



NORTHWEST CORRIDOR NEWS

Northwest Corridor (I-75/I-575) HOV/BRT Project Station Area Planning Newsletter

Winter/Spring 2005

Proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Stations

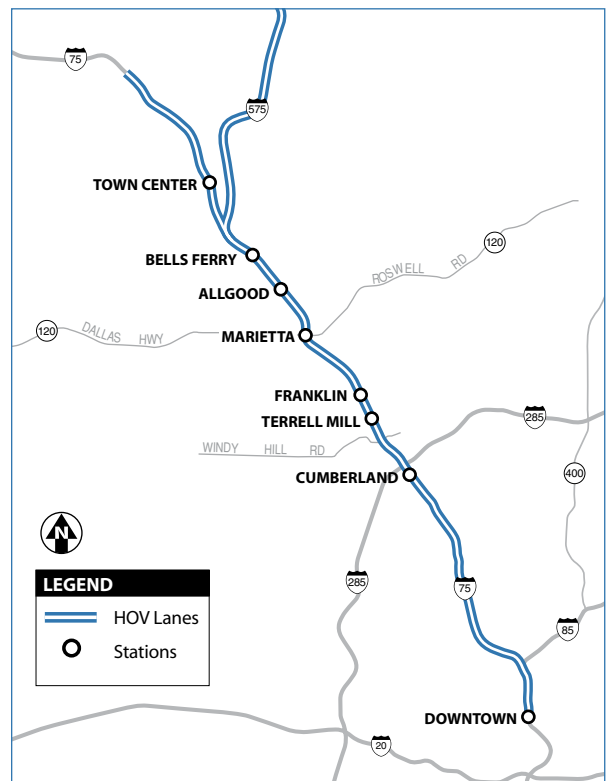
- ❖ *Cumberland Station*
- ❖ *Terrell Mill Station*
- ❖ *Franklin Station*
- ❖ *Marietta Station*
- ❖ *Allgood Station*
- ❖ *Bells Ferry Station*
- ❖ *Town Center Station*

Northwest Corridor HOV/BRT In the Fast Lane

In May of 2004, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) joined forces to kick off the Northwest Corridor I-75/I-575 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project.

Governor Sonny Purdum has identified the project as a priority in his Fast Forward Transportation Program, forging the effort ahead as a means to improve access to and mobility between major activity centers including Downtown Atlanta, Midtown Atlanta, Cumberland/ Galleria, Marietta, and Town Center in Cobb County.

The project includes the extension of HOV lanes along I-75 from Akers Mill Road to Wade Green Road in Cobb County and along I-575 to Sixes Road in Cherokee County. It also provides for the development of a Bus Rapid Transit system along I-75 in Cobb County with seven potential station sites.



HOV Improvements and BRT Stations

Environmental Analysis Underway

The Northwest Corridor HOV/BRT Project is currently in the Alternatives Analysis (AA)/ Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) phase. During the AA/DEIS phase of the project, the team will examine the potential environmental impacts of the project as well as the costs and benefits of a series of proposed alternatives. The process allows for the public and the decision makers to reach a consensus on the alternative that best meets the goals and objectives of the project. This is called the Locally Preferred Alternative, or *LPA*.

Public meetings held in August and November of 2004 as part of the federally required "scoping" process brought GDOT and GRTA staff together with citizens to discuss the proposed alternatives and the potential environmental impacts presented by each. Scoping signifies the early stages of the AA/DEIS where the project is introduced and public input is solicited to help guide the study process as it moves forward. Work on the DEIS will continue through fall of this year, when it is expected that the document will be submitted for federal agency review. It is estimated that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)





Alternatives Under Consideration

1) No-Build

Evaluates what happens without building the project.

2) HOV

HOV lanes without expanded transit services.

3) HOV/Transportation

System Management (TSM)
HOV lanes and expanded bus services without stations.

4) HOV/BRT

HOV lanes and expanded bus services with transit stations.

For more information on these alternatives, please visit: www.nwhovbrt.com

and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will issue a Record of Decision (ROD) on the project by the summer of 2006. If approved, construction on the first phase of the project could begin as early as mid-2009.

Alternatives currently under evaluation in the AA/DEIS include: 1) no-build, 2) HOV, 3) HOV/TSM, and 4) HOV/BRT. The HOV/BRT alternative includes the construction of seven BRT stations along the corridor. Four HOV lane configuration options will be evaluated for this alternative between Akers Mill Road and the I-75/I-575 Interchange. North of the I-75/I-575 interchange, one HOV lane in each direction will be placed in the median on both I-75 and I-575.

I-75 HOV LANE OPTIONS (between Akers Mill and I-575)
Option 1 - Two lanes in each direction in the expanded center of I-75
Option 2 - Two lanes in each direction on both sides of I-75
Option 3 - Two lanes in each direction on the west side of I-75
Option 4 - Two lanes in each direction on the east side of I-75

Northwest Corridor HOV/BRT Brings New Transit Technology to the Atlanta Region

The Northwest Corridor HOV/BRT project brings the first transit system of its kind to the Atlanta region. Bus Rapid Transit is an emerging transit technology that incorporates the look and feel of a train system while providing greater flexibility and lower costs. BRT systems combine rubber-tired vehicles with schedules and station designs that create a higher-capacity passenger system similar to rail. BRT is designed to be comfortable, convenient, and FAST! BRT vehicles will run frequently, approximately every ten minutes, and utilize busways, such as managed HOV lanes, in order to avoid traffic lights and congestion, thereby maximizing speed and travel-time savings.



BRT Busway in Pittsburgh, PA

The proposed system includes seven BRT stations that include platforms for passenger loading and unloading with overhead canopies and shading for weather protection as well as amenities such as benches, fare machines, information kiosks, and security devices. Stations also include multi-level park-and-ride garages and bus transfer facilities for local buses providing connecting service to the stations. BRT vehicles would operate in the I-75 HOV facilities, stop at the stations, and re-enter the I-75 HOV lane system by utilizing direct-access HOV ramps.

Similar BRT systems currently operate in Pittsburgh, PA and Ottawa, Canada and are under study in cities including Jacksonville, FL, San Diego, CA and Charlotte, NC.

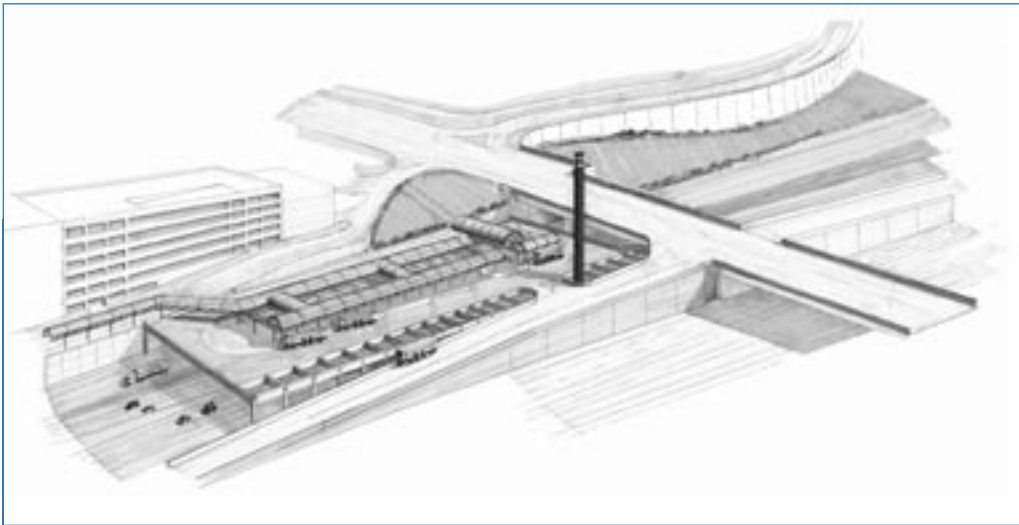


Example of a typical BRT vehicle



Help Design the Community Around Your Future Stations

Citizens have the unique opportunity to help in the design of this state-of-the-art transit system by participating in a process known as Station Area Planning. Station Area Planning involves extensive coordination between GRTA, GDOT, Cobb County, the City of Marietta, and the Cumberland and Town Center Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) in order to come to agreement on what stations should look like and how the areas around the proposed stations should be developed or redeveloped. A series of community forums will be held to generate discussion and feedback, propose ideas, and address concerns. As a participant, you will also have the opportunity to influence and comment on land use and design concepts for the station facilities. This is an opportunity you don't want to miss!



Example of a BRT Station Concept (Cumberland Station)

Topics to be addressed during the Station Area Planning process for each of the station areas include: development of design guidelines that will enhance the livability of the community surrounding each proposed station, assessment of physical, economic, and social trends and issues in each station area, and the development of a market strategy for each area. The first Station Area Planning meeting will take place in March and will introduce these concepts to the community. A series of workshops in April, May, and June will focus on specific station locations and station area issues. In the Fall of 2005, when the HOV alternatives selection process is expected to conclude, the Station Area Planning process will resume and focus on finalizing plans for each station site and the adjoining community.

Please join us on March 15, 2005 for the kickoff of the Station Area Planning process. The meeting will begin at 6:30PM with an informal open house and review of project displays and materials. The formal program will begin at 7PM. All interested members of the community are encouraged to attend. The series will continue throughout the spring of 2005. For more information or to join the mailing list, send an email to hov_brt_comments@projectsolve2.com or contact Roger Henze at GRTA, (404) 463-3094.

2005 STATION AREA PLANNING TIMELINE



Station Area Planning Objective:

To carefully fit the BRT Stations into the context of the area in which they will reside; assuring successful operations while supporting the aspirations and needs of the community.

Public Kickoff Meeting

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005
6:30PM-8:30PM
Southern Polytechnic State University
1100 South Marietta Parkway
Marietta, GA 30060
(678)-915-7778
Room M100
(Building "M" is the Apparel/ Textiles Manufacturing Center)*



Get Involved!

For project updates and to join the mailing list or provide feedback:

Voice Mail Hotline: (404) 377-4012

Email: hov_brt_comments@projectsolve2.com

Website: www.nwhovbrt.com

For more information regarding Station Area Planning, contact:

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Lexicon

- AA:** Alternatives Analysis
- DEIS:** Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- LPA:** Locally Preferred Alternative
- BRT:** Bus Rapid Transit
- HOV Lanes:** High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
- TSM:** Transportation Systems Management

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Address Correction Requested

