



2.0 Socioeconomic Conditions

This chapter presents a description of the following characteristics of the study area:

- Population
- Employment
- Households
- Low-Income Population
- Minority Population
- Transit-Dependent Population
- Elderly Population
- Neighborhoods
- Community Resources
- Land Use and Development Characteristics

Data presented are from the ARC 2040 Demographic Forecasts, the US Census Bureau, and the websites of the cities in the study area. Tables 2-1, 2-2, and 2-4 through 2-8 present the totals for the cities within the study area, but the figures for the study area and northern Fulton County data are a composite average of Census Tracts within their respective geographies.

2.1 Population

As shown in Table 2-1, approximately 145,156 persons resided in the study area in 2010. The study area population grew by 22 percent from 2000 to 2010 and it is projected to increase by about 13 percent by 2040. Of the cities in the study area, Alpharetta and Milton experienced the highest population

growth from 2000 to 2010 at 65 and 80 percent, respectively. Conversely, Dunwoody and Sandy Springs are projected to have the highest growth in population from 2010 to 2040 at 17 and 14 percent, respectively. Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2 show the population densities for 2010 and 2040.

2.2 Employment

As shown in Table 2-2, employment in the study area declined slightly from 2000 to 2009. However, it is projected to increase by approximately 45 percent by 2040. Roswell, Alpharetta, and Milton experienced employment increases from 2000 to 2009 while Sandy Springs and Dunwoody saw decreases in employment during the same period. All cities in the study area are projected to experience employment increases from 2009 to 2040 with Roswell projected to have the highest increase of 60.3 percent. Figure 2-3 and Figure 2-4 depict 2009 and 2040 employment densities in the study area.

2.2.1 Major Employers

Major employers are listed by city in Table 2-3. The 25 shown in italics are within the study area. At the inception of this AA, a survey of employment was considered, and some data was collected to support the transportation modeling effort. At this time, a full survey is not planned, but additional data may be collected later during the modeling process.

2.3 Households

Table 2-4 presents a summary of household data for the study

area. Between year 2000 and 2010, the study area experienced a 24 percent increase in households. While all areas saw increases between 2000 and 2010, Alpharetta and Milton had the highest increases of 56 and 99 percent, respectively. Household projections show increases from year 2010 to 2040 ranging from 12 percent in Roswell to 20 percent in Alpharetta. Figure 2-5 and Figure 2-6 depict study area household densities for 2010 and 2040.

2.4 Low-Income Population

Low-income households include any households with income at or below the US Census poverty thresholds¹. Table 2-5 presents data pertaining to 2009 median household income and the population below the poverty level.

Data are listed for each city as a whole, while the study area and northern Fulton incomes are a composite average of Census Tracts within their respective geographies. The 2009 median income of households in the study area was approximately \$86,667. Of the cities in the study area, Milton had the highest median income at about \$117,608.

According to US Census data, 8.3 percent of the study area population was living below the poverty level in 2009 as compared 15.7 percent in all of Fulton County and 5.8 percent in northern Fulton County. Of the cities in the study area, Sandy Springs and Roswell had the highest percentage of the population living below the poverty level, at approximately seven percent. Figure 2-7 depicts the distribution of low-income households throughout the study area.

2.5 Minority Populations

The US Department of Transportation Order (5610.2) on Environmental Justice provides clear definitions of the four minority groups² to be addressed through Executive Order 12898.³ Table 2-6 shows the number and percentage of minorities residing in each city, the study area, and northern Fulton County. In 2010, 44.4 percent of the population in the study area was minority. Alpharetta and Sandy Springs had

¹ According to the US Census Bureau, "Following the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive 14, the Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps)."

² Black - a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa; Hispanic - a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American descent, or of other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race; Asian American - a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands; and, American Indian and Alaskan Native - a person having origins in any of the original people of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

³ Executive Order 12898 directs federal agencies to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effects of its activities on minority and low-income populations.

the highest concentration of minority populations at 32.1 and 34.7 percent, respectively. Figure 2-8 depicts the distribution of minority populations throughout the study area.

2.6 Zero-Car Households

Transit-dependent populations are generally defined as households with no vehicle or workers 16 years and older using public transportation to get to work. By definition, public transportation includes bus or trolley bus, streetcar or trolley car, subway, railroad, ferryboat, or taxi. Five percent of the households in the study area had no vehicle and 3.8 percent used public transportation to get to work. Sandy Springs had the highest percentage of zero-car households. Sandy Springs and Dunwoody had the highest percent of workers 16 years and older using public transportation to get to work. Figure 2-9 shows the distribution of zero-car households and workers using public transportation to get to work.

2.7 Elderly Populations

Elderly populations are defined as persons that are age 65 or over. Table 2-8 shows the number and percentage of elderly residing in each city, within the study area, and northern Fulton County. The distribution of the elderly population in the study area is shown in Figure 2-10. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, approximately 9.4 percent of the population in the study area was elderly. The largest numbers of elderly in the study area reside in Sandy Springs and Roswell while Dunwoody has the largest percentage of elderly population.

2.8 Communities

This section provides a list, organized by city, of the neighborhoods and subdivisions located within the study area. This information was collected from various sources including the websites of Sandy Springs, Roswell and Alpharetta, Community Neighborhood Association websites for Dunwoody, a Google Maps survey, and a windshield survey.

2.8.1 Sandy Springs

The city occupies 38.8 square miles in northern Fulton County between the cities of Atlanta and Roswell. Its western boundary is the Chattahoochee River, and to the City's east are DeKalb County and a small portion of Gwinnett County.

The City of Sandy Springs was incorporated on December 1, 2005. It has the second-largest population of the cities in Metro Atlanta and the seventh largest in the Georgia. In 2010, the population was 46,267. It is forecast to have increased by 16.9 percent to 54,063 in 2040. The following neighborhoods are

within the Sandy Springs portion of the study area based on review of the Comprehensive Plan and Google Earth. The list may not be comprehensive. •

- Aberdeen
- Autumn Chace
- Bakers Glen
- Briars of Dunwoody
- Carrington Place
- Carroll Manor
- Dunwoody Lake
- Dunwoody Springs
- Dunwoody Square Townhomes
- Gates at Glenridge
- Glen Meadow
- Glenridge Close
- Glenridge Park
- Greater Branches

2.8.2 Dunwoody

Dunwoody occupies 13.24 square miles in northern DeKalb County, west of Norcross and east of Sandy Springs. To the north it is bordered by Dunwoody Country Club and to the south by Interstate 285. In 2010, the population was 95,853. It is forecast to have increased by 13.9 percent to 106,924 in 2040.

The following neighborhoods are within the Dunwoody portion of the study area based on review of the Comprehensive Plan and Google Earth. The list may not be comprehensive.

- Devonshire
- Dunwoody Village
- Georgetown
- Jett Ferry/ Williamsburg
- Kings Down
- Perimeter Center
- North Springs
- Olde Village
- Tilly Mill
- Winters Chapel
- Withmere

2.8.3 Roswell

Roswell occupies 41.73 square miles in Fulton County, approximately 20 miles from Atlanta and nine miles from I-285. The city charter was by The Georgia General Assembly in 1854. Today, Roswell is the eighth largest city in Georgia. In 2010, the population was 88,346. It is forecast to increase by 8.5 percent to 93,835 in 2040.

The following neighborhoods are within the Roswell portion of the study area based on review of the Zoning Map and Google Earth. The list may not be comprehensive:

- Arbor Creek
- Aspen Point
- Barrington Farms
- Belcourt
- Bent Willow
- Carriage Station
- Chatham Park
- Concept 21
- The Gables
- Greenway Country Club Estates
- Grimes Bluff
- Heatherton
- Hembree Grove, Cove and Springs
- Hilton Hills
- Holcomb's Crossing
- Kings Bridge
- Liberty Square
- Martin's Landing
- Old Roswell Corners
- Olde Roswell
- Park Ridge
- Pine Valley Estates
- Riverview Estates
- Roswell Heights
- Roswell North
- Roswell Station
- Shadowbrook
- Taylor Oaks

- Whitehall
- Windsor Forest

2.8.4 Alpharetta

Alpharetta occupies 27.24 square miles in Fulton County north of Roswell, and south of Milton. In 2010, the population was 57,551. It is forecast to have increased by 10.4 percent to 63,527 in 2040.

Although a majority of Alpharetta in the study area is dedicated to office and commercial uses, a review of the Zoning Map shows the following lists the neighborhoods in the study area (the list may not be comprehensive):

- Bluffs
- Compass Pointe
- Country Place
- Creek Ridge
- Glen Abbey
- Jamestowne
- Jecca Hills
- Manchester at Mansell
- Mannings Ridge
- Penbrooke
- Plymouth Colony
- Poplar Ridge
- The Preserve at Academy Park
- Signal Pointe
- Somerby at Westside
- Stone Brook Common
- Wedgewood Forest
- Westwind
- Westwood Park

2.8.5 Milton

Milton occupies 39.16 square miles in Fulton County, but only a small portion is located within the northern portion of the study area. It was incorporated on July 18, 2006, from the then unincorporated northwestern part of northern Fulton County.

It is bounded by the cities of Roswell and Alpharetta on the south, Forsyth County on the east, and Cherokee County on the

north and west. In 2010, the population was 32,661. It is forecast to have increased by 3.7 percent to 33,859 in 2040.

Due to the small portion of Milton within the study area, only two neighborhoods are within the study area:

- Avensong
- Manor View

2.8.6 Johns Creek

The City of Johns Creek is not directly within the study area, but it occupies 31.39 square miles nearby in the eastern portion of northern Fulton County. It is bound by Alpharetta on the north, Roswell on the west and Gwinnett County on the south and east. Incorporated on December 1, 2006, Johns Creek includes the remaining lands in eastern portion of northern Fulton County not previously incorporated into Alpharetta and Roswell. Today, Johns Creek is an affluent suburb boasting a calm bucolic lifestyle. In 2010, the population was 76,728.

2.9 Community Facilities

Community facilities data in the study area was gathered from an ARC database and from a Google Earth survey. Table 2-9 shows the number of facilities in the study area by city and type. Table 2-10 lists the community facilities in the study area by name and city. Each resource with an asterisk in Table 2-10 indicates the facility is part of the ARC database. Figure 2-11 maps these facilities.

2.10 Land Use and Development Characteristics

Land use plans and policies are core drivers of the potential for public transit. This section presents the study area's applicable land use planning policies of regional entities and of each city, as well as existing and planned land uses.

2.10.1 Regional Plans and Policies

While the cities are the only jurisdictions with the power to make land use decisions, regional entities like MARTA and ARC can influence the general transit-supportive nature of land use. The means of influence include financial incentive programs, technical support, or, in the case of MARTA, acting as the developer around transit stations.

2.10.1.1 ARC's Unified Growth Policy Map

The Unified Growth Policy Map (UGPM) and Plan 2040 Regional Development Guide (ARC 2011) provide a regional perspective and give direction for growth by combining local and regional

plans from around the Atlanta Region and defining regional context zones. The cities located within the study area lie within an area classified as an Established Suburb.⁴ The recommended policies in the UGPM for Established Suburbs include:

- Maintain the existing transportation facilities in a state of good repair;
- Maintain and expand access to regional transit services, including bus rapid transit (BRT), light rail, and heavy rail;
- Establish strategies for improved road design, such as establishing minimum connections to existing road networks;
- Promote programs that encourage safe walking and biking while reducing traffic congestion; and
- Create neighborhood-scale mixed-use and walkable places near existing residential neighborhoods.

2.10.1.2 Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)

The ARC has had a strong role in encouraging transit oriented development (TOD) throughout the region, in particular through its LCI program. The LCI program utilizes federal transportation monies to fund planning studies designed to integrate land use and transportation planning in small areas.

This program has greatly influenced the promotion of TOD planning in the region. LCI studies have resulted in master plans for at least 11 MARTA station areas. These studies have resulted in numerous jurisdictions changing land use policies to support TOD. The following LCI studies have been completed in, or near, the study area:

- Roswell Road Corridor (City of Sandy Springs)
- Sandy Springs LCI
- Perimeter
- Dunwoody Town Center
- SR 9 – Atlanta Road
- Roswell Town Square/Atlanta Street Corridor
- North Point Activity Center LCI Study Alpharetta
- Alpharetta Town Center
- Milton – SR 9
- McFarland – Stoney Point

⁴ Established Suburbs are characterized by suburban style development patterns that primarily function around an automobile-dependent transportation system. Greenfield residential development is typically built out, and redevelopment is unlikely to occur in the single-family residential neighborhoods. Future growth is most likely to occur in existing commercial and industrial nodes. Where new development can occur, land use and transportation related general policies are laid out by the UGPM for how new development can best function in order to serve the surrounding community.

- Georgetown / North Shallowford Master Plan

2.10.1.3 MARTA Sponsored Transit-Oriented Development

As a regional transit provider and community stakeholder, MARTA is a strong proponent of Transit-Oriented Development or (TOD). TOD is a type of community-based development that is compact, viable, & sustainable, and within an easy walk - 1/4 to 1/2 mile - of a transit station or stop. TODs are generally comprised of a compatible mix of residential, retail, and office uses, and may include other uses – such as hotels, recreational and civic facilities. Mixed use development encourages pedestrian friendly street design with safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists, and with convenient and safe access to transit facilities. Such development should be well-suited to and compatible with its' surrounding neighborhood.

To provide guidance and a common understanding among transit agencies, local governments, regional planners, community groups and developers, MARTA reviewed the best practices of ten other North American transit systems, and issued Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines. MARTA's TOD Guidelines encourages consistent, quality development and sound land use and infrastructure decisions that are based upon a shared set of standards for the region. These guidelines were approved and adopted by the MARTA Board of Directors in 2010.

In addition to planning support and outreach, MARTA has been an active joint development partner in TOD projects around several of its rail stations since 1987. One Atlantic Center, MARTA's first joint development, was completed in 1987 and was the tallest building in Atlanta until 1992. Lindbergh City Center, MARTA's largest TOD, is comprised of over 1 million square feet of Class A office space, 700+ multifamily units, and over 200,000 square feet of retail. Other, smaller scale joint development projects can be found adjacent to the Chamblee, Lakewood/Ft. McPherson, Lenox and Medical Center MARTA Stations.

2.10.1.4 Community Improvement Districts

A community improvement district (CID) is a self-taxing business entity with the purpose of promoting the needs of the business community. Because transportation accessibility is critical to businesses, many CID initiatives are related to transportation. The two CIDs in the study area are the North Fulton CID and the Perimeter Center CID.

The North Fulton CID, organized in 2003, includes the cities of Alpharetta, Milton and Roswell. The cities collaborate with the CID on projects, planning and initiatives. The CID's vision for the future is detailed in the Blueprint North Fulton master plan, a strategic land use and transportation plan, designed to create a cohesive vision for future growth and development along the Georgia 400 Corridor. The following is a list of projects proposed

in the plan:

- Advocate for GA 400 improvements
- Add sidewalks and bike lanes to Encore Park bridge (RTP project #FN-253)
- Construct Big Creek to Encore Park bikeway/sidewalk
- Reconstruct Windward Parkway/Windward Concourse intersection
- Reconstruct Haynes Bridge streetscaping
- Install landscaped entryways at Haynes Bridge, SR 120, and Windward Parkway
- Extend Mansell Road streetscaping to Westside Parkway and Big Creek Greenway
- Install wayfinding signs for the District/ coordinate traffic signals in the District
- Incorporate Blueprint plan into municipal land-use plans
- Develop graphic standards for land use in the District
- Create model zoning regulations for the District

The Perimeter CID (PCID) supports several large projects in the commercial and office district surrounding Perimeter Mall including:

- Hammond Half-Diamond Interchange
- Ashford Dunwoody Diverging Diamond Interchange
- Streetscapes at the Medical Center, along Lake Hearn Drive, along Perimeter Center Parkway, Ashford Dunwoody South, Peachtree Dunwoody Road
- Sidewalk installation and intersection improvements along Ashford Dunwoody Road, Perimeter Center West, Peachtree Dunwoody Road and Mt. Vernon Highway

2.10.2 City Comprehensive Plans

Summarized below are the comprehensive plans prepared for each city in the study area. All plans follow the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning adopted by the Georgia State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in May 2005. When examining the policy framework of the cities, the following factors were assessed to gauge transit support:

- Community vision, goals, and policies relating to encouraging a transit-supportive environment found within a city's comprehensive plan
- Implementation strategies, and short-term action items supporting transit, found within a city's comprehensive plan.

Transit-supportive land uses such as mixed-use and higher-density residential shown on the city's future land use or future development map.

2.10.2.1 Sandy Springs

The City of Sandy Springs, Georgia 2027 Comprehensive Plan (City of Sandy Springs 2007) represents the City's vision for its future over a 20-year period and contains the policies and capital projects intended to implement that vision.

The plan is intended to assist the City with future decisions in policy areas, such as land use and transportation, and to provide a framework for evaluating future development proposals. Seven transportation goals in five themes are included in the Plan. They are as follows:

- Mobility
- System Balance
- Safety
- Land Use
- Quality of Life

Several areas in the study area have been designated as character areas⁵. Each character area is a planning sub-area where more detailed, small-area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns. Examples include the following:

Regional Transit-Oriented Activity Center: This designation corresponds with the large regional employment center, Perimeter Center, located around the Perimeter Mall area. Development consists of high-intensity, mid- and high-rise office towers, and an orientation to the MARTA rail stations. In the parts of this district outside reasonable walking distance of MARTA rail stations, development is or will be oriented toward bus transit available along major corridors.

Urban Residential: This category applies to higher-density residential developments, mostly apartments. Densities are generally at least eight units per acre with most complexes developed at densities of 12 to 14 units per acre. Some townhouse developments are found in this category, usually at lower than average densities. These character areas are located within or adjacent to the Roswell Road corridor or between GA 400 and Roswell Road. Character consists mostly of "garden style" apartments. In the case of fee-simple townhouses, character consists of small, narrow lots (20' by 100' typical) oriented to a public or private street grid pattern. Some of these communities may be gated, and most are within walking distance to bus transportation

⁵ Character areas are defined in the Sandy Springs Comprehensive Plan as specific geographic areas with:

- unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced such as downtown, a historic district, or a transportation corridor;
- the potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation; or
- a need for special attention due to unique development issues.

Employment: This category corresponds with areas in Sandy Springs near I-285 at Powers Ferry and GA 400 that have been developed primarily with office towers. Some commercial uses may also exist in these developments. The character of these areas is one where the development pattern focuses private vehicle transportation, though provisions for pedestrians are provided. Parking is provided primarily in decks. Some employment areas are lower intensity, single-story office and business parks. These districts are close to commercial areas and are generally served by bus transit.

2.10.2.2 Dunwoody

The City of Dunwoody Comprehensive Plan (City of Dunwoody 2010) covers the 2010-2030 planning period, establishes a long-range vision, and commits the City to a short-term action plan. Land use and transportation related goals established for the area in this plan include:

- Creatively address parking and congestion as a part of new local development
- Identify solutions for structural parking
- Establish bicycle network for new connectivity throughout the City so that “all roads lead to the Village”⁶
- Reduce surface parking and promote livable centers in the immediate areas surrounding MARTA station
- Promote/establish new connectivity
- Coordinate with the City of Sandy Springs for LCI Updates and implementation
- Coordinate with the ARC for implementation of future LCI study updates
- Coordinate with MARTA regarding BRT (or other regional service) and urban design surrounding all transit stations
- Establish infrastructure thresholds that new developments must meet.

General transportation goals and policies were also identified in the Community Agenda. In summary, the goals and policies related to transportation and land use in and around Dunwoody emphasize:

- Safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian access
- Improved transit access
- Maintenance of a multi-modal balance within the transportation network
- Maintenance of an efficient roadway network not overburdened by congestion
- Improvements to efficiency along roadways while carefully balancing solutions that involve increased roadway capacity against potential impacts to the multi-modal environment and area character

⁶ “Village” refers to the Dunwoody Village character area, as indicated their comprehensive plan. The Village has historically been the ‘heart’ of Dunwoody and is represented by the area surrounding Chamblee-Dunwoody Rd., Mt. Vernon Rd., and Dunwoody Village Pkwy

- Maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and minimizing the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community

2.10.2.3 Roswell

Imagine Roswell 2030 Comprehensive Plan (City of Roswell 2011) Community Agenda establishes the vision, policy, and development framework for the 20-year planning horizon to the year 2030. The transportation goals in the Plan are:

- *Enhance Safety – not just for vehicles, but for all users: motorized vehicle operators, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders*
- *Manage Congestion – focus on providing innovative yet realistic options for local traffic including key intersections, as well as creating new connections*
- *Increase Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Mobility – ensure that all City residents have safe bicycle and pedestrian mobility options and that transit service is as accessible to residents and visitors as possible*
- *Support Redevelopment – provide transportation systems that support redevelopment while preserving Roswell’s character. This will allow the City to plan for a prosperous future.*

2.10.2.4 Alpharetta

The City of Alpharetta Comprehensive Plan 2030 (City of Alpharetta 2011) is a long-range plan for guiding development in the city for the next twenty years. The overall goal of the plan is to accommodate development in a timely, orderly, and efficient arrangement of land uses and public facilities and services that meet the needs of the present and future residents and businesses of Alpharetta.

The transportation goal of the plan is provide a transportation system that continues to keep pace with growth and integrates various modes of travel in order to allow mobility options. Policies and strategies that relate to the project that were established to accomplish this goal include:

- *Increase transportation accessibility and mobility*
- *Enhance connectivity to community destinations with a street network that expands route options for people driving, biking, walking and riding public transportation*
- *Support transit friendly streets, bicycle routes and walkable communities that provide linkages to activity centers within the city*
- *Promote the development of compact mixed-use and transit-oriented development in appropriate locations*
- *Provide multi-modal transportation options*
- *Develop “Complete Streets” guidelines that encourage a system that accommodates all modes of travel while still providing flexibility to allow designers to tailor the project to unique circumstances*

- *Extend rail transit to Alpharetta, improve park and ride lots, provide express bus service and expand local bus and shuttle services*
- *While examining new development proposals, assess their ability to offer transportation alternatives and reduce the number of vehicular trips*
- *Improve the environment and air quality*
- *Minimize transportation impacts on social, environmental, and historic resources by reducing total vehicle emissions*
- *Require development designs to encourage pedestrian activity that reduces on-site vehicular dependence*
- *Encourage accommodations for alternative fuel vehicles*

2.10.2.5 Milton

The City of Milton 2030 Comprehensive Plan: Community Agenda (City of Milton 2011) is the vision and set of policies developed for the community's future. Transportation and land use goals of the Plan related to the project are:

- Encourage mixed-use developments, where appropriate, that are human scale, less auto-oriented and include neighborhoods that are walkable, bicycle and wheelchair friendly
- Encourage walking, biking, car-pooling, and other alternative transportation choices in making development decisions
- Target and encourage transportation improvements that support desired development patterns for the community

2.10.2.6 Johns Creek

Although not directly in the study area, Johns Creek's development patterns and policies will have an effect on the travel patterns for the surrounding sub-regions, including northern Fulton County. The City of Johns Creek 2009- 2030 Comprehensive Plan (City of Johns Creek 2009) provides a vision and policy framework for shaping the City's future – its social, built and green environment. Transportation and land use goals of the Plan related to the project are:

- Enforce existing sidewalk regulations and support additional measures to accommodate pedestrians Citywide. Promote walkability between homes, schools, shopping, civic uses and open space
- Consider enhancement of multi-modal transportation
- Promote travel demand management strategies to reduce trips
- Encourage increased mixed-use development/ redevelopment
- Support Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), MARTA, and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) efforts related to express transit service and commuter rail

2.10.3 Existing Land Uses

This section presents an overview of existing land uses within the study area. It describes the land use composition and geographic distribution of existing land uses. The ARC's 2009 Land Pro data was used to assess the existing land use data. Land Pro is the ARC's land use and land cover data set developed for regional planning.

An analysis of existing land uses shows that the principal land use is residential with 52.1 percent of the study area. Open space and Commercial land uses also comprise substantial portions with 12.8% and 23.7%, respectively. Conversely, industrial, institutional, water, other urban, and transportation-communication-utilities (TCU) land uses comprise a small portion, with a combined 11.8 percent. The distribution of existing land uses is included in Table 2-11, depicted in Figure 2-12, and mapped in Figure 2-13. They are described by city in the following subsections.

2.10.3.1 Sandy Springs

Sandy Springs represents approximately 27.1 percent of the study area. Within the Sandy Springs portion of the study area, existing land uses are primarily residential and commercial, which is predominantly office and institutional uses, though some neighborhood commercial uses may also exist. Figure 2-14 shows the distribution of land uses in the Sandy Springs portion of the study area.

2.10.3.2 Dunwoody

Dunwoody represents approximately 14.6 percent of the study area. Within the Dunwoody portion of the study area, existing land uses are primarily residential and commercial. Figure 2-15 shows the distribution of land uses in the Dunwoody portion of the study area.

2.10.3.3 Unincorporated DeKalb County

A small portion of unincorporated DeKalb County represents approximately 1.3 percent of the study area. Within the unincorporated DeKalb County portion of the study area, existing land uses are primarily residential and commercial. Figure 2-16 shows the distribution of land uses in the unincorporated DeKalb County portion of the study area.

2.10.3.4 Roswell

Roswell represents approximately 26.2 percent of the land area in the study area. Within the Roswell portion of the study area, existing land uses are primarily residential, open space, and commercial. Figure 2-17 shows the distribution of land uses in the Roswell portion of the study area.

2.10.3.5 Alpharetta

Alpharetta represents approximately 26.1 percent of the land

area in the study area. Within the Alpharetta portion of the study area, existing land uses are primarily commercial, open space, and residential.

Figure 2-18 shows the distribution of land uses in the Alpharetta portion of the study area.

2.10.3.6 Milton

Milton represents approximately 4.8 percent of the land area in the study area. Within the Milton portion of the study area, existing land uses are primarily residential, commercial, and open space. Figure 2-19 shows the distribution of land uses in the Milton portion of the study area.

2.10.4 Future Land Uses

The future land uses are summarized below by city. Each city is reviewed separately because an aggregation of the different categories into one overall corridor plan would not provide the level of detail necessary for analysis. Each city creates its own unique land use categories appropriate for their community, but generally, these categories include some version of residential, commercial, office, open space or conservation, mixed-use, warehouse, and institutional.

2.10.4.1 Sandy Springs

Sandy Springs has adopted a future land use map that also includes the concept of Land Use Nodes. There are 14 different Land Use Nodes throughout the city of varying size, intensity and character. The five of these nodes within the study area are described below.

Land Use Node #6: PCID (Perimeter Community Improvement District - Live Work Regional only)

In the PCID, properties are situated along the GA-400 Corridor, generally located within the boundaries of the PCID. The vision for this area is as follows:

- Parcels around the Dunwoody, Sandy Springs and Medical Center MARTA transit stations should have high-density developments incorporating a mix of land uses including residential, commercial and institutional uses.
- New developments should incorporate internal roads creating a network of secondary roads that distribute the vehicular traffic to include inter-parcel access whenever possible.
- New development should incorporate open and green space features such as plazas, parks and similar features.
- Preserve single-family neighborhoods surrounding the PCID's residential core.
- New residential development should encourage home ownership in balance with rental housing.
- Encourage the inclusion of institutions and schools in the area, in order to create a true urban center.

Land Use Node #11 PCID- No Retail

The boundaries of this node are GA 400, Peachtree-Dunwoody Road, and some parcels on its east side to the north of Abernathy Road, Live-Work Neighborhood and office parcels. The vision for this node is as follows:

- Parcels adjacent to the North Springs MARTA Station shall be developed consistent with the Live-Work and residential densities.
- Preserve single-family neighborhoods and provide appropriate land use transitions.
- Uses transition in density and intensity from the Land Use Node to the residential neighborhoods to the east and north.

Land Use Node #12 Dalrymple

The boundaries incorporate all properties with frontage along Roswell Road at the intersection with Dalrymple Road. The vision for this node is:

- The assemblage of smaller lots should be encouraged to accommodate a more consistent character in terms of architecture and uses, and provide for an elimination or reduction of curb cuts along Roswell Road.
- Projects should incorporate transitions to existing neighborhoods through reductions in height, the incorporation of less intense uses, the use of compatible architecture, the utilization of traditional or natural materials, and open and green space.

Land Use Node #13 Northridge

This node includes all properties with frontage along Roswell Road at the intersection with Northridge Road. The vision for the node is as follows:

- The area should be developed with a mix of commercial, office, and residential uses, with consideration given to the proximity of the area to the GA-400 corridor and the possible need to continue to provide automobile oriented commercial businesses in keeping with redevelopment efforts.
- Single-use developments in this area, especially office developments, should be discouraged. Accessory commercial uses should be incorporated into office developments to assist in limiting vehicular trips.

Land Use Node #14 Dunwoody Place

Located on the northeast corner of the Roswell Road and Dunwoody Place intersection, this node includes the properties bounded by Roswell Road on the west, North River Parkway on the north, Winding River on the east (with some exceptions), and Dunwoody Place on the south. The majority of the existing development in the area is characterized by largely disjointed commercial and multi-family residential development. The vision for this node is as follows:

- A mix of commercial, office and residential uses at a substantial density should be allowed to encourage redevelopment and to support the market of the northern portion of the City.

- Consolidation of properties and the collective redevelopment of multiple properties should be encouraged in the area to perpetuate economic vitality, increased green space, and an improved transportation system.

Future Land Use Outside of Land Use Nodes

Sandy Springs is a well-established community with little undeveloped property remaining. Because of this, most of the Future Land Use designations reflect the existing development patterns. Much of the area not in Land Use Nodes is designated for residential or commercial, with commercial along major corridors and higher density residential closer to GA 400.

From the southern point of the study area, a large pocket of Residential (2-3 Units per Acre) is sandwiched between the Land Use Nodes along Roswell Road and GA-400. Farther north, along Abernathy road, a section is designated for Residential (3-5 Units per Acre) adjacent to an existing neighborhood designated for Residential (2-3 Units per Acre). Along Pitts Road, a large parcel is designated for Residential (12-20 Units per Acre). In the northern most point of the city, adjacent to the Chattahoochee River national Recreation Area, is a large section of land designated for Residential (8-12 Units per Acre).

2.10.4.2 Dunwoody

The City of Dunwoody has adopted a Character Area map rather than the traditional parcel-based Future Land Use Map. The two Character Areas in the Dunwoody portion of the study area are described below:

Suburban Neighborhood

The vision for the Suburban Neighborhood is a stable, owner-occupied single-family residential area that is characterized by a traditional suburban pattern of development with accessible sidewalks, extensive landscaping, and access to parks and functional greenspace, places of worship and schools.

Perimeter Center

The vision for the Perimeter Center is to create a “livable” regional center with first-class office, retail and high-end restaurants in a pedestrian and bicycle-oriented environment that serves as a regional example of high quality design standards. By 2030, the area will add public gathering space and pocket parks, continue to create transportation alternatives, mitigate congestion, and reduce remaining excessive surface parking. All future development continues to emphasize high quality design standards and building - materials and incorporates the current national best practices on energy efficiency, where possible. Dunwoody recognizes the value of creating mixed-use, transit-oriented development within walking distance of public transit stations. However, the City has concerns about the impact of such development on the City’s infrastructure and schools. To ensure proper controls on residential growth, the City recommends zoning changes to require Special Land Use Permits (SLUP) for future high-density housing projects.

Development within the Perimeter Center Character Area that abuts the Suburban Neighborhood Character Area should demonstrate conformance with the principles of a transitional area. Unless accompanied by an exceptional buffering and usable open space provisions, density should be no greater than 4-8 units to the acre and commercial uses should be less than 20,000 square feet.

2.10.4.3 Roswell

The City of Roswell Future Land Use Map from the 2025 Comprehensive Plan primarily maintains the existing development patterns. The southern boundary of Roswell is adjacent to the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area and is designated as Parks/Recreation/Open Space. North of this area, west of GA 400, is a large area of Low Density Residential (1-1.5 Units per Acre), which appears to be an existing residential community.

The majority of the land in the study area in Roswell is designated for residential use with High Density Residential (5-8 Units per Acre) located adjacent to GA 400. It appears that existing neighborhoods are designated Medium Density Residential (3-5 Units per Acre) and Suburban Residential. Holcomb Bridge Road is shown as General Commercial. Office Campus is the designated use for land adjacent to the eastern edge of GA 400 and along Old Alabama Road. The northern boundary of Roswell is another large area designated for Parks/ Recreation/ Open space where the Roswell Greenway Trail is located.

2.10.4.4 Alpharetta

The City of Alpharetta Future Land Use Map from the Comprehensive Plan designates most of the land adjacent to the GA 400 corridor for Office Center uses. A large portion of the area around North Point Mall is designated for Retail Sales and Services. The eastern boundary of the study area is almost parallel with the Big Creek Greenway, a linear park and conservation area.

The western boundary of the study area is located closer to the SR 9 and the central business district of Alpharetta, and the future land use generally reflects existing development patterns. A large business, manufacturing and warehouse park is planned directly across GA 400 from the North Point Mall, surrounded by Office Center designation. Farther north, Professional Office is planned along Old Milton Parkway. In the northern most section, pockets of Medium and High Density Residential closer to the GA 400 border an established neighborhood of Low Density Residential.

2.10.4.5 Milton

Only the southeastern most corner of Milton is located in the study area. A large portion is designated as Retail and Services between Windward Parkway and Webb Road. The land adjacent to GA 400 corridor east of McGinnis Ferry Road is designated for Office and Residential- 8-12 Units/Acre.

2.10.4.6 Johns Creek

The Future Development Map for Johns Creek is not parcel based. It is divided into 12 Character Areas. The objective of most of the Character Areas is to preserve the existing suburban or bucolic nature of the city. Eight activity nodes are targeted for possible future commercial growth on Jones Bridge Road, Abbotts Bridge Road, Old Alabama Road, States Bridge Road, Bell Road and Medlock Bridge Road. A Technology Park Character Area is highlighted as having the need for transit access.

2.10.5 Zoning

Table 2-12 lists the zoning designations for the study area. These categories include the potential for a wide variety of land uses from agricultural to industrial. The array of residential districts includes large-lot requirements, small-lot requirements, and some apartments. The study area also contains some property zoned for mixed use.

2.10.6 Developments of Regional Impact

Several major land development projects classified as “Developments of Regional Impact” (DRI)⁷ have been proposed and/or constructed in the study area. Table 2-13 provides a list of DRIs within the study area filed with the ARC since the year 2000 by city and date of filing. These are shown geographically in Figure 2-20.

⁷ DRIs are large developments where the impacts on the surrounding community are reviewed by regional entities to ensure that the community's infrastructure is capable of managing the potential new users.