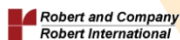


Six Flags Livable Centers Initiative: Implementation Guidebook



In Association with



Final Report – June 2012

Prepared for:

Cobb County, Georgia

In association with Atlanta Regional Commission

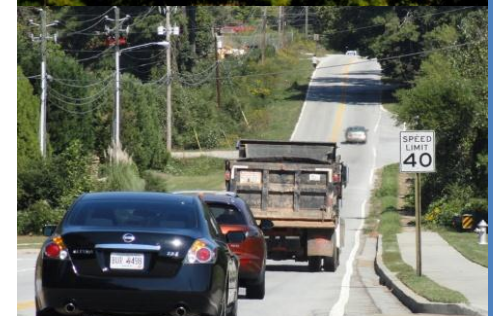
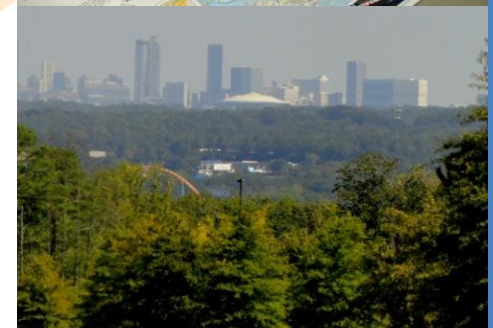
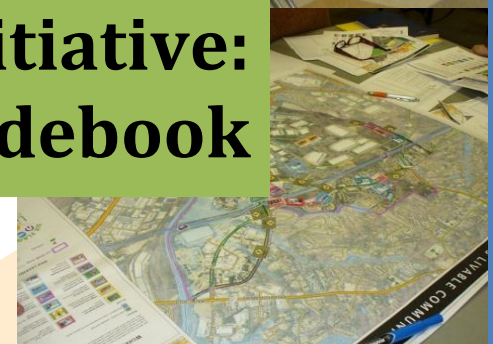
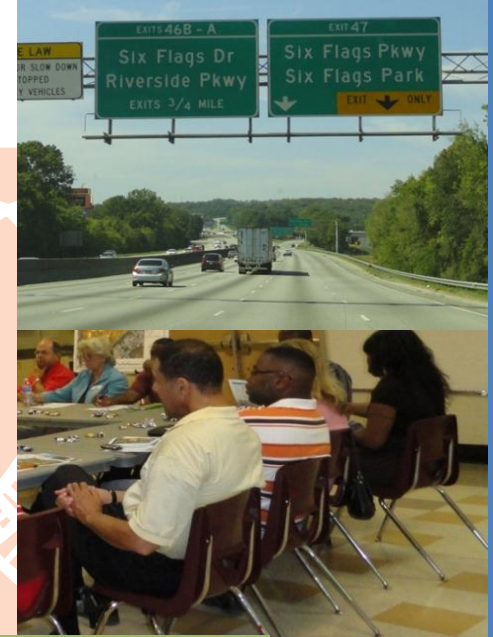
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Introduction

The Six Flags Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) study, funded by the Atlanta Regional Commission and Cobb County is a critical tool in obtaining funding for projects that qualify for additional funding through the LCI process. Many of the recommendations are outside of the scope of this funding source and as such, the plan's success relies on identifying and obtaining investment dollars from a variety of other sources.

This Implementation Guidebook is intended to provide the framework to allow individuals, organizations and agencies the opportunity to select and advance projects that align with their mission and funding mechanisms or processes.

Each category of recommendations is included: Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development. Within each category, each recommendation is described and then key information is presented which identifies, among other items, a potential Lead Agency, other key stakeholders, potential funding sources or mechanisms.

There are two overarching recommendations that have emerged from assessing all of the input to this process. The community has members who are very engaged and searching for a way to help the area succeed. It is recommended that this group initiate the formation of a Six Flags Community Task Force.

The second recommendation is that the requirements for additional police resources be evaluated and that funding opportunities to support this growth in police presence be identified and sought.

The intent of this document is to allow and encourage a wide audience of interested parties to select specific actions which they can support and advance.

LAND USE INTRODUCTION

Future land use recommendations for the Six Flags LCI Study Area have been developed based on a number of factors. First, previous land use studies were reviewed in order to identify future development initiatives that have already been identified for the area. This review of previous plans is especially important given the number of recent studies that have been conducted. Whenever possible, this study seeks to build on the future land use plans that have already achieved consensus.

Next, an analysis of demographic and economic trends in the surrounding areas was conducted in order to assess the regional demand for various land uses. The continued decline of the Atlanta Metropolitan economy is the most pressing factor that affects the viability of redevelopment plans. The existing land use survey included an assessment of the condition of current uses and their potential for the future. Finally public outreach and consultation with local stakeholders and county staff was carried out in order to evaluate the support for various redevelopment proposals. A series of land use charettes and interactive exercises were also included within this outreach program.

Based on this planning process, there have been several major themes that have emerged. First, public outreach and research have identified needs that relate land use to community livability and public health. This nexus between livability and development is among the founding principles of the Livable Centers Initiative program. Residents have repeatedly stressed the need for a grocery store that provides options for healthy food. Indeed, a recent national study of supermarket accessibility by ESRI found that the Six Flags area community is effectively a “food desert,” where low income residents have little access to groceries.

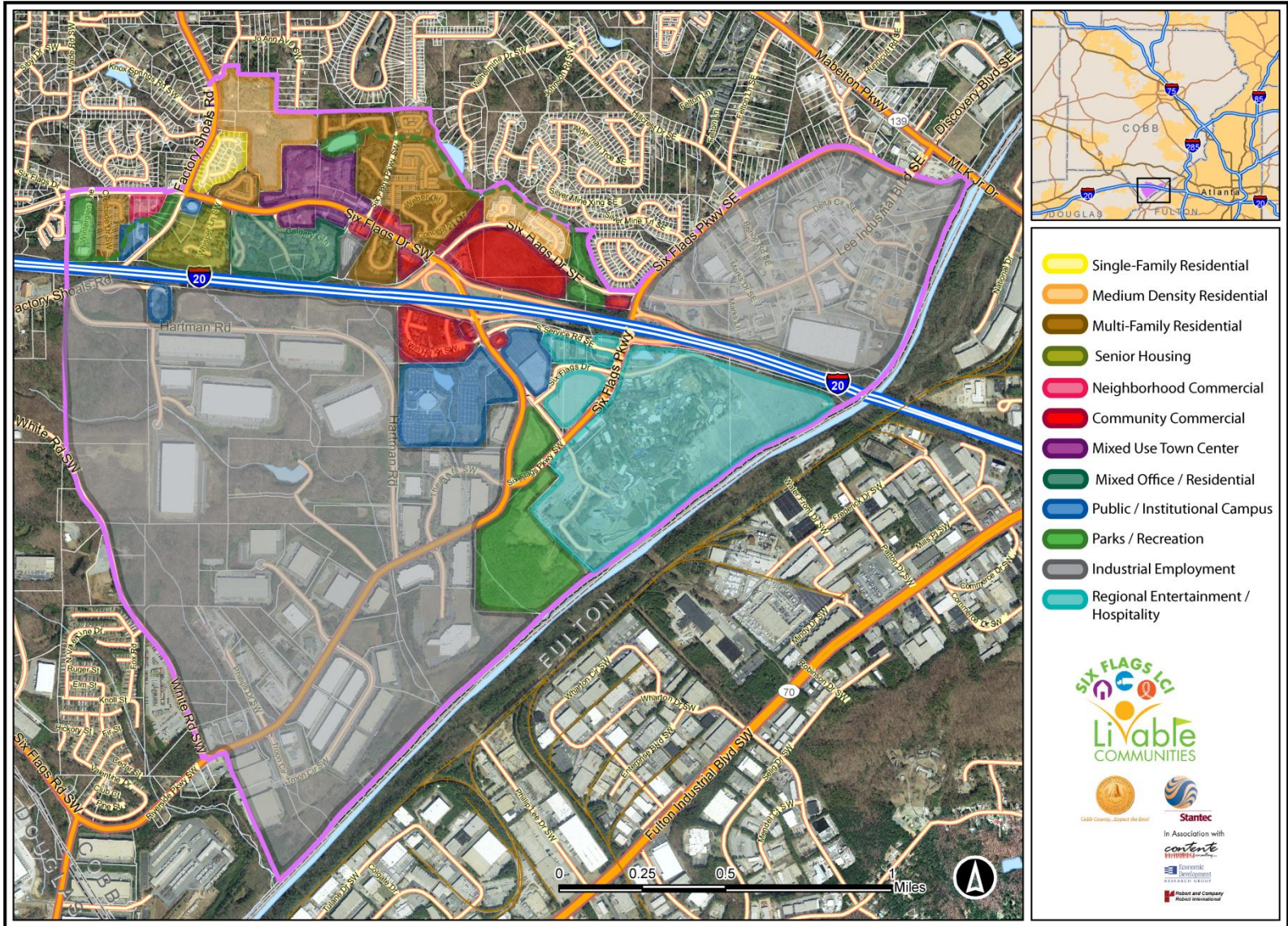
Another community livability factor identified in the LCI study has been the need for outdoor recreation. While the South Cobb Recreation Center serves as an invaluable recreational asset, there

are few parks with outdoor ballfields and passive recreational amenities. In order for low income residents to make use of community facilities, they must be accessible to those who lack automobiles. Thus, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit accessibility are key factors in community livability and public health.

Another community livability factor in the Six Flags Study Area related to public health is the need for public safety. Pedestrian oriented development should improve the safety of residents who are currently forced to navigate dangerous intersections to access basic needs. Redevelopment areas and community facilities must also be designed to minimize crime.

Previous planning studies have identified redevelopment priorities in the Study Area. In order to change the existing dynamic of the Six Flags Drive corridor, it is necessary to target distressed apartment communities for redevelopment. A mixed use town center along Six Flags Drive is proposed as a catalyst development and community focal point. The other major redevelopment proposal identified throughout previous studies has been the opportunity to create a mixed use hospitality and entertainment district adjacent to Six Flags over Georgia. The mixed use character of these redevelopment areas is intended to create live-work-play activity centers.

In order to further improve the livability of the Study Area, redevelopment should enhance community identity and sense of place. Identity nodes, such as public plazas and fountains, have been identified as community focal points within both of the proposed mixed use activity centers. Gateway features at key intersections, such as signage and public art, can also enhance the sense of place and community. A public art project at Factory Shoals Road and Six Flags Drive is proposed to install a mural on the water tower.



Note: These recommendations are a concept only and do not alter or impact land use policy. Therefore, they cannot be used to justify land use and zoning decision making.

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

COMMERCIAL

Future commercial development within the Study Area should be divided in scale between three levels of intensity, including Neighborhood Commercial, Community Commercial, and Regional Commercial.

At the smallest scale, Neighborhood Commercial nodes should be designed to serve the immediate surrounding neighborhood with shops and offices under 10,000 square feet in size. In these areas, adaptive reuse techniques should be applied in order to allow older homes to be converted to small-scale commercial activities that do not generate substantial traffic, such as day care centers and small offices. The intersection of Six Flags Drive and Factory Shoals Road has been identified as a Neighborhood Commercial node.

At the next level of intensity, Community Commercial centers should be designed to serve several surrounding neighborhoods, with establishments no larger than 40,000 square feet. Community Commercial areas include the existing shopping centers east of the proposed town center along Six Flags Drive as well as at expressway interchanges.

Timeframe

Ongoing



Community Commercial

Goals / Strategies

- Attract community serving retail uses, such as grocery stores, banks, and sit-down restaurants.

Actions / Policies

- Designate commercial activity centers according to intensity of desired development and commercial service area. (e.g. Neighborhood Commercial and Community Commercial)
- Perform grocery store market study within LCI economic development analysis.
- Recruit mid-sized retail/grocery store.
- Improve aesthetics of existing commercial areas.
- Improve pedestrian accessibility to commercial centers.

Measures of Progress

- Percentage increase in retail space (sq ft) from baseline year, by type

Potential Lead Organization

- South Cobb Redevelopment Authority and Six Flags Community Task Force

LAND USE • *TRANSPORTATION* • *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

Key Stakeholders

- Cobb County Economic Development Department
- Cobb County Community Development Department
- Business Owners
- Austell Community Task Force
- Six Flags Community Task Force

Potential Funding Sources

- Private Investment
- Public Infrastructure
 - Transportation Investments (see Transportation section)
 - TAD funding

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MIXED USE TOWN CENTER

One of the major themes in previous studies as well as in public comments has been the desire to establish a pedestrian-oriented mixed use redevelopment area to serve as a center for community activity. The linear nature of the Six Flags Drive corridor and the lack of a commercial core has left the area without a clear identity, aside from its proximity to the Six Flags amusement park. The distressed condition of some of the apartment communities along Six Flags drive provides an opportunity to develop such a mixed use town center to serve as a catalyst for redevelopment and revitalization. Ground floor commercial should be allowed along Six Flags Drive and along the perpendicular and approved “Main Street” area with residential or office on the upper floors. Behind this commercial core medium to high density housing should be encouraged, with an emphasis on owner-occupied properties. Connections should be established between the proposed town center and surrounding redevelopment areas in order to create a pedestrian oriented grid with minimal block lengths. Public plazas, greenspace, trails, and streetscapes should be integrated into the design in order to provide a compelling pedestrian experience.

Timeframe

Intermediate Range

Goals / Strategies

- Identify opportunities for town center mixed use development within the Study Area.

Actions / Policies

- Evaluate Tax Allocation District to fund public improvements to Town Center
- Allocate NSP funds for acquisitions

Measures of Progress

- Percentage increase in retail space (sq ft) from baseline year, by type
- Housing Mix (percentage of units by housing type)
- Household Density (units per acre)

Potential Lead Organization

- South Cobb Redevelopment Authority and Six Flags Community Task Force and Six Flags Community Task Force



Key Stakeholders

- Cobb County Economic Development Department
- Cobb County Community Development Department
- Apartment Communities
- Six Flags Community Task Force
- Development Community

Potential Funding Sources

- Private Investment
- Public Infrastructure
 - Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds
 - Transportation Investments (see Transportation section)
 - TAD funding

LAND USE • *TRANSPORTATION* • *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

MIXED USE OFFICE / RESIDENTIAL

The Mixed Use Office/Residential district is intended to allow for redevelopment of older apartment communities into office, educational, institutional, and residential land uses. Land between Six Flags Drive SW and Interstate 20 has been identified for conversion to more intensive land use. This policy reflects the status of I-20 as a major growth corridor and employment center. While the majority of the multi-family housing in this area is not currently blighted, long range plans should allow for conversion to a mix of office and residential development. Redevelopment within this district could include stacked office/residential mixed use or single-use development.

Mixed Use Office/Residential development adjacent to the proposed Town Center serves several purposes. Office development provides a transitional land use that is compatible with both the adjacent Town Center and interstate corridor. In order to support the proposed Town Center, the Mixed Use Office / Residential district should encourage pedestrian oriented development that allows workers to easily access community facilities and amenities. Next, office development provides opportunities for professional employment within the Study Area. Office/institutional uses such as educational facilities could also help develop workforce skills for residents. The Mixed Use Office/Residential or Town Center districts would provide an ideal location for a job training career center facility. Medical office uses provide another opportunity for professional employment that also benefits community health needs.

Timeframe

Long Range

Goals / Strategies

- Identify opportunities for professional employment within the Study Area.

- Encourage the redevelopment of older apartment complexes along Six Flags Drive.

Actions / Policies

Locate office/professional uses as a transition between activity centers and less intensive development.



Measures of Progress

- Percentage increase in office space (sq. ft.)
- Percentage increase in professional employment

Potential Lead Organization

- South Cobb Redevelopment Authority and Six Flags Community Task Force

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Key Stakeholders

- Cobb County Economic Development Department
- Cobb County Community Development Department
- Apartment Communities
- Cobb Works
- Chattahoochee Tech
- Six Flags Community Task Force
- Development Community

Potential Funding Sources

- Private Investment
- Public Infrastructure
 - US Housing and Urban Development (for Senior Housing component)
 - Transportation Investments (see Transportation section)
 - TAD funding

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC / INSTITUTIONAL CAMPUS

Public / Institutional Campus districts include government, religious, educational, and civic land uses. Small community facilities, such as neighborhood churches, are often compatible with neighborhoods and activity centers. For example, government facilities are included within the neighborhood activity center at Factory Shoals Road and Six Flags Drive. Public facilities can also enhance mixed use activity centers such as the proposed Town Center and Office/Residential districts. Public safety facilities, such as a mini police precinct, can enhance the quality of walkable development by improving the perception and the reality of security.

However, large-scale institutional campuses should be restricted to regional activity centers. Large religious venues must manage traffic and parking for events and adjunct facilities. The Word of Faith Cathedral includes a large capacity auditorium and training center. The church has extensive plans for expansion, including a campus of amenities and social services.

Institutional Campus expansion should be coordinated with local redevelopment plans and community initiatives. Partnerships between religious institutions and hospitality/commercial businesses in the area should be encouraged. Joint redevelopment efforts have the potential for shared recreational amenities and public facilities. In addition to adequate parking and automobile access, large institutions should provide pedestrian linkages between campus facilities and surrounding neighborhoods. As with Word of Faith's shuttle bus program, large institutions should consider transit and transportation management approaches to provide access and minimize traffic impacts.

Timeframe

Ongoing

Goals / Strategies

- Facilitate the development of religious, civic, and educational institutions that provide social services for the community.



Word of Faith Chapel



Word of Faith Life Training Center

Actions / Policies

- Pursue faith-based redevelopment initiatives through public/private partnerships.
- Encourage development of educational facilities and job training centers.
- Provide pedestrian accessibility between campus facilities and surrounding neighborhoods where housing or transit is within a reasonable walking distance.

Measures of Progress

- Job Training Clients
- Social Services Provided

Potential Lead Organization

- Word of Faith

Key Stakeholders

- Faith-based community
- Cobb County Economic Development Department
- Cobb County Community Development Department
- Six Flags Over Georgia
- Six Flags Community Task Force
- Cobb Works

Potential Funding Sources

- Faith-based community
- Six Flags Over Georgia
- Private Investment, including organizations such as United Way Council on Opportunity Zones
- Transportation sources for pedestrian improvements

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

REGIONAL HOSPITALITY / ENTERTAINMENT

The presence of the Six Flags Over Georgia amusement park within the Study Area provides an excellent opportunity for complimentary hospitality and entertainment development. There are already several small hotels and motels near the entrance to Six Flags and at expressway interchanges. While the deterioration of the local economy has had an impact on these businesses, there is also the potential for revitalization with improvements to the corridors leading into Six Flags. There should be coordination between Six Flags, local businesses, and Word of Faith to ensure that revitalization of the surrounding area benefits all local stakeholders.

Several planning studies have explored the possibility of a regional hospitality / entertainment district adjacent to Six Flags. There are some large tracts of vacant or underutilized land immediately adjacent to Six Flags that could be used for a major new development. In addition, some of the surface parking lots serving Six Flags could be consolidated to make room for a regional entertainment destination. A resort hotel with golf and recreational amenities would encourage visitors to stay for multiple days when visiting Six Flags. This type of development would be a private venture and would not involve any public funds or public participation. The entertainment district should include restaurant and retail opportunities that provide an alternative to fast food. The Regional Hospitality / Entertainment district also has the potential to include a conference center facility along with hotel and entertainment uses. Corporate retreats, such as the Turner night at Six Flags, can make use of recreational facilities for team building exercises and employee perks. However, plans for a conference facility should be coordinated with Word of Faith's plans for an auditorium and conference facility to prevent duplication of services.

Timeframe

Ongoing



Goals / Strategies

- Identify opportunities for community and regional entertainment uses in order to take advantage of the proximity to the Six Flags Over Georgia.
- Increase the number of options for restaurants and community commercial.

Actions/Policies

- Develop hospitality / entertainment district adjacent to Six Flags entrances.
- Encourage private development of a golf resort hotel on vacant land south and west of Six Flags park.

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Measures of Progress

- Number of Hotel Rooms and Visitors
- Sit-down Restaurants

Potential Lead Organizations

- Six Flags Over Georgia
- South Cobb Redevelopment Authority and Six Flags Community Task Force

Key Stakeholders

- Cobb County Economic Development Department
- Cobb County Community Development Department
- Word of Faith
- Six Flags Over Georgia

Potential Funding Sources

- Six Flags Over Georgia
- Private Investment
- Cobb County Parks and Recreation

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

Industrial Employment Centers are the primary economic engine of the area, with a major agglomeration of both heavy and light industrial along Riverside Parkway and Hartman Road. Maintenance and continued development of these assets is an important goal for future land use planning, given the importance of industrial uses to the local economy. Conflicts between industrial activities and surrounding land uses should be minimized, particularly by separating them from residential development. Likewise, freight traffic routes should be designated in order to avoid conflicts between truck traffic, neighborhoods, and business districts.

Timeframe

Ongoing

Goals / Strategies

- Prevent conflicts between industrial and residential land uses.
- Maintain and expand Industrial Employment Centers as a major economic asset.

Actions / Policies

- Prevent incursion of residential land uses into industrial districts.
- Mitigate conflicts between industrial truck traffic and surrounding land uses.
- Form Industrial Business Improvement District.
- Designate routes for trucks in order to manage industrial traffic.

Measures of Progress

- Industrial employment
- Industrial space (Sq. Ft.)



Light Industrial Warehousing / Logistics



Heavy Industrial

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb Chamber of Commerce, South Cobb Council

Key Stakeholders

- Cobb County Economic Development Department
- Cobb County Community Development Partner
- Industrial Business Owners
- United Way Council on Opportunity Zones

Potential Funding Sources

- Cobb Works
- United Way Opportunity Zone

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**PARKS / RECREATION / CONSERVATION**

The priority for new public parks and recreation within the LCI Study Area should focus on amenities that serve the existing communities on the north side of I-20. In the short term, neighborhood parks can be created in areas with good visibility in order to deter crime and maximize the benefit for spurring redevelopment. Oakdale Park in Smyrna is an example of a neighborhood park with both good visibility and fencing for security. The vacant parcels at the intersection of Six Flags Drive and Factory Shoals Road provide such an opportunity for a secure neighborhood playground/park.

Another opportunity for this area is a public art project that could create a focal point and also enhance the area recommended for a park. The water tower can be turned into a feature and can help build more community cohesion. An example of how to accomplish this can be seen in the efforts of a group in New York that is raising funds to “dress” water towers throughout the city. See www.watertowerproject.org or find their page on Facebook for additional details. Another example of how to accomplish a project like this was demonstrated in Duluth, Georgia where private fundraising and partnering with Georgia Tech School of Architecture ultimately led to the installation of a piece of sculpture in a public space.



Many of the water features in the Study Area and tributaries leading into the Chattahoochee River provide opportunities for conservation land, passive greenspace, and trails. While floodplain areas should not be developed, these areas can serve as important recreation amenities. The riparian corridor and ponds north of the proposed town center could be used as a trail network linking redevelopment areas into surrounding neighborhoods. A riparian trail along this water feature could also form a loop, if connected to the proposed trail along Six Flags Drive. However, the low-lying nature of river corridors would require public safety patrols and lighting in order to ensure safety.

At a larger scale, the vacant land west and southwest of Six Flags over Georgia could serve as possible locations for regional recreational amenities. A park has been proposed in the area between Six Flags Parkway and Six Flags Way in order to complement the proposed entertainment district. Recreational development in this area should be coordinated with the expansion plans of the Word of Faith church. Past proposals for the undeveloped land southwest of Six Flags include a nature center or botanical garden. It would also be possible to develop a regional sports facility such as a 9-hole or par-3 golf course on the land southwest of Six Flags. This type of development would be a private venture and would not involve any public funds or public participation.



South Cobb Aquatic Center

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Timeframe

Short Range

Goals / Strategies

- Create parks, trails, greenspace, and landscaping in order to provide recreational opportunities and improve aesthetics.

Actions / Policies

- Develop new neighborhood parks at key community focal points and gateways.
- Develop a network of trails in order to link recreational amenities.
- Provide public safety and Crime Prevention Through Design in new parks.

Measures of Progress

- Access to recreational amenities
- Park acreage

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb County Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs Department

Key Stakeholders

- Park Users
- School Groups
- Local Residents
- Six Flags Community Task Force

Potential Funding Sources

- Cobb County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department
- Park Users (if any amenities lend themselves to user fees)
- Faith-based community
- Current or future SPLOST
- Health Insurance Companies and related organizations
- Private fundraising



Oakdale Park, Smyrna

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RESIDENTIAL

Future residential development within the Study Area is generally divided between detached single-family residential, medium density residential, and multi-family residential. Medium density residential can range from detached traditional neighborhood development and cluster homes to single family attached townhomes. Senior housing has also been included as an additional specialized category of medium to high density housing. Previous plans and public comments have expressed the need for a diverse housing stock that includes options for more types of housing.

The top priority for residential development within the Six Flags LCI Study Area is to encourage redevelopment of distressed apartment communities. The proposed Mixed Use Town Center includes some older apartments that have undergone foreclosure. Redevelopment of the existing housing stock should seek to create mixed income communities that introduce quality new housing while preserving some affordable units.

New housing should also provide opportunities for residents to remain within the community as they transition between different life cycle stages. Lifelong Communities strategies outlined within ARC best practices should be encouraged as a means of allowing residents to “age in place” and remain within the community. In order to allow seniors to maintain active lifestyles, senior housing should be near public services and community amenities.

Some new housing within the Study Area is recommended for medium density clustered single family residential. These neighborhoods should seek to incorporate traditional neighborhood development (TND) techniques as a means of encouraging pedestrian activity and community interaction. Underutilized land northwest of the proposed town center is recommended as medium density residential to serve as a transition between the town center and surrounding single family residential areas to the north.



Village Residential



Townhomes



Apartments



Senior Housing

This would provide for a transitional medium density area between the proposed mixed use town center and surrounding single family residential areas to the north.

Currently there is very little single family residential within the Six Flags LCI Study Area. However, there are several single family residential subdivisions immediately north and west of the Study Area. While there is little undeveloped land available on the north side of the Study Area, there are some several large tracts of vacant land that are currently zoned for residential. In order to prevent conflicts between residential and industrial development, the south side of the Study Area should primarily be reserved for industrial employment.

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Timeframe

Ongoing

Goals / Strategies

- Encourage the redevelopment of older apartment complexes along Six Flags Drive.
- Goal – Encourage housing types and densities needed to support desired economic growth.
- Encourage a diversity of mixed-income residential neighborhoods.

Actions / Policies

- Develop mixed use town center as a catalyst for residential redevelopment of older apartment complexes.
- Encourage mixed income redevelopment that includes provisions for affordable housing.
- Consider Lifelong Communities principles in order to allow residents to remain in the community as they age.

Measures of Progress

- Housing Mix (percentage of units by housing type)
- Household Density (units per acre)
- Percentage of housing stock built after 1980 (or other appropriate year, where data is available)

Potential Lead Organization

- South Cobb Redevelopment Authority and Six Flags Community Task Force

Key Stakeholders

- Apartment Communities
- Apartment Ownership / Management

Potential Funding Sources

- Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding
- Private Investment
- Programs for funding senior activities

TRANSPORTATION INTRODUCTION

The transportation recommendations for the Six Flags LCI Study Area have been identified based on input from the local citizens, previous studies as well as observation and analysis. The transportation implementation plan includes potential projects for pedestrians, transit and trucks, as well as roadway operations and capacity.

PEDESTRIAN

The availability of quality pedestrian access throughout the study area remains a vital part of the overall community. Transportation options with a special focus on walkability has been a consistent concern. Pedestrian recommendations focus primarily on a completion of the sidewalks network as well as updating and installing crosswalks.

There is a high demand for safe and adequately installed sidewalks to/from the key land uses in and beyond the study area. Currently there are worn paths to/from existing land uses indicating high pedestrian usage. There are locations where improvements would also assist with allowing drivers to be able to more sufficiently see pedestrians.

There are two major elements with respect to improving the overall quality of pedestrian accessibility within the study area: sidewalks and crosswalks. The sidewalks & crosswalks should be improved in a way that is consistent with the future land uses.

The improvements to the connection of sidewalks will serve as a catalyst for increased pedestrian activity and potentially an increase in demand for transit services. New sidewalks are needed along Six Flags Drive between Factory Shoals Road and Riverside Parkway (to be completed with the HAWK signal), portions of Riverside Parkway, and Factory Shoals Road between Six flags Drive and Hartman Road

Properly installed sidewalks as well as crosswalks at the following locations - Six Flags Drive at Factory Shoals Road, Six Flags Drive at Riverside Parkway, Riverside Parkway at south Service Road would provide safer movement of pedestrians. Possible improvements would include updated crossing signals and textured cross walks.

Timeframe

The sidewalks segments are placed into two major implementation categories:

1. **Priority segments:** These are segments that are projected to provide the greatest and most immediate benefits. Sidewalk segments within this category currently have worn paths showing an existing need. These segments would be planned, designed and constructed as short-term (1-3 years) projects.
2. **Developmental segments:** These are segments that will occur as a part of future land use development. As the future land use develops, a shift in pedestrian activity and travel patterns is expected. These segments would be meet the needs of future land use and are considered long-term (>4 years) projects.

Goals / Strategies

- Develop and prioritize a network of paths for non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians by interconnecting existing sidewalks and introducing new paths/sidewalks/trails for major routes & corridors.
- Encourage involvement of local schools with the Safe Routes to School program and define related areas and paths within the study area.
- Access management plan for Six Flags Drive from Riverside Parkway to Factory Shoals Rd and Six Flags Parkway from Riverside Parkway to Lee Industrial Blvd. Should take into consideration the multi-modal travel plan/options.

*LAND USE • **TRANSPORTATION** • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

Actions / Policies

- Complete the existing network of sidewalks with priority based on location of worn paths and high pedestrian traffic routes.
- Develop multiuse trail to connect future potential green spaces to proposed Cobb trail and bicycle plan.
- Identify potential perpetual maintenance efforts of sidewalks, trains, and paths.
- Develop collaboration with local community for sidewalk beautification maintenance.
- Installation of sufficient lighting for safe pedestrian travel as well as to better allow drivers to identify pedestrians at night. Adequate lighting should be installed in the study area with heavy concentration at highly utilizes areas.

Measures of Progress

- Linear feet of sidewalk installed

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb County Department of Transportation

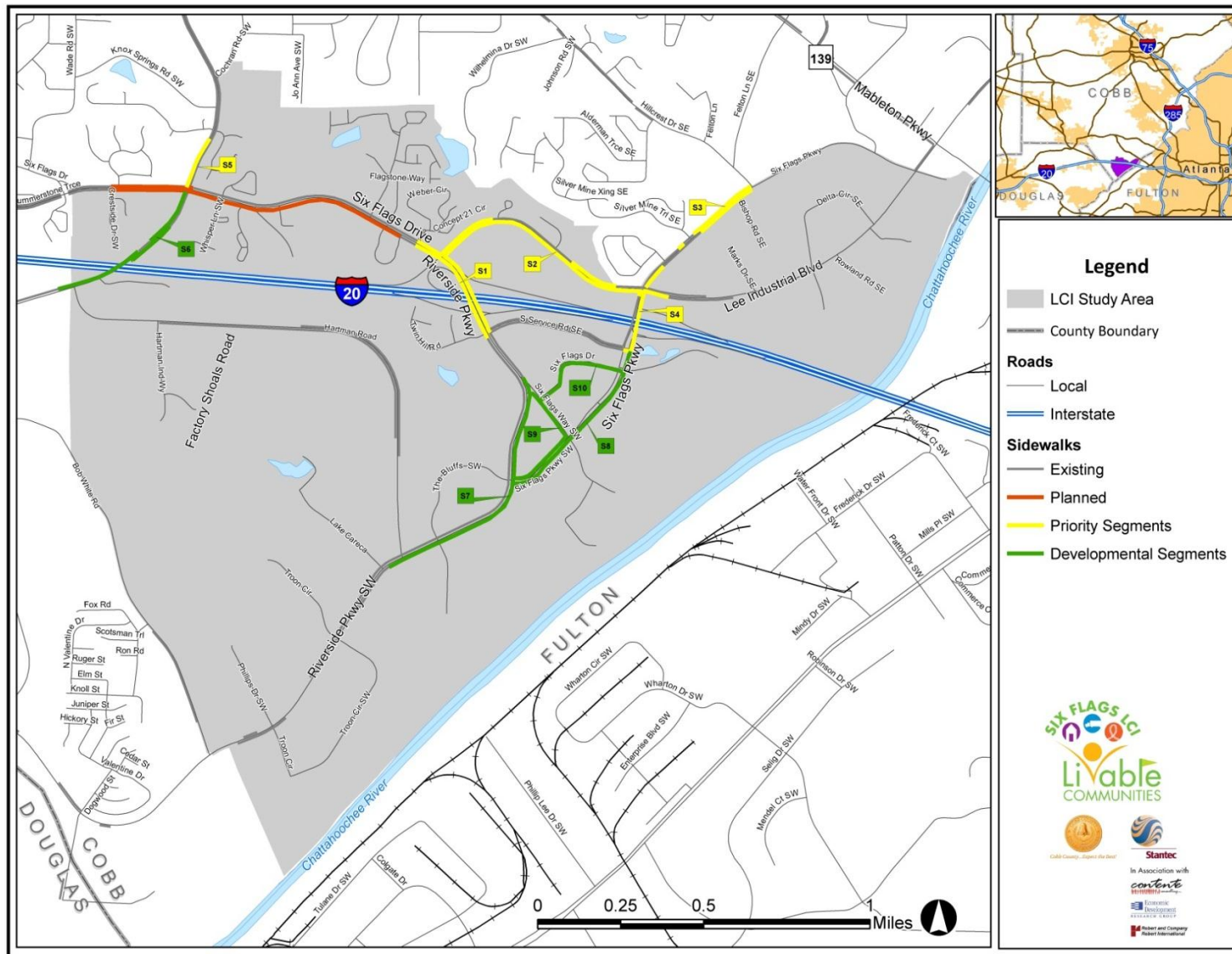
Key Stakeholders

- Austell Community Task Force
- Six Flags Community Task Force
- Cobb Transportation Advisory Board

Potential Funding Source

- Cobb County Department of Transportation
- ARC LCI Implementation and other transportation program funds
- Transportation Investment Act (TIA) – Local funding allocation, if TIA is approved
- Georgia Department of Transportation Safety Funds or Transportation enhancement funds
- CMAQ funds

RECOMMENDED SIDEWALK UPGRADES



TRANSIT

Public transportation services within the community have decreased in recent times due to budget cuts. Cobb Community Transit (CCT) serves not only the community, but the region with access to/from the area via public transportation. CCT will remain the primary source of public transportation; however, it will be imperative to ensure that the existing service route meets the needs of the citizens.

Other types of support need to be examined for future implementation, including shuttles among residential, commercial and industrial uses.

It is recommended that CCT and the Cobb County Department of Transportation consider a remote location for residents to sign up for Cobb Senior Services Demand/Response Transport. This remote location can operate via a kiosk, housed in an easily accessible location in the Six Flags LCI Study area: at the South Cobb Recreation Center (Short-term) and at the Proposed Town Center (long-term).

- A study is needed to determine the most feasible transit route and stops to enhance mobility based on the current service opportunities.
- An organization such as a Transportation Management Association needs to be formed to develop and manage an area-limited Trolley Service along Six Flags Drive with stops at the following locations:
 - South Cobb Recreation Center
 - Future Town Center
 - Future Regional Commercial
 - Six Flags Over Georgia
 - Industrial Parks
 - Additional Stops to be determined
- Bus Shelters and street furniture needs to be replaced and maintained



Timeframe

Ongoing

Goals / Strategies

- Identify partnerships and other methods for providing transportation options for seniors, children and students within the study area.
- Identify opportunities to connect residents to job opportunities

Actions/ Policies

- Short Term- Evaluate the existing bus route and stops to compensate for stops and destinations that are now excluded due to the previously terminated routes.
- Setup local hub for Cobb Senior Services Demand/Response registration
- Long Term – Reinstate public transportation services in study area
- Develop local community trolley service

LAND USE • ***TRANSPORTATION*** • *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb Community Transit

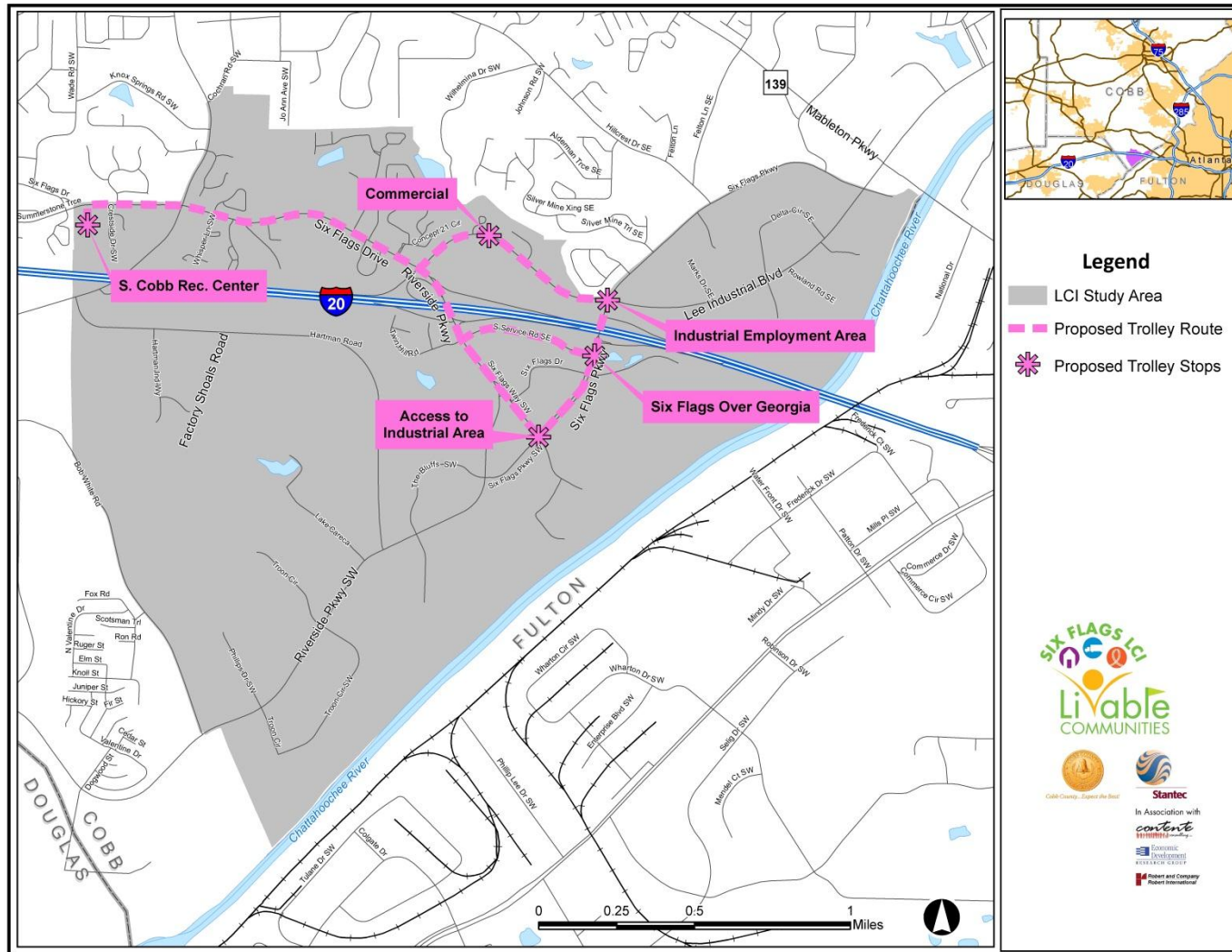
Key Stakeholders

- Opportunity Zone
- Cobb Transportation Advisory Board

Potential Funding Source

- Cobb Community Transit
- Federal Transit Administration
- Community or Business Improvement District
- Opportunity Zone
- Private investment (advertising on bus shelters, for example)

RECOMMENDED LOCAL TROLLEY SERVICE



LAND USE • **TRANSPORTATION** • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ROADWAY OPERATIONS & CAPACITY

Ease of mobility will become more pertinent as the future land use plan develops and activity in the community increases. The area has a need for safe and adequate roadway operations specifically during peak Six Flags Over Georgia operating periods.

There are several intersections that will serve as regional and local gateways into the community:

- Gateway nodes:
 - Six Flags Drive at Factory Shoals – West Gateway
 - Factory Shoals at Hartman Road – Southwest Gateway
 - Six Flags Drive at Riverside Parkway (southern end, just south of where the existing Garden Ridge Building is located) – Southeast Gateway
 - Riverside Parkway at the I-20 EB & WB Ramps – Regional Gateway
 - Six Flags Drive at the I-20 WB Ramps – Regional Gateway
 - Lee Industrial Blvd at Six flags Pkwy – East Gateway

Timeframe

Ongoing

Goals / Strategies

- Application of County's access management standards for Six Flags Drive from Riverside Parkway to Factory Shoals Rd and Six Flags Parkway from Riverside Parkway to Lee Industrial Blvd. as redevelopment occurs and road improvements are implemented. Should take into consideration the multi-modal requirements.

Actions / Policies

- Installation of gateway nodes - The identified intersections should be analyzed to determine the appropriate configuration which may include upgrading lanes and signals or roundabout installations.

- Installation and/or upgrade of crosswalks at gateway nodes.
- Improve visibility for drivers and pedestrians with the use of specialized crosswalks such as textured or raised pavements increased lighting.
- Develop a wayfinding signage plan that also addresses community identification. This will require a branding study.
- Promote consideration of access management standards for new developments such as shared driveways, inter-parcel access, and where appropriate right-in/right-out islands. Other access management tools should be applied as appropriate.
- Plan for the installation of a 10-foot wide median on Six Flags Drive between Factory Shoals Road and Riverside Parkway with openings at key locations to be identified when the future land use plan is adopted and detailed.

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb County Department of Transportation

Key Stakeholders

- Cobb County Department of Transportation
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Industrial Property Owners

Potential Funding Source

- Cobb County Department of Transportation
- ARC LCI Implementation and other transportation program funds TIA – Local funds, if approved
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Community or Business Improvement District

RECOMMENDED GATEWAY NODES



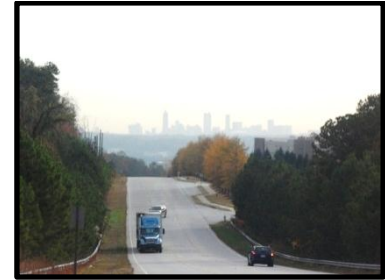
TRUCKS

The existence of important Industrial Employment Centers and the nearby residential land uses suggest that proper designs including the mixture of vehicle types is necessary. The main intersections within the study area serve the transportation needs of trucks, cars, buses as well as pedestrians and bicycles. Other than Interstate 20, the study area does not have any regionally designated truck routes. However, with thriving industrial facilities on the eastern and southwestern portions of the study area, there is a need for local truck route designation. Ease of access for the trucks is essential for the vitality of the Industrial areas to continue to be successful.

Previous studies have designated Riverside Parkway as the local truck route. Additional heavily utilized, non-designated truck routes in the study area include:

- Lee Industrial Boulevard
- Six Flags Parkway (North of Interstate 20)

It is also important to identify places where **through trucks** should not be allowed as the roads primarily serve residential properties. The area of Six Flags Drive west of the Recreation Center and Six Flags Parkway north of Lee Industrial are such road segments. These are outside of the current study area.



Study Area Truck Activity

*LAND USE • **TRANSPORTATION** • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

Timeframe

Ongoing

Goals / Strategies

- Clearly define truck travel paths and routes (both officially designated & heavily traveled routes) develop a project to safely accommodate trucks and residential traffic (e.g. Riverside Pkwy, Access to I-20, Six Flags Parkway).

Actions / Policies

- Installation of truck route signage consistent with the proposed wayfinding signage plan
- Include geometric improvements and signal optimization on local intersections
- Identify areas for No Through Truck signage and enforcement (currently outside of study area)
- Work with local schools and employment centers to develop a program to educate the general public on passenger car/truck/pedestrian safety.
- Enhance county standards/guidelines for freight specific building and site requirements for use by local jurisdictions when conducting permitting and site review
- Resurface Riverside Parkway from six Flags Drive to Bob White Road.

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb County Department of Transportation

Key Stakeholders

- Industrial Property Owners
- Local residents

Potential Funding Source

- Cobb County Department of Transportation
- ARC LCI Implementation

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INTRODUCTION

This economic development implementation plan includes strategies for housing, retail, office and industrial development. These strategies focus on job creation, income growth, as well as community development and revitalization. An overarching component for the successful economic development of this area is improvement in safety and security. A partnership with the Cobb County police department to strategically address the crime in the area is needed. As funding makes it feasible, an increase in the police presence in the area can be significant.

HOUSING

The Study Area currently offers a limited range of housing products, consisting of a number of large apartment complexes, multi-family condominiums, and subdivisions with single family homes. New housing should be introduced in a way that 1) Reduces blight and high vacancy rates by reducing the over-all number of units; and 2) Provides a range of housing types that serve a wider range of income levels, ultimately providing support for much-needed community retail and services.

Timeframe

The acquisition of blighted and obsolete housing units should begin as soon as possible, with the goal of phasing in replacement housing units over the next two years.

Goals/Strategies

- Reduce residential vacancy rates
- Replace obsolete/blighted/substandard housing units
- Provide housing for a wider range of incomes
- Provide support for much-needed retail and services

Location(s)

Primarily in high density apartment complexes along Six Flags, with smaller projects possible on undeveloped, residentially zoned sites throughout the community.

Actions/Policies

- Identify and purchase apartment buildings with a significant proportion of blighted and substandard housing to be replaced;
- Encourage apartment complex managers to meet with residents of housing stock to be reduced. Provide information and applications for potential relocation.
- Identify and work with private sector developer experienced in affordable and mixed-income housing to provide new housing products in the Study Area as part of the larger Town Center development.

Measures of Progress

- Housing Mix (percentage of units by housing type)
- Household Density (units per acre)

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb County Community Development Department

Key Stakeholders

- Cobb County Department of Economic Development
- South Cobb Redevelopment Authority
- Apartment complex owners
- Six Flags residents (whether potentially displaced or not)

Potential Funding Sources

- New Market Tax Credits
- Affordable Housing Tax Credits
- Tax Allocation District (possible)

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RETAIL

Neighborhood- and community-serving retail is in short supply within the Study Area, leaving residents to buy their day-to-day necessities in other communities. From an economic development perspective, this means foregone economic activity that could be contributing to the vibrancy of the Six Flags economy. From a livability perspective, it leaves residents to spend additional time and money on transportation.

Timeframe

Six months to two years

Goals/Strategies

- Attract a grocery store to the Study Area
- Attract complementary/supporting retail and services such as banking
- Focus new retail development in a Town Center configuration, integrated with mixed use residential and office developments

Location(s)

Along Six Flags Drive on land freed up by acquisition of blighted/obsolete multifamily housing units.

Actions/Policies

- Work with civic partners to raise awareness of healthy eating and fresh foods among Study Area residents
- Identify sites within the Study Area that satisfy zoning regulations with regard to distance from schools and churches
- Design a package of incentives that reduce the risk for the real estate developer and grocery store anchor tenant
- Assign a “grocery store champion” to approach possible operators, introduce them to the sites and incentives available in the study area and see the process through to completion.

Measures of Progress

- Percentage increase in retail space (sq ft) from baseline year, by type
- Percent increase in number of sit-down restaurants

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb County Department of Economic Development

Key Stakeholders

- South Cobb Redevelopment Authority
- Property owners in the Six Flags Study Area
- Residents

Potential Funding Sources

- New Market Tax Credits
- Tax Allocation District (if determined to be desirable)
- Community Development Block Grant
- Opportunity Zone Jobs Tax Credit

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OFFICE

A user-driven office project will provide an additional source of jobs for Six Flags residents, as well as a support for community-serving retail such as restaurants and personal services. Expansion of office jobs in existing business parks will also provide support for retail/restaurants, as well as help reduce commercial office/industrial vacancy rates in the Study Area.

Timeframe

Two to five years.

Goals/Strategies

- Increase office employment within existing Six Flags Study Area business parks
- Attract a user-driven office development to a site on Six Flags Drive adjacent to the Town Center

Location(s)

Along Six Flags Drive on land freed up by acquisition of blighted/obsolete multifamily housing units; Within existing Six Flags Study Area business parks.

Actions/Policies

- Identify existing buildings within the Study Area suitable for office use
- Identify possible sites along Six Flags Drive suitable for a major user-driven office project
- Raise awareness among state-level economic development officials regarding the desirability of a Six Flags site for office location/expansion

Measures of Progress

- Percentage increase in office space (sq. ft.)
- Percentage increase in professional employment

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb County Department of Economic Development

Key Stakeholders

- Industrial Property Owners
- Development Community
- Council on Opportunity Zones
- South Cobb Redevelopment Authority

Potential Funding Sources

- New Market Tax Credits
- Tax Allocation District (possible)
- Community Development Block Grant
- Opportunity Zone Jobs Tax Credit

LAND USE • TRANSPORTATION • **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

INDUSTRIAL

Six Flags industrial firms provide employment opportunities in a wide range of occupations, from entry level production workers, to highly skilled machinists, from entry level administrative positions to experienced management positions. Current vacant space of approximately 500,000 sq. ft. is sufficient in the near term for the anticipated job growth. As these highly attractive industrial areas attract a share of regional job growth, and also as the economy improves, vacant space will be filled and demand for new space will be created.

The quality of the industrial parks combined with excellent Interstate highway access make Six Flags industrial sites highly desirable. Sustaining land for future Industrial growth is important to this area and to Cobb County as a whole. Six Flags residents and businesses alike will benefit from an increased link between the resident workforce and firms in the industrial parks.

Timeframe

Ongoing

Goals/Strategies

- Increase employment of Six Flags residents at Six Flags Study Area industrial parks

Location(s)

Along Six Flags Drive on land freed up by acquisition of blighted/obsolete multifamily housing units; Within existing Six Flags Study Area business parks.

Actions/Policies

- Identify workforce skill gaps needed to meet Six Flags company needs

- Provide workforce training to close skill gaps
- Provide job training in job search skills, resume and interview skills
- Work with employers to get job postings
- Provide job matching services, employee pre-screening and other services to employers

Measures of Progress

- Percentage increase in utilized space (sq. ft.)
- Percentage increase in employment (by job type)

Potential Lead Organization

- Cobb County Department of Economic Development

Key Stakeholders

- Chattahoochee Tech
- Other area technical schools
- Area high schools
- Six Flags Study Area employers
- Six Flags Study Area residents in the workforce (including those currently employed outside the area, under employed, and unemployed)

Potential Funding Sources

- New Market Tax Credits
- Tax Allocation District (possible)
- Community Development Block Grant
- Opportunity Zone Jobs Tax Credit

FIVE YEAR LAND USE PLAN

Recommendation	Action	Cost	Year	Responsible	Potential Funding Sources	Match Amount
Encourage mixed use redevelopment along Six Flags Drive.	Promote Redevelopment Overlay District for Six Flags Drive between Factory Shoals and I-20	\$5,000	2013	SCRA	SCRA	\$1,000
Facilitate the development of religious, civic, and educational institutions that provide social services for the community.	Amend Cobb County Comprehensive Plan to include Word of Faith Campus as a public-institutional district	Staff time	2012	CCP	CCP	
Create parks, trails, greenspace, and landscaping in order to provide recreational opportunities and improve aesthetics.	Acquire land at intersection of Factory Shoals and Six Flags Drive for gateway park	\$250,000	2015	Cobb County Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs	Cobb County Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs	\$50,000

CCP: Cobb County Planning

SCRA: South Cobb Redevelopment Authority

FIVE YEAR TRANSPORTATION PLAN

ID	Description	Type of Improvement	Length	Engineering or Planning ¹		Right of Way		Construction		Total Project Cost	Responsible	Potential Funding Sources	Match Amount
				Year	Costs	Year	Costs	Year	Costs				
S1	Six Flags Drive from Concept 21 Cir to S. Service Road (both sides)	Sidewalks	0.4 Mile	2014	\$25,000	TBD	N/A	2015	\$350,000	\$375,000	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$75,000
S2	Six Flags Drive from Riverside Parkway to Lee Industrial Blvd	Sidewalks	0.8 Mile	2014	\$25,000	TBD	N/A	2015	\$350,000	\$375,000	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$75,000
S3	Six Flags Parkway from Hillcrest Drive to Silver Mine Trail (both sides)	Sidewalks	0.2 Mile	2013	\$15,000	TBD	N/A	2014	\$150,000	\$165,000	CCDOT	LCI Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$33,000
S4	Six Flags Parkway from Silver Arrow Cir to S. Service Rd (eastern side of road)	Sidewalks	0.3 Mile	2013	\$12,500	TBD	N/A	2014	\$100,000	\$112,500	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$22,500
S5	Factory Shoals Road from Tomahawk Pl to Six Flags Dr (western side of road)	Sidewalks	0.2 Mile	2014	\$10,000	TBD	N/A	2015	\$100,000	\$110,000	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$22,000
S6	Factory Shoals Road from Six Flags Dr to Hartman Rd (both sides of road, long term)	Sidewalks	0.5 Mile	2016	\$40,000	TBD	N/A	2017	\$375,000	\$415,000	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$83,000
S7	Riverside Pkwy from Six Flags Way to Lake Careco Rd (on eastern side of road)	Sidewalks	0.8 Mile	2016	\$25,000	TBD	N/A	2017	\$350,000	\$375,000	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$75,000
S8	Six Flags Pkwy SW from Riverside Pkwy to S. Service Rd (both sides)	Sidewalks	0.5 Mile	2016	\$40,000	TBD	N/A	2017	\$375,000	\$415,000	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$83,000
S9	Six Flags Way from Six Flags Pkwy to Riverside Pkwy (both sides)	Sidewalks	0.2 Mile	2017	\$15,000	TBD	N/A	2018	\$150,000	\$165,000	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$33,000
S10	Six Flags Dr (south of S. Service Rd) from Six Flags Pkwy to Six Flags Way (both sides)	Sidewalks	0.3 Mile	2017	\$25,000	TBD	N/A	2018	\$200,000	\$225,000	CCDOT	LCI, Safety CMAQ, SPLOST	\$45,000
G1	Southwest Gateway: Hartman Rd at Factory Shoals Rd	Intersection Improvements	N/A	2017	\$30,000		N/A	2018	\$75,000	\$105,000	CCDOT	LCI/GDOT	\$21,000
G2	West Gateway: Factory Shoals Rd at Six Flags Dr	Crosswalks & Signal Upgrade	N/A	2013	\$50,000		N/A	2014	\$150,000	\$200,000	CCDOT	LCI/GDOT	\$40,000
G3	Southeast Gateway: Six Flags	Intersection	N/A	2015	\$50,000		N/A	2016	\$200,000	\$250,000	CCDOT	LCI/GDOT	\$50,000

¹ Planning includes traffic studies that are necessary to finalize the design of improvements

ID	Description	Type of Improvement	Length	Engineering or Planning ¹		Right of Way		Construction		Total Project Cost	Responsible	Potential Funding Sources	Match Amount
				Year	Costs	Year	Costs	Year	Costs				
	Pkwy at Riverside Pkwy	Improvements											
G4	East Gateway: Six Flags Pkwy at Lee industrial Blvd.	Intersection Improvements or Roundabout	N/A	2014	\$150,000	TBD	N/A	2016	\$500,000	\$650,000	CCDOT	LCI/GDOT	\$130,000
G5	Regional Gateway: I-20 WB Ramps at Riverside Pkwy	Crosswalks & Signal Upgrade	N/A	2015	\$50,000		N/A	2016	\$150,000	\$220,000	CCDOT	LCI/GDOT	\$44,000
G6	Regional Gateway: I-20 EB Ramps at Riverside Pkwy	Crosswalks & Signal Upgrade	N/A	2015	\$50,000		N/A	2016	\$150,000	\$270,000	CCDOT	LCI/GDOT	\$54,000
G7	Regional Gateway: I-20 WB Exit & EB Entrance Ramp at Six Flags Pkwy	Crosswalks & Signal Improvements or Roundabout	N/A	2015	\$150,000		N/A	2016	\$500,000	\$650,000	CCDOT	LCI/GDOT	\$130,000
T1	Study Existing transit service and identify ways to restore additional service	Transit Study	N/A	2013	\$25,000		N/A			\$25,000	CCT/CCDOT	LCI	\$5,000
T2	Implement local trolley service (privately sponsored)	Local Trolley Service*	N/A	2016			N/A	2016		\$100,000/yr	CCT	TMA	\$20,000/yr
T3	Replace and maintain bus shelters and street furniture		N/A	2013 - 2015	\$45,000					\$45,000	CCT	LCI	\$9,000/yr
R1	Installation of wayfinding signage plan		N/A	2014	\$45,000		N/A	2015	\$150,000	\$195,000	CCDOT	LCI	\$39,000
S1	Conduct study to develop trolley service for local area			2014	\$10,000		N/A			\$10,000	CID	CID or FTA	\$2,000
RS1	Resurfacing Riverside parkway from Six Flags Drive to Bob White Road	Pavement Resurfacing	2 Miles	2015	27,000		N/A	2016	534,400	\$561,400	CCDOT	LCI/GDOT	\$112,280

Dollars are expressed in 2012 \$

Assumes that vehicle will be provided by other and TMA will only pay operating costs.

CCDOT: Cobb County Department of Transportation
 CCT: Cobb Community Transit
 LCI: Livable Centers Initiative Transportation Improvement Funding
 GDOT: Georgia Department of Transportation
 ECODEV: Cobb County Economic Development Department
 FTA: Federal Transit Administration

FIVE YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Category	Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible	Potential Funding Sources
Housing	Identify and purchase apartment buildings with a significant proportion of blighted and substandard housing to be replaced;	TBD	2012-2014	ECODEV	Neighborhood Stabilization Program Funds, New Market Tax Credits, TAD (possible), Community Development Block Grant
	Identify and work with private sector developer experienced in affordable and mixed-income housing to provide new housing products in the Study Area as part of the larger Town Center development.	Staff time	2013-2014	ECODEV, Cobb County, multiple agencies (Planning, Zoning, Community Dev, etc)	New Market Tax Credits, TAD (possible), Community Development Block Grant
Retail	Identify possible sites that meet regulatory requirements;		2012	ECODEV	New Market Tax Credits, TAD (possible), Community Development Block Grant, Opportunity Zone Job Tax Credit
	Design a package of incentives that reduce the risk for the real estate developer and grocery store anchor tenant; and	Outside services	2012-2013	ECODEV	
	Assign a "grocery store champion" to approach possible operators, introduce them to the sites and incentives available in the study area, open a dialog with the operators to determine what needs to be done, and see the process through to completion.	\$20,000	2013-2014	ECODEV	
Office	Identify desirable locations for major office development within the Six Flags Study Area		2012-2013	ECODEV	New Market Tax Credits, TAD (possible), Community Development Block Grant, Opportunity Zone Job Tax Credit
	Identify a corporate user looking for an expansion site	Outside services	2012-2017	ECODEV	
	Assemble an incentives package to ensure that a Six Flags site is financially advantageous to the proposed user	\$20,000	2012-2013	ECODEV	
	Raise awareness among state-level economic development officials regarding the desirability of a Six Flags site for office location/expansion		ongoing	ECODEV	
Industrial	Continue existing economic development policies that have led to the development of high quality industrial parks with excellent transportation access and competitive business costs	n/a	ongoing	ECODEV	New Market Tax Credits, TAD (possible), Community Development Block Grant
	Preserve undeveloped industrial sites for future employment uses		ongoing	CCP	New Market Tax Credits, TAD (possible)
	Provide workforce training and job placement services within the Six Flags community		2012, ongoing	Cobb Works	Opportunity Zone Job Tax Credits, State workforce training grants

CCCD: Cobb County Community Development

CCP: Cobb County Planning, Economic Development

TAD: Tax Allocation District

ECODEV: Cobb County Economic Development Department

SCRA: South Cobb Redevelopment Authority