

Chamblee Dunwoody Road and Cotillion Drive Livability and Operations Improvements

Questions and Responses

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

1) Are there going to be any meetings about improving N Shallowford Rd?	There are currently no projects planned for N Shallowford that would warrant public involvement meetings. Any comments or ideas for future improvements may be sent to t City of Dunwoody Department of Public Works (publicworks@dunwoodyga.gov).
2) Has anyone looked at making this section of Chamblee Dunwoody & also N. Shallowford one way? Chamblee Dunwoody north from Cotillion to N. Shallowford intersection and the other one south.	A one-way conversion of these streets was discussed, but was not included in the alternatives analysis due to the significant effects upon side street traffic, mobility, increased trips, and modifications needed to driveways. Of concern would be a complication of having one-way vehicle flow and two-way pedestrian and bicycle flow alongside each other.
3) Would like more information about B & C choices, i.e. necessary property needs, right C-D & Peeler.	Conceptual drawings were on display at the public meeting and are available on the City of Dunwoody website. As the project develops, detailed engineering drawings will be provided to all impacted properties prior to right-of-way acquisition.
4) Please contact and hold a meeting with the homeowners along Chamblee Dunwoody Rd so we can all weigh in and discuss the proposed alternatives. We have been in our home for 45 years and if this is really for the community, value our point of view and consider our quality of life and privacy.	The city is available to answer questions from individuals or groups. Please contact Public Works at 678-382-6850.
5) Why is it a given that there will be bicyclists on Chamblee-Dunwoody Road? It is a waste of taxpayer money to accommodate the very few people in Dunwoody who ride bikes. I am opposed to widening roads, or carving space on existing roads, for the sake of a few people.	

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, bicycle lanes or paths are to be installed along key corridors to allow access for all modes of transportation. Chamblee Dunwoody Road is identified in the plan as a bike facility corridor to provide for a north-south connection through the city.

In addition, the community and the City (via the affirmed and adopted Georgetown Area Master Plan) directed this project to develop better accommodation for people desiring to walk and bicycle within the corridor.

Email

Date Received: Friday, December 12, 2014 4:18:42 PM

Comments: To Whom It May Concern,

I'd like to make a suggestion regarding the Georgetown Gateway project. First, I don't think that the removal of lanes in the area is going to help. It's a heavy traffic area, and necking down the amount of cars that can get through will only cause headaches and smog. I think the main priority of the project should be to ease congestion, with bike and walking paths fitting in along with automobile traffic improvements.

That said, I think one small change could really help flow in the area. Southbound traffic on Chamblee-Dunwoody turning right to access I-285 West should have a dedicated lane after the turn. Think diverging diamond. Currently, there is only one lane that flows straight from Cotillion onto 285. If traffic headed south on Chamblee-Dunwoody did not have to stop to get onto the highway, it could ease congestion during the morning commute. Take a look at the attached photo.

I think making better use of traffic light timing sensors could help too. When cars are sitting at red lights and there is no cross traffic, the light should turn green. This simple concept can keep cars moving instead of idling.

Just my two cents.

**Sincerely,
Dunwoody citizen,
Adam Caplan**

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 a 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. One of the alternatives showed a dedicated right turn lane on southbound Chamblee Dunwoody Road to turn westbound onto I-285. Improvements to the I-285 ramp itself are not within the scope of this project due to the ramps being limited access control by Georgia DOT.

Email

Date Received: Monday, December 15, 2014 8:34:15 PM

Comments: I listened to several URS people at the 12/11/14 Public meeting and offer the following feedback.

Is there a master end to end traffic flow plan of which the intersection improvements are a part, or is each improvement being considered stand alone in response to some pain stimulus? If there is no end to end plan, I would generally be a proponent of doing only minimally expensive tactical projects to address specific problems for which the expected results can be well stated and measured. From this meeting, I'm not sure if you are more concerned about getting traffic through this point quicker (with what specific benefits), or if safety, and possibly less throughput, is the major objective. Are you considering lowering the speed limits on any of these streets? Given the slower speeds of bikes and pedestrians, that seems a reasonable consideration. I can also relate to the objective to make the area more attractive, but would really like to see more private partnership interest in helping to fund that. Maybe John Wieland and other businesses would want to kick in a few bucks here for improvements that attract people to them. The pretty part will be closer, and likely more financially lucrative, to them than homeowners.

For the ChamDwdy/Peelr/Shlfd intersection, given that 2 lane roads come into and out of it, and that left and right turn lanes already exist, just putting in smarter traffic lights seems like the best bang for the buck. More lanes through the intersection don't appear to significantly improve overall traffic flow, especially if there are lengthy queues as this traffic approaches the next bottleneck. Sounds like the old Army saying, "hurry up and wait." Highly intelligent lights might reduce accidents (countdown crosswalk timers also let drivers know when the light is likely to change) and can insure equitable wait times (for dynamic traffic arrivals) while generally biasing backed up lanes. A SINGLE lane traffic circle could be done instead of smart lights, if its ongoing maintenance reduction has a reasonable breakeven point with construction costs. Double lane traffic circles pose way too much safety risk for the limited throughput reward, as I heard it explained, for the particular traffic patterns present here. Can you publish your intended signal algorithms for traffic shaping and the maximum wait times that users will see (and the scenarios they will see them in)? Educate the community in advance (ie, start now) about what to expect in the lighted scenario.

For the I-285 to Wieland's jungle jim section of Chamblee Dwdy, I sense planners are trying to cram too much into the existing space. If bike and pedestrian traffic is to be encouraged, then you need to remove at least a road lane (possibly in each direction??) to accommodate it. Please fight the temptation to reduce lane width. Narrow lanes cause driver anxiety, and require low sturdy curbs so vehicles larger than a prius can turn (right) over them attempting to stay in their lanes. The further away the bike/pedestrian (B/P) paths can be from the cars, the better in my book for everyone's safety and efficient movement. The fewer the times that b/p paths cross car lanes the better. I assume you have considered and ruled out creative routings that puts these new paths along the sides and backs of property (especially commercial) instead of adjacent and parallel to the main streets? Therefore, I would prefer C-D Road be no more than a single lane in each direction plus a continuous center left turn lane for the entire length that paths are beside it. There are many curb cut driveways in this area that make any further number of lanes more accident prone than efficient,

especially given increased b/p traffic nearby. A lot of signs warning drivers of bikes and peds add clutter to a visually busy environment; better you design crossings (touch points) that make the b/p's more obvious when they are present and otherwise don't compete for drivers' attention. And, make sure the beautifying berms, shrubs, and trees don't obscure any driver's (or b/p's) vision of the whole scene. This area is a destination for many locals, and their driving/biking/walking attentions may be competing with their thoughts of anticipated destination activities.

For Cotillion, my first question is where do you expect the bike/ped traffic to go at Shallowford? Is there a plan for continued frontage road paths to N Peachtree, or elsewhere? What are the expected numbers of users of such a path if built? What are the counts now, and expected counts for the next 5 years? Is there going to be some kind of regional transportation hub along here, or did I mishear that was being considered? If so, what is to be built, and where, and when? Try to do something path/sidewalk-wise that either a) doesn't have to be torn out, or b) is cheap enough to throw away and handles a current great need in the interim. To the extent you are leaning toward option a), I'd say make the path wide and put both peds and bikes on it. Also, be thinking about publishing "rules of the paths" to begin the lengthy public education process of co-existence (include skateboards, scooters, motorized wheelchairs, golf carts, etc) and standards that can apply to future projects (ie, maximum number of curb cuts per unit distance, private property crossings). Is there any merit to putting the path, or part of it, on the Expressway side of the road to beautify the bent rusty chain link kudzu fence and possibly reduce ongoing cleanup/maintenance expense there (or get state/fed aid)? I can definitely see where that would be questioned by people in the apartments by McDonalds since there is no destination of consequence on the other side of 285, so maybe serving them by a stub path on their north property line could work. For that matter, can a path go behind Ga Power, et al, effectively obviating the need for a Cotillion path and maybe serving more users, including Peachford Road apartments? That could also make Savoy more viable for pathing to get people into Georgetown from that side of 285 and vice versa (with collaboration dollars from Chamblee).

What are the ongoing maintenance expenses (\$ and headcount) projected to be for the 3 projects? Trash barrels, benches, pressure washing, painting, plantings, watering, mowing, lighting, graffiti removal... Is advertising to be prohibited in these (path) areas? What signage is proposed? Is security and crime on paths on someone's are-we-vulnerable list to address?

Side comment. Somebody already made the entrance to the Kroger shopping center (at the light) uncomfortably narrow. It is now more inefficient than when it was wider and just 2 lanes. It is also very tight for turning into and out of the parking stall rows. I'd recommend taking out the column of parking stalls closest to the buildings at the next make over. Also, the traffic light could be made more intelligent so people don't sit needlessly at low flow times. Most people are left turners out of the shopping center, as the right turners are learning to go out by the Korean taco place. The occasional person who goes straight across must be considered as well as making it more obvious that Subway exiters might be coming straight into the shopping center. What are the traffic signal coordination capabilities that are being planned for all the lights from I-285 to Peeler on C-D Rd?

Replies addressing your current thinking on these projects and specifically the items cited above would be welcomed. It takes us a bit of time to digest what you've presented and think up follow on

questions, too. And, I don't mind being told an idea is stupid when it is, or has already been beat to death and just unworkable. There is a tendency in public meetings such as this for a one time, one way collection of input without meaningful iterative feedback to the stakeholder residents soliciting their continued input and buy in. (This is over and above being put on the dunwoodyga.gov weekly email list.)

Thank you for your efforts hosting and preparing for the public meeting. It was NON-trivial and very useful in establishing base levels of understanding (for me). The room was well laid out with sufficient space, and, at least while I was there, good access to people who could explain and answer many questions. And, pretty good directional signs to it, too, at least before dark. Possibly some reduced size (11x17) take away renditions would be good at the next iteration meeting???

The city's Comprehensive Transportation Plan recommends improvements to this area as well as other areas of the City. The focus of the Chamblee Dunwoody Road Multimodal project is that of providing enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Other goals of the project are to enhance the aesthetics of the Georgetown area and to provide a gateway character to the area. Without increasing the number of through lanes this project will also incorporate improved lane assignments to benefit traffic flow of the corridor.

The traffic volume during peak periods exceeds the capacity of the existing Chamblee Dunwoody/Peeler/N. Shallowford intersection and surrounding approaches. The city has programmed the timings as efficiently as the current layout allows. This signal is coordinated with the adjacent signal at Vermack as well as the signals to the south.

A single lane roundabout was tested in the analysis part of this project. According to the analysis and modeling, a single lane roundabout did not provide adequate capacity for current or future traffic volumes, so a two lane roundabout was tested and shown to provide the best overall operations compared to a signalized option with dual left turn lanes from NB Chamblee Dunwoody to NB Chamblee Dunwoody. Analysis shows that to obtain the operational results comparable to the roundabout option, dual right turn lanes would also be required for the SB Chamblee Dunwoody to SB Chamblee Dunwoody movement.

Several roadway cross-section options were evaluated. Lanes less than ten feet are not considered. Placing bike or pedestrian paths on the "backs" of properties and away from Chamblee Dunwoody Road would likely include significant property acquisition by the City to the level that a project would not be feasible. Such a placement would also require a major effort to restructure existing properties and access.

It is beyond the scope of this project to

Date Received: Friday, December 19, 2014 11:33 AM

Comments: Check out these Protected Bike Lanes & see if the consultants can incorporate these into another alternative to propose.

<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/blog/entry/americas-10-best-new-bike-lanes-of-2014> (Then have sidewalks for pedestrians)

Go to the following link for examples of buffers:

<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/blog/entry/14-ways-to-make-bike-lanes-better-t>
he-infographic

We really want to avoid mixing up bicyclists & pedestrians sharing the same facility. Chamb-Dwy is a major transportation corridor, so need to acknowledge that bicycle commuters will be using the same street segment.

Too many curb cuts to do a multi-use trail.

Bicyclists are safer traveling in the same direction as motor vehicles.

Laundry List of items:

On-Street one-way Cycle Track on each side of the road (in the direction of traffic). Cycle Tracks are "Protected" Bike Lanes with a physical barrier of protection in-between the Bike Lane and motor vehicle traffic. Physical barriers can be as elegant as a landscape buffer of low vegetation, or as simple as vertical plastic poles known as bollards. Bollards are in use on the 2-way Cycle Track on 10th Street in Midtown adjacent to Piedmont Park.

Follow NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide, the nationally-accepted design standards for Cycle Tracks and other bicycle facilities in high-density areas such as the Chamblee-Dunwoody Gateway area.

Dedicated wide pedestrian sidewalks, with vegetated buffer between the on-street bicycle lane.

Pull-over space for MARTA bus stops.

Reduction of Curb Cuts. Each driveway/entrance onto Chamblee-Dunwoody represents intersections. Intersections are where the most collisions occur.

Negotiate with property owners to consolidate & eliminate many curb cuts. In exchange for reducing curb cuts, offer property owners the value added of publicly-funded streetscapes and redesign of the entire "Gateway".

Install Pedestrian Crossing Islands, including mid-block as necessary.

Traffic Calming Measures, including raised pedestrian crossings.

Covered bus stops with benches, with NO paid advertising

Trash AND Recycling receptacles

Drought-tolerant native grasses and other unique flora (verses "monkey grass", sod and other "common" landscaping that was installed on the Village Parkway).

For info about Protected/Buffered Bike Lanes aka "Cycle Tracks", please go here:

<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/green-lane-project/pages/resources>

For info about the NACTO Design Guide, please go here:

<http://nacto.org/cities-for-cycling/design-guide/>

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 one-way cycle track idea outlined by the stakeholder. 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.

Strictly speaking, there is no technical basis to “avoid mixing” of bicyclists and pedestrians. There are thousands of shared-use facilities throughout the United States in similar settings as Chamblee Dunwoody Rd, and they operate just fine. There are not “too many curb cuts” for a multi-use trail – if there are, then there are also too many for a cycle track. Option A with buffered bikeways can best serve the high speed commuter bicyclists if that is what the community and City desires to optimize for this corridor.

The multi-use pathways in the options presented in the public open house have the chicanes and provisions to ensure bicyclists will be low speed, closer to walking speeds at driveways. This is totally in keeping with recommendations of AASHTO for this type of accommodation.

We are very aware of how driveways impact traffic operations for both motorists and bicyclists. We are seeking to consolidate commercial driveways where property owners are collaborating. We are very aware of the benefits that can be offered as incentives for cooperation.

The NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide is not a national design “standard”. While we use that document frequently as reference, we also rely on the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and other applicable guidance, including traffic and roadway design engineering judgment.

That being said, the consulting team members serving the City are very knowledgeable of, and experienced with protected and buffered bike lanes and cycle tracks and have some of the most in-depth experience in the United States with planning, designing, engineering and constructing them.

Additionally, we have recommended mid-block pedestrian crossings at appropriate locations. We also are cognizant of and will utilize appropriate traffic calming measures.

Updated March 19, 2015