revolving loan fund to provide low interest loans or grants to low income and elderly households for housing maintenance	\$100,000	2008	County	County / Grant Funds
Develop affordable housing through redevelopment plans for catalyst sites using the ROD ordinance.	NA	ongoing	County / Developers	Private

Other Local Initiatives

Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Acquisition and Development of land for Silver Comet Trail trailhead and park	\$300,000,000	2008 - 2010	County	County / Grants
Amend Comprehensive Plan as outlined in Chapter V of the Austell Road LCI Study	Staff Time	2007 - 8	County - Planning Dept.	NA
Amend ROD Zoning Ordinance as outlined in Chapter IV of the Austell Road LCI Study	NA	2007 - 8	County - Planning Dept.	NA
Convene Redevelopment Task Force for the Austell Road corridor	Staff Time	ongoing	County Planning and Economic Development Depts.	NA
Develop a Business Association or CID for the Austell Road corridor	Staff Time	ongoing	County Economic Development Dept.	NA
Hold periodic Redevelopment Summits to update community leaders on the implementation of the LCI Study	Staff Time	ongoing	County Planning and Economic Development Depts.	NA
Workshops/Presentations for the development community to generate interested in pursuing redevelopment projects in the LCI study area	Staff Time	ongoing	County Planning and Economic Development Depts.	NA
Apply Cobb County Urban Design Standards to the Austell Road corridor in order to develop a consistent landscaping and sidewalks along Austell Road	Staff Time	2007	County Planning and Transportation Depts.	NA

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2008 Project List												
Develop a Neighborhood Watch for the Austell Road corridor	Public Safety	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County / Property Owners / Law Enforcement	COUNTY/ GRANT FUNTS	N/A	N/A
Develop a Neighborhood Stabilization Team to help maintain existing housing stock and encourage appropriate infill housing	Housing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County / Citizens / Local Organizations	COUNTY	N/A	N/A
Develop infill development standards - especially for housing	Codes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County	COUNTY	N/A	N/A
Increase code enforcement in Austell Road LCI study area to reduce negative impacts of absentee landlords	Code Enforcement	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County / Citizens / Law Enforcement	COUNTY	N/A	N/A
Develop a revolving loan fund to provide low interest loans or grants to low income and elderly households for housing maintenance	Housing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$100,000	County	COUNTY/ GRANT FUNTS	N/A	N/A

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2008 Project List												
Develop affordable housing through redevelopment plans for catalyst sites using the ROD ordinance.	Housing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County / Developers	PRIVATE FUNDS	N/A	N/A
Acquisition and Development of land for Silver Comet Trail trailhead and park	Parks and Recreation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$300,000,000	County - Community Development Dept.	COUNTY/ GRANT FUNTS	N/A	N/A
Amend Comprehensive Plan as outlined in Chapter V of the Austell Road LCI Study	Community Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County - Community Development Dept.	NA	N/A	N/A
Amend ROD Zoning Ordinance as outlined in Chapter IV of the Austell Road LCI Study	Community Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County - Community Development Dept.	NA	N/A	N/A
Convene Redevelopment Task Force for the Austell Road corridor	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Develop a Business Association or CID for the Austell Road corridor	Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Economic Development Dept.	NA	N/A	N/A

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2008 Project List												
Hold periodic Redevelopment Summits to update community leaders on the implementation of the LCI Study	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Workshops/Presentations for the development community to generate interested in pursuing redevelopment projects in the LCI study area	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Apply Cobb County Urban Design Standards to the Austell Road corridor in order to develop a consistent landscaping and sidewalks along Austell Road	Community Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Transportation Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Mulkey Road Extensions	Extend Mulkey road west to East west Connector	2008	\$300,000	2009	\$1,000,000.00	2010	\$3,100,000	\$4,400,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$880,000
Mulkey Road Extensions	Extend Mulkey Road east to Floyd Road	2008	\$70,000	2009	\$200,000.00	2010	\$700,000	\$970,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$194,000
Mulkey Road Improvements	Add third middle lane to existing Mulkey Road	2008	\$140,000	2009	\$1,100,000.00	2010	\$1,400,000	\$2,640,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$528,000

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2008 Project List												
Extension of Lincoln Crest Dr. from Austell Road to E-W Connector aligned with new Mulkey Road connector	New Roadway	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$1,400,000.00	2010	\$1,000,000	\$2,500,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$500,000
Clay Road and Extended Hemlock Drive west of Austell Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
Clay Road and Seayes Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
Austell Road and Evergreen Drive	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
Austell Road and Seayes Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
Austell Road and McDuffie Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
Austell Road and Elmwood Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2008 Project List												
Anderson Mill Road and the new Sanders Elementary Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Austell Road and Lincoln Crest Drive	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
East-West Connector and Austell Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$200,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$1,600,000	\$1,800,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$360,000	
East-West Connector and Floyd Road	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$200,000	
Throughout Austell Road Corridor	Congestion improvements	2008	\$100,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$750,000	\$850,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County, GDOT \$170,000	
Multi Use Path Connections to Silver Comet Trail	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$110,000	2009	\$275,000.00	2010	\$1,100,000	\$1,485,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$297,000	
North along Hemlock to Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$25,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$250,000	\$275,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$55,000	
Austell and Seayes Road to Hemlock Dr. Trailhead	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$25,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$250,000	\$275,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$55,000	
Trailhead Facility E. of Austell Rd. south, then west connecting to Austell Rd.	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$25,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$250,000	\$275,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$55,000	
Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail SE connecting to Donna St.	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$25,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$250,000	\$275,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$55,000	

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount
2008 Project List											
at Silver Comet Trail west of Austell Road north crossing over Anderson Mill Road into neighborhood	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$10,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$100,000	\$110,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$22,000
Trailhead Facility at Silver Comet Trail north forking into neighborhood	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2008	\$10,000	2009	\$0.00	2010	\$100,000	\$110,000	County	TE	County / GDOT \$22,000
Total 2008			\$2,140,000		\$3,975,000		\$19,850,000	\$25,965,000			\$5,193,000

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2009 Project List												
Cobb Community Transit to Investigate possible new CCT route down Austell Rd. to Factory Shoals, Six Flags Dr., then to Holmes Station and extension of another segment of CCT down Floyd Rd. to Oakdale Rd., Highlands Pkwy., and Cumberland Mall	Study	2009	\$100,000	N/A	\$0.00	N/A	\$0	\$100,000	County	County	CCT	\$0
Hold periodic Redevelopment Summits to update community leaders on the implementation of the LCI Study	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Workshops/Presentations for the development community to generate interested in pursuing redevelopment projects in the LCI study area	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Total 2009			\$100,000		\$0		\$0	\$100,000			\$0	\$0

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2010 Project List												
Possible privately-operated local shuttle with 8-10 stops that runs between the hospital, medical offices, shopping centers, pharmacies, and senior facilities such as Presbyterian Village	Study	2010	\$100,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$100,000	County	CCT	CCT + Private	\$0
Hold periodic Redevelopment Summits to update community leaders on the implementation of the LCI Study	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Workshops/Presentations for the development community to generate interested in pursuing redevelopment projects in the LCI study area	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Total 2010			\$100,000		\$0		\$0	\$100,000			\$0	\$0

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2011 Project List												
Hold periodic Redevelopment Summits to update community leaders on the implementation of the LCI Study	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Workshops/Presentations for the development community to generate interested in pursuing redevelopment projects in the LCI study area	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Total 2011			\$0		\$0			\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
2012 Project List												
Hold periodic Redevelopment Summits to update community leaders on the implementation of the LCI Study	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Workshops/Presentations for the development community to generate interested in pursuing redevelopment projects in the LCI study area	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Total 2012			\$0		\$0			\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2013 Project List												
Hold periodic Redevelopment Summits to update community leaders on the implementation of the LCI Study	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Workshops/Presentations for the development community to generate interested in pursuing redevelopment projects in the LCI study area	Community Development & Economic Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Staff Time	County Community Development and Economic Development Depts.	NA	N/A	N/A
Austell Rd. and new WellStar Cobb Hospital Entrance north of S.Hospital Way and south of Mulkey Rd.	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2013	\$100,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
East-West Connector and Mulkey Road Extension	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2013	\$100,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
Austell Road and Crest Ridge Drive	Intersection, turn lanes and signalization	2013	\$100,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$200,000
Clay Road and Seayes Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/LOCAL FUNDS	County	\$0

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount	
2013 Project List												
Austell Road and Evergreen Drive Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Austell Road and Mulkey Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Austell Road and Hurt Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Austell Road and Amy Lane Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Austell Road and Pair Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Austell Road and Milford Church Road Pedestrian Countdown Signals	Pedestrian Signalization	2013	\$40,000	N/A	\$0.00	2014	\$120,000	\$160,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$0
Hemlock Drive Extension	New Roadway	2013	\$32,000	2014	\$800,000.00	2015	\$320,000	\$1,152,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County	\$230,400

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount
2013 Project List											
Parallel access road on north side of Clay Road to serve high school bus queue	New Roadway	2013	\$35,000	2014	\$75,000.00	2015	\$352,000	\$462,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$92,400
Sanders Elementary Road Creation	New Roadway parallel to school and heading north from Clay Road	2013	\$60,000	2014	\$1,500,000.00	2015	\$583,000	\$2,143,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$428,600
New WellStar Cobb Hospital Entrance	New Roadway and intersection	2013	\$25,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$200,000	\$225,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$0
Clay Road east of Seayes Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$5,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$50,000	\$55,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$0
Warren Drive from Clay Road to Austell Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$15,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$120,000	\$135,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$0
Anderson Mill Road crossing Austell Road to Sanders Elementary	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$10,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$100,000	\$110,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$0
Amy Lane west of Austell Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$10,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$80,000	\$90,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$0
Pair Road west of Austell Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$20,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$120,000	\$140,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$0
Milford Church Road west of Austell Road	Mobility and pedestrian improvements	2013	\$10,000	2014	\$0.00	2015	\$100,000	\$110,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$0

Projects Listed by Initiation Year for 2008 - 2013

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source & Match Amount
2013 Project List											
Hurt Road re-alignment	New Roadway to realign Hurt Rd. with Brookwood Road (north of East-west Connector)	2013	\$70,000	2014	\$200,000.00	2015	\$700,000	\$970,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$194,000
Floyd Road re-alignment	New Roadway realign Floyd Rd. with Hurt Rd. (north of East-west Connector)	2013	\$70,000	2014	\$200,000.00	2015	\$700,000	\$970,000	County	COUNTY/L OCAL FUNDS	County \$194,000
Total 2013			\$982,000		\$2,775,000		\$7,085,000	\$10,842,000			\$1,739,400
TOTAL PROJECTS			\$3,322,000		\$6,750,000		\$26,935,000	\$37,007,000			\$6,932,400

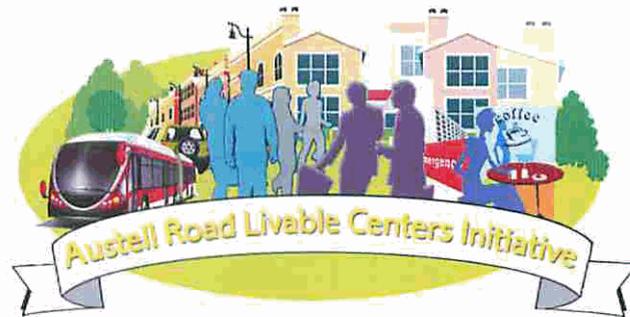
Appendix A

Market Analysis

Ackerman & Co.

Austell Road LCI

Market Analysis



Presented to:

Cobb County

January 5, 2007

Presented by:

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Executive Vice President

In association with:

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MARKET ANALYSIS

AUSTELL ROAD LIVABLE CENTERES INITIATIVE

Cobb County engaged Jordan Jones & Goulding, in conjunction with Ackerman & Co.'s advisory services group and other consultants, to prepare the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) study for the Austell Road corridor in South Cobb County. Ackerman was responsible for the market analysis portion of the study which was conducted during November and December 2006. This report was completed on January 5, 2007.

Understanding the natural market forces that contribute to the dynamics of the Austell Road LCI economic marketplace is essential to managing the quantity and quality of its growth. The community is experiencing a renewal in growth and development due to its Cobb County location, the relatively recent completion of the East-West Connector, and the availability land at reasonable prices. The corridor is anchored by WellStar Cobb Hospital which is a major employer and economic generator for the area. The market analysis begins with a trade area analysis for the Austell Road LCI study area to assess demand for residential and commercial uses. This is followed by an exploration of current real estate market conditions and development opportunities for these sectors. Market information is contained in the addendum to this report.

- I. Demographics
- II. Residential Market
- III. Retail Market
- IV. Medical/Office Market
- V. Key Development Sites

Trade Area Analysis

The Austell Road LCI study area is located in south Cobb County on the western edge of the South Cobb Superdistrict as defined by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). Cobb County is the 4th most populous county in Georgia with a 2005 population of 668,057, according to the US Census Bureau. The population has more than doubled since 1980, which is significant due to the County's large base. It is interesting to note that the County's population is already on par with ARC's 2010 projection.

By 2030 Cobb County is projected to have a population and employment base of approximately 760,000 and 450,000, respectively. Although the county is still growing at a steady pace, its growth rate has slowed due to its size and maturity. The South Cobb Superdistrict is growing at a more rapid pace than the County as a whole. By 2030, this area will comprise 17% of the County's population and employment. The County's growth started in the eastern portion of the county in the East Cobb and Cumberland/Galleria areas and is progressing northward along the I-75 corridor and westward due to the supply of available land for development. Cobb County enjoys a strong reputation for its efficient government, excellent school system, pro business environment, and good quality of life, which should continue to propel its growth.

POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS					
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>Annual % Change</u>
<u>Cobb County</u>					
Population	607,751	668,960	718,658	763,889	0.77%
Employment	313,800	337,367	386,008	448,821	1.20%
Emp./Pop. Ratio	0.52	0.50	0.54	0.59	---
<u>South Cobb Superdistrict</u>					
Population	99,483	112,462	121,185	128,962	0.87%
Employment	29,787	37,181	46,872	57,630	2.22%
Emp./Pop. Ratio	0.30	0.33	0.39	0.45	---

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission (8/2004)

The Austell Road trade area encompasses an area that extends three miles from the intersection of Austell Road and the East-West Connector. It represents the primary area from which the businesses along the corridor could potentially attract both residents and customers. This trade area appears appropriate, because it extends just beyond the study boundaries to the north and south between the communities of Marietta and Austell. It also extends west of South Cobb Drive and Smyrna to the east and to Powder Springs to the west. The following table shows a summary of key demographic characteristics and trends for both the LCI study area and the three-mile trade area.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE		
	<u>Austell Road LCI Study Area</u>	<u>Trade Area (3-Mile Radius)</u>
<u>Population</u>		
2006 (Estimate)	7,625	55,527
2011 (Projection)	8,106	58,545
<u>Annual % Change</u>		
1990-2006	2.7%	2.4%
2006-2011	1.2%	1.1%
<u>2006 Estimates</u>		
% Under 18	26.0%	26.8%
% 65+	12.9%	10.7%
% Minority	55.3%	52.9%
Median Age	35.7	35.87
Households	2,722	19,640
Avg. Household Size	2.65	2.78
% Owner-Occupied Housing	62.10%	78.30%
Median House Value	\$136,438	\$146,850
Avg. Household Income	\$56,151	\$63,929
Employment	7,043	17,007
% Retail Trade	36.2%	35.5%
% Health Services	40.6%	19.9%

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (11/2006)

- Approximately 7,600 people reside within the LCI study area. This population is growing at a steady annual rate. The population is projected to increase by nearly 500 people during the next five years. Although Austell Road is more of a business corridor than a residential corridor, this projection seems thin given the current development momentum in the area.
- The LCI study area population tends to be married and family-oriented, with an average household size of 2.65. They tend to be mixed in terms of age and race. They are

moderately well educated (20.6% hold college degrees) and hold a variety of occupations. The average commute time to work is more than 30 minutes, indicating a bedroom-community lifestyle, despite the fact that the job-housing ratio leans more towards jobs than housing – 2.59 jobs per household.

- The LCI study area includes 2,700 households. Incomes are middle-class, averaging \$56,000 per year. Only 9.8% earn over \$100,000 annually. The vast majority of householders reside in owner-occupied housing units (62.1%) with a median house value of approximately \$136,000. Housing structures are older, with a median age of more than 20 years; less than 15% of housing units have been built since 1999.
- Population within the LCI study area represents only 14% of the trade area population (three-mile radius), which includes 55,500 people. These trade area residents have similar characteristics to the study area residents – mixed ages and races, family-oriented, and middle-class. The minority population is growing at a much faster rate than the population as a whole, particularly Hispanics and African-Americans, which is expected to account for half of the 3,000+ new residents forecasted for the trade area in the next five years. The population is also aging with an average age of 35.5 in 2006 compared to 37.8 in 2011. The incomes and house values are higher in the trade area as compared to the study area, due to the influence of Smyrna and Vinings to the east.
- More than 17,000 people work in the trade area, of which 41% (7,043) work in the LCI study area. Services and retail trade comprise more than three-quarters of jobs, which is consistent with a suburban community. Not surprisingly, health services are a dominant factor due to the location of WellStar Cobb Hospital in the study area. The daytime population also boosts demand for restaurants and retail services throughout the study area along Austell Road and the East-West Connector.

New household formation is another important demand indicator for residential and commercial uses. The following table indicates that 1,031 new households are projected for the LCI trade area during the next five years. This includes 171 new households projected for the LCI study area. Although the current development momentum could potentially support stronger growth, it provides an indication of the composition of new households in the area.

NEW HOUSEHOLDS ADDED (2006-2011) TO TRADE AREA (3-MILE RADIUS) BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER AND INCOME								
Income	Age 15-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65-74	Age 75+	Total
Less than \$15,000	15	(37)	(34)	0	22	7	27	0
\$15,000-24,000	14	(42)	(43)	(14)	44	13	19	(9)
\$25,000-34,999	29	(110)	(62)	12	53	13	53	(12)
\$35,000-49,999	3	(157)	(130)	80	95	66	53	10
\$50,000-74,999	47	(257)	(11)	67	124	101	47	118
\$75,000-99,999	26	(101)	45	142	114	23	20	269
\$100,000-124,999	14	(58)	79	105	84	20	9	253
\$125,000-149,999	5	6	46	62	43	11	(1)	172
\$150,000 or More	0	(19)	86	103	29	28	3	230
	153	(775)	(24)	557	608	282	230	1,031

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (11/2006)

As shown, the population is getting older and wealthier. Approximately 900 new householders (92.2%) will earn in excess of \$75,000. These householders can afford house prices in excess of \$250,000 which is somewhat lacking in the current market. Conversely, householders earning less than \$35,000 per year, who tend to be renters rather than owners, are expected to experience a slight decrease in the next five years. A total of 1,677 new householders are empty nesters or retirees aged 45+ years old, which may indicate a preference for downsizing their homes. This includes seniors (aged 65+) who represent nearly 50% of new householders and who also offer good incomes to support new residential development to meet their needs. Younger householders aged 25 to 44, who tend to be in their child-rearing years, are experiencing significant decline and create a noticeable void in the market. The youngest householders, under 25 years old, are forecasted to add 153 households; the challenge is to keep them in the community on a longer-term basis.

Housing Market Analysis

While the national housing market has hit the much talked about housing bubble in 2006, the metro Atlanta market continues to hum along. One reason is that metro Atlanta is a highly affordable market compared to national standards which, in conjunction with continued low mortgage rates and good job growth, creates a very favorable and active selling market. According to the National Association of Realtors (NAR), the average home price in metro Atlanta is \$173,900 as of second quarter 2006 compared to a US average of \$227,100, a 31% price differential. Since 2003, metro Atlanta prices have increased by an annual average of 5.4% per year compared to 9.6% for the nation. This respectable, but slower than national growth experienced by the Atlanta market has helped curtail the price bubble locally; Atlanta is expected to continue to experience respectable growth and strong price appreciation due to its affordable prices. The NAR does have a couple of cautions about the local market:

- Atlanta ranked first in the nation for new home construction in 2005, so homebuilders need to be wary of over-supply.
- The percentage of homebuyers in Atlanta who use sub-prime mortgages – those with rates of three percentage points above the market average – are higher than the national average, which makes the local market more vulnerable to foreclosures. Financing with Adjustable-Rate Mortgages (ARMs) also holds this foreclosure risk.

In order to assess the Austell Road LCI housing market, we have considered for sale and for rent housing options as well as senior housing. An inventory and assessment of current housing stock in the LCI study area is also prepared. Another consideration is mixed-use potential to integrate housing with retail and office uses. Our research focused on collecting residential permits, house sales activity, apartment market trends, apartment project performance, and senior housing facilities from secondary data sources, and conducting a survey of new subdivisions/townhouses and area apartments. Interviews with active residential realtors and developers were also conducted. Our assessment of current market conditions, strengths and challenges for residential development, and residential development opportunities follows.

Market Conditions

- **Existing Housing Inventory:** The LCI study area has an inventory of 2,863 residential units based on 2006 estimates by Claritas of US Census data. The study area is an “inclusive” community offering a full array of housing choices. The exceptions are higher priced housing (\$300,000+, which comprise less than 3% of units) and alternative housing, such as lofts and mixed-use projects that are beginning to proliferate in other Atlanta area communities. The existing housing stock is well balanced between owner-occupied (62%) and renter-occupied (38%). The majority of housing is single-family (65%), but higher-density multi-family housing is well represented (34%). There are also a few mobile homes (1%) in the study area, concentrated in two mobile home parks along the corridor: Orange Acres and Westbrook Park. The housing stock is older, with a median age of more than 20 years. A total of 55% of housing units were built between 1950 and 1979, and only 15% of have been constructed since 1999. The average house value is \$136,000. Approximately 13% of houses are valued at over \$200,000, but only 2.7% are valued at over \$300,000.
- **For Sale Market:** Cobb County has a booming volume of housing growth and sales. The County has permitted an average of 5,300 single-family units annually since 1996. During the last three years, an average of 4,500 new homes have sold per year with average prices in the mid-\$200,000s. The Austell Road corridor area has also experienced reasonable new home sales volume, but the prices are solidly geared toward middle income householders, priced in the mid-\$100,000s. This market area currently has five active single-family subdivisions totaling 282 units; three are affordable communities with prices starting in the mid to high \$100,000s, but two are higher-priced communities starting in the \$300,000s. The majority of homes on the market are of two-story, traditional-style product. Townhouses have been well received in the marketplace, despite the reasonable cost of single-family homes, which indicates a lifestyle choice among purchasers. There are three active townhouse projects (203 units) in the market area, priced from the \$200,000s. In addition, there are two ranch condominium projects on the market starting from \$170,000 and \$270,000 that are geared toward retirees and empty-nesters. One specific community worth mentioning is Barnes Mill, located east of the study area on the East-West Connector. A development of Red Oak Construction, Barnes Mill is a high-quality community offering higher-end traditional houses, townhouses and ranch condominiums with a full amenity package. It is illustrative of the fact that people are willing to pay more for high quality in this specific market area, partly due to the spillover from the much higher priced areas of Smyrna and Vinings to the east.
- **For Rent Market:** Apartment permits in Cobb County have averaged 1,200 units per year since 1996. As of June 2006, the Cobb County apartment market has an occupancy rate of 92.2% that is slightly lower than metro Atlanta (92.9%), and an average monthly rent of \$0.78 per square foot that is on par with metro Atlanta (\$0.79 per square foot). Class A rents in the County average \$0.89 per square foot, which would likely support economically viable new construction with private financing. The Austell Road market area offers seven rental projects (1,826 units) that have been developed since the 1980s. They are well occupied with a rate of 95.3%. Only two are considered newer, higher-quality Class A properties totaling 762 units: Alta Mill and Tramore Village. These two projects have average rents of \$890, or

\$0.82 per square foot, which are not strong enough to support new apartment construction in the immediate market area without subsidized financing. The other five projects, totaling 1,064 units, are Class B properties geared toward lower-income residents. The rental market has struggled recently, because low-interest loans and low house prices have fueled a trend toward home ownership. This trend has largely run its course and apartments are making a strong comeback with demand fueled by the Echo Boom generation. While apartments are favorable to investors today, they are not popular among many neighborhoods, which put pressure on government entities to curb construction of rental units.

- **Senior Market:** According to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), approximately 80% of seniors prefer to “age in place” – that is, stay in their current home. If this is true, then the other 20% presumably resides in housing oriented toward seniors. Currently, senior citizens in Austell Road corridor area have many housing options, including ranch condominiums, apartments, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes. The market area is noticeably lacking single-level, single-family homes. One of the newest senior housing trends is the development of “CCRC’s” – continuing care retirement communities – that provide a full-array of housing options ranging from independent living to nursing care in one community. Presbyterian Village is a CCRC located adjacent to WellStar Cobb Hospital. This community is a 60-acre campus-style development comprising 283 units in six separate product/care levels. It currently has a waiting list which indicates pent-up demand for this product. CCRC communities tend to be geared to higher net-worth people who have more choices. Low-income seniors are likely an under-served market in the area. The Austell Road corridor area is popular among seniors due to the health care offered at the hospital as well as shopping and dining choices in the area.

Strengths & Challenges

The Austell Road LCI study area offers several **strengths** for residential development:

- Reasonable commuting distance to jobs in immediate area, particularly the hospital, as well as jobs in Marietta and the Cumberland/Galleria area.
- Generally an “inclusive” community with a variety of housing choices, for rent and for sale.
- Growing trade area and study area from which to draw new residents.
- Good reputation of overall Cobb County school system.
- Ample retail support services, such as restaurants, grocery stores and drug stores.

Key **challenges** for residential development include:

- Austell Road corridor is more of a business rather than residential corridor, lacking a critical mass of residents.
- Limited supply of large tracts of land in immediate area.
- Poor reputation of schools serving the corridor, particularly the middle school and high school.
- Traffic congestion on major roads during peak driving/commuting times.
- “Walk-able” environment lacking in LCI study area.
- Dearth of higher-priced housing (\$300,000+).

Development Opportunities

There are several key trends of note affecting today's residential market which should be considered for the Austell Road LCI study area:

- Seniors and emerging seniors do not want to live in “senior” specific developments. They want walk-able communities and single-level living. Many are developing new interests and activities – and they do not want to “keep house” anymore. Developments that have low-maintenance options will be particularly attractive to this population. Some popular preferences are:
 - Living near grown children and grandchildren
 - Low maintenance lawn and exterior care
 - Walk-able neighborhoods
 - Good exterior lighting
 - Single level living with the master on the main level as a minimum
- Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) have been highly successful in all areas of the country. While not for everyone, they offer walk-able streets, neighborhood parks and gathering areas – with individual lot sizes being much smaller than historically seen in suburbs. These developments can be exceptionally successful when they are developed with a retail element or proximity to a retail development.
- TNDs can also provide for mixed-income housing in the same development. For example, townhouses (for-rent or for-sale) can be located in the densest portion and serve more moderate incomes.
- “Mini” mansions can be developed as part of TND developments. These mini-mansions are developed to house four living units. Similar to the quad developments of the past, these newer versions visually fit well in a single family neighborhood.
- Sustainable design and construction. Confronting the decline of America's first tier suburbs, there is a growing awareness of what elements ensure sustainability.
 - Housing quality – good materials used for all price points.
 - Sense of community and ownership, not only of one's “lot and house” but of the surrounding community.
 - Design that encourages interaction and familiarity.
 - Diversity of housing in new developments, in essence, not a development of homes that are all the same.
- Low density development remains desirable for a sector of the population and should be provided for and located away from commercial and retail nodes.

In addition, during the next five years the Austell Road LCI trade area is projected to add at least 1,000 new householders. Although the LCI study area is projected to attract 17% of these new householders, there is potential to increase this share if residential development is encouraged in the LCI study area. The majority of these householders are:

- Older – 1,677 are “empty nesters” (45-64 years old) and 512 are seniors (65+ years old).
- Wealthier – 924 will earn more than \$75,000 per year affording housing in excess of \$300,000.
- Racially Mixed – half of the new residents will be minority, particularly African-American and Hispanic.

Given these market and demand dynamics, several housing opportunities have been identified for the study area. During the short-term – next five years – demand will predominately be for “for sale” housing, including senior housing, as described in the following discussions:

- **Higher-Density Housing:** A variety of higher-density housing concepts would have market appeal to a variety of market segments, including younger couples and families, as well as empty nesters and retirees. These concepts include neo-traditional developments, zero-lot-line/cluster homes, townhouses, and condominiums. There are opportunities to develop these types of projects on vacant tracts and/or redevelopment sites throughout the study area. We recommend development of traditional-style single-family homes on small lots laid out in a traditional neighborhood “grid” pattern with sidewalks, street trees, pocket parks and alleyways. These homes should be geared toward “empty nesters” and other childless market segments, such as retirees and young singles and couples. Cluster homes could target a similar market segment with an alternative product. Townhouses and condominiums should be included in this housing mix. The market would also support at least one group housing project geared toward seniors, such as an assisted living facility.
- **Mixed-Use Development:** During the next five years, the market area will support at least one significant mixed-use residential/commercial project, similar to the Smyrna Village or Ivy Walk developments. This type of project is ideally suited on the site(s) of the older, underperforming shopping centers located along the corridor, such as the former Target center, Heritage Hills, or Austell Plaza. A portion of the project would consist of ground-level retail or office space with townhouses or condominium units developed above and behind the retail space. Other commercial and higher-density residential uses, including single-family units, could also be part of the mix.

The market will continue to support middle-income housing, currently priced in the \$200,000s, which is generally affordable to householders earning at least \$50,000 annually. This price point has been successfully developed in the market area in a variety of product types, ranging from traditional single-family homes to higher-density townhouses and ranch condominiums. As previously mentioned, there is potential to push the market on the upper end, with houses priced from the \$300,000s, to create a more well-rounded community. The majority of new householders projected for the market area will earn in excess of \$75,000 and they can afford homes in this higher price point. Conversely, it is important to maintain housing affordability in the community. Although there is abundant affordable housing in both the LCI study area and the trade area, many affordable units are of older stock. Development of new affordable housing should be encouraged to create a well-balanced community.

During the next five years, we do not see an opportunity for additional rental housing in the study area, due to the changing demography and an adequate supply of rental units. There is likely a market need, however, for market rate and affordable senior housing in the form of assisted living facilities and independent living apartments. These projects could be developed in a mixed-income concept. In the longer-term, the demand for traditional high-density apartments will resume.

ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING AFFORDABILITY			
<u>Annual Household Income</u>	<u>Maximum Annual Income</u>	<u>Max. Monthly Income for Housing (30%)</u>	<u>Equivalent House Price*</u>
Less Than \$15,000	\$15,000	\$375	\$59,332
\$15,000-24,999	\$25,000	\$625	\$98,887
\$25,000-34,999	\$35,000	\$875	\$138,441
\$35,000-49,999	\$50,000	\$1,250	\$197,773
\$50,000-74,999	\$75,000	\$1,875	\$296,660
\$75,000-99,999	\$100,000	\$2,500	\$395,546
\$100,000-149,999	\$150,000	\$3,750	\$593,319
\$150,000-249,999	\$250,000	\$6,250	\$988,866
\$250,000-499,999	\$500,000	\$12,500	\$1,977,731
Average Household Income - LCI Study Area			
2006	\$56,151	\$1,404	\$222,103
Average Household Income - Trade Area			
2006	\$63,929	\$1,598	\$252,869

* Based on a 95% loan at 7% interest for 30 years.
Sources: Claritas (Household Income) and Ackerman/JJG

Commercial Market Analysis

The commercial market for the Austell Road LCI area consists primarily of retail and office development. Our research focused on an inventory and assessment of projects in the Austell Road trade area. Aggregate market trends, primary tenants/users, retail trade potential, and job composition and growth were among the other factors considered. In addition, interviews with active commercial brokers/developers and officials at WellStar Cobb Hospital were also conducted. Our analysis of current market conditions, strengths and challenges for commercial development, and commercial development opportunities follows.

Market Conditions

Retail Market

Cobb County has an inventory of approximately 376 shopping centers, totaling 26.4 million square feet and representing 16% of the Atlanta market, according to Dorey Publishing. During the past four years average annual deliveries have only slightly outpaced absorption leaving the Cobb County market with an occupancy rate of 87.9%, which is below equilibrium for retail space (90-95%). The Cobb market is focused on three specific submarkets: Cumberland/East Cobb, Kennesaw/Northwest Cobb, and Austell. The Austell market area is the smallest submarket with 4.5 million square feet, representing 17% of the county's retail space. This submarket spills over into the Fulton Industrial area across the County line into Fulton, but the majority of retail space falls on the Cobb County side of this market. It has experienced lower occupancy (82.5%) and lower rents (\$9.71/SF) compared to the County as a whole.

There are 27 shopping centers in the Austell Road trade area (three-mile radius) comprising 3.0 million square feet of space, representing a ratio of 54 square feet per person, which is notably

higher than the average for Cobb County (39.5 square feet/person) and metro Atlanta (36.6 square feet/person). This high ratio of retail space indicates that the Austell Road market is significantly overbuilt. The Austell Road study area includes 10 shopping centers totaling 1.5 million square feet, representing half of retail space in the trade area. These statistics do not include freestanding retail buildings, which likely add at least 500,000 square feet of space to the trade area. Other observations about the retail market are:

- Most of the retail space is concentrated at the intersection of Austell Road and the East-West Connector, extending north to Hurt Road and west to Floyd Road; seven study area shopping centers (1.36 million square feet) are located in and around this triangle. Other significant retail corridors in the trade area include the East-West Connector, Floyd Road, Powder Springs Road, and Veteran’s Memorial Highway, although centers located along the latter three corridors tend to be older and not competitive with a few exceptions.
- The average shopping center size is 111,200 square feet. Newer centers tend to be very large, anchored with big-box tenants or smaller, unanchored strips or specialty centers. The largest is East-West Commons (450,000 SF), anchored by Target and Lowes, among other large tenants. The smallest is 2495 East-West Connector (13,000 SF), a new strip center.
- The shopping centers are surprisingly well occupied given the amount of space for the number of people. The overall occupancy rate is 91.1%, but it is stronger for centers in the LCI study area (97%) than those outside the study area (85%).
- There are three competitive shopping centers in the LCI study area, as shown in the following chart, based on their age, condition and tenancy. Another six centers in the trade area (614,000 SF) are considered competitive, including the Wal-Mart Supercenter at the East-West Connector and Floyd Road. The remaining centers are leased, but struggling with lower quality tenants.

COMPETITIVE SHOPPING CENTERS				
AUSTELL ROAD LCI STUDY AREA				
Project	Year		Occupancy	
	Built	Sq. Ft.	Rate	Anchor Tenants
Brookwood Square	1990	253,448	100%	Home Depot, Marshall's, Staples
East-West Commons	1999	450,000	99.8%	Target, Lowes, TJ Maxx, Borders, Etc.
East-West Crossing	2001	150,000	100%	Kohl's, Ross, Rack Room Shoes
		853,448		

Source: Ackerman/JJG

- The market is served by a full array of tenants, including all the large discounters – two Wal-Marts (including one free-standing Wal-Mart on the west side of the trade area), Target, K Mart, and a free-standing BJ’s Wholesale Club. It also includes eight grocery stores, of which the most competitive are Wal-Mart, Kroger, and Publix. Two grocers have recently closed in this market – Kroger and Ingles – due to competition by Wal-Mart – and others are struggling, such as Food Depot and Super Foods. The other big-box apparel and specialty stores are also well represented
- The trade area has begun to attract full-service restaurants during the last five years or so. Prior to that time, fast food establishments were essentially the only dining choice. There are 12 moderate to mid-priced full-service restaurants in the trade area, including Longhorn Steakhouse, Red Lobster, and Ted’s Montana Grill.

A retail gap analysis was performed for the Austell Road trade area based on Claritas data. This type of analysis provides an indication of supply-demand equilibrium based on retail sales. As shown in the following table, there is demand for \$82.2 million, but this demand is primarily in the area of motor vehicles, parts and dealers, which are not likely going to locate in West Cobb given their current Cobb market concentrations in Marietta and Kennesaw/Town Center. A positive retail gap also exists in the areas of furniture, electronics, building materials and garden equipment, and food service and drinking places. Conversely, there are negative gaps in the areas of general merchandise, food and beverages (grocery stores), and clothing/apparel.

RETAIL TRADE POTENTIAL (2006)			
AUSTELL ROAD TRADE AREA (THREE-MILE RADIUS)			
Category	Demand/ Consumer Expenditures	Supply/ Retail Sales	Retail Opportunity Gap/Surplus
Motor vehicles, parts & dealers	\$172,746,274	\$33,360,069	\$139,386,205
Furniture & home furnishings	\$20,931,299	\$7,533,216	\$13,398,083
Electronics & appliances	\$18,717,072	\$4,623,780	\$14,093,292
Building material & garden equipment	\$95,805,476	\$61,597,029	\$34,208,447
Food & beverages	\$95,415,209	\$116,666,552	(\$21,251,343)
Health & personal care	\$40,040,634	\$45,721,020	(\$5,680,386)
Gasoline stations	\$87,302,689	\$91,163,888	(\$3,861,199)
Clothing & clothing accessories	\$38,627,782	\$59,444,821	(\$20,817,039)
Sporting goods, hobbies, books, & music	\$13,894,522	\$19,337,526	(\$5,443,004)
General merchandise/department stores	\$99,058,529	\$211,603,567	(\$112,545,038)
Miscellaneous items	\$19,883,369	\$23,475,121	(\$3,591,752)
Non-store retailers (e-shopping, vending)	\$46,741,523	\$5,005,652	\$41,735,871
Food service & drinking places	\$75,786,113	\$63,170,686	\$12,615,427
Total	\$824,950,491	\$742,702,927	\$82,247,564

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (11/2006)

Office Market

The Northwest office submarket, which primarily comprises of Cobb County, is Atlanta's largest office submarket with 28.4 million square feet, representing 16.6% of total inventory, according to CoStar Group. Unlike its large sister market, Central Perimeter, which has dense, concentrated office space, the Northwest market is spread out across several nodes. The largest area is Cumberland/Galleria, representing 80% of space, but there are strong pockets in Marietta/East Cobb and Kennesaw/Town Center. The Northwest market has struggled since the 2001 economic recession, but it is improving considerably in the last few years:

- It has a vacancy rate of 18.5%, which remains higher than the metro Atlanta vacancy rate of 17.4%. However, the Northwest area's vacancy rate has actually fallen from a high water mark of 22% in 2002 and 2003, which is a significant improvement.
- It has achieved a net absorption (the net change in occupied space) of 322,000 square feet for the first three quarters of 2006, representing 11% of metro Atlanta absorption. Since 2000, absorption has averaged only 69,000 square feet annually (due to negative absorption in 2001 and 2002); however, average annual absorption has increased to 316,000 square feet since 2004.

- The Northwest market has experienced some short-term weakness, but it's a good, long-term market due to its size, transportation/access improvements, and amenities such as retail support services and the Cobb Galleria Centre. It is also reasonably accessible to executive housing in Buckhead, Vinings, and East Cobb, which also drives office locations.

Office space in the Austell Road area is focused on the area immediately surrounding WellStar Cobb Hospital, which is the driver for office space in this market area. Owned by the Hospital Authority of Cobb County, WellStar Cobb Hospital is a 347-bed hospital that opened in 1968 and comprises approximately 670,000 square feet of facilities on a 27-acre campus. A total of 484 physicians serve the hospital, which has a budgeted employment base of 2,264. The hospital has a respectable occupancy rate of 72.3% - higher than the County average of 56.5% - and it is currently profitable; its profitability, however, is deteriorating according to hospital officials due to a decline in managed care and an increase in indigent care. Although the market it serves is growing, many higher-income patients with choices tend to support other area hospitals, such as WellStar Kennestone, WellStar Douglas, and Piedmont; this is a challenge for WellStar Cobb Hospital. Further, WellStar Paulding Hospital is relocating from Dallas to Eastern Paulding County at US 278 and Georgia 92, which could further erode the patient base at WellStar Cobb in the future. In addition, the hospital is nearly 40 years old and in need of renovations and capital expenditures, which is another challenge.

A total of 32 office buildings are located in and around the hospital and the LCI study area totaling 580,000 square feet. The vast majority – 29 buildings with 555,600 square feet – is medical office buildings, which indicates the importance of the hospital in this market. Only three buildings (24,000 square feet) are conventional office developments, which signify the limited depth of non-medical offices; an exception is the administrative building that houses a branch of the Cobb County government. The market is well leased with an occupancy rate of 92%. The medical office market is summarized in the following table, which shows that the market primarily consists of older, lower quality properties. Only six properties (208,000 SF) have been developed since 1990, including two currently under construction: 1) a free-standing building for Kaiser Permanente (60,000 SF) and 2) Group VI Medical Park, a multi-tenant property comprising 22,500 square feet.

MEDICAL OFFICE MARKET SUMMARY				
WELLSTAR COBB HOSPITAL AREA				
	<u>No. of Properties</u>	<u>Total Sq. Ft.</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Average Sq. Ft.</u>
Year Built				
Before 1980	14	128,720	23.2%	9,194
1980s	7	219,050	39.4%	31,293
1990s	2	64,496	11.6%	32,248
2000s	6	143,362	25.8%	23,894
	29	555,628	100.0%	19,160
Class				
A	2	82,500	14.8%	41,250
B	10	254,978	45.9%	25,498
C	17	218,150	39.3%	12,832
	29	555,628	100.0%	19,160
Type				
Single-Tenant	18	295,702	53.2%	16,428
Multi-Tenant	11	259,926	46.8%	23,630
	29	555,628	100.0%	19,160

Source: Ackerman/JJG

According to medical market specialists, there is not a lot of pent-up demand for space in the market area despite the high occupancy rate. Most current physician practices are not expanding and the Austell Road corridor is not a preferred location for new practices, which tend to locate near Kennestone and WellStar Douglas hospitals or in the Smyrna/Vinings area, due to the faster growth and higher incomes in these areas. Many physician groups simply are not willing to pay the lease rates necessary to support new high-quality construction, which fall in the \$18-20 per square foot range, net of operating expenses. The exception is the occasional practice that relocates to a build-to-suit building. Recent examples include Georgia Lung Center and Cobb Physicians Group. Many physician groups also have a desire to own rather than to lease their space. In addition to physician groups, the area has attracted other types of medical uses, such as imaging centers and lab testing facilities, many of which are located in freestanding buildings near the hospital. Medical-oriented education facilities that offer technical training are noticeably missing from the market area, which may be due to the area's remote location away from the Interstate system.

Strengths and Challenges

Austell Road LCI study area offers several *strengths* for commercial development:

- Growing trade area and study area from which to draw customers and employees.
- Good access and traffic volume along the East-West Connector and Austell Road.
- WellStar Cobb Hospital is economic generator for area.
- Cobb County location, offering lower taxes and pro-business government compared to many metro counties.

Key *challenges* for commercial development include:

- Limited supply of large tracts of land in immediate area.

- Traffic congestion on major roads during peak driving/commuting times.
- Removed from Interstates 285 and 75 – 6 miles – depending on location.
- Lack of critical mass of people residing in LCI study area.
- Lack of executive-level housing to support office development and higher-end retail development.

Commercial Market Opportunities

Retail and office demand is derived by residents and employees in the trade area. Income is also an important factor. As previously indicated, the three-mile trade area includes approximately 55,500 residents and 19,640 households with an average annual income of nearly \$64,000. As a side note, retailers typically begin to look hard at market areas with an income exceeding \$50,000. During the next five years, the trade area is expected to add more than 3,000 new residents and 1,000 new households, according to Claritas. Income is also expected to grow at a nominal rate of 5% (1% per annum) over the next five years to \$67,300. In addition, the trade area has more than 1,500 business establishments with total employment exceeding 17,000, of which three-quarters are in the retail trade and services sectors, based on Claritas data. Although Claritas does not forecast employment, we would expect at least 900 to 1,000 new jobs in the next five years assuming a nominal growth rate in the 1.0% range.

Retail is also driven by tenant location decisions, whether there is market support or not. Types of tenants notably missing from the market include sporting goods, entertainment, house wares, and electronics, which might include such brands as Dick’s Sporting Goods, The Sports Authority, Dave & Busters, Barnes & Noble, Bed Bath & Beyond, Linens & Things, Best Buy, Circuit City, and HH Gregg. The market could also support additional mid-priced, full-service restaurants, including Applebee’s, Bahama Breeze, Buffalo’s, Chipotle Grill, Gordon Biersch Brewery, Jock’s & Jill’s, Ryan’s Steakhouse, Ruby Tuesday, and Smokey Bones. Sembler is reportedly developing a shopping center east of the LCI study area on the East-West Connector and Floyd Road, which would be anchored by a relocated Home Depot among other tenants. Brookwood Square, currently anchored by Home Depot, Marshall’s and Staples, might be the next struggling shopping center in the market area.

Several older or abandoned shopping centers along the Austell Road corridor should be targeted for redevelopment, as shown on the following table. It shows a list of currently struggling and abandoned shopping centers that offer tremendous redevelopment opportunities near the intersection of Austell Road and the East-West Connector. These older shopping centers should be targeted for mixed-use development that would include residential uses, as well as commercial uses. The net effect is a smaller amount of commercial space in the short-term, but more households to support the existing and future commercial space. The amount of new commercial space to be developed would depend on the ability to draw anchor tenants, but the market should support at least one-third to half of the space removed from the market in new construction and/or redevelopment.

SHOPPING CENTERS WITH REDEVELOPMENTP POTENTIAL					
AUSTELL ROAD LCI STUDY AREA					
Project	Year		Occupancy		Anchor Tenants
	Acres	Built	Sq. Ft.	Rate	
Austell Plaza	11.84	1992	120,000	91.6%	Big Lots, Dollar General, Citi Trends
Austell Floyd Plaza	3.79	1969	35,260	100.0%	Fred's, Ocean Fish Market, U Haul
Heritage Hills	21.60	1990	226,583	97.4%	Food Depot, Hobby Lobby, Dollar Tree
Former Target S/C	10.21	N/A	150,000	0.0%	Vacant
	47.44		531,843		

Source: Ackerman/JJG

Investment in significant new office development in the LCI study area warrants some caution. Market conditions are currently weak and there is a lack of executive-level housing to support a significant amount of office demand. The office market will continue to be focus on medical rather than convention space, now and in the foreseeable future, because the primary office driver is WellStar Cobb Hospital. Since nearly all the newer space on the market is for lease, there may be a short-term opportunity for Williamsburg-style office condominiums geared to small medical and professional service tenants, with individual units ranging in size from 1,200 to 2,400 square feet. During the next five years, there should be demand to support the recent pace of construction of approximately 10,000 to 15,000 square feet of new office development per year, including both single-tenant and multi-tenant options.

There may also be opportunities for other types of commercial uses that were not part of the scope of work for this market analysis. Hotels are probably the most notable use. The market area's first hotel, a Holiday Inn Express, is under construction at Tramore Pointe, located on the East-West Connector just west of the LCI study area; they reportedly chose this location due to potential demand generated by the hospital. During the next five years, there could be an opportunity for another mid-priced, limited service 80-100-room hotel. Potential brands include Hampton Inn and Ramada Limited among others. Other potential commercial uses might include institutional uses, such as churches and educational facilities.

Summary

In summary, there is market support for a variety of development opportunities in the Austell Road LCI study area. The area offers a good location within metro Atlanta and is a reasonable distance to large employment centers in Marietta and the Cumberland/Galleria area. Other notable strengths include the area's access and traffic volume along the East-West Connector and Austell Road, as well as WellStar Cobb Hospital, which is the primary economic driver for area. In addition, there is a growing trade area – population and employment – to generate demand for real estate.

The three-mile trade area for the LCI study area currently has 55,500 residents, 19,640 households, and an employment base of 17,000. The trade area's population tends to be racially mixed (53% minority), family-oriented (74% of households), and of middle income (average household income of \$64,000). During the next five years, the trade area is expected to add more than 3,000 new residents and 1,000 new households; and a minimum of 900 to 1,000 new

jobs is conservatively forecasted. The LCI study area represents only 14% of the trade area's population – 7,625 of 55,000 residents – but it contains 41% for the trade area's jobs – 7,043 of 17,000 employees. This information illustrates that Austell Road is more of a business corridor rather than residential corridor, currently lacking a critical mass of residents, which is one of the area's challenges.

Other key challenges include: 1) traffic congestion on major roads during peak driving times; 2) poor reputation of schools serving the corridor, particularly the middle school and high school, which limits the area's appeal to families; 3) lack of executive-level housing to support office development and higher-end retail development; and 4) a limited supply of land for development in immediate area, although there are several redevelopment opportunities.

The retail market is overbuilt, but the excess supply is largely the result of older, non-competitive centers that could be targeted for redevelopment. These include five centers in the study area that total approximately 532,000 square feet, including the former Target shopping center. There are several notable retail category gaps in the market area, including sporting goods, entertainment, house wares, and electronics, as well as mid-priced full-service restaurants.

The office market is currently weak and the lack of high-priced housing does not support significant new development. The market is dominated by medical office space because the primary office driver is WellStar Cobb Hospital. This trend will not change in the near-term future. During the next five years, there should be demand to support a small amount of office development on a pace of 10,000 to 15,000 square feet per year. The hospital should also support the development of a mid-priced, limited service hotel in the market area.

The residential market offers tremendous near-term development opportunities particularly for "for sale" units compared to rental units. The Austell Road LCI trade area is projected to add at least 1,000 new householders during the next five years. Although the LCI study area is projected to attract 17% of these new householders, there is potential to increase this share if residential development is encouraged in the LCI study area. These new householders are projected to be older and wealthier than current householders as well as more racially mixed. These new householders create demand for a variety of residential product that can be accommodated in the LCI study area.

Based on the assessment of current market conditions and the market’s demand dynamics, the following development opportunities have been identified for the Austell Road LCI study area for the next five years:

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AUSTELL ROAD LCI STUDY AREA		
Type of Property	Units/Square Feet	
	Low Range	High Range
RESIDENTIAL		
Single-Family/Cluster Homes		
\$200,000-299,999	85	120
\$300,000+	35	60
Condominiums/Townhouses		
Less than \$200,000/Affordable	20	30
\$200,000+	20	40
Group Housing/Assisted Living	40	50
	200	300
COMMERCIAL		
Retail/Commercial	200,000	250,000
Office	50,000	75,000
	250,000	325,000
Hotel (Rooms)	80	100
<i>Source: Ackerman/JJG</i>		

As shown, the market should support 200 to 300 new residential units, comprised of single-family units (60%) and multi-family units (40%). All are “for sale” units, with the exception of the assisted living facility, which should have ample support from the growing senior population. A variety of product types and price points is recommended, including higher-priced housing. Conversely, we recommend a policy to integrate affordable housing in the mix, possibly by offering higher-density options to developers who are willing to include this product. In addition, there is market support for 250,000 to 325,000 square feet of commercial space and a hotel. Office opportunities will be somewhat limited; and retail opportunities will depend on a couple of factors: 1) the ability for the developer to attract anchor tenants; and 2) the potential to redevelop at least one existing under-performing shopping center.

Another strong recommendation is to encourage higher-density housing and mixed-use development in this market area in appropriate locations. Higher-density housing is required to support a “New Urbanist”, walkable lifestyle, and it can include an array of product types, including single-family units. This type of housing is easily integrated into mixed-use environment that includes commercial uses in an integrated development.

- I. Demographics**
- II. Residential Market**
- III. Retail Market**
- IV. Medical/Office Market**
- V. Key Development Sites**

I. Demographics

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

AUSTELL ROAD LCI MARKET AREA

Population Trends	Austell Rd. LCI	Austell Road & East-West Connector		
	Study Area	1-Mile Radius	3-Mile Radius	5-Mile Radius
1990 (Census)	5,015	5,243	38,153	108,950
2000 (Census)	7,005	7,450	51,954	146,839
2006 (Estimate)	7,625	8,674	55,527	160,350
2011 (Projected)	8,106	9,644	58,545	171,580
Annual % Change				
1990-2006	2.7%	3.2%	2.4%	2.4%
2006-2011	1.2%	2.1%	1.1%	1.4%
Household Trends				
1990 (Census)	1,717	1,750	13,270	39,695
2000 (Census)	2,507	2,696	18,444	52,438
2006 (Estimate)	2,722	3,149	19,640	56,580
2011 (Projected)	2,893	3,519	20,666	60,039
Annual % Change				
1990-2006	2.9%	3.7%	2.5%	2.2%
2006-2011	1.2%	2.2%	1.0%	1.2%
Population Profile (2006)				
Median Age	35.70	35.54	35.87	34.94
% Under 18	26.0%	25.5%	26.8%	26.7%
% 65+	12.9%	13.6%	10.7%	9.8%
Minority Population (Non-White)	55.3%	58.0%	52.9%	51.9%
African-American Population	45.2%	50.6%	42.3%	40.2%
Hispanic Population (Any Race)	9.5%	7.8%	9.6%	12.8%
Male/Female Ratio	0.88%	0.83%	0.92%	0.98%
Married Population (Aged 15+)	75.1%	52.0%	59.8%	57.3%
High School Graduates (Aged 25+)	61.0%	62.8%	58.2%	56.6%
College Graduates (Aged 25+)	20.6%	19.1%	26.3%	25.3%
Housing/Household Profile (2006)				
Average Household Size	2.65	2.55	2.76	2.75
% Family Households	70.4%	68.9%	74.2%	71.6%
% Single-Person Households	29.6%	31.1%	25.8%	28.4%
Housing Units (Occupied)				
% Owner-Occupied	62.1%	58.8%	78.3%	72.3%
% Renter-Occupied	37.9%	41.2%	21.7%	27.7%
Median Owner-Occ. House Value	\$136,438	\$134,941	\$146,850	\$145,808
Income Profile (2006)				
Average Household Income	\$56,151	\$53,761	\$63,929	\$63,899
Median Household Income	\$48,370	\$46,834	\$55,878	\$53,538
Per Capita Income	\$21,661	\$21,589	\$23,336	\$23,250
Household Income				
Less than \$15,000	8.2%	9.1%	6.9%	8.5%
\$15,000-24,999	10.8%	10.5%	8.5%	8.9%
\$25,000-34,999	13.3%	14.2%	10.1%	11.5%
\$35,000-49,999	19.9%	20.6%	18.2%	17.6%
\$50,000-74,999	27.1%	27.1%	27.0%	24.3%
\$75,000-99,999	10.9%	9.8%	14.8%	13.7%
\$100,000-149,999	7.2%	7.2%	11.2%	11.3%
\$150,000+	2.6%	1.6%	3.3%	4.1%
Employment Profile (2006)				
Occupation Classification (Aged 16+)				
Blue-Collar	19.5%	17.4%	21.2%	23.3%
White Collar	67.2%	68.3%	66.8%	64.7%
Service and Farm	13.3%	14.3%	12.1%	12.1%
Class of Worker (Aged 16+)				
Private Worker	85.5%	83.1%	83.3%	83.6%
Public Worker	10.5%	13.0%	11.8%	11.4%
Self-Employed Worker	4.0%	3.9%	4.9%	5.0%
Avg. Travel Time to Work (Minutes)	33.78	34.03	35.87	35.37

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (November 2006)

Ackerman & Co.

HOUSEHOLD FORMATIONS BY INCOME AND AGE AUSTELL ROAD & EAST-WEST CONNECTOR - 3-MILE RADIUS

New Household Formations - 2000-2006

Income Range	Age 15-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65-74	Age 75+	Total
Less than \$10,000	1	(21)	(22)	1	16	40	26	41
\$10,000-14,999	(7)	(11)	(7)	3	21	(1)	0	(2)
\$15,000-19,999	4	(37)	(51)	(7)	41	42	8	0
\$20,000-24,999	21	(64)	(8)	(14)	15	(2)	43	(9)
\$25,000-29,999	11	(21)	(9)	19	24	20	(8)	36
\$30,000-34,999	1	(55)	(77)	52	46	8	17	(8)
\$35,000-39,999	25	(8)	(32)	(4)	(19)	6	31	(1)
\$40,000-44,999	(27)	(130)	(79)	72	81	9	7	(67)
\$45,555-49,999	3	14	49	12	38	50	10	176
\$50,000-59,999	41	(126)	(56)	20	6	53	18	(44)
\$60,000-74,999	19	(109)	(88)	102	93	85	46	148
\$75,000-99,999	43	(51)	65	88	140	39	8	332
\$100,000-124,999	2	50	20	65	56	29	1	223
\$125,000-149,999	2	1	81	38	41	18	10	191
\$150,000+	2	(2)	30	89	29	7	3	158
Total	141	(570)	(184)	536	628	403	220	1,174

New Household Formations - 2006-2011

Income Range	Age 15-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65-74	Age 75+	Total
Less than \$10,000	8	(26)	(18)	(4)	13	11	32	16
\$10,000-14,999	7	(11)	(16)	4	9	(4)	(5)	(16)
\$15,000-19,999	(5)	(14)	(25)	(1)	24	2	11	(8)
\$20,000-24,999	19	(28)	(18)	(13)	20	11	8	(1)
\$25,000-29,999	19	(48)	(10)	(21)	32	9	32	13
\$30,000-34,999	10	(62)	(52)	33	21	4	21	(25)
\$35,000-39,999	(6)	(24)	(59)	29	31	14	23	8
\$40,000-44,999	6	(60)	(43)	(20)	21	43	21	(32)
\$45,555-49,999	3	(73)	(28)	71	43	9	9	34
\$50,000-59,999	13	(100)	8	9	48	41	22	41
\$60,000-74,999	34	(157)	(19)	58	76	60	25	77
\$75,000-99,999	26	(101)	45	142	114	23	20	269
\$100,000-124,999	14	(58)	79	105	84	20	9	253
\$125,000-149,999	5	6	46	62	43	11	(1)	172
\$150,000+	0	(19)	86	103	29	28	3	230
Total	153	(775)	(24)	557	608	282	230	1,031

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (November 2006)

Ackerman & Co.

2006 EMPLOYMENT COMPOSITION

AUSTELL ROAD LCI MARKET AREA

AUSTELL ROAD LCI STUDY AREA

THREE-MILE RADIUS AUSTELL RD. & EAST-WEST CONNECTOR

<u>Industry Sector</u>	<u>No. of</u>		<u>% of</u>		<u>No. of</u>		<u>% of</u>	
	<u>Establishments</u>	<u>Total Employment</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Establishments</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>
Agriculture	5	15	0.2%	0.2%	43	154	0.9%	0.9%
Mining	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Construction	16	99	1.4%	1.4%	129	878	5.2%	5.2%
Manufacturing	10	289	4.1%	4.1%	55	1,024	6.0%	6.0%
Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities	14	134	1.9%	1.9%	54	480	2.8%	2.8%
Wholesale Trade	10	81	1.2%	1.2%	56	405	2.4%	2.4%
Retail Trade	136	2,553	36.2%	36.2%	377	6,029	35.5%	35.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	35	159	2.3%	2.3%	113	651	3.8%	3.8%
Services	241	3,649	51.8%	51.8%	691	7,266	42.7%	42.7%
Hotel and lodging services	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	1	7	0.0%	0.0%
Personal services	60	208	3.0%	3.0%	226	863	5.1%	5.1%
Business services	14	64	0.9%	0.9%	122	519	3.1%	3.1%
Health services	130	2,860	40.6%	40.6%	160	3,387	19.9%	19.9%
Legal services	5	16	0.2%	0.2%	10	30	0.2%	0.2%
Educational services	4	248	3.5%	3.5%	27	1,489	8.8%	8.8%
Social services	6	107	1.5%	1.5%	37	375	2.2%	2.2%
Other services	22	146	2.1%	2.1%	108	596	3.5%	3.5%
Public Administration	3	64	0.9%	0.9%	10	120	0.7%	0.7%
Total	470	7,043	100.0%	100.0%	1,528	17,007	100.0%	100.0%

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (November 2006)

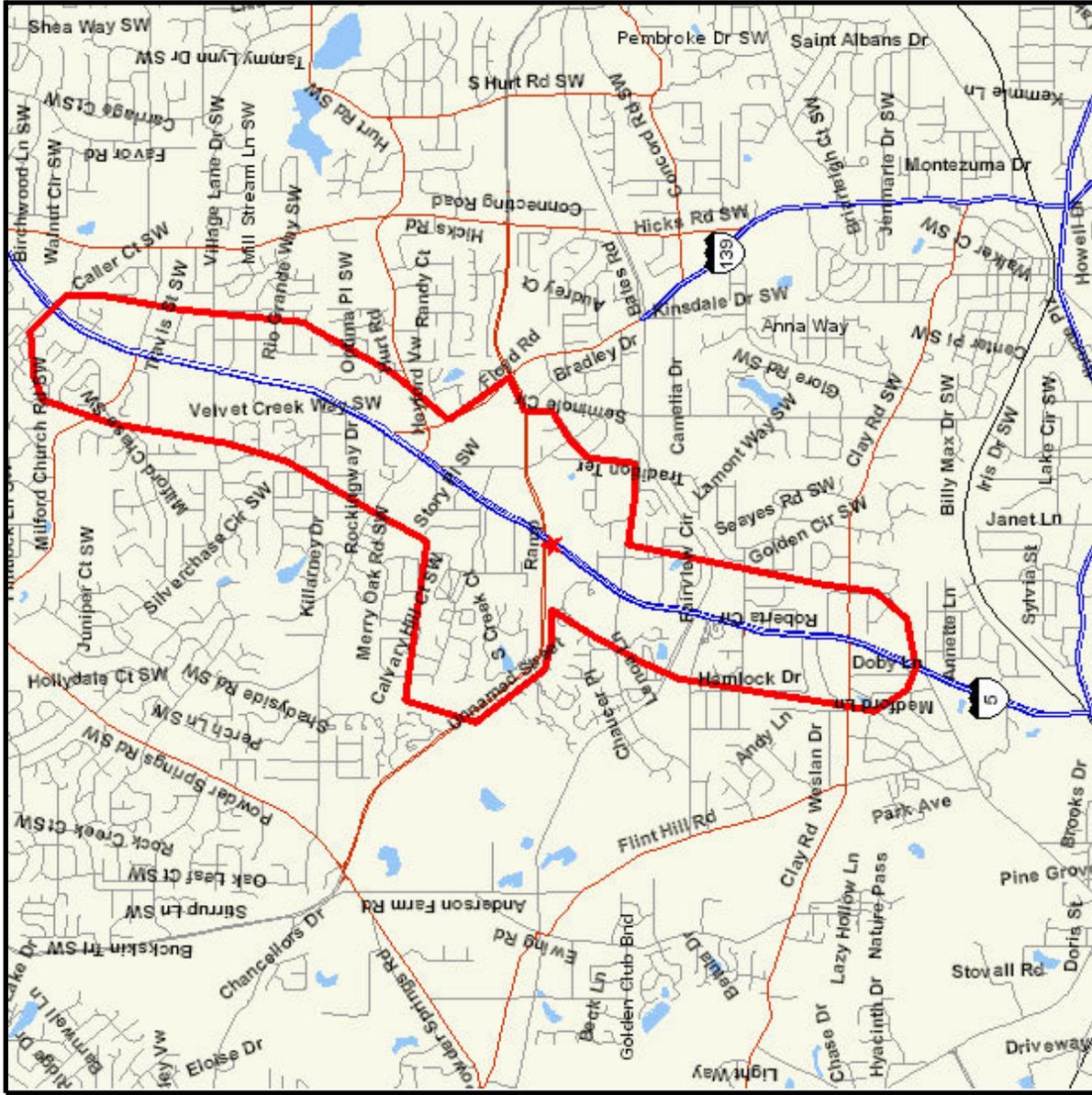
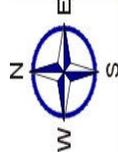
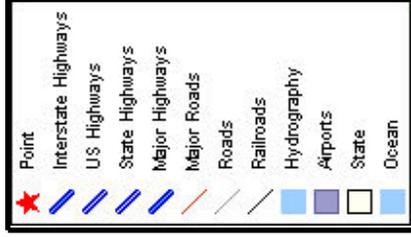
Ackerman & Co.

Area Map

Prepared For: Austell Rd. Study
 Project Code: Austell Rd. Study

Order #: 964620063
 Site: 01

4110 AUSTELL RD
 AUSTELL, GA 30106-1841
 Coord: 33.853535, -84.604052
 Polygon - See Appendix for Points

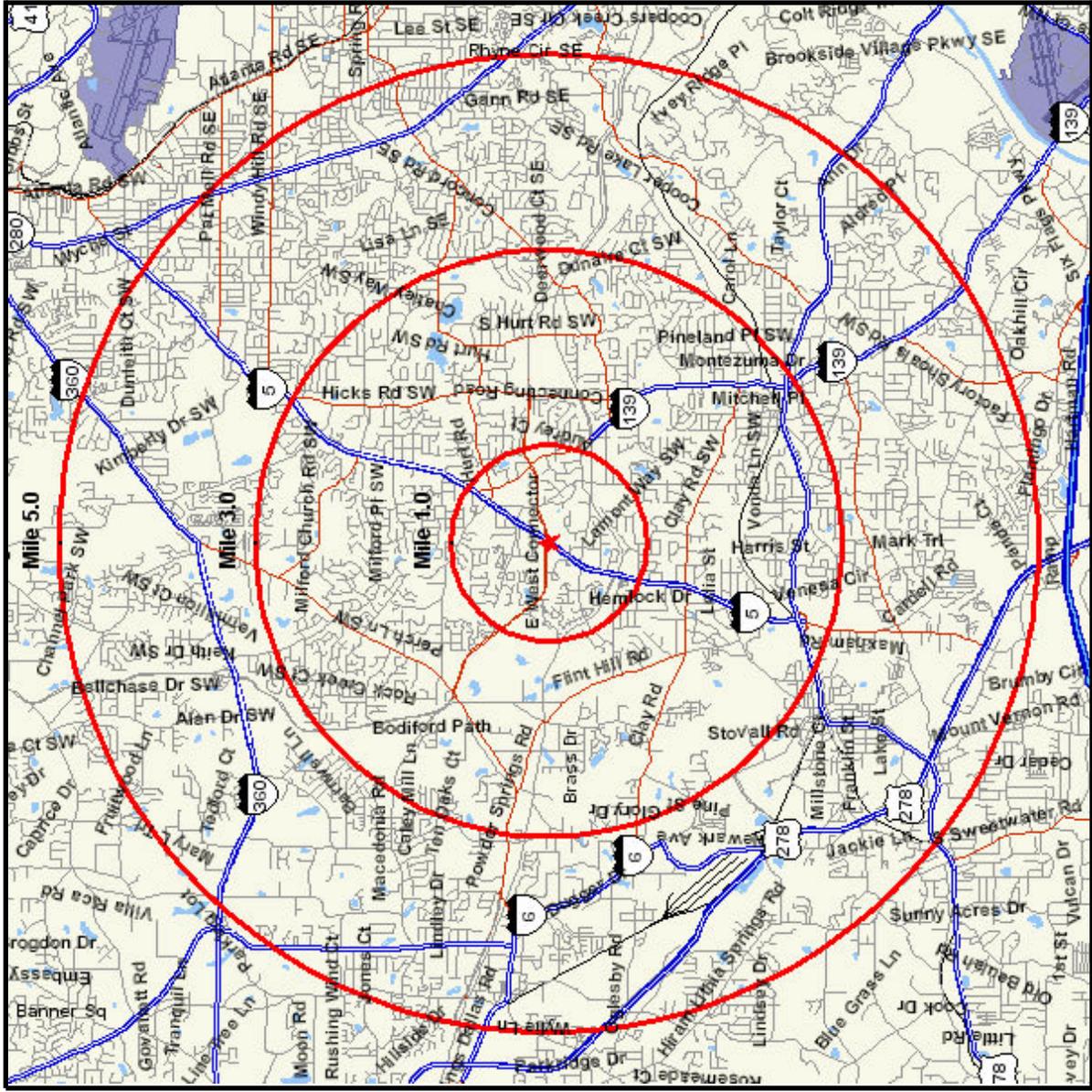
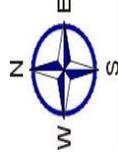
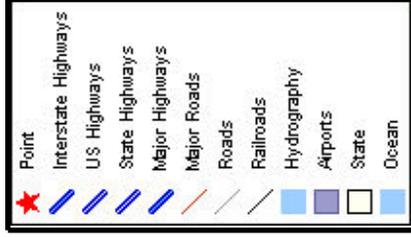


Area Map

Prepared For:
Project Code: Austell Rd. & EW Connector

Order #: 964620248
Site: 01

4110 AUSTELL RD
AUSTELL, GA 30106-1841
Coord: 33.853535, -84.604052
Radius - See Appendix for Details



FORECASTS-POPULATION, HOUSEHOLDS & EMPLOYMENT

SOUTH/SW COBB, COBB COUNTY & ATLANTA REGION

South Cobb - Superdistrict 35*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>Population/ Household</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Jobs/ Housing Balance</u>
2000	99,483	36,367	2.74	29,787	0.82
2005	106,887	39,573	2.70	32,754	0.83
2010	112,462	41,543	2.71	37,181	0.90
2015	117,137	44,054	2.66	40,854	0.93
2020	121,185	46,209	2.62	46,872	1.01
2025	124,634	48,069	2.59	52,013	1.08
2030	128,962	49,927	2.58	57,630	1.15
Annual % Change					
2000-2005	1.4%	1.7%	---	1.9%	---
2005-2010	1.0%	1.0%	---	2.6%	---
2010-2015	0.8%	1.2%	---	1.9%	---
2015-2020	0.7%	1.0%	---	2.8%	---
2020-2025	0.6%	0.8%	---	2.1%	---
2025-2030	0.7%	0.8%	---	2.1%	---

Southwest Cobb County - Superdistrict 36

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>Population/ Household</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Jobs/ Housing Balance</u>
2000	64,568	21,481	3.01	10,710	0.50
2005	72,038	24,199	2.98	12,629	0.52
2010	74,117	24,993	2.97	14,921	0.60
2015	78,099	26,877	2.91	16,811	0.63
2020	81,067	28,359	2.86	19,705	0.69
2025	83,577	29,642	2.82	23,320	0.79
2030	86,446	30,837	2.80	26,461	0.86
Annual % Change					
2000-2005	2.2%	2.4%	---	3.4%	---
2005-2010	0.6%	0.6%	---	3.4%	---
2010-2015	1.1%	1.5%	---	2.4%	---
2015-2020	0.7%	1.1%	---	3.2%	---
2020-2025	0.6%	0.9%	---	3.4%	---
2025-2030	0.7%	0.8%	---	2.6%	---

* The Austell Road LCI Study Area is located in Superdistrict 35.

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Ackerman & Co.

FORECASTS (Continued)

SOUTH/SW COBB, COBB COUNTY & ATLANTA REGION

Cobb County					
<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>Population/ Household</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Jobs/ Housing Balance</u>
2000	607,751	227,590	2.67	313,800	1.38
2005	643,703	243,768	2.64	312,748	1.28
2010	668,960	252,846	2.65	337,367	1.33
2015	694,193	267,228	2.60	361,638	1.35
2020	718,658	280,751	2.56	386,008	1.37
2025	737,356	291,598	2.53	415,221	1.42
2030	763,889	303,658	2.52	448,821	1.48
Annual % Change					
2000-2005	1.2%	1.4%	---	-0.1%	---
2005-2010	0.8%	0.7%	---	1.5%	---
2010-2015	0.7%	1.1%	---	1.4%	---
2015-2020	0.7%	1.0%	---	1.3%	---
2020-2025	0.5%	0.8%	---	1.5%	---
2025-2030	0.7%	0.8%	---	1.6%	---

10-County Atlanta Region*					
<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>Population/ Household</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Jobs/ Housing Balance</u>
2000	3,429,379	1,262,401	2.72	1,991,450	1.58
2005	3,813,709	1,421,506	2.68	1,982,828	1.39
2010	4,038,777	1,497,636	2.70	2,168,669	1.45
2015	4,311,483	1,627,334	2.65	2,375,241	1.46
2020	4,591,877	1,757,524	2.61	2,597,629	1.48
2025	4,886,473	1,892,715	2.58	2,829,838	1.50
2030	5,261,534	2,047,169	2.57	3,086,304	1.51
Annual % Change					
2000-2005	2.1%	2.4%	---	-0.1%	---
2005-2010	1.2%	1.0%	---	1.8%	---
2010-2015	1.3%	1.7%	---	1.8%	---
2015-2020	1.3%	1.6%	---	1.8%	---
2020-2025	1.3%	1.5%	---	1.7%	---
2025-2030	1.5%	1.6%	---	1.8%	---

* The Atlanta Region includes the following counties: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale.

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Ackerman & Co.

EMPLOYMENT FORECAST BY INDUSTRY SOUTH COBB COUNTY (SUPERDISTRICT 35)

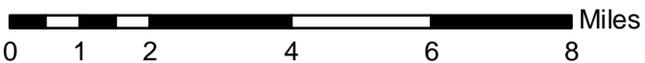
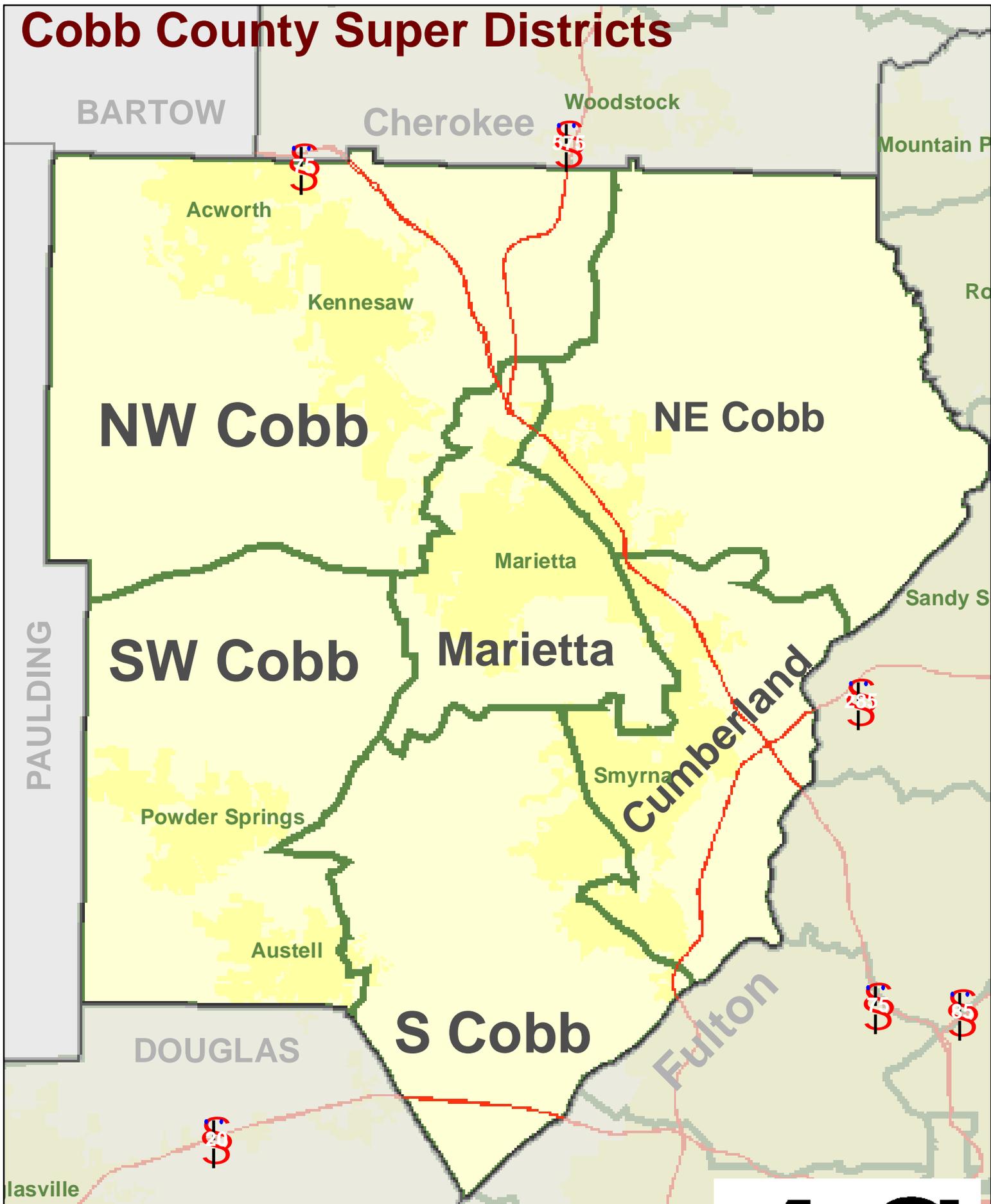
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>% of Total</u>		<u>Annual % Change</u>
								<u>2000</u>	<u>2030</u>	
Construction	1,838	1,381	1,532	1,582	1,753	1,946	2,190	17.2%	10.9%	0.6%
Manufacturing	1,345	1,521	1,638	1,633	1,570	1,551	1,565	12.6%	12.0%	0.5%
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	394	438	412	407	417	417	444	3.7%	3.5%	0.4%
Wholesale Trade	209	435	1,150	1,342	2,363	3,668	3,972	2.0%	3.4%	10.3%
Retail Trade	2,176	2,645	3,174	3,674	4,094	4,520	5,069	20.3%	20.9%	2.9%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	210	217	229	261	326	485	690	2.0%	1.7%	4.0%
Services	2,531	3,205	3,940	4,955	6,061	7,435	8,983	23.6%	25.4%	4.3%
Government	2,007	2,787	2,846	2,957	3,121	3,298	3,548	18.7%	22.1%	1.9%
Total	10,710	12,629	14,921	16,811	19,705	23,320	26,461	100.0%	100.0%	3.1%

Note: The Austell Road LCI Study Area is located in Superdistrict 35.

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Ackerman & Co.

Cobb County Super Districts



II. Residential Market

RESIDENTIAL MARKET OVERVIEW

AUSTELL ROAD LCI MARKET AREA

HOUSING PERMITS - COBB COUNTY

Year	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Total
1996	5,147	1,121	6,268
1997	5,314	1,767	7,081
1998	6,711	1,663	8,374
1999	7,143	865	8,008
2000	5,455	1,187	6,642
2001	4,513	1,144	5,657
2002	4,703	853	5,556
2003	4,993	970	5,963
2004	5,432	1,457	6,889
2005	5,123	1,019	6,142
YTD 9/06	2,719	1,011	3,730
Total	57,253	13,057	70,310
Annual Avg.	5,326	1,215	6,540

APARTMENT MARKET SUMMARY

Cobb County Market Performance		
	12/2005	6/2006
New Starts	500	125
Existing Inventory	65,338	65,463
Occupancy Rate	92.5%	92.2%
Class A	94.7%	95.1%
Monthly Rent Per SF	\$0.78	\$0.78
Class A	\$0.88	\$0.89

Competitive Apartments - Austell Road Area		
Project	Units	Occupancy
Alta Mill	438	95.9%
Century Brook	110	95.5%
Highland Ridge	108	93.5%
Ivy Commons	344	94.8%
Madison at Forest Glen	264	95.8%
Orchard Mill	238	95.8%
Tramore Village	324	94.8%
Total	1,826	95.3%

NEW HOUSE SALES BY ZIP CODE

	30106 (Austell)	30008 (N. Austell)	30127 (W. Cobb)	30082 (Smyrna)
Number of Sales				
2000	184	156	652	363
2001	135	49	704	277
2002	212	145	617	237
2003	206	121	507	192
2004	80	67	470	280
2005	82	76	471	262
2006	156	186	397	248
Total	1,055	800	3,818	1,859
Average	151	114	545	266

Median Price

2000	\$136,900	\$139,650	\$172,950	\$203,500
2001	\$151,200	\$152,400	\$180,250	\$263,900
2002	\$143,200	\$157,500	\$200,150	\$286,100
2003	\$156,725	\$170,000	\$189,900	\$289,750
2004	\$172,200	\$164,900	\$212,050	\$284,950
2005	\$181,300	\$183,400	\$239,900	\$263,750
2006	\$205,000	\$198,700	\$235,859	\$289,100
Total	\$1,146,525	\$1,166,550	\$1,431,059	\$1,881,050
Average	\$163,789	\$166,650	\$204,437	\$268,721

ACTIVE FOR SALE PROEJCTS

Project	Pricing
Single-Family Subdivisions	
Brookwood Park	\$300,000s
Inspiration at Covered Br.	\$350,000+
Landin Pointe	\$183,000+
Madison Point	\$190,000+
Oakbluff	\$175,900+
Townhouses	
Carriages at Covered Br.	\$260,000+
Mill Park	\$200,000+
Orange Hill Place	\$200,000+
Ranch Condominiums	
Magnolias at Covered Br.	\$270,000+
Magnolia Lane	\$170,000+

Sources: US Census Bureau, AJC Home Report, Realtor.com, Dale Henson Associates, and Ackerman & Co. (November 2006)

Ackerman & Co.

2006 HOUSING PROFILE - AUSTELL ROAD LCI MARKET AREA

	AUSTELL ROAD LCI STUDY AREA		THREE-MILE RADIUS AUSTELL RD. & E-W CONN.	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Housing Units by Units in Structure				
1 Unit Attached	191	6.7%	850	4.1%
1 Unit Detached	1,852	64.7%	16,848	82.1%
2 Units	16	0.6%	325	1.6%
3-19 Units	589	20.6%	1,710	8.3%
20-49 Units	47	1.6%	133	0.6%
50+ Units	135	4.7%	360	1.8%
Mobile Home	32	1.1%	283	1.4%
Boat, RV, Van, Other	2	0.1%	11	0.1%
Total	2,863	100.0%	20,520	100.0%
Housing Units by Year Built				
Built 1999-2006	428	14.9%	3,079	15.0%
Built 1990-1998	269	9.4%	2,292	11.2%
Built 1980-1989	407	14.2%	2,304	11.2%
Built 1970-1979	641	22.4%	4,778	23.3%
Built 1960-1969	519	18.1%	3,409	16.6%
Built 1950-1959	417	14.6%	2,963	14.4%
Built 1940-1949	142	5.0%	1,073	5.2%
Built 1939 or Earlier	40	1.4%	622	3.0%
Total	2,863	100.0%	20,520	100.0%
Median Year Structure Built	1985	---	1985	---
Housing Units by Tenure				
Occupied Housing Units	2,722	100.0%	19,640	100.0%
Owner-Occupied	1,691	62.1%	15,380	78.3%
Renter-Occupied	1,031	37.9%	4,260	21.7%
Vacant Housing Units	141	4.9%	880	4.3%
Total Housing Units	2,863	100.0%	20,520	100.0%
Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units				
Less Than \$20,000	8	0.5%	125	0.8%
\$20,000-\$39,999	4	0.2%	51	0.3%
\$40,000-59,999	7	0.4%	76	0.5%
\$60,000-79,999	59	3.5%	513	3.3%
\$80,000-99,999	142	8.4%	1,155	7.5%
\$100,000-149,999	858	50.7%	6,158	40.0%
\$150,000-199,999	397	23.5%	4,412	28.7%
\$200,000-299,999	172	10.2%	2,351	15.3%
\$300,000-399,999	30	1.8%	402	2.6%
\$400,000-499,999	11	0.7%	73	0.5%
\$500,000-\$749,999	1	0.1%	35	0.2%
\$750,000-\$999,999	2	0.1%	14	0.1%
\$1,000,000+	0	0.0%	16	0.1%
Total	1,691	100.0%	15,380	100.0%
Median Owner-Occupied House Value	\$136,438	---	\$146,850	---

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (November 2006)

Ackerman & Co.

ACTIVE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES

AUSTELL ROAD LCI MARKET AREA

<u>No.</u>	<u>Project/ Developer/Location</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Price Range</u>	<u>Amenities</u>
SINGLE-FAMILY SUBDIVISIONS				
1	<i>Brookwood Park</i> Brookwood Drive Red Oak Construction	58	\$318,000-394,900	Community park
2	<i>Inspiration at Covered Bridge at Barnes Mill</i> East-West Connector Red Oak Construction	65	\$350,000-450,000+	Swimming pool, clubhouse, tennis courts, hiking/biking trails, green space, playground, access to Silver Comet Trail
3	<i>Landin Pointe</i> Austell Road Raven Homes	72	\$183,000+	None
4	<i>Madison Point</i> Clay Road Silver Creek Communities	35	\$190,000+	None
5	<i>Oakbluff</i> Leila Street Red Oak Construction	52	\$175,900-211,900	None
		282		
TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENTS				
1	<i>Carriages at Covered Bridge at Barnes Mill</i> East-West Connector Red Oak Construction	69	\$260,000+	Swimming pool, walking/ biking trails, access to Silver Comet & tennis courts
4	<i>Mill Park</i> Anderson Mill Road McCar Homes	88	\$197,800-213,500	Swimming pool
5	<i>Orange Hill Place</i> Anderson Mill Road Milbourne Corporation	46	\$200,000s+	None
		203		
RANCH CONDOMINIUM DEVELOPMENTS				
2	<i>Magnolias at Covered Bridge at Barnes Mill</i> East-West Connector Red Oak Construction	70	\$270,000+	Swimming pool, clubhouse walking/biking trails, access to Silver Comet & tennis courts
3	<i>Magnolia Lane</i> Austell Road Red Oak Construction	78	\$170,000+	Swimming pool, clubhouse
		148		

COMPETITIVE APARTMENTS AUSTELL ROAD LCI MARKET AREA

<u>No.</u>	<u>Project/ Location/Manager</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Year Built</u>	<u>No. of Units</u>	<u>Floor Plans</u>	<u>Units Size (SF)</u>	<u>Monthly Rent</u>	<u>Monthly Rent/SF</u>	<u>Vacancy Units</u>	<u>Vacancy Rate</u>	<u>Amenities</u>
1	Alta Mill 1650 Anderson Mill Road Steven D. Bell	A	1999	196 178 64 438	1 BR 2 BR 3 BR	725-896 1,112-1,214 1,460	\$733-861 \$900-1,045 \$1,078-1,123	\$0.96-1.01 \$0.81-0.86 \$0.73-0.77	18	4.1%	Swimming pools, fitness center, business center, surround sound theater, secured entrance
2	Century Brook 2100 Mesa Valley Way Norsouth Corp.	B	1996	68 42 110	1 BR 2 BR	1,002 1,153-1,304	\$680-700 \$715-755	\$0.68-0.70 \$0.58-0.62	5	4.5%	Swimming pool
3	Highland Ridge 1899 Mulkey Road Miles Properties	B	1992	20 68 20 108	1 BR 2 BR 3 BR	760 980-1,020 1,220	\$686 \$730-745 \$875	\$0.90 \$0.73-0.74 \$0.72	7	6.5%	Swimming pool
4	Ivy Commons 3555 Austell Road Milestone Management	B	1980s	344	1 BR 2 BR 3 BR	720 1,030-1,110 1,340	\$599 \$725-749 \$799	\$0.83 \$0.67-0.70 \$0.60	18	5.2%	Swimming pools, fitness center, business center, tennis courts, secured entrance
5	Madison at Forest Glen 4236 Austell Road Madison Apartment Group	B	1987	60 204 264	1 BR 2 BR	850 1,100-1,250	\$599 \$740-\$750	\$0.70 \$0.60-0.67	11	4.2%	Swimming pool, fitness center, tennis courts
6	Orchard Mill 1800 Mulkey Road Related Management	B	1990	100 88 50 238	1 BR 2 BR 3 BR	686-714 865-973 1,157	\$665-695 \$780-805 \$960	\$0.97 \$0.83-0.90 \$0.83	10	4.2%	Swimming pool
7	Tramore Village 2222 East-West Connector Cottonwood Capital	A	1999	122 162 40 324	1 BR 2 BR 3 BR	811-988 1,166-1,285 1,353-1,475	\$725-820 \$850-922 \$1,015-1,050	\$0.83-0.89 \$0.72-0.73 \$0.71-0.75	17	5.2%	Swimming pool
Total Market Area									86	4.7%	

Source: Ackerman & Co. (November 2006)

Ackerman & Co.

SENIOR HOUSING MARKET PROFILE

AUSTELL ROAD LCI MARKET AREA

ASSISTED LIVING/NURSING FACILITIES

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Year Licensed</u>	<u>Total Beds</u>	<u>Type of Ownership</u>	<u>Chain Ownership</u>
Austell Health Care	1700 Mulkey Way	1984	124	For Profit	No
Brian Center Nursing Care	2130 Anderson Mill Road	1976	170	For Profit	Yes
Presbyterian Village	2000 East-West Connector	1990	107	Non-profit	No
Sunrise Assisted Living	3829 Floyd Road	1990s	75	For Profit	Yes
			476		

65+ HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME - 2006*

<u>Income</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Less than \$15,000	580	19.1%
\$15,000-24,999	487	24.4%
\$25,000-34,999	417	20.9%
\$35,000-49,999	600	30.0%
\$50,000-74,999	554	27.7%
\$75,000-99,999	205	10.3%
\$100,000+	186	9.3%
Total	3,029	100.0%

65+ HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME - 2011*

<u>Income</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Less than \$15,000	614	17.3%
\$15,000-24,999	519	14.7%
\$25,000-34,999	483	13.6%
\$35,000-49,999	719	20.3%
\$50,000-74,999	702	19.8%
\$75,000-99,999	248	7.0%
\$100,000+	256	7.2%
Total	3,541	100.0%

PRESBYTERIAN VILLAGE

<i>Location:</i>	2000 East-West Connector
<i>Owner:</i>	Presbyterian Homes of Georgia
<i>Year started:</i>	1987
<i>Total acres:</i>	60
<i>Type of Project:</i>	Continuing Care Retirement Comm.

<u>Product/Level of Care</u>	<u>Units/ Beds</u>	<u>Year Started</u>
<i>Health Services Center (Nursing)</i>	107	1987
<i>Hearthstone (Memory Care)</i>	48	1994
<i>Assisted Living</i>	24	1994
<i>Apartments</i>	49	1994
<i>Cottages</i>	35	1995
<i>Cluster Homes</i>	20	1995
283		

<i>Occupancy Rate:</i>	100% - Waiting list
<i>Amenities:</i>	Village center with multi-purpose room, fitness center (with pool), library, arts/crafts room, & gift shop;
<i>Services:</i>	Dining, housekeeping, maintenance, transportation, hair salon, etc.

SENIOR HOUSEHOLD TRENDS*

<u>Age Cohort</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006 Est.</u>	<u>2011 Projection</u>	<u>% of Total Households</u>			<u>Annual % Change</u>	
				<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2000-2006</u>	<u>2005-2010</u>
55-64	2,195	2,823	3,431	11.9%	14.4%	16.6%	4.3%	4.0%
65-69	732	991	1,172	4.0%	5.0%	5.7%	5.2%	3.4%
70-74	659	803	904	3.6%	4.1%	4.4%	3.3%	2.4%
75-79	483	559	657	2.6%	2.8%	3.2%	2.5%	3.3%
80-84	315	423	482	1.7%	2.2%	2.3%	5.0%	2.6%
85+	217	253	326	1.2%	1.3%	1.6%	2.6%	5.2%
Total - 65+	2,406	3,029	3,541	13.0%	15.4%	17.1%	3.9%	3.2%
Total Households	18,464	19,638	20,669	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1.0%	1.0%
% 65+ Households	13.0%	15.4%	17.1%	---	---	---	---	---

* The demographic information is for a three-mile radius from Austell Road and East-West Connector.

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (November 2006).

III. Retail Market

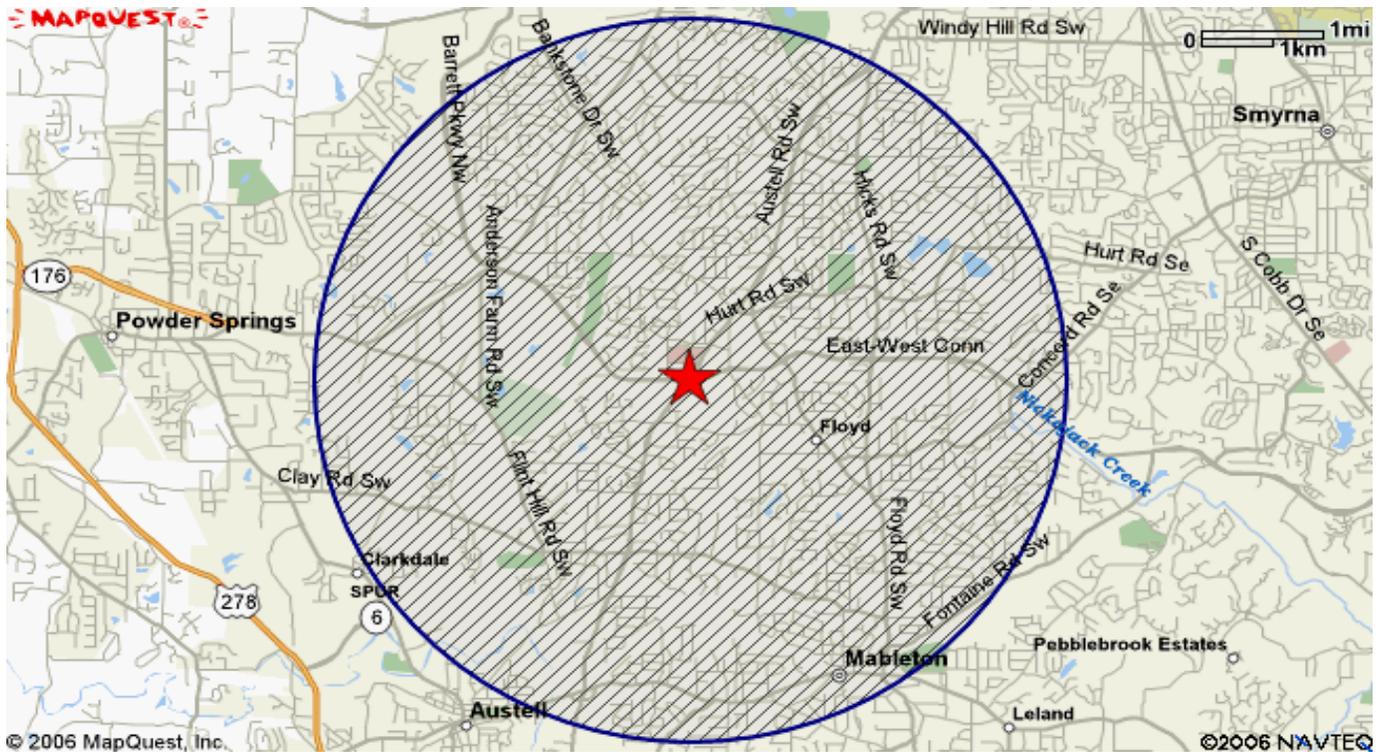
ATLANTA RETAIL MARKET PROFILE

Third Quarter, 2006

Map Area	Submarket	No. of Shopping Centers	Existing Sq. Ft.	Available Sq. Ft.	Occupancy Rate	Avg. Rent Rate	1/2000-Q3 2006	
							Avg. Annual Deliveries (Sq. Ft.)	Avg. Annual Absorption (Sq. Ft.)
A	Central Business District	47	3,110,079	391,537	87.4%	\$22.05	322,397	286,358
B	Midtown	75	3,274,293	343,475	89.5%	\$20.82	189,050	211,092
C	Buckhead	103	6,852,831	298,454	95.6%	\$23.40	(88,770)	(76,894)
D	Sandy Springs	86	7,346,480	505,838	93.1%	\$18.77	117,082	138,405
E	West Atlanta	29	1,984,703	145,169	92.7%	\$13.74	100,787	120,210
F	South Atlanta/Airport	75	4,288,913	453,061	89.4%	\$12.10	213,223	201,424
G	East Atlanta	113	6,635,290	1,332,159	79.9%	\$10.01	343,600	254,310
H	Northeast Atlanta	76	5,996,211	469,752	92.2%	\$17.62	56,327	58,589
I	Peachtree Corners/Norcross/I-85	174	11,608,648	1,069,794	90.8%	\$15.23	225,639	197,622
J	North Fulton	192	13,115,424	1,318,420	89.9%	\$18.88	664,636	538,059
K	Cumberland/East Cobb	204	13,031,400	1,699,954	87.0%	\$16.13	208,228	98,312
L	Austell/Fulton Industrial	59	4,504,395	788,193	82.5%	\$9.71	164,100	109,101
M	I-85 South	42	1,982,256	664,122	66.5%	\$11.13	(51,489)	(76,836)
N	Forest Park/Jonesboro/Clayton County	143	8,429,601	1,221,294	85.5%	\$13.14	177,745	90,556
O	Stockbridge/McDonough/Henry County	80	4,429,453	471,129	89.4%	\$14.43	563,980	498,423
P	Lithonia/Conyers/I-20	113	8,784,932	2,236,223	74.5%	\$11.03	576,706	267,532
Q	Stone Mountain/Snellville	143	9,557,038	1,380,419	85.6%	\$11.54	282,915	190,125
R	Northeast Gwinnett County	208	15,037,170	1,761,325	88.3%	\$14.91	1,118,484	1,028,914
S	Kennesaw/Northwest Cobb	113	8,868,260	709,097	92.0%	\$15.71	209,253	191,071
T	Cartersville/Bartow County	10	1,201,983	128,547	89.3%	\$11.21	(4,228)	(8,108)
U	Forsyth County/Georgia 400 North	70	3,882,656	379,720	90.2%	\$18.93	355,450	307,706
V	Gainesville/Hall County	52	3,000,598	626,052	79.1%	\$11.36	140,927	75,887
W	Cherokee County	85	4,678,132	712,359	84.8%	\$15.51	365,926	267,371
X	Douglasville/Douglas County	52	4,654,077	634,307	86.4%	\$13.43	96,567	65,708
Y	Fayetteville/Fayette County	46	3,626,848	315,653	91.3%	\$14.53	174,133	132,237
Z	Griffin/Spalding County	14	1,772,452	452,148	74.5%	\$7.46	94,524	42,578
AA	Dallas/Paulding County	19	1,551,507	154,014	90.1%	\$13.80	114,518	97,242
BB	Newnan/Coweta County	30	2,290,082	392,253	82.9%	\$13.76	144,310	101,304
Metro Atlanta Total							6,876,017	5,408,296
2,453							165,495,712	21,054,468
							87.3%	\$14.66

Sources: Dorey's Atlanta Retail Space Guide (Fall/Winter 2006) and Ackerman & Co.

RETAIL MARKET OVERVIEW - AUSTELL ROAD LCI



SUMMARY OF SHOPPING CENTERS (3-MILE RADIUS)

	<u>LCI Study Area</u>		<u>3-Mile Trade Area</u>	
	No.	Sq. Ft.	No.	Sq. Ft.
Shopping Centers by Year Open				
<1970	2	66,260	8	550,386
1970s	1	121,910	5	324,816
1980s	1	120,841	2	298,165
1990s	5	1,066,831	8	1,480,656
2000s	1	150,000	4	349,921
	10	1,525,842	27	3,003,944
Shopping Centers by Size (SF)				
<50,000	3	83,060	9	256,678
50-100,000	0	0	5	316,725
100-150,000	4	512,751	7	862,448
150-300,000	2	480,031	5	1,118,093
>300,000	1	450,000	1	450,000
	10	1,525,842	27	3,003,944

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS (3-MILE RADIUS)

Population:	55,527
Annual % Change (1990-2006):	2.40%
2011 Projection:	58,545
% Minority Population:	52.90%
% Under 18:	26.80%
% Over 65:	10.70%
% College Graduate:	26.30%
Households:	19,640
Average Household Size:	2.76
% Owner-Occupied Housing:	78.30%
Median House Value:	\$146,850
Average Household Income:	\$63,929
Retail Trade Potential (Sales in \$000s)	
Demand	\$824,951
Supply	\$742,703
Gap/Market Potential	\$82,248

ANCHOR TENANTS (3-MILE RADIUS)

Grocery Stores

ALDI Foods
Food Depot (2)
Kroger
Publix
Super Foods
Wal-Mart (2)

Discount/Gen. Mdse.

Big Lots
BJ's Wholesale Club
Great Stuff
K Mart
Target
Tuesday Morning

Apparel Stores

Avenue
Burlington Coat Factory
Cato
Citi Trend
Dress Barn
Fashion Bug
Goody's
Kohl's
Marshall's
Old Navy
Ross
TJ Maxx

Specialty Stores

Aaron's Sales & Lease
Borders
Farmer's Furniture
Gold's Gym
Hibbett Sports
Hobby Lobby
Home Depot
LA Fitness
Lowe's
Office Max
Party City
Regal Cinemas
School Box
Staples

Full-Serv. Restaurants

Chili's
Golden Corral
IHOP
Italian Oven
Longhorn Steakhouse
Outback Steakhouse
Red Lobster
Roadhouse Grill
Sonny's Barbeque
Sports Grill
Ted's Montana Grill
World Noodles

Drug Stores

CVS/pharmacy
Eckerd (2)
Physician's Pharmacy
Walgreen's

Dollar Stores

Dollar General (4)
Dollar Tree (2)
Family Dollar

SHOPPING CENTERS (10,000+ SF)* - AUSTELL ROAD LCI AREA

No.	Shopping Center/Location	Year Built	Leasable Area (SF)	Available Area (SF)	Vacancy Rate	In Line Stores	Anchor Tenants
Austell Road LCI Study Area							
1	<i>Austell Car Care Center</i> 2730 Austell Road	1990s	16,800	0	0.0%	4	Cottman Transmission
2	<i>Austell Floyd Plaza</i> 3687-3723 Austell Road	1969	35,260	0	0.0%	7	Fred's, Ocean Fish Market, U Haul
3	<i>Austell Plaza</i> 5075 Austell Road	1992	120,000	10,080	8.4%	11	Big Lots, Dollar General, Citi Trends
4	<i>Brookwood Square</i> 3901-3999 Austell Road	1990	253,448	0	0.0%	15	Home Depot, Marshalls, Staples
5	<i>Burlington Plaza</i> 3753 Austell Road	1975	121,910	3,200	2.6%	10	Burlington Coat Factory, Dollar General
6	<i>Clay Plaza</i> 4970 Austell Road	1966	31,000	2,800	9.0%	8	Super Foods, Movie Gallery
7	<i>Cobb Marketfair</i> 3565 Austell Road	1987	120,841	22,953	19.0%	15	Great Stuff, Fresenius Medical Care
8	<i>East-West Commons</i> 4155 Austell Road	1999	450,000	1,082	0.2%	21	Lowes, Target, TJ Maxx, Goody's, Borders, Office Max, Old Navy, Party City
9	<i>East-West Crossing</i> 4180 Austell Road	2001	150,000	0	0.0%	11	Kohl's, Ross, Rack Room Shoes
10	<i>Heritage Hills</i> 1355 East-West Connector	1990	226,583	5,800	2.6%	23	Food Depot, Hobby Lobby, Dollar Tree
			1,525,842	45,915	3.0%	125	
Austell Road LCI Trade Area - Three-Mile Radius (Austell Road & East-West Connector)							
1	<i>Austell Hicks Plaza</i> 2471-2491 Austell Road	1955	40,118	0	0.0%	8	Salvation Army, Dollar General
2	<i>Beaver's Plaza</i> 1161 Veteran's Memorial Hwy.	1958	18,000	0	0.0%	8	Art Frame
3	<i>2495 East-West Connector</i> 2495 East-West Connector	2004	13,000	0	0.0%	7	Roxanne's Tax & Acctg., Bella's Pizza
4	<i>East-West Shops</i> 1025 East-West Connector	2002	63,000	4,200	6.7%	7	Moe's, LA Fitness, Starbuck's
5	<i>Forbes Plaza</i> 1588 Veteran's Memorial Hwy.	1973	36,000	0	0.0%	9	Thrift Store
6	<i>Hawthorne Plaza</i> 1245 Veteran's Memorial Hwy.	1961	120,034	4,400	3.7%	11	Family Dollar, Farmer's Furniture, O'Reilly's
7	<i>Hilltop Shopping Center</i> 1387 Veteran's Memorial Hwy.	1973	51,548	0	0.0%	5	Dollar General, Sherwin Williams
8	<i>Horseshoe Bend S/C</i> 2200 Powder Springs Road	1974	52,000	0	0.0%	9	A-Z Thrift Store
9	<i>Mableton Crossing</i> 4875 Floyd Road	1997	86,819	1,200	1.4%	16	Kroger, Washington Mutual, Koko Beauty
10	<i>Mableton Walk</i> 5015 Floyd Road	1994	105,742	5,250	5.0%	18	Publix, Piccadilly Cafeteria, Avenue, Hallmark
11	<i>Plaza at Mableton</i> 5345 Floyd Road	1975	63,358	0	0.0%	15	Food Depot, Cobb Family Dentistry
12	<i>Ragan Plaza</i> 744 Veteran's Memorial Hwy.	1962	44,000	0	0.0%	6	Aaron's Sales & Lease
13	<i>Regal Pavilion</i> 2840 East-West Connector	2004	123,921	0	0.0%	10	Regal Cinema, Gold's Gym
14	<i>Village at Mableton</i> 5990 Mableton Parkway	1956	239,474	94,393	39.4%	14	Kmart, Dollar Tree, Cato
15	<i>Village at Powder Springs</i> 2667 Powder Springs Parkway	1988	177,324	106,618	60.1%	13	Kroger (vacant), Mattress King
16	<i>White Columns S/C</i> 1129 Veteran's Memorial Hwy.	1964	22,500	0	0.0%	10	Lucky Star Silk Flowers, Advantage Title/Pawn
17	<i>Wal-Mart Supercenter</i> 1133 East-West Connector	1999	221,264	4,536	2.1%	9	Wal-Mart Supercenter, Fashion Bug, Atlanta Bread Company, Honey Baked Ham
			1,478,102	220,597	14.9%	175	
MARKET AREA TOTAL			3,003,944	266,512	8.9%	300	

* This list excludes large freestanding retailers, such as BJ's, Wal-Mart Supercenter, and ALDI Foods, as well as large vacant stores (e.g., Target, Ingles)

Sources: CoStar Group and Ackerman/JJG (November 2006)

Ackerman & Co.

RETAIL TRADE POTENTIAL (2006)

AUSTELL ROAD & EAST-WEST CONNECTOR

ONE-MILE RADIUS

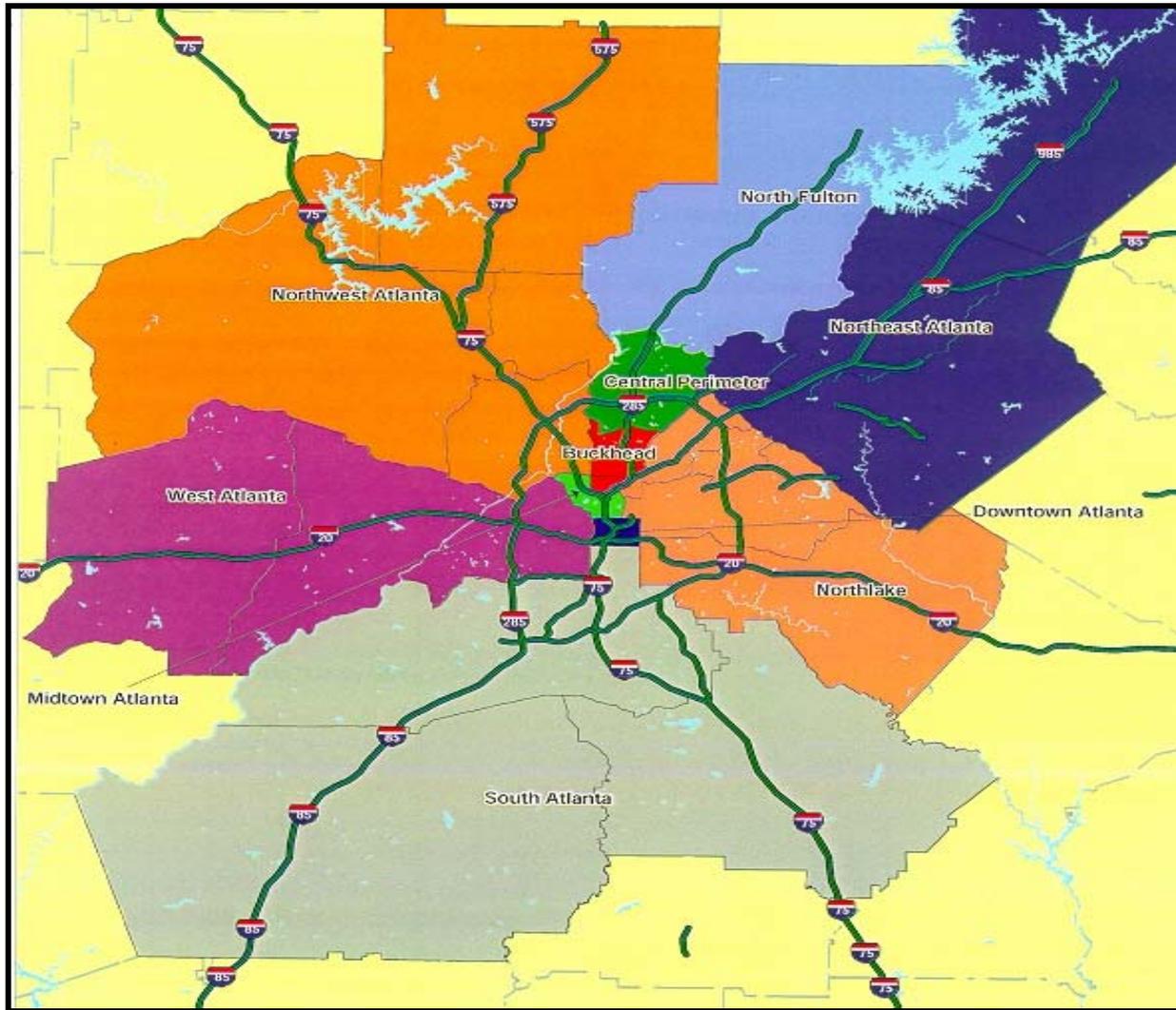
THREE-MILE RADIUS

Category	ONE-MILE RADIUS		THREE-MILE RADIUS	
	Demand/ Consumer Expenditures	Supply/ Retail Sales	Demand/ Consumer Expenditures	Supply/ Retail Sales
Motor vehicles, parts & dealers	\$23,833,328	\$3,221,240	\$172,746,274	\$33,360,069
Furniture & home furnishings	\$2,644,910	\$2,176,631	\$20,931,299	\$7,533,216
Electronics & appliances	\$2,543,925	\$1,364,602	\$18,717,072	\$4,623,780
Building material & garden equipment	\$11,378,037	\$45,674,943	\$95,805,476	\$61,597,029
Food & beverages	\$13,764,363	\$11,082,506	\$95,415,209	\$116,666,552
Health & personal care	\$5,870,980	\$19,044,794	\$40,040,634	\$45,721,020
Gasoline stations	\$12,689,671	\$16,948,684	\$87,302,689	\$91,163,888
Clothing & clothing accessories	\$5,233,664	\$52,905,334	\$38,627,782	\$59,444,821
Sporting goods, hobbies, books, & music	\$1,837,491	\$11,988,533	\$13,894,522	\$19,337,526
General merchandise/departments stores	\$13,682,861	\$60,750,562	\$99,058,529	\$211,603,567
Miscellaneous items	\$2,657,172	\$13,152,768	\$19,883,369	\$23,475,121
Non-store retailers (e-shopping, vending)	\$6,351,316	\$84,292	\$46,741,523	\$5,005,652
Food service & drinking places	\$10,898,831	\$33,508,864	\$75,786,113	\$63,170,686
Total	\$113,386,549	\$271,903,753	\$824,950,491	\$742,702,927
				\$82,247,564

Sources: Claritas and Ackerman/JJG (November 2006)

Ackerman & Co.

IV. Medical/Office Market



ATLANTA OFFICE MARKET PROFILE 3rd Quarter 2006

Submarket	Existing Sq. Ft.	% of Total	Vacancy Rate	NET ABSORPTION (SF)		CLASS A MARKET		Space Under Construction (Sq. Ft.)
				2006 YTD	2005	Existing Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	
Buckhead	14,565,371	8.5%	15.1%	182,488	(71,321)	10,031,172	16.8%	1,072,874
Central Perimeter	27,563,352	16.1%	17.1%	717,653	899,744	18,268,026	17.9%	36,000
Downtown	21,475,799	12.5%	23.9%	(231,706)	330,765	12,853,670	26.7%	548,231
Midtown	16,370,993	9.6%	12.0%	945,853	685,808	9,989,985	15.6%	668,541
North Fulton	21,468,523	12.5%	17.8%	817,005	467,726	12,721,691	18.1%	306,200
Northeast	17,781,617	10.4%	19.2%	181,527	735,171	6,284,045	19.5%	266,805
Northlake/Decatur	15,758,600	9.2%	12.8%	(27,015)	323,745	2,054,405	18.0%	83,900
Northwest	28,371,082	16.6%	18.5%	322,032	76,014	13,759,168	17.7%	174,168
South Atlanta	6,393,855	3.7%	15.1%	21,695	288,371	543,477	14.0%	144,000
West Atlanta	1,464,442	0.9%	16.9%	23,750	61,974	0	0.0%	30,800
Atlanta Total	171,213,634	100.0%	17.4%	2,953,282	3,797,997	86,505,639	18.3%	3,331,519

Note: This analysis is based on office buildings containing a minimum of 10,000 square feet. Owner-occupied buildings are not included.

Sources: CoStar Group and Ackerman & Co.

ATLANTA OFFICE MARKET SUPPLY AND ABSORPTION TRENDS - 3rd Quarter 2006

SUPPLY FACTORS/TRENDS

Existing Inventory

No. of Buildings 94
Existing Sq. Ft. 14,565,371
Avg. Building Size (Sq. Ft.) 154,951

Vacant Space

Direct Vacant Sq. Ft. 1,849,528
Direct Vacancy Rate 12.7%
Vacant Sublease Sq. Ft. 351,666
Sublease Vacancy Rate 2.4%
Total Vacant Space 2,201,194

Vacancy Rate (Direct & Sublease)

15.1%

Sq. Ft. Under Construction

1,072,874

New Deliveries (Sq. Ft.)

1998 1,132,595
1999 424,635
2000 0
2001 559,620
2002 0
2003 0
2004 31,000
2005 192,985
YTD 2006 2,340,835

Avg. Sq. Ft. Delivered

1998-2006 512,441
2000-2006 424,545
2004-2006 81,449

ABSORPTION TRENDS

Net Absorption (Sq. Ft.)

1998 407,545
1999 943,812
2000 344,527
2001 (497,270)
2002 (526,218)
2003 (254,617)
2004 681,479
2005 (71,372)
YTD 2006 182,488

Avg. Annual Absorption

1998-2006 138,328
2000-2006 (20,886)
2004-2006 288,216

Sources: CoStar Group and Ackerman & Co.

	Buckhead	Central Perimeter	Downtown	Midtown	North Fulton	Northeast	Northlake/Decatur	Northwest	South Atlanta	West Atlanta	METRO ATLANTA
Existing Inventory	94	255	113	113	273	340	314	343	159	34	2,038
No. of Buildings	14,565,371	27,563,352	21,475,799	16,370,993	21,468,523	17,781,617	15,758,600	28,371,082	6,393,855	1,464,442	171,213,634
Existing Sq. Ft.	154,951	108,092	190,051	144,876	78,639	52,299	50,187	82,715	40,213	43,072	84,011
Avg. Building Size (Sq. Ft.)	1,849,528	4,411,933	4,588,917	1,649,254	3,392,831	3,221,063	1,945,956	4,799,353	891,122	247,429	26,997,386
Direct Vacant Sq. Ft.	12.7%	16.0%	21.4%	10.1%	15.9%	18.1%	12.3%	16.9%	13.9%	16.9%	15.8%
Direct Vacancy Rate	351,666	298,584	550,690	313,710	419,277	191,978	64,487	454,347	74,041	0	2,718,780
Vacant Sublease Sq. Ft.	2.4%	1.1%	2.6%	1.9%	2.0%	1.1%	0.4%	1.6%	1.2%	0.0%	1.6%
Sublease Vacancy Rate	2,201,194	4,710,517	5,139,607	1,962,964	3,812,108	3,413,041	2,010,443	5,253,700	965,163	247,429	29,716,166
Total Vacant Space	15.1%	17.1%	23.9%	12.0%	17.8%	19.2%	12.8%	18.5%	15.1%	16.9%	17.4%
Vacancy Rate (Direct & Sublease)	1,072,874	36,000	548,231	668,541	306,200	266,805	83,900	174,168	144,000	30,800	3,331,519
Sq. Ft. Under Construction	1,132,595	787,477	25,000	0	2,469,450	1,485,250	187,000	1,312,690	16,500	0	7,415,962
New Deliveries (Sq. Ft.)	424,635	830,703	650,000	165,000	2,545,317	1,137,035	52,650	1,027,403	459,867	53,400	6,696,010
1998	0	1,523,663	18,000	1,437,554	3,193,194	1,494,829	298,000	812,625	170,670	93,355	7,504,729
1999	559,620	0	357,782	233,500	360,099	620,014	120,960	735,213	188,414	0	7,202,698
2000	0	90,000	0	488,000	425,000	155,736	0	928,710	22,460	0	2,733,525
2001	0	1,025,546	28,794	529,999	78,000	147,064	0	195,000	125,000	15,000	2,429,282
2002	31,000	39,000	319,853	0	100,950	367,593	187,385	145,000	170,388	0	1,138,245
2003	0	152,369	0	670,000	533,508	681,608	54,338	244,210	169,907	0	1,573,267
2004	192,985	35,100	0	0	0	0	0	182,388	96,440	89,800	2,536,167
2005	2,340,835	4,483,858	1,399,429	3,524,053	12,167,105	7,016,532	1,043,633	5,583,239	1,419,646	251,555	39,229,885
YTD 2006	267,524	512,441	159,935	402,749	1,390,526	801,889	119,272	638,084	162,245	28,749	4,483,415
Avg. Sq. Ft. Delivered	116,090	424,545	203,619	497,637	1,059,606	651,000	119,109	480,466	139,745	29,356	3,721,172
1998-2006	81,449	82,352	126,781	436,363	259,076	435,005	87,899	207,854	158,813	32,655	1,908,247
2000-2006	407,545	311,055	376,485	265,896	2,569,195	777,893	106,366	1,074,653	31,135	(3,751)	5,916,472
2004-2006	943,812	1,134,427	919,479	(207,108)	2,236,056	811,870	132,889	519,972	175,964	103,283	5,746,967
Net Absorption (Sq. Ft.)	344,527	1,134,427	1,242,471	238,522	2,402,359	924,342	81,731	391,991	98,940	49,905	6,909,215
1998	(497,270)	(710,668)	(842,533)	(332,564)	1,056,174	559,120	(3,282)	(106,218)	104,872	5,199	(767,170)
1999	(526,218)	(938,187)	(223,227)	120,568	382,591	194,886	(356,473)	(820,165)	185,681	91,300	(1,889,244)
2000	(254,617)	(1,113,687)	(262,478)	467,132	437,821	396,230	309,269	88,472	122,344	(61,327)	129,159
2001	681,479	878,042	(500,553)	957,518	873,728	292,999	(78,112)	472,406	220,823	(20,964)	3,777,366
2002	(71,372)	899,744	330,765	685,808	467,726	735,171	323,745	76,014	288,371	61,974	3,797,946
2003	182,488	717,653	(231,706)	945,853	817,005	181,527	(27,015)	322,032	(21,695)	23,750	2,909,892
2004	1,210,374	1,289,129	808,703	3,141,625	11,242,655	4,874,038	489,118	2,019,157	1,206,435	249,369	26,530,603
2005	138,328	147,329	92,423	359,043	1,284,875	557,033	55,899	230,761	137,878	28,499	3,032,069
YTD 2006	(20,886)	128,492	(72,187)	456,717	953,689	486,559	37,017	62,894	148,050	22,198	2,202,543
Avg. Annual Absorption	288,216	907,432	(145,998)	941,520	784,894	439,890	79,497	316,528	177,272	23,549	3,812,801

MEDICAL MARKET OVERVIEW

AUSTELL ROAD LCI STUDY AREA

COBB COUNTY HOSPITALS (2005)

Number of Hospitals:	4
Total Number of Beds:	1,218
% WellStar Cobb	33.9%
Occupancy Rate:	56.5%
Total Admissions:	52,613
% WellStar Cobb	38.3%
Total Inpatient Days:	251,070
% WellStar Cobb	36.5%

COBB COUNTY PHYSICIANS

Total Practicing Physicians	
2000	930
2002	1,043
Annual % Change	5.9%
Physicians/100,000 People	160

MEDICAL OFFICES - AUSTELL ROAD

Number of Buildings:	29
Total Square Feet:	555,628
Occupancy Rate:	91.7%

WELLSTAR COBB HOSPITAL (2004)

Location:	3950 Austell Road
Year Open:	1968
Ownership:	Hospital Authority of Cobb County
Occupancy Rate:	72.3%
Charges for Services:	
Private room rate	\$590
Semi-private room rate	\$560
Operating room - cost of 1st hour	\$1,513
Avg. total charge for inpatient day	\$3,850
Admissions from Emergency Room:	41.4%
Discharges to Death:	413

Revenue/Expenses (2005)	
Inpatient revenue:	\$338,119,988
Outpatient revenue:	\$242,865,650
Total Expenses:	\$199,162,621

Indigent/Charity Care (2005)	
Inpatient	\$12,592,644
Outpatient	\$10,521,777
	\$23,114,421

Beds/Admissions/Discharges:	<u>Beds</u>		<u>Admissions</u>		<u>Inpatient Days</u>		<u>Discharges</u>		<u>Discharge Days</u>	
	Medical/surgery	209	10,629	57,281	10,676	57,798	11,971	4,697	11,957	7,953
Obstetrics/pediatrics	46	4,702	7,740	2,117	7,953	7,425	1,333	7,436	5,398	5,398
Intensive care	34	2,114	5,412	577	5,398	1,779	791	1,812	1,812	1,812
Psychiatry	24	1,331	1,779	791	1,812	347	20,142	91,608	20,191	92,354
Physical rehab.	20	578	91,608	20,191	92,354	20,142	91,608	20,191	92,354	92,354
Pediatrics	14	788	20,142	91,608	20,191	92,354	20,142	91,608	20,191	92,354
	347	20,142	91,608	20,191	92,354	20,142	91,608	20,191	92,354	92,354

Patient Profile:		<u>Inpatient</u>
	<u>Admissions</u>	<u>Days</u>
White	13,631	64,287
Black	4,741	21,616
Hispanic/Latino	1,420	4,438
Other	350	1,267
	20,142	91,608
Male	6,213	32,094
Female	13,929	59,514
	20,142	91,608

Staff/Physician Profile:	
Full-time equivalent employment	
Budgeted	2,264
Vacancies	154
Physicians	
Medical specialties	211
Surgical specialties	145
Other specialties	128
	484

Sources: Georgia Dept. of Community Health, "Annual Hospital Questionnaire"; University of Georgia, "Georgia County Guide"; and Ackerman & Co. (November 2006).

OFFICE PROPERTIES (2,000+ SF)

AUSTELL ROAD LCI MARKET AREA

<u>No.</u>	<u>Property/Address</u>	<u>Year Built</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Floors</u>	<u>Rentable Area (SF)</u>	<u>Available Area (SF)</u>	<u>Vacancy Rate</u>
Conventional Office Properties							
1	3411 Austell Road (Cobb West 2)	1988	C	2	6,000	1,250	20.8%
2	3411 Austell Road (Cobb West 1)	1988	C	2	6,000	0	0.0%
3	4760 Austell Road	1969	C	1	12,000	0	0.0%
					24,000	1,250	5.2%

Medical Office Properties							
1	3825 Austell Road (S. Cobb Professional Center)	1970s	C	1	30,000	0	0.0%
2	3834 Austell Road*	1987	C	2	6,000	3,100	51.7%
3	4426 Austell Road (Peachstreet Clinic)	1956	C	1	2,000	0	0.0%
4	4439 Austell Road (Family & Cosmetic Dentistry)	1956	C	1	2,000	0	0.0%
5	4444 Austell Road (Cobb Physicians Group)	2002	B	1	6,000	2,000	33.3%
6	4750 Austell Rd. (Austell Dental Assoc.)	1985	C	1	3,600	0	0.0%
7	East-West Connector (Kaiser Permanente)	2007 (UC)	A	3	60,000	0	0.0%
8	1700 Hospital South Dr. (Cobb Physicians Center)	1989	B	4	80,000	0	0.0%
9	3820 Medical Park Dr. (Georgia Lung Center)	2003	B	2	43,672	0	0.0%
10	3845 Medical Park Dr. (Austell Dental Assoc.)	2003	C	1	5,080	0	0.0%
11	3865 Medical Park Dr. (Davita Dialysis Clinic)	1973	B	1	6,300	0	0.0%
12	3870 Medical Park Dr. (Group VI Med. Park)	2007 (UC)	A	3	22,500	15,000	66.7%
13	3870 Medical Park Dr. (Comprehensive Pain Mgmt. Ctr.)	2003	B	1	6,110	0	0.0%
14	2041 Mesa Valley Way (East-West Medical Ctr.)	1999	B	1	41,402	0	0.0%
15	1595 Mulkey Road (Clower/Orthodontist)	1979	C	1	3,800	0	0.0%
16	1599 Mulkey Road (Atlanta West Family Practice)	1977	C	1	2,100	0	0.0%
17	1605 Mulkey Road (2 Buildings)	1988	C	1	6,250	0	0.0%
18	1620 Mulkey Road (Atlanta Allergy & Asthma Clinic)	1972	C	2	10,100	0	0.0%
19	1650 Mulkey Road (Foot & Leg Healthcare Specialists)	1970s	C	1	4,400	0	0.0%
20	1660 Mulkey Road (Cobb Nephrology Hypertension Assoc.)	1979	C	1	12,140	0	0.0%
21	1664 Mulkey Road (Cobb Pediatrics Associates)	1988	B	1	8,200	0	0.0%
22	1668 Mulkey Road (Pinnacle Orthopaedics)	1971	B	1	7,200	0	0.0%
23	1676 Mulkey Road	1970	C	2	15,500	3,750	24.2%
24	1678 Mulkey Road	1968	C	2	10,500	3,000	28.6%
25	1680 Mulkey Road	1968	C	1	16,680	3,000	18.0%
26	1790 Mulkey Road (Buildings 1-10)*	1980	C	1	82,000	0	0.0%
27	1791 Mulkey Road (WellStar)	1986	B	3	33,000	0	0.0%
28	1810 Mulkey Road (Cobb Medical Arts Building)*	1991	B	2	23,094	10,032	43.4%
29	3911 Mulkey Way (Vacant - Cobb Pediatrics)	1970s	C	1	6,000	6,000	100.0%
					555,628	45,882	8.3%

TOTAL - CONVENTIONAL AND MEDICAL OFFICE PROPERTIES

579,628 47,132 8.1%

* These properties are office condominiums.

Sources: CoStar Group and Ackerman & Co.

Ackerman & Co.

V. Key Development Sites

KEY DEVELOPMENT SITES - AUSTELL ROAD CORRIDOR

<u>No.</u>	<u>Agent/Location</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Price/Acre</u>	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>Comments</u>
SITES OFFERED FOR SALE						
1	King Industrial Realty 4561 Austell Road	9.20	\$2,760,000	\$300,000	GC General Comm.	Gently rolling topo; adjacent to Silver Comet Trail
2	Grubb & Ellis NE - Austell Rd. at Milford Church Rd.	9.18	\$1,560,600	\$170,000	CRC Commercial	Level site; wraps around CVS/pharmacy
3	BC Investments E/side Austell Rd. at Amy Lane	7.41	\$1,750,000	\$236,167	O/I Office/Inst.	Level site; wraps around office development
4	Foresight Properties E/side Austell Rd., S of Seayes Rd.	6.00	\$1,950,000	\$325,000	GC General Comm.	Level, square-shaped property
5	Brannen/Goddard NW - Austell Rd. at Anderson Mill Rd.	3.37	\$1,175,000	\$348,665	GC/R-20 General Comm. & Residential	Two owners/four lots; Good corner location
6	Taratoot & Associates E/side Austell Rd. at Leila	2.50	\$400,000	\$160,000	NRC Neighborhood Retail/Comm.	Level, rectangular-shaped site
7	Grubb & Ellis NW - Austell Rd. at Milford Church Rd.	1.02	\$425,000	\$416,667	NRC Neighborhood Retail/Comm.	Level site
8	Grubb & Ellis SW - Austell Rd. at Milford Church Rd.	0.89	\$350,000	\$393,258	NS Neighborhood Shopping	Level, triangular-shaped property
POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT SITES (3+ Acres)						
1	Holbrook Floyd Road Prop. (Owner) 3890 Floyd Road at Brookwood Dr.	20.71	---	---	GC General Comm.	Currently improved with clubhouse (3,200 SF) and driving range
2	Marth Sue Daniel (Owner) 1336 Milford Church Rd. at Austell Rd.	12.74	---	---	R5 Residential	Vacant site
3	Austell Cobb, LLC (Owner) 5075 Austell Road	11.84	---	---	PSC Commercial	Currently improved with Austell Plaza (120,000 SF)
4	Earnest Miller (Owner) 3751 Floyd Road, east of Austell Rd.	10.21	---	---	GC/PSC General Comm.	Currently improved with former Target shopping center (102,652 SF)
5	Jan Williams (Owner) 3280 Austell Road	9.25	---	---	HI/GC General Comm.	Currently improved with Orange Acres trailer park
6	Alice Cannon (Owner) 3345 Austell Road	7.70	---	---	MHP/R Mobile Home	Currently improved with Westbrook Park trailer park
7	Lillie Johnson et al (Owner) 2818 Austell Road	5.00	---	---	NRC/W Commercial	Vacant site
8	Alterman Real Estate Corp. (Owner) 3701 Austell Road	3.79	---	---	PSC/C Commercial	Currently improved with Austell Floyd Plaza (35,260 SF)
9	Richard B. Holbrook (Owner) Floyd Road, N of Albany Drive	3.18	---	---	C5 Commercial	Vacant site

Source: Ackerman/JJG (November 2006)

Appendix B Core and Project Management Team Members

Austell Road LCI Study Core Team

Dania Aponte, Citizen
Cathy Bailey, Giving Back Foundation
Clarice Barber-Paige, SWAN
Nathan Blair, SWAN
Bruce Brown, Kingland Estates HOA
Rick and Sharon Bucharo, Developer
Jill Choulevan, Hidden Creek HOA
Adam Cogbill, South Cobb High School
Joel Cope, Mableton Improvement Coalition (MIC)
Pamela Dingle, Sanders Intermediate Elementary School
Dorothy Dodgen, AARP
Roxane Ene, GDOT
Joe Foppiano, Citizen
Dan Fox, Citizen
Jerry Gonzalez, Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials
Joann Green, Crest Ridge HOA
Mark Haney, Wellstar
Roger Henze, GRTA
Linda Horning, Kaiser Permanente
Pastor Clarence Howard, Milford Road Baptist Church
Kristi Kee, Sanders Primary School
Steve Kepsal, Developer
Julie Kovach, Atlanta Regional Commission
Jared Lombard, Atlanta Regional Commission
Jason A. Lewis, Investment Cobb LLC
Jane Lindsey, Austell Health Care
Ron Mann, Mann & Associates
Jennie Myers, Senior Citizen
Lt. Ronnie Prince, Cobb County Public Safety
Dr. Grant Rivera, South Cobb High School
James Royal, Transit Advisory Board (TAB)
Tony Stalling
Pastor Kerry Stallings, Highest Praise Church of God
David Stuart, Georgia Power
Kirk Walsh, Cobb Hospital
Janice M. Wesley, Austell Community Taskforce

Austell Road LCI Study Project Management Team

Laraine Vance, Cobb County Department of Transportation
Jason Gaines, Cobb County Department of Transportation
Larry Stokes, Cobb County Department of Transportation
Nar Chaudhry, Cobb County Department of Transportation
Lane Watson, Cobb County Department of Transportation
John Morey, Cobb County Department of Transportation
Dana Johnson, Cobb County Community Development
Phil Mayer, Cobb County Transit
Michel Hughes, Cobb County Office of Economic Development
Terry Hannah, Cobb County Office of Economic Development
Julie Kovach, Atlanta Regional Commission
Jared Lombard, Atlanta Regional Commission
Gary Cornell, Jordan, Jones & Goulding
Harry McGinnis, CROY Engineering
Morris Dillard, DW & Associates
Steve Brown, Carter Burgess

Appendix C

Summary of Public Kick-Off Meeting & Kick-Off Meeting Survey



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative
Public Kick-Off Meeting
November 16, 2006

Meeting Date: November 16, 2006
Meeting Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Location: South Cobb Government Service Center
4700 Austell Road
Attendance: 65

Agenda

Opening and Introductions – *Laraine Vance, Cobb County DOT*
Overview of Project Goals and Schedule - *Gary Cornell, JJG*
Community Preference Survey – *Morris Dillard, DW&Associates*
Break Out Sessions – *Various Project Team Members*
Group Reports – *Various Project Team Members*
Closing and Next Steps – *Gary Cornell*

Presentation

Laraine Vance, Planning Division Manager for Cobb DOT welcomed all the attendees and expressed how important this project is to the community's future. Gary Cornell from JJG then gave an overview of the evening's agenda and then an overview of the project goals and schedules. Some of the highlights from the presentation include:

Project facts:

- **Population:** 7,625 in 2,722 households
 - 13% of population is over 65 yrs. old
 - 2,000 persons living in poverty
 - Racial composition is about 50/50
- **Employment:** 470 businesses with 7,000 employees
- **Traffic:** Average Daily Traffic on Austell Road is 20,000 to 22,000 vpd
 - Austell Road is at theoretical capacity
 - Accident rate is higher than statewide average
- **Transportation Improvements:**
 - E-W Connector/ Austell Road improvements
 - 8 other Intersection improvements:
 - Sandtown Rd.
 - Windy Hill Rd.
 - Hicks Rd.
 - Callaway Rd.
 - Milford Church Rd.
 - Floyd Rd.
 - Hurt Rd.
 - Hospital South Rd.
 - Clay Rd.
 - Callaway Road widening Austell Rd. – Powder Springs Rd.
 - Clay Road re-alignment and intersection improvements at Austell Rd.



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative
Public Kick-Off Meeting
November 16, 2006

Study Area Issues & Opportunities:

- Changing Demographics and Economics
- Traffic Congestion
- Mobility Needs
- Access Management & Connectivity
- Land Use Management
- Aesthetics
- Finance and Organization

Project Goals

- Foster Sense of Place and Create a Distinctive Character
- Address Transportation and Land Use Needs within the Study Area
- Establish Specific Master Plan with Design Standards

The presentation also included information regarding transportation analysis, real estate market analysis, land-use and transportation relationship, and public outreach and involvement.

Next a general discussion session was held, comments received are summarized below:

General Verbal Comments

- Traffic light at the corner of Austell Road and Seayes Road needs a turn light (guarded turn light) going southbound on Austell Road.
- Traffic light at the corner of Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road needs a turn light (guarded turn light) going northbound on Austell Road.
- Who can look out for area prior to study implementation so car washes, car lots, etc. are not to be contended with at later dates?
- The south (east) side of Austell Road is Mableton address – and they did not get flyers.
- We need family parks and fountains.
- Get rid of dinky homes on Austell and dinky, junky businesses.
- The area that we are discussing is in the middle of Austell, Marietta, Powder Springs, and Mableton. Our business has to use multiple phone books. We have no good answer when someone asks what area we're located closest to!
- We also cannot afford to advertise in every Yellow Page directory covering all areas from where our clients come.
- The study doesn't seem to have much "teeth" to it. I would feel better if a Commissioner had been here, or a member of the Zoning Commission. This would show that the study is not being conducted in a vacuum; that the departments are supporting the results. And I would love to have a moratorium on development that has a low probability of fitting in with the future plan. You don't need a study to know a used car lot or car washes or storage buildings are not going to fit into any plan.
- I appreciate this opportunity and your hard work. I hope we can get things done quickly so we don't lose more available land.



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative
Public Kick-Off Meeting
November 16, 2006

- Perfect timing; our neighborhoods/businesses need this planning

Notes from Comment Sheets:

- How do we get information to put on our neighborhood websites or email newsletters?
- Thank you. Keep it up.
- Love the study and ideas, however poorer people do not go to zoning meetings, etc.
- Don't allow one or two big mouths to control the flow of the meeting.
- I was dismayed by the lack of communication about the meeting, which I believe is invaluable to the population in general.
- The moderators need to manage the crowd better and challenge some of the suggestions, which have no basis or foundation.
- Very informative – I learned a lot about my neighbors and their fears and concerns...and their general knowledge level.
- Capture statistics of the meeting attendees.
- Provide reference material or a directory of what references were used to drive recommendations.

Community Preference Survey

After the completion of the question and answer session a community preference survey was held. Every participant was given a score card and asked to rate their preference from [1: Very Inappropriate to 5: Very Appropriate] on a variety of land uses including single family, multi-family, commercial, mixed-use, parking, open space, building forms and street types. The highest and lowest rated images for each topic are featured on the following pages. Additional analysis will be conducted on the results later in the project.

Single Family Residences



Highest



Lowest



Multi Family Residence



Highest



Lowest

Commercial



Highest



Lowest

Mixed Use



Highest



Lowest



Parking



Highest



Lowest

Parks/Open Space



Highest



Lowest

Sidewalks



Highest



Lowest



Street Furniture



Highest



Lowest

Building/Street



Highest (tie)



Lowest





Building Type



Highest



Lowest

Streets



Highest



Lowest

Crossings



Highest



Lowest



Signs



Highest



Lowest

Overall



Highest



Lowest

Break Out Sessions

At the conclusion of the Community Preference Survey, participants were then asked to break out into two groups and were led in a SWOT analysis S: Strengths, W: Weaknesses, O: Opportunities, T: Threats. Additionally, the breakout groups were asked to comment on the community's identity. The results of these discussion are listed on the following pages.

Strengths of the Austell Road Corridor

- Convenient
- Accessible to medical/healthcare and general shopping
- Major amenity – Silver Comet Trail
- Large residential land lots
- Low residential/commercial density
- Heavily wooded
- Family-oriented
- East-West Connector – good gateway to corridor



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative
Public Kick-Off Meeting
November 16, 2006

- Many good family restaurants
- Multi-generational – strong ties
- Traffic not as bad as north metro Cobb
- Potential for growth and increased housing values

Weaknesses of the Austell Road Corridor

- Hodgepodge without definition
- Inadequate turn signals
- Traffic congestion
- Property is not being improved
- High crime rate
- Vacant dilapidated commercial structures
- Lack of higher education facilities
- Too many red lights
- Uncoordinated traffic lights and turn signals
- Lack of code enforcement
- Drainage issues
- Concrete medians loaded with trash – litter all over
- U-turns and no traffic signals
- Public schools are not of good quality
- Abandoned strip malls
- Lack of quality redevelopment
- Lots of homelessness and low-income housing

Opportunities for the Austell Road Corridor

- Can have more community involvement through better signage before meetings
- Open tracts to be developed
- Open tracts for green space
- Strong youth community
- Opportunity to create more opportunities such as accommodating small business and entrepreneurial development
- Opportunity to create more live/work spaces
- Single-family community
- Well-established population base
- Hospital nearby – could cluster healthcare services and have wellness/recreational areas
- Public transportation
- Silver Comet Trail proximity – connection could be better
- Good time to plan for future and purchase green space
- Skilled labor force
- Redevelopment
- Strip centers can have traffic funneled through access roads and bus lanes



Threats to the Austell Road Corridor

- Prostitution
- Drugs and gangs
- Illegal immigrants
- Commuter traffic
- Increased traffic congestion
- Tarnished image
- Absentee landlords
- Section 8 housing
- South Cobb being ignored by Cobb County Zoning Commission
- Community is not well organized with strong representation
- Lack of ownership by Commissioners through division of the district
- Lack of education about the representation process and various issues

Identity – What do you want people to think about your community

- Accessible and safe
- Public transportation from schools to jobs
- Transit shelters standardized – safety lights and trash cans
- Consistent signage – a sense of place
- Streetscaping – lighting
- Better sidewalks, lighting, and pedestrian crossings
- Consistent design standards and materials
- Wider side streets – subdivision regulations
- Truck restrictions in subdivisions
- Bus bays
- Stricter law enforcement
- More stringent code enforcement
- More family-oriented businesses and recreational outlets

Austell Road LCI Kick Off Meeting Survey Summary

1 a Are you a:		(41 respondents)	% of Total	Total
	Resident		73.2%	30
	Business Owners		14.6%	6
	Resident & Business Owner		9.8%	4
	N/A		2.4%	1
Zip Code			% of Total	Total
	30008	Austell	26.8%	11
	30126	Mableton	19.5%	8
	30106	Austell	17.1%	7
	30060	Marietta	9.8%	4
	Other Zip Codes		12.2%	5
	N/A		14.6%	6
1 b If a resident		(34 respondents)	% of Total	Total
	Own		100.0%	33
	Rent		0.0%	0
Year located to Austell Rd corridor area:			% of Total	Total
	2002 - 2006		18.2%	6
	1997 - 2001		18.2%	6
	1987 - 1996		21.2%	7
	1977 - 1986		15.2%	5
	1967 - 1976		12.1%	4
	1966 and prior		15.2%	5
Reasons located in area: (2+ responses)				Total
	Proximity/Accessibility (to Metro Atlanta, Airport, work, family, hospital)			17
	Affordability (Cost of home, cost of living, low taxes)			7
	Has lived in the area since childhood			3
	Large lot size, single home			3
	Community, Diversity, Family Friendly			4
	Like Cobb, Like area			3
	Milford Chase Subdivision			2
	Used to be country			2
	Growth			2
	Schools			2
1 c If a business (type)		10 Respondents	% of Total	Total
	Church		20.0%	2
	Real Estate		20.0%	2
	Commercial		10.0%	1
	Golf Center		10.0%	1
	Law Firm		10.0%	1
	Medical Billing		10.0%	1
	Retail		10.0%	1
	Veterinary		10.0%	1
Year located to Austell Rd corridor area:			% of Total	Total
	2002 - 2006		30.0%	3
	1997 - 2001		10.0%	1
	1987 - 1996		20.0%	2
	1977 - 1986		10.0%	1
	1967 - 1976		10.0%	1
	N/A		20.0%	2
Reasons located in area: (2+ responses)				Total
	Proximity/location			3
	Church; faith building			3
	Development/Redevelopment opportunity/Demographics			3

Austell Road LCI Kick Off Meeting Survey Summary

2. What are the top three strengths for economic growth along the corridor?		Total
Location		9
Hospital & Medical		8
Shopping, restaurants		7
New business, development opportunity, growth opportunity		6
Roads - Traffic flow, improvements, infrastructure, accessibility		6
Large lot size, single home		4
Sense of community, residential areas, home owners		4
Choice of business, access to business		3
Population growth/density		3
Silver Comet Trail		3
Tress, Green space, wooded lots		3
Church		2
Diversity of population		2
Housing Costs, cost of living		2
Property Value		2
Schools		2
Tax Rate		2
3. What are the top three challenges for economic growth along the corridor?: (2+ responses)		Total
Traffic - congestion, flow, accidents, egress & ingress, crosswalks		22
Redevelopment - abandon/vacant stores/malls		12
Crime		7
Schools		6
Demographic changes, racial diversity, poverty, illegals		6
Eliminate junky businesses, hodge podge look, look of streetscape		4
Zoning issues		4
Access		3
Keep area from becoming commercial, no more retail, no more fast food		3
Investment in infrastructure, invest resources toward comprehensive reform		2
Low price housing, low property value		2
Quality development, attracting development to the area		2
4. What additions would you like to see that would complement and support Wellstar Hospital (e.g. complementary land uses, facilities, and activities)?: (2+ responses)		Total
Medical - office building, complex, park, related services, physical therapy, diabetes treatment center, expand trauma facility		10
Green space, Park, nature area		6
Another entrance to EWC, Better access to roads, traffic flow		4
Community recreation center, Family YMCA, Family fun center, Library		4
Free parking for hospital, parking deck		4
Aquatic/Swim center		3
Mixed use development, walking area with restaurants & shops, hotel		3
Fitness Center, gym		2
Retirement/senior living		2
Child Development Center, school		2

Austell Road LCI Kick Off Meeting Survey Summary

5. What type of development/redevelopment would you like to see on the sites of aging strip shopping centers along the corridor?: (2+ responses)		Total
Mixed Use - including "Village look", housing above retail		9
Upscale/Specialty retail - similar to "The Avenue"		8
Parks, green space, more trees, recreation		5
Multi family housing, better housing, various home builders		3
Upscale, upgrade, top quality commercial/retail, office, warehouse		3
Redevelopment - including incentives		3
Family owned businesses, no big box		2
Medical		2
Mow them down, demolition		2
Restaurants - upscale		2
Hotel/conference center, lodging for hospital guests		2
School, local college		2
Roads - Traffic flow, infrastructure, accessibility, Park & Ride for transit		2
6. What type of residential development would complement and support businesses in the area?: (2+ responses)		Total
Single family homes		7
Senior living - including single ranch and townhomes		5
Condos/housing over retail, ranch condos		4
Mixed use - including with trails		3
Upper end single family homes including \$500k plus; homes on 1/2 acre minimum lot		3
7. What type of residential development do you not want to see in the area?: (2+ responses)		Total
Apartments		16
Low income housing, section 8 housing		10
Expensive housing, gated communities, large lots		5
Cheap homes, cookie cutter homes, poorly built cluster homes, low budget condos		4
Townhomes		4
Condos		3
High density housing		3
Multi-family housing		3
Rentals		2
Trailer parks		2
8. What type of businesses do you think are suitable to target for location along the corridor?: (2+ responses)		Total
Restaurants, cafes		17
Specialty retail, boutiques, pet store		16
Medical, professional services		10
Family oriented: entertainment, sports facility, child care, University exten.		7
Supermarket - Kroger or Publix		4
Family owned businesses, entrepreneurial		3
Office buildings including 2 to 3 story and high end		3
Parks		2

Austell Road LCI Kick Off Meeting Survey Summary

9. What type of businesses would not be suitable for the area?: (2+ responses)	Total
Auto related including car lots and tire stores	18
Bars, Clubs, Liquor Stores, Package Stores	10
Adult entertainment including massage parlors, novelty, strip club & dance clubs	8
Salvage Stores, thrift stores, used furniture stores	5
Pawn Shops	4
Big Box retailers	3
Check cashing	3
Dollar Stores	3
Title Pawn	3
Bail bonds	2
Industrial	2
Storage	2
Tattoo parlors	2
10. What are the main transportation need in the corridor?: (2+ responses)	Total
Left turn arrows, lanes, signals	7
Shuttle bus, van, trolley for local trips, seniors, medical	6
Improve traffic flow	6
Sidewalks, pedestrian accessibility	5
Synchronize traffic lights	5
Better mass transit routes to Atlanta and in Cobb including rerouting CCT	4
Eliminate center median	3
Bike paths including connecting to Silver Comet Trail	3
Better access roads, better access to I-75 and I-85	2

Note: A survey tool was distributed at the Kick-Off meeting for the Austell Road LCI on November 16, 2006.
A total of 41 people participated in the survey.

Source: Ackerman/JJG (November 2006)

Appendix D

Summary of Community Design Workshop



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative
Community Design Workshop
January 25 & 27, 2007

Meeting Dates: January 25 & 27, 2007
Meeting Time: 1:00 – 9:00 PM.& 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM
Location: South Cobb Government Service Center
4700 Austell Road
Attendance: 170 over both days

Agenda

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25

1:00 – 1:15 Welcome, introductions, Agenda for the Day
1:15 – 1:45 Overview Presentation
Facts and images from the study area about corridor demographics,
economics, land use, aesthetics and transportation
Review ARC goals for LCI projects
1:45 – 2:15 Report on Public Kick-Off Meeting and Community Preference Survey
2:15 – 3:15 Break out session #1 – Overall Conditions and Prioritization of Needs
3:15 - 3:45 Group Reports
3:45 – 4:00 Break
4:00 – 5:45 Break out sessions for Identification of Issues and Plan Elements
2A - Land Use and Real Estate
2B- Transportation
2C - Community Design
5:45 – 6:15 Break
6:15 – 7:30 Reports and Plenary Session
7:30 – 9:00 Break out sessions for Conceptual Planning:
3A - Land Use
3B- Transportation
3C - Community Design

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27

8:30 – 9:00 Coffee and Bagels
9:00 – 9:15 Welcome, Introductions, Agenda for the Day
9:15 – 10:00 Review Day #1 Results
10:00 – 11:15 Break out Sessions for Plan Evaluation and Refinement:
4A - Land Use
4B- Transportation
4C - Community Design
11:15 – 11:45 Group Reports
11:45 -12:45 Break out Sessions for Implementation:
5A - Land Use
5B- Transportation
5C - Community Design
12:45 – 1:00 Wrap Up and Next Steps



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Opening Session

Laraine Vance, Cobb County Project Manager, opened the two-day workshop by welcoming the participants and pointing out the importance of the workshop. She stated that the workshop provides an opportunity for the public to work in a collaborative fashion with the planners in translating visions and goals into specific plans and strategies. She encouraged everyone to stay for the duration of the workshop both on Thursday and Saturday. If people had to leave, she emphasized the importance of returning. She then presented Gary Cornell, study team Project Manager.

Gary introduced the project team and outlined the purpose and progress of the study. He then mentioned activities already undertaken to get public input such as the Public Kick-off Meeting held on November 16, 2006, and he thanked those who attended that meeting. A power point presentation was given outlining the scope of the study, the schedule and the status of the work. The presentation also included an overview of the 2-day workshop (G. Cornell pointed out that the public would not meet on Friday, however the study team will use Friday to organize the results of Thursday's session and prepare for Saturday's session).

Several participants expressed concern that the study might develop plans that could result in their property being taken or their property taxes being increased. Morris Dillard provided a more in-depth overview of the public outreach effort and addressed the audiences concerns about the purpose of the study. M. Dillard assured the participants on behalf of the study team that the purpose of this initiative is not to disrupt the community and drive people from their property but to look for ways to create a greater sense of community through land use and transportation improvements. He also stated that he did not believe the County Commissioners who would have final approval of the plan, would accept recommendations that would drive citizens from their homes. He encouraged everyone to stay involved so that the plan reflects what the community wants to see happen in the corridor. Several questions were asked during the General Session to gain a better understanding of the study.

The primary purpose of the 2-day workshop was to identify a priority list of projects or initiatives in the areas of land use, transportation and Community Design that will translate the community's vision for the area into reality. Following the workshop, the list of priorities will be refined and converted into a conceptual redevelopment plan for the Austell Road Corridor. Approximately 170 persons attended the workshop, including Cobb County Commissioner Kesting. Many attended both days and worked tirelessly to generate the projects that will make up the conceptual redevelopment plan.

General sessions were used for background information, public education, and to receive reports from the breakout sessions where most of the actual work was accomplished. The breakout session reports follow.



BREAKOUT SESSION REPORTS

Day 1 – January 25, 2007

Breakout Session #1 Reports—Overall Conditions and Prioritization of Needs

Land Use & Real Estate Group: Top 5 priorities

- Ensuring high quality design and aesthetics
- Pedestrian access and safety
- Code enforcement
- Improving schools
- Additional green space

Transportation Group: Top 6 priorities

- Traffic flow and traffic calming
- Businesses need to come together to take concerted action
- Need to limit development on E/W Connector
- Access Management
- Need tax incentives to induce certain types of behavior such as reducing curb cuts
- Need more green space and recreational activities

Community Design Group: Top 5 priorities

- Improve appearance of corridor by getting rid of abandoned buildings
- Implement traditional neighborhood design standards: buildings close to streets; parking in rear; green space in center for recreation and relaxation; walking and bike paths
- Strengthen code enforcement
- Better control over commercial development: no “big box”, more independent businesses in small buildings
- Proper maintenance of new development

Priorities Common to All Three Groups:

- Better code enforcement
- Access management
- Green space, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities such as community centers, walking trails, parks
- A business association to speak for the common needs of the business community in the corridor



Breakout Session #2 Reports – Identification of Issues and Plan Elements

Land Use and Real Estate Group:

□ Issues

- Parking lots used for noisy, after-hour activities
- Cut-through traffic
- Absence of buffering between uses
- Traffic in South Cobb High School area—noise and lights from football games
- Un-controlled run-off from new development
- Continuous yard sales at certain churches

□ Plan Elements/Opportunities

- **Hard Areas—unlikely to redevelop in next 10-20 years**
 - ❖ Established single family neighborhoods
 - ❖ Large apartment complexes
 - ❖ Hospitals
 - ❖ Schools
 - ❖ Churches
 - ❖ Newer shopping areas on E/W Connector
- **Soft Areas—redevelopment potential good to excellent**
 - ❖ Heritage Hills
 - ❖ The vacant Target site
 - ❖ Empty office complexes
 - ❖ Austell Plaza

These “hard” and “soft” areas were shown on maps.

Transportation Group:

Potential plan elements

- Business to business connectivity without using Austell Road
- Improve Hurt, Floyd, Austell triangle
- Build access roads behind retail businesses with adequate buffers between and appropriate access to residential neighborhoods
- Replace concrete median in Austell Road with landscaped median



Community Design Group:

Eliminate things that take away from the beauty of area; add things that enhance the beauty of the area

- Clean up abandoned buildings
- Develop pocket parks along the corridor
- Various streetscape improvements, including widening sidewalks and making them more user-friendly (for example street furniture)
- Replace concrete median in Austell Road with landscaped median using smaller trees; upgrade and maintain
- Develop area between Silver Comet Trail and Austell Road

Breakout Session #3 – Conceptual Planning Framework (

Land Use and Real Estate Group: *Specific proposals for discussion and consensus*

- Select areas within the corridor that can be developed or redeveloped to become a “trend setter” or catalyst. Corridor could become a model development for others to use
- Ideal mixed use development would include: recreational activities; residential and family activities; green space; preservation of surrounding neighborhoods
- Redevelopment could include the older apartments north of the hospital
- Redevelopment could also include the trailer park
- Redevelopment is more than a face-lift
- Improving access is one way to make an area more attractive
- Develop green space and bike facilities and walking trails as links from neighborhoods to trails and shopping and other uses. The home becomes both origin and destination making driving unnecessary. Green space plan should be defined in detail and should include maintenance standards
- Green space must be maintained in the mixed-use development
- Cluster housing within a mixed-use development will help preserve green space
- Residents want to limit height of development to 3 stories
- New development should be compatible with existing development, topography and location
- Limit “clear cutting”
- Austell Road Corridor needs its own identity. An appropriate identity might be found in the history of the area. In the North, the Milford Community was known for its apple groves. So Milford and apples might be part of the new identity. An historical marker or a Gateway could be installed to reflect the old and the new
- Consider rezoning from R20 to R5



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Transportation – *Specific proposals for discussion and consensus*

- ❑ Corridor shuttle service to connect key uses such as shopping, schools, medical facilities—8-10 stops
- ❑ Keep E/W Connector as primarily a thoroughfare for thru traffic; limit access to Connector
- ❑ Better alignment of bus stops (spacing)
- ❑ Extend CCT service along Austell Road from E/W Connector to Floyd Factory Shoals to Six Flags to H.E Holmes MARTA Station; also Powder Springs to E/W Connector to Maxham to Veterans Memorial to Oakdale to Cumberland
- ❑ Provide access to Silver Comet Trail from Austell Road
- ❑ Sidewalks in the vicinity of Milford and Austell and Light of the World Church—close gaps in sidewalks
- ❑ Sidewalks to access bus stops
- ❑ Crosswalk at Pair Road
- ❑ Pedestrian signals at all signalized intersections
- ❑ Signalization improvements using SPLOST and GDOT funding
- ❑ Make Hicks Road an alternative to Austell
- ❑ Reduce Speed on Austell Road
- ❑ Put in a grid system to handle local traffic, connecting neighborhoods without having to use Austell
- ❑ Additional intersection improvements
- ❑ Build access roads behind retail businesses such as Wall Mart and Home Depot
- ❑ Left turn signal from Austell onto Floyd
- ❑ Roundabout at Floyd and Austell

Community Design – *Specific Proposals for discussion and consensus*

- ❑ **Current Image**
 - Poor visual quality
 - Abandoned buildings
 - No or poor landscaping
 - Single family houses converted to business use
- ❑ **Preferred Image**
 - Variety of residential types – controlled development of condos and town homes
 - Secure property ownership – no threat of Cobb County taking property by using power of eminent domain
 - Strict control over design and use of residential and business spaces
 - Locate merchants on main road and residences off main road
 - Good maintenance of common areas (good landscaping)
 - User-friendly sidewalks for pedestrians and bike facilities for connections to shopping and residential areas
 - Eliminate concrete median in Austell Road and replace with landscaped median (small trees)
 - Well designed recreational facilities for children and teens (Boys & Girls Clubs)
- ❑ **Most important Community Design Elements**



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- Create a sense of place in the corridor with landmarks and focal points
- Identify locations for pocket parks and green space
- Provide access to Silver Comet Trail
- Improve the streetscape on Austell Rd. (landscaped median, wide sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, etc.)
- Require new developments to place buildings along the street with parking in the rear or on the side

Day 2 – Saturday, January 27, 2007 – Plan Evaluation and Refinement

Land Use and Real Estate Group – Top 5 proposals

- ❑ Austell Road/ Floyd Road/Hurt Road triangle possible mixed use development site
- ❑ Older apartments and trailer parks north of the hospital: potential redevelopment site
- ❑ Old Target Site-potential mixed use development
- ❑ Bed/Breakfast facilities in Hospital area for extended stay patients and family
- ❑ Primary focus of redevelopment should be in existing commercial areas that need improvement

Transportation Group – Top 6 proposals

- ❑ Access Management—focus on Wal-Mart, Target, the New Home Depot, South Cobb High School (special facility for buses)
- ❑ Sidewalk connections: close the gaps (churches, retail establishments, neighborhood entrances, schools)
- ❑ Re-design north/south Hospital Way so as to take some pressure off the intersection of Austell Road and E/W Connector
- ❑ Various operational improvements, for example at Hurt Road and Clay Road
- ❑ Roundabout at Floyd Road and Austell Road
- ❑ Install pedestrian crosswalks with count down signals at major intersections

Community Design Group – Top 5 proposals

- ❑ Strict control of commercial development: smaller buildings, independent businesses
- ❑ Eliminate or re-habilitate abandoned buildings
- ❑ Place buildings close to streets with parking in back, green space in center, bike trails and recreational areas
- ❑ Replace concrete median in Austell Road with landscaped median (small trees)
- ❑ Enact development covenants with fees to ensure that new development is properly maintained



Breakout Session #4 – Implementation Strategies

Land Use and Community Design Group (*these two groups merged*)

- ❑ Establish streetscape policy and standards
- ❑ Street lights on Austell Road
- ❑ Limit left turns
- ❑ Do not feel compelled to develop all vacant land; require developers to make a portion of their sites green space
- ❑ Require appropriate buffers between uses; make them a condition of zoning
- ❑ Give attention to scale—don't make the Austell Road Corridor another regional activity center like Cumberland
- ❑ Possible catalyst sites: Clay House across from South Cobb High football field; Rezone NE corner of Seayes; Post Office site
- ❑ Share LCI plan with developers

Transportation:

- ❑ Access Management: obstacles – resistance from business owners who will not want to give up driveways nor pay for access roads; solutions--need to show businesses how they can prosper as a result of less congestion and smoother traffic flow. Possible funding sources: SPLOST, LCI Implementation funds, state, private—community improvement district, federal
- ❑ Sidewalks: obstacles – complex design in some areas requiring curb and gutter with retaining walls; may need right-of way; solution--money. Possible funding sources: local, regional, state (Transportation Enhancement Funds), private developers, federal
- ❑ Redesign of Hospital Way: obstacles –traffic congestion will be a major problem during construction; solution--hire off-duty police to direct traffic. Must build traffic control cost into project cost. Possible funding sources: state, the Hospital, federal
- ❑ Clay/Hurt Road operational improvements: obstacles--coordination with neighborhoods; right-of-way issues; traffic during construction; solutions-- neighborhood meetings, money, use off-duty police officers for traffic control. Possible funding sources: state, federal
- ❑ Roundabout @ Floyd and Austell: obstacles – possible opposition from GDOT and public opposition; solutions – show GDOT precedents, public education. Possible funding sources: SPLOST, regional, state, private, federal
- ❑ Crosswalks with pedestrian countdown signals: obstacles: public confusion; solution – public education. Possible funding sources: local, regional



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Land Use Group:

- ❑ Changes in area in last 20 years
 - 2-lane road
 - Sparse shopping
 - Impact of road widening increase in traffic
 - Number of young people in this area (South Cobb High School)
 - Amount of housing
 - Types of housing
 - Zoning changes
 - Quality of housing being built as well as commercial structures
 - Concern over vacant properties
 - What will replace the vacant properties?
- ❑ Based on current trends in corridor, what will we see in 10 years if we do nothing?
 - Property values will decline
 - Gridlock
 - Buffer design is a concern
 - Pedestrian issues
 - Green spaces that may exist are underutilized and not maintained
- ❑ What do we want to see 10 years from now? 5 years from now?
 - R-20 neighborhoods maintained
 - Peachtree City w/ electric golf carts (a secondary network of transportation)
 - Design in Smyrna (political attention to maintain community)
 - Setting benchmarks for meeting community goals
 - Adopt Land Use plan and convert to ordinance
 - Higher scale business (asset to community)
 - Upscale restaurants
 - Alternative modes of transportation
 - Pedestrian access and increase security at key intersections
 - More policing
 - Raising the bar in terms of building materials
 - Get rid of concrete median and replace w/ landscape median
 - Sidewalks
 - Lighting

Top 10 Prioritized Changes to Corridor

- | | |
|---|--|
| ❑ Improved schools* 1 | ❑ Maintain traffic flow and removing impediments |
| ❑ Pedestrian access and safety *2 | ❑ Allowing for alternative modes of transportation |
| ❑ Ensuring high quality design & aesthetics*3 | ❑ Higher quality businesses/restaurants |
| ❑ Code enforcement* 4 | ❑ Landscaped medians |
| ❑ Additional Green space and access*5 | ❑ Buffers |
| ❑ Access management | |



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*Top 5 is indicated with * and number*

Comment: I am concerned about the lack of trees. Trees are needed to soak up exhaust fumes.

Question: Do you have information about the proposed redevelopment at the northeast corner of Seayes Road?

Response: There is a proposed rezoning to build homes but there has been no action on this. A meeting is scheduled for this is February 6.

Comment: Proposed zoning is of concern. I would like to have an equal number of retail as office spaces. Also, there is a concern that businesses near residences bring rodents and privacy issues where windows on the back of businesses provide direct view into homes.

Response: With this type of mix, there would need to be height lines and other standards to ensure consistency.

Comment: I am concerned that this area not become like Cumberland with high rises and many businesses.

Response: Two areas in the County are designated as regional activity centers and they both surround malls, Cumberland and Town Center, but you will not see that in this study area with the current zoning. When we talk about density, we are talking about rearranging the sites.

Question: In considering the densities for residences, are you also considering the impact to the school system?

Response: Yes, the area's schools are involved on the team.

Comment: I travel Austell Road and Clay Road and they are already at the breaking point. If we change the area we will not relieve but double traffic. Also, Austell Road had one thousand times the accidents as ten years ago.

Response: We will be looking at that from a transportation perspective. From land use perspective, we want to see a redevelopment of vacant retail to meet the public's desired uses. We are tasked to look at catalyst sites to see where change is possible.

Question: What happens after you agree on a plan, do you meet with developers?

Response: There are developer fairs where these plans are displayed and developers express interest to conceptual plans. Also, the County's Office of Economic Development uses these plans to recruit potential businesses to the area.

Question: It is dark during the evening hours along Austell Road; will lighting be a part of this study?

Response: Yes, this study will address street and area lighting.

Comment: Add other businesses such as a Bed and Breakfast Inn near hospital for extended stay rather than hotels only.

Response: That is a good idea.



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Question: Is this a study to target abandoned shopping centers or is this precedent setting for developers to come in and get other land?

Response: This is a catalyst for improving the community and activity centers.

Question: There is so much discussion about vacant land; can we just leave land vacant?

Response: The County, through direct acquisition, will need to designate parcels as green space. Also, when development occurs, standards can be established that preserves space as green space. We can also look for ways to create incentives for green space.

Transportation Group:

- ❑ Who was here 10 years ago?
 - Majority community (Whites)
- ❑ How would characterize the community_at that time?
 - Same except traffic
 - Calloway & Clay – get around at anytime
 - No peak congestion
 - Change over at hospital was the most important part and still is today
 - Croy Engineering hired to come up with new designs, which will improve corridor traffic and E/W Connector traffic. Hospital, emergency vehicles and residents
- ❑ Before E/W connector, how did you get around?
 - Hurt Road
- ❑ Has corridor changed for better or worse over 10 years?
 - Better – we have more shopping areas, used to go to Cumberland; more access to needs
 - Not Better – no systematic development approach. Raised median abandoned buildings, parking in front, etc.
 - With the new E/W corridor, when businesses moved to new developments, it created gray areas on Austell Rd.
 - Exemption from taxes and non-compete clauses caused businesses to move

Comment: We love our autos. Can the roads keep up with automobiles? If you have free flowing conditions there is a balance that must be weighed; will there be enough funds to maximize both development and transportation – traffic during peak times.

- ❑ What public decisions or events changed the corridor?
 - Austell Road becoming a State Road. Cobb County cannot do anything without state permit. No big business without acceleration/de-acceleration lane.
 - Before Austell became State Road...street name change, perhaps putting State Rd 5 back on E/W will improve taxes
 - GDOT Authority – no zoning authority, their main responsibility was to build roads
 - E/W Connector – was supposed to be limited access. Now subdivisions, more business, etc resulting in more traffic
 - Coordination process with DOT and Cobb County

Comment: It would be (GDOT/Cobb County) helpful to have an on-line flow chart. What bothers me is the local politics that gets involved.



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- ❑ What are the trends?
 - Austell Rd - E/W Connector – 517 accidents the last 3 years; that is a top accident zone
- ❑ Why cannot Cobb County recommend having an access road on the backside of business developments (shopping)?
 - Regulated at local level. Consultant will recommend. Aspirations Plan – have an urban interchange – expensive project 10, 15, 20 years from now?
- ❑ If the corridor/development stays the same, what will happen?
 - Congestion, gridlock, development must be regulated.
 - You will get new development that will go to the new E/W Connector.
 - What do you want to see in the corridor next 10 years? No new building on the E/W Connector will improve Austell Rd. Fifty to sixty homes per development will use Austell Rd.
 - The other half of rejuvenating Austell, Clay Rd. businesses was grand fathered in. This type of zoning should be addressed.
 - Rezoning the road for mixed use will help

Question: How do you balance the move of younger people in with older established citizens? How do you balance it? Will there be more developments for older people?

Response: Connect business owners with improving the corridor

Suggestion: Business Association may help. Does not cost the county or taxpayers any dollars

Suggestion: Seven thousand people work in the corridor. There should be open space in the corridor where workers could go during their lunchtimes. Set a goal for green space.

Community Design Group:

- ❑ Current Image
 - Poor image
 - Abandoned buildings
 - Lack of landscaping
 - Individual homes converted to businesses
- ❑ Preferred image
 - Residential variety (not just single family homes)
 - Secure property ownership – no threat of County taking their property by exercising the power of eminent domain
 - Strict controls over design and use of residential and business spaces
 - Merchants located on main road and residences off main road
 - Maintenance of common areas (i.e. landscaping). Some areas are maintained better than others
 - Sidewalks for walkways, bike trails and connections to residences and shopping
 - Use smaller trees in the median of Austell Road
 - Controlled development of new condominiums and town homes
 - Recreational facilities for children and teens (i.e. Boys & Girls Club)



COMMENTS FROM GENERAL SESSIONS

Question: Will this project include expansion of South Cobb High School? Students are in trailers now.

Response: This study includes a focus on land use and transportation and the Board of Education is represented on the steering committee for this project. The School Board is interested in getting your ideas and working with you to make sure that this project reflects the community needs.

Question: Peachtree City has golf cart paths to get traffic off the road, help with gas and traffic conditions. Can we consider alternatives such as this?

Response: Yes, your input is critical in considering such alternatives.

Question: Are there any plans by the County about eminent domain, taking people's property and or driving up property taxes? I live in the area of Bennett Street in the middle of corridor.

Response: There is no plan now and you are here to help us develop a plan. The display maps are of existing conditions.

Comment: We live in neighborhoods along Austell Road. Shopping is and should be contained mainly on the East West Connector. We bought into a residential community and we want to keep it that way. Many of us are retired and if multi-story homes come to the area, we will be forced to move because we will not be able to afford taxes being on a fixed income. We could not afford to purchase the same quality home and acreage that we currently have anyplace else.

Response: The purpose of this study is to find out how this community can be improved, not to force anyone to move. Things have changed in the time you have been here and we want to work with you to determine how to make it a better community.

Question: Can we freeze the property values as they are now for tax purposes until the existing residents die? With development, the value of our property and taxes will go sky high. Expensive half a million dollar properties adjacent to our property will drive our taxes up, making our property unaffordable.

Response: The LCI Program uses the existing property as a foundation for the study. There is enough retail and vacant property that needs to be redeveloped to make the corridor better without doing anything to the residential community at all. This study is also to make it better for residents to access Austell Road more quickly and safely. For example, if you need better north-south connections, there may be a way for you to access that point rather than using Austell Road. Also, we are looking for opportunities to make your property and neighborhood look better by examining dilapidated conditions and considering opportunities such as senior residences and some retail for people to walk who do not drive. We are looking at building on the strength of community.

Question: Is this study like the one done in Smyrna with the complex?

Response: No, that was not an LCI project. The purpose of an LCI is not to go in and bulldoze good residential property. This study will build on existing communities and connect land use with transportation.



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Comment: I think that improving the area improves the value of your home. I am here to complain about the corner where I live on Milford Church Road between Hicks and Austell Road. One-quarter mile west from the corner is disgraceful and makes the value of my property go down. I am very concerned and have complained to the Commissioner with no satisfaction. That needs to be corrected!

Response: You will get a chance to respond to that area as part of this process.

Question: How will this study affect Childers Drive?

Response: You will be given an opportunity to identify areas that you would like changed or improved.

Comment: I want green space and parcels of land to remain in tact; do not take over all of the land.

Comment: Something needs to be done on Austell Road. I would not want to cross Austell Road; it is like taking your life into your own hands.

Comment: There has to be better communications/notice from the County to publicize and inform citizens of the Zoning and Planning Meetings other than the yellow signs. I am glad to see the web site used for this study.

Citizen Response: I have attended the Zoning and Planning Meetings to appeal a request and the system does work.

Citizen Response: I agree we need to be involved. Some people do not come because it will do no good. I and two others opposed a cell towers along with 97 signatures on a petition. Two were for the towers and it passed. No one listened to us.

Comment: Until we get control over growth and it matches infrastructure, we will continue to be behind the curve.

Response: The Comprehensive Transportation Plan Study is underway for the County and each city and it is intended to get a better handle on the community's infrastructure and land use.

Question: I like what is going on for this Austell Road Study because we have always been treated like a stepchild. Who has the final say on what gets done?

Response: On state roads the state and county collaborate and the state has the final say. On land use issues, the final say is the county.

Comment: You say you are not going to take property but the map shows shading where homes will not exist.

Response: The map shows what is residential and what is commercial. If the property comes to the Board of Commission for commercial rezoning and the area is consistent with commercial development, then a change may be granted.

Appendix E

Summary of Community Design Workshop



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative
Public Open House
March 12, 2007

Meeting Date: March 12, 2007
Meeting Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Location: South Cobb Government Service Center
4700 Austell Road
Attendance: 90

Meeting Summary

Participants were asked to sign in upon arrival and provided with project materials including the agenda, which is included in the recopy of these notes and a copy of the Winter 2007 newsletter. Area maps were on display for review. After reviewing the study area maps, a power point presentation was made on the project's status and preliminary plans that resulted from the January Public Design Workshop. The presentation is part of the record copy of these notes, a brief summary of the key recommendations is provided below. Following the presentation meeting attendees were asked for reaction and additional feedback.

Land Use Recommendation

- Replace vacant shopping centers with viable uses
- Provide a sense of place
- Identify gateways
- Build to a central focus
- Improve land use efficiency
- Increase housing options
- Encourage mixed use
- Ensure adequate open space
- Design for walkability
- Provide for landscaping
- Provide for wayfinding
- Protect neighborhoods
- Create design guidelines
 - Public realm
 - Private realm
- Redevelopment of “catalyst sites”
 - 3 Sites identified in study:
 - Former Target store
 - Heritage Hills SC
 - Austell Plaza
 - These sites sizes are large enough parcel to have an impact
 - May need to provide incentives for a feasible real estate project
- Amend the Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Map, and ROD Ordinance
- Acquire Land for a Park at Silver Comet Trail
- Preserve the area's stable neighborhoods
- Create a business organization for corridor



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative
Public Open House
March 12, 2007

Transportation Recommendations (in addition to those already planned/programmed)

Roadway Improvements

- Brookwood Drive Extension
- Hemlock Drive Extension
- Hicks Road Improvements
- Hurt Road Realignment
- Mulkey Road Extensions
- Floyd Road Realignment
- Extension of Lincoln Crest Drive from Austell Rd. to East - West Connector in line with new Mulkey Road Connector
- New Road: From Anderson Mill Road north along the west side of Sanders Elementary to the new Target Shopping Center
- Anderson Mill Road: From Anderson Ridge S/D east to Sanders Elementary School

Recommended Sidewalk Improvements

- Anderson Mill Road on the east and west sides of Austell Road
- Amy Lane west of Austell Road
- Pair Road west of Austell Road
- South side of Milford Church Road west of Austell Road
- Sidewalk gaps along Austell Road from Callaway Road to Clay Road.

Traffic Operations and Intersection Improvements

- Austell Road & extension of Lincoln Crest Drive
- Clay Road & Extended Hemlock Drive (west of Austell Rd.)
- Austell Road & Evergreen Drive
- Austell Road & McDuffie Road
- Austell Road & Anderson Mill Road
- Austell Road and Seayes Road
- East -West Connector & Floyd Road
- Pedestrian Countdown Signals
 - Austell Road & Mulkey Road
 - Austell Road & Hurt Road
 - Austell Road & Milford Church Road

Citizen Feedback

- Reducing traffic congestion must be given priority. Any priority to study placement of sidewalks?

Reply: Yes, the recommendations on sidewalks are:

- Series of multi-use paths/sidewalks – perhaps linked to the Silver Comet Trail
- Close gaps in existing sidewalks
- Build new sidewalks with new roads or road improvements
- Sidewalks should be built near all schools
- Pedestrian mobility is very important. We will look at sidewalks to ensure safety and compliance with ADA regulations.



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- The law requires one mile of sidewalks on either side for all schools. Is that the case?
Reply: School systems will put sidewalks in front of the school as they are built. The county will be responsible for additional sidewalks. There is a recommendation for new developments to add sidewalks.
- East/West Connector – are there current plans to add turn lanes?
Reply: Yes.
- What is the timeline for implementation of proposed turn signals?
Reply: The implementation plan is not in place yet. After the plan is finalized, the list will be shortened and prioritized and voted on by Board of Commissioners.
- What can be done when a TAD is created to encourage businesses to locate in an area and after a while the businesses decide to close and relocate to another area, leaving the original business vacant - this is a big problem?
Reply: There is a recommendation to provide incentives to increase the market return so that businesses will remain in their original locations.
- There is no recommendation for improving schools.
Reply: The composition of the neighborhoods is shifting from families to older or single residents that would drive decisions about the schools. As a result, the Board of Education did not bring an issue relative to the number of schools. This study is probably not the best forum in which to discuss improving the quality of schools, although it is very appropriate to discuss the location of schools in the context of this study.
- At the last meeting, there was a recommendation to use land behind South Cobb High to expand the school so the portables can be removed.
- The study has been expanded from N. Leela – Milford Church. Why?
Reply: The County asked for an extension to Callaway early the study. The traffic count at Callaway is very high and this impacts Austell Rd. In addition, several requests were made from the public to add Callaway.
- Why does the shuttle stop around hospital versus continuing to Callaway?
Reply: The shuttle recommendation is based on comments from the first day of the workshop, January 25th. Continuation of the shuttle along the East/West Connector, for example, is something that CCT may want to study in the future. It's largely a question of funding
- Expand Core Team to include Gospel Harvester Church.
- Add recreation center to park site – recreation fields, basketball, YMCA amenities



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Written Comments

- I have a complaint on traffic lights. The light at Seayes Rd. across from the Government Center holds less than the Silver Comet trail light for walkers. Only two to three cars can get out at a time. Also, we need a turn left signal light onto Seayes from Austell Rd. The Government Center and Police Station have one onto Seayes on that side of Austell. This is a dangerous thing and there have been wrecks, especially when one is turning right off Seayes and one is trying to make a U-turn. We appreciate your help. Thanks.
- Concerning the Park on Austell Rd – I do not think this is a good thing for a neighborhood. Anything can go on in a setting like this. I would like to see this become green space with trees to protect our environment and to cut pollution for us. In this kind of a park setting, you have more wide open doors for home invasions in the name of riding the Trail. We do not want our area urbanized. Thank you.
- The concept and plans as presented, especially the catalyst zones, should greatly improve the corridor.
- Accomplishing those redevelopments would trigger other existing sites to upgrade and improve.
- Consider U-turns only at left turn arrow-controlled intersections. A left turn arrow signal is needed northbound on Austell Road at all intersections.
- Jim Moon, Milford Chase HOA President, jim@milfordchase.com
 - ❖ I would be interested in helping form a business/community organization.
 - ❖ I strongly believe that a better, unifying name is essential to this area developing.
 - ❖ The addition of a park on the Silver Comet would be a strong first accomplishment for this area.

Appendix F

Stakeholder Interview Summary

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1.0 Introduction

Austell Road was identified as a corridor with great potential for creating a livable center whereby both residences and businesses can enjoy the benefits of a vibrant and thriving community. Approximately 18 miles from metropolitan Atlanta and 23 miles north of the Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, the Austell Road community is in close proximity to several Cobb County municipalities as well as multiple metropolitan centers and attractions, including downtown Atlanta.

The Austell Road Corridor, once a strong and thriving community has undergone a transition over the past several years and as a result, is in a position to redefine and redevelop itself, becoming a more sustainable, livable and attractive place for this and future generations. Over the past several years, once residential homes have been converted to businesses, retail, strip malls and medium to large sized box stores have been vacated. Traffic congestion, including commuters using shortcuts and cut-through routes to access other corridors, is affecting the once calm, quiet residential streets.

Well Star Health Systems of Cobb County has remained viable and supportive of the medical and economic needs of the community. As a result, medical facilities surrounding the hospital campus thrive from its presence in the community. Growth along the corridor has remained problematic and challenging. The elementary, middle and high schools throughout the corridor are adversely impacted as they share the congested roadways with business commuters from within and outside of the community. A variety of redevelopment opportunities are needed, including those that will encourage and facilitate a multi-modal transportation infrastructure as was highlighted during conversations with stakeholders.

The Livable Centers Initiative grant, provided by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), is being used by Cobb County to fund a study that will address the opportunities for redevelopment and a menu of improvements along this valued corridor.

Key stakeholders from the residential, business, medical, development, education and government sectors were asked to provide feedback on the current conditions and future vision for the corridor. This Stakeholder Interview Report summarizes stakeholder feedback and provides guidance and options for redevelopment along the corridor. Eighteen of the stakeholders contacted provided feedback contained in this summary report.



2.0 Overarching Themes

Stakeholders generally agreed on a vision for the future of the Austell Road Corridor. Those overarching concerns are as follows.

- Mixture of retail, businesses and residential
- Active and vibrant corridor
- Update appearance
- Improve lighting
- Similar to other parts of Cobb County with streetscape, clean and appealing
- Upscale similar to development along S. Atlanta Road and projections for Belmont Hills Shopping Center
- Renovate on southern portion of Austell Road near Clay Road with more retail and businesses on a smaller scale than the East West Connector
- Preserve neighborhoods while creating options for alternate travel
- Improved access to businesses and commercial properties
- Reduce congestion along corridor

3.0 Recurring Themes

Strengths of the Corridor

The Austell Road corridor remains viable primarily due to its established residential support, location and potential redevelopment. The stakeholders interviewed identified the current strengths of the corridor in the following terms.

Businesses/Education

- Wellstar Hospital and other medical facilities
- Anchor stores such as Kohl's Target, Lowe's and Home Depot attract patrons to smaller box and retail stores
- Repeat customers continue to patronize business
- Income levels of shoppers a plus
- Businesses along the East-West Connector are a strength
- Education system is good

Location/Accessibility/Infrastructure

- High traffic, access and visibility
- Good location and growing area
- Alternate cut-through routes such as Calloway road over to Powder Springs or from Austell Road to Highway 5 and to US41
- Location – Cobb County, proximity to metro Atlanta, I-285, and large tracts of land
- Road infrastructure good
- Land prices affordable



Residents/Community

- Customer loyalty; residents are proud of their area; longevity of residents
- Large dense population
- Attracting new middle-income people
- Calm place, friendly neighbors
- Community is tolerant of diversity

Future Business Opportunities

Stakeholders would like to see aging shopping centers and structure replaced with the following:

- Mixed-use development – medical offices, retail mixed with residential, senior housing and apartment homes
- Quality anchor tenants
- Nicer food establishments such as Moe's Restaurant and Shane's Rib Shack
- Shopping area such as The Avenues of West Cobb (site to shop and get exercise at the same time for aging community)
- More retail establishments similar to Cumberland Mall
- Grocery stores
- Children's clinics
- Employment centers
- Businesses that provide support to the medical facilities

Future Residential/Community Opportunities

Stakeholders would like to see aging shopping centers and structures replaced with the following:

- High density, mixed use live/work/play; planned village with residential and retail
- Higher-density residential development including condominiums in the \$100,000 range
- Single family development in the \$250,000-350,000 range
- Upper end apartments, senior housing, including ranch condos and assisted living
- Affordable homes (such as on Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road)
- Senior apartments
- Mixed income, mixed type housing (example Walton Village and Walton Reserve)
- Green space, parks, and nature parks for senior residents outdoors
- Nature Park; Amphitheatre, gazebos
- Activity centers for young people such as a computer center, library and/or park



New Services Needed in Corridor

Stakeholders identified the need for the following new services in the corridor:

- Upscale and moderately priced restaurants
- Grocery stores
- More medical office space to support the hospital
- Children medical clinics
- Banks, hotels/motels
- Activities for young people

Major Transportation Needs

The following transportation needs were identified:

- Increase CCT routes and frequency and closer stops
- Extend bus system down Austell Road to Thornton Road
- Ease traffic congestion
- Additional public transportation options

Top Issues Facing the Corridor

In response to the top issues or problems facing the corridor, stakeholders responded as follows.

Aesthetics

- Vacant and deteriorating buildings, shopping plazas and box retail creating eyesore
- Residential homes converted to businesses; lack of standards and access
- Lack of “curb” appeal; appearance as an old rural area

Crime

- Vandalism, spray painting of graffiti, dimly lit areas
- Highest crime rate in Cobb County, crime problem rising – more security needed
- Improved lighting in retail parking lots

Congestion/Mobility/Access

- Poor access to businesses
- Need appropriate cut-through along medians so that the businesses do not suffer
- Traffic lights need to be on sensors or timers
- Traffic congestion, traffic flow during certain periods
- Add traffic lights (examples: Amy Lane making a left and right turn off of Austell Road, at Ivy Commons)
- Need covered bus stops for inclement weather conditions



Businesses & Schools

- County needs to pay more attention to small businesses rather than continue to raise taxes to increase revenue
- Need more banks
- Poor performing middle and high schools
- Not enough businesses to attract higher income levels; upper class moving out of area

Infrastructure

- Sewer and drainage improvements needed
- Need for additional sidewalks and bicycle trails
- Too many mechanic shops

Community Preservation/Viability

- Not enough constructive activities for young people



4.0 Summary of Stakeholder Interview Feedback

1. Have you heard about the Austell Road LCI Study? If yes, how?
 - Word of mouth – 2
 - Project website – 0
 - Media – 0
 - Flyer – 3
 - Mail – 0
 - Other - 3

2. Do you live in the corridor? 3
 - Work in the corridor? 11
 - Shop in the corridor? 6
 - Own a business in the corridor? 2
 - All of the above? 1

3. What kind of identity does this corridor have now?
 - Growing area; center point joining Kennesaw to Smyrna
 - Place where people feel comfortable shopping, living and working
 - Some businesses along the East-West Connector are more upscale and seem to be thriving
 - A great north-south corridor
 - Area in need of improvement (i.e. facelift, street light upgrades, fencing to enclose wide open area including the back of the business)
 - Abundance of vacant buildings in need of renovation
 - Eyesore in some areas; blighted area
 - Median impact property values by restricting access
 - Dangerous to navigate around median
 - Busy, old and outdated; only regular customers continue to patronize businesses
 - Lots of traffic accidents, vehicular and pedestrians
 - Commercial area -- not too hospitable for residential uses
 - Congested corridor
 - Stagnant area for businesses and property values
 - Owners neglect property
 - Commercial rental in substandard office buildings

4. What kind of identity would you like the corridor to have?
 - Mixture of retail, businesses and residential
 - More businesses with a customer service approach
 - Modern look; brightened up
 - Active and vibrant corridor with more apartments
 - Improve lighting
 - Similar to other parts of Cobb County with streetscape, clean and appealing
 - Renovation on southern portion of Austell Road near Clay Road with more retail and businesses on a smaller scale than the East West Connector



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative Stakeholder Interview Summary

- Upscale similar to development along S. Atlanta Road and projections for Belmont Hills Shopping Center
- Preservation of the neighborhood while creating options for alternate travel (the solution is a major redevelopment project)
- Improved access to businesses and commercial properties
- Reduce congestion along corridor

5. What are the top (3 or 4) issues or problems facing the corridor today?

Aesthetics

- Vacant and deteriorating buildings, shopping plazas and box retail creating eyesore
- Residential dwellings converted to businesses; lack standards and access
- Lack “curb” appeal; appearance as an old rural area

Crime

- Vandalism, spray painting of graffiti, dimly lit areas
- Highest crime rate in Cobb County, crime problem rising - more security needed
- Improved lighting in retail parking lots

Congestion/Mobility/Access

- Poor access to businesses
- Need appropriate cut-through along medians so that the businesses do not suffer
- Traffic lights need to be on sensors or timers
- Traffic congestion, traffic flow during certain periods
- Add traffic lights (examples: Amy Lane making a left and right turn off of Austell Road, at Ivy Commons)
- Need covered bus stops during inclement weather conditions

Businesses & Schools

- County needs to pay more attention to small businesses rather than continue to raise taxes to increase revenue
- Need more banks
- Poor performing middle and high schools
- Not enough businesses to attract higher income levels; upper class moving out of area

Infrastructure

- Sewer and drainage improvements needed
- Need for additional sidewalks and bicycle trails
- Too many mechanic shops

Community Preservation/Viability

- Inadequate constructive activities for young people



6. What are the major (3 or 4) strengths of the corridor?

Businesses/Environment

- Ross Department Store benefits from anchor stores such as Kohl's, Target, Lowe's and Home Depot
- Hospital and medical facilities are a plus
- Strong retail potential
- Repeat customers continue to patronize business
- Traffic volume is good
- Income levels of shoppers a plus
- Education system is good
- Businesses along the East-West Connector are a strength

Location/Accessibility

- High traffic, access and visibility
- Good location and growing area
- Alternate cut-through routes such as Callaway Road over to Powder Springs or from Austell Road to Highway 5 and to US41
- Location – Cobb County, proximity to metro Atlanta, I-285, and large tracts of land

Residents/Community

- Customer loyalty; residents are proud of their area; longevity of residents
- Large dense population
- Attracting new middle-income people
- Calm place, friendly neighbors
- Diverse community; tolerant of the diversity

Infrastructure

- Land prices
- Road infrastructure

7. What type of business development/redevelopment would you like to see on the sites of aging shopping centers along the corridor?

- Quality anchor tenant
- Nicer food establishments such as Moe's Restaurant and Shane's Rib Shack
- Shopping area such as The Avenues of West Cobb (site to shop and get exercise at the same time for aging community)
- More retail establishments similar to Cumberland Mall
- Mixed-use development – medical offices and retail mixed with residential, including senior housing
- Grocery stores
- Children's clinics
- Sam's Club to support retail establishments supply needs
- Places of employment and businesses to support the medical facilities rather than single-family residential housing

8. What type of residential development would you like to see in the corridor?



Austell Road Livable Centers Initiative Stakeholder Interview Summary

- Upscale apartments, town homes and/or lofts for younger population and the aging community
- Higher-density residential development including affordable condos (\$100,000 range); not sure this is the right area for mixed-use development
- Single family development in the \$250,000-350,000 range, upper end apartments, senior housing, including ranch condos and assisted living
- High density, mixed use live/work/play; planned village with residential and retail
- Affordable homes such as on Austell Road and Anderson Mill Road
- More assisted living facilities
- Condominiums and senior apartments
- Affordable housing and nice developments that will resell; homeowner opportunities
- Mixed income, mixed type housing (example Walton Village and Walton Reserve)
- Single-family and multi-family homes

Community/Environment

- Green space, parks, and nature parks so that aging residents can get outdoors
- Nature Park; Amphitheatre, gazebo
- Activity centers for young people such as a computer center, library and/or park

9. Are there new services needed in the corridor?

- Variety of restaurants (both upscale and moderately priced)
- Grocery store
- Medical office space to support the hospital
- Children medical clinics
- Banking
- Better shopping areas
- Activities for young people
- Hotels/motels

10. What are the major transportation needs in the corridor?

- Increase CCT routes and frequency
- Place bus stops closer together
- Extend bus system down Austell Road to Thornton Road
- Ease traffic congestion issues along corridor
- Additional public transportation in area

11. In your view, who are the major actors in the corridors?

- Business owners, property owners, taxpayers, county and community
- South Cobb High School at Clay Road, the Hospital complex at the East-West Connector, quality shopping at East –West Connector, good retail at Floyd Road (needing little work) and County Services complex on the north end
- Cobb Hospital and major medical facilities around the area
- Presbyterian Homes, Village and Well Star and the school system
- Target, Ross, Wal-Mart, Home Depot
- Kroger and the other tenants along the East-West Connector
- Business owners and taxpayers

12. Other comments?

N/A



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Interviewee: _____

Contact Information: _____

Interviewer: _____

1. Have you heard about the Austell Road LCI Study? If yes, how?
a. Word of mouth ___ b.) Project website ___ c.) Media ___ d.) Flyer ___
b. e.) Mail ___ f.) Other ___
2. Do you live in the corridor? ___ Work in the corridor? ___ Shop in the corridor? ___
Own a business in the corridor? ___ All of the above? ___
3. What kind of identity does this corridor have now?
4. What kind of identity would you like the corridor to have?
5. What are the top (3 or 4) issues or problems facing the corridor today
6. What are the major (3 or 4) strengths of the corridor?
7. What type of business development/redevelopment would you like to see on the sites of aging shopping centers along the corridor?
8. What type of residential development would you like to see in the corridor?
9. Are there new services needed in the corridor?
10. What are the major transportation needs in the corridor?
11. In your view, who are the major actors in the corridors?
12. Other comments?



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWEES

The following individuals were interviewed or contacted for an interview.

Contact Name		Affiliation	Status
Sam Olens	Chairman	Cobb County Board of Commissioners	Completed
Annette Kestings	Commissioner	Cobb County Commission	Completed
Randy Cook	VP & Administrator	Wellstar Hospital	Completed
Ron Mann	Business Owner	Mann & Associates (Food Depot)	Completed
Joe Presley	Developer	Red Oak Construction	Completed
Gwen Hardy	Director	Presbyterian Village Retirement Community	Completed
Ernest Hunter	Maintenance Supervisor	Atla Mill Apartment Complex	Completed
Martha Ramos	Church Assistant	Iglesia La Luz del Mundo	Completed
Charles Onyiramba	Attorney	Onyiramba Law Offices	Completed
Joey Crawford	Property Manager	Austell Floyd Plaza	Completed
Cerise Hall	Store Manager	Kohl's	Completed
Charlene Barber	Store Manager	Ross Dress for Less	Completed
Terry Johnson	State Representative	House of Representatives	Completed
Alicia Thomas Morgan	State Representative	House of Representatives	Completed
Virgil Jackson	Store Manager	Big Lots	Completed
Bob Mandpara	Business Owner	Super Food	Completed
Mohammad Islam	Store Manager	Austell Wings And More	Completed
Ray Buday	Director	Marietta Housing Authority	Completed
Venus Gines	N/A	Dia de la Mujer Latina, Inc	Declined
Austell Floyd Plaza	N/A	Dollar General	Declined

Appendix G: Planning Commission Recommendations

Motion approved on June 26, 2007 to ACCEPT the Austell Road Corridor Study with the following amendments (numbers correspond to footnotes in the main document):

1 & 2:

In an effort to reduce the quantity of strip commercial activity along Austell Road, and in an effort to induce redevelopment, the study should promote altering the Community Activity Center (CAC) area to Medium Density Residential (MDR) on the east side of Austell Road from Milford Church Road to Byers Drive. The mobile-home community on the west side of Austell Road across the street from Amelia Road and Lanier Road should be altered from CAC to MDR.

3 & 4:

In an effort to ensure appropriately scaled development and to encourage homeownership throughout the county, the proposed High Density Residential (HDR) areas in section 2(a) on page 95 and the maps V-3 and V-4 should be altered to Medium Density Residential (MDR). As a means to support quality redevelopment, the actual density of proposed new developments should be considered on a case-by-case basis so that neighboring, stable residential areas are not adversely impacted by proposed increases in density.

5:

Section 2(b) on page 97 provides no indication as to the appropriate type and scale of proposed new residential units. If a redevelopment of the Gospel Harvester Church and the Southminster Presbyterian Church (both currently "Public/Institutional") were to occur, there needs to be language promoting owner-occupied structures for whatever is proposed. In addition, the CAC area surrounding the Gospel Harvester Church should not be expanded into residential areas. Given the quantity of underutilized retail in this corridor, an expansion of a retail category in this area will not be beneficial to inducing infill commercial development.

6:

The area between the proposed park mentioned on page 97 (and the maps V-3 and V-4) and Seayes Drive should be changed from Community Activity Center (CAC) to Low Density Residential (LDR). This will provide a transition to the Medium Density housing south of Seayes Drive and match existing residential adjoining to the east.

7:

In an effort to ensure appropriately scaled development and to encourage homeownership throughout the county, the proposed High Density Residential (HDR) areas south of Seayes Road in section 2(e) on page 98

and on the maps V-3 and V-4 should be altered to Medium Density Residential (MDR). As a means to support quality redevelopment, the actual density of proposed new developments should be considered on a case-by-case basis so that neighboring, stable residential areas are not adversely impacted by proposed increases in density. Also, the proposed MDR along Dolby Lane should be expanded to include the alteration of the three CAC parcels at the southwest corner of Austell Road and Clay Road to MDR.

- 8.** Section 2(f) on page 99 should include language that encourages medical office use around the hospital. Mixed-use sites should be the driving force for many of the “catalyst sites” and other key sites on the corridor. Encouraging mixed-use in this manner will allow for the greatest potential positive impact, while addressing concerns that substantial encroachment of residential units on prime commercial property will have a negative economic impact on potential offices/services that are needed to support the growth of the medical-service sector.
- 9.** Within the ROD recommendations on page 112, the specification mentioning “30 units per acre” should be removed and replaced with, “of owner-occupied, higher-density residential.”



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