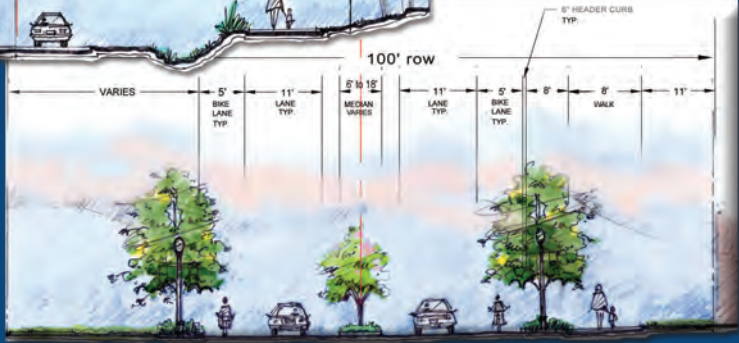
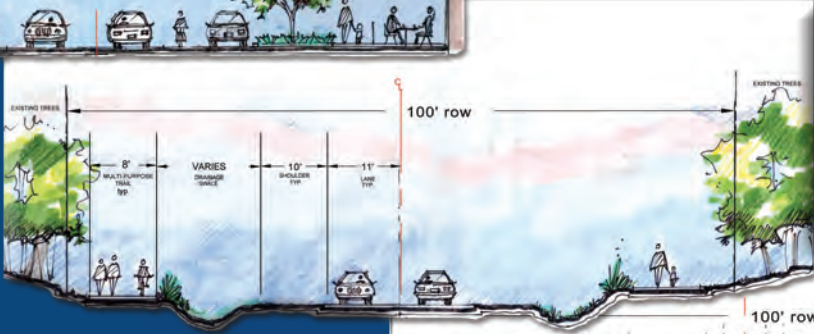
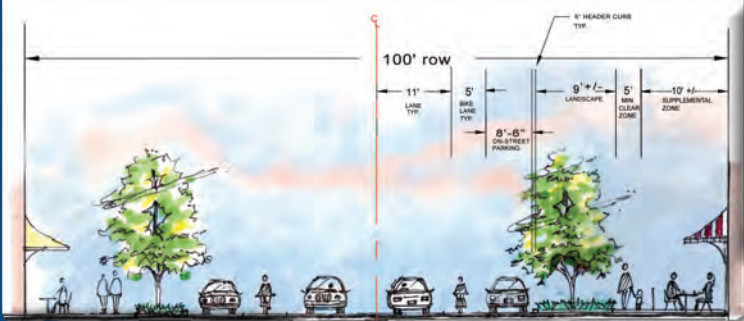


BUFORD HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION STUDY: FINAL REPORT

City of Suwanee, Georgia

April, 2010



Buford Highway Transportation Study

Final Report

Prepared for:



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April, 2010

URS Project Number: 15280785

Project funded in part by the Atlanta Regional Commission's Livable Centers Initiative

Introduction

The City of Suwanee is a dynamic community of 16,670 people located in northwest metropolitan Atlanta. In 2009, the City completed construction of a new City Hall at the apex of Town Center, Suwanee’s signature civic center, which integrates both public and private space and includes Town Center Park and mixed-use commercial, office, residential, and institutional development. Town Center resulted from a history of thoughtful planning first identified in detail in the *Old Town Master Plan*, conducted in 2002.

In 2008, the City updated its master plan, now called the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*. The *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* identified future development nodes along Buford Highway and recognized the need to connect Town Center Suwanee with historic Old Town. One of the needs identified within the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* was to closely examine the role of Buford Highway within the context of the plan and develop a long-range vision for the highway.

In Fall 2009, the City began the **Buford Highway Transportation Study**, a detailed planning and traffic engineering study for Buford Highway (US 23/SR 13) from McGinnis Ferry Road to George Pierce Park. The purpose of the study was to identify what types of multimodal improvements are needed long-term to meet community and mobility needs as they relate to Buford Highway.



Historic Pierce's Corner at Main Street

STUDY AREA MAP



Study Tasks and Schedule

The Buford Highway Transportation Study was comprised of four major components: data collection, traffic impact and circulation analysis, alternatives and recommendations development, and public involvement. The study was initiated in October 2009 and completed in April 2010. At the outset of the study, new traffic data was collected at intersections along and around Buford Highway.

The traffic impact and circulation analysis considered and compared how traffic demands will change from the existing to future condition based on alternative assumptions. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) Regional Travel Demand Model, combined with anticipated development identified in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*, was used to examine future growth rates and develop future build and no-build conditions for Buford Highway. The 2030 future build scenario assumed that the development identified

within the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* would be implemented, while the 2030 no-build scenario assumed no additional development. Both future scenarios were compared against an existing condition.

Community outreach and participation for the study used multiple means to engage citizens, stakeholders, and policy makers within the study process. Major elements of the public involvement process included stakeholder interviews, development of a interjurisdictional transportation stakeholder committee, a public workshop meeting, a public open house meeting, and a presentation to the City Council.

Alternatives were developed as a result of the traffic impact and circulation analysis and in consideration of input received through the public outreach process. The alternatives considered included traffic operational and safety improvements as well as design options for Buford Highway.

Recommendations

Recommended projects are divided into three categories: roadway projects, short-term operations and safety projects, and long-term operations and safety projects. Projects will require further engineering evaluation, concept development, and design prior to implementation.

Roadway Projects

- ❖ **Apply a Context-Sensitive Design to Buford Highway**

It is recommended that Buford Highway be designed in a context-sensitive manner to fit its land use *transect*. A transect is a cut or path through part of the environment showing a range of different characteristics and habitats. From Town Center through the historic Old Town and into the more rural area south of Russell Street, Buford Highway passes through three distinct Transects, as shown in the figure below.

The preferred design for Buford Highway includes three typical cross sections which have been developed to relate to the land use transect (as shown below and illustrated in more detail on Page 3).

From McGinnis Ferry Road to Davis Street, the **Rural** cross section includes two 11-foot vehicle lanes and an eight-foot multi-purpose path that is set back from the edge of the street by a natural swale and landscaping.

The **Historic** cross section extends from Davis Street to just south of Town Center and includes two 11-foot vehicle lanes, two five-foot bicycle lanes, and a 24-foot supplemental and landscape zone that includes a broad sidewalk. The Historic cross section also includes provisions for on-street parking.

The **Town Center** cross section includes two 11-foot vehicle lanes, two five-foot bicycle lanes, a landscaped median, and a broad eight-foot sidewalk. All of the cross sections were developed within the estimated 100-foot right-of-way area that already exists on Buford Highway.

In addition to a new design for Buford Highway, a number of projects were identified to address access and mobility needs.

These projects are illustrated on the Project Recommendations map on Page 4.

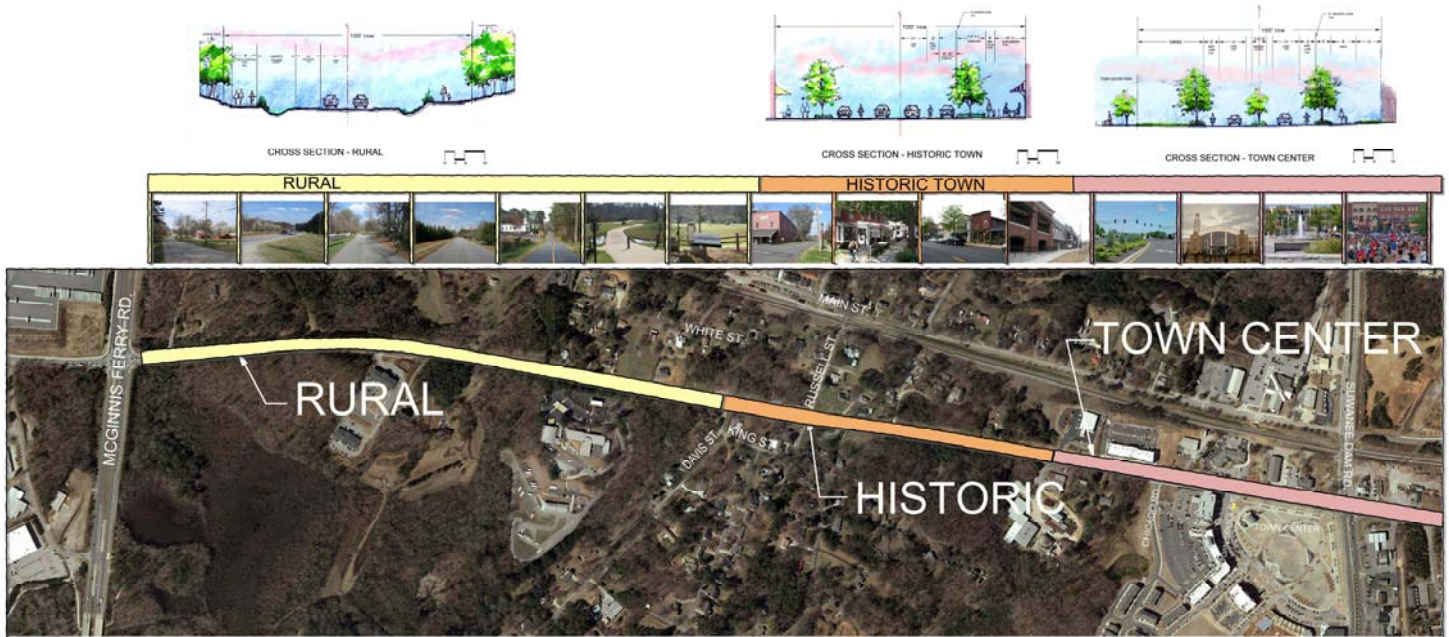
- ❖ **Develop Access to George Pierce Park from Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road**

Provide access to George Pierce Park from Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road at either Suwanee Avenue or Mohawk Trail. The timing of the project should coincide with the redevelopment proposed in the *Down-town Suwanee Master Plan*. This project would provide a secondary access point for this busy regional park.

Short-Term Traffic Operations and Safety Projects

- ❖ **HAWK Signal on Buford Highway at Town Center Avenue**

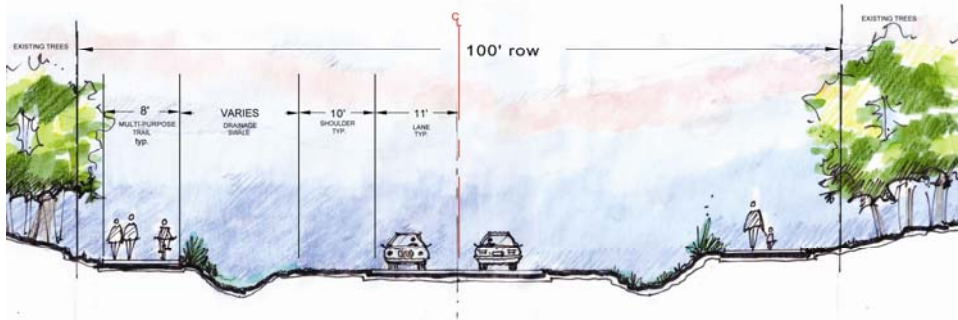
Modify the HAWK signal design to re-stripe the crosswalk over Buford Highway so that it terminates on the Town Center side of Buford Highway into the channelized right turn island instead of into the right turn lane as it does now. Another alternative would be to move the HAWK signal to a mid-block location.



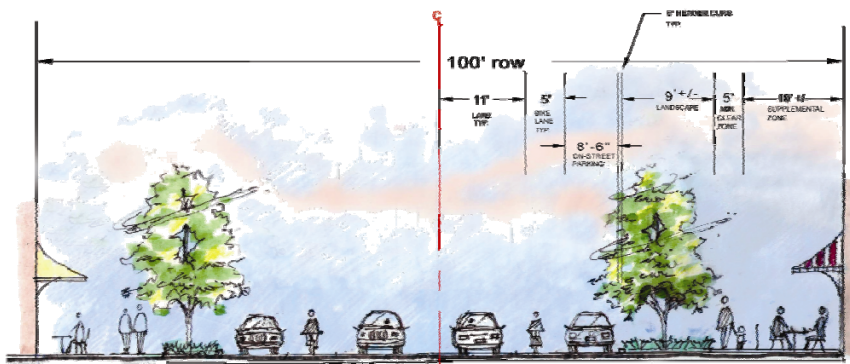
Buford Highway Road Character Cross Sections



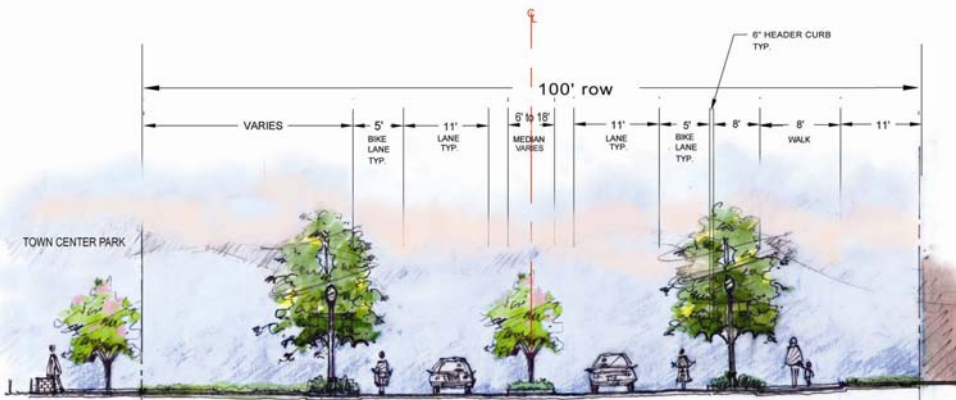
Rural Transect Cross Section



Historic Transect Cross Section



Town Center Transect Cross Section



❖ Suwanee Dam Road and Main Street/Brogdon Road

Modify the intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and Main Street/Brogdon Road. Concepts considered included a roundabout treatment and “Michigan-left” designs but were ruled infeasible due to the intersection’s proximity to the railroad. Previously considered concepts include closing the median and providing access to Old Town Suwanee via the existing signalized intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and the

Library/Shadowbrook Church. While the concerns about maintaining the existing access to Old Town Suwanee and businesses located on Brogdon Road and Main Street are valid, it is likely that future congestion and safety issues at this intersection could effectively close off the current access. It is recommended that the City of Suwanee continue to address a reasonable approach to this intersection with business owners, the public, and in coordination with the City of Sugar Hill and Gwinnett County.

Long-Term Traffic Operations and Safety Projects

❖ Add turning lanes to Buford Highway at McGinnis Ferry Road

Intersection operations indicated current level of service (LOS) D/E degrading to LOS E/F in the 2030 Build condition. This project would add an additional left turn lane on northbound Buford Highway and a right turn lane on southbound Buford Highway.

❖ Provide traffic signal control at:

Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and Suwanee Avenue (Project includes a dedicated eastbound left turn lane from Suwanee Avenue to Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road)

Satellite Boulevard and Martin Farm Road

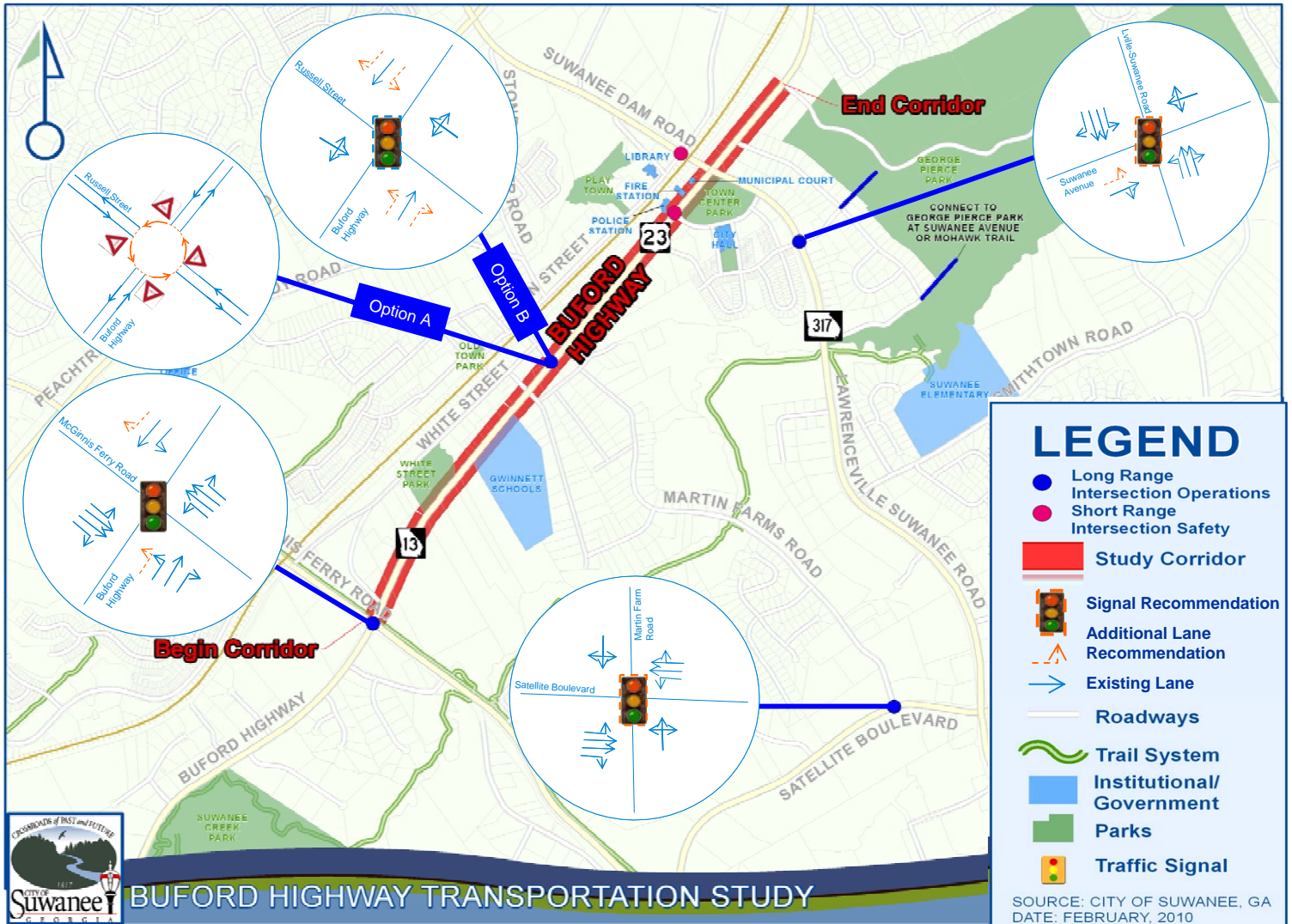
Buford Highway and Russell Street (Alternatives considered include a traditional signalized intersection with dedicated northbound and southbound turn lanes or a single-lane roundabout, which is illustrated on Page 4.)

All locations identified for signals are currently unsignalized. Traffic projections indicate a significant increase in traffic volumes with proposed development in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*. Signal control will likely be needed to safety and effectively manage traffic. To implement traffic signals, traffic signal warrants and DOT approval will be required.



The heart of Old Town Suwanee

BUFORD HIGHWAY PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS



Round-about Concept for Russell Street and Buford Highway



Looking north on Buford Highway



Buford Highway Transportation Study

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1.0 Introduction

The City of Suwanee is a dynamic community of 16,670 people located in northwest metropolitan Atlanta. Founded in 1837 and formally incorporated in 1949, the City takes pride in its heritage but is also forward-thinking in planning and development. In 2009, the City completed construction of a new City Hall at the apex of Town Center, Suwanee's signature civic center, which integrates both public and private space and includes Town Center Park and mixed-use commercial, office, residential, and institutional development. Town Center resulted from a history of thoughtful planning first identified in detail the *Old Town Master Plan*, conducted in 2002.

In 2008, the City updated its master plan, now called the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*. The *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* identified future development nodes along Buford Highway and recognized the need to connect Town Center Suwanee with Historic Old Town. Buford Highway and the Norfolk Southern Railroad separate the Town Center from Old Town. One of the needs identified within the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* was to closely examine the role of Buford Highway within the context of the plan and develop a long-range vision for the highway. In Fall 2009, the City began the **Buford Highway Transportation Study**, a detailed planning and traffic engineering study for Buford Highway (US 23/SR 13) from McGinnis Ferry Road to George Pierce Park. The study area is shown in Figure 1. The purpose of the study was to identify what types of multimodal improvements are needed long-term to meet community and mobility needs as they relate to Buford Highway. The study offered the opportunity to assess the existing and future travel patterns and traffic demands and desired development plans to determine how to balance competing demands for this segment of Buford Highway.

1.1 Study Elements

The study was comprised of four major components: data collection, traffic impact and circulation analysis, alternatives and recommendations development, and public involvement. The study was initiated in October 2009 and completed in April 2010. At the outset of the study, new traffic data was collected at intersections along and around Buford Highway. This traffic data was used to better understand existing traffic patterns and demands as well as conduct the traffic impact assessment.

The traffic impact and circulation analysis considered and compared how traffic demands will change from the existing to future condition based on alternative assumptions. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) Regional Travel Demand Model, combined with anticipated development identified in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*, was used to examine future growth rates and develop future build and no-build conditions for Buford Highway. The 2030 future build scenario assumed that the development identified within the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* would be implemented, while the 2030 no-build scenario assumed no additional development. Both future scenarios were compared against an existing condition. Findings from the analysis are included in the Traffic Technical Memorandum and are included in Appendix A.

STUDY AREA MAP





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Community outreach and participation for the study used multiple means to engage citizens, stakeholders, and policy makers within the study process. Major elements of the public involvement process included stakeholder interviews, development of an interjurisdictional transportation stakeholder committee, a public workshop meeting, a public open house meeting, and a presentation to the City Council. Documentation from the public outreach process is included in Appendix B.

The alternatives development component of the study combined the results of the traffic impact and circulation analysis with the input received through the public outreach process to develop projects and strategies that address immediate and long-term community needs. The alternatives considered included traffic operational and safety improvements as well as design options for Buford Highway. The Transportation Alternatives technical memorandum is included in Appendix C.

1.2 Report Purpose and Organization

This report serves as the final documentation of the Buford Highway Transportation Study process and presents project findings and recommendations. Following this Introduction, Section 2.0 presents an overview of the study development process, Section 3.0 summarizes input from the community and stakeholders, and Section 4.0 presents the study recommendations. The recommendations are a result of the traffic assessment and public outreach process, combined with guidance from the City and informed by previous studies. Section 4.0 also includes an implementation plan which provides a schedule and action plan for the recommendations.



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2.0 Study Development

The Buford Highway Transportation Study builds upon the transportation assessment conducted in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*. One finding from the Master Plan was that numerous potential transportation improvements to Buford Highway had been suggested by prior studies; however, no singular vision or plan for Buford Highway was identified. Projects identified ranged from pedestrian improvements, street lighting, and landscaping to a long-range project to widen Buford Highway. The *Suwanee 2030 Comprehensive Plan* suggested that Buford Highway be reconstructed to function as a Main Street, but additional data and analysis were needed to develop a cohesive long-range plan for Buford Highway.

2.1 Technical Assessment Approach

The Buford Highway Transportation Study provided the technical assessment required to better understand long-range transportation needs and refine recommendations to meet those needs. The key component of the technical assessment was to collect new data on which to conduct a thorough traffic assessment which could inform the decision-making process. The following summarizes the findings of the data collection and assessment effort.

2.2 Data Collection

To provide a solid foundation on which to develop the traffic assessment, a field review was conducted and new traffic counts were collected at the following ten intersections:

- Buford Highway & McGinnis Ferry Road
- McGinnis Ferry Road & Scales Road
- Buford Highway & George Pierce Park
- Russell Street & Main Street
- Suwanee Dam Road & Main Street/Brogdon Road
- Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road & Suwanee Avenue
- Satellite Boulevard & Martin Farm Road
- Buford Highway & Russell Street
- Buford Highway & Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road/Suwanee Dam Road
- Buford Highway & Town Center Avenue

Data collected at the intersections included all vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle counts during the morning (7:00 to 9:00 a.m.) and afternoon (4:00 to 6:00 p.m.) peak periods. The traffic data was collected over three weekdays in October 2009 and used to identify peak hour traffic volumes, peak hour pedestrian and bicycle movements, peak hour factor, and truck percentage. In addition, a speed count was conducted on Buford Highway between Russell Street and Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road/Suwanee Dam Road which provided a 24-hour traffic volume for Buford Highway (12,400 vehicles per day) and provided the 85th percentile speed (49 miles per hour). In addition, crash data collected by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for the years 2003 through 2008 were reviewed.



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2.3 Traffic Analysis

A traffic analysis was undertaken to identify existing and future needs within the study area. The traffic analysis considered peak period turning movement traffic counts, observations from a field review, and assessment of crash history. The following summarizes the activities and findings from this analysis.

The traffic analysis focused on the weekday morning and afternoon peak hours for 2009 (Existing Conditions) and on the years 2010 and 2030 with and without the implementation of the development recommended in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* (No-Build and Build Conditions). The operational analysis utilized a Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology with the Synchro 7 software program. Growth rates for the 2030 build and no-build scenarios were informed by utilization of the ARC Regional Travel Demand Model. The four scenarios assessed included the following:

- **2009 Existing Conditions:** Analysis of traffic conditions observed in the year 2009
- **2010 No Build Conditions:** Analysis of projected traffic conditions for the year 2010 with the assumption that no changes in development within the downtown Suwanee study area will take place.
- **2030 No Build Conditions:** Analysis of projected traffic conditions for the year 2030 with the assumption that no changes in development within the downtown Suwanee study area will take place. In effect, this scenario assumes no additional development in downtown Suwanee through the year 2030.
- **2030 Build Conditions:** Analysis of projected traffic conditions for the year 2030 with the assumption that the development recommendations of the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* will be implemented.

The results of the traffic assessment indicated limited congestion for the 2009 existing peak hours. Of note was level of service (LOS) E observed at the intersection of Buford Highway and McGinnis Ferry Road in the afternoon peak hour and congestion at the intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and Main Street. Conditions in the year 2010 showed similar results to the year 2009. By the year 2030, the traffic assessment indicated degradation of many signalized and unsignalized intersections in the study area, particularly when development recommended in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* is assumed as it was in the Build condition. The intersection LOS results from the analysis are shown in Table 1.



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Table 1: Intersection Level of Service (2009, 2010, and 2030)

Intersection	2009		2010 No Build		2030 No Build		2030 Build	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Buford Highway & McGinnis Ferry Road	D	E	D	E	D	E	E	F
McGinnis Ferry Road & Scales Road (unsignalized)								
Northbound Scales Road	D	F	D	F	D	F	F	F
Southbound Scales Road	C	F	C	F	D	F	F	F
Buford Highway & George Pierce Park	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Russell Street & Main Street (unsignalized)								
Northbound Main Street	A	A	A	A	A	A	D	C
Southbound Main Street	B	B	B	B	B	B	F	F
Suwanee Dam Road & Main Street/Brogdon Road (unsignalized)								
Northbound Main Street	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Southbound Brogdon Road	E	D	E	D	E	F	F	F
Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road & Suwanee Avenue (unsignalized)								
Eastbound Suwanee Avenue	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Westbound Suwanee Avenue	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Satellite Boulevard & Martin Farm Road (unsignalized)								
Northbound Martin Farm Road	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Southbound Martin Farm Road	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Buford Highway and Russell Street (unsignalized)								
Eastbound Russell Street	D	F	D	F	D	F	F	F
Westbound Russell Street	C	E	C	E	C	E	F	F
Buford Highway & Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road/Suwanee Dam Road	C	D	C	D	C	D	D	E
Buford Highway & Town Center Avenue (unsignalized)								
Eastbound Town Center Avenue	C	D	C	D	C	D	F	F
Westbound Town Center Avenue	C	D	C	D	D	D	F	F

Other significant findings not directly related to the operational analysis include the following.

- The ARC travel demand model indicated that a majority of the trips along Buford Highway are local Suwanee-based trips (52.4 percent in the year 2005 increasing to 59.6 percent in the year 2030) or Gwinnett based trips (46.1 percent in the year 2005 and 38.9 percent in the year 2030), while only a small amount of trips are regional (1.4 percent in 2005 and 1.5 percent in 2030).
- Likewise, the travel demand model indicated that a large majority of the future traffic growth on Buford Highway is likely to be local, not regional. This analysis was used to determine the growth rate of regional traffic for the No-Build condition analysis and indicated only a 0.28 percent annual growth rate in regional traffic through the year 2030.



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The safety analysis of reported crashes between the years 2003 through 2008 did not indicate any overall patterns in crashes that could be mitigated through improvements. However, field observations did indicate three locations with safety concerns.

Town Center Avenue at Buford Highway - The newly installed HAWK signal located immediately north of Town Center Avenue on Buford Highway was observed to be utilized on several occasions. However, on many of these occasions, observations suggested that drivers along Buford Highway were unsure of how to travel relative to the different phases of the HAWK signal. Likewise, westbound traffic on Town Center Avenue making a right turn onto northbound Buford Highway is channelized directly into the pedestrian crossing path for the HAWK signal with a YIELD control. Vehicles making this movement cannot see the HAWK signal which could create an unsafe condition for a pedestrian or bicyclist utilizing the HAWK signal and pedestrian crossing path.

Suwanee Dam Road at Buford Highway - Trains crossing at Suwanee Dam Road during the afternoon peak period can contribute to congestion at the intersection of Buford Highway and Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road/Suwanee Dam Road including traffic queues on Suwanee Dam Road eastbound, Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road westbound, and Buford Highway northbound. The upcoming pre-emption at this intersection with the rail crossing will likely address some of the safety issues caused by this congestion (including eastbound queues backing onto the railroad tracks) but will not likely address the congestion. This congestion seems to be exacerbated by heavy vehicle movements from Suwanee Dam eastbound making a left onto Buford Highway. The storage length for the eastbound left turn at the intersection of Buford Highway and Lawrenceville-Suwanee/Suwanee Dam Road is too short to handle the demand in traffic which then spills out into the through lanes on Suwanee Dam Road. Observations indicate that in the PM peak period many of these vehicles are destined to George Pierce Park.

Suwanee Dam Road at Main Street/Brogdon Road – Operations at the intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and Main Street/Brogdon Road are impacted by congestion at the intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and Buford Highway or when trains are crossing Suwanee Dam Road in the PM peak hour. This complicates a variety of potential safety issues including:

- Westbound vehicles making a left turn from Suwanee Dam Road onto Main Street southbound despite the lack of a dedicated left turn lane which often results in westbound vehicles backing up onto the railroad crossing and/or situations where the probability of a rear-end vehicle collision is increased.
- Vehicles making a left from southbound Brogdon Road onto Suwanee Dam Road often compete in the median with the aforementioned vehicles making a left from Suwanee Dam Road to Main Street. Incidentally, some of these vehicles from Brogdon Road were observed to be trucks.

In addition, the intersection of Buford Highway and George Pierce Park operated well with the exception of whenever games were beginning or ending at the park. When entering the park, many vehicles entering from southbound Buford Highway were observed to utilize the striped median to turn due to the lack of a dedicated southbound left turn lane. When games were ending, a significant queue was observed for vehicles attempting to exit the park. This heavy demand of vehicles (many turning westbound left onto Buford Highway) was also observed on Buford Highway approaching Lawrenceville-Suwanee Dam Road on such instances.



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3.0 Community and Stakeholder Input

Community outreach and participation for the study used a variety of approaches to engage citizens, stakeholders, and policy makers within the study process. To gain a better understanding of the community's views and vision for Buford Highway, prior studies were reviewed to complement the public involvement activities. Outreach efforts within the public involvement process included stakeholder interviews, development of a interjurisdictional transportation stakeholder committee, a public workshop, a public open house meeting, and a presentation to the City Council.

3.1 Prior Studies and Plans

A review of prior studies and plans indicates an evolution of ideas regarding improvements needed for Buford Highway, some of which have been implemented. Sidewalks have been constructed along Buford Highway from Suwanee Dam/Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road to the driveway of George Pierce Park. Pedestrian crossing improvements, including a marked crosswalk and HAWK signal, have been installed at Buford Highway and Town Center Avenue. Pedestrian crossing improvements at the intersection of Suwanee Dam/Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and Buford Highway have been recently completed (pedestrian push button signals and crosswalks).

Projects previously identified for Buford Highway but not implemented include the following:

- Sidewalks from Russell Street to Suwanee Dam/Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road (*Old Town Master Plan, 2002*);
- Sidewalks, lighting, crosswalks, and landscaping from the City limits to Russell Street (*2030 Comprehensive Plan*);
- Reconstructing Buford Highway to function as a "Main Street" (*2030 Comprehensive Plan*); and
- Widening Buford Highway from Sugarloaf Parkway to SR 20 in Buford (*GDOT Long Range Plan*).

In the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*, a more refined project for Buford Highway was described: Implement pedestrian improvements by upgrading Buford Highway from a rural to an urban cross-section with curb and gutter, landscape strip, and sidewalk or trail from Russell Street to Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road/ Suwanee Dam Road. In addition, the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* created a long-range vision for development within the corridor. The land use recommendations indicate a desire for compact, mixed-use development at a pedestrian-scale (ranging from two to a maximum of five stories) that includes mixed-use, commercial and residential uses, with an emphasis on offering a diversity of residential types, specifically multi-family and townhomes. Of particular note, the *Master Plan* recommends development of three unique districts along the corridor, as follows:

- Town Center District
- Historic Old Town Village District
- Suwanee Farm Village District



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Each district has a unique character, scale and intended uses. A brief description of the relationship between the Buford Highway corridor and the proposed development recommended in each district is provided below.

Town Center District - The Town Center District is bisected by Buford Highway, with land use recommendations that enforce the design precedent established in the previous *Town Center Master Plan*. The properties along Buford Highway are intended to provide low- to mid-rise majority non-residential (i.e. commercial and office) and civic opportunities in order to facilitate the area as a true community hub for the City of Suwanee. Building placement fronts the roadway and relegates parking to the rear, facilitating an enhanced urban and pedestrian-oriented aesthetic. Emphasis is placed on enhancing both pedestrian and vehicular connections along Buford Highway, especially between the Town Center and the Historic Old Town Village Districts through limited driveways and a pedestrian-oriented streetscape to improve the corridor's overall desirability.

Historic Old Town Village District - The intersection of Buford Highway and Russell Street is intended as an extension of the Historic Old Town Village (i.e. Main Street) and includes low- to mid-rise majority commercial and office development. Buildings should front the roadway, provide outdoor patios and seating areas and parking at the rear. An improved streetscape, including wide sidewalks, pedestrian lighting and amenities (i.e. signage, benches, etc), and intersection enhancements (i.e. textured paving, reduced turning radii, pedestrian signals, etc.) allow this intersection to become a gateway to the Historic Old Town area and a desirable address for new businesses.

Suwanee Farm Village District - Anchored by the Suwanee Farm conservation area (known today as the City's White Street Park), this District is planned as predominantly residential, incorporating a mix of dwelling types that transition from attached townhomes to mid-rise (three to five stories) majority residential developments near the McGinnis Ferry Road intersection (located to the southwest). Mid-rise (two to three stories) retail/ office and civic opportunities enhance the economic potential of the corridor, and complement the need for streetscaping and pedestrian amenities. To ensure desirability for residential dwellings, increased building setbacks, limited curb cuts and enhanced buffers (or existing tree save areas) are recommended along this southern portion of the Buford Highway corridor.

The proposed development form along the Buford Highway corridor for all three districts is intended to front the street, offer pedestrian amenities (i.e. front stoops, pedestrian lighting, landscaping and sidewalks), locate vehicular parking at the rear, and require inter-parcel access so as to reduce the number of driveways along Buford Highway.

Buford Highway is described as a Boulevard in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*, defined as a primary community travel route with multimodal travel options, including bicycle lanes and pedestrian sidewalks. For the Buford Highway corridor to be compatible with the recommended development form and associated density of the three districts described above, the corridor must:

- Incorporate alternative modes of travel, specifically pedestrian-oriented;
- Allow inter-parcel connectivity;
- Reduce curb cuts and driveway access; and
- Enhance the aesthetics, safety and quality of the corridor, through landscaping and pedestrian improvements.



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3.2 Community Outreach

The multifaceted outreach approach sought input from a wide spectrum of the Suwanee and greater-Suwanee community. Major outreach activities conducted during the study area summarized in Table 2. Description of each activity and input received through each activity follows.

Table 2: Public Outreach Activity Summary

Activity	Date	Purpose
Stakeholder Interviews	October and November, 2009	Gain understanding of issues and needs and identify long-term goals for Buford Highway
Interjurisdictional Transportation Coordination Committee Meetings	November 17, 2009	Introduce study and gather input regarding Buford Highway from transportation stakeholders
	March 3, 2010	Present proposed alternatives and strategies for review and comment
Public Meeting Workshop	February 25, 2010	Present study background, process, and proposed alternatives and strategies for review and comment
Public Information Open House	March 18, 2010	Present draft final recommendations for public comment
Suwanee City Council Workshop	April 15, 2010	Present draft final recommendations to City Council

3.2.1 Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders representing the city, downtown business leaders, and property owners were interviewed in October and November, 2009. Specific to the study, the stakeholder interviews focused on identifying community issues and needs regarding Buford Highway as well as identifying what was desired long-term for Buford Highway.

On the whole, stakeholders indicated a need to integrate the development concept along Buford Highway with multimodal transportation improvements to Buford Highway. The role of Buford Highway in the center of Suwanee needs to change from a pass-through highway to a central core “Main Street,” one that better serves the community. The development patterns should result in a destination place to shop and include residential housing. Buford Highway needs to connect Town Center to Old Town in a way to encourage future development.

Safety was the most frequently cited transportation concern along Buford Highway. Buford Highway was identified as extremely dangerous for alternative transportation, particularly from Davis Street to McGinnis Ferry Road. There are no sidewalks or shoulders, and it is difficult to walk along as there is no buffer between pedestrians and vehicles.

One of the most commonly cited observations about Buford Highway is that it is relatively unchanged, except for the development of Town Center and Town Center Park. It is unusual that development along Buford Highway has not occurred, as growth has occurred elsewhere in Suwanee. The greatest changes observed on Buford Highway include increased traffic



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volumes during commute times, the Pedestrian HAWK signal installation at Town Center, and upgrade of the signal at Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road.

3.2.2 Interjurisdictional Transportation Coordination Committee

Buford Highway is a state and federal route which crosses many jurisdictions. To provide input and guidance for the study, an interjurisdictional transportation coordination committee was convened. The committee met two times during the course of the study (November 17, 2009 and March 3, 2010), and participants were invited to the public meetings as well.

Representative staff from the City of Suwanee, GDOT, ARC, Gwinnett County, City of Duluth, and Norfolk Southern Railroad were invited to participate in the committee. The coordination among the jurisdictions was sought to assist the City of Suwanee in its efforts to provide long-term improvements to Buford Highway. The committee provided insight on various topics related to roadway design, traffic, funding, and project development.

3.2.3 Public Meeting Workshop

An interactive workshop for the general public was conducted Thursday, February 25 at the Crossroads Center. Attendance at the meeting was approximately 40, though 30 persons officially signed-in as attending. The format of the meeting included a brief presentation to provide study background information, analysis approach, and proposed strategies and projects and an interactive workshop. Following the presentation, the participants were divided into two groups to examine, ask questions, and comment on the proposed recommendations. A detailed comment form was distributed to gather input.

The comment form provided an opportunity for attendees to offer feedback on the preferred design alternative for Buford Highway (between George Pierce Park and McGinnis Ferry Road) and short and long-term safety and operations project recommendations. The responses indicated that the preferred design alternative for Buford Highway—retaining the two-lane cross section and basing the design of the corridor on a transect from rural to historic to town center—provides vehicular (60 percent), pedestrian (91 percent) and bicyclist (86 percent) safety while retaining the unique character of the City of Suwanee (95 percent). Of note, 100 percent of the respondents stated that the preferred design alternative is visually and aesthetically pleasing.

The element of the preferred design alternative that was least liked by respondents was the reduction or limitation of traffic flow (due to retaining the current two-lane cross section). However, tree cover, pedestrian access (sidewalks) and bicycle lanes were all listed as elements liked the most by respondents. When asked what features of the proposed Rural, Historic, and Town Center transect cross sections were liked the most, tree cover, the roundabout treatment (at Russell and Buford Highway intersection) and pedestrian safety were listed by a majority of the respondents. Limited traffic capacity was listed as the element liked least in the three proposed transect cross sections. A majority of respondents (77 percent) indicated that the locations/ lengths of the proposed Rural, Historic and Town Center transect cross sections are appropriate along Buford Highway.

3.2.4 Public Information Open House

A public information open house was conducted Thursday, March 18, 2010 in the lobby of City Hall. Boards showing project recommendations were displayed, and participants were encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback via a comment form. The public information



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open house was attended by approximately 15 persons, and three attendees completed comment forms. In general, the context-sensitive design for Buford Highway was supported, though some property owners along Buford Highway expressed an interest in widening Buford Highway to four lanes and maintaining the 45 mph speed limit. In addition, a question was raised about how access to existing businesses would be affected if a landscaped median was added to Buford Highway. Concern was expressed about safety on Buford Highway. One business owner expressed interest in constructing an underpass for Suwanee Dam Road under the Norfolk Southern rail line.

3.2.5 City Council Workshop Presentation

The Buford Highway study recommendations were presented to the Suwanee City Council at their workshop on Thursday, April 15. The presentation provided an overview of the study process, input received, and recommendations. Council asked questions and provided input regarding the study.



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4.0 Recommendations

The Buford Highway Study Area extends approximately 2.6 miles along Buford Highway/ US 23/SR 13 from McGinnis Ferry Road to the driveway at George Pierce Park. Currently, Buford Highway is designated as an Urban Minor Arterial by GDOT and a Major Arterial by the City of Suwanee. The existing cross-section includes two through-lanes, and the posted speed is 45 miles per hour (mph). Major cross-streets include the four-lane McGinnis Ferry Road and Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road/SR 317-Suwanee Dam Road, which are each posted 45 mph.

As a follow-up to the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*, the study has focused on Buford Highway and has provided the opportunity to look at existing and future mobility, accessibility, safety, and sustainability within the context of desired future development within the City of Suwanee. The study attempts to balance the need for vehicle capacity, speed, and safety. Short and long-term projects, strategies, and policies have been identified to address identified needs. The following provides an overview of the project identification process. Complementary transportation strategies and policies are also identified.

4.1 Alternatives Development

The *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* process provided an opportunity to establish vision and guidance about how the study area should be developed over the long term. One of the major transportation focus areas is to provide expanded options for traveling outside of a vehicle, whether by foot, bicycle, or transit. A major theme indicated by the prior planning process and reinforced by stakeholders is that transportation infrastructure is multimodal and fit with planned development. Buford Highway should better fit the context of a city street, providing access to the Town Center and envisioned future development, while connecting Town Center to the historic Old Town, instead of separating the two areas as Peachtree Industrial Boulevard effectively separates portions of Suwanee from Town Center and Historic Old Town.

4.2 Projects

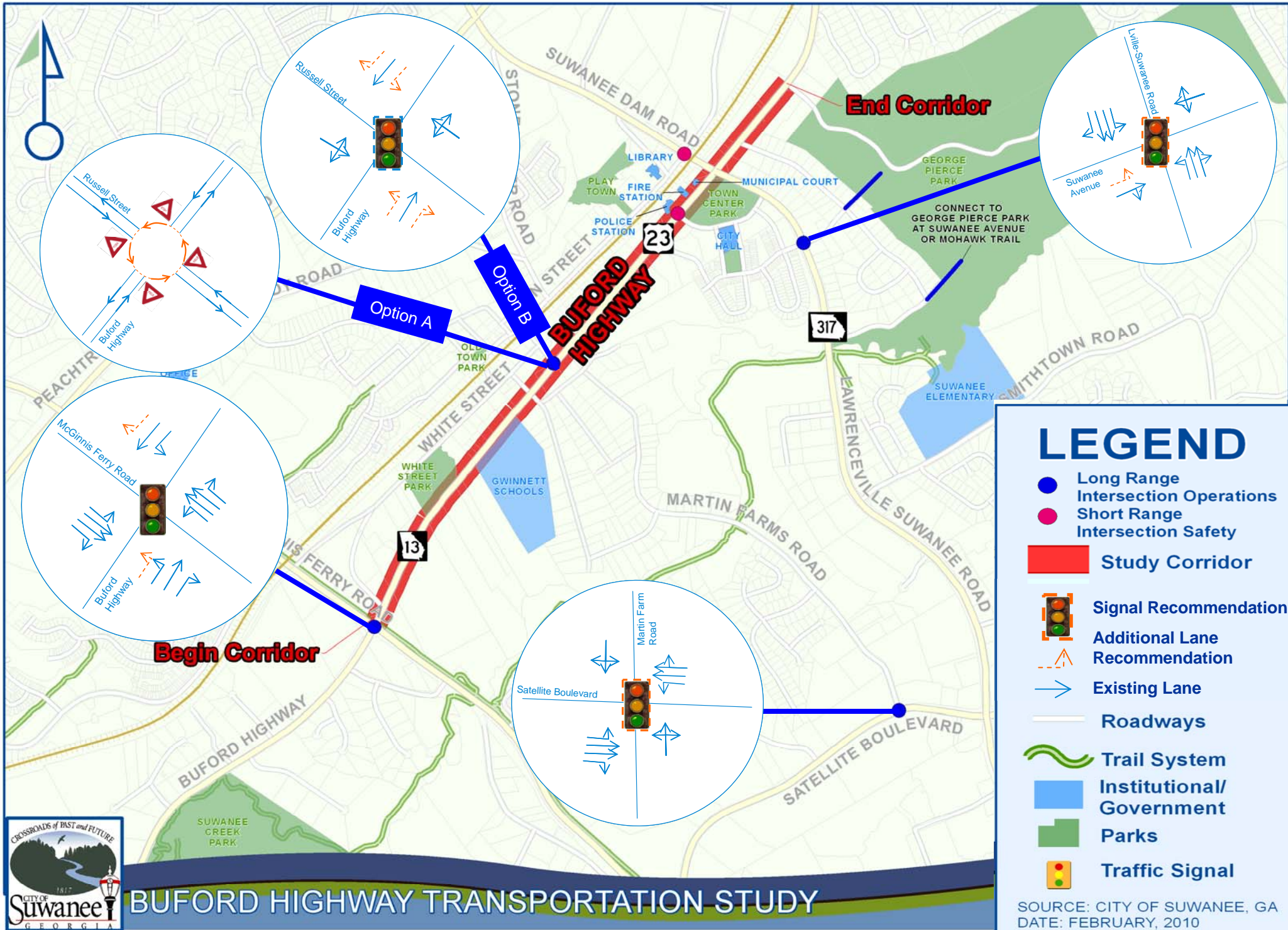
As a result of the needs identified in the traffic analysis, a number of projects and strategies were developed. The traffic operations analysis indicated increased congestion in the year 2030, particularly in the Build alternative, where the development recommendations from the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* were assumed. Recommended projects are divided into three categories: short-term operations and safety projects, long-term operations and safety projects, and roadway projects. Figure 2 depicts the project recommendations for all projects except the preferred design recommendations for Buford Highway, which are illustrated separately.

4.2.1 Short-Term Traffic Operations and Safety Projects

As a result of the field review, two short-term projects and strategies are recommended to address primarily safety concerns.

HAWK Signal on Buford Highway at Town Center Avenue - Modify the HAWK signal design to restripe the crosswalk over Buford Highway so that it terminates on the Town Center side of Buford Highway into the channelized right turn island instead of into the right turn lane as it does now. Another alternative would be to move the HAWK signal to a mid-block location.

BUFORD HIGHWAY PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS



LEGEND

- Long Range Intersection Operations
- Short Range Intersection Safety
- Study Corridor
-  Signal Recommendation
-  Additional Lane Recommendation
-  Existing Lane
-  Roadways
-  Trail System
-  Institutional/Government
-  Parks
-  Traffic Signal



BUFORD HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SOURCE: CITY OF SUWANEE, GA
DATE: FEBRUARY, 2010



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Suwanee Dam Road and Main Street/Brogdon Road - Modify the intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and Main Street/Brogdon Road. While the issues with this intersection are widely known in the community and have been broached previously in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* and by the Downtown Development Authority, the operational analysis and field reviews conducted for this study indicate that the current issues at the intersection will likely increase in the future.

For this study, concepts including roundabout and “Michigan-left” designs were considered but ruled infeasible due to the intersection’s proximity to the railroad. Previously considered concepts include closing the median and providing access to Old Town Suwanee via the existing signalized intersection of Suwanee Dam Road and the Library/Shadowbrook Church. While the concerns about maintaining the existing access to Old Town Suwanee and businesses located on Brogdon Road and Main Street are valid, it is likely that future congestion and safety issues at this intersection could effectively close off the current access. Therefore, it is recommended that the City of Suwanee continue to address a reasonable approach to this intersection with business owners, the public, and in coordination with the City of Sugar Hill and Gwinnett County.

4.2.2 Long-Term Traffic Operations and Safety Projects

The following projects should be considered to be long-term and subject to the way in which the downtown Suwanee area develops. In particular, the recommendations, including signalization of intersections, are based on the assumption that those intersections will be the main entry and exit points for new development in downtown Suwanee and are pursuant to signal warrant analyses and subsequent permit review and approval by agencies such as GDOT. The following long-term intersection operations and safety projects are recommended.

Add turning lanes to Buford Highway at McGinnis Ferry Road - Intersection operations indicated current level of service (LOS) D/E degrading to LOS E/F in the 2030 Build condition. This project would add an additional left turn lane on northbound Buford Highway and a right turn lane on southbound Buford Highway.

Provide traffic signal control at:

- **Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and Suwanee Avenue** (includes a dedicated eastbound left turn lane from Suwanee Avenue to Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road)
- **Satellite Boulevard and Martin Farm Road**
- **Buford Highway and Russell Street** (alternatives considered include a traditional signalized intersection with dedicated northbound and southbound turn lanes or a single-lane roundabout)

All locations identified for signals are currently unsignalized. Traffic projections indicate a significant increase in traffic volumes with proposed development in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*. Signal control will likely be needed to safety and effectively manage traffic. To implement traffic signals, traffic signal warrants and DOT approval will be required.

For the intersection of Russell Street and Buford Highway, the operational analysis of the two options indicated that the roundabout would have less congestion. Additionally, converting the existing four-way intersection to a roundabout will improve the vehicular safety of the

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intersection. As cited in *Synthesis of Highway Practice 264: Modern Roundabout Practice in the United States*, the percent change in average annual vehicle crash frequencies at 11 U.S. intersections converted to roundabouts was -37 percent in total crashes, -51 percent in injury crashes, and -29 percent in property damage only crashes. However, debate continues regarding pedestrian safety and roundabouts (some debates suggests that poorly designed roundabouts contribute to the perception by some that roundabouts are unsafe for pedestrians), and the development type at the intersection may necessitate a more traditional four-way intersection. A planning-level roundabout concept illustration for Buford Highway at Russell Street is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Buford Highway and Russell Street Roundabout Concept





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4.2.3 Roadway Projects

The recommended roadway projects include new access to George Pierce Park and a preferred design concept for Buford Highway.

Develop Access to George Pierce Park from Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road - Provide access to George Pierce Park from Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road at either Suwanee Avenue or Mohawk Trail. This improvement should be coordinated with Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Department. The timing of the project should coincide with the redevelopment proposed in the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*. This project would provide a secondary access point for this busy regional park.

Apply a Context-Sensitive Design to Buford Highway - Design Buford Highway in a context-sensitive manner to fit its land use *transect*. A transect is a cut or path through part of the environment showing a range of different characteristics and habitats. The City of Suwanee is well positioned to reflect and preserve its distinct development characteristics due to the rich character of each transect. From Town Center through the historic Old Town and into the more rural area south of Russell Street, Buford Highway passes through three distinct Transects, as illustrated in Figure 4.

The preferred design for Buford Highway includes three typical cross sections which have been developed to relate to the land use transect. From McGinnis Ferry Road to Davis Street, the Rural cross section includes two 11-foot vehicle lanes and an eight-foot multi-purpose path that is set back from the edge of the street by a natural swale and landscaping. The Historic cross section extends from Davis Street to just south of Town Center and includes two 11-foot vehicle lanes, two five-foot bicycle lanes, and a 24-foot supplemental and landscape zone that includes a broad sidewalk. The Historic cross section also includes provisions for on-street parking. The Town Center cross section includes two 11-foot vehicle lanes, two five-foot bicycle lanes, a landscaped median, and a broad eight-foot sidewalk. All of the cross sections were developed within the estimated 100-foot right-of-way area that already exists on Buford Highway. The cross sections are illustrated in Figures 5 through 7. A plan view of the cross-section is shown in Figure 8.

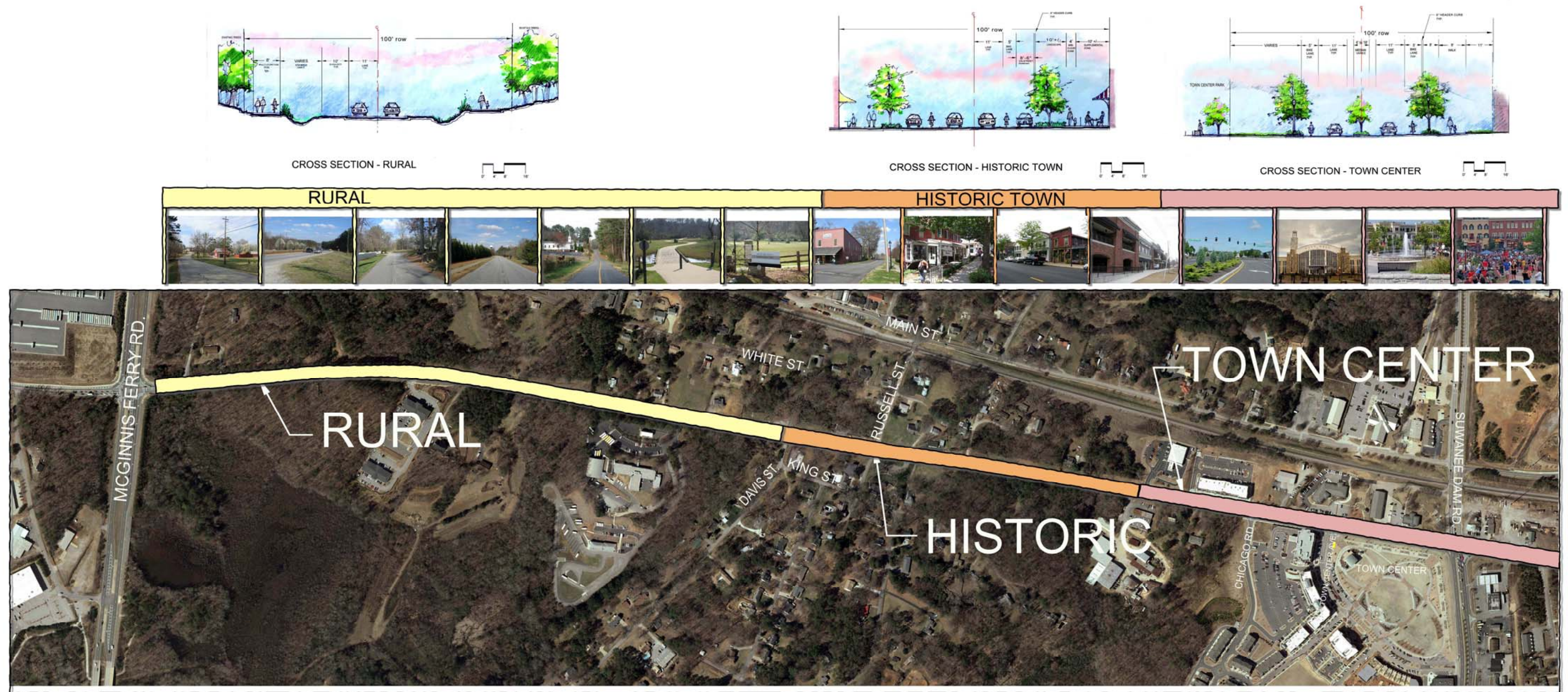
An alternative to widen Buford Highway to four lanes was evaluated during the alternatives identification process. A typical cross section was developed considering state design standards. Widening Buford Highway would provide additional capacity for vehicular movement, but it would further separate Historic Old Town from Town Center and result in a reduced level of service for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Comparison of Context-Sensitive and Conventional Designs		
Characteristic	Context-Sensitive Design	Conventional 4-lane Design
Estimated Daily Vehicular Capacity*	16,600	35,000
Approximate Lane Crossing Distance for Pedestrians	22'	48'
Traffic Calming	Yes	No
Typical Speeds	Slower speeds achieved through design	45 mph+
Complements Downtown Suwanee Master Plan	Yes	No
Impacts to Adjacent Land Uses	Within 100' ROW	May Require Additional ROW
Estimated Cost**	\$5,155,000	\$12,676,000

*Defined as ability to maintain LOS D per GRTA DRI Technical Guidelines.

**Planning-level cost estimates are included in Appendix D.

Figure 4: Buford Highway Road Transect

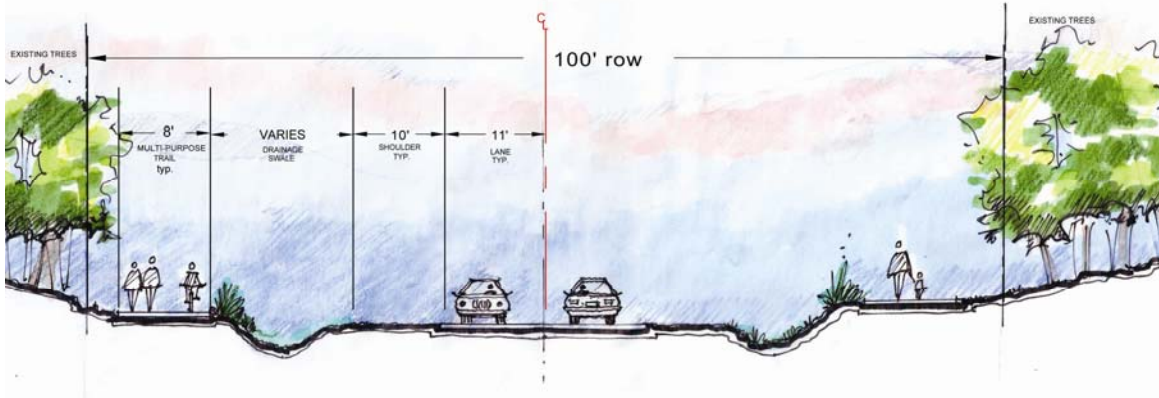


TRANSECT - ROAD CHARACTER
BUFORD HWY. STUDY

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Figure 5: Buford Highway Rural Transect Cross Section and Plan View

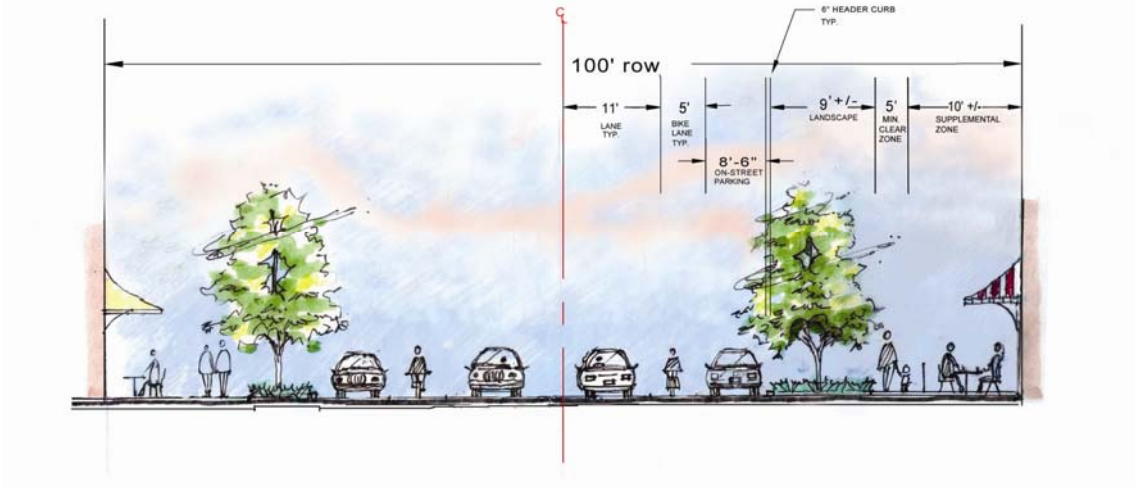


Note: Cross section and plan view illustrate planning-level conceptual drawings. Project will require further engineering evaluation, concept development, and design prior to implementation.

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Figure 6: Buford Highway Historic Transect Cross Section and Plan View

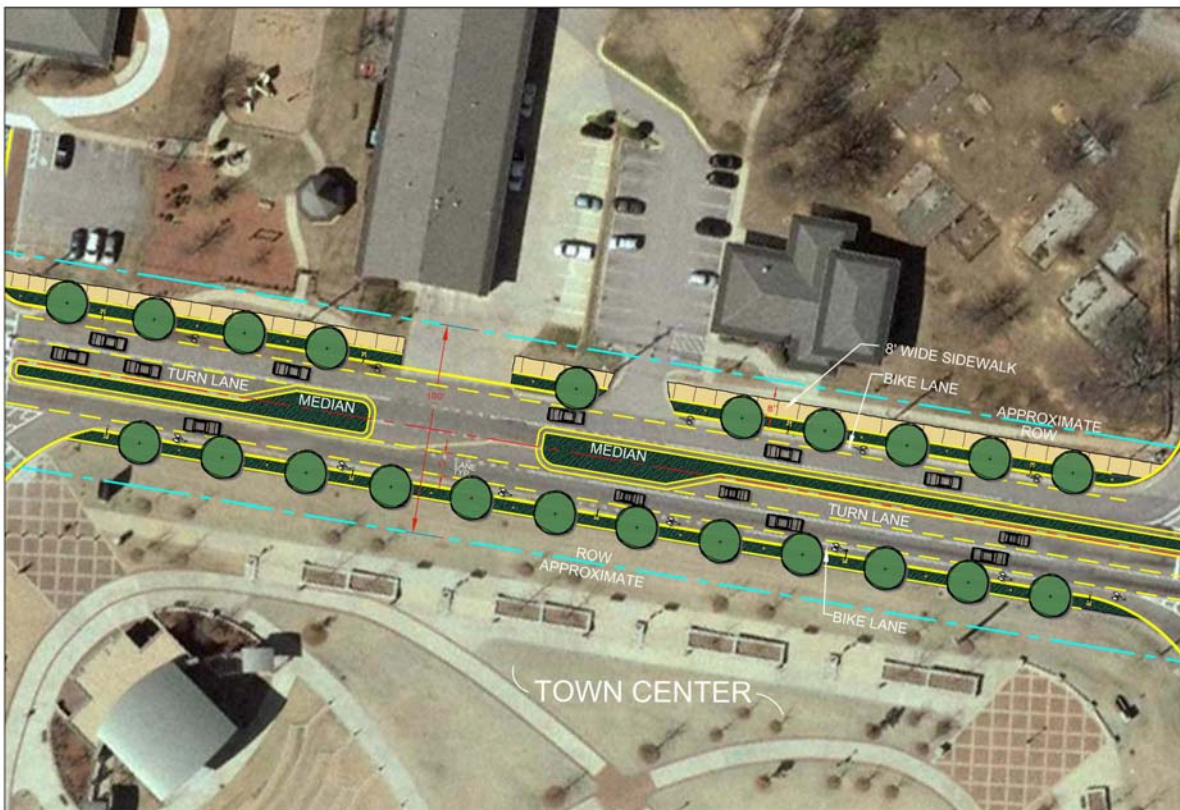
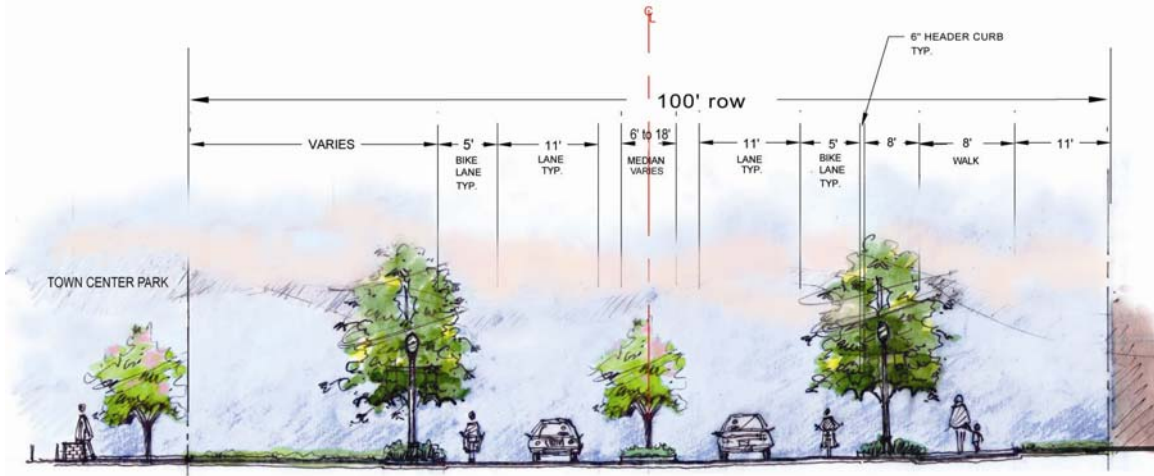


Note: Cross section and plan view illustrate planning-level conceptual drawings. Project will require further engineering evaluation, concept development, and design prior to implementation.

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Figure 7: Buford Highway Town Center Transect Cross Section and Plan View



Note: Cross section and plan view illustrate planning-level conceptual drawings. Project will require further engineering evaluation, concept development, and design prior to implementation.

Figure 8: Corridor Plan View



TRANSECT - ROAD CHARACTER
BUFORD HWY. STUDY



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4.3 Strategies

Two concerns expressed about Buford Highway during the study were safety and ownership. The City and stakeholders have indicated the posted speed and vehicular travel speeds on Buford Highway are too high in relation to new development around Town Center. Formerly, Buford Highway served as a major regional thoroughfare for long distance travel. Now, a majority of regional travel occurs on I-85 and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, while Buford Highway serves more local traffic. Since the development of Town Center, completion of the pedestrian tunnel under the Norfolk Southern railroad linking Main Street to Buford Highway, and installation of HAWK pedestrian signal across Buford Highway at Town Center, the number of pedestrian crossings has increased. The speed of traffic on Buford Highway is a concern for those trying to cross the Highway. In addition, throughout the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan* development and into this study, the fact that the state maintains ownership of Buford Highway means that any future changes to Buford Highway are subject to GDOT policies. GDOT policies, which govern all state owned and maintained roads, do not reflect or complement Suwanee's overall development vision for the Buford Highway corridor. In recognition of concerns about speed and ownership, two strategies are proposed.

4.3.1 Speed Reduction

One of the concerns expressed by the City and stakeholders is how the current posted speed (45 mph) and actual travel speeds of vehicles on Buford Highway are higher than desired. The City seeks to provide safer pedestrian access to Town Center along and across Buford Highway. The higher travel speeds are not in context with the desire to create both a safer environment for pedestrians and an environment where pedestrians perceive a safer condition. These concerns are underscored by empirical data. Primary considerations for creating pedestrian and bicyclist safety are traffic volumes, design and separation, and traffic speed. As noted in the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) *Pedestrian Facilities User Guide-Providing Safety and Mobility*, "Speeding has serious consequences when a pedestrian is involved. A pedestrian hit at 40 mph has an 85 percent chance of being killed; at 30 mph, the likelihood goes down to 45 percent, while at 20 mph, the fatality rate is only 5 percent. Faster speeds increase the likelihood of a pedestrian being hit. At higher speeds, motorists are less likely to see a pedestrian, and are even less likely to be able to stop in time to avoid hitting one."¹

As a state highway, the City of Suwanee may petition GDOT and Gwinnett County for a speed zone reduction, as directed by Transportation Online Policy & Procedure System (TOPPS) directive 6780-4, "Establishment of Speed Zones." As noted in the directive, the means for determining speed limits is specified by an engineering and traffic investigation. Factors that are typically included in the traffic engineering and traffic investigation are:

- Field checks of existing travel speeds to calculate the 85th percentile speed and the pace speed;
- Roadside development;

¹ U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, *Pedestrian Facilities User Guide-Providing Safety and Mobility*, Publication No. FHWA-RD-01-102, March 2002, page 13.



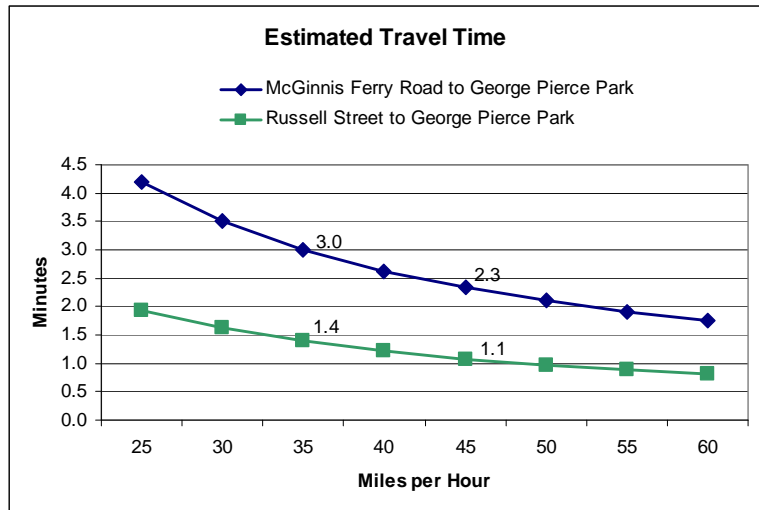
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- Roadway geometrics and design, which includes width, clearances, shoulders, sight distances, and stopping sight distances;
- Other conditions of the roadway, which includes parking and the presence of pedestrians and trucks;
- Crash history; and
- A field test drive to confirm driving conditions.

As stated in the TOPPS 6780-4, “The speed limit will be set as a maximum speed limit under the best conditions.”

As an element of this study, existing travel speeds, pedestrian crossing data, and vehicular crash data were reviewed. The 85th percentile speed in both the northbound and southbound direction on Buford Highway was 49 mph. Average speed was 42 mph, and the pace speed was 41 to 50 mph, with 62 to 64 percent of vehicles traveling within the pace speed range. At the HAWK signal location on Buford Highway at Town Center Avenue, pedestrian crossings were also tabulated. In the morning peak hour, no



pedestrian crossings were recorded. However, in the afternoon, 14 pedestrian crossings occurred during the peak hour, and 23 crossings occurred during the peak period (from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm).

Vehicle crash data for 2005 through 2007, collected for the *Downtown Suwanee Master Plan*, was reviewed to determine any pattern or correlation that could be attributed to roadway design elements and vehicle speed.* The area reviewed extends from McGinnis Ferry Road and Suwanee Dam Road/Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road. For this review, crashes at intersections were eliminated from the review as vehicle speeds are affected by intersection operations, particularly at signalized intersections.

During the time period reviewed, there were 17 crashes in the study area, of which four were injury crashes (with a total of six injuries) and no fatal crashes. Eleven of 17 crashes were rear-end type crashes, and three crashes occurred at night. The crash locations were spread evenly across the 1.3 mile study area with only one crash occurring at a curve. The crash data do not appear to indicate any consistent pattern that would indicate higher speeds and design are contributing factors of the crashes.

* Note: Two separate crash assessments were conducted for this study. One assessment focused on intersection safety for the traffic impact and circulation analysis. The other looked at crashes in relation to the speed concern.



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As a result of the preliminary engineering and traffic review, the current data do not strongly support a speed reduction petition. However, the option to petition is one that the City could undertake. The City will evaluate means to reduce speed through the context-sensitive design for Buford Highway.

4.3.2 State and Federal Route Revision

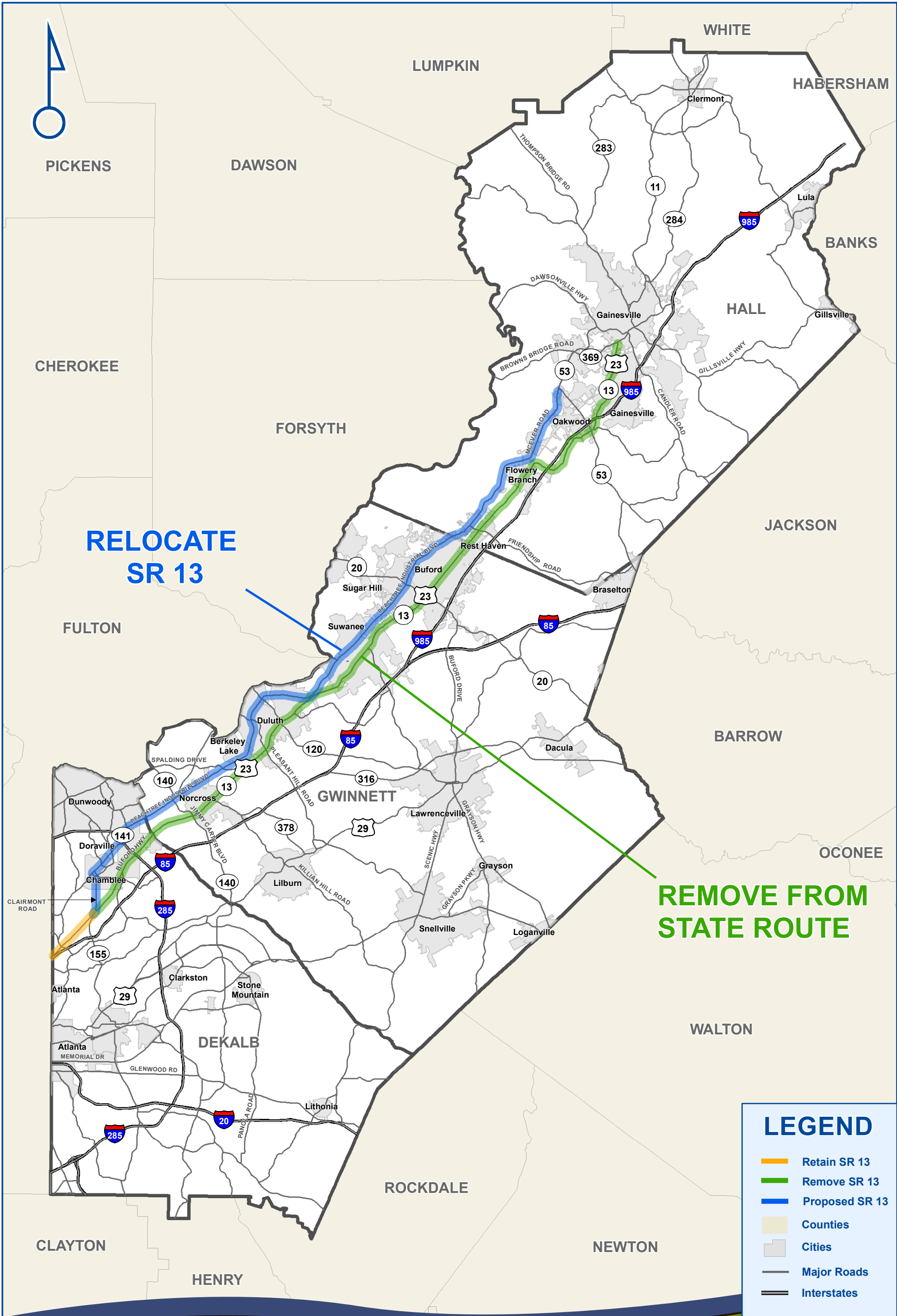
The future of Buford Highway and downtown Suwanee could differ based on whether Buford Highway remains a state and federal route. As a state route, Buford Highway will be governed by GDOT rules and managed for regional, high-speed throughput. As a state route, Buford Highway will be subject to GDOT traffic, design, and access policies (such as requiring acceleration/ deceleration lanes for new developments as well turning radii to accommodate freight). It is unlikely that state will remove from its long-range plan the project to widen Buford Highway to four lanes (PI# 0002393). Any proposed project improvements will have to conform to GDOT standards. The City of Suwanee would prefer to work with GDOT to achieve its preferred design for Buford Highway, and meetings with GDOT confirm their desire to work with Suwanee on a context-sensitive design. However, another alternative to gain more local control for Buford Highway, if necessary, might be considered through a state and federal route revision.

If Buford Highway became a locally-maintained/owned street, Suwanee would gain more local control over the future of Buford Highway. By removing Buford Highway from the state route system, the City could presume more flexibility in design, traffic, and policies related to Buford Highway. This option may result in a context-sensitive design that better accommodates the multimodal travel, with vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians sharing the road.

The primary challenge in getting a state route revision is achieving consensus from Suwanee's neighboring jurisdictions, counties, and GDOT to move the state route designation. Three potential revisions are proposed. Alternative 1, illustrated in Figure 9, proposes a multi-county state route revision, which transfers the state route designation from Buford Highway to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and McEver Road within DeKalb, Gwinnett, and Hall Counties. Alternative 2, illustrated in Figure 10, proposes the revision only within Gwinnett County, which transfers the state route designation from Buford Highway to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard between SR 140 and SR 20. Alternative 3, illustrated in Figure 11, shows a revision in Gwinnett and Hall Counties from Sugarloaf Parkway to Radford Road. If the state route is moved, the local jurisdictions would take ownership of Buford Highway.

The process for making the state route revision includes making a written petition to GDOT for the change. Although Suwanee would be the coordinating applicant, it is important that the City begin discussions with its neighboring jurisdictions and Gwinnett County to gauge intent and agreement. The primary considerations on behalf of each institution are ownership, operations, and maintenance. If Buford Highway is removed from the state route system, then the local governments assuming ownership will be responsible for operations and maintenance. Likewise, if Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and McEver Road are added to the state route system, local ownership is lost and these facilities would be owned, operated, and maintained by GDOT. Table 3 provides approximate centerline and lane miles removed and proposed for the two revision alternatives.

SR 13 ROUTE REVISION - ALTERNATIVE 1



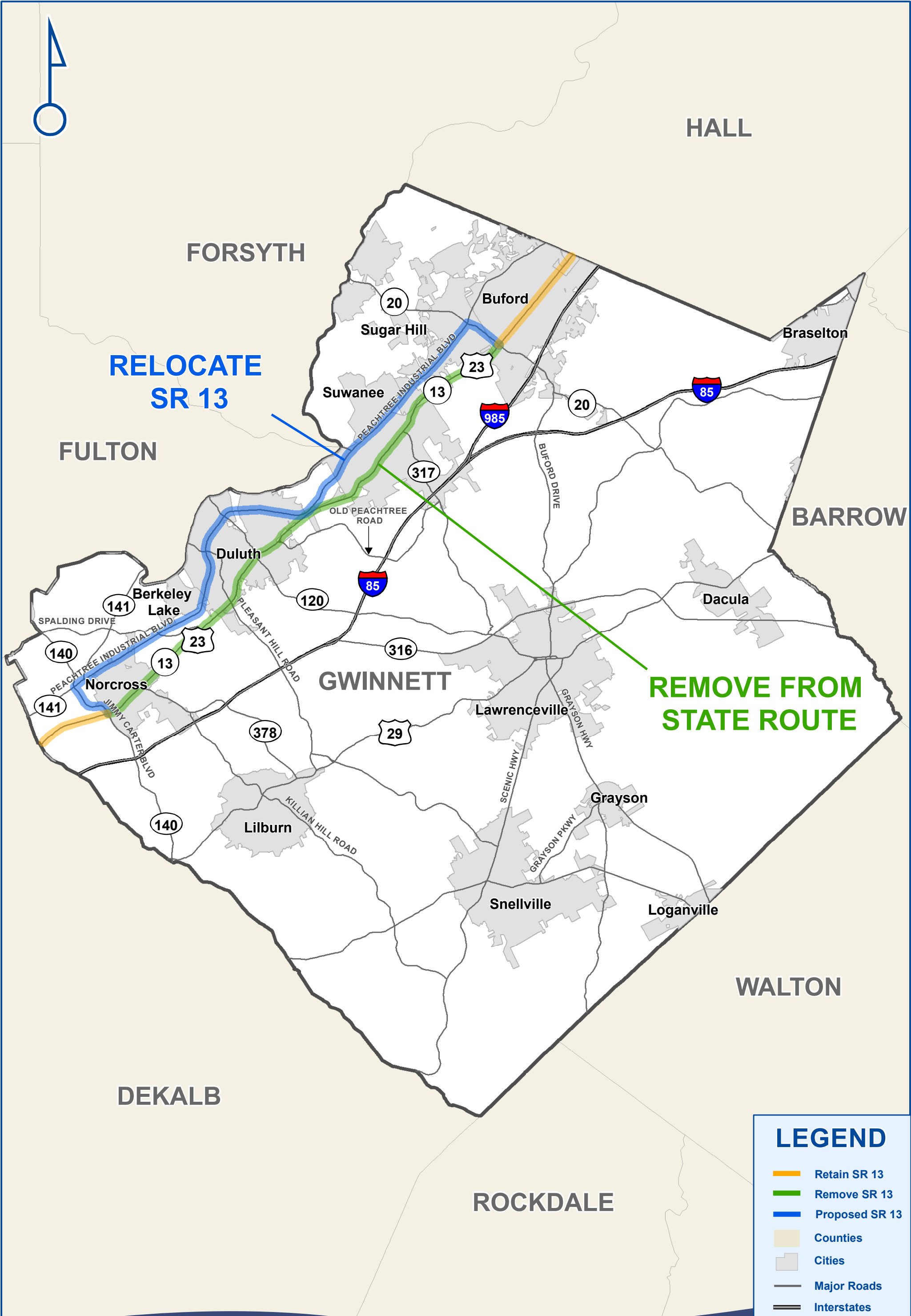
**RELOCATE
SR 13**

**REMOVE FROM
STATE ROUTE**

LEGEND

- Retain SR 13
- Remove SR 13
- Proposed SR 13
- Counties
- Cities
- Major Roads
- Interstates

SR 13 ROUTE REVISION - ALTERNATIVE 2



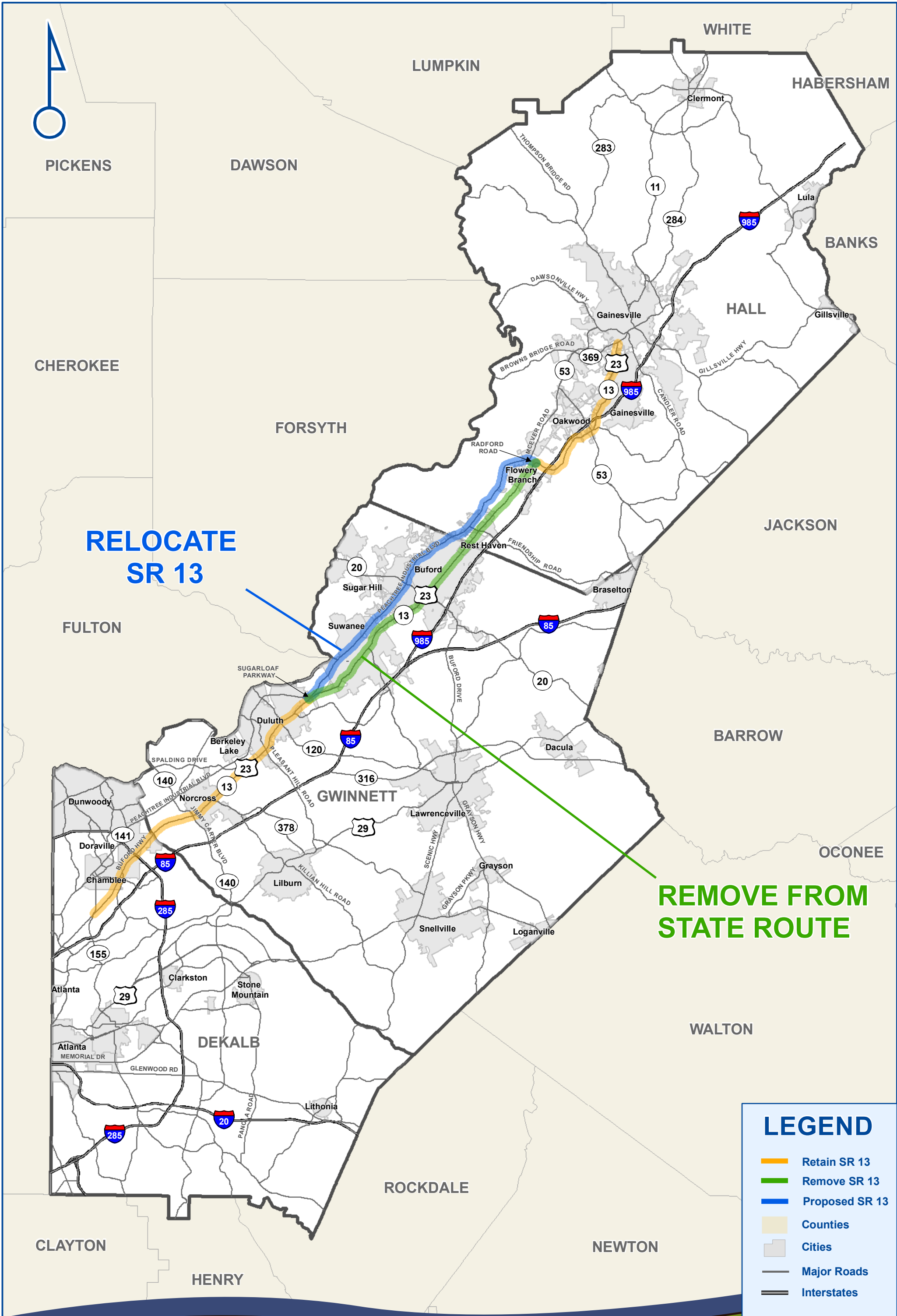
**RELOCATE
SR 13**

**REMOVE FROM
STATE ROUTE**

LEGEND

- Retain SR 13
- Remove SR 13
- Proposed SR 13
- Counties
- Cities
- Major Roads
- Interstates

SR 13 ROUTE REVISION - ALTERNATIVE 3



**RELOCATE
SR 13**

**REMOVE FROM
STATE ROUTE**

LEGEND

- Retain SR 13
- Remove SR 13
- Proposed SR 13
- Counties
- Cities
- Major Roads
- Interstates



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Table 3: State Route Revision Alternatives

State Route Revision	County	SR 13 Miles Removed from Buford Highway		SR 13 Miles Added to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and McEver Road (Hall)	
		Centerline Miles	Lane Miles	Centerline Miles	Lane Miles
Alternative 1	DeKalb	5.1	29.4	**	**
	Gwinnett	22.9	70.2	21.1	84.4
	Hall	14.3	28.6	10	22.4
Alternative 2	Gwinnett	16.9	47.2	17.5	70
Alternative 3	Gwinnett	11.6	30.2	11.3	45.2
	Hall	5.5	11	6.5	26

Note: All distances are approximate.

** Within DeKalb County, Peachtree Industrial Boulevard is already State Route 141 so no miles would be added to the state route system. The SR 13 designation would be changed to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, which would become SR 13/141.

Another consideration for the state route revision is what is planned for the facilities in question. A review of GDOT's Transportation Explorer (T-Rex) on-line project system indicates the following unlet projects are currently identified within the Construction Work Program (CWP) or Long Range Program (see Table 4).

Table 4: Planned Projects on Buford Highway, Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, and McEver Road

Facility	Project Description	County	Project ID No.	Length	Status
Buford Highway/US 23/SR 13	Miscellaneous and streetscape improvements from Lenox Road to Shallowford Terrace	DeKalb, Fulton	0008802, 0008803, 731770	5	CWP
	Miscellaneous improvements from Afton Lane to Shallowford Terrace, Phase II	DeKalb	0009400	2.73	Long Range
	Widen Buford Highway from Sugarloaf Parkway to SR 20	Gwinnett	0002393	8.03	Long Range
	Landscape/Beautify from CR 901/ North Berkeley Lake Road to SR 120	Gwinnett	0009070	2.15	CWP
	Bicycle/Pedestrian facility from CR 655/Amwiler Road to Jimmy Carter Boulevard	Gwinnett	0009075	1.78	CWP
	Widen Buford Highway from Old Peachtree Road to Sugarloaf Parkway	Gwinnett	132360	2.4	Long Range
	Widen Buford Highway from CS	Gwinnett,	132950	1.59	CWP



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Facility	Project Description	County	Project ID No.	Length	Status
	1120/Sawnee Avenue to SR 347	Hall			
	Widen Atlanta Highway from CR 528/Radford Road to South of SR 53	Hall	0001822	3.88	Long Range
	Traffic signal upgrades on SR 11, SR 13, SR 53, and SR 60	Hall	0007353	--	CWP
McEver Road	Widen McEver Road from CR 537/Jim Crow Road to SR 53/Mundy Mill	Hall	122030	4.32	Long Range
	Widen McEver Road/CR 1293 from SR 347 to CR 537/Jim Crow Road	Hall	0001821	4.85	Long Range
	Intersection Improvement at CR 487, CR 1285, CR 357, CR 1287, CR 1294	Hall	0007389	2	Long Range

Source: GDOT T-Rex, accessed February 2, 2010

As federal route US 23, the city could also request that the U.S. highway designation be moved with the state route designation. The process for moving a federal route requires a petition to GDOT, which then petitions for a review of the revision from the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Executive Route Numbering Committee. The AASHTO Executive Route Numbering Committee meets and reviews proposed U.S. Route System adjustments twice a year during its spring and fall committee meetings.

4.4 Implementation

The Implementation Plan was developed to identify resources and actions necessary to implement recommended projects. The Action Plan in Table 5 includes estimated planning-level project costs, responsible parties, and recommended time periods. It should be noted that the project costs are in current 2010 dollars. The cost estimates for Buford Highway considered the unit costs based on GDOT's mean item averages as well as professional opinion of probable cost. Right-of-way costs are not included. Project cost estimates for the traffic operations improvements are based on the ARC costing tool.



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Table 5: Action Plan

Action	Responsible Parties	Estimated Cost* (if applicable)	Implementation Period		
			Short Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term
Submit Buford Highway Concept for ARC pre-qualification	City of Suwanee ARC	N/A	◆		
Complete ARC Scoping Report for Buford Highway Project	City of Suwanee ARC	\$10,000	◆		
Modify HAWK Signal	City of Suwanee GDOT	TBD	◆		
Modify Suwanee Dam Road intersection with Main Street/Brogdon Road	City of Suwanee Gwinnett County	N/A	◆	◆	
Initiate Speed Reduction Petition	City of Suwanee Gwinnett County GDOT	N/A	◆		
Initiate SR 13/US 23 Revision, if needed	City of Suwanee Gwinnett County GDOT	N/A		◆	
Develop and Construct Context-Sensitive Design for Buford Highway	City of Suwanee GDOT	\$5,155,000		◆	◆
Implement operational improvement for Buford Highway at McGinnis Ferry Road	City of Suwanee Gwinnett County GDOT	\$465,000			◆
Implement operational improvement for Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and Suwanee Avenue	City of Suwanee GDOT	\$466,000			◆
Implement operational improvement for Satellite Boulevard and Martin Farm Road	City of Suwanee Gwinnett County	\$250,000			◆
Implement operational improvement for Russell Street and Buford Highway	City of Suwanee GDOT	\$492,000			◆
Construct new access to George Pierce Park from Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road	City of Suwanee Gwinnett County GDOT	\$610,700			◆

**Note: Cost estimates reflect planning-level data and will require refinement during engineering design.*