

Chamblee Dunwoody Road Infrastructure Improvements

Questions and Responses

Received from Comments from the Public Information Open House - June 5, 2014

1) What is the scope of the construction?

DeKalb County is embarking on an aggressive rehabilitation program to address the aging water pipelines within Dunwoody and throughout the county. Chamblee Dunwoody from Cambridge Drive to Womack Road in one of these segments to be constructed in Dunwoody. The replacement of the water main will permit the city to proceed with resurfacing Chamblee Dunwoody Road. These efforts by the county also present the city with an opportunity to widen the road to accommodate bicyclists and to construct sidewalks on the east side Chamblee Dunwoody Road. In an effort to streamline the sequencing of these improvements, the City of Dunwoody will be managing the construction of each of these three major tasks. This project is anticipated to be awarded to a contractor by summer 2015.

In summary, the city will manage these three major tasks

- 16" Water Main Replacement (Funded by DeKalb County)
- Roadway Widening Sidewalk Construction (Funded by the City of Dunwoody)
- Repaving Chamblee Dunwoody Road (Funded by the City of Dunwoody)

2) Why isn't the intersection at Chamblee Dunwoody at Womack being further improved as part of this project to add a left turn lane from Womack to Chamblee Dunwoody?

This project will improve the distance at this intersection to a degree that will allow the 'no right turn on red' restriction. The city has also investigated the possibility of additional improvements at this intersection by adding a short left turn lane on Womack Road. Unfortunately, even the most minimal solution would require right of way acquisition from the AT&T property, which is prohibitive from a scheduling aspect. Improvements to this intersection will likely be added to the next version of the city's Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

3) Why are bicycle lanes being added along Chamblee Dunwoody when there does not appear to be a sufficient user base?

When adequate facilities do not already exist, the existing user base is not an accurate indication of the number of potential users of such a facility. As identified in the city's Comprehensive Transportation Plan, pedestrian facilities, including bicycle lanes and sidewalks are to be installed where they are warranted to allow access for all modes of transportation. Chamblee Dunwoody Road is identified as a bike facility to provide for at least one north-south route through the city.

Beyond the benefits to improve the health, quality of life, and home values for communities where such facilities are installed, there are additional, non-bicycle related benefits to adding bike lanes. To minimize the overall width of pavement, vehicular travel lanes are slightly narrowed, which has been shown to reduce travel speeds. Furthermore, widening the roadway, roadside obstructions are

distanced farther from the travel lane, improving the sight distance for vehicles traveling around curves as well as for stopped vehicles at intersections and driveways, which also improves roadway safety. Also, the additional roadway width allows for greater maneuverability by first respondent vehicles (ambulances, fire trucks, etc.) around stopped traffic, which allows a decreased response time. In these ways, widening the roadway to include bike lanes, improves enhances the safety along the roadway.

4) Why are the sidewalks being implemented before adding sidewalks along roadways that don't have sidewalks on either side?

The city has published its [Sidewalk Improvement Policy](#) that outlines the basis on which sidewalk improvement projects are implemented. Sidewalk projects are scored based on the perceived need, traffic volumes, presence of existing sidewalks, location along a school route, ease of construction, etc. The result of the scoring produces a [list of projects](#) that are essentially ranked in order of priority.

For major roadways such as Chamblee Dunwoody Road and Mount Vernon Road, the high traffic volumes, warrant sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. Pedestrians must cross these roads to access the existing sidewalks. Pedestrian crossings would not address the access needs of homes located on the non-sidewalk side along the corridors, since those residents would have to walk along the grassed shoulders of the roadway to access these crossings.

There are additional factors that must also be considered before a project is implemented such as whether or not other (nonrelated) projects, such as a planned intersection improvement, would impact the funding, schedule, or overall layout of the sidewalk project. As a result, sidewalk projects are not always implemented in the order based only on scoring. In the case of this section of Chamblee Dunwoody Road, it is being implemented now based on both its high score as well as due to other planned projects. In particular, the opportunity exists to implement this project in parallel with DeKalb County's water line replacement project so that interruptions to this corridor are not duplicated if these projects were implemented independently. These sidewalks will also provide connectivity to the future construction improvements in the Georgetown and Dunwoody Village character areas.

5) Why not just add more crosswalks instead of adding sidewalks on both sides of the roadway?

The unfortunate reality is that pedestrians are at risk whenever they cross the roadway. The degree of risk depends on the complexity of the vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns and the effectiveness of enhancements provided. The risk increases along stretches of roadway where pedestrian crossings are not expected and where vehicles are moving at the posted travel speed, where the motorists are oftentimes focused on other motorists and not scanning for pedestrians. Mid-block crossings tend to provide a false sense of security for the pedestrian, potentially putting them in harm's way if they are not assertive about their own safety. The pedestrian must wait for drivers in both directions to acknowledge them and stop or they must wait for an adequate gap in the traffic. For a road with traffic volume as high as Mount Vernon, the gaps in traffic are shorter and less frequent making it more difficult for the pedestrian to cross. Therefore, the pedestrian safety on high-traffic roadways is

increased when unnecessary pedestrian crossings are eliminated by providing sidewalks on both sides of the road that offer access to crosswalks at stop conditions such as stop signs and traffic lights.

6) Why doesn't the city fix its existing sidewalk before adding new ones?

The city has an annual budget for maintenance projects to cover repairs to its existing roadway and sidewalk infrastructure. In order to perform such repairs, they must first be identified. With a small staff of public works employees, the city must rely heavily on residents and other users of these facilities to report them to us. There are several mechanisms to report issues. To learn more about the ways to report them, please visit the city's website:
http://dunwoodyga.gov/index.php?section=departments_public_works_report_a_problem

7) With the widening of the road for bike lanes, how much will the road be widened and will land be used on both sides or just on the side where the new sidewalks are going in?

The location of the existing sidewalks on the west side of Chamblee Dunwoody will not be affected. Chamblee Dunwoody will be widened approximately 8' towards the east to accommodate 4' bike lanes. New curb and gutter will be added to the east, a 2' grass strip, and a 5' sidewalk. All of the improvements will be done on existing City property (right of way).

8) With these changes, has the city considered needed road changes at the Vermack/Chamblee Dunwoody Rd intersection which should be done in conjunction with the widening and sidewalks?

This project will add sidewalks and bike lanes on Chamblee Dunwoody from Cambridge to Womack Road. However, we have projects underway at different plan phases that will improve the entire Chamblee Dunwoody corridor from Cotillion to Womack and into the Dunwoody Village area. The projects south of Cambridge are a greater scale much more complex and will take longer to implement since they will likely require the City to move utilities and purchase property from residents in some locations. Concepts are being developed for [the Georgetown Gateway \(Cotillion Drive to Peeler Road\)](#) and to the Operational Improvement Project (Peeler Road to Vermack Road). Also, we will add appropriate turn lanes at all of the intersections. Once these projects are complete there will be continuous pedestrian and bicycle facilities from Cotillion Drive to Womack Road.

9) Will the city consider widening the proposed sidewalk from 5' to 10'?

The increased width is prohibitive due to the need for the city to acquire additional right of way to construct them and creates greater impacts to adjacent property owners. Using a 5' wide sidewalk allows the city is able to construct the project without requesting residents to sell a portion of their front yards. This is a standard width for a sidewalk, that allows two adults to walk comfortably side-by-side and two wheelchair users to pass one another.

10) How will traffic be routed during construction?

All efforts will be made to stage the construction in a manner that minimizes impacts to traffic. With the exception of temporary lane closures, manned by traffic control flagging crewmembers, two lanes of travel will be maintained throughout the construction process. In general, construction times will

<p>be limited to the hours of 7:30am- 8:30pm, Monday through Friday. Lane closures will not be permissible during the hours of 7:00am-9:00am and 4:00pm-7:00pm.</p>
<p>11) Will this project impact the maple tree at 5249 Chamblee Dunwoody Road?</p>
<p>The maple tree will remain in place post-construction. The contractor will be instructed to remove lower limbs of the trees to a height of 7' to allow for pedestrians to walk beneath it and will instructed to otherwise minimize any impacts to the tree.</p> <p>This project will be constructed within the city's right of way. However, the city respects that this area is typically cared for by the property owner and is dedicated to maintaining the context of the existing corridor as a residential street. Therefore, the design consultant has been instructed to minimize impacts to existing trees and vegetative features as allowable. In some cases, there is no way to avoid these features. However, opportunities have been identified along this section of Chamblee Dunwoody Road to accomplish this objective. These opportunities include, modifying the proposed back slopes and meandering the sidewalk behind existing trees and following the existing terrain.</p>
<p>12) Will the city consider adding speed detection signs along this section of Chamblee Dunwoody?</p>
<p>If speed detection signs are installed throughout the city, they would likely not show a reduction in overall traffic speeds. With an increased frequency, drivers have a tendency to allow them to not be as significant and as a result are more likely to be ignored.</p>
<p>13) When will the paving at the intersection of Chamblee Dunwoody Road with Mount Vernon Road be improved?</p>
<p>The paving of these roads, including their intersection, has been delayed to allow DeKalb's water main replacement project to be implemented. Otherwise, it would have been inevitable that the county would have had to cut up the newly resurfaced roadways to later replace the water main.</p>
<p>14) What is the city doing to reduce the amount of traffic and delays through Dunwoody?</p>
<p>The city has a Comprehensive Transportation Plan to guide the investment in transportation infrastructure. The plan includes a number of intersection improvement projects to reduce delays on major corridors. The city is also investing heavily in traffic signal coordination and communication technology. Providing alternative transportation options, such as this one, also helps reduce the traffic volumes. Finally the city supports options for regional improvements such as the SR 400 and I-285 Interchange Project to relieve congestion on the interstates which will in turn benefit Dunwoody roadways.</p>
<p>15) Why aren't formal presentations given at these public meetings followed by the opportunity for public Q&A?</p>
<p>The city provides the open house format in order to extend the hours and not require attendees to be</p>

present at a given time. This increased window allows more residents and stakeholders the opportunity to see the concepts of proposed projects and provides face-to-face interaction with city representatives and staff members. Oftentimes in public question and answer forums, attendees are reluctant to ask their questions before a room full of people.

This document provides a summary of all comments that were received from the public information open house held for this project. This document further summarizes and answers all of the questions that were asked within those comment cards.

Updated October 8, 2014