



Department of Transportation

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May 29, 2007

Thank you for attending the public hearing open house for the Northwest Corridor Project on I-75 and I-575. In this handout package you will find a project description with location map, a project need and purpose handout, right-of-way acquisition information, an environmental summary, a room layout map, a comment form, and a newsletter. The objectives of this public hearing open house are to allow you to view study area maps and displays and get information, review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and allow for comment on the DEIS.

As you enter the room, you will notice a special automated presentation that will give you an overview on the project. Additionally, there are aerial displays of the preliminary layout for the project along with display boards with additional information. Signage is placed throughout the room to guide you through the displays. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) representatives, identified by their name tags, are available to discuss the project and answer your questions. There will be no formal presentation.

As a convenience to you, we have provided a number of different ways for you to give us your comments on this project. A court reporter is available for those persons who would like to make a verbal statement about the project. You may also complete a comment card and deposit it into the box provided here or send in written comments about the project until July 13, 2007. Written statements may be submitted to:

Mr. Harvey D. Keepler,
State Environmental/Location Engineer,
Georgia Department of Transportation,
3993 Aviation Circle,
Atlanta, Georgia 30336-1593.

You may also submit your comments on the project web site at www.nwhovbrt.com or send an email to hov_brt_comments@projectsolvemail.com. You may also elect to leave a message on the project hotline at 404-377-4012. All comments will be made a part of the project record.

The displays at the public hearing open house and the DEIS document will be available until July 13, 2007 for review online at www.nwhovbrt.com and at the GDOT Cartersville District Engineers Office located at 500 Joe Frank Harris Parkway and the GDOT Marietta Area Engineers Office located at 862 Barnes Mill Road. The transcripts, as soon as they are prepared, will also be available at these locations.

In addition to the locations listed above, the DEIS document will also be available for review at:

- Atlanta-Fulton County Library, One Margaret Mitchell Square, Atlanta GA 30303
- Cobb County Library, 266 Roswell St, Marietta GA 30060
- Sequoyah Regional Library, 116 Brown Industrial Pkwy, Canton GA 30114
- City of Atlanta, Department of Planning, 55 Trinity Avenue, Suite 3350, Atlanta GA 30303
- City of Marietta, City Manager's Office, 205 Lawrence Street, Marietta GA 30060
- Cobb County, County Clerk's Office, 100 Cherokee Street, Marietta GA 30090
- Cobb County Department of Transportation, 1890 County Services Pkwy, Marietta, GA 30008
- Cherokee County, County Clerk's Office, 90 North St, Canton GA 30114

Again, thank you for attending this open house. We look forward to receiving any comments you may have on the DEIS.

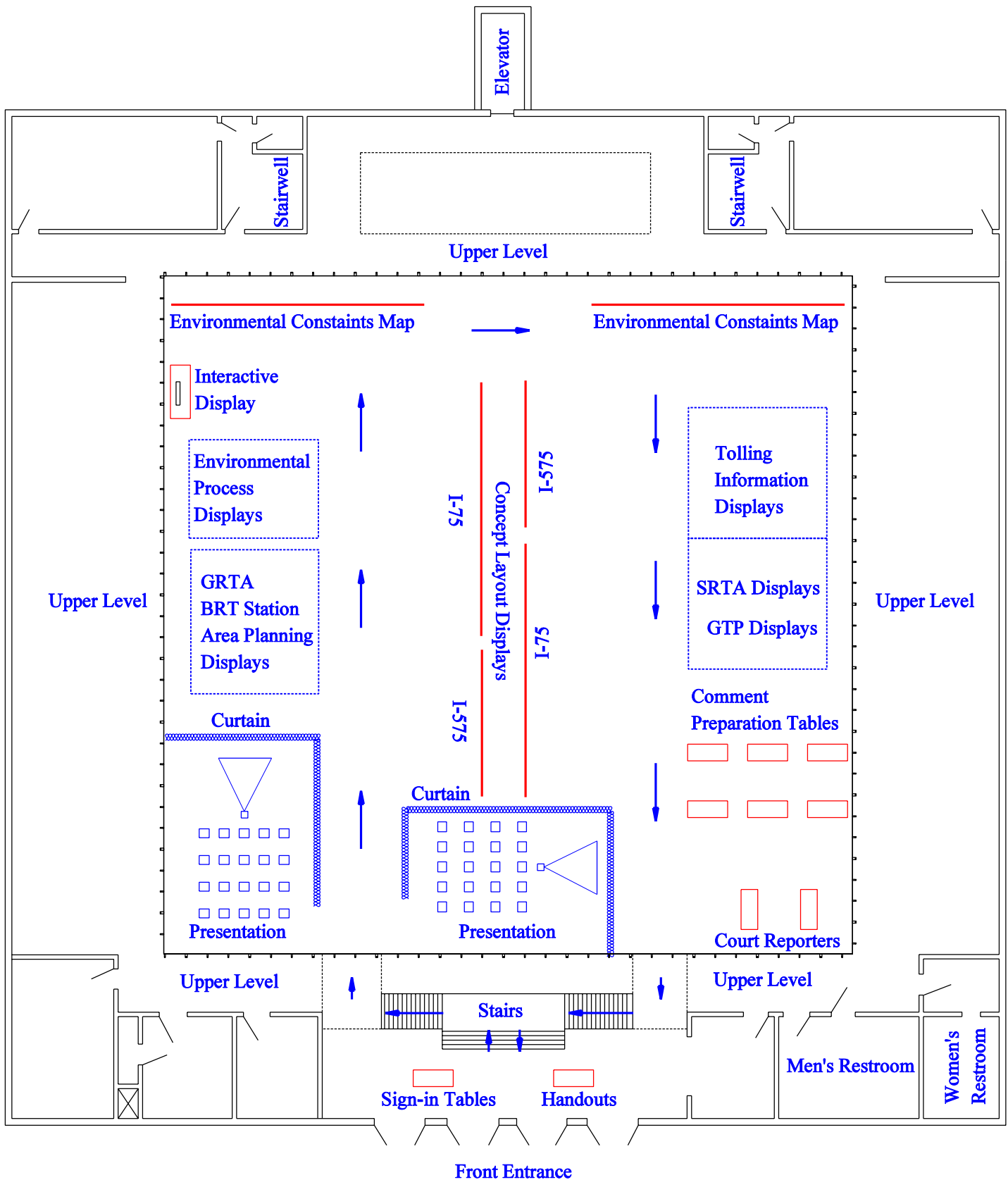
Sincerely,



Ben Buchan, P.E.
State Urban Design Engineer

HDK/khd

Cobb County Civic Center



PHOH Display Layout



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND NEED

Transportation-Related Problems in Study Corridor

The specific transportation problems in the corridor that contribute to the need for transportation improvements can be summarized as follows.

- Urban development in Cobb and Cherokee counties over the past decades has substantially increased traffic congestion on both I-75 and I-575. There are also segments of I-75 with design deficiencies that contribute to congestion and safety concerns. As a result, mobility has increasingly become difficult and time consuming for commuters and interstate travelers using I-75 and I-575 for travel within the region and Northwest Corridor. The congestion equally affects travel by autos, buses, and commercial vehicles.
- The availability of undeveloped land in the project study area and pressures for continued urbanization are projected to result in substantial increases in both population and employment, which would lead to even worse traffic congestion.
- Several major activity and employment centers are located along I-75, including downtown Atlanta, Midtown, Cumberland-Galleria, Marietta, and Town Center. The congestion on I-75 and I-575 affects access to and travel between these activity centers. Travel options other than by single-occupant auto on I-75 and I-575 are limited because of the lack of continuous high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and adequate transit connections between these centers.
- The Atlanta metropolitan area currently does not meet all of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The area has been designated as a non-attainment area for ground level ozone (smog) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) by the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Ozone is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrous oxides (NO_x) from vehicle emissions react under sunlight to form ozone (O₃). The combustion of fossil fuels by cars and trucks also accounts for a substantial portion of particulate matter, especially PM_{2.5}. These air quality concerns correlate to the substantial traffic congestion and regional patterns of land development.

Needs to be Addressed by Project

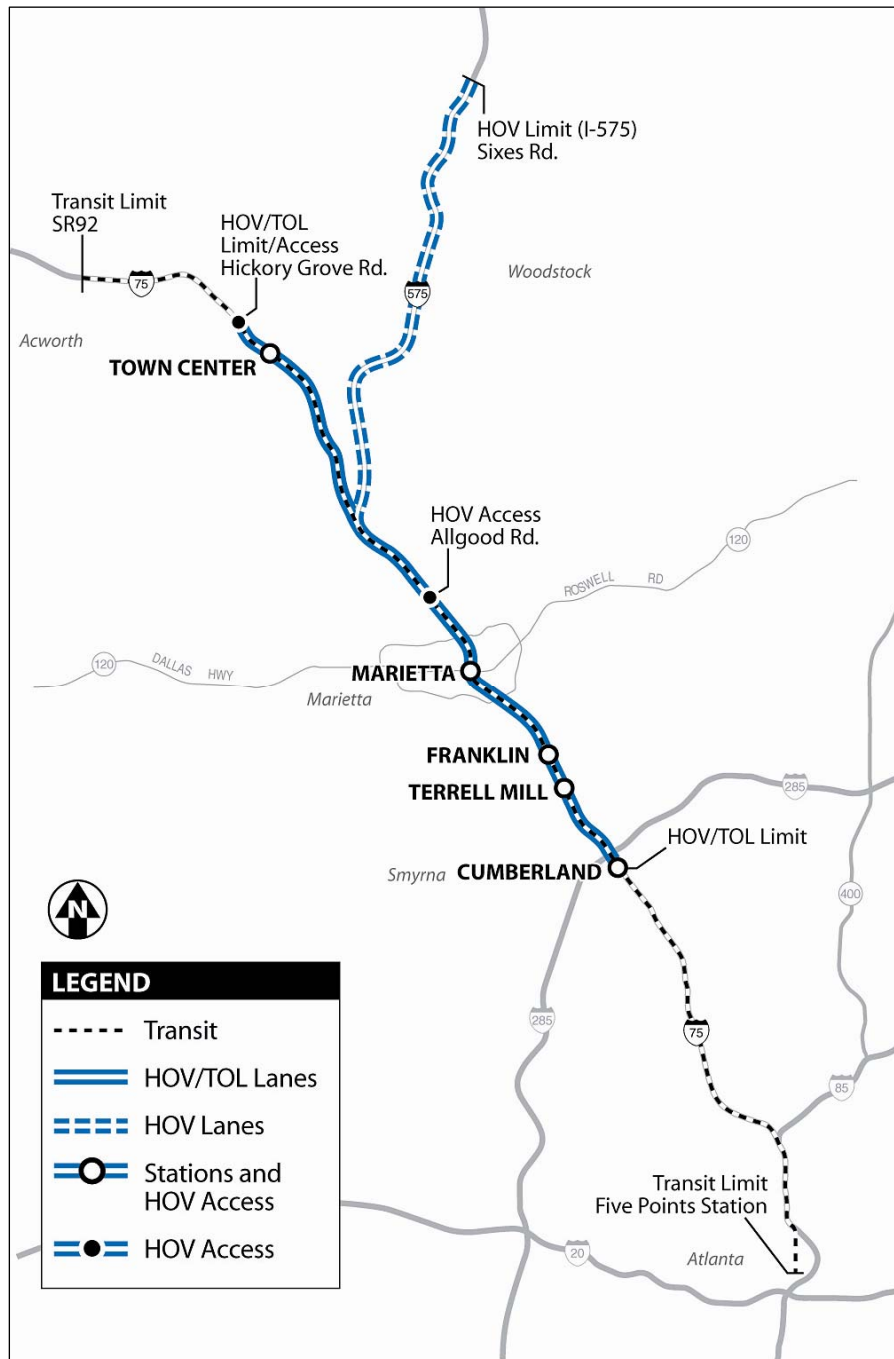
Transportation needs to be addressed by the alternatives are based on the transportation problems. They can be summarized as follows:

- Need to reduce congestion
- Need to improve mobility by reducing travel time and increasing reliability
- Need to improve access by improving connectivity between regional activity centers
- Need to improve safety by reducing existing roadway design deficiencies and congestion-related crashes
- Need to reduce vehicle emissions by improving vehicular travel efficiency and increasing the proportion of high-capacity vehicles



Project Description and Location Map

The Northwest Corridor Project proposes construction of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and Truck Only (TOL) lanes along I-75 from Akers Mill Road to Hickory Grove Road and implementation of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system along I-75 from Cobb County to Downtown Atlanta. BRT stations are proposed in Cobb County at Cumberland (Akers Mill Road), Terrell Mill Road, Franklin Road, Marietta (Roswell Road), and Town Center (Big Shanty Road). HOV lanes are also proposed on I-575 from the I-75/I-575 Interchange to Sixes Road in Cherokee County.



SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY FULTON, COBB, AND CHEROKEE COUNTIES

In compliance with the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act, the Georgia Department of Transportation has conducted an assessment of the social, economic and environmental effects for the proposed highway and transit improvements in the Northwest I-75/I-575 Corridor. The following information gives a summary of the environmental document.

Approximately 328 residential units and 48 businesses would be displaced by the proposed project. The roadway would be placed closer to remaining residences, and loss of yard area will occur. The proposed project would result in the loss of both residential and business frontage as well as some business parking. However, owners would be compensated for these losses.

In accordance with Executive Order 11990, the proposed project was surveyed for wetland involvement. The project was found to have negative impact on wetlands affecting 4.35 acres.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is in need of providing wetland mitigation for this project. Land for wetland mitigation, in the form of **degraded wetlands**:

1. **must be** relatively near the project (no greater than ten miles);
2. **must not** be existing wetlands or swamp (potential restoration areas should show signs of being previously ditched or drained or converted to non-wetland use such as agriculture or silvaculture); **and**,
3. **must be** easily accessible by local or state roads.

Anyone who has such property and would be willing to sell it to the state for wetland restoration, should send a letter, with a map (USGS Topographic Quad Sheet, County road map, or detailed drawing) clearly showing the location of the degraded wetland, to the address at the bottom of this summary.

In accordance with Executive Order 11988, the proposed project was surveyed for floodplain involvement. The proposed project would not significantly encroach upon the floodplain associated with the Chattahoochee and Etowah Rivers. The project would not have an adverse effect on water quality within the project corridor. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 individual permit would be required for this project.

The proposed project would not exceed state and federal air quality standards, and it is consistent with the State Implementation Plan for the attainment of clean air quality in the state. A PM_{2.5} hot-spot analysis will be prepared for the Final Environmental Impact Statement if the project is determined to be a project of air quality concern.

The construction of this project would result in a 10 decibel increase in traffic generated noise by the design year 2030, and 687 houses would approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria.

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the project has been surveyed for existing and eligible National Register properties. No existing or eligible historic or archaeological resources were found to be located within the project's area of potential environmental effect.

The proposed project would not affect any threatened or endangered plant or wildlife species, as none are located in or frequent the project area.

The project would not involve any farmland as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act, 7 CFR Part 658, due to the land in this corridor being in or committed to urban development.

The proposed project has been surveyed for potential sites where contaminated soil and/or water from leaking underground storage tanks may exist. The 26 potential sites that were identified are being further investigated. If contaminants are found, avoidance alternates may be considered, or applicable laws and regulations concerning the removal of toxic or hazardous material will be coordinated with the Environmental Protection Division.

Copies of the environmental document are available at this hearing for your review or by sending your request to:

Mr. Harvey D. Keepler
State Environmental/Location Engineer
Georgia Department of Transportation
3993 Aviation Circle
Atlanta, Georgia 30336-1593

Right-Of-Way Acquisition
Project NHS-0001-00(919), CSNHS-0006-00(417), CSNHS-0006-00(418),
CSNHS-0006-00(419), NH-575-01(28), NH-73-3(242), AND CSMSL-0008-
00(404), P.I. NO. 0001919, 0006417, 0006418, 0006419, 713640, 714130,
008404, Cobb and Cherokee Counties

The Georgia Department of Transportation has the responsibility once a project is approved, of appraising, purchasing property and, if required, assisting individuals, families or businesses in relocating. When purchasing property, we desire to pay full market value for the necessary property. This value will be established by using qualified real estate appraisers who will prepare, for the Department's use, written appraisals using actual sales data in the surrounding community.

In making an appraisal, the appraiser will contact each property owner and arrange a convenient time to make an on-site inspection of the property with him or her. After completion of the appraisal, our right-of-way appraisal staff will review and field check the findings for accuracy to ensure that all things relating to value have been considered in establishing the amount to be offered. When only a part of the property is needed, we will purchase that part plus pay for loss of value, if any, to the remaining property. In all cases, when the Department purchases property, we will make additional payments to property owners for the cost of transferring ownership to the Georgia Department of Transportation. These costs generally include transfer taxes, deed-recording fees, mortgage pre-payment penalties and the pro-rata share of city or county taxes.

The Department is aware of the problems experienced by individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofit organizations when they are required to move. It is our commitment that no family or individual will be required to relocate until comparable decent, safe and sanitary housing is available or is provided for those occupants.

Additionally, the Department will provide assistance to businesses and nonprofit organizations in relocating to other sites and will encourage them to remain in the community.

The information pamphlet "What Happens When Your Property is Needed for a Transportation Facility" is available at the entrance, and this booklet outlines the services offered and any payments for which you may be eligible, such as moving expenses and replacement housing benefits for owners and tenants. The brochure also outlines the eligibility requirements for receiving these payments.

Results of the field inspection by Department of Transportation Personnel have revealed that there will be 328 residential and 48 business(es) that will be required to relocate.

It is important to remember that the Department is committed to the principle that no one will be required to relocate until housing is available, or, if there is no housing available, until provisions have been made by the Department to provide housing. It is also important to remember that all displacees will be given sufficient advance notice of the Department's intention to purchase any property in order to allow sufficient time in which to relocate.

The Department of Transportation District 6 and 7 offices will be in charge of acquiring the necessary right-of-way for this project. The contact for the District 6 office, located in Cartersville, GA, is Rick Brock, (770)387-3658. The contacts for the District 7 office, located in Chamblee, GA, are Bruce Savage, (770)986-1557 and Sherry Phillips, (770) 986-1556.

