

# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE OF GEORGIA

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## SUMMARY OF MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: April 27, 2016, 5:00PM at Spelman College, Atlanta

STUDY TEAM: Sam Samu, GDOT  
Kimberly Nesbitt, GDOT  
Annalsce Baker, GDOT  
Erick Fry, AECOM  
Jonathan DiGioia, AECOM  
Allie Velleca, AECOM  
France Campbell, AECOM  
Mickey O'Brien, AECOM  
John Hightower, AECOM  
Brian McHugh, AECOM  
Carly Queen, AECOM  
Scott Younker, AECOM  
Shirley Franklin, UES  
Joe Morris, UES  
Julius Hollis, UES

CAC MEMBERS: Monique Forte, MARTA  
Jonathan Lewis, City of Atlanta Planning  
Cleta Winslow, City of Atlanta Councilmember  
Wanda Whiteside, AUC Community Association  
Lyndon Greene, PUF/AUCNA  
Erika Smith, Sylvan Hills, NPU-X  
Adrienne Proeller, NPU-X  
Carl Nes, WEND  
Larry Copeland, WEND  
Jomeco Law, WEND, JL Law Group  
Mamie Moore, English Avenue NA  
Lloyd Hawk, Friendship Baptist LLC  
Sam Young, Friendship Baptist LLC  
Art Frazier, Spelman College  
Don Blackston, Spelman College  
Jay Scott, Westview Community Org  
Octavia Vogel, Westview Community Org  
Byron Rushing, Adair Park  
Pamela Flores, HELP Org. Inc.  
Howard Rogers, Morehouse School of Medicine  
Melody Blount, Ashview Heights  
Jessica Maynard, Castleberry Hill NA

DISCUSSION: **CAC Meeting #1, Segment 4 for SR 3/ Northside Drive,  
GDOT PI 0007557, City of Atlanta, Georgia**

A citizen advisory committee meeting with the above listed participants was held on April 27, 2016 in the Atrium of the Manley Center at Spelman College, 350 Spelman Ln SW, Atlanta, GA 30314. This meeting was held to validate data collected including crashes, traffic data, public comments, previous planning studies, and environmental resources. The CAC members worked in small breakout groups to identify issues and opportunities along segment one and two of the Northside Drive study area.

AECOM began by welcoming the attendees, followed by GDOT making a statement. All consultants and CAC members identified themselves and what organization they were representing. The PowerPoint was shown, followed by the breakout discussion sequence of questions. During the presentation, a CAC member pointed out a buffered water not mentioned in the slides. It was confirmed that it is a retention pond within the Georgia Power substation. Another CAC member asked to receive the traffic LOS slide to the group after the meeting.

The presentation portion of the meeting was followed by a 45-minute breakout session in which the CAC members were broken into two groups to discuss needs, opportunities, and community perspectives along Northside Drive in segment 4, as well as for the corridor as a whole. Two study team members facilitated the discussions by asking each group the same set of questions and making sure each CAC member had a chance to speak. The following CAC member responses and discussion points were recorded during the breakout session.

Note: The following questions differ slightly from those asked in segment 1 & 2.

Question 1: In one word or sentence, what is your vision for Northside Drive in 20 years?

- Gateway, all roads lead to Atlanta
- Multi-modal to connect to neighborhoods south of I-20
- Bus-rapid transit opportunities
- Unite Communities east to west
- Better handling stormwater runoff, increased permeability
- Green space, not just concrete/asphalt, and safe for all users
- Mobility, efficient movement through traffic intersections
- Traffic calming from a development standpoint
- Clarify movements through intersections
- East/west connection to downtown, connection to jobs, frequent connections from side streets and neighborhoods, better connections to Herndon Homes and through North Avenue tunnel
- Better connectivity east to west and north to south
- Bankhead Avenue bridge rehab as connection across RR
- Moving traffic
- Contributing to the community

- North/south corridor
- Efforts should continue to south of I-20
- Priority for residents, sense of community, regional approach to improvements
- Beautiful
- Low-stress for driving, walking and biking
- Shouldn't be a barrier
- Vibrant commercial corridor
- Get people out of their cars and make public transportation more appealing
- Safe and accessible, new name, think about it differently
- Better bike accessibility to be able to ride bikes to the stadium in 20 years

Question 2: If you could improve one corridor-wide aspect of Northside Drive, what would it be?

- Traffic light synchronization
- Traffic calming
- East/west connectivity, specifically focused at MLK, Boone and Fair Street; and pleasant for pedestrians
- Take the best bicycle, pedestrian, streetscape, and roadway designs in Atlanta and bring them to Northside
- Pedestrian islands, medians, streetscape, wider sidewalks like Peachtree between Wieuca and Paces Ferry in Buckhead
- Corridor changes as you move along to reflect unique sense of place like AUC and Friendship Village
- No negative impacts to west side neighborhoods including those along Lowery
- The community comes together to use Northside
- Urban street design, not high-speed suburban road
- Integrated public transit network, not just buses
- Recognize that it is a corridor between 75 & I-20
- Free public internet access/wifi
- Ensure traffic is not dumping here – traffic calming and traffic demand management
- Lower speeds, ensure speed limit compliance
- Safer and more comfortable to cross east/west for all users
- Public transportation
- Better signage and less speeding

Question 3: Currently, how do you use this segment of Northside Drive?

- Drive between Ralph David Abernathy/Metropolitan Parkway and I-20
- Walk to work down Northside
- Avoid expressway for commute to work
- Connection to Georgia Tech and other businesses further north on Northside by car
- FYI: Marta crosses NSD with bus routes and Vine City rail station is next to Northside. Marta is exploring other vehicles to travel the surrounding neighborhoods that will connect to the rail stations
- Walk to/from stadium

- Reliever from the connector and connect to retail areas north on Northside
- Marta mobility up, down and across. Struggles with staying on time
- Ivan Allen/Northside is preferred route for commute by car
- Travel to retail and downtown to avoid the interstate
- Weekends, access to Castleberry Hill
- To get to WEND as an alternate route to 75, concerned about traffic from 17<sup>th</sup> to MLK
- Way to avoid traffic, walking – cross at Fair Street from AUC, parking for games
- Drive, transit access to Georgia Tech/Atlanta Station
- Travel to Georgia Tech, avoid interstate, get to restaurants in Castleberry Hill and West Midtown
- Drive to work (commute)
- Live in Castleberry, walk and drive on Northside, sidewalks are too narrow on west side south of Mitchell Street
- Patrol the corridor

Question 3A (Posed by GDOT to one of the discussion groups): What is your ideal speed limit for Northside Drive?

30mph	30-35mph	35mph	35-40mph	40mph	45mph
<b>3 votes</b>	<b>1 vote</b>	<b>2 votes</b>			<b>1 vote</b>

Additional comments regarding speed:

- Signage
- Safety
- Lower speeds in residential areas
- Most efficient
- What about variable speed limits?
- Enforcement
- Fine with lower speeds to accommodate pedestrians
- Design a slower, safer, walkable experience – needs to be slower
- Peachtree Road as an example in Buckhead

Question 4: What do you like or dislike about this segment of Northside Drive?

<i>Like</i>	<i>Dislike</i>
Nothing	Intersections--Chapel, McDaniel & Spelman have poor crosswalks, lack good sidewalks and no MARTA
Nothing-Worst in city?	Speed, lack of safety, LOS is too high
Convenient to avoid traffic	Concerned with area below I-20, think about what happens to Metropolitan Pkwy when traffic is directed to I-20. Support closing Lee Street ramp
Like it as a corridor for moving traffic	Poor sight lines making left from Metropolitan Pkwy to Chapel, arrows confusing

Like community areas off of Northside	Everything
Want economic development, density, food options – a destination, not a bypass	McDaniel, single lane confusing-needs a redesign
Straight, opportunities to link economic development districts	Sight lines at Fair St northbound and Spelman Lane southbound
Fast, smooth travel	Poorly planned and poorly added onto over the years
Potential to draw people to the Westside community	Lane configuration at Chapel/Spelman intersection, left turn conflict
Potential to transform the area	McDaniel-no left, railroad delays traffic
	Lack of pedestrian protection
	Lack of lighting at night, avoid Northside & Chapel by going to MLK
	Confusing intersections
	Too fast, elderly cannot cross, not for urban living
	Not bringing people to the Westside
	Not inviting or safe for pedestrians
	Sidewalks broken and narrow
	One-way configuration at Spelman/Peters
	Lack of good lighting under bridges and along walls especially at night

Question 5: If you could fix one thing within this segment along Northside Drive, what would it be? (Only one breakout group answered this question)

- Sight lines
- Left at Chapel, speeding enforcements, landscaping/walkability
- Purpose/identity
- More like Peachtree Road in Buckhead
- Pedestrian islands/median
- Get people out of their cars and using other modes
- Fast forward to what is really going to happen (make improvements sooner)
- Cleopas Johnson Park improvements-safety, access, lighting

Question 6: Should features like turn lanes, landscape medians, wider sidewalks, or bike lanes be added to this segment of Northside Drive? If so, where? Adding these features means making Northside Drive wider, which affects neighborhoods, businesses and the environment along the road.

- Look to narrow road instead of eating into adjacent land-reduce lanes when it makes sense and look for opposite of typical induced demand
- Would give up things to get amenities
- Willing to give up some of my property for sidewalks, need beautification (from AUC to Herndon Homes), pedestrian islands

- Address dual personality of Northside – this segment needs sidewalks and streetscape, but not true for all segments
- The more infrastructure, the better
- Fix the street for pedestrians, sight lines
- Can't see people giving up land (build up)
- Incompatible identities, not sure
- Wants amenities, narrow road instead
- NO, use existing right of way
- Maybe north of 16<sup>th</sup>, but not here
- Look at impacts of density and economic development
- Food desert
- Traffic management issues vs. pedestrian experience
- Yes, bio swales to naturally move the stormwater
- Not wider – calmer means more narrow, use existing right of way, moving local commerce, not big trucks
- Connect AUC to Castleberry by crossing aerially over Northside (because of the topography)
- Yes, work within right of way to add sidewalks and medians
- Do not take personal property and displace residents
- Bus lanes necessary
- Avoid Bethune Elementary
- Focus on how roadway impacts community
- Better connectivity to I-20 – this will impact everything
- Even though the stadium prevents expansion to the east side, don't just take all the land on the west side
- If add I-20 interchange, connect N-S-E-W (full access)
- Connection clarity/simplification around I-20 may be welcome as long as high speeds are not encouraged along Northside

**Additional Comments Received:**

- There is a road gap on east side from Mitchell to Northside Drive
- Oversize sidewalks made from recycled tires from Proctor Street watershed and streets
- Coordinate with Westside Future Fund land use action plan (underway through summer/fall 2016)

**Action Items:**

- a. Distribute meeting minutes/meeting summary
- b. Schedule CAC Meeting #2
- c. GDOT/AECOM → Collect comments/develop improvements
- d. CAC → Share feedback with community organizations