

2.0 Concept Plans



Preferred Commercial Development Types

2.1 COMPASS RESULTS/SUMMARY

To help establish a future vision for the North Point Activity Center the Planning Team developed a visual preference and short-answer survey. The survey was published online and advertised through a series of e-mails and flyers. The online survey generated almost 500 interested visitors and 337 complete responses over a period of 15 days in November 2007. An extended version of the survey was also administered to a Core Team of city officials, business leaders, and community stakeholders on November 15, 2007. While there were modest differences between the responses of the general public via the online survey and the Core Team of city and community leaders, the survey results generally showed strong community preference toward:

- Multi-story, mixed-use, walkable environments as a model for future redevelopment in the North Point Activity Center,
- Incorporation of publicly accessible open space as part of any significant development / redevelopment project,
- Enhanced pedestrian connectivity, the ability to walk within and between existing developments, and enhanced connectivity to potential transit facilities,
- Enhancement and extension of bicycling opportunities within the Activity Center and a preference toward off-street bicycle facilities,
- A future transit stop in the North Point Activity Center to enhance connectivity and reduce traffic congestion.




Preferred Residential Development Types



Preferred Open Space Character



Preferred Street and Circulation Images



The 337 online survey respondents included an even distribution of males and females from the North Point and Alpharetta area. 19% of the respondents were under the age of 35, 47% were between the ages of 36 and 50, and 26% of respondents were over the age of 51. The survey included a fairly even distribution of newcomers and longtime residents/workers in the area. 13% of residents have been in the area 0-2 years, 14% between 3 and 5 years, 24% between 5 and 10 years, 30% between 10 and 20 years and 11% over 20 years. 8% of the respondents did not provide their age or tenure.

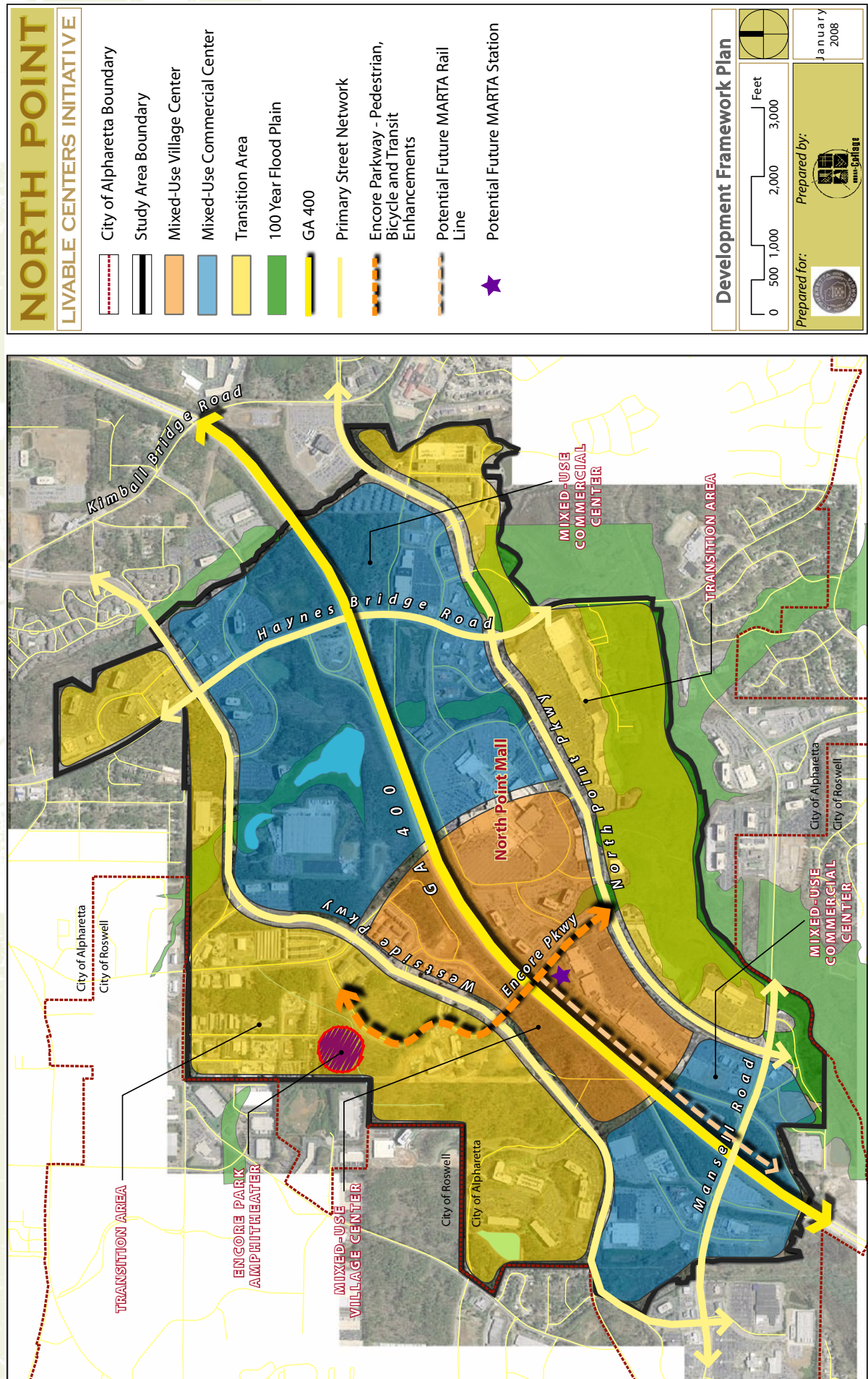
2.2 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

The LCI planning process resulted in a Development Framework Plan that outlines three mixed-use character areas, each with recommended development attributes based on appropriate building heights and character, transportation access and connectivity, and the ability to reinforce and create high-quality development with a strong sense of place in the North Point Activity Center. The Conceptual Land Use Framework Plan on the following page (Figure 2.1) displays the three recommended character areas.

These character areas are intended to act as a guide and general policy concerning desired development types and character in the North Point Activity Center. Rather than following traditional zoning frameworks that separate various uses, the character areas seek to encourage more integrated, walkable developments that create a unique, high-quality environment and sense of place. Further, the envisioned character areas result in and support the transportation strategies and framework that follow. They encourage developments that will provide the intensity of development necessary to support transit in the future while seeking to reduce strain and congestion on existing roadways by maximizing walkability and connectivity and minimizing the number of vehicular trips.

In each of the three character areas mixed-use development, particularly vertically mixed development with retail and/or professional office on the ground floor and residential and/or office development above, is recommended. Areas of concentrated mixed-use development can enhance walkability, reduce short distance and single occupancy vehicle trips and create a unique sense of place. As discussed in the market opportunities section of this document, a growing number of residents throughout the country and the Southeastern United States prefer this type of mixed-use, walkable, living environment. “Empty-nesters” and young professionals and

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Land Use Framework Plan



couples alike are looking for more diverse, low maintenance lifestyles afforded by integrated mixed-use centers. Additionally, each character area should include provisions to encourage publicly accessible open space that becomes a focal point within the district or community. These open spaces are often achieved by transferring the development that could have been supported by the property to other adjacent properties in return for preserving and/or providing open space that benefits the larger public.



Mixed-Use Village Center

The primary development recommendation is for the creation of a mid-rise, mixed-use village center within ½ mile of Encore Parkway between North Point Parkway and Westside Parkway. A Village Center in this location has the ability to:

- Create a unique sense of place within the North Point Activity Center,
- Reduce vehicle trips,
- Reconnect the east and west sides of Georgia 400,
- Provide a viable pedestrian network from the Activity Center's core commercial area to the Cousins Westside Development and Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park, and
- Support enhanced transit and/or alternative transportation opportunities.

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, the Village Center is built on the notion of creating a walkable, mixed-use environment. This is particularly important along Encore Parkway between North Point Parkway and Westside Parkway where enhancement of the pedestrian and built environment along the roadway has a change to reconnect the east and west sides of Georgia 400, entertainment venues, residents, offices and shopping destinations. New buildings should generally front existing external roadways (Encore Parkway, North Point Parkway and Westside Parkway) and create a grid of interior streets to foster connectivity and walkability. Significant buffers (4-6 feet in width) and sidewalk facilities (8-12 feet width) should accompany roadway improvements to provide a safe, comfortable walking and shopping environment throughout the district.

The Village Center is strategically positioned within 1/2 mile of Encore Parkway to promote a critical mass of employees and residents within an acceptable walking distance of landmark facilities and open spaces. The entire Village Center is located within the confines of North Point Parkway and Westside Parkway where pedestrian crossings are difficult except at controlled (signalized) intersections.



To create an environment that is comfortable, walkable, and appropriate for Alpharetta, and based on the general value/cost of property in the area, development within the Village Center should generally be 4-6 stories tall. Some higher intensity exceptions may be appropriate closer to Georgia 400 and along the edges of a major open space to help anchor the greenspace and take advantage of long views through the park. Major developments should be organized around public open spaces/green space that help preserve some of the area's natural environment, create a strong sense of place, and provide an opportunity for public gatherings.

The Village Center should be connected to the Big Creek Greenway through an extension of the greenway through the western buffer of Georgia 400 and new greenway connections across North Point Parkway. Connectivity to the greenway will provide additional recreational resources for those living and working in the district and could provide a commuting alternative if the trails are lighted for morning and evening use.

Encore Parkway Priority Development Concepts

To illustrate the potential of a mixed-use Village Center and a strong connection at Encore Parkway between the east and west side of Georgia 400, the Planning Team developed a draft development concept for Encore Parkway between North Point Parkway and Georgia 400. The concept is an illustration of the type of development and development character that could be created in this area based upon the community vision defined during the LCI planning process and the current value of the subject properties. The illustrations on the following pages are a concept example and not an actual development proposal. Future development may or may not follow this example. However, future regulatory changes, as recommended by this plan, should use the concept example as a guide for the type of environment sought for the North Point Activity Center Mixed-Use Village Center.

The following development example envisions potential redevelopment of the retail strip center just south of Encore Parkway, east of Georgia 400 and infill development along the Encore Parkway edge of the existing office development just north of Encore Parkway, east of Georgia 400. The development example is presented in potential phases, to illustrate redevelopment of the project over time in six steps.

EXAMPLE CONCEPT
NOT AN ACTUAL
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL



Existing retail and office buildings near Encore Parkway looking west from North Point Parkway



1. New mixed-use (retail/residential) development replacing outparcels and oversized parking lots



2. New lowrise retail development (potential office on upper floor(s)) along the north side of Encore Parkway in underutilized parking area(s)

EXAMPLE CONCEPT
NOT AN ACTUAL
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL



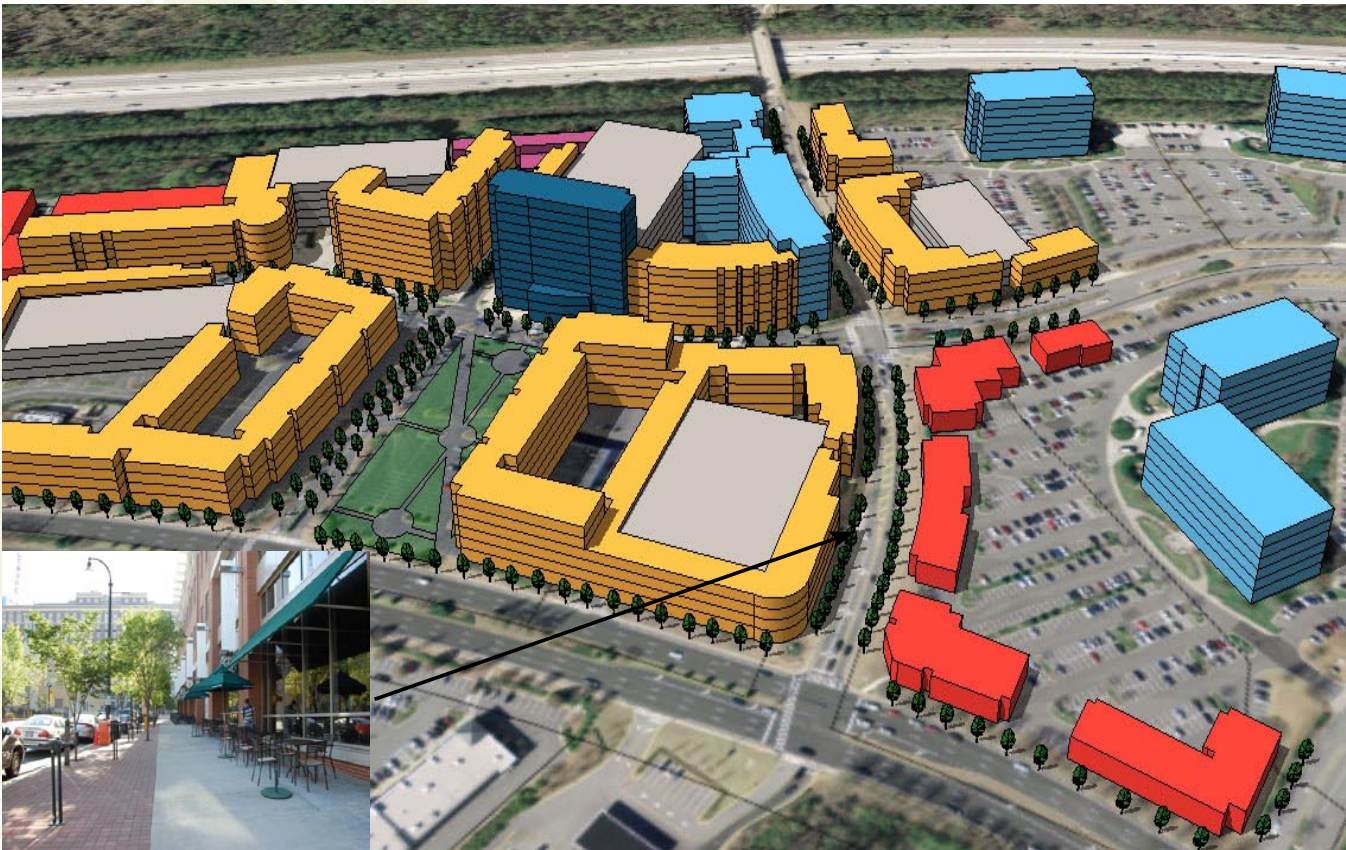
3. Additional mixed-use development along the north side of Encore Parkway near Georgia 400



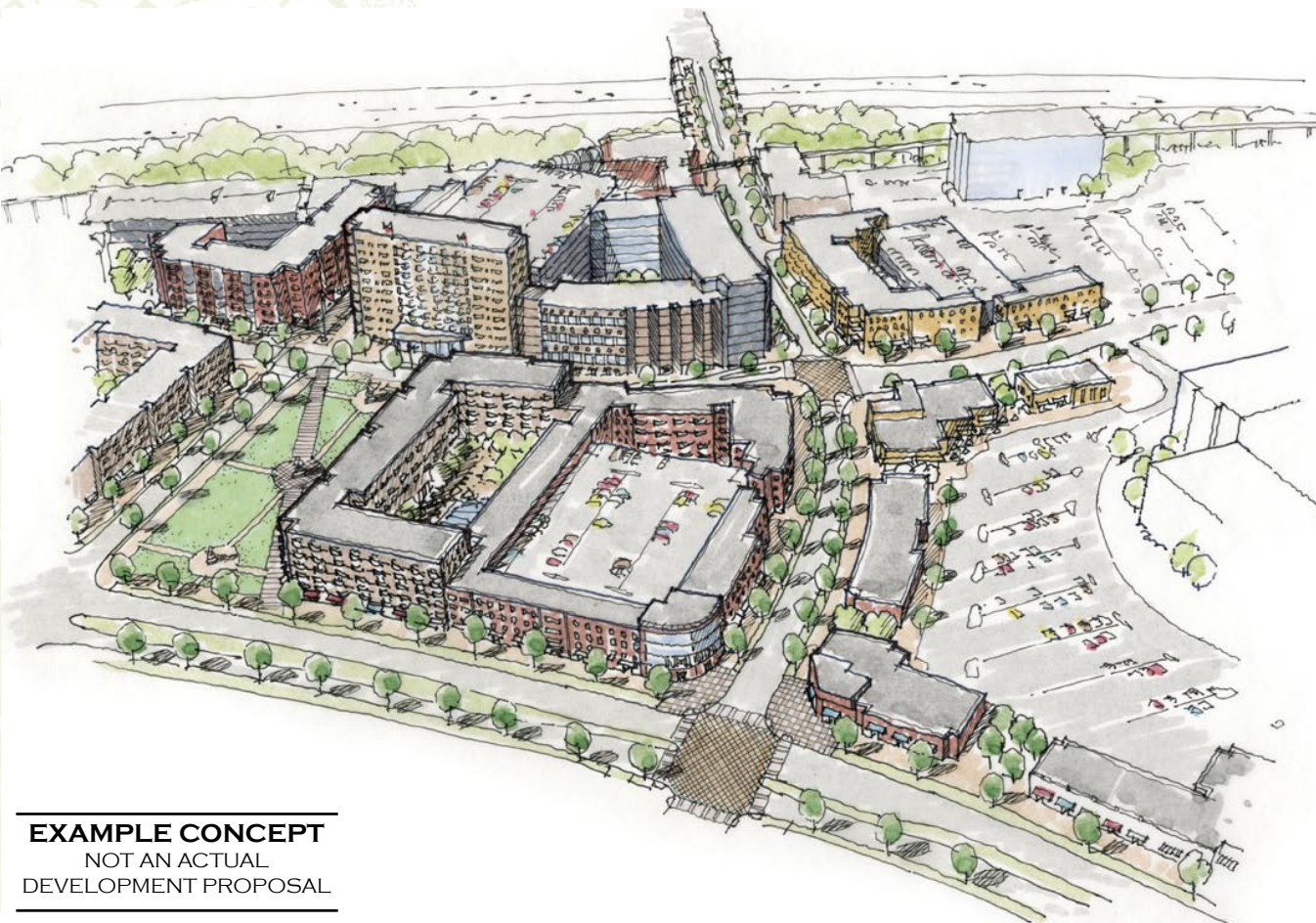
4. Significant mixed-use development (potential hotel, transit site and parking structure) to replace existing big box facilities, major park/open space development



5. Additional mixed-use development (retail/residential) along Georgia 400.



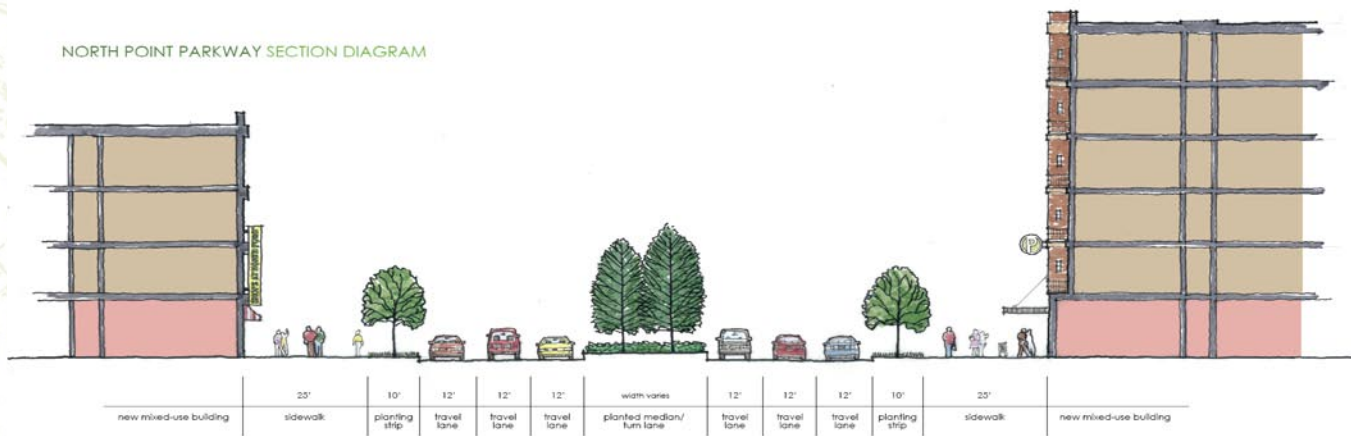
6. Additional mixed-use development (retail/residential) along North Point Parkway to frame park and complete the development example



EXAMPLE CONCEPT
NOT AN ACTUAL
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Example quantities for illustrated development example:

- Approximately 40 acres of property
- 280,000 SF of existing retail replaced
- 400,000 SF of potential retail development
- 350,000 SF of potential office development
- 950 potential residential units
- 250 potential hotel rooms
- \$1.25 - \$1.5 Million residual land value based on illustrated development quantities



North Point Parkway recommended cross section- 4-6 story buildings with 10 foot landscape buffer and 20-25 foot pedestrian sidewalk areas

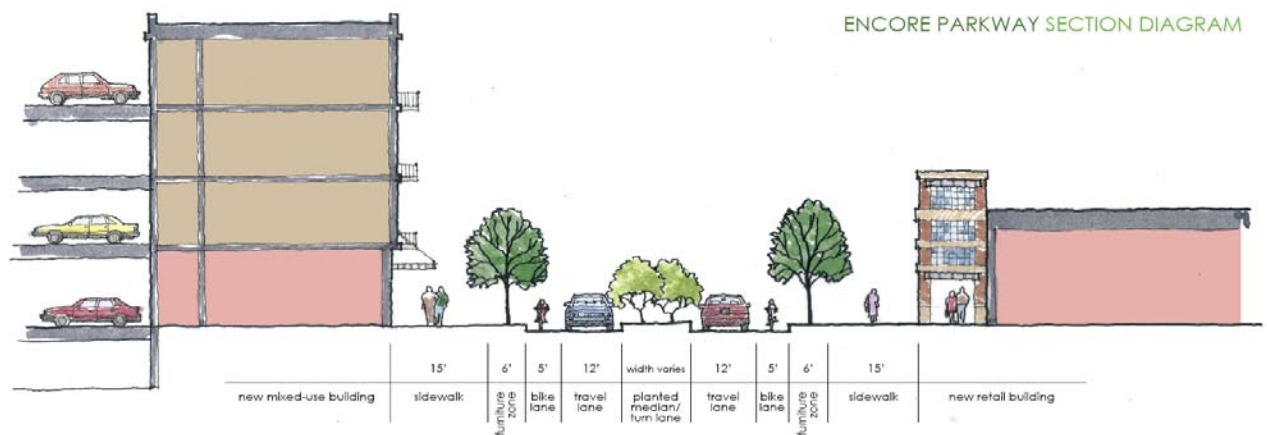


North Point Parkway looking south from Encore Parkway today

EXAMPLE CONCEPT
NOT AN ACTUAL
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL



Same vantage point with potential future development and open space on the west side of North Point Parkway



Encore Parkway recommended cross section- with on-street bicycle lanes, 6 foot landscape buffer and 15 foot pedestrian sidewalk area



Encore Parkway looking west from North Point Parkway today



1. Potential mixed-use development south of Encore Parkway at North Point Parkway



2. Infill development on the north side of Encore Parkway at North Point Parkway

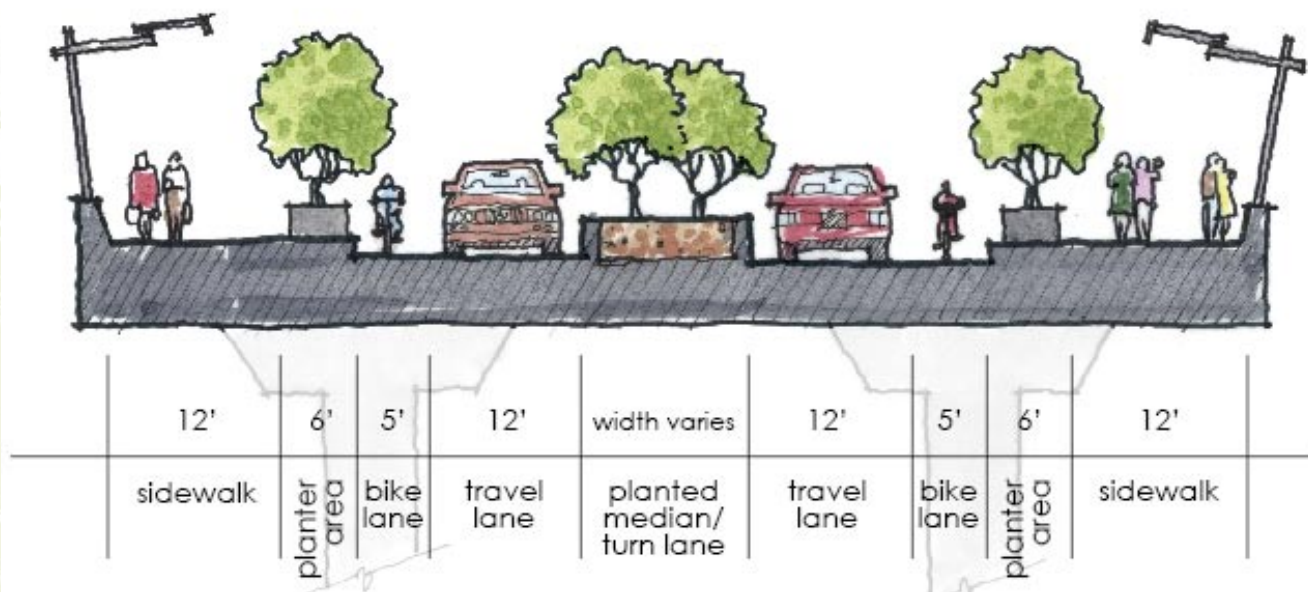


3. Mixed-use development on the north side of Encore Parkway near Georgia 400

EXAMPLE CONCEPT
NOT AN ACTUAL
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL



4. Additional mixed-use development on the south side of Encore Parkway near Georgia 400- future potential view of Encore Parkway looking west from North Point Parkway



Recommended improvements to Encore Parkway bridge over Georgia 400 to foster connectivity across Georgia 400 and improve walkability



Encore Parkway bridge over Georgia 400 today



Recommended improvements to Encore Parkway and bridge over Georgia 400 including on-street bicycle lanes, 6 foot landscape/hardscape zone with lighting and landscaping, and 10-15 foot pedestrian sidewalks

North Point Concepts

The intensity of potential development in the Mixed-Use Village Center has the ability to attract and sustain future transit in the North Point area while building a strong sense of place and supporting the North Point Activity Center's major destinations (Encore Park, North Point Mall, multiple major office developments, future potential mixed-use developments including a residential component).



★ Potential Future Transit Site - On Georgia 400 in south side of Encore Parkway

Previously a parcel north of Encore Parkway between Westside Parkway and Georgia 400 was identified as a potential future transit site. Based on this LCI Study, the potential for future transit-oriented development, a desire to enhance connectivity and MARTA's North Line Transit Study (December 2006), the Planning Team recommends that the City of Alpharetta and/or MARTA consider identifying and acquiring rights for a future transit facility closer to the intersection of Georgia 400 and Encore Parkway. A transit facility in this location has the ability to:

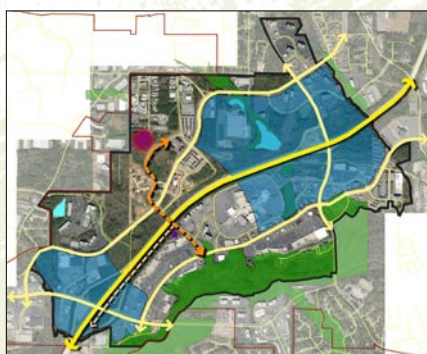
- Enhance potential for mixed-use redevelopment in the area,
- Better connect the east and west sides of Georgia 400,
- Enhance walkability through the Village Center to and from major North Point destinations, and
- Maintain high accessibility to the future transit facility from Mansell Road, North Point Parkway, Haynes Bridge Road and Westside Parkway.

Additional recommendations concerning future transit and other transportation improvements can be found in the transportation projects and strategies section later in this report.

Mixed-Use Commercial Centers

Beyond the Mixed-Use Village Center, two Mixed-Use Commercial Centers seek to accommodate high intensity uses with significant vehicular traffic demand within a short distance of the Georgia 400 interchanges. Positioning regional facilities and destinations within a short distance of Georgia 400 along Mansell and Haynes Bridge Road serves to "capture" vehicles in high capacity areas before they progress into lower capacity areas and adjacent residential areas.

Because of their proximity to the proposed mixed-use village center, particularly those areas inside of the Mansell, North Point, Haynes Bridge, Westside supergrid, the mixed-use commercial centers can and should be connected to the village center with a network of bicycle/ pedestrian connections and sidewalks. Areas outside of the supergrid should foster walkability by channeling pedestrians to signalized



intersections where high visibility pedestrian crossings and pedestrian signals can be improved to facilitate safe pedestrian routes.

Development and redevelopment within the commercial centers should aspire (and be encouraged) to support mixed-use environments with retail on the ground floor and office above. We would expect a heavy office concentration in the commercial centers due to the ability to accommodate larger vehicular capacities and the pre-existence of several major office facilities that are unlikely to redevelop. Residential opportunities in the commercial centers are more likely to be rental products in high traffic areas, but should be integrated in mixed-use formats with accompanying retail, office and hotel facilities to enhance connectivity, walkability and an appropriate sense of character.

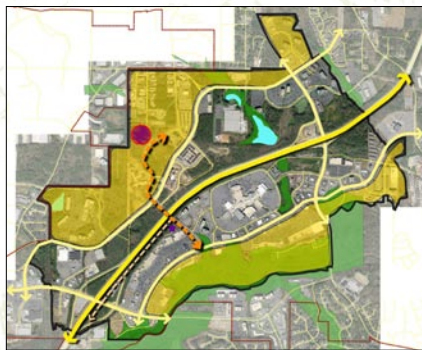
Generally, development in the commercial centers would be expected to be 6-12 stories in height. A minimal number of new facilities may achieve taller heights in return for providing open space or other public benefits. Within the commercial center, the highest intensity developments should be located near Georgia 400. Intensities should generally step down as they approach the midrise Village Center and existing properties outside the commercial center districts.


Transition Areas

Areas outside of the village and commercial core and beyond North Point and Westside Parkways should become transitional, mixed-use areas. The areas to the west of Westside Parkway and east of North Point Parkway provide somewhat limited pedestrian connectivity back to the Village Center and Commercial Centers due to the need to concentrate pedestrian movements across major roadways where high visibility crosswalks and pedestrian signals can be improved.

The transitional areas today include a mix of lowrise retail buildings between North Point Parkway and the Big Creek Greenway and a variety of office, residential, entertainment, industrial, and office facilities west of Westside Parkway. Future development and/or redevelopment in the transitional areas should continue to extend the mixed-use environment, but will likely be 3-6 stories tall, particularly east of North Point Parkway where property depths between Mansell and Haynes Bridge Road area limited.

Future development along North Point Parkway and Westside Parkway should be pulled up the street with parking behind or to the side. Pedestrian areas along major roadways should include a significant





landscape buffer (10 feet) and wide pedestrian sidewalks between the curb and adjacent buildings (20-25 feet)- see North Point Parkway proposed section on Page 65.

Higher intensity development in the transitional areas should be located near Westside Parkway and Northside Parkway, where heavier traffic volumes and greater pedestrian connectivity can be accommodated. Further from the major arterial streets and near existing low density development, outside the North Point Activity Center, lower intensity developments should be accommodated.

Economic/Market Recommendations

Office

In order to capitalize on the emerging real estate trends and continue to capture its historically healthy share of metro Atlanta job growth, the North Point Area must position itself to compete for office tenants looking for space not only in typical suburban office park environments, but also for those looking to attract top young talent by locating in active mixed-use settings. In order to quantify the extent to which the area may be able to capitalize on these trends, we conducted a statistical demand analysis taking into consideration regional job growth, directions of growth, the North Fulton submarket's capture of the growth, and the ability of the study area to compete within the submarket.

In 1995, the Georgia 400 corridor connected North Fulton to I-85, resulting in a shift in demand from closer in locations to the northern suburbs, which led to high captures in North Fulton from 1995-2000. However, as the Atlanta economy rebounded from the 2001-2002 economic downturn, North Fulton's total absorption rates never returned to the highs of the late 1990s. As a result, whereas from 1997-2003 the submarket absorbed 40% of all of Atlanta's office space, it has absorbed only 14% since 2004. While North Fulton's market fundamentals have recently improved, assuming a continuation of the deteriorating market capture and a very aggressive planned and proposed project pipeline, there appears to be a potential for overbuilding within the next five years. Nevertheless, the North Point area can successfully compete within the submarket and within the larger region by offering the potential for office users to locate in mixed-use settings not found in other suburban submarkets. Local and national trends reveal that companies are increasingly seeking these types of locations that offer retail amenities and residential options nearby in an effort to attract talented employees with changing work/life preferences from previous generations.




Assuming the North Fulton submarket garners its 1995-2007 overall average “fair share” of growth, the area could attract approximately 29% of all Metro Atlanta office absorption. The result is demand potential for nearly five million additional square feet of office space over the next 10 years. A significant amount of space, particularly given that the planned and proposed pipeline currently calls for almost four million square feet in just the next three years. Therefore, the absorption schedule for new commercial space in the study area calls for no office for at least five years. At that time, assuming the insertion of new walkable retail and residential options, North Point could capture strong amounts of new office space. Traditionally, the area garners about 18% of the submarket’s space. With the improvements called for by the LCI process, our demand analysis has the area increasing that capture to near 40% of North Fulton by 2030, resulting in potential for just over 1 million additional square feet of office in the study area, with the potential to add about 190,00 square feet annually from 2020-2030.

Retail

Support for retail in the North Fulton Activity Center comes from a large regional trade area driven by North Point Mall. While we certainly expect this to continue, particularly in the short-term, major shifts in the local retail landscape and in national consumer trends are combining to necessitate a re-evaluation of the types of future retail development that will allow the area to remain competitive and relevant. Nationally, newer retail formats including outdoor lifestyle centers and active mixed-use centers that combine retail with residential and other uses have created increased competition for regional malls. Undoubtedly, North Point Mall remains successful and will continue to anchor the area. However, developers are currently planning and/or building numerous retail centers in more up-to-date formats that will potentially encroach upon the market share of the area’s existing retail. Therefore, the area must be proactive to stay viable. An opportunity exists to create a sense of place by inserting mixed-use retail offerings to complement the mall and replace aging strip centers. This will not only breathe new life into the area to help it remain competitive, but also attract additional demand from sources such as area households and local office workers.

In order to assess the extent that the retail landscape in the North Point area can shift from being solely auto-dependent and regional-serving to a better-rounded environment that includes updated formats, we looked closely at analogous situations around the nation. While many examples exist, three proven case studies can point to the direction of future retail in the North Point area. The three examples – Valencia



Mall in California, Dadeland Mall in Florida, and Southpark Mall in Charlotte, North Carolina provide examples of successful regional malls that added lifestyle and mixed use components in order to stay competitive. On average, developers added retail square feet equal to 15% to 20% of the existing mall size in the first phase of redevelopment nearby. Given the 1.5 million square feet of space currently at North Point Mall, this would indicate that approximately 350,000 square feet of retail space could be placed near the mall in order to re-invigorate the area. In addition, all of these examples also added other land uses nearby, including hotel, office, and residential units, both above retail and as stand-alone projects. Further, the inclusion of these new lifestyle components near existing malls helped to spur additional development (or development plans) elsewhere in the local vicinity. Based on this case study analysis, combined with a statistical analysis that assessed consumer expenditure data for both the local area and its broader trade area and translating that into a supportable amount of square footage, we were able to estimate potential new demand for retail in the area. This analysis revealed that the study area could attract a total of approximately 765,000 additional square feet of retail space over the next 25 years. Portions of this space should replace aging strip centers in strategic locations that will help to create synergies and critical mass and enhance connectivity with other demand drivers such as the current mall and the Amphitheater.

For-Sale Residential

Based on demographics and the current situation in the local for-sale, residential market, there is an opportunity for development in the near-term. The purchasers of for-sale residential in the study area (near Georgia 400) will be made up mostly of two target market audiences: 1. empty-nesters and retirees as aging households in the local area seek housing that will allow them to “age in place,” and 2. younger singles and couples working the area and looking to avoid long commutes and to locate near retail and social amenities.

In determining the depth of demand for for-sale housing in the North Point area, RCLCO looked at demographic data, age by income data, household turnover rates, as well as demonstrated homesales over the past few years in the zipcodes in North Fulton County as well as Fulton County as a whole. With this, we determined a range of expected home sales for the study area for the next five years. Demand for for-sale residential product is broken down between single-family detached homes (SFD) and attached housing products (such as townhomes and condos).



One and two-person households are a critical driver of demand for new housing, particularly for higher density attached products such as townhomes, lofts, and condominiums. Demographic shifts such as the aging of the Baby Boomers and the entrance of Gen-Y into the housing market will continue to generate demand for such products. Based on both these psychographic trends and local market realities, over the next five years, we believe there to be market support for 450-500 attached units over this time frame within the North Point Activity Center. While a case should be made for the offering of work-force housing in the area in order to attract a large portion of those employed nearby, currently land values require the following price range:

Table 2.1 Anticipated Annual Demand for For-Sale Residential Products in the North Point Activity Area

Product Type	Anticipated Annual Demand
Small-Lot Single Family	75-85 Units
Attached (> \$300,000)	90-100 Units

For-Rent Residential

New apartments within the study area will likely be supported by young singles and couples, including those working in and around the area, those new to the market, and those looking to stay in the North Fulton area, but relocate their permanent or retirement residence elsewhere. Based on demand generated from household growth of singles and couples in the greater area, renter turnover, and propensities to rent versus buy, the study area could likely support between 600 to 650 rental units over the next five years. This would likely translate into two to three new apartment communities. Included in this is the potential to develop rental apartment units above retail providing a relatively unique niche in the market. Achievable rents for these new units will be between \$1,000 and \$1,800 per month or more.



2.3 TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Responding to anticipated growth and development in the North Point Activity Center, the transportation system infrastructure will need to change accordingly. The following section provides an overview of the transportation project identification process along with an action plan for future improvements. Complementary transportation strategies and policies are also identified.

Project Identification

As acknowledged in the transportation system assessment, the North Point Activity Center's existing transportation network is predominately focused on providing vehicular access and mobility. The City of Alpharetta has developed "Guiding Principles" within its Comprehensive Plan to support development of alternative travel modes for facilitating travel on foot, on a bicycle, or via transit. Recognizing the need for greater multimodal infrastructure, the City has required sidewalks with new development, particularly on the west side of the Activity Center. To support the development framework of more compact mixed-use village centers and commercial centers the transportation recommendations realize the changing transportation needs of such development. The recommendations address:

- Providing multimodal connectivity throughout the study area;
- Leveraging the existing transportation network for vehicular and alternative mode travel;
- Supporting potential future transit investments; and
- Creating an off-road network for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Transportation Projects

Based on an evaluation of the existing transportation system and the future development framework, the Planning Team has outlined a list of suggested transportation projects consistent with the community's vision for the future of the North Point Activity Center. Each of the transportation projects identified is described in this section. Major elements of the Action Plan include addition of sidewalks, bicycle lanes and streetscaping to Encore Parkway, additional multiuse trail connections to the Big Creek Greenway, secondary street network to support new development, traffic operational improvements throughout the study area, and preservation of land for a future transit connection. Figure 2.2 provides an illustration of the project recommendations.

Figure 2.2: Transportation Strategies

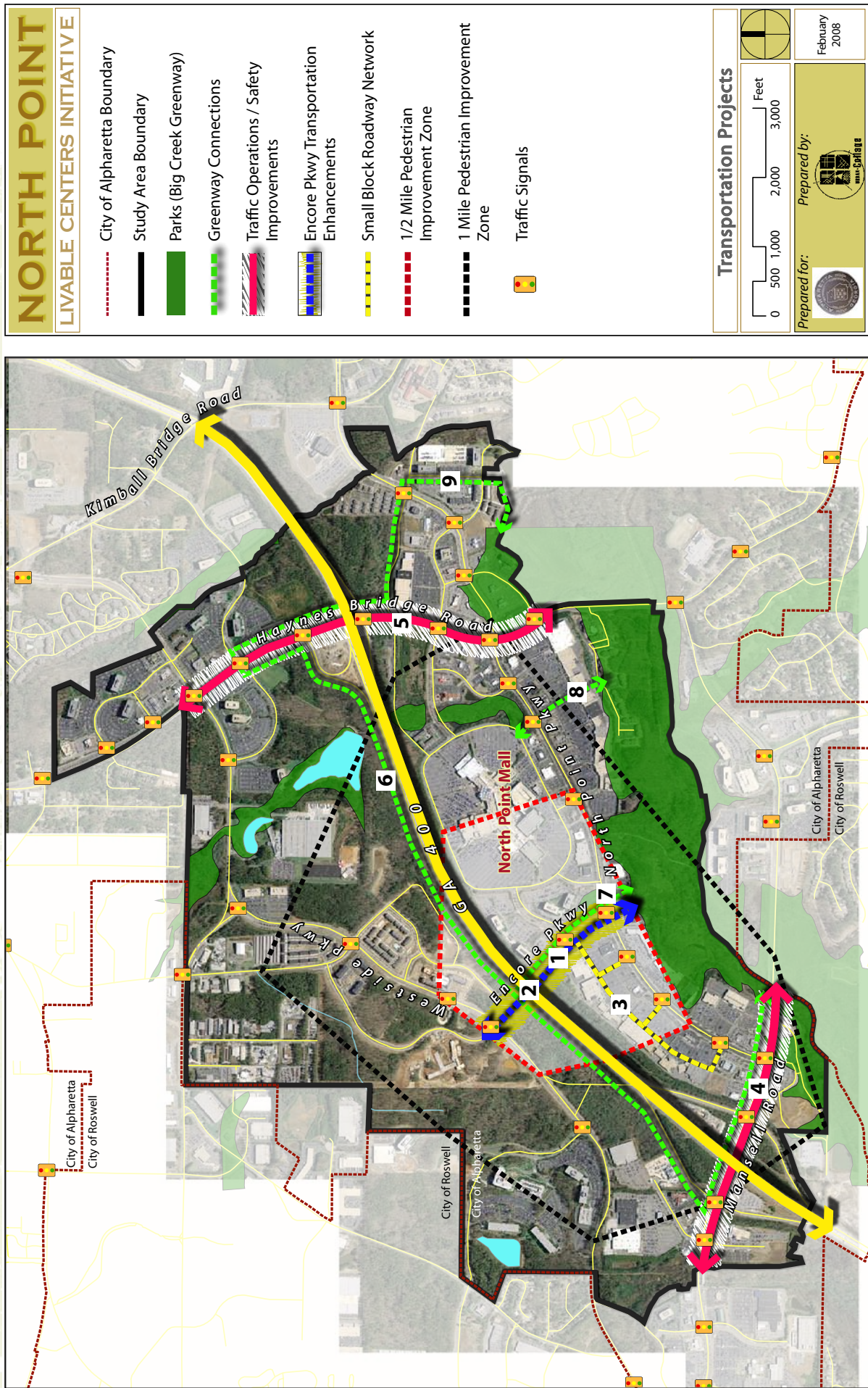


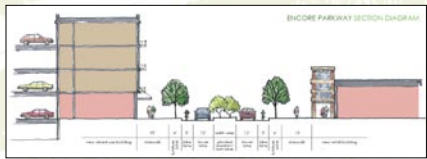
Table 2.2 Transportation Projects

1. Encore Parkway	
Description:	Widen Encore Parkway to provide transportation enhancements to accommodate 2-3 lanes of traffic with appropriate turn lanes, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities from Westside Parkway to North Point Parkway
Length:	1,992 feet
Project Type:	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility
Projected Cost:	\$2 Million
2. Encore Parkway Bridge over SR 400	
Description:	Widen Encore Parkway bridge over SR 400 to accommodate 2-3 travel lanes, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities
Length:	342 feet
Project Type:	Bridge Upgrade
Projected Cost:	\$2.6 Million
3. New Roadway	
Description:	Create new roadways to provide connectivity within large scale development/redevelopment projects extending from Encore Parkway between North Point Parkway and Westside Parkway
Length:	2,730 feet
Project Type:	General Purpose Roadway Capacity
Projected Cost:	\$2.4 Million
4/5. Mansell Road and Haynes Bridge Road Advanced Traffic Management System and Intersections	
Description:	Traffic Signal Timing and intersection improvements at four locations on Mansell Road from Davis Drive to North Point Parkway
Project Type:	Roadway Operations
Projected Cost:	\$1.1 Million
6. Big Creek Greenway Extension	
Description:	Extension of Big Creek Greenway from Mansell Road to Haynes Bridge Road through the west side buffer of Georgia 400
Length:	11,291 feet
Project Type:	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility
Projected Cost:	\$1.7 Million
7. Big Creek Greenway Extension	
Description:	Extension of Big Creek Greenway from North Point Parkway at Encore Parkway to Greenway
Length:	348 feet
Project Type:	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility
Projected Cost:	\$350,000
8. Big Creek Greenway Extension	
Description:	Extension of Big Creek Greenway from North Point Circle/Mall to Greenway
Length:	1,936 feet
Project Type:	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility
Projected Cost:	\$1.6 Million
9. Big Creek Greenway Extension	
Description:	Extension of Big Creek Greenway from Haynes Bridge Road to North Point Parkway
Length:	1,870 feet
Project Type:	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility
Projected Cost:	\$1.6 Million
10. Property Acquisition for Future North Point Transit Facility	
Description:	Acquisition of land for future transit facility (rail, BRT, shuttle and/or heliport)
Project Type:	Transit
Projected Cost:	\$4.0 Million

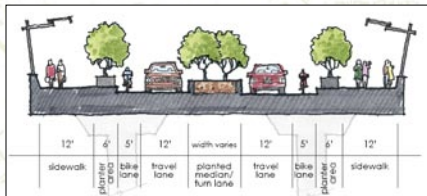
Village Center Improvements

Encore Parkway Multimodal Transportation Upgrade (Projects # 1-2)

Within the North Point Activity Center, three roads connect the east and west sides of the area, Mansell Road, Encore Parkway, and Haynes Bridge Road. Both Mansell and Haynes Bridge Roads have interchange connections with Georgia State Route (SR) 400 and serve both regional and local travel needs. Encore Parkway, with a bridge over SR 400, serves an essential role within the Activity Center, providing a non-interchange connection between the east and west sides. Encore Parkway extends from North Point Parkway on the south to Maxwell Road on the north and is approximately 5,580 feet long, a little over one mile.




Encore Parkway Roadway Concept
(see page 67 for full size graphic)



Encore Parkway Bridge Concept
(see page 68 for full size graphic)

In order to enhance the connectivity for all modes and serve as a complete street, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and streetscaping are recommended for Encore Parkway, extending from North Point Parkway to Westside Parkway. This section of Encore Parkway currently has two through lanes for traffic. Sidewalks are currently found in a few, disconnected segments along this section of Encore Parkway. No bicycle facilities are provided. The Encore Parkway roadway concept includes broad 15-foot sidewalks, a landscape buffer between the sidewalks and pavement, five-foot bicycle lanes, two 12-foot travel lanes, and a landscaped median (page 67). Care should be taken to limit the width of intersections by limiting turning lanes so that pedestrians have a shorter distance to cross Encore Parkway. The bridge over SR 400 will also require an upgrade to provide adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities. It is recommended (page 68) that the bridge include features to support and enhance pedestrian travel.

The Encore Parkway improvements will provide a critical connection to link the east and west sides of the Activity Center. On the west side the Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park is slated to open in 2008. New active adult-living multi-family housing, Sanctuary Park, and other office developments are found on the west side of SR 400. On the east side of SR 400 are existing shopping areas and restaurants, including North Point Mall, Mansell Crossing, and other retail centers. The future development framework promotes a mixed-use environment along Encore Parkway, which will require infrastructure to support travel via alternative modes. In addition, a future transit facilities, potentially MARTA's North Line rail system should be accommodated in the future in the proximity of Encore Parkway and SR 400. The Draft North Line Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study identified Encore Parkway (formerly Center Bridge Road) and SR 400 as the "best location for



development of a prototypical MARTA TOD station.” (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), Draft North Line Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study (December 2006), page 4-1.) The recommended improvements to Encore Parkway would support the transit-oriented transportation network proposed in the TOD study. The recommended expansion of Encore Parkway for alternative modes supports the following guiding principles established by the Alpharetta Comprehensive Plan:

- Develop policy statements regarding rail service along Georgia 400 and express bus and HOV lanes.
- Locate sidewalks on all collector and arterial roadways.
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian connections from all activity centers (i.e. schools, commercial districts, parks, etc.), and ensure that sidewalks exist from all public transportation in areas that link to the existing sidewalk system.
- Connect the Big Creek Greenway to the sidewalk and bike systems.

New Roadways to support development framework (Project # 3)

One of the essential components of a multimodal transportation system is connectivity. A smaller-scale street network with shorter block lengths is more amenable to walking and non-motorized transportation than longer block lengths. To facilitate a multimodal environment, it is recommended that new streets be developed within the proposed mixed-use Village Center and Commercial Centers as redevelopment occurs. Such streets can provide vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and access for new development, create smaller, pedestrian-scale street network outside of the arterial super-grid, and serve as ‘main street’ for redevelopment. One such street is illustrated by extending North Point Center East into the development area south of Encore Parkway.

New internal roadways creating internal street grids are recommended for development/redevelopment of any property within the study area. The Action Plan specifically encourages the City to identify funding to participate, if necessary, in the development of internal streets, sidewalks and pedestrian amenities for projects within the proposed Village Center. Generally sidewalks should be 8-12 feet wide internal to developments along primary shopping and walking corridors and separated from travel lanes with landscape buffers and/or on-street parking.



Roadway Operations / Safety Improvements (Project #4-5)

One of the primary issues raised throughout the study was how to improve traffic flow throughout the North Point Activity Area. The existing roadway network provides significant travel capacity and connectivity. Due to the high traffic volumes however, traffic controls are necessary to ensure safe and efficient travel. Thirty intersections within the study area are controlled with traffic signals. Traffic signal interconnections are planned for North Point Parkway from Mansell Road to Windward Parkway. Additional Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies are recommended to optimize traffic flow within the North Point Activity Center. Appropriate ITS technologies for the area were identified considering the Roswell/Alpharetta Traffic Management System Deployment Plan (October 2000). Recommended technologies for deployment include:

- Closed-captioned television cameras (CCTV)
- Permanent traffic count stations
- Arterial congestion management systems (CMS)
- Encore Parkway communications connection
- Traveler information displays at North Point Mall and the Encore Park Amphitheater

The recommended ITS improvements are part of a systematic approach to improve traffic operations and safety within the North Point Activity Center and thereby improve mobility for local and through-traffic, particularly during traffic peak-period. The ITS improvements support community desire to provide traffic congestion relief.

Most ITS improvements would be concentrated on Mansell Road and Haynes Bridge Road. Additionally, pedestrian crossings at appropriate, strategic locations that foster pedestrian access across Mansell Road, North Point Parkway, Haynes Bridge Road, and Westside Parkway should be improved for higher visibility and pedestrian signals and maintained at a high level.

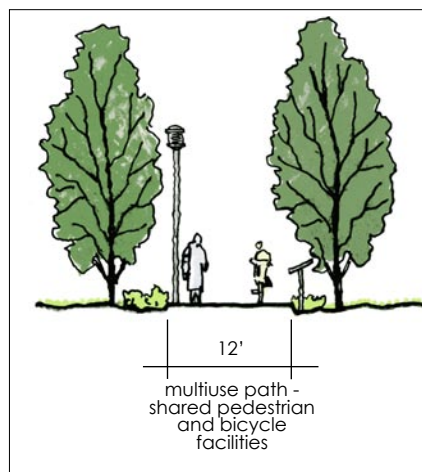
Greenway Extensions (Project #6,7,8,9)

The Big Creek Greenway is on the southern border of the North Point Activity Center LCI Study Area. Within the City of Alpharetta, the greenway currently extends from Mansell Road to Webb Bridge Road and is approximately six-miles long. Plans are underway to connect the greenway into the City of Roswell across Mansell Road. A bicycle and pedestrian facility is also planned to connect the greenway end at Mansell Road to the park and ride lot located at Mansell Road and SR 400.

The Big Creek Greenway is a significant amenity within the Activity Center. Although the existing Greenway is primarily a recreational trail, its close proximity to office, residential, and commercial-retail development makes it an attractive candidate for expanding its potential for alternative transportation use. The existing trailheads within the Activity Center are located on North Point Parkway and Haynes Bridge Road. It is recommended that additional cross-connections to the Greenway be developed to increase connectivity and potential use of the greenway. In addition, it is recommended that a parallel spine to the Greenway, within the protected buffer along the west side of SR 400, be created to provide a pedestrian and bicycle “alternative mode” system.

The trail concept, based on the existing Greenway, is to develop a 12-foot-wide, concrete or asphalt multiuse path. Pedestrian and bicycle facility connections should be made where each path intersects an existing roadway. Four segments have been identified to extend the Big Creek Greenway through the North Point Activity Center:

- Through the western buffer of SR400 from Mansell Road to Haynes Bridge Road
- From the existing greenway to the intersection of North Point Parkway and Encore Parkway
- Existing greenway to North Point Circle/North Point Parkway
- Haynes Bridge Road to North Point Parkway



Typical section of trail through greenways

The recommended extensions of the Big Creek Greenway provide an off-road bicycle and pedestrian network to serve existing and future higher intensity development. The primary attraction of the off-road multi-use trail is that it minimizes potential conflicts between those traveling in vehicles and those traveling on foot or bicycle. Developments adjacent to the greenway and proposed extensions can provide

access to the off-road trail system so that it is easier and more attractive to travel between adjacent activity areas. The connections at Encore Parkway and new trail west of SR 400 additionally provide a pedestrian and transit-oriented transportation network to support a proposed MARTA North Line rail station. Recommended Greenway extensions support the following guiding principles established by the Alpharetta



Comprehensive Plan:

- Provide bicycle and pedestrian connections from all activity centers (i.e. schools, commercial districts, parks, etc.), and ensure that sidewalks exist from all public transportation in areas that link to the existing sidewalk system.
- Connect the Big Creek Greenway to the sidewalk and bike systems.
- Review roadways for “bike-friendly” shoulders.

Future Transit- Short-term, long-term, helipad, etc.


North Point Transit Station Land Acquisition (Project #10)

Existing transit operations within the North Point Activity Center include two MARTA bus routes, Route 85 and Route 140, each of which serve the Mansell Road Park and Ride Lot. Route 140 provides service on Mansell Road, North Point Parkway, and Haynes Bridge Road, while Route 85 serves a short portion of Mansell Road, west of SR 400. Plans within the City of Alpharetta and regionally have identified potential for future expansion of the MARTA North Line rail service. The Draft North Line Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study identified the North Point Activity Center as the best location for a future transit-oriented development around a future rail station site at the intersection of Encore Parkway (formerly Center Bridge Road) and SR 400. The Transit Planning Board in November 2007 released a regional concept plan (Concept 3) that prioritizes a MARTA North Line heavy rail extension from the North Springs MARTA Station to Windward Parkway.

To support the proposed extension of heavy rail into the North Point Activity Center, it is recommended that land be acquired through direct purchase, right-of-way acquisition, or easement for a future transit (potentially rail) station. The purpose would be to preserve a key parcel for transit and provide a future regional transit connection to the North Point Activity Center. Some important considerations for identifying a future rail station location include:

- 360° or multi-directional access to the station to provide separate access points for pedestrians, vehicles, and buses/service vehicles,
- Direct and inviting pedestrian linkages to nearby/adjacent development,
- Roadway access for facilitating transfers between rail and other vehicular transit modes (fixed-route bus service, shuttle bus service, taxi service, etc.), and
- Availability and supply of parking.

The recommendation to preserve land for a future transit station is supported by City of Alpharetta through policy and plans. In the Short Term Work Program for 2006, the City allocated \$1.8 million to facilitate



land acquisition for public transit purposes. The City also included a policy to support rail service in its comprehensive plan.

Additional alternative modes of transit/transportation considered during the LCI study were a local circulator shuttle and helicopter access/helipad facilities.

As identified in the North Point LCI study, existing transit services include a park and ride lot at Mansell Road and SR 400 as well as two MARTA bus routes, which serve North Point Parkway and Haynes Bridge Road. Input received through the public outreach process indicated interest in a shuttle or circulator bus service for the North Point LCI Activity Center. With the existing development patterns and densities, a shuttle or circulator bus service is not feasible for implementation at this time. However, as population and employment densities increase and new, mixed-use destinations are developed, as proposed in the development concept, the need for a shuttle or circulator bus service should be reexamined. Such service could link the higher density office developments with the activity nodes (Northwinds, Sanctuary Park, etc.) and the Village Center and link the east and west sides of the North Point Activity Center. A local shuttle/circulator would likely be separate from a local transit alternative linking North Point to the North Springs MARTA Station due to the distance involved.

The cost of a simple circulator/shuttle system would be quite extensive. In this region, there is a lack of dedicated funding reserved for transit systems. Several activity centers such as the Cumberland/Galleria and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport areas have performed feasibility studies to implement shuttle service and have found the financial burden too great to overcome. If a circulator system were to be implemented in Alpharetta, it is virtually certain the City and its partners would be forced to fund 100% of the capital and operations costs.

Several local developers have expressed interest in accommodating a helipad within the North Point Area to provide access to area destinations and other regional destinations including Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. Potential helipad locations should avoid residential areas, but could be considered near Westside Parkway where pedestrian access to Encore Park, a future transit facilities and the North Point's office and shopping areas could be fostered. A helipad site could also be considered in one of the two Commercial Centers near Mansell and/or Haynes Bridge Road where office concentrations are higher, but pedestrian and trail access to the Village Center and major attractions could be retained.



Transportation Strategies / Policies

In addition to specific projects, transportation strategies and policies have been identified to provide guidance or improvements in the North Point Activity Center LCI, as follows:

- MARTA schedule information for Routes 85: Roswell/Mansell Road and 140: North Point/Mansell Road Park/Ride should be posted at the Mansell Road park and ride lot and at higher activity bus stops to support existing transit operations.
- Pedestrian-supportive and bicyclist-supportive intersection design techniques should be adopted to support safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings in identified pedestrian and bicyclist activity zones. Techniques may include: high visibility cross-walks at all intersection legs, pedestrian count-down signals, reduced intersection widths, decreased intersection radii, pedestrian refuge areas such as raised islands and medians, bicycle lane detectors, and intersection lighting.
- Clear and direct pedestrian access should be provided to developments from pedestrian areas.
- Streets around the Big Creek Greenway and the recommended Greenway extensions should be evaluated to determine suitability for on-street bicycle lanes to create additional bicycle connections.
- A smaller pedestrian-scale block-length should be developed for secondary street networks within new development and redeveloping areas to provide pedestrian connectivity and support multimodal travel.

The transportation projects listed above combine to enhance the balance of viable modes of travel throughout the Activity Center. To that end, the North Point LCI Plan includes recommendations concerning:

- Improving operations and safety along major vehicular routes,
- Enhancing the pedestrian environment throughout the Activity Center and promoting creation of a more dynamic, walkable environment,
- Providing safe, effective bicycle routes to link the North Point area and other destinations within Alpharetta and North Fulton,
- Extending and providing greater accessibility to the Big Creek Greenway, a major strength of the North Point Activity Center,
- Enhancing future potential for transit or alternative transportation solutions (rail, bus, helipad, etc.) in the North Point Area,
- Maintaining potential for local circulator services and connections to the North Springs MARTA Station until, and in support of, the realization of regional transit facilities in North Fulton.

Trip Generation Analysis

To determine the number of trips associated with the North Point Activity Center, a trip generation analysis was conducted using the standard reference Trip Generation, 7th Edition, published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). This type of analysis is typically used for traffic impact studies to determine the number of trips that will be generated by new development by referencing traffic volume count data collected at similar land uses nationwide. As a result, the analysis is limited in the sense that the data it derives from focuses on automobile trips generated by different land use combinations that are typically in traditional suburban settings. Despite these limitations, the analysis is applied here to provide a general indication of the change in daily trips that can be expected with the different development scenarios. For this evaluation, the analysis was conducted for three scenarios. The development assumptions associated with these scenarios are provided in Table 2.3. Please note that the 'Build-Out Scenario 2' is derived from the realization of the office/convention space proposed as part of the Cousins Westside development. 'Build-Out Scenario 1' assumes a larger number of residential units in lieu of the office/convention space to maintain most commercial functions within the mixed-use village center and to better balance the jobs/housing ratio in the North Point Activity Center.

Table 2.3: North Point Activity Center Scenario Development Assumptions

Development Type	Scenario		
	Existing	Build-Out Scenario 1	Build-Out Scenario 2
Attached Residential	1,247 Units	6,307 Units	6,307 Units
Single-Family Housing	0 Units	800 Units	0 Units
Retail	2,536,500 Square Feet	3,021,918 Square Feet	3,021,918 Square Feet
Office	3,429,721 Square Feet	4,800,921 Square Feet	6,400,921 Square Feet

As indicated in Table 2.4, both Build-Out development scenarios indicate an increase in the number of daily trips from existing conditions in trip generation to and from the North Point Activity Center. However, the more balanced mix of residential, retail, and office increases the likely number of trips that will be internal (that is, those trips that begin and end within the North Point Activity Center), particularly in Build-Out Scenario 1. With this development mix and a supportive infrastructure, it is more likely that these internal trips will be conducted via walking or biking, as well as a larger potential that these trips will be more evenly spread out through the day (instead of being clustered during traditional morning and evening commuter



periods). This can be contrasted with the internal trips that occur in existing conditions which are more likely to be automobile-based, despite the relatively short distances to and from any destination within the North Point Activity Center. Such trip type phenomena can help to offset the impact of the total amount of new trips that will be associated with the Build-Out scenarios.

Table 2.4: North Point Activity Center Scenario Trip Generation

Development Type	Scenario		
	Existing	Built-Out Scenario 1	Built-Out Scenario 2
Estimated Daily Trips	155,407	233,407	244,636
Estimated Internal Capture %	8%	18%	15%
Estimated Internal Trips	13,044	41,714	36,596
Estimated External Trips	142,363	191,963	208,040

The results of the trip generation analysis show the significant impact that more compact, mixed-use development patterns can have on the impact to the surrounding transportation network. The mixed-use development strategy inside of the mixed-use Village Center and the mixed-use Commercial Centers could result in an increase of 100-125% in total square footage of built space within the Activity Center over the next 20-25 years. However, development of this space in more walkable, mixed-use patterns, including significant residential development, may result (as outlined above) in only 50-60% additional total traffic. Of that traffic the limited number of external trips results in an increase of 33-45% of traffic on the Activity Center's main roadways (Mansell, North Point Parkway, Haynes Bridge and Westside Parkway), some of which will occur during off-peak periods when substantial carrying capacity exists.



3.0 Action Plan

3.1 5 - YEAR ACTION PLAN

The 5-Year Action Plan is a tool from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to outline and track improvement projects and efforts defined by the Livable Centers Initiative Planning Process. The chart on the next page outlines each recommended transportation project and includes an estimate of cost, timing, and funding for each initiative.

Construction costs in the Action Plan were based on the concept design detailed in the concept plan section of this document. These are early estimates and should be used for budgetary purposes only. Construction costs can vary based on the design of a project and the time at which it is designed and/or bid. More detailed cost estimates should be generated and updated as implementation of individual projects is pursued. Costs in the Action Plan are based on Winter 2008 construction costs. Engineering costs vary from 10-20% of the estimated construction costs based on the size and complexity of each project. Right of way (ROW) costs are estimated based on the potential value of the area affected based on the concept plan. Note that potential ROW costs for new roadways within individual developments and the greenway extension to the west of GA 400 were assumed to be absorbed by private development entities or deeded/held by public entities (Local and/or State).

The project years included in the Action Plan were developed in coordination with the Core Team of city, business, and community leaders. They are based on a reasonable timeframe for implementing each initiative if progress were to begin immediately.

3.2 FUNDING

To design and implement the suggested transportation projects a variety of funding sources will be necessary. Below is a list of funding sources and the LCI projects each would potentially fund:

LCI Funds

Two LCI identified transportation projects can be pre-qualified for LCI funding. The Planning Team and Core Team recommend that the Encore Parkway improvements (roadway and bridge improvements combined as one project) and greenway extension on the west side of Georgia 400 from Mansell Road to Haynes Bridge Road through the

**Table 3.1: 5-Year Implementation Plan
Transportation Projects**

Description	Type of Improvement	Engineering Year	Engineering Costs	ROW Year	ROW Costs	Construction Year	Construction Costs	Total Project Costs	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Local Source	Match Amount
Add sidewalks, bicycle lanes and streetscaping to Encore Parkway	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility	2009	\$145,956	2010	\$300,000	2011	\$1,589,798	\$2,035,754	City of Alpharetta	LCI	City of Alpharetta, North Fulton CID	\$407,151
Add sidewalks and bicycle lanes to Encore Parkway bridge over SR 400	Bridge Upgrade	2009	\$229,106			2011	\$2,344,923	\$2,574,029	City of Alpharetta	Federal, State (GDOT), & Local	City of Alpharetta, North Fulton CID	\$514,806
Create new roadway to provide a main street for development activities extending from Encore Parkway to Mansell Road and from SR 400 to North Point Parkway ¹	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	TBD- commensurate with development	\$200,842			TBD- commensurate with development	\$2,185,555	\$2,386,397	City of Alpharetta	Local	City of Alpharetta	\$2,386,397
Advanced traffic management system for North Point Activity Center (including Mansell Road and Haynes Bridge Road)	Roadway Operations	2009	\$182,000			2010	\$910,000	\$1,092,000	City of Alpharetta	Federal, State (GDOT), & Local	City of Alpharetta	\$218,400
Extension of Big Creek Greenway from Mansell Road to Haynes Bridge Road ²	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility	2012	\$215,505			2013	\$1,436,700	\$1,652,205	City of Alpharetta	LCI	City of Alpharetta	\$330,441
Extension of Big Creek Greenway from North Point Parkway to Greenway	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility	2013	\$12,341	2014	\$255,000	2015	\$61,704	\$329,045	City of Alpharetta	TE	City of Alpharetta	\$65,809
Extension of Big Creek Greenway from North Point Circle/Mall to Greenway	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility	2013	\$42,220	2014	\$1,365,000	2015	\$211,100	\$1,618,320	City of Alpharetta	TE	City of Alpharetta	\$323,664
Extension of Big Creek Greenway from Haynes Bridge Road to North Point Parkway	Multi-use Bike/Ped Facility	2015	\$41,095	2016	\$1,320,000	2017	\$205,475	\$1,566,570	City of Alpharetta	TE	City of Alpharetta	\$313,314
Property acquisition for future North Point MARTA Rail Station	Transit Capital			2010	\$4,000,000			\$4,000,000	MARTA	Federal Local	MARTA	\$800,000
Construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Mansell Road from Big Creek to MARTA Park and Ride Lot ³	Transportation Enhancement							TBD	City of Alpharetta, GDOT	Federal Local	City of Alpharetta	
Upgrade Hembree Road and Maxwell Road intersection ³	Roadway Operations							TBD	City of Alpharetta, City of Roswell	Local	City of Alpharetta, City of Roswell	
Total			\$1,069,064		\$7,240,000		\$8,945,255	\$17,254,319				\$5,359,981

Notes:

¹ Examine potential for right-of-way donation from redevelopment. Estimated land value is \$5,130,000.

² Examine potential for easement to eliminate right-of-way cost. Estimated land value is \$5,300,000.


³ Projects programmed in TIP

Housing Projects / Initiatives

Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Clarify/modify the City's multi-family housing policy for the North Point Activity Center	\$0	2008	City of Alpharetta	N/A
Conduct consumer research study regarding potential residential development in North Point Activity Center	\$20,000	2008	North Fulton CID	CID
Consider LCI Supplemental Study to further define housing options and choices/market in North Point Activity Center	30000	2010	City of Alpharetta	LCI/Local/CID

Other Local Initiatives

Description/Action	Cost	Year	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Develop alternative/incentive zoning for North Point Activity Center	\$30,000	2008	City of Alpharetta	Local
Incorporate LCI Plan into future land use plan and comprehensive plan	\$0	2008	City of Alpharetta	N/A



west side buffer of Georgia 400 be selected by the City of Alpharetta for prequalification with the Atlanta Regional Commission as part of the Livable Centers Initiative Program. Following pre-qualification, the City may apply for up to \$4 million in construction funding for each of these two projects. Prequalification of the greenway project will likely require the City to consider lighting the trail to serve as a viable commute alternative.

LCI Prequalification applications are expected to be accepted during the Spring or Summer of 2008. Following prequalification, additional applications will be necessary for the City's first priority project to be awarded concept funds and construction funds from ARC. The City, in cooperation with other partners, should consider funding the design and engineering of priority improvements to shorten the timeframe necessary to implement significant improvements. Should the City depend upon LCI funds to assist with design and engineering, the earliest implementation date would likely be 2013 or beyond.

GDOT/State Funding

Mansell Road, Haynes Bridge Road, and North Point Activity Center ATMS and intersection improvements are most likely to be funded with assistance from GDOT as part of safety and/or technology upgrades. The City should begin and/or continue conversations with GDOT's state and district officials to monitor and complete for project funding with GDOT.

TE (Transportation Enhancement) and Other Grants

Additional greenway connections from the Big Creek Greenway to the west side of Georgia 400 (along Encore Parkway, North Point Circle, Haynes Bridge Road) would most likely be funded through transportation enhancement funds or other open space/greenway/trail grants. TE funding applications are typically accepted once a year or every other year and are competitive within each GDOT Commission District. Typical grants range from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000.

Private foundations may be another source of likely funding for greenway trail and open space initiatives. Several national and local groups and foundations have money available for open space preservation and development and greenway trail development.

The City's partnership with the North Fulton Community Improvement District (CID) provides additional opportunities for design and engineering funding particularly for Encore Parkway enhancements



which have the potential to incent significant redevelopment and change in the area and various intersection/capacity projects. Conversations with the North Fulton CID Board will be necessary to prioritize project funding. The CID is expected to develop a priority list of projects in the Summer of 2008 as part of their Blueprint North Fulton process.

3.3 IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS


To create the character areas outlined in the Concept Plan, a series of actions will be necessary on the part of the City of Alpharetta.

Alternative/Incentive Zoning Classification

An overlay or incentive zoning classification will be necessary for the North Point Activity Center to encourage vertical mixed-use development/redevelopment appropriate to each character area. The alternative zoning classification should require site and architectural design that mixes various uses and creates a desirable pedestrian and transit-oriented development character.

The alternative zoning should encourage vertical mixed-use development with multiple uses within a single structure including retail/professional office on the ground floor and office and/or residential development on upper floors. Appropriate building heights should be based on the three recommended character areas with mid-rise development in the Village Center, high intensity/travel demand uses in the two Commercial Centers, and lower intensity development in Transitional Areas.

Alternative zoning for the North Point Activity Center should establish typical block sizes that are more amenable to walking (typically 200 to 400 feet). The regulations should also limit the number of curb cuts on major roadways to control access and limit interruptions and potential conflicts in pedestrian areas. Pedestrian requirements should be detailed as part of the alternative zoning including standard widths for landscape/hardscape buffers between the roadway and pedestrian sidewalk (5 feet on Encore Parkway, 10 feet on North Point Parkway, Westside Parkway, and other high traffic roadways) and pedestrian sidewalks (15 feet on Encore Parkway, 20-25 feet on North Point Parkway, Westside Parkway, and other high traffic roadways). Standard requirements and spacing for lighting (50-60 feet on center) and landscaping (street trees at 25-30 feet on center) in public areas should also be included.



Site design standards should require buildings to be placed at the back of pedestrian sidewalks and should not generally allow parking between roadways and new development. Parking guidelines should be established that create opportunities to share parking between complementary developments and to encourage transit-oriented parking ratios to minimize “grayfield”/parking lot development and create an environment appropriate for future transit.

Site design standards should also require preservation and development of publicly accessible open spaces, require those open spaces to be prominent within each development, and consider a transfer of development rights from the open space area contributed to adjacent, developable parcels.

Ultimately the goal of the alternative zoning is to create a more dynamic, mixed-use environment that is of a scale appropriate to Alpharetta and commensurate with the value of property in the area. The zoning should seek to provide incentives for property owners to redevelop aging strip centers in lieu of reinvesting in properties that do not foster walkability and connectivity in the recommended Village and Commercial Centers.

Multi-Family Housing Policy

A key component of a mixed-use environment is the availability of housing within the district. Alpharetta and North Fulton’s current housing market and demographic trends suggest that there is ample potential for quality multi-family development as part of an integrated mixed-use strategy. Potential residents for multi-family housing include “empty-nesters” who desire to stay in Alpharetta, but desire a low maintenance lifestyle, and young professionals and couples who seek to be closer to their places of employment in the Georgia 400 corridor and desire a walkable environment with access to retail, restaurants and entertainment options.

In light of this potential and the desired character of the North Point Activity Center, the City of Alpharetta should review its multi-family housing policy as it applies to the North Point Area to:

- Encourage multi-family housing as part of integrated mixed-use developments,
- Allow higher density housing in appropriate character areas,
- Mandate appropriate public open spaces in higher intensity housing areas ,
- Mandate appropriate pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in higher intensity housing areas,



Future Transit Facility

As discussed as part of the transportation initiatives, the City should seek to identify and acquire property and/or rights to develop a future transit facility near the intersection of Encore Parkway over Georgia 400. Potential station locations will need to be coordinated with MARTA based on the potential for MARTA's north line to be extended to and beyond North Point.

Land Use Plan and Comprehensive Plan Updates

As part of the LCI process, the City of Alpharetta should also incorporate the LCI plan, its land use and transportation concepts, and recommendations into the City's future land use plan and comprehensive plan. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) would want to ensure that this step and other progressive steps have been taken to adopt and move toward the policies recommended in this plan before they award concept and construction funds for potential LCI transportation projects.

3.4 25-YEAR PROJECTIONS

Table 3.2 highlights population, household, and employment projections from ARC for Census Tracts 116.05 and 116.07. These Census Tracts take in more land than the actual Study Area but are the closest proxies for statistical purposes. These projections show the jobs-to-housing balance continuing an upward climb to 5-to-1 by 2025 based on the status quo.

Table 3.3 uses the ARC projections as a base of future growth and adds potential growth based upon implementation of this LCI Plan.

- In order to estimate the population growth brought on by the additional housing units it was assumed that each additional attached unit would account for an additional 1.5 persons added to the Census Tract. Each additional detached unit was assumed to add 2.5 persons.
- In order to estimate the employment growth brought on by the additional retail and office space it was assumed that each additional 400 square feet of retail would account for an additional employee added to the Census Tract. Each additional 250 square feet of office would account for an additional employee. These estimates were based upon research from the International Council of Shopping Centers, the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, and adjusted to meet local market realities.

- These projections show that the LCI planning process will lead to an additional 7,400 jobs yet help to keep the jobs-to-housing ratio under 4-to-1.

Table 3.2: Status Quo Population and Employment Projections, North Point LCI Study Area¹, 2000-2030

	2000	2007	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population ²	21,329	25,757	28,260	27,939	27,535	27,827
Households ²	8,355	11,746	14,189	14,259	14,253	14,503
Approx. HH Size	2.6	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.9
Employment ²	30,730	40,199	57,364	67,292	70,847	72,734
Job/HH Ratio	3.7	3.4	4.0	4.7	5.0	5.0

¹ The North Point Study area is defined as Census Tracts 116.05 and 116.07.

These Census Tracts take in more land than the actual Study Area but are the closest proxies for statistical purposes.

² Figures for 2000 based on US Census and ARC. Employment figures based on 2006 ARC estimates. 2007-2030 forecasts from ARC.

Table 3.3: Population and Employment Projections with Additional Build-Out, North Point LCI Study Area¹, 2000-2030

	2000	2007	2015	2020	2025	2030
Additional Cumulative Proposed LCI Housing Units			1,730	3,468	4,865	5,860
Detached			400	800	1,200	1,600
Attached			1,330	2,668	3,665	4,260
Population ²	21,329	25,757	31,255	33,941	36,032	38,218
Households ²	8,355	11,746	15,919	17,727	19,118	20,364
Approx. HH Size	2.6	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9
Additional Cumulative Proposed LCI Commercial SF			498,018	767,018	1,452,618	2,138,218
Additional Cumulative Proposed LCI Employment			1243	1918	4660	7402
Total Employment ²	30730	40199	58607	69210	75507	80136
Job/HH Ratio	3.7	3.4	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.9

¹ The North Point Study area is defined as Census Tracts 116.05 and 116.07.

These Census Tracts take in more land than the actual Study Area but are the closest proxies for statistical purposes.

² Figures for 2000 based on US Census and ARC. Employment figures based on 2006 ARC estimates. 2007-2030 forecasts from ARC and include estimated additional build-out based LCI planning process. Employment projections assume that one employee will be added to the area for every 250 square feet of office space and for every 400 square feet of retail space.



3.5 THE FUTURE OF THE NORTH POINT ACTIVITY CENTER

On April 21, 2008, the City of Alpharetta City Council unanimously approved a resolution to adopt this LCI Plan and incorporate the plan into the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Plan has potential to reshape the North Point Activity Center over the next two decades. However, change requires time. Some of the plan's initiative can begin immediately, others will take years to develop.

The North Point LCI Plan should serve as a policy document for future development of and improvements in the North Point area. The City will take the lead role in implementing the plan by developing a new zoning code for the area to allow vertical, mixed-use development; outline design and site guidelines that reinforce and frame the public right of way; require more significant sidewalks, lighting and landscaping; and promote greater connectivity within and between developments. The City should also use the LCI Plan's development vision and recommendations as a guide when considering future development proposals within the Activity Center. The City will further shape the future of the North Point Area through transportation and public improvement projects, which should seek a greater balance between vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

Much of the area will be shaped by future private development. While market forces will shift over the coming years, the need to create more concentrated, walkable development will remain. Developments that mix uses, provide connectivity within and between developments, and follow the guidelines of the appropriate character area within which the property resides should be prioritized.

An opportunity to extend regional transit services to North Point has the greatest potential to reshape the area. Future development within the core of the Activity Center should seek to create the type of densities and environment that can support future transit, while at the same time creating places that are inviting and unique to Alpharetta.

Implementation of the plan will required continued partnerships and continued discussion between the City of Alpharetta, the North Fulton Community Improvement District, local property owners, and local residents. Success of the plan will lie in a collective devotion to creating places that are dynamic, accessible, walkable, and inviting.