

Georgetown LCI Corridor Project

Comments Received from the Public Information Open House – December 11, 2014

Multiple respondents showed support for enhancing the aesthetics of the corridor. One respondent expressed a preference for burying overhead utilities between Cotillion Dr and Old Spring House Ln.

Providing aesthetic enhancements is a project goal, and this includes burying some utilities within the project limits where feasible.

Several respondents expressed general support for improving the walkability of the Georgetown area. Some also expressed a desire to see enhanced pedestrian crossings added along the corridor (e.g. rapid-flashing beacons, HAWK signals). One respondent stated a desire to see future trail connections also linking the area to Perimeter Center, Murphy Candler Park, and other local destinations. Another respondent expressed concern about the bicycle and pedestrian facilities from the Georgetown LCI coming to an end at the intersection of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd and Peeler Rd.

A primary goal of this project (directly from the Georgetown Area Master Plan) is to greatly enhance pedestrian and bicycle mobility and safety within the project corridor. Enhanced pedestrian crossings will be added where appropriate within the corridor. The project team will approach the design decisions on this project in light of the existing, proposed, and potential connections that are planned or programmed elsewhere by the City.

Several other respondents had reservations about the project's goals because they believed that not enough people would want to walk/bike on this corridor.

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 described in the city's Comprehensive Transportation Plan, pedestrian and bicycle facilities are to be installed where prescribed and/or warranted to allow access for all modes of transportation. Chamblee Dunwoody Road is identified in the plan as a bike facility corridor, meaning that bicycle lanes or paths are to be installed along it to provide for a north-south connection through the city.

The goals for this project have been largely derived from the community-affirmed and City-adopted Georgetown Area Master Plan.

Some respondents expressed concern that reducing the number of travel lanes on Chamblee Dunwoody Rd (as in Option A) would have a negative effect on congestion during peak travel times. Others said they would like to see traffic flow improvements included as part of the project, including increasing right turn capacity onto I-285 WB from Chamblee Dunwoody

SB.

For the traffic operations portion of this multimodal project, delay and congestion were evaluated to determine the impacts of travel lane modifications. A reduction of travel lanes could have negative effect on congestion, so where a reduction was shown, other modifications were also shown such as added left or right turn lanes or bicycle or pedestrian improvements, specifically near the intersection of Chamblee Dunwoody Road at the Interstate 285 westbound ramp.

Some respondents stated preferences in favor of access management and/or lane re-allocation. These preferences included

- **Consolidating driveways along the corridor**
- **Converting the southernmost entrance to Georgetown Shopping Center (next to the I-285 WB on ramp) to a right-in-right-out driveway**
- **Reducing the number of motor vehicle lanes between I-285 and Old Spring House Ln**

Consolidating driveways and reducing the amount of left turns from the side streets along the corridor, specifically in the commercial area, should have a positive effect on safety and traffic operations for the corridor. The design team will work with appropriate stakeholders to see what opportunities may exist for consolidating driveways between Cotillion Dr and Old Spring House Ln and/or converting some to right-in-right-out configuration.

Several respondents stated preferences and concerns related to bicycle facility types. These included:

- **Preference for separation between bicycle and motor vehicle traffic**
- **Preference for on-road bicycle facilities (e.g. bike lanes, cycle tracks)**
- **Concern about mixing cyclists and pedestrians on the same path**

One of the challenges in selecting the best bicycle facility for a given setting is deciding on the appropriate design user.

High speed bicyclists, such as many of the commuter bicyclists who would be riding the Chamblee Dunwoody Rd corridor, are generally best served operating in the road in the same direction as traffic (as in a buffered bike lane – see Option A). The buffered bike lane option is operationally equivalent to the idea of a one-way cycle track. The buffered bike lane option presented in the public open house implements that concept in a way that is compliant with Georgia law and drivers' expectations and is easily maintained by Dunwoody Public Works.

Physically separating bicycle traffic from motor vehicle traffic certainly holds promise to accommodate a much wider cohort of people choosing to bicycle. However, separation – whether via a multi-use path or cycle track – also comes with a host of operational challenges that are well documented in our nation's leading design guidance.

Two-way cycle tracks, while they offer many benefits at mid-block locations, are nevertheless

problematic to implement in this corridor. First, introducing a two-way facility for vehicles – the bicycle is a vehicle according to GA law – into an environment with a significant number of high-traffic driveways, sets up multiple locations for motor vehicle operators to be unclear as to their obligation to yield to through traffic (bicyclists), not to mention them not being able to make a turn according to GA law. Secondly, exiting motorists from the commercial driveways may not detect cyclists on the cycle track approaching from the motorists' right (opposite normal traffic flow), and crash incidence could be significant without placing controls to slow down bicycle and/or motor vehicle traffic. Additionally, at signalized intersections, the bicycle traffic in the counter-flow direction must be specially controlled to avoid conflicts with motor vehicle traffic. The right-of-way (actually the obligation to yield) for bicyclists on a cycle track can be allocated through special signal timing – but this takes green time away from the through (motor vehicle) traffic – something that most residents would not support.

The alternatives outlined at the public information meeting offer improvements to bicycling along the corridor without compromising any of the safety-related aspects relating to separated bicycle facilities adjacent to roadways.

Concerning the segment between Cotillion Dr and Old Spring House Ln, two respondents stated a preference for placing a multi-use trail on the west side of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd between Cotillion Dr and Old Spring House Ln (with a sidewalk on the east side as depicted in Option C).

One respondent stated a preference for instead placing a multi-use trail on the east side of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd (with a sidewalk on the west side) in order to reduce road crossings between the proposed multi-use trail on Cotillion Drive – which joins the corridor on the east side of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd – and the trail connection at Georgetown Park (also on the east side).

One respondent expressed only seeing a need for a multi-use trail between Georgetown Park and Old Spring House Ln.

One major goal of the project is providing bicycle and pedestrian connectivity along the entire segment of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd between Cotillion Dr and Peeler Rd. Therefore, the proposed facilities span the entire corridor.

The main reason for placing a multi-use trail on the west side of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd (as depicted in Option C) as opposed to the east side through the commercial district is the significant reduction in driveway crossings along this side of the street. Fewer driveway crossings mean fewer opportunities for hazardous interactions between drivers and trail users.

While it is true that placing a multi-use trail on the east side instead would require fewer crossings of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd to travel between Cotillion Dr and Georgetown Park, a road crossing will be necessary at some point to accommodate a future trail connection to the Perimeter Center area. Traveling on the trail between Perimeter Center and Georgetown Park and/or Cotillion Dr, it will be necessary to cross Chamblee Dunwoody Rd anyway. For this reason, it made sense to depict

“Option C” with a trail on the *west* side where there are fewer driveway crossings.

Some respondents expressed specific thoughts or concerns about traffic controls. One expressed hesitation about shortening left turn lanes. This comment may have been directed to the proposed replacement of the “trap” left turn lane from Chamblee Dunwoody Rd NB onto Old Spring House Ln WB by a left turn bay developed from the center turn lane.

Another respondent expressed the desire to have a traffic signal installed at the intersection of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd and Chateau Dr. Another was concerned that pedestrian refuge islands between Old Spring House Ln and Peeler Rd could make it more difficult to make left turns onto Chamblee Dunwoody Rd from side streets.

The shortening of left turn lanes is not a modification that is proposed in the alternatives developed.

Pedestrian refuge islands will be planned to have as little effect as possible on the ability of vehicles turning left or right from side streets onto Chamblee Dunwoody Road

Two respondents expressed a desire to see the curve on Chamblee Dunwoody Rd between Old Spring House Ln and Peeler Rd re-aligned to encroach more on Georgetown Park and lessen the impact on properties across the street.

This project intends to perform symmetrical widening along the corridor to minimize cost and prevent disproportionate impacts to properties on one side of the road versus the other. While realigning the curve inward may reduce impacts to some properties on the west side of Chamblee Dunwoody Rd, it would require significant property acquisition from Georgetown Park and the Jewish Family and Career Services center.

Updated March 19, 2015