

SR 400 & SR 365 Corridor Studies
Public Meeting #1 Summary – SR 400 Corridor

August 22, 2006
4:00 - 7:00 PM
Black's Mill Elementary School

Objectives

- To receive feedback re: the issues along the corridors
- To receive feedback re: the opportunities along the corridors
- To engage the public in the development of potential design scenarios
- To get public comment

Notification Strategy

Written notification in the form of a meeting flyer was mailed to all stakeholder database entries.

News releases were coordinated with Teri Pope at the GDOT Office of Communications. Display advertisements – each publicizing both meetings within the same advertisement – were placed in the following papers on the following dates:

Newspaper	Ad Run Dates
Mexico Lindo	Aug. 4; Aug. 18
Dahlonega Nugget	Aug. 9; Aug. 16
Dawson News & Advertiser	Aug. 9; Aug. 16
Northeast Georgian	Aug. 8; Aug. 22
Gainesville Times	Aug. 8; Aug. 22

More than 65 meeting notifications were sent to service providers and organizations throughout the study area accompanied by a GDOT letter asking that they be posted in highly visible locations. These included churches and other organizations which focus on outreach to Hispanic populations.

Format of Meeting

The meeting was an open house/workshop format with an emphasis on education and receiving public input. A welcome station was set up to sign in meeting participants and to orient them to the meeting format and expected outcomes. Handouts distributed included the current Fact Sheet, a comment form, a meeting evaluation form, and exercise dots. Participants also received a public meeting handout. The handout described the process followed by the study team to compile, analyze and review existing conditions data. It also summarized the next steps and public involvement process.

Stations with display boards were arranged around the meeting room. These stations, which were staffed by study team members, provided graphic information on the following project elements:

- Existing Land Use with Employment Locations
- Existing Level of Service
- Origin Destination Trip Patterns
- Population and Employment Estimates
- Safety

Two interactive activity stations were also set up. Station 1 was the *Corridor Challenges & Issues Exercise* where meeting participants were asked to use dots to identify key areas along the corridors where they encounter challenges and/or issues in their daily trips. Station 2 was the *Alternatives Analysis Survey* where meeting participants provided input regarding the preferred potential design of the corridor by section.

Study Team Attendees

Olen Daelhousen, ARCADIS
Maureen Gresham, ARCADIS
Brandy McDow, ARCADIS
Tim Preece, ARCADIS
Cindy VanDyke, GA Department of Transportation
Robert Mahoney, GA Department of Transportation
Teri Pope, GA Department of Transportation
Neil Kantner, GA Department of Transportation
Bill Cantrell, GA Department of Transportation
Russell McMurry, GA Department of Transportation

Ulysses Mitchell, GA Department of Transportation
Jason Crane, GA Department of Transportation
Jim Evans, PBS&J
Jen Price, Sycamore Consulting
Leah Vaughan, Sycamore Consulting

Summary of Meeting Activities & Feedback

The meeting was designed to inform the public of study progress to date and to gain feedback through two “hands-on” activities. An Origin-Destination Exercise was designed to allow the public to identify the travel patterns of corridor users (where are people coming from and where are they going). Aerial maps of the study area corridors were broken down into segments with key roads and landmarks shown to help orient participants to the study area. Meeting participants will be asked to place a green dot on the appropriate map to show the origin or beginning of a typical daily trip and a red dot to show the destination or ending point of a typical daily trip in the study area. A second Corridor Issues and Challenges Exercise was designed to allow the public to identify key areas along the corridor(s) where users encounter challenges and/or issues in their daily trips. Meeting participants were asked to place a dot on the map to symbolize challenging areas of the corridors. Aerial maps of the study area corridors are broken down into segments with key roads and landmarks shown to help orient participants to the study area. Participants were given color-coded dots to place at key locations representing various challenges and issues. A comment form was provided to all exercise participants to allow them to expand on the elements identified through the exercise. A total of 38 responses were received on the comment forms. The following is a summary of the meeting exercises and information gathered.

Exercise 1: IDENTIFYING CORRIDOR CHALLENGES & ISSUES

Meeting participants were asked to place a dot on an aerial map to symbolize challenging areas of the corridors. Participants were given color-coded dots to place at key locations where the following challenges and issues are present:

- **BLUE** -- Safety on Roadway
- **BLACK** -- Condition of Bridge
- **ORANGE** -- Condition of Pavement
- **RED** – Roadway Signage/Informational Devices
- **YELLOW** -- Safe Access to Businesses
- **GREEN** -- Traffic Congestion
- **LIGHT BLUE** – Bicycle and Pedestrian
- **WHITE** -- Other

The most common challenges and issues expressed by meeting attendees at intersections throughout the corridor are traffic congestion and safety on the roadway. Safe access to businesses was an issue, specifically in locations where businesses front SR 400 and have access points that are not at signalized intersections. Participants expressed the need for improvements for bike and pedestrian safety on SR 400 near the Premium Outlets and Home Depot/Wal-Mart Shopping Centers, as well as along Lumpkin Campground Road.

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Corridor Intersection SR 400 @:	Challenges & Issues	
	Major Issue(s)	Minor Issue(s)
Keith Bridge Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway Signage/Informational Devices 	None
Matt Highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway Signage/Informational Devices Safety on Roadway
Martin Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway 	None
Heard's Circle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion Safe Access to Businesses 	None
Reservoir Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway
Reservoir 59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Access to Businesses
Hubbard Town Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway
Reservoir 36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway Safe Access to Businesses 	None
Jot Em Down Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway
Lumpkin Campground Road (south of Dawson Forest Road)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike & Pedestrian Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway Traffic Congestion
Whitmere Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion 	None
Carlisle Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway Signage/Informational Devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Access to Businesses
Dawson Forest Road to SR 53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion Safe Access to Businesses Safety on Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike & Pedestrian Safety
Dawson Forest Road @ SR 53 (west of SR 400)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion Roadway Signage/Informational Devices Safety on Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike & Pedestrian Safety
Harmony Church Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion Safety on Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway Signage/Informational Devices Condition of Pavement
East Grant Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condition of Pavement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway Signage/Informational Devices
SR 226 @ SR 9E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway Signage/Informational Devices 	None
Gold Creek Highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway Roadway Signage/Informational Devices
Auraria Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion Safe Access to Businesses
Cain Branch Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condition of Pavement 	None
Whelchel Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety on Roadway 	None
Cain Bridge Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condition of Pavement 	None
Lumpkin County Park Road @ Mountain Brook Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike & Pedestrian Safety 	None
SR 60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Access to Businesses Safety on Roadway

Exercise 2: ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS SURVEY

Meeting participants were asked to select preferred roadway design improvements (or combination of improvements) for each segment of the corridor by placing a dot within a box showing roadway type alternatives. Alternatives given included Freeway, Limited Access Highway, Multi-Lane Divided Highway, and Access Roads.

Participants were also asked to provide input regarding **preferred typical section improvements** on an aerial map of the project corridor based on the following descriptions:

- a. **Freeway** - a divided multi-lane road designed for high-speed travel by large numbers of vehicles. Access to freeways is fully controlled, with traffic entering and leaving only at grade-separated interchanges. Because traffic never crosses at-grade, there are no traffic signals, stop signs or yield signs on the main corridor.
- b. **Access Road or Service Road** - a non-limited access road running parallel to a higher-speed road, usually a freeway, and feeding in at appropriate points of access by ramp. In many cases, the service road is a former highway already in existence when the limited access road was built. Service roads provide access to homes and businesses which would be cut off by a limited access road and connect these locations with roads which have direct access to the main highway.
- c. **Interchange** - a road junction that utilizes grade separation, and one or more ramps, to permit traffic on a limited or controlled access roadway to pass through the junction without crossing any other traffic stream.
- d. **Limited-access Highway** - a highway where vehicular access to the roadway is limited. Much of the time, driveways to adjacent private land can be eliminated with a side road for access. On some occasions, driveways may be connected to these corridors. Sometimes, at-grade intersections (signalized or unsignalized) can be found too.
- e. **Multi-Lane Divided Highway** – a multi-lane divided highway with a grassed or concrete median allowing median cuts, driveway cuts, and at-grade signalized or unsignalized intersections. The current roadway is mostly multi-lane divided highway allowing vehicles to enter and exit the roadway at frequent access locations.
- f. **Intersection with Traffic Signal** - a signaling device positioned at an intersection of two roads at the same grade to indicate when it is safe to drive, ride, or walk.
- g. **Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity** – a path connected by bridge or underpass to enable cyclists or pedestrians to move from one side of the roadway/freeway to the other without encountering motor vehicle traffic.

Overall, meeting participants expressed that a Freeway is the preferred roadway type for all segments of the SR 400 corridor. For segments 1 through 3, this choice was followed by the Limited Access option, and then by Multi-Lane Divided highway. However, for segments 4 through 5, Multi-Lane Divided was the second most preferred option followed by the Limited Access roadway type. Access Roads are preferred throughout the corridor, and are highly favored for segments 3 and 4. Alternatives with the approximate number of responses given for each are summarized by segment below.

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Corridor Segment	Alternatives Analysis Exercise Responses
<i>Segment 1 : Forsyth County:</i> From SR306 (Keith Bridge Road) to just north of Settingdown Road	The majority of participants (approximately 35 responses) preferred Freeway for this roadway segment, followed by Limited Access (approximately 18 responses) and Multi-Lane Divided (3 responses). Participants were in favor of Access Roads (approximately 13 responses)
<i>Segment 2 : Forsyth County:</i> From just north of Settingdown Road to just north of Jot Em Down Road	The majority of participants (approximately 30 responses) preferred Freeway for this roadway segment, followed by Limited Access (approximately 15 responses) and Multi-Lane Divided (3 responses). Participants were in favor of Access Roads (approximately 18 responses)
<i>Segment 3 : Dawson County:</i> From just north of Jot Em Down Road to just south of Harmony Church Road	The majority of participants (approximately 33 responses) preferred Freeway for this roadway segment, followed by Limited Access (approximately 18 responses) and Multi-Lane Divided (12 responses). Participants were heavily in favor of Access Roads (approximately 54 responses)
<i>Segment 4 : Dawson County:</i> From just north of Harmony Church Road to Cane Branch Creek (just south of Whelchel Road)	The majority of participants (approximately 36 responses) preferred Freeway for this roadway segment, followed by Multi-Lane Divided (approximately 20 responses) and Limited Access (11 responses). Participants were heavily in favor of Access Roads (approximately 50 responses)
<i>Segment 5 : Lumpkin County:</i> Cane Branch (stream) to SR 60 (end of corridor study limits)	The majority of participants (approximately 36 responses) preferred Freeway for this roadway segment, followed by Multi-Lane Divided (approximately 15 responses) and Limited Access (11 responses). Participants were in favor of Access Roads (approximately 22 responses)

	Freeway	Limited Access	Multi-Lane Divided	Access Roads
Segment 1	35%	18%	3%	13%
Segment 2	30%	15%	3%	18%
Segment 3	33%	18%	12%	54%
Segment 4	36%	11%	20%	50%
Segment 5	36%	11%	15%	22%

In summary:

- Freeway is the preferred roadway type for all segments of the SR 400 corridor.
- For segments 1 through 3, this choice was followed by the Limited Access option, and then by Multi-Lane Divided highway.
- For segments 4 through 5, Multi-Lane Divided was the second most preferred option followed by the Limited Access roadway type.
- Access Roads are preferred throughout the corridor, and are highly favored for segments 3 and 4.

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On the comment form, participants were asked to provide details regarding **problem locations** and/or additional information regarding **issues or challenges** along the corridor. A total of 41 responses were received. The following is a summary of responses received:

- You can fix 53 and 400 but unless you fix Lumpkin Campground and 53 it will not help the situation. They should be looked at in unison.
- I work for Forsyth County and am aware at all of the residential rezonings that have already been approved. 400 will need to be a “freeway” design to handle all of the traffic that will be generated by the explosive growth in housing along the corridor.
- All intersections in corridor should have left turn lanes, especially those intersecting GA 400. These lanes should be controlled by lights.
- There is a problem at the traffic light at Lumpkin Campground Road. Crossover as most of the traffic turns, either north from Lumpkin or south from traffic at opposite direction.
- SR 369 @ 400 requires a grade separated interchange, much traffic and congestion for years now. There are too many signals now between 369 & SR 53 is now a 15 minute trip. 400 should be L/A from 306 to minimum Jot Em Down Road. I realize 400 @ 53 needs improvement. My input would be the interchange except with 400 going under SR 53. Less impact except to utilities.
- Coming out of Chick-Fil-A, Wal-Mart, Chin-Chin, etc has become a problem at times as many people do not want to go west on 400 and try to cross all lanes immediately to make a left on to 400 or to go to the outlet mall.
- At 400 & 53 – congestion, safety, very few parallel or alternate roads.
- At Dawson Forest & 400 – few alternates east and west.
- At Lumpkin Campground & 53 – congestion, poor visibility, no turn lanes or signals.
- Improve safe access to businesses along 400 between Whitmire Road and Lumpkin Campground Road.
- Safety improvements needed for traffic crossing GA 400 at Dawson Forest, the outlet mall entrance, Industrial Parkway, and Hwy 53.
- A flyover at 400 & 53 would change the character of the county and will diminish the commercial activity.
- SR 369/GA 400 intersection at rush hour causes extensive delays.
- The Kilough Church Road/400 intersection is a major problem; has no light with increasing traffic; dangerous to cross over. A flyover here would create a major danger.
- The area between 136/400 & exit 14 is the biggest problem area.
- Many accidents between 53/400 and Dawson Forest Road.
- Unlimited access to 400 poses a very dangerous situation; limited access south of Cumming is working well.
- Widen the lanes as is being done on S 400 and have access roads; no flyover.
- The merchants and businessmen of Dawson County can be counted on to go to Washington to defeat any attempt to limit access to their property.
- Red light at 53 and 400 cycle – two or three times for stop. There are not enough acceleration lanes at several points—7-9 a.m. and 4-7 p.m.
- Martin Road at 400 should be closed; they can use 369 on Settingdown. Harmony Church at 400 and Lumpkin Campground – people turn before they are through the center of the intersection.
- Too many cars for the roads. As always DOT is 10 to 20 years behind.
- It scares me to death coming out of Eckerd Drugs onto 400 and getting to the left lane to turn left on 53. It scares me to death leaving Home Depot or Chik-fil-A and getting on 400! There needs to be access roads from Dawson Forest Road north to Highway 53 on both sides of Highway 400!
- *[From a letter mailed]* The area between Dawson Forest Road and Highway 53 has become VERY UNSAFE for drivers. I can’t understand why the expansion of Dawson Forest Rd. at the new Super Wal-Mart, has not been finished a month after the store opened. The new circle to the entrance to Home Depot and Wal-Mart is not any safe and was finished after the store opened. I had a costly accident because I had to take a detour to reach my house by trying to go across the crossover in front

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of the Exxon gas station going east to west. This crossover is between the traffic light at Dawson Forest Rd. and Highway 53. It is an approved crossover, however it is not lighted and is very dangerous at night.

- *[From a typed summary]* 1: Intersection SR 53 and SR 400: NO flyover or flyunder! The closeness of the Dawson County business community to SR 400 means that either suggestion would do serious damage to the many merchants at this intersection. 2: Intersection SR 136 and SR 400: Vehicles traveling east and west on SR 136 who stop for the traffic signal at this intersection and then want to make a left turn onto SR 400 have no turn lanes in the middle of the intersection. This is not a safe situation. 3: Intersection SR 60 and SR 400: This is NOT a safe intersection. If GDOT wants to improve the traffic flow and safety of an intersection on SR 400, then this is where the money should be used. All four approaches to this intersection are not safe. 4: Additional lanes for SR 400: The work now underway on the lower portion of SR 400 to add more lanes is greatly appreciated. However, a good case could be made that the work should have started at least five years ago. Please do NOT wait for five years after the fact to begin adding additional lanes for the upper part of SR 400!
- *[From email received]* I'm in favor of an interchange/flyover at SR 400 and SR 53 in Dawson County for safety purposes on SR 400.
- *[From a petition signed by 8 folks]* The undersigned citizens of Dawson county understand that money has been set aside to be spent in this county for the purpose of a flyover at the intersection of Highway 400 and Highway 53. We feel that the project will limit access to the County's existing and future commercial and industrial areas thereby having an adverse impact on the economic development of Dawson County and not fulfill the intent of the Appalachian Development Act of 1965, as amended. Please consider using these funds for other needed projects in our area.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN COMMENTS:

On the comment form, participants were asked to provide detail regarding the locations to consider for **bicycle and pedestrian** connectivity. The following is a summary of responses received:

- Anyone would be crazy to be on a bicycle anywhere near 400. If you wish to fix that good luck and you have my best wishes.
- Each of the major intersections along the corridor will need to be grade separated. The minor intersections should be connected by frontage roads.
- I have to come from such a long distance away (Amicalola Falls) that bicycling or walking is not feasible.
- Most side roads in the corridor do not have sufficient berm for safe pedestrian or bicycle traffic. This should be required of all roads in high population, fast growing areas.
- Don't know if pedestrian access is necessary except at 53 which is a congested business area. Don't see pedestrians anywhere else. Keep bikes off state routes and on secondary roads.
- People should not be walking on a major highway.
- East of Dawson Forest at Lumpkin Campground Road; West of Dawson Forest Road at Forest Preserve.
- Bike lanes are needed among many of the county roads. Several of the roads are part of organized rides by local and regional bicycle clubs.
- No need for pedestrian connectivity.
- There are no safe roads to ride bicycles on; bike paths are needed or much larger shoulders on the roads; bike paths on existing right-of-way is cheaper and safer.
- Lumpkin Campground Road should be considered if it does not have to be used as a perimeter for traffic diversion from 400/53 intersection.
- Pedestrian walkway should be provided from outlets over 400 to Home Depot, Wal-Mart, Chick-Fil-A.
- Bike trails along side roads, not along 400.
- A great source of additional grant money are bicycling paths with below grade cross turnings.

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- Not aware of any parks or cycle tracks that would benefit – in the 400 corridor – but it could be visionary to include these too!
- A: Bikes access along Harmony Church Road from 400 to 53. B: Service roads or a perimeter road Dawson Forest to Harmony Church along 400.
- 400 and 53 mall area – bridge across for pedestrian and bike traffic.
- Require a feeder road for all of 400.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Other Considerations the study team should be aware of in the evaluation of future operations along SR 400 include:

- No more entrances for businesses. Businesses and all other entrances must be off side roads.
- I know this idea is counter to the normal method used in the south for grade separated intersections but please use clover leaf designs for these intersections. Slip ramps just clog traffic.
- Subdivisions that feed onto 400 – dangerous.
- Would like automobiles have access to visit businesses in Dawson County.
- Please don't allow any disruptions to the businesses (accessibility) along the corridor around 53, especially the Kroger store, as that's the only decent grocery store and gas station with decent prices.
- Improvements take too long causing additional hazards to traffic (ex: exit from new Wal-Mart store at Dawson Forest Road).
- Put 400 under 53 without raising 53 by more than an couple of feet.
- The economic impact to the counties.
- School locations; location of fire rescue, EMS, heli-pad for emergency transportation.
- Setbacks for businesses along GA 400 in Dawson is not appropriate for future growth.
- No flyover; build overpasses like the southern part of 400; do not turn Dawson County into a Peachtree Industrial Parkway.
- Kilough Church Road should not be the drop off point for a flyover; consider access roads on either side of 400 at the Kilough intersection.
- 400 should continue beyond Exit 17 as a limited access highway with access roads.
- No overpass at 53 and 400.
- Widen roads and have access roads.
- Access roads & interchanges take out too much access and the existing roads need to be existing roads.
- No flyover to "speed traffic flow".
- Add a traffic circle (roundabout) at the end of 400 to ease traffic flow dissipating to Longbranch and Dahlonega, etc.
- I would strongly prefer to see **either** 400 under 53 **or** 53 under 400 at the intersection; no flyover.
- Complete rapid rail line along SR400 up to SR 60 in Lumpkin County.
- Could the use of a two-lane reversible toll road (speed lane) be used for critical times (into Atlanta and out).
- Dawson County uses Kilough Elementary School to vote – there will be heavy traffic on election day at Kilough Church and 400.
- SR 53 and SR 400 – no flyover or fly-under!; SR 136 and SR 400 – east and west traffic on SR 136 turning left onto SR 400 NEEDS turn lanes; SR 60 and SR 400 NOT safe intersections! Spend money here!
- Make all of 400 bridges and off ramps.
- Need flyover on 400 and 53 with access roads for businesses. No traffic should enter 400 directly.

Additional comments regarding the segments/explanation of choices are summarized as follows:

Corridor Segment	Additional Comments on Preferences
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Corridor Segment	Additional Comments on Preferences
<p><i>Segment 1 : Forsyth County:</i> From SR306 (Keith Bridge Road) to just north of Settingdown Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 369 intersection: grade separated w/clover leaf design • Allow quick access to Dawson County • Freeway (2) • Expressway • One-way traffic on Keith Bridge Road switching morning/night to reduce congestion • Limited access with frontage roads • Traffic should slow down right before 306 until after 369 • Freeway with access roads (3) • Too many curb cuts • Widen with turn lanes & access roads • Traffic backs up north causing congestion
<p><i>Segment 2 : Forsyth County:</i> From just north of Settingdown Road to just north of Jot Em Down Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East/west traffic crossing 400 is extremely dangerous • Slower traffic as entrance into Dawson County • Needs to be freeway • Expressway • Access to/from World Beverage & Paw-Spa is dangerous; should be via frontage road. • Limited access with frontage roads • Access roads • Freeway with access roads (4) • Too many curb cuts • Widen with turn lanes & access roads
<p><i>Segment 3 : Dawson County:</i> From just north of Jot Em Down Road to just south of Harmony Church Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East/west traffic crossing 400 is dangerous/problematic (2) • Allow easy access to future and present businesses in Dawson County (2) • Needs to be freeway • Need a light at Kilough Church Road • Eliminate 2-way traffic on 53 @ SR 400 • Reduce speed to 45 mph – too congested • Needs public lighting – too dark at night • A light is needed at Industrial Park Road and at Kilough Church Road • Improve, widen Lumpkin Campground Road for local use • Traffic signals and or bridges over 400 are needed • No flyover/fly-under (4) • Access roads • Freeway with access roads (4) • Widen with turn lanes & access roads • There is a school down Kilough Church Road and the

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Corridor Segment	Additional Comments on Preferences
	buses even have a hard time crossing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need flyover with business access roads along 400, between Dawson Forest and 53 • Provide for the future development of service roads
<i>Segment 4 : Dawson County:</i> From just north of Harmony Church Road to Cane Branch Creek (just south of Whelchel Road)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow easy access to future/present businesses • Freeway (2) • Get through as quickly as possible to Hwy 136 • Freeway with some limited access; reduce driveways • Access roads (2) • Freeway with access roads (3) • Build bridges
<i>Segment 5 : Lumpkin County:</i> Cane Branch (stream) to SR 60 (end of corridor study limits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeway (2) • Expressway • Freeway with access roads (3) • Widen with turn lanes & access roads • Build access/frontage roads • Build bridges

On the comment form, participants were asked to complete a table regarding their intersection **treatment preferences**. These responses are summarized in the table below:

INTERSECTING ROADWAY ON SR 400	FUTURE TREATMENT		
	Intersection w/ Traffic Signal	Grade-separated Interchange w/ Ramps	No Change
Keith Bridge Road		9	6
Browns Bridge Rd		14	4
Martin Rd		8	4
Setting Down Road	1	11	5
Bottoms Road	1	9	5
Hubbard Town Road	1	9	3
Jot Em Down Road		12	6
Carlisle Rd	2	8	4
Dawson Forest Rd	3	13	5
SR 53	3	20	3
Kilough Church Rd	4	12	7
Harmony Church Rd	1	9	7
Stowers Rd		9	5
Gold Creek Hwy		9	4

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INTERSECTING ROADWAY ON SR 400	FUTURE TREATMENT		
	Intersection w/ Traffic Signal	Grade-separated Interchange w/ Ramps	No Change
Auraria Rd/Henry Grady Hwy	1	8	7
Reeves Rd		8	4
Lumpkin County Parkway		9	4
Chesterra Road	1	7	4
Other Intersecting Roadways			
SR 60		1	
Nightfire Road	1		
Edna Noblin Road			1

Comments:

- When school lets out there is not a light on 400 and even the buses have a hard time crossing.
- Close Martin Road, Stowers Road, Reeves Road, Lumpkin Campground Parkway, and Chesterra Road

What is Your General Opinion of SR 400 Corridor?

Responses to the general opinion survey are summarized below.

1) When do you travel on SR 400?

Response	# Responses
Weekdays	1
Weekends	0
Both	36

2) On average, how long is the SR 400 portion of your trips?

Response	# Responses
1-5 minutes	2
5-10 minutes	5
10-20 minutes	6
20-40 minutes	17
40+ minutes	9

- 3) What are the primary destinations of your trips on SR 400?

Response	# Responses
Work	18
Shopping	26
Restaurants	24
Church	7
School	3
Other	16

- 4) The following criteria are typical reasons to modify a section of a roadway corridor. Which ones do you feel would be applicable to the SR 400 corridor? (you may check more than one)

Response	# Responses
Increase Safety on Roadway	32
Improve Condition of Bridge	0
Improve Condition of Pavement	2
Improve Roadway Signage/Informational Devices	7
Improve Safe Access to Businesses	27
Decrease Traffic Congestion	27
Other (Access Roads)	2

- 5) Overall, how would you describe traveling conditions along SR 400?

Response	# Responses
Excellent	1
Good	13
Fair	16
Poor	8

- 6) Overall, how would you describe the level of difficulty in exiting the SR 400 highway?

Response	# Responses
Very Difficult	3
Somewhat Difficult	12
Neutral	8
Easy	12
Very Easy	3

- 7) Overall, how would you describe the level of difficulty in entering the SR 400 highway?

Response	# Responses
Very Difficult	6

Somewhat Difficult	18
Neutral	5
Easy	9
Very Easy	0

8) Please use the space below to provide additional comments.

- It is dangerous – cars are going too fast. What happened to obeying the speed limit? Stop speeding.
- I don't mean to sound like a broken record but throw the slip-ramp design standards out the window. Put the big pants on guys and use a clover leaf design. Clover leaf design allows for continuous traffic flow!
- Should not allow subdivisions to feed onto 400.
- 400 should only have ramp access. It is too dangerous to have traffic from direct access and too congesting to have lights.
- Please do not scare businesses away from Dawson County.
- Please do not eliminate Dawson County's growth of retail, etc. off 400. [It is] the reason we moved our family here 4 years ago.
- I would prefer fewer traffic lights.
- Speed limit on GA 400 north of Keith Bridge is too high. Would be okay if it were enforced. Not sure a lower limit would reduce speed but something should be done to reduce speed to <65 mph. Most are going faster than posted by 5 – 10 mph.
- Reduce speed to 45 mph from Cherry Auto Dealership to light at Chevron Gas Station – north of Hwy 53.
- Less signals and more limited access on the southern portion.
- An overpass could cause economic problems for the businesses in Dawson County on GA 400.
- Very dangerous to exit or to enter except at lights.
- Harmony Church Road at 400 is dangerous. People are confused with the turning and do in all directions.
- I disagree with the trip patterns map.
- The 400/53 junction is congested at most times of the day and getting worse. Safety is becoming a major issue as traffic exits and enters from businesses (Kroger, Ingles, etc.) at this junction.
- Dawson County expects substantial residential growth which will severely strain 400 exits and travel times unless modified.
- Extending rapid rail from North Point Mall along SR 400 to SR 60 in Lumpkin County will do more to alleviate congestion on SR 400 than the little bit of tweaking you are contemplating.
- Kilough Church Road has a school on it. Need a light for bus safety.

Summary of Meeting Evaluation Forms

Meeting participants were given a [meeting evaluation form](#). The following are responses received. A total of 44 responses were received.

1) How would you rate this meeting overall?

Response	# Responses
Very Good	5
Good	18
Average	12

Poor	4
Very Poor	4

2) Are the presentations and display boards informative and easy to understand? If not, please explain.

Response	# Responses
Yes	22
No	3
N/A	5

Common Explanations & Responses

- Confusing displays
- Errors on displays/Roads with wrong names
- Newspaper coverage about meeting & actual meeting content not consistent
- Confusion with exercises e.g., uses of dots for different exercises, legends
- A choice to widen the road should have been offered
- Difficult to orient yourself

3) Has the study team been helpful in answering your questions? If not, please explain.

Response	# Responses
Yes	27
No	5
N/A	9

Common Explanations & Responses

- Very helpful; staff provided explanation of projects
- Wanted a presentation
- Somewhat
- Not enough staff
- Staff not aware of what is going to be done
- Staff could not explain why it took so long to address the problem

4) What did you like most about the meeting?

- Informative/ informative content (6)
- Aerial photos/Displays/posters (7)
- Informal/interactive format (5)
- Well organized/format (3)
- Close to my house
- Public input opportunity (2)
- Listening to the colts who know more than the trained experts
- Broad/thoroughness (2)
- Broad time range (2)

5) In what areas do you feel the meeting could have been improved?

- Clearer explanation of instructions for exercises (2)
- Limit number of stickers
- None (2)
- Provide a presentation (3)
- Better/accurate maps (2)
- Refreshments
- Question & Answer period/opportunity to talk (2)

- School zones
- Receive our input not your directed input
- Less arrogance on the part of DOT in pretending you would change anything you know is already decided
- More interaction with DOT
- More specifics on GDOT plans (2)

6) What do you think this study is trying to accomplish?

- To satisfy the requirements for Congress' grant money and is vague enough to skew to DOT's satisfaction.
- To make citizens feel good.
- Put us further in debt.
- The study is fine. It accomplishes what you want. You can now say you asked for input by the public which is meaningless.
- I wish I knew.
- I believe the decision has been made and this is an exercise in futility on the part of the citizens.
- To communicate, exchange ideas, answer questions.
- I have no idea.
- Provide input from public for best data.
- Best way to improve over-extended GA 400.
- How to improve safety and reduce congestion in the corridor.
- Improve quality of life for residents.
- Make decisions about the future of 400.
- Develop a comprehensive plan.
- Hopefully upgrading 400 based on experience of existing travel patterns/opinions.
- Informing the public & gathering some input from them (whether it is ever used is another matter!).
- Do require meetings to justify predetermined plan.
- Method for improvement.
- Determine the thoughts of residents that will be affected the most.
- Provide for public safety.
- To define future modifications of GA 400 to meet the needs of people using it and businesses along it.
- Gain input from the people who will be using the improvements to the road.

Do you agree with the study goals?

Response	# Responses
Yes	10
No	4
N/A	0

Common Explanations & Responses

- Public input is always a good thing.
- As long as there is no GA 400 flyover.
- DOT can observe traffic congestion and travel safety/future needs. What they need is feedback by citizens on what the DOT has planned including cost considerations.
- I hope you really listen to the people. We want a safe & smooth traffic flow that won't harm businesses.
- I feel that the people don't matter.

7) Regarding what you have learned, how would you rate the following statements?

I learned new information

Public Meeting #1 Summary: SR 400 Corridor
SR 400 and SR 365 Corridor Studies

1	Strongly Agree	7
2	Agree	12
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	4
4	Disagree	2
5	Strongly Disagree	6

I was given an opportunity to provide input.

1	Strongly Agree	12
2	Agree	10
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3
4	Disagree	4
5	Strongly Disagree	4

8) How did you find out about tonight's meeting?

- Word of mouth (3)
- Newspaper (22)
- News (2)
- Email (2); Chamber of Commerce Email (5)
- Mail (1)
- Commissioners (2)
- Forsyth County Website (2)
- Online (1)

9) Please provide any additional comments on any aspect of the SR 400 & SR 365 Corridor Studies:

- I use the businesses around Dawson Forest Road and 53. Beyond either of these I would prefer to just get on down or up the road with as few hindrances as possible.
- Who has info on what is happening north of 400/60 intersection? When is this going to be developed and presented?
- It would be helpful to have access to this information as pdf on website so that the public has more than a couple of hours to study them and generate questions.
- Please allow Dawson County growth along 400. Please do not take away prospective businesses.
- Balance must be made between increasing flow along 400 with retaining some form of access to businesses – parallel access road is ideal if this is feasible.
- Take a step back and get a land use expert in to sort things out and create a good land use plan then bring in the transportation team. The road is fine it is the land use that's the problem.
- School zones are not marked where buses cross highway 400 with no light.
- Feeder roads parallel to GA 400 would be helpful for local traffic as it is in other states (Texas for example).
- I am worried about businesses at SR 400 locations. Poor traffic flow and lanes to access businesses will hurt or stop businesses at these locations.
- Although generally supportive of DOT efforts and performance, the flyover proposal is seriously misguided and would result in massive overkill for an issue that can be resolved in another way.
- I have dealt with you people several times over a period of years. Each experience taught me to never trust you with the people's business.
- No one in DOT has ever listened to Dawson County. When I go to the district office no one will talk to me.
- Need flyover 53 & 400 with access roads for businesses and the 7 traffic lights on 400 from Hwy 369 to Hwy 53 should be replaced with overpasses. Continue 400 as it is below 369.
- Roundabouts work in Europe because they regularly eliminate the slow or careless drivers/pedestrians. The circle in front of Wal-Mart is a foretaste of what you can expect.

Use of Comments in the Study Process

The comments gathered at the public meeting are being used in various ways to aid the study team. The information gathered from the public is being provided to the study Technical Advisory Committee which consists of local, regional, and state agency staff representatives in the areas of planning, public works, and engineering as well as representatives of the schools and major employers in the corridor. The TAC will use this feedback to further guide their recommendations for improvements to be considered in the corridor. All operational comments were compiled in a memorandum provided to GDOT District 1 for review and consideration for any short term solutions to identified issues in the corridor. The study team is using this input to gain a better local understanding of the travel patterns and issues in the corridor. The study team will use the information as input to refine the transportation model and as guidance in the development of any infrastructure or policy improvements necessary to ensure efficient operation of the corridor into the future.

Overall Evaluation of Round I Meetings

Evaluation of the effectiveness of public involvement efforts is a key aspect in documenting the level of public involvement achieved. This synopsis uses the performance criteria identified in the Public Involvement Plan for this study (meeting attendance and participant feedback, which includes comments received and the types of comments received) to assess the effectiveness of the meeting. The written comments received via the standard meeting evaluation form distributed at the workshops are the basis for analysis.

Since public notification efforts were combined for both the SR 400 and SR 365 corridors, this synopsis examines the effectiveness of both meetings, combined. Recommendations for improvements are also included.

Meeting Attendance

A combined total of 182 people signed-in at the SR 400 and SR 365 public meetings held on August 22 and August 29, 2006. Of these individuals, 10 were contacts already existing in the project stakeholder database. Therefore, these 10 attendees received a meeting notice and letter as a primary form of notification. The remaining 172 meeting attendees (approximately 95%) were notified by other means. The local newspapers prove to be the most effective means for informing the public, but other means were also helpful.

Overall, meeting attendance was very good.

Participant Feedback

Comments Received (Meeting Evaluation Forms)

Of the 182 attendees, 86 (approximately 47%) submitted meeting evaluation forms. The standard return rate of 25% was greatly exceeded. This could be due to public interest in the project and a desire to “weigh-in” on the issues circulating in recent news reports regarding safety and accidents in the corridor. Other hot-button issues occurring in the study corridor also feed the public’s interest (e.g., the SR 53 fly-over proposal on SR 400). High return rate of meeting evaluation forms could also be due to the type of meeting that was held. Workshops and other interactive meetings where participation is encouraged can translate into a greater willingness for people to participate overall, meeting evaluations included.

Types of Comments Received (Meeting Evaluation Forms)

Meeting attendees were asked some very specific questions, so the majority of comments received were geared towards those questions. People were also asked to provide any additional comments on any aspect of the study. These comments varied across many topics including concerns for businesses and commercial growth on SR 400 to issues of safety on SR 365.

Overall, the amount of participant feedback received greatly exceeded expectations.

Recommendations

1. Provide “Yes” and “No” options on meeting evaluation questions as appropriate. This would increase ease of analysis of the evaluation forms, especially in cases where respondents do not answer questions directly.
2. Specifically, revise the meeting evaluation question “How did you find out about this meeting” from an open-ended question to one that provides a discrete number of choices. This will provide the public involvement team with more specific information about the most effective means of communicating with the public about the study. Sample text is as follows:

<p>How did you hear about this meeting? <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Radio</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Newspaper</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Signs</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Word of Mouth</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Postcard/Meeting Notice</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other (please specify):</i> _____</p>
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3. The conclusion of the public comment period should also be made known and displayed clearly on all meeting evaluation forms. Following GDOT’s standard 10-day rule is recommended.