



Northwest Corridor Project I-75 and I-575

Public Information Open House

November 15, 2005

Welcome to the public information open house for the Northwest Corridor project. We hope that you will find the information provided in this presentation and in the displays helpful. Several public meetings about this project have already been held. If you missed the first events, don't be concerned – we will reiterate the important points and update you as we go along. The presentation will last just a few minutes and will help you become more informed about this important project and better understand the issues so that you can become an informed participant in the process of developing transportation improvements for the I-75 and I-575 corridors. The improvements are designed to provide more transportation choices and improve mobility on the corridors.



Purpose of the Meeting

- Project Background
- Discuss the Current State of the Project
- Discuss the EIS Process
- Present Alternatives being Considered
- Obtain Comments from the Public

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to describe the background planning efforts leading up to the current project as well as recent activities associated with the combined High Occupancy Vehicle, Bus Rapid Transit and truck only lane project. The meeting will provide some detail on the Environmental Impact Statement preparation process, discuss the options under consideration and ask for your input on improvements to the alternatives and issues of concern that should be addressed in the EIS.



Public Input

- We are interested in your opinion
- Options for providing input
 - Court Reporter
 - Comment forms
 - By email – send comments to hov_brt_comments@projectsolvemail.com
 - Visit our Web site at www.nwhovbrt.com
 - Call our Voice Mail Hotline at (404) 377-4012

We are interested in your comments on this project. There are several options for you to let us know what you think. Each comment you provide will become part of the official record of the meeting and each question or comment will be answered individually. There are court reporters on site this evening if you wish to express your comments verbally. You may talk with one of them and your comments will be transcribed and made a part of the record. Alternatively, you may fill out the comment form provided as you entered the site. You can also email us at the address shown, visit our website, which has a comment page or call our hotline number and leave a message. The email address, web site address and hotline number are provided in the handout package. Either way, we encourage and welcome your input.



Displays and Additional Information

- Lane Configuration Options
- Concept Roadway Layouts
- Typical Section Information
- BRT Station Layouts
- BRT Station Area Planning
- SRTA Information Booth
- GTP Information Booth

As you return to the meeting area, you will see several new displays of various HOV and truck only lane configuration options. One representative option is presented on aerial photography. Some of these displays are very detailed. They attempt to visually convey the impacts associated with each of the options under consideration. The matching typical sections for each option should aid in understanding the concepts. Please take a few minutes to look over this information and feel free to ask questions.

There is also a display area about the Station Area Planning process. This process, which was temporarily stopped with the recent addition of truck only lanes has been underway since March 2005 and will continue very soon.

There are individuals from GDOT and the consultant staff at each of the display areas. These individuals will be able to help you with your comments.

You will also find information booths for the State Road and Tollway Authority and Georgia Transportation Partners. The SRTA staff can provide information about the potential benefits of truck only lanes. GTP, the successful proposer for the Public Private Initiative on the corridor can provide information on innovative ways to deliver the project in a more timely fashion than conventional construction methods allow.



Project Overview

OK, lets get started.

If you have been involved with the project since the beginning, you know that the Northwest Corridor Project has evolved over the period of time since it was first envisioned. It has grown in scope from a simple to a very complex project.



Brief Project History

- Begun by GDOT as a simple extension of the HOV system along I-75 and I-575 in November 2001
- The project was combined with the Northwest Connectivity Study prepared by GRTA in May 2004 to include Bus Rapid Transit on the I-75 corridor
- In response to the HOT/TOT Study by SRTA the project was modified in August 2005 to include truck only lanes on the I-75 corridor

Let's talk briefly about the history of the project.

The Georgia Department of Transportation project to improve the I-75 corridor began as a simple widening project to extend the existing HOV system from its current terminus at Akers Mill Road to Wade Green Road. It also included adding HOV lanes on I-575 from the I-75 Interchange to Sixes Road. Work began on mapping and concept development at the end of November 2001.

Concurrently, during the same basic time frame, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority was exploring transit related improvements in the same general area in the northwestern portion of the metropolitan Atlanta Area. The Northwest Connectivity Study concluded with the selection of Bus Rapid Transit operating in the HOV lanes along I-75 as the preferred alternative.

Realizing that there were many common goals associated with the two projects, the decision was made by GDOT and GRTA to combine the projects from a design and environmental documentation standpoint. Work began on this combined project in May 2004.

As the combined project was being developed, the State Road and Tollway Authority published draft reports on two studies in the Atlanta region in April 2005. They were entitled "High Occupancy Toll Lanes Potential for Implementation in the Atlanta Region" and "Truck Only Toll Facilities Potential for Implementation in the Atlanta Region". Collectively, these reports are known as the HOT/TOT Study. The study concluded that the addition of truck only lanes to the Interstate corridors outside the Perimeter could produce substantial travel time savings for motorists in the general purpose lanes. It makes sense that removing a significant percentage of the large trucks with trailers from the general purpose lanes will help since these vehicles do not respond readily to speed changes and make lane changes difficult. The HOT/TOT Study basically reached the same conclusion.

So, in August 2005, GDOT made the decision to add truck only lanes to the study on the I-75 corridor. Work began immediately on adding truck only lanes to the roadway and BRT station concepts and modifying the already completed chapters of the Draft EIS.



PPI Proposal

- A Public Private Initiative proposal was submitted by Georgia Transportation Partners in November 2004
- Existing general purpose lanes remain free
- Add new congestion-priced express toll lanes to I-75 and I-575.
- BRT shares use of HOV system without tolls
- Option to toll truck only lanes
- Financed by Federal and State funds and toll revenue backed bonds
- Completion of construction would be considerably sooner than traditional approach to construction
- Provide reliable trip times on BRT or managed HOV lanes

It is also very important to note that, along with physical changes, a new element has been added to the approach to this project.

In November 2004, Georgia Transportation Partners, a team of national and local private transportation builders, submitted a proposal to GDOT for the improvements on the Northwest Corridor.

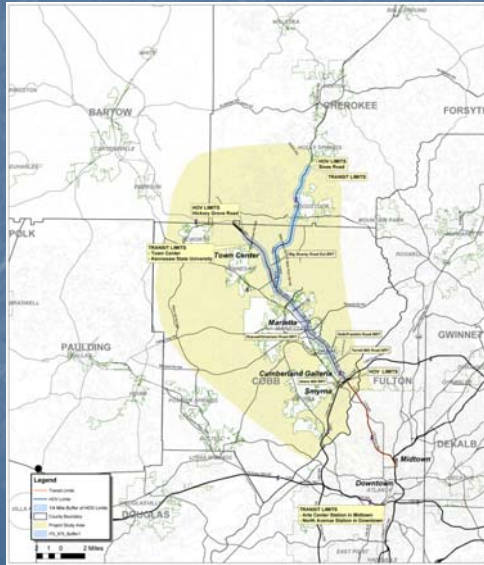
The GTP proposal was submitted to GDOT under the recently enacted Public-Private Initiatives legislation. Under its proposal, GTP would design and build the project, and tolls would be collected by the State. The project would be financed through a mix of federal funds, toll-backed revenue bonds and state sources. Under the public-private initiative approach, GTP proposes to save both time and money over the traditional transportation project development process to provide reliable trip times on the BRT and HOV systems.

The proposal is currently under review by GDOT. If approved, the proposed concepts would build on the concept and environmental work being conducted through the existing Northwest Corridor Project.

Please plan to visit the booth about the GTP proposal available at this meeting, review the information they have and ask questions of the GTP staff to find out more about this innovative approach to implementing major infrastructure improvements.



Project Location and Study Area



- ◆ HOV/TOL and BRT Stations on I-75 from Akers Mill Rd to Hickory Grove Road
- ◆ HOV Lanes on I-575 from I-75 to Sixes Road
- ◆ Additional bus routes in Downtown Atlanta
- ◆ Additional bus bays at Arts Center Marta Station
- ◆ Bus stops on Northside Drive and at Atlantic Station

The resultant study area after all of the modifications to date is indicated on this graphic. The limits on the I-75 corridor were extended beyond Wade Green Road to Hickory Grove Road, just over a mile, when the truck only lanes were added. The reason for this is to create a more logical point to end the HOV and truck only lanes under consideration.

From the beginning the decision, to separate HOV access points from the general purpose interchanges has been a part of the fabric of this project. The reason for this is that it is not appropriate to add HOV access points to already congested general purpose interchanges, so this approach was avoided by creating new HOV interchanges separate from the general purpose interchanges. The northern terminus at Wade Green Road does not match this logic, so moving to Hickory Grove Road which does not currently provide access and creating another HOV access point there was a logical decision. Additionally, the potential to locate a bus park and ride facility at that point swayed the decision. Also, the wide median (about 350 feet) just north of Hickory Grove Road could accommodate a toll plaza for the truck only lanes, if that is required.

The extension of the project to the south when the BRT project was added was required to create the connection to Marta at the existing Arts Center Station and the existing Five Points Marta Station. While no additional road construction is planned on I-75 south of Akers Mill Road, additional bus stops along Northside Drive, at Atlantic Station and elsewhere further south to Five Points Station will be put in place along with improvements at the Arts Center Marta Station to expand the number of bus bays to address the additional bus traffic expected.



The I-575 Corridor

- One HOV lane in each direction from I-75 to Sixes Road
- A system to system interchange at I-75 will accommodate general purpose lanes, TO lanes and HOV lanes for access between the two corridors
- Almost all of the proposed elements can be accommodated in the existing median
- HOV access points are planned at Big Shanty Road, Shallowford Road and Dupree Road

Lets start our detailed discussion of the project by first addressing the I-575 corridor. From the beginning the HOV system on the I-575 corridor has been proposed as the addition of a single HOV lane in each direction. The new truck only lanes proposed on I-75 will affect I-575 slightly by the addition of a truck only access to and from the I-75 corridor at the I-75/I-575 Interchange.

The concept of placing one HOV lane in each direction on I-575 can be accommodated in the existing median without significant physical impacts along the corridor. The median width is such that little new right of way will be required except for the possibility of minor requirements at the new HOV access points planned at Big Shanty Road, Shallowford Road and Dupree Road. This is basically the same concept you have seen at our public meetings since the beginning.



HOV/TOL Lane Location Options

Now lets talk about how all of the elements that are under consideration can be accommodated on the I-75 corridor.



The I-75 Corridor

- The number of general purpose lanes in each direction at any given point will not be decreased
- Two HOV Lanes in each direction on I-75 from I-285 to I-575 and one HOV lane in each direction from I-575 to Hickory Grove Road
- Two Truck only lanes in each direction on I-75 from I-285 to Hickory Grove Rd
- Five Bus Rapid Transit stations with buses operating in the HOV lanes

As you might imagine, the I-75 corridor is not quite as simple as I-575. All of the traffic streams must be accommodated. The new project footprint will require:

- The number general purpose lanes in each direction at any given point will not be decreased
- Two Truck only lanes in each direction between the project limits
- Two HOV lanes in each direction between I-285 and I-575
- One HOV lane in each direction north of I-575

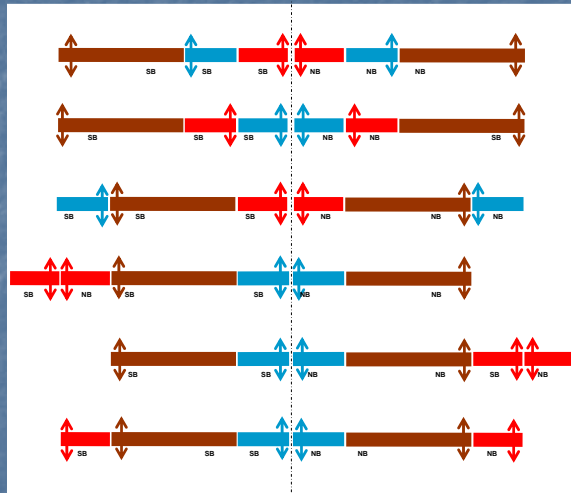
Each of the traffic streams will be separated by a barrier.

Additionally, five Bus Rapid Transit stations will be added.



Lane Location Configurations
on I-75 from I-285 to I-575

1. HOV lanes in the center with truck lanes to the outside between the HOV and general purpose lanes.
2. Truck lanes in the center with HOV lanes to the outside between the HOV and general purpose lanes.
3. HOV lanes in the center with truck lanes split to both east and west of the roadway.
4. HOV lanes on west side of the roadway and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.
5. HOV lanes on east side of the roadway and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.
6. HOV lanes split to both east and west and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.



LEGEND:
 General Purpose Lanes
 HOV Lanes
 Truck Only Lanes
 Interchange Ramp

0 50 100 150 200 250 300

There are a number of possibilities for accommodating this new project footprint. These simplified cross sections attempt to illustrate several, but not necessarily all, of the possible solutions over the next few slides.

The colors represent the lane types with red being the HOV lanes, blue the truck only lanes and brown the general purpose lanes. The vertical dashed line represents the existing project centerline. The colored arrows represent access ramps schematically. Option 3, which would place the HOV lanes in the center and split the truck only lanes on either side, is highlighted in red to draw your attention to it. We will discuss it further as we go along.



Lane Location Configurations

7. HOV and truck lanes split to both east and west.



8. HOV lanes on west and truck lanes on east.



9. HOV lanes on east and truck lanes on west.



10. HOV lanes on west and truck lanes on west between HOV and general purpose lanes.



11. Truck lanes on west and HOV lanes on west between truck and general purpose lanes.



12. HOV lanes on west and truck lanes split to both east and west.



LEGEND:
 General Purpose Lanes
 HOV Lanes
 Truck Only Lanes
 Interchange Ramp

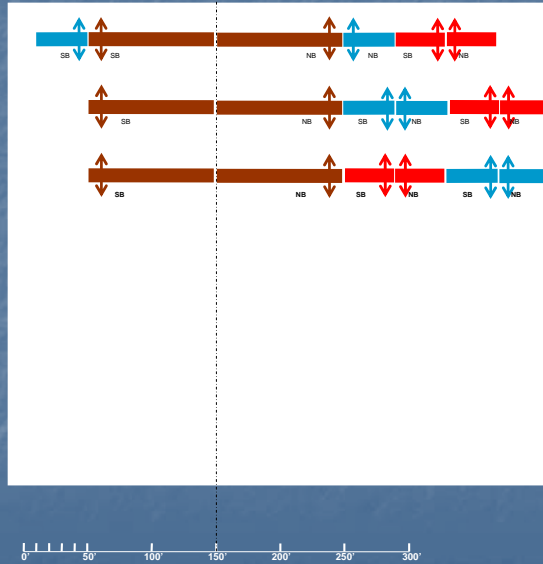


Note that these sections assume that the existing centerline of I-75 will be maintained in its current location. This requires asymmetrical widening off to one side in some cases with significant impacts on one side of the alignment and none on the other as indicated with Options 10 and 11.



Lane Location Configurations on I-75 from I-285 to I-575

- 13. HOV lanes on east and truck lanes split to both east and west.
- 14. HOV lanes on east and truck lanes on east between HOV and general purpose lanes.
- 15. Truck lanes on east and HOV lanes between truck and general purpose lanes



This is a problem especially since the existing right of way along the corridor varies significantly and can be much wider on one side than the other. Based on this, it appears to be a logical conclusion that centering the roadway “footprint” within the existing right of way would be something to be seriously considered if we are to make the most of the existing right of way.



Previous Concept with HOV/BRT only

- Attempted to preserve the existing paving
- Minimized pavement replacement wherever possible
- Preserved space to correct deficiencies on the corridor for the outside HOV placement concepts

As mentioned, previous concepts prior to the advent of the truck only lanes attempted to preserve the existing paving by widening symmetrically, or off to one side in relation to the existing centerline. Also, the addition of the new lanes proposed a gap between the existing and proposed lanes to allow room in the future to correct deficiencies that currently exist on the corridor.



Existing Deficiencies Include

- Lane capacity
- Substandard shoulder widths
- Substandard horizontal clearances
- Narrow lane widths
- Substandard loop ramp radii
- Inadequate weaving distances
- Substandard Clearances
- Substandard entrance ramp tapers
- Interchange spacing

Those deficiencies include among other things, the items listed. Some of the deficiencies such as lane width, shoulder width, horizontal and vertical clearances, loop ramp radii, etc, represent safety issues that will be addressed as part of the work proposed to add the new HOV and truck only lanes. Other issues such as interchange spacing would require more far reaching solutions than are practical to address as part of this project.



Current Concepts with HOV/BRT/TOL

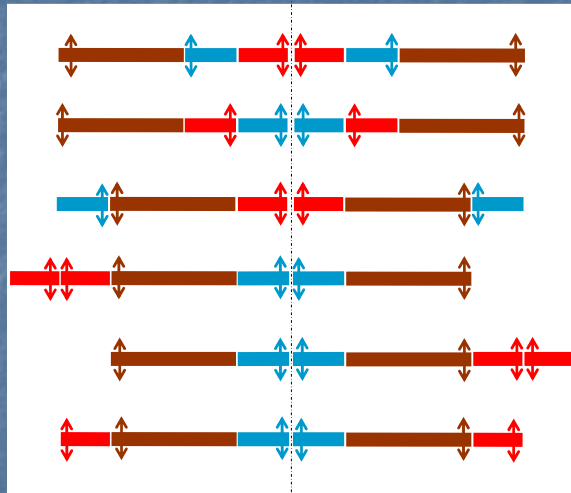
- Varying the project centerline:
 - Maximizes use of existing right of way
 - Results in similar impacts on both sides of the corridor
- Increased opportunity to correct safety related deficiencies

The increased width of the proposed “footprint” of the project strongly suggests that varying the centerline location during construction of the new lanes would result in more balanced impacts and could help avoid significant impacts altogether in some areas. It also provides the opportunity to address the safety issues. For these and other reasons such as minimizing the cost of purchasing right of way for the project, this strategy was adopted for development of the new project concept.



Lane Location Configurations on I-75 from I-285 to I-575

1. HOV lanes in the center with truck lanes to the outside between the HOV and general purpose lanes.
2. Truck lanes in the center with HOV lanes to the outside between the HOV and general purpose lanes.
3. HOV lanes in the center with truck lanes split to both east and west of the roadway.
4. HOV lanes on west side of the roadway and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.
5. HOV lanes on east side of the roadway and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.
6. HOV lanes split to both east and west and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.



LEGEND:
General Purpose Lanes
HOV Lanes
Truck Only Lanes
Interchange Ramp

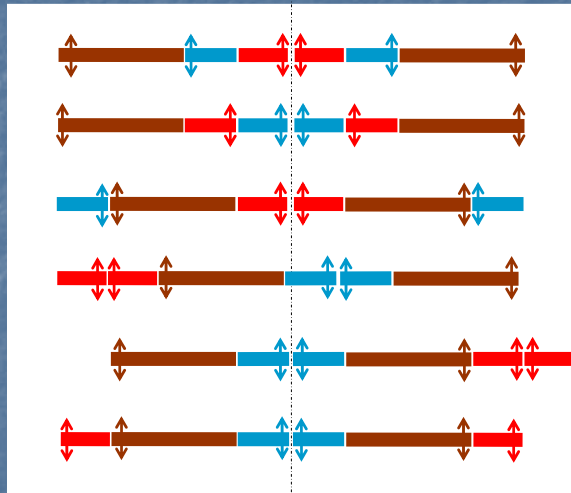


In order to illustrate the new approach to centering the roadway, let's go back to the illustration of the first six lane configurations and move Option 4 so that it lines up with the symmetrical concepts.



Lane Location Configurations
on I-75 from I-285 to I-575

1. HOV lanes in the center with truck lanes to the outside between the HOV and general purpose lanes.
2. Truck lanes in the center with HOV lanes to the outside between the HOV and general purpose lanes.
3. HOV lanes in the center with truck lanes split to both east and west of the roadway.
4. HOV lanes on west side of the roadway and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.
5. HOV lanes on east side of the roadway and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.
6. HOV lanes split to both east and west and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.



LEGEND:
 General Purpose Lanes
 HOV Lanes
 Truck Only Lanes
 Interchange Ramp

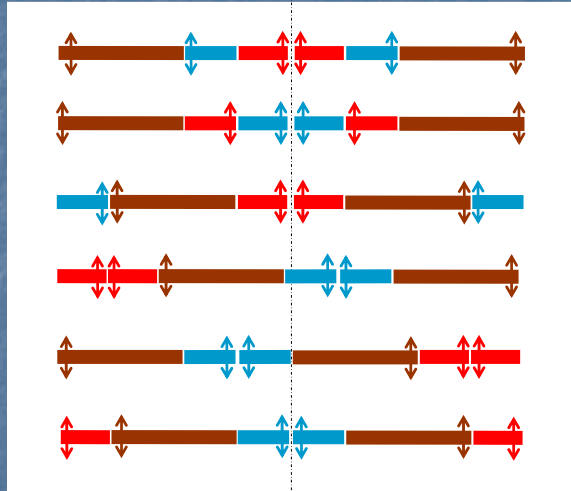


Now lets do the same with Option 5.



Lane Location Configurations on I-75 from I-285 to I-575

1. HOV lanes in the center with truck lanes to the outside between the HOV and general purpose lanes.
2. Truck lanes in the center with HOV lanes to the outside between the HOV and general purpose lanes.
3. HOV lanes in the center with truck lanes split to both east and west of the roadway.
4. HOV lanes on west side of the roadway and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.
5. HOV lanes on east side of the roadway and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.
6. HOV lanes split to both east and west and truck lanes in the center of the roadway.



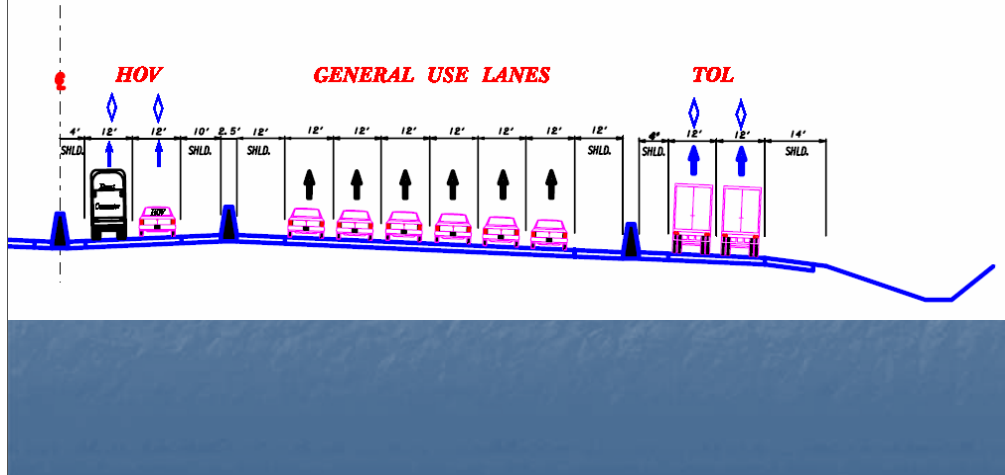
LEGEND:
General Purpose Lanes
HOV Lanes
Truck Only Lanes
Interchange Ramp

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Notice that if maintaining the centerline is not an absolute requirement, the proposed outside edges of paving line up. So, taking this approach would indicate that all of the configurations under consideration are basically the same and differ only in how the use of the lanes inside the paved area is designated. Based on this, we just need to establish the outside edges of pavement to determine the impacts on the corridor regardless of how we use the lanes inside these limits. This is, as you might imagine, an oversimplification and there will be cases where the proposed roadway will be offset to one side or the other to avoid a given feature on the corridor.



***I-75 NORTHBOUND with INSIDE HOV and OUTSIDE TOL
TYPICAL HALF SECTION***



Here is a better illustration of the cross section of Option 3. Since truck lanes have traditionally been designated as the outside lanes, Lane Location Option 3 appears to be a logical choice for exploring the impacts associated with the HOV/BRT/TOL configuration. Note that this illustration is only one half of the section information for simplicity. The other half is just a mirror image of what you see here. The HOV lanes will be in the center and the truck only lanes on the outside. The number of general purpose lanes at any point on the corridor will be replicated.

It bears repeating that the existing right of way on the I-75 corridor is not uniform. This is not unusual for roadways in general and I-75 is no exception. The I-75 right of way is wider on one side or the other in most areas due to the terrain or some other aspect that was taken into account when the roadway was initially constructed. As noted, if the Interstate centerline can be relocated slightly to take advantage of the existing right of way that currently exists on the corridor, the impacts associated with the project can be basically equal on each side. Of course there are areas on the corridor where this doesn't work very well but as a general rule it appears to be a reasonable starting point.

The layout graphics you will see here tonight in the displays reflect HOV/BRT on the inside, truck only lanes on the outside and a centered footprint where possible.

You have no doubt noticed that each of the traffic streams are separated by a physical barrier. This can create problems with the traditional methods of handling incidents on the corridor.



Incident Management

- New barrier separated approach raises new issues for addressing accidents
- Critical planning for accidents required
- Planning for accident location identification using the ATMS system and GDOT TOC personnel and HERO Units
- Planning for State, Fulton County, Cobb County, Cherokee County, the City of Atlanta and City of Marietta involvement as responders

With the barrier separated HOV and TOL systems proposed and the limited access points associated with each one, incident management becomes a significant issue. It is absolutely essential that a plan for responding to accidents on the corridors be prepared. This will require the use of all the resources available in the region to identify the specifics of the accident location, identify the appropriate facilities for treatment of accident victims, notify the facilities, arrange for transportation of victims and finally efficiently clear the accident to minimize disruption to traffic flow. GDOT is currently overseeing preparation of the appropriate Incident Management Plan to deal with this important issue which will involve the existing GDOT Traffic Operations Center, State HERO units, Fulton County, Cobb County, Cherokee County the City of Atlanta, the City of Marietta and others.

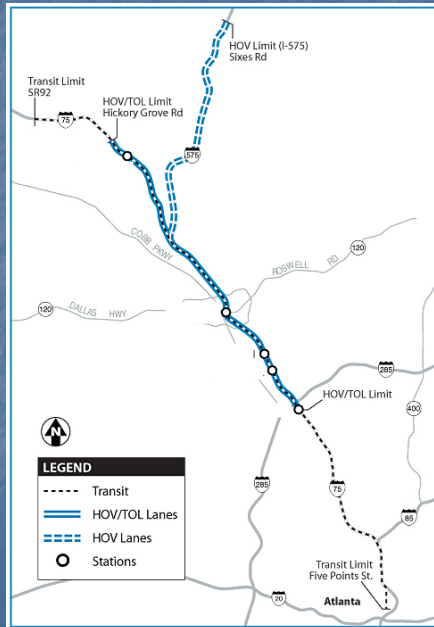


HOV Access Points and Bus Rapid Transit Station Locations

The addition of the new HOV system requires HOV access points. BRT stations will typically be located there. The new HOV interchanges will be located as follows:



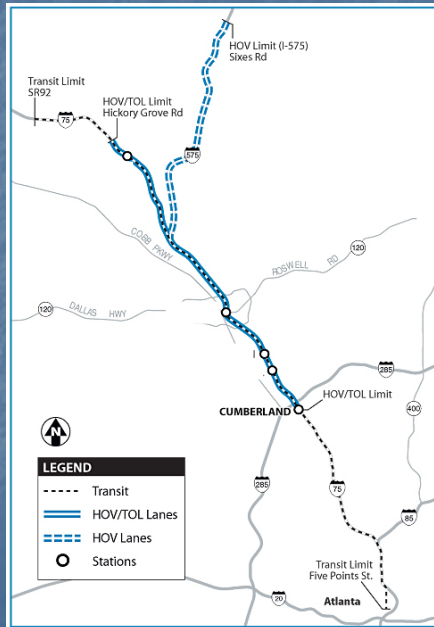
HOV Access and BRT Stations



A new BRT station will be added at Akers Mill Road. The existing HOV access at Akers Mill would be modified to add the north facing ramps to match the existing south facing ramps.



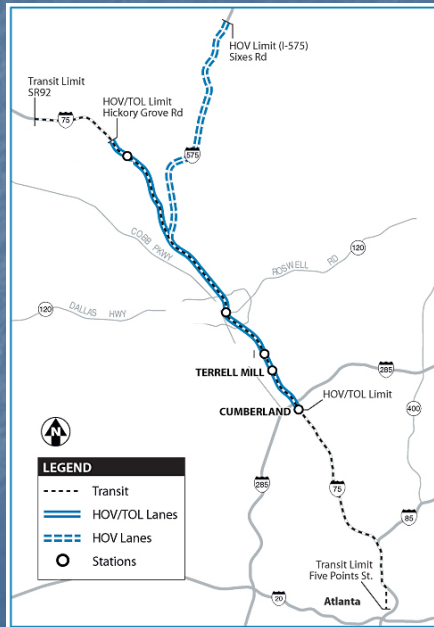
HOV Access and BRT Stations



A new HOV access point and BRT station will be added at Terrell Mill Rd



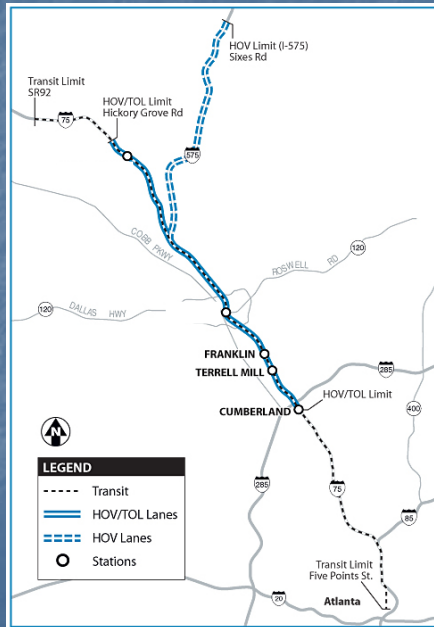
HOV Access and BRT Stations



A new BRT station and HOV access point will be added midway between Delk Road and South Marietta Pkwy.



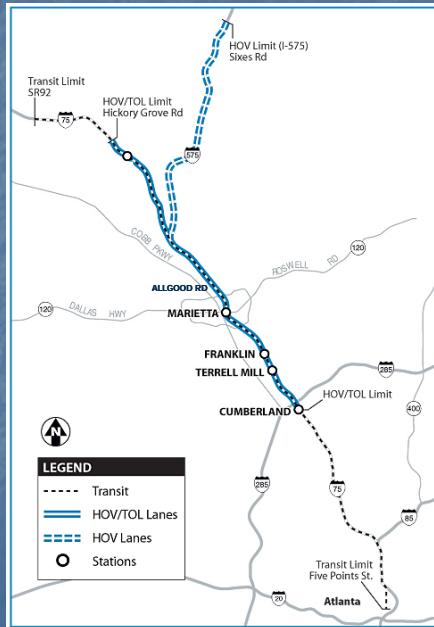
HOV Access and BRT Stations



A new HOV access point and BRT station will be added at Roswell Rd.



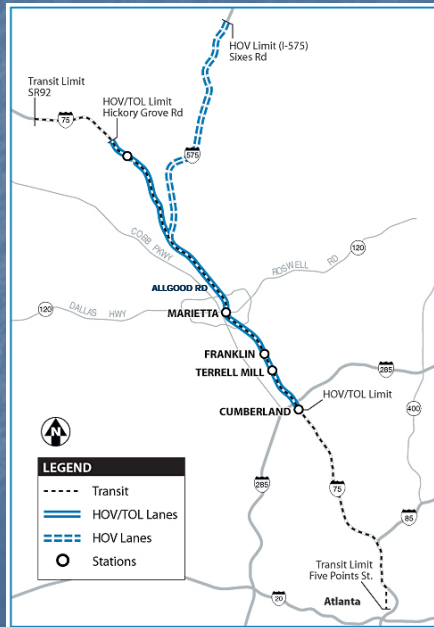
HOV Access and BRT Stations



While a new HOV access point will be created at Allgood Rd, no BRT station will be provided there.



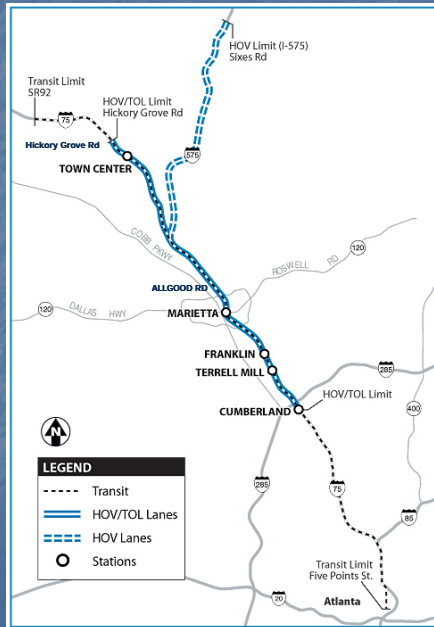
HOV Access and BRT Stations



A new BRT station and HOV access point will be created between the new Big Shanty Rd extension across I-75 and Chastain Rd near Town Center.



HOV Access and BRT Stations



Finally, a new HOV access point will be created at Hickory Grove Road.

It should be noted that while they are not shown here, I-575 would also have new HOV access points located at Big Shanty Rd, Shallowford Road and Dupree Rd. No BRT stations are planned on I-575, however.



Station Area Planning

As part of the development of each of the BRT stations, Station Area Planning meetings for the I-75 corridor were conducted over several months beginning in March of this year. Information was presented on land use in the general vicinity of each proposed BRT station site and the public was asked to comment on how they would like to see the stations developed.



Station Area Development Planning Meeting Objectives

- Provide background and status
- Refine understanding of issues
- Gather input from the participants
- Provide background from previous meetings
- Continue discussion
- Respond to questions
- Encourage future participation

The meeting objectives shown here were the guiding principles for the meetings. Prior to the truck only lane study, the information presented did not include station layouts. The discussions were general in nature to provide an understanding of the process. Now that the lane requirements are known, and the stations concepts have been prepared, the proposed layouts can be presented in future SADP meetings for public comment. We encourage you to visit the Station Area Development Planning displays and sign up for participation in these important workshops that will help us shape the BRT designs to reflect the land use best suited for the various communities.



BRT Stations

- Town Center Station
Big Shanty Road Extension at I-75 near Town Center
- Marietta Station
Between Roswell Road and Gresham Road on I-75
- Franklin Station
Midway between Delk Road and South Marietta Parkway on I-75
- Terrell Mill Station
Terrell Mill Road at I-75
- Cumberland Station
Akers Mill Road at I-75

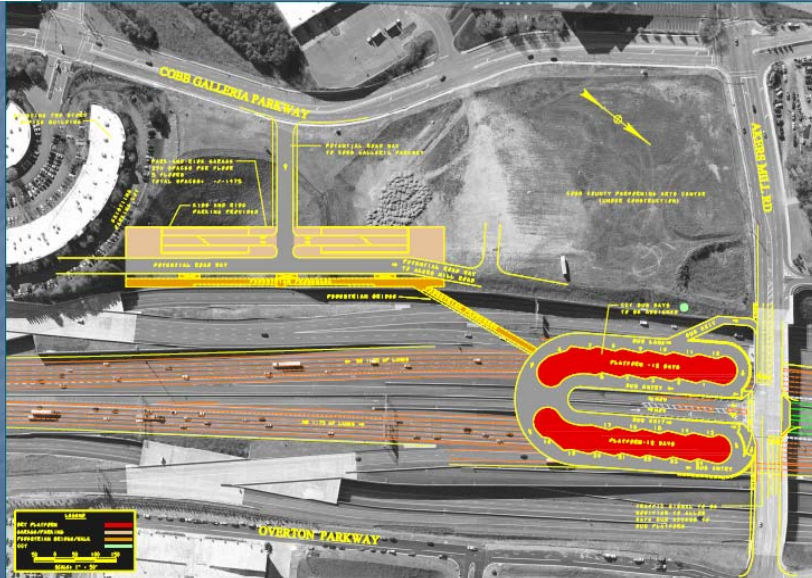
The five BRT stations proposed have been designated with names that reflect the surrounding landmarks. The layout graphics presented here tonight illustrate the specific locations of these stations being considered.

It should be noted that BRT stations at Allgood Road and Bells Ferry Road were also proposed but input from the public during the Station Area Planning public meetings and from the Cobb County Commission indicated that these stations would not be acceptable to the affected communities. Therefore, they were deleted from further consideration.

Detailed layouts are provided for each of the proposed BRT stations at the Station Area Planning Displays. There are representatives from Georgia Regional Transportation Authority and others in the display area who will be able to answer any questions you may have. Briefly, the station concepts are as follows:



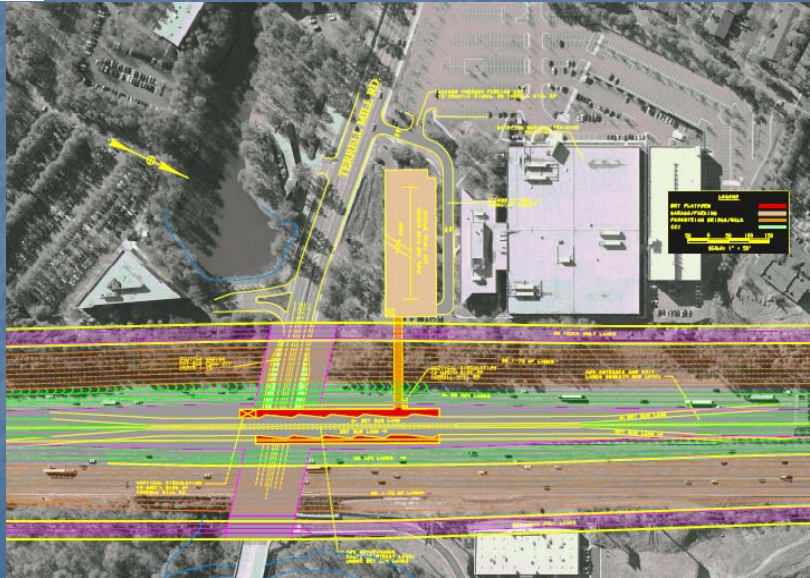
Cumberland Station



Cumberland Station is an important part of the BRT system in the area. It is the hub between the I-75 BRT and the future I-285 BRT system as well as the CCT transfer center to be relocated from behind Cumberland Mall. The bus platform would be constructed on a bridge structure over I-75 on the south side of Akers Mill Road. Bus operations would drop off and pick up passengers on this platform. Parking would be provided in a new parking deck on the west side of I-75 south of the Performing Arts Center currently under construction.



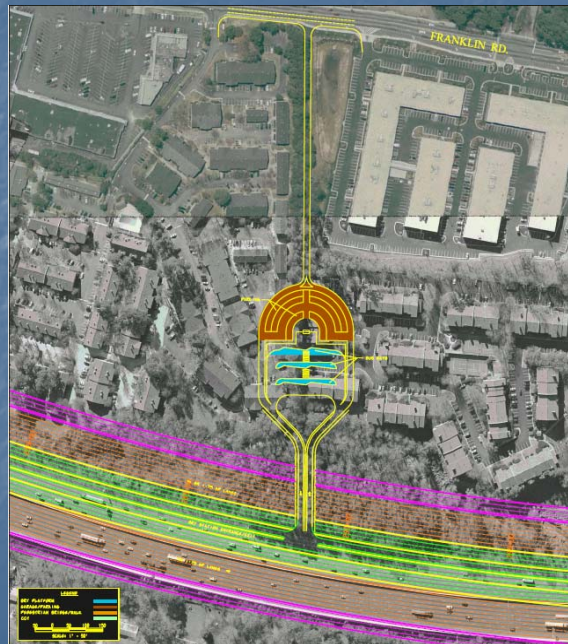
Terrell Mill Station



The Terrell Mill Station would be a center access facility in the median of I-75 with a parking deck on the west side and a pedestrian access bridge over the southbound lanes of I-75.



Franklin Station

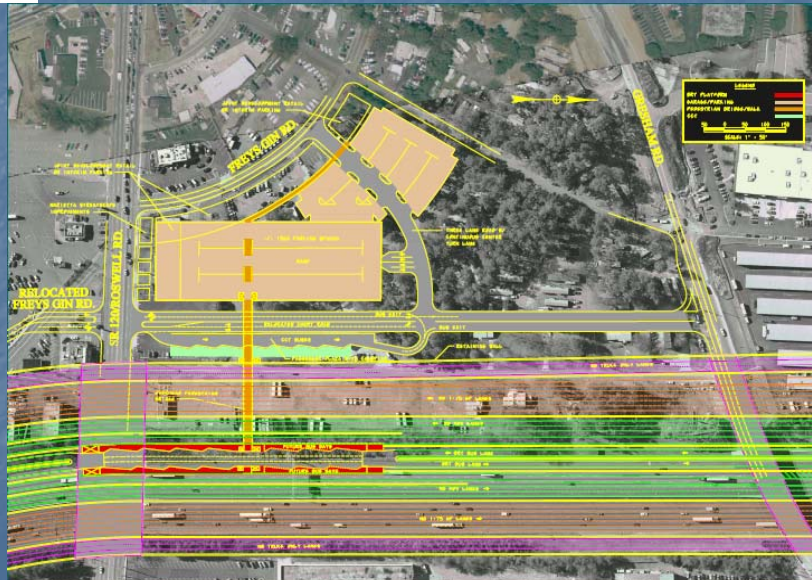


The Franklin Station concept reflects the results of the Livable Communities Initiatives Study prepared by the City of Marietta. This study looked at land use in the area along Franklin Road east of I-75 between Delk Road and South Marietta Parkway.

This station requires removing several apartment buildings and relocating those families. An earlier alternative closer to Delk Road would relocate fewer families, but would have been less convenient to the neighborhood.



Marietta Station



Marietta Station would be located in the center of I-75 at Roswell Road with a new HOV access point. The parking deck would be on the west with a pedestrian bridge. The light green bus platforms shown are for local bus traffic.



Town Center Station



The Town Center BRT station would be located between the Big Shanty Road extension and existing Chastain Road. The bus platform and the parking deck would be offline on the east side of I-75 as indicated.



Draft EIS Update

OK, let's talk about how to advance the environmental documentation to get the project back on track.

With the modification of the project to include truck only lanes several changes have been made.



DEIS Status

- DEIS chapters previously completed under revision to include study of truck-only lanes
 - Chapter 1-Purpose and Need
 - Chapter 2-Alternatives Considered
 - Chapter 3-Affected Environment
 - All other chapters
- Initiating work on revisions to Affected Environment chapter.
 - Change to logical termini for study area.
 - Baseline for BRT stations and remote park-and-ride lots will need to be updated because of changes in location and size of these facilities
 - Noise analysis likely to require most work because of changes in receptors

A large portion of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement was completed before the truck only lanes were added, so a significant portion of it will need to be rewritten. A very important part of this revision will be the preparation of the affected environment chapter to define the impacts along the I-75 corridor. This work is already underway.



Revisions to Alternatives Under Consideration

- No-Build Alternative to exclude I-285 improvements – HOV lanes and BRT
- Technical analyses will address changes in effectiveness of I-75 projects with I-285 improvements
- Changes in transit facility locations and size of facilities under TSM and BRT alternatives
- BRT transit facilities will include ROW for expansion of facilities with I-285 BRT
- All build alternatives will include HOV and truck-only lanes with consideration for tolling options

Some significant modifications to the project have been implemented. It was determined that the I-75 BRT system should be evaluated as a stand alone project without the influence of the I-285 BRT system that is part of the current regional plan. This is an excellent planning approach that takes a practical look at how the I-75 system would function by itself in case the I-285 system, that significantly increases the ridership on I-75, is not implemented. If the I-75 BRT system can be shown to be viable without the I-285 BRT project, it has a better chance of obtaining the federal funds for construction. The analysis will address the differences in the station parking requirements and provide the needed right of way for future expansion.

All of the build options being evaluated will include HOV and truck only lanes and all will consider tolling.



Alternatives Under Consideration with Addition of Truck-Only Lanes

- No-Build Alternative
- HOV/TOL Lane Alternative
- HOV/TOL TSM Alternative
- HOV/TOL/BRT Alternative
- Options to Build Alternatives
 - High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes
 - Truck-Only Toll (TOT) Lanes

The alternatives that will be considered for the DEIS are shown here. While this may look somewhat confusing at first, the process is fairly simple. First, we must consider not building the project. Actually, the no-build alternative does include all of the other projects planned in the region that are unrelated to HOV, TOL or BRT on the corridor with the exception of the I-285 BRT system as noted previously. The other three alternatives are build scenarios that include HOV and TOL in each case but have various transit options. By the way, TSM is an acronym that stands for Transit Systems Management. The TSM alternative would be an enhanced express bus system with similar service to the BRT system but without the BRT stations. The TSM alternative would include new park and ride facilities on the corridor in approximately the same locations as the BRT stations and offer service comparable to the BRT Alternative. Of course, BRT is the proposed transit solution on the I-75 corridor.



Schedule Outline

- Project scoping thru Dec 2005
- Technical Analysis thru Mar 2006
- DEIS Preparation thru May 2006
- DEIS Circulation and Comment thru Oct 2006
- Identify LPA thru Dec 2006
- FEIS Preparation thru Feb 2007
- FEIS Circulation and ROD thru April 2007
- Approval of Record of Decision May 2007

Now let's discuss the project schedule. During Scoping the project is defined in detail and the details are presented to the public and the various agencies involved. The Technical Analysis phase identifies and develops the project details including traffic volumes, environmental impacts, refined physical and operational characteristics, financial analysis and other information. There are eight chapters in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement which describe and analyze the project in considerable detail.

Once the DEIS is completed, it is circulated for comment at FHWA and FTA. After comments are addressed, the document is published in the Federal Register, public comment is solicited and a public hearing is scheduled. After the DEIS is approved a Locally Preferred Alternative is identified and the Final Environmental Impact Statement is prepared with updated engineering drawings and a revised financial analysis among other things. After another round of circulation, the FEIS is approved with comments from agencies and the public incorporated and a Record of Decision is prepared. The final schedule milestone for the EIS is the approval and the signing of the Record of Decision by FHWA and FTA. After this the project can be prepared for construction.



Next Steps

- Station Area Development Planning
- Transit
 - Complete BRT Station configuration concepts
 - Complete Environmental Impact Analysis
 - Complete definition of TSM Alternative and submit to FTA for review and concurrence
 - Update Detailed Definition of Alternatives Report
 - Update Environmental Baseline
 - Update previously completed Chapters of the DEIS
- Roadway
 - Complete concept for inclusion of Truck only Lanes
 - Prepare cost estimates for revised concept
 - Prepare Environmental Impact Analysis

The next steps for the Project include the various elements you see here. As the BRT station concepts begin to solidify, the process of presenting the information to the public in a series of meetings can begin in January 2006. This process will continue until the concepts reflect the best thinking of all the participants. In order to accomplish this, more detail must be prepared on the transit elements and the roadway elements of the project to ensure that all of the parts work together. A complete analysis of the design and a detailed cost estimate for the financial analysis will be part of the DEIS.

We encourage you to become an active participant in the process by adding your name to the contact list for future public meetings.



Thank You

Thank you very much for taking time out of your busy day to help us with this project.