

# Action Plan For The Fort McPherson Community



Interim Plan



Land Use, Zoning  
& Urban Design



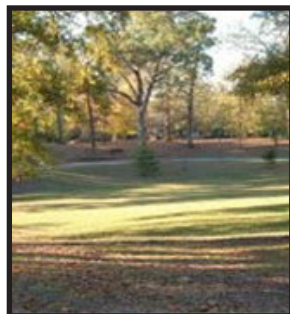
Transportation



Economic  
Development



Housing



Environment



History, Education,  
& Culture



Public Health &  
Public Safety

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# Acknowledgements

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The studio program at the School calls upon Masters of City and Regional Planning students to find their way to apply their classroom and other work experience to a real world situation. In this case, the client was the community, with Georgia Stand-Up assuring the communication and continuity between the community work and the student work. The neighborhoods and businesses surrounding the base that are being directly impacted by the closing deserve the same consideration in conceptualizing, planning, and developing the assets provided by the base as any other interest, and the studio work is dedicated to making that case.

The materials presented here incorporate countless hours of community meetings, field trips, focused topical discussions, conversations, surveys, and data gathering across all of the community-identified issue areas. The goal is to synthesize community aspirations, needs, and priorities with technical and procedural information and requirements to advance community interests as a baseline factor in the interactions between government and private forces that will shape the base's redevelopment future.

This is student work and so reflects the effort of many hands and minds as the learning experiences were conducted and interpreted through their varying lenses. As a whole and in its eight sections this report intends to help guide what must be an ongoing effort to assure that the community benefits from this massive public initiative. Thus Community Benefit Agreements relating to jobs, housing and greenspace, required approval processes like planning and zoning, prioritization of infrastructure capital projects, the use of tax allocation district financing, and gaining a seat at the table where the decisions are being made should all include formalized citizen guidance.

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## Executive Summary

Fort McPherson army base is situated in the South Atlanta area and borders East Point. It connects two MARTA rail transit stations and is bordered by three arterial streets. After being targeted for closure in 2005 under the federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) program, there have been several ongoing efforts to determine how the base will be redeveloped for future use after the army departs in 2011. Beyond the walls are low density, mostly single family neighborhoods with a diversity of people and a rich history intertwined with the base. At present these neighborhoods are facing stresses brought on by the base closing and speculation over its future on one hand and on the other by the real estate collapse, with foreclosures, derelict absentee owners, and boarded up homes with damage evident on nearly every block. The neighborhoods have strengths to build upon, some attractive to speculators, yet are challenged by uncertainties that range from displacement and gentrification to further deterioration and disinvestment. In Atlanta, these neighborhoods, mostly African-American, with a wide range of incomes from low to high, lie in Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) S, R, and X, and in Wards A and B of the city of East Point.

Language in the Local Redevelopment Authority's (LRA) vision and principle statements seem to embrace benefit to the local community as core values with such language as: on the vision side, "Economically uplift surrounding communities..." or "Enhance community services and promote life-long learning;" or "Develop through collaborative process;" or on the principle side, "Province connections to the surrounding neighborhoods;" or "Develop with respect to the local community;" or "Create a place for everyone." Yet their actual work has ignored community needs, priorities, and aspirations. Their sole focus has been how to maximize the redevelopment of the base, an inward directed effort that perpetuates the base property as an island, whose relevance is city or region wide, not support for the community in whose midst it resides. Responding to growing community concern, Georgia StandUp, a community based think tank and action organization, spearheaded the move to create a community-driven plan to build community benefits into any base redevelopment strategy. Convening diverse representatives and elected officials from all the affected communities, Georgia StandUp, supported by Georgia Tech's School of City and Regional Planning studios, have conducted a thorough analysis of the problems and opportunities, resulting in this action plan. Its goal is to facilitate a partnership relationship with the LRA resources are tapped to support community improvement objectives while also boosting the timely transformation of the base property into a fully integrated contributor to the overall communities' positive futures.

Yet there is a long way to go. In a nutshell, the question that needs to be addressed is why shouldn't this publicly controlled and funded development initiative bend its effort toward improving the larger community that sits all around it? This action plan identifies issues and opportunities and proposes actions to do just that. It suggests a cohesive vision and usable framework for the communities to use in influencing the many approval steps that lie before the LRA in its quest for redevelopment. The work, summarized from the full report in this executive summary, addresses that interim plan; land use, zoning, and urban design; transportation; jobs and economic development; housing; parks and environment; culture, history, and education; and public health and public safety.

## Fort McPherson Redevelopment Plan

Still in the throes of the economic downturn, the LRA is amending the redevelopment plan it approved in 2007. That plan anticipated a bio-science based research center/complex sponsored in part by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia as the generator for a mixed use development program through public private partnerships. Using a modified grid street systems with defined anchored blocks, the plan directed high density development to the middle of the east side of the property, while preserving its historic core to the north and Considerable Park and open space activities to the west. Housing developments were to be implemented with the highest densities of core mixed use tapering down to the single family scale at the edges.

The LRA's most recent planning effort (released in February 2011) calls for about 3-1/2 million square feet of office/research space, 200,000 square feet of retail space, and 1,400 residential units, ranging from single family to multi-family, as well as about 300 units of housing for homeless people.

**Figure A1.** Rendering from: Fort McPherson Redevelopment Research Park Master Plan and Conceptual Plan. 2011.

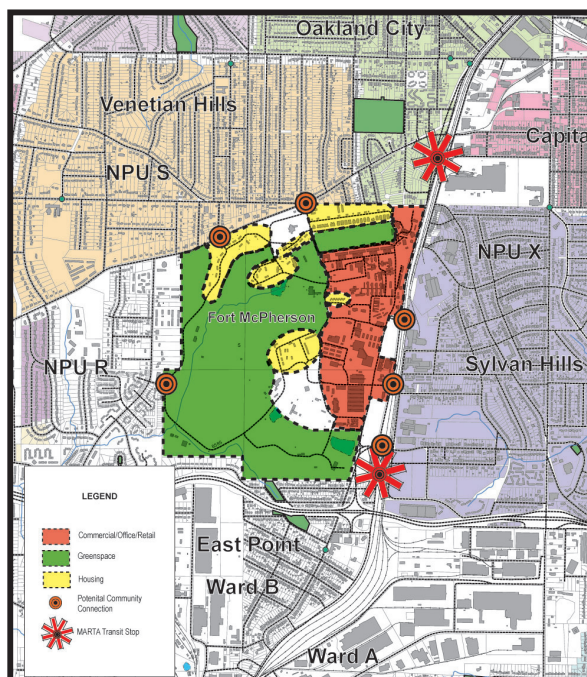


The following sections outline the current situation for each area of concern with regards to the development process. It also outlines issues and pressing concerns, opportunities for engagement, participation, and input, and recommendations and suggestions for community action.

## Interim Base Plan

### Current Situation

In order to address not only the future needs of the community but the current needs as well, students are assisting in developing an interim plan for the Base. The interim plan inventories the existing uses on the Fort McPherson Base and in the adjacent communities and recommends possible adaptive reuses of existing facilities. The interim planning work also identifies various physical connection points to the surrounding community. The accompanying inventory map summarizes strategies for redevelopment and their relation to the MARTA stops and the potential for connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods.



**Figure A2.** Base inventory map and its relation to the surrounding neighborhoods and MARTA stops.

### Issues/Opportunities

One of the most pressing concerns from the community is whether the base will remain fenced and gated until the LRA finds tenants that can contribute to promoting a sustainable local economy. Other concerns include whether existing, well maintained assets will be made available for the residents, and who is responsible for monitoring on-site activity in this interim phase? In response to these concerns, McPherson Action Community Coalition (MACC), Georgia StandUP, and Georgia Tech created a pictorial survey of the base and its features and asked the community members to identify those features they would most like to see made available to the community once it is turned over by the military and before the LRA begins the redevelopment process.



## Recommendations

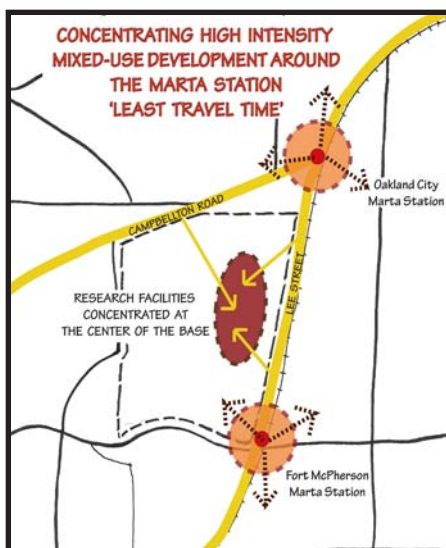
The following structures have been identified by the community for potential use prior to LRA redevelopment: Historic Structures; Quality Housing Units; Quality Office & Administrative Buildings; Educational Facilities; Chapels; Clinic; Pharmacy; Child Development Center; Commissary; Auditorium; Museums; Fire Station; and Recreational Facilities.

Other opportunities for reuse were analyzed and the results favored maintaining quality structures existing on the base with an emphasis on housing, office and administration buildings, community buildings, and recreational facilities. The community also viewed the older and historic buildings as very important features to maintain. Overwhelmingly, the community identified a desire to protect the historic structures on the base as well as utilizing the existing housing stock on site to support community needs. The community also showed interest in making quality office and administrative buildings on the base available to local business. Community use structures, recreation facilities, and health facilities, particularly seeking partnership with the VA, were also identified as potential structures to remain for community use. This input seems not to be reflected so far in the LRA phasing plan.

## Land Use, Zoning, and Urban Design

### Current Situation

This component of the studio focuses on the arrangement, functionality, and livability of the redeveloped Fort McPherson site, fully integrating it with the surrounding communities. The ultimate goal is to protect and improve neighborhoods, promote walkability, increase transportation efficiency, and economic growth in a way that provides jobs for the existing community members. The Base's inward orientation isolates it from the surrounding communities. The result of this isolation and failure to engage the communities increases traffic around the perimeter and reduces the quality of accessibility in the area. The latest version of the redevelopment plan continues to focus its attention to the middle of the property, thus setting up a development strategy that diminishes the advantage of the MARTA access with 1/2 to 3/4 mile walking distances. Additionally, the streets surrounding the Base both major and minor do not provide adequate conditions for pedestrian and cyclist.



**Figure A3.** Diagram showing the logic of concentrating development around the MARTA stations.

### Issues/Opportunities

The rezoning process included during redevelopment allows for the opportunity to use SPI Zoning. While not yet incorporated in the City's effort, the SPI zoning strategy should be considered for areas beyond the base perimeter. The existence of two MARTA stations on either end of the base presents an opportunity for higher density mixed-use development concentrated at those transportation nodes. The existing development strategy proposed by the LRA with its emphasis on the center of the base, raises concern that the LRA has not yet recognized the importance and the opportunity of improving the condition and the access of its perimeter. The scarcity of walkable streetscapes and the resulting need for enhanced livability in the areas also provides an opportunity to implement transportation projects both on and off the base that create multi-modal corridors and increase pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between the two.

## Recommendations

Based on community input and careful analysis of existing conditions, the urban design and zoning team makes recommendations that can be summarized as follow:

- Adopt an alternative or at least supplementary development strategy centered on higher intensity mixed-use, mixed income transit oriented development around the MARTA stations
- Improve streetscapes
- Increase connectivity and accessibility
- Encourage retail and mixed-use development at nodes along the major corridors
- Identify historical districts, community institutions, and public spaces that should be preserved and accentuated
- As it relates to the SPI zoning, it is essential that the ordinance include, as most SPI ordinances do, provision for a “development review committee,” that includes members from the affected communities.

In order to achieve these ends, the communities and their representatives should press the City and the LRA to consider their necessary Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) and rezoning actions, both already underway separately, in parallel. At the present time, for example, the City is underway with its CDP update for the whole city, and Council member Keisha Lance Bottoms District 11 is pressing forward for comprehensive rezoning of Campbellton Road her district, which abuts Fort McPherson. Yet no such review appears to be underway for the balance of Campbellton Road, from Stanton Road to east of the MARTA underpass, where the crucial areas between the north boundary of the Fort and Oakland City Park and MARTA's vast parking lots should play a central role in transforming the prospects for the communities around. Meanwhile, the LRA is pressing forward with its CDP/ rezoning process, wholly within its boundaries, with no apparent coordination beyond its fence. These disconnections of process ignore the realities of the interactions and mutual impacts these crucial stabilization and redevelopment opportunities inevitably will have on each other.

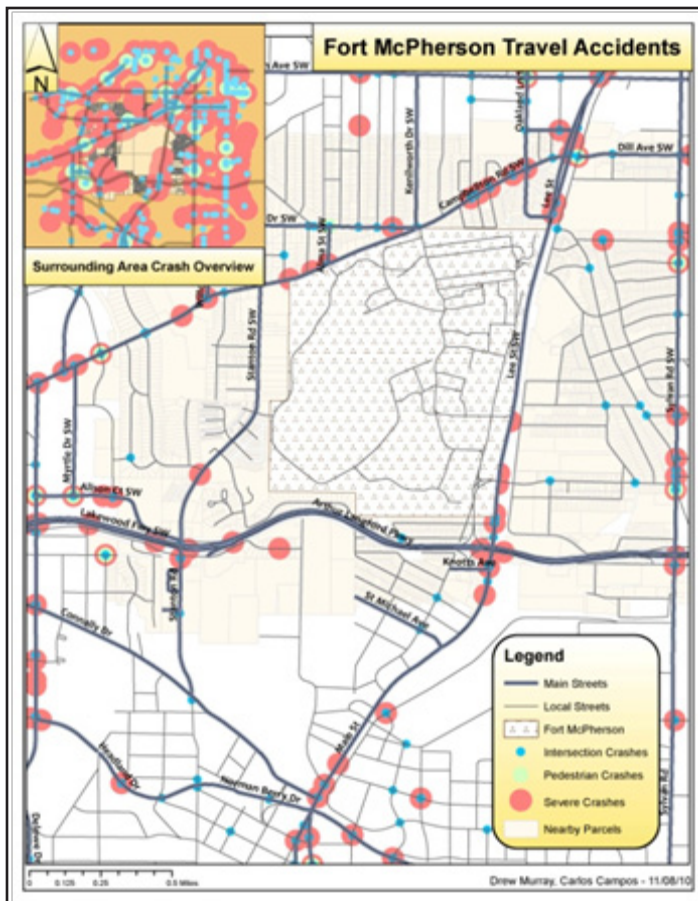
## Transportation

### Current Situation

The transportation infrastructure serving Fort McPherson and communities around is a mixed bag of great nominal transit access, severe limitations in east-west flow across the MARTA and freight rail corridor, the bounding arterial streets (Lee Street, Campbellton Road, and Langford Parkway) and only a single point of connectivity to the Base, which underscores the historical isolation of the Base and the disconnects this impose on the communities. This study incorporates and updates important planning work from the recent past, including the Oakland City Livable Communities (LCI) study, the Campbellton Road TAD study, the ConnectAtlanta Plan, and the Local Redevelopment Authority's ongoing planning work (to the extent that is available). Citizen input and feedback included workshops and surveys to gauge needs and priorities from the communities' perspective, resulting in organizing analysis and recommendations into three overall categories: automobile mobility, access, and safety; transit options and choices and pedestrian and bicycle analysis and suggested improvements.

### Issues/Opportunities

The LRA redevelopment planning nominally addresses the automobile disconnect issue by recommending various alternatives for connecting to the larger community street network, but their proposed early phases do not appear to act on any of the alternatives. The current transportation system for Fort McPherson lacks the connectivity that is crucial for integration of the base with surrounding communities. In terms of roadway issues, there is a need for intersection improvements that will increase the safety for not only automobile drivers but for pedestrians and cyclists as well.



**Figure A4.** Overall street network showing frequency of traffic accidents in the Fort McPherson area.

The two MARTA stations at Oakland City and Fort McPherson together with connecting bus lines accommodate a significant proportion of the travel requirements for local residents. Yet the communities, more dependent on transit than many, are pressing for a better, finer grained service network. The truly multimodal potential that the area's two MARTA stations provide is not being realized with the LRA plan concentrating much of its density midway between them instead of around them. On the more day to day level, obstructed pedestrian access to the rail stations hurts their current usability. The sidewalks in place are under maintained reducing their utility due to breaks in access, plant overgrowth, broken concrete, insufficient lighting and mismatched crosswalk curb-cuts at intersections - these all contribute to weak links in the multi modal accessibility of the system. Additionally, neighborhoods that are not within walking distance to MARTA rail or bus stops need alternative transit options that can tie them into the system.

Analysis of the disconnected and often badly broken sidewalk and bicycle system calls out for affirmative steps to improve the condition of these modes. The lack of connectivity for bicycle lanes through-out the neighborhoods surrounding the base is another concern. Often a bicycle path may exist for one or

two blocks before ending abruptly. There are many opportunities for increased connectivity and accessibility between Fort McPherson and the surrounding communities. The Connect Atlanta Plan recognizes the prime location of the base and opportunities for economic growth on the area and has included Fort McPherson in its candidate projects. Overall, the emphasis is on establishing full and functional connectivity within the neighborhood, within the Base, and most importantly between the two.

## Alternatives/Choices/Priorities

Major priorities for the Fort McPherson Community include the following:

- For automobile access and safety: increase connectivity between base and surrounding neighborhoods and improve intersections for safety and mobility, more specifically, roadways and intersections that need improvements, traffic control, signalization, and management methods that can improve safety for all modes and better balance the use of right-of-way for these modes as well as favoring access to major destination points.
- For transit: further study and incorporation of alternative transit options, such as better use of the MARTA train stations, better circulating systems for feeder transit, lighting, pedestrian crossing, and other safety upgrades.
- For pedestrian and bike network: maintaining and improving sidewalks and establishing a workable biking network, with priorities to be established by the LRA with the community to achieve connectivity to the existing (and quite beautiful) base pathway system.

The extent to which each of these priorities is pursued depends on numerous variable circumstances as well as the community's level of engagement. For example, a major intersection improvement could be achieved at Campbellton Road at the presently closed base entrance through roundabout construction, as suggested in the LRA plan; yet this is not identified as a Phase One priority. Improved lane markings and visibility can be achieved, but again needs to be given priority. Operationally, the creation of a Transportation Management Association that includes community participation as part of the development program could oversee development of transportation assets to maximize benefits of transit options.

## **Recommendations/Suggestions**

The large number of issues facing the transportation system in and around Fort McPherson has resulted in an equally large number of possible solutions to those problems. The alternatives listed above are a small sample of the many ideas put forth in the transportation section of the final report. Recommending or suggesting any specific projects at this point relies less on a specific solution's effectiveness and more on cooperative approach for balancing community and base redevelopment needs with financial resources and project feasibility. On this point, for example, the report suggests that funding for necessary transit improvements incorporate a blend of Tax Allocation District (TAD) funds, Community Improvement (CID) funds, a Transportation Management Association (TMA) implementation structure, as matches for City and federal funding for the future. Thus, even as the LRA is contemplating its range of development strategies, it should take steps to commit to partner across its boundaries in providing for a TMA, a CID, and using TAD funds to fully integrate its future with that of the larger community.

Altogether, the Base redevelopment offers the opportunity and calls out for truly innovative and collaborative approaches for integrating transportation with jobs and housing strategies in ways that incorporate community needs into a balanced overall redevelopment strategy.

# **Jobs and Economic Development**

## **Current Situation**

The neighborhoods surrounding Fort McPherson face similar struggles to many other mixed-income communities across the country. The effects of the residential real-estate crisis, lack of stable employment opportunities; and lack of other opportunities for economic growth are prevalent all over, and certainly in the Fort McPherson area. The base closing is exacerbating these problems. Initially, plans for the Base redevelopment called for a bioscience park to fill the void left by the base closure. However, the degree to which the economy declined and the effect that the slide had on all aspects of the Georgia economy renders that original plan less likely. The new economic reality allows the local economy a second chance of being heard and a second chance at developing an economic strategy that can address their job and income needs.

## **Issues/Opportunities**

Demographic analysis confirms income and job disparities that afflict much of the nearby communities. As pointed out in the discussion of the current LRA plan above, the BRAC process identified criteria that should be met that seem to favor greater coordination in meeting community as well as City needs and priorities.

To meet some of these criteria, any kind of partnership between the community and the LRA would be welcome. As an example, there are at least three economic development tools that offer the communities, the City, and the LRA the opportunity to collaborate on job-generating economic development strategies. At the present time, these do not seem to be particularly coordinated or cooperatively planned. The communities and the Base lie in the City-designated federal Opportunity Zone, giving business access to employment tax incentives and other benefits. They also lie in



the area recently awarded an EPA/HUD Brownfield study grant to develop applications for future Brownfield funding. Finally, the Campbellton Road Tax Allocation District provides the opportunity for co-funding major new infrastructure improvements between the LRA and the City. While the LRA has been considering these potential funds as “theirs,” reflecting the potential that much of the tax increment generated may come from Base redevelopment, this resource should be co-planned and co-committed to balance Base redevelopment needs with community infrastructure improvement needs.

The community has strongly expressed the need to eliminate barriers that prevent entry into the workforce and the lack of incentives and resources needed to develop an effective development and training program. Specific barriers include lack of education, lack of work history, child care, transportation, health conditions, substance-abuse, ex-offenders, homelessness, language barriers and disabilities. Another significant barrier is soft skills- such a deficiency can hinder even the brightest young people.

### **Alternatives/Choices/Priorities**

After extensive community outreach and an in depth examination of the issues, four areas have been identified as priorities that need to be addressed in some way. These areas include increasing the local community’s access to capital and financial resources, fostering and developing truly comprehensive workforce development resources, increasing the access that local residents have to sustainable green jobs across the vertical employment “ladder”, and drafting and implementing an effective community benefits agreement (CBA) that ensures that any development keeps the local community’s interests in mind.

### **Recommendations/Suggestions**

Four priority areas for jobs and economic development strategies have emerged, all directed at removing predictable barriers to job and capital access and favoring community economic development priorities. Increasing a community’s access to capital is never an easy task. The communities surrounding Fort McPherson, however, could greatly benefit from either the founding of a community credit union specifically that caters specifically to community needs or the establishment of a micro-lending institution that would disperse microloans to community residents. Either form could provide workshops to develop financial know-how. The communities need to continue to press for improved access to capital to support entrepreneurial initiatives.

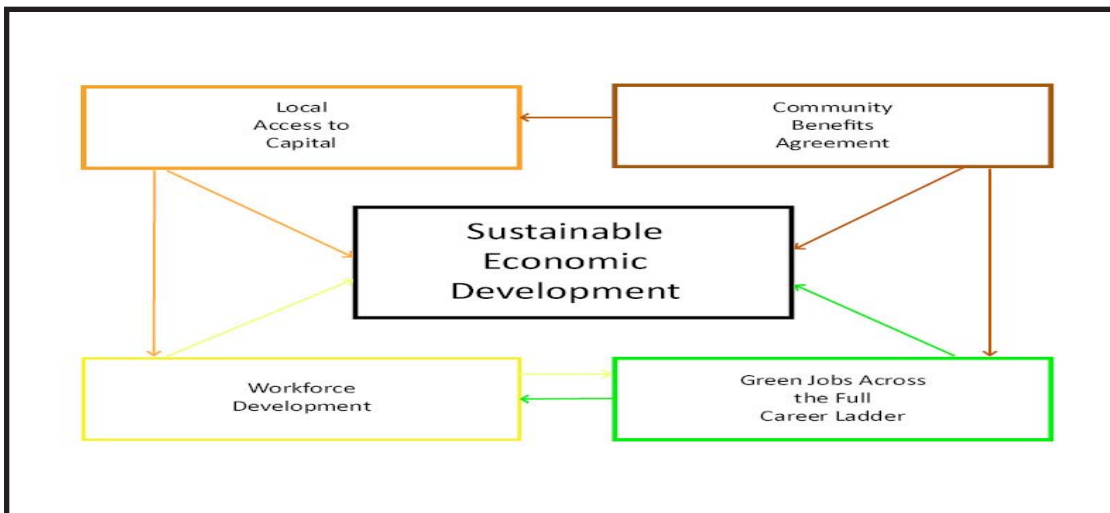
Information about increasing the community’s access to workforce training/development programs has been accomplished in part in the full report, where a list of local resources is put forth that details specific area programs (including the areas of study offered, location of training, and contact information). More importantly, though, access to workforce development and training in anticipation of redevelopment initiative on the Base and elsewhere must focus on the workforce needs and profiles of the immediate communities.

Green jobs are undoubtedly the future. Programs that reflect the growing commitment and funding for the full spectrum of “green” jobs should support community and base deconstruction, rehabilitation, and new construction needs. The economic development section of the final report provides green jobs sectors and types, local training in these sectors and potential future training in these sectors. In support of local business opportunity, student inventoried all business within a two mile radius so that linkages could be made between them and Base maintenance, operations, and development needs.

The communities need to formalize their effort to establish a viable, legally constituted community development entity so that all of the above needs and resources can be negotiated into enforceable Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) between the communities, the LRA, the City, the Atlanta Development Authority, and other development entities. The CBA and/or Community Workforce Agreement (CWA) have the potential to help implementing the above suggestions. A CBA is a legally binding contract between a developer and a legally incorporated community entity

(like perhaps the McPherson Action Community Coalition- MACC) that calls for a variety of community benefits that the developer agrees to execute/provide in exchange for gaining the full support of the community for the development. Examples of such benefits include living wage requirements, a “first source” hiring system, space for child-care providers, construction of parks and other recreational facilities, infrastructure improvements, and/or the construction of affordable housing.

To make progress on the priority suggestions, the community needs to gain better access to the financial and operational tools identifies above.



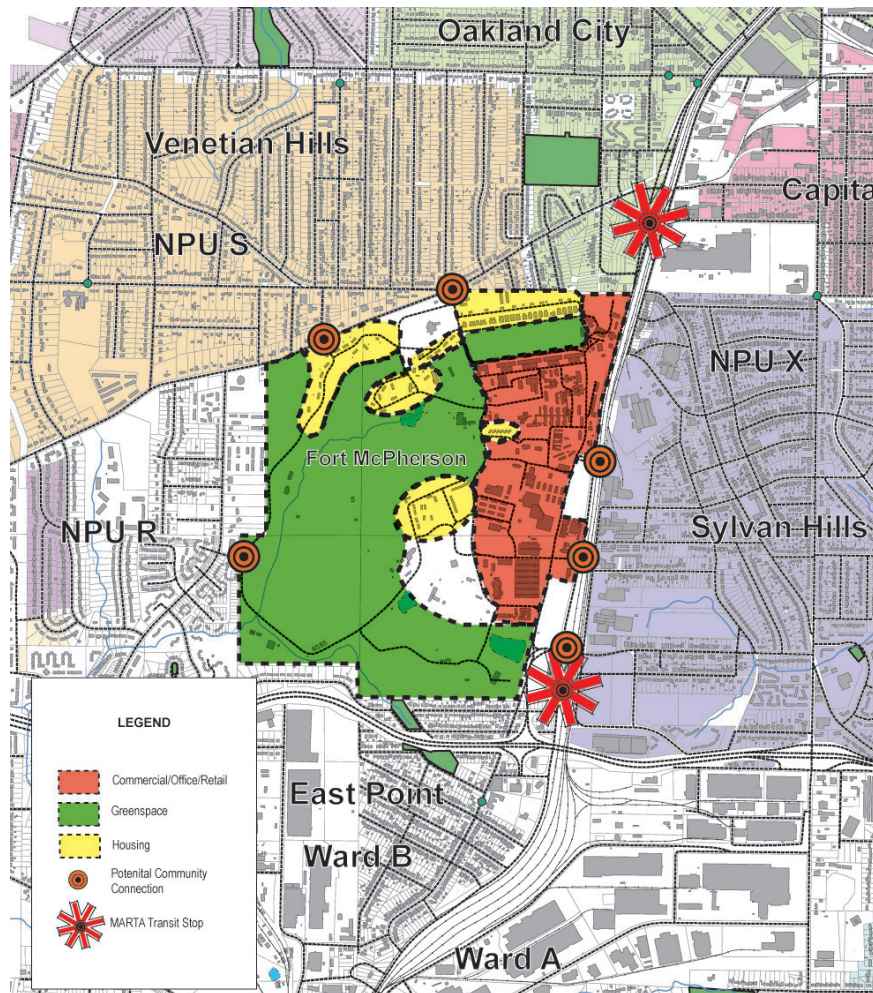
**Figure A5.** Diagram depicting the economic development model that will integrate Green Jobs, Workforce development, Access to Capital, and a Community Benefit Agreements.

# Interim Plan

## Introduction:

Over the course of the past year and a half, the communities surrounding Fort McPherson have become increasingly involved in scrutinizing the ongoing planning for the Base by its Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA). Most of the LRA work has focused on the Base property itself, with only passing regard for the aspirations, needs, and priorities of the surrounding communities. In this context, several overall concerns and responses come forward, many dealt with in later sections of this planning report. Incorporating community guidance, this section provides a brief analysis and critique of the latest of the LRA plans made available to the public, and then it addresses one of the most persistent and yet unresolved community concerns: what happens when the Army moves out at the end of 2011?

The Georgia Tech studio work with the communities last year identified and advanced the idea of the need for an “interim plan,” that could begin to suggest to the LRA what it should consider in planning for the imminent departure of the Army, taking with it about 4000 jobs, about half civilian. Subsequent planning by the LRA appears to have begun to recognize this need in a plan that they label “Phase One.” Pushing forward with developing an interim plan that would consider matching the well-maintained existing Base facilities with community needs, the McPherson Action Community Coalition (MACC), Georgia Stand-UP, and the studio conducted an analysis of these facilities and resources, including mapping and a pictorial survey. (see Appendix \_\_). The goal of this effort is to propose to the LRA a prioritized framework for guiding the interim planning, transition, and operation and maintenance for the closed Base in a way that begins to respond positively and collaboratively to community needs and priorities.



**Figure B1.** Base inventory map and its relation to the surrounding neighborhoods and MARTA stops as well as potential connection points between the community and the base. The Diagram also highlights the housing locations in yellow, the retail/commercial core in red and the recreation and greenspace uses in green.

### **Current Situation:**

In response to the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) plan developed by HOK in September 2010 the Fort McPherson community began to question what happens to the site when the base is closed and not just 5-20 years in the future. The base has been a doughnut hole in the community since its inception, leading to a divide and separation between the area on the base and the surroundings of the base. The site is within walking distance from two Marta transit stops and has several potential connection points to the community that have been gated or closed. Concerns from the community have been raised regarding the closure of the base and its future relationship with the surrounding communities, will it remain fenced and gated until the LRA finds what they deem as acceptable tenants? Will community features within the base be available for residents? Who will monitor the activity on the base? In response to the concerns and fears of the community MACC and Georgia Tech created a pictorial survey of the base and its features and asked community members to identify the features they would most like to see available to the community once turned over by the military and before the LRA redevelopment process begins.

### **Issues and Recommendations:**

The desires of the community were analyzed and the results favored maintaining quality structures existing on the base with an emphasis in housing, office and administration buildings, community buildings and recreational facilities. The community also viewed the older and historic buildings as very important features to maintain. The following recommendations respond to the community's desires and the need for the base to be active prior to the LRA development process.

- I. Historic Preservation: A common thread throughout each community member's responses was the desire to maintain and restore existing historic structures on base. It is recommended that existing base structures be examined for possible addition to the current listing of historic structures on the base to ensure that the history and culture of the base remains for years to come.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources: Historic Preservation Division:  
254 Washington Street, SW, Ground Level  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
404.656.2840

National Park Service National Register of Historic Places:  
1849 C Street, NW (2280)  
Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 354-2211

- II. Housing: The community is interested in maintaining existing quality housing structures on the base in hopes of creating affordable housing opportunities for residents. With the shortage of quality affordable rental housing units in the Atlanta area and in response to the overwhelming response this summer to the East Point housing voucher application mishap, the possibility and interest of utilizing existing base housing as potential affordable housing was developed. The following resources and developers are available in the Atlanta area for assistance with such projects:

Atlanta Development Authority: 86 Pryor Street, Atlanta, GA 30303  
404.880.4100  
Interim Director Housing Finance:  
Dawn Luke [dluke@atlantada.com](mailto:dluke@atlantada.com)

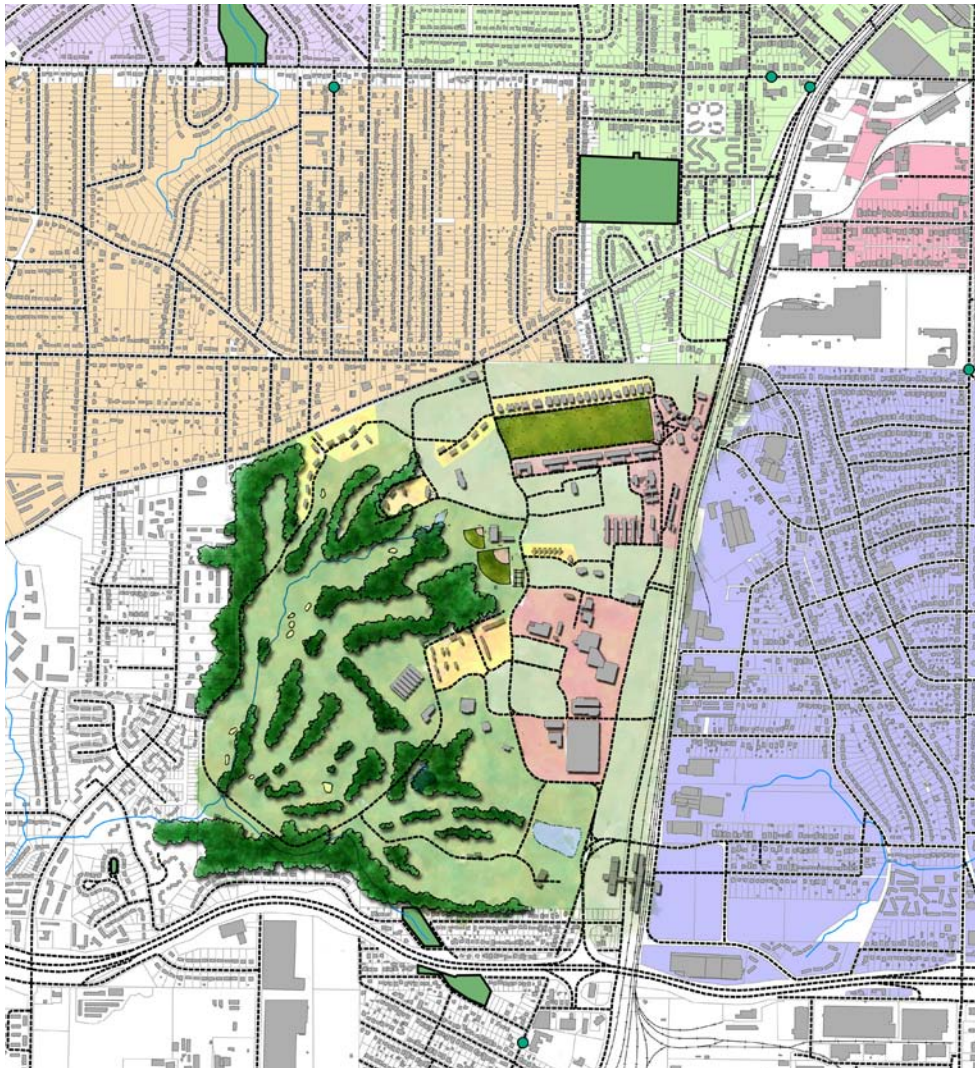
City of Atlanta Bureau of Housing: 68 Mitchell Street Suite 1200  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404.330.6390  
Director: Evelyn Nu'Man [enuman@atlantaga.gov](mailto:enuman@atlantaga.gov)

PROGRESSIVE REDEVELOPMENT, INC: 321 W. Hill Street, Suite 3  
Decatur, GA 30030  
404.371.1230  
President and CEO: Bruce Junter [brucejunter@prihousing.org](mailto:brucejunter@prihousing.org)

The Integral Group LLC: 60 Piedmont Avenue, NE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
404.224.1860  
Executive Vice President: Carl Powell

- III. Office and Administration: Residents identified the need for quality commercial and business space within their community and recommended that the larger facilities be made available and emphasized the desire for the creation of commercial spaces for community based businesses.
- IV. Education Facilities: The community responded positively to the current amount of training and educational facilities currently located on the base and viewed these as an opportunities for workforce training programs, youth education and adult education, etc.
- V. Community Buildings: The participants of this exercise responded positively to the amount of available resources on base as potentials for strengthening their community. The following buildings were identified as potential sites of interest to meet the cureent needs of the community:
  - Chapels
  - Clinic
  - Pharmacy
  - Child Development Center
  - Commissary
  - Auditorium
  - Museums
  - Fire Station
  - Recreational Facilities





**Figure B2.** Community developed Interim Base Redevelopment Plan. Existing golf course and recreation facilities to remain along with quality housing, commercial, educational and community buildings.

## LRA/HOK Plan Analysis:

The community brought to light the concerns of the fate of the base immediately after closure of the base. While the LRA has created plans that begin to show the conceptualization of phasing, it remains unclear what will happen to base directly after closing. The concern that the base will be gated and shut out the community was mentioned throughout the process and a resolution has yet to be developed. The following highlights the areas for concern and reconsideration from LRA and HOK.



**Figure B3.** LRA/HOK Plan Evaluation



# Land Use, Zoning & Urban Design

## Introduction

Responding to community input, the urban design, land use, and zoning component of the studio focuses on the arrangement, functionality, and livability of the redeveloped Fort McPherson site and the surrounding communities. The communities' ultimate goal is to integrate the base site into the surrounding communities in a way that protects and improves neighborhoods, enhances livability, promotes walkability, increases transportation efficiency, and also encourages concentrated economic growth.

Based on community input and careful analysis of existing conditions, the urban design and zoning team has developed suggestions that range from proposing an alternative development strategy centered on higher intensity mixed use development around the MARTA stations to improving streetscapes, increasing connectivity and accessibility, encouraging retail and mixed-use development at nodes along the around transit stations and major corridors, and identifying historical districts, community institutions, and public spaces that should be preserved, enhanced, and accentuated.

In order to achieve these ends, the communities and their representatives should press the City and the LRA to consider their necessary Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) and rezoning actions, both already underway separately, in parallel. At the present time, for example, the City is underway with its CDP update for the whole city, and Councilmember Keisha Lance Bottoms of District 11 is pressing forward for comprehensive rezoning of Campbellton Road in her district, which abuts Fort McPherson. Yet no such review appears to be underway for the balance of Campbellton Road, from Stanton Road to east of the MARTA underpass, where the crucial areas between the north boundary of the Fort and Oakland City Park and MARTA's vast parking lots should play a central role in transforming the prospects for the communities around . Meanwhile, the LRA is pressing forward with its CDP/rezoning process, wholly within its boundaries, with no apparent coordination beyond its fence. These disconnections of process totally ignore the realities of the interactions and mutual impacts these crucial stabilization and redevelopment opportunities inevitably will have on each other.



**Figure B4.** Potential Street Network Connectivity Diagram

## Connectivity

### a. Creating a new street network that connects the site with the existing neighborhoods.

For decades Fort McPherson has been barricaded from the surrounding community with razor-wire fences and gates. The public gains access to the base only by entering through high security checkpoints—and currently there are only two entrance and exit points for the 487-acre base. As the redevelopment plan for the base unfolds, the surrounding neighborhoods must take advantage of every opportunity to influence the planning process. The currently accepted redevelopment proposal does not seem to prioritize new connections from the community onto and through the base. The proposed redevelopment plan shows only a handful of new entrances and exits. Likewise, the proposal only depicts a small number of new streets connecting through the site. (See page 10 for an image of the proposed plan). An open and well-connected street network is critical in integrating the base site with the surrounding communities. If the site is not opened and if connections are not made, the base will remain a physical disruption in the community fabric and the surrounding neighborhoods will not have access to the potential benefits.

Instead of being an inaccessible void in the middle of the community, the Fort McPherson site has the potential to be totally open and interconnected with surrounding neighborhoods. For this to happen, both the literal and figurative barriers must be dismantled. Removing the literal barriers can be done in the relative short-term and will allow the surrounding communities to begin the process of mentally removing the figurative barriers that have existed for so long. Ideally, in the future there will be no conception of ‘on-base’ versus ‘off-base’—instead, there will simply be seamlessly connected neighborhoods.

The first step in removing the literal barriers is to take down Fort McPherson’s fences and give the public full through-access. The second step is to extend the street network from the neighborhoods into and through the base site. Extending the neighborhood street network through the Fort McPherson site will not only give the community access to the site, but it will also increase the overall connectivity, mobility, and walkability of the surrounding communities. See Figure 4 Street Connectivity.

The ultimate goal is to increase connectivity and accessibility between neighborhoods, schools, parks, shopping centers, and activity centers—for pedestrians, bicyclists, and also vehicles. An interconnected street pattern will improve traffic circulation and increase transportation efficiency by providing more direct routes to/from origins and destinations—plus, more street connections creates more mobility choices, giving residents access to their destinations with greater efficiency and ease.

### b. Improving connections between neighborhoods and parks, schools, and activity centers to improve overall walkability.

In addition to redeveloping and improving areas on the Fort McPherson site, the BRAC process also offers the opportunity for improvements off base and in the surrounding communities as well. The current redevelopment proposal does not extend its scope beyond the base boundaries; however, as discussed in previous sections, surrounding communities can negotiate for various neighborhood improvements through community engagement and future community benefit agreements. Infrastructure projects focusing on improving connectivity and walkability should be a priority of the communities. The neighborhoods surrounding Fort McPherson are all in close proximity to parks, schools, and commercial centers—and the neighborhoods are all of a walkable residential scale. Because the neighborhoods have these existing attributes, negotiating for improvement projects that would enhance walkability is a feasible goal. Small and relatively affordable improvements in sidewalk connections can have great impacts in creating safe and more efficient routes to schools, parks, Marta stations, and commercial centers.

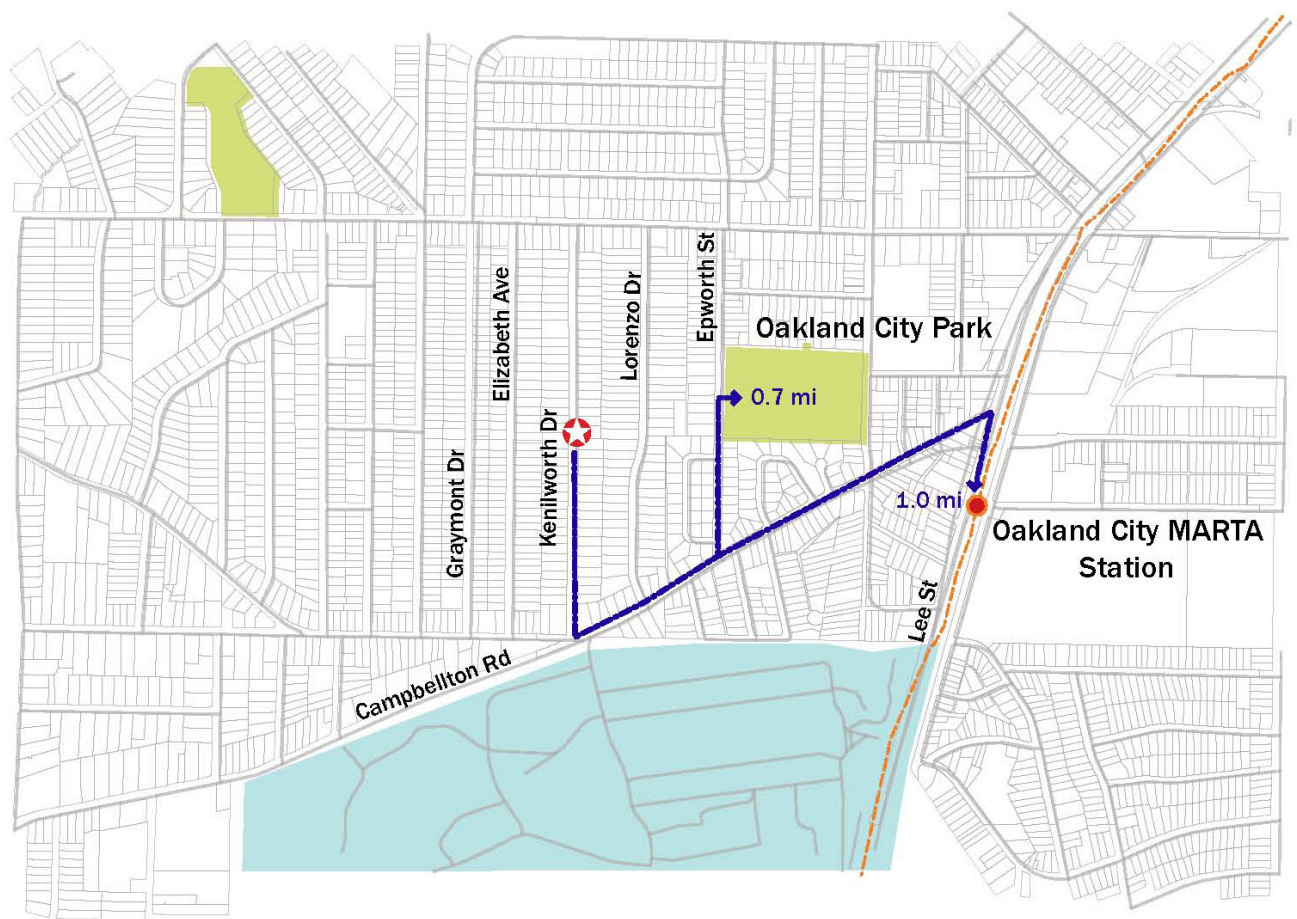
Walkability is becoming an increasingly accepted measure of the overall health of a neighborhood—and enhancing

walkability is a common design intervention used to improve a neighborhood’s fabric and promote healthy lifestyles. Some characteristics of a walkable neighborhood include smaller, well-connected blocks, an adequate sidewalk network, and access to food, shopping, and entertainment within reasonable walking distances.

A neighborhood’s walkability goes beyond the simple notion of walking as a means of transportation—the concept of a walkable neighborhood also captures the sociability among neighbors and fosters communities that are environmentally, physically, and spiritually healthy. The first step in establishing a walkable neighborhood is ensuring that residents have somewhere to go—destinations within walking distance. As discussed in the mixed-use development section, concentrating commercial development along the area’s major corridors, such as Lee Street and Campbellton Road, and around MARTA transit stations could provide residents with shopping, restaurants, and groceries within a short distance.

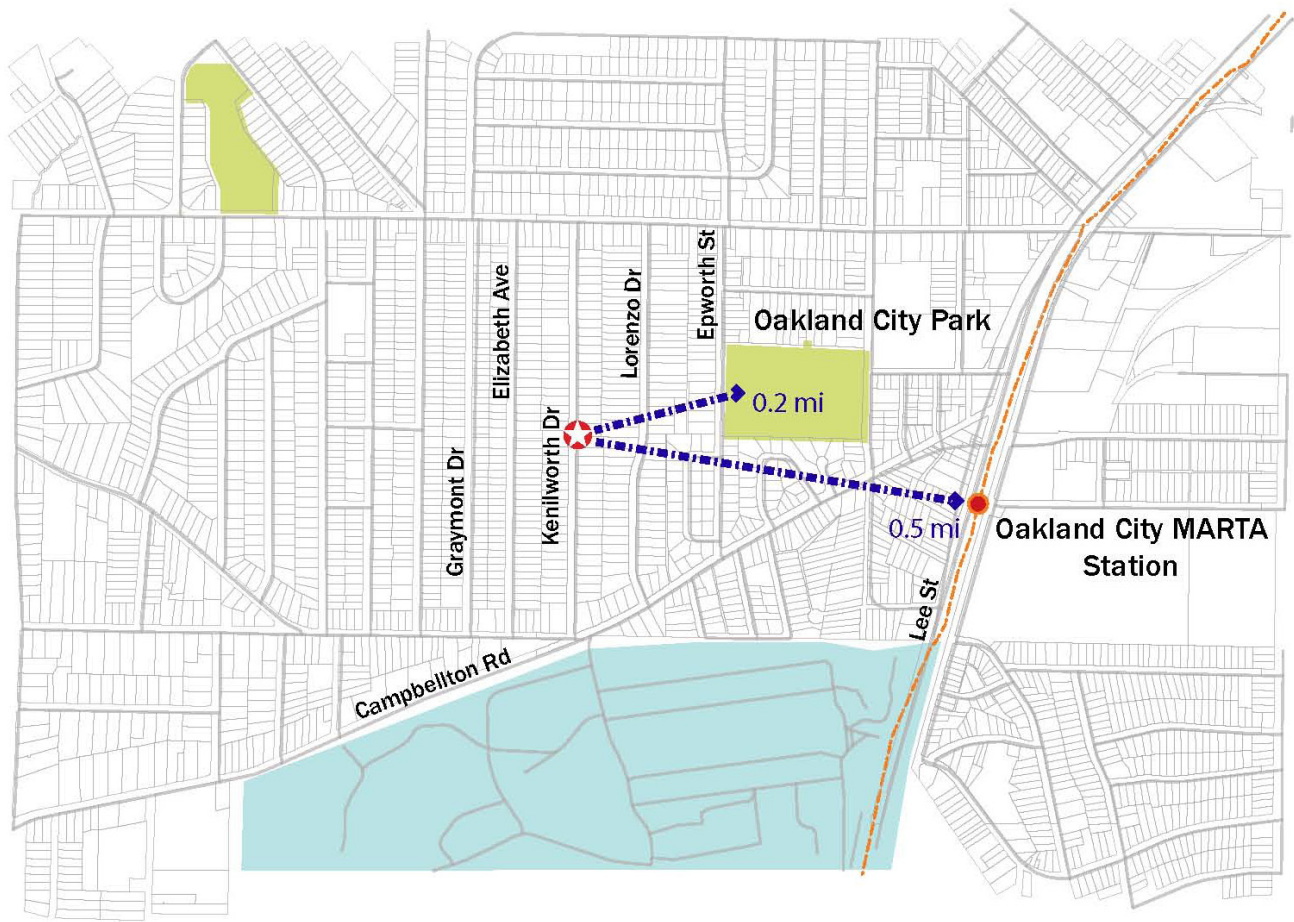
Aside from walking access to commercial destinations, a well-connected neighborhood also gives residents easier access to neighborhood parks, recreation centers, and schools. As previously mentioned, the neighborhoods surrounding Fort McPherson, such as Venetian Hills, Sylvan Hills, and Oakland City, currently have a generally well-connected street network; however, with a handful of additional connections, they have the potential to be even more walkable.

The Venetian Hills neighborhood offers a good example of a neighborhood that has the existing framework that can easily be transformed into truly walkable neighborhood. Venetian Hills is made up of small residential lots, it borders a major corridor- Campbellton Road, and it is in close proximity to the Oakland City MARTA station. However, many



**Figure B5.** Venetian hills route to park and MARTA





**Figure B6.** Venetian Hills actual distances

of the blocks in the neighborhood are too long to truly promote walkability. For instance, Willow Trail, Westmont Graymont, Elizabeth Avenue, Kenilworth, and Lorenzo Drive are each over half a mile long, with no East-West connecting streets to break up the blocks. This lack of through-connections creates extremely long blocks and discourages walkability.

To give an example, a resident living mid-block on Kenilworth Drive must walk at least 0.7 miles to reach the Epworth Street entrance to Oakland City Park, which is actually only 0.2 miles away. Likewise, if following the existing street network (and assuming sidewalks are in place), that same resident on Kenilworth must walk roughly one mile to the

Oakland City Marta station—which is actually only half a mile away. (See Figures B5 & B6).

Filling out the street network with through-streets to break up the long blocks and better connect these important



**Example Photos B1, B2 + B3.** Atkins Park Photos

destinations would significantly improve the area's walkability. There may even be the opportunity to replace foreclosed, bank owned properties with through block connections. Even so, cutting entire new streets through the existing neighborhoods would be costly and potentially too disruptive to be feasible in the short-term. An alternative to building new streets is to link up the blocks with connective sidewalks and paths. This would be cost-effective and less obtrusive—and would still dramatically enhance the neighborhoods' walkability and connectivity. Cut-through sidewalks and paths could potentially shave a one-mile trek to the MARTA station down to a half-mile stroll.



**Figure B7.** Potential Sidewalk Connections Through Venetian Hills

Other neighborhoods in the Atlanta area have taken a similar approach and used pathways as a means of enhancing walkability. Specifically the Atkins Park neighborhood in Virginia Highland has sidewalk connections that break up the long residential blocks. The sidewalks are unobtrusive and offer residents more options for accessing the nearby parks and shopping centers. (See Example Photos B1, B2 +3). New connections like this would be ideal for the neighborhoods around Fort McPherson because the block network is already so strong—only a handful of strategically place connections would make a great impact on walkability and serve as an impetus for lifestyle changes.

The current economic climate is actually a good time for rights-of-way (purchasing the legal right to use land for transportation facilities) to be obtained for these connections. It could be as simple as identifying pairs of abutting bank owned properties, obtaining rights of way or easements, and laying the pathways. (See Figure B7). Building sidewalk connections instead of streets has the advantage of limiting the impact on the adjacent properties—because only a few feet would be taken for the easement, property values would not be negatively affected when the properties are one-day sold again.



**Figure B8.** Thoroughfares include: Cascade Rd, Avon Ave, Venetian Dr, Campbellton Rd, Connally Dr, Centra Villa Dr, Stanton St, Oakland Dr, Lee St, Sylvan Rd, Metropolitan Pkwy

## Corridors and Streetscapes

### Major Corridors

Fort McPherson lies in the heart of Southwest Atlanta and is therefore surrounded by some of the area's most heavily traveled corridors. Currently, Lee Street, Campbellton Road, and Langford Parkway, each of which is immediately adjacent to the base, are designed as high traffic arterial roads. Their designation as major corridors conflicts with the community ideal to develop the base in a way that encourages pedestrian activity and walkability. High traffic counts and low pedestrian activity on these roads surrounding the base result from two primary reasons. First, the base creates a super block without any through streets, forcing all traffic in the area onto these roads. Secondly, they serve as major connectors within the region and are therefore designed to accommodate a higher number of vehicles with a high level of service. The map below identifies the major corridors surrounding Fort McPherson.



**Image B4.** Lee Street Looking South



This map illustrates these roads' significance to the surrounding area. Roads like Langford Parkway, Lee Street, and Campbellton Road act as regional connectors and high-density commercial corridors. Roads like Venetian Drive, Avon Avenue, Cascade Road, and Stanton Road act as local connectors and medium density corridors. The result of this demand for fast-moving corridors for local and regional commuters is roads designed for cars rather than bikers and pedestrians. Take Lee Street, for example. It is located less than 1.5 miles from Interstate 85 and is the third exit off of Langford Parkway. Between Langford Parkway and Campbellton Road, Lee Street has only one intersection. It is bordered on the East by a fence and rail lines and on the west by the wall containing the base, isolating the street from the surrounding community and intimidating potential pedestrians.

The existing conditions of Lee Street are unfortunate for many reasons, but primarily because the street's location relative to MARTA Stations and Fort McPherson itself makes it an ideal multi-modal corridor. A multi-modal corridor is one that avails itself equally to busses, automobiles, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The transformation of Lee Street and other major corridors in the vicinity is imperative to the redevelopment of Fort McPherson. The success of commercial development within new Fort McPherson site will depend on its visibility and accessibility from the surrounding streets and neighborhoods. One of the most common ways of transforming corridors is a technique called a "road diet". This technique, along with a few other standard design guidelines that should be applied in the Fort McPherson vicinity, is explained below.

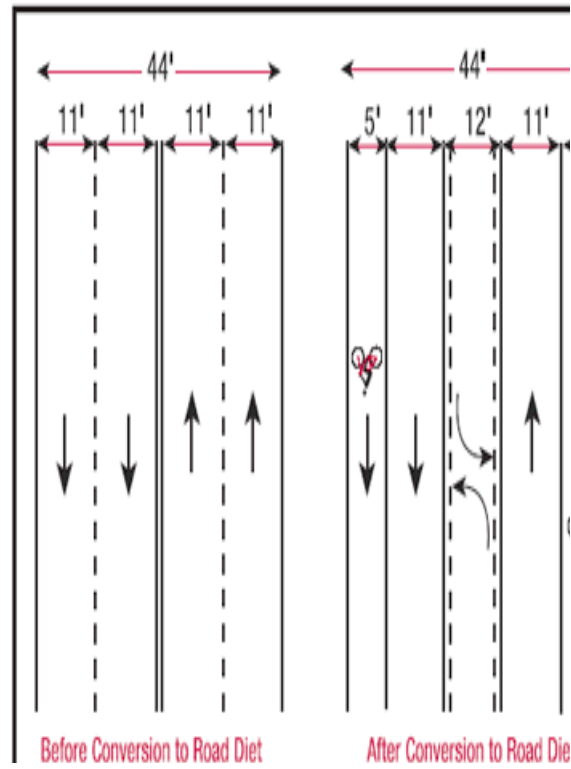
### *Road Diets*

A road diet is a method of improving streetscapes by reducing the number of traffic lanes and increasing the amount of space for streetscape, pedestrian, and bicycle activity. Typically, a road diet will take a four lane road with two lanes in each direction and convert it to a three lane road with one travel lane in each direction and one dedicated turn lane in between. The created space on the edges provides room for bicycle lanes, on street parking, wider sidewalks and street furniture. Research indicates that road diets are typically successful on roads with annual average daily traffic (AADT) count of fewer than 19,000. Lee Street, one of the area's busier arterials, has an AADT count of just over 15,000, indicating that a road diet would be successful in not only improving pedestrian activity and accessibility in and around Fort McPherson, but also in managing and reducing traffic.

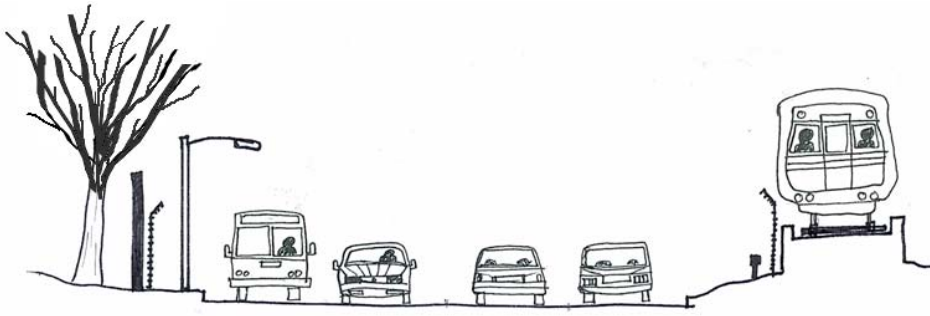
Similar to road diets is a technique referred to as lane diets. This technique is based on the idea that motorists drive according to how comfortable they feel on the road. In 1942 when traffic guidelines were first issued, arterial roads were suggested to be very wide to easily accommodate growing traffic and to provide ease of drivability. Unfortunately, widening the road meant thinning the sidewalks and increasing automotive speeds. By reducing the travel lanes to widths aligned with desired travel speeds, more space can be given to bikers and pedestrians while increasing traffic safety by slowing traffic speeds.

The following diagram illustrates how a road diet could be applied to Lee Street.

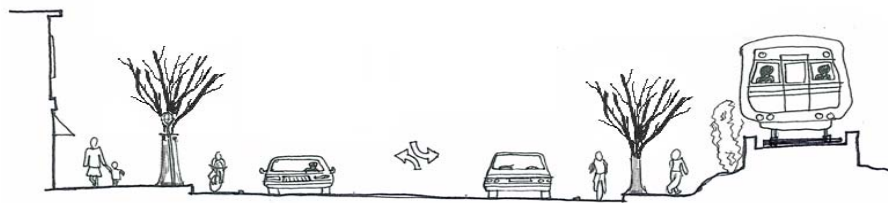




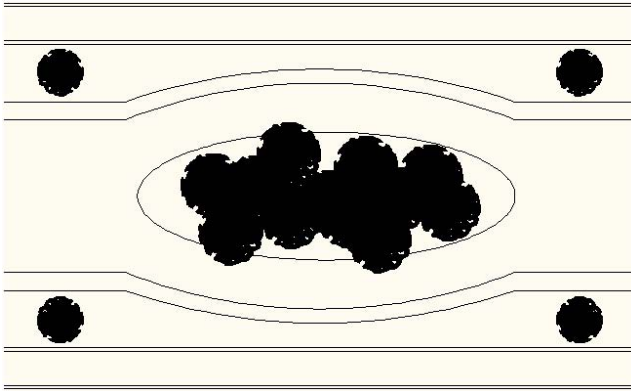
**Figure B9.** Road Diet.



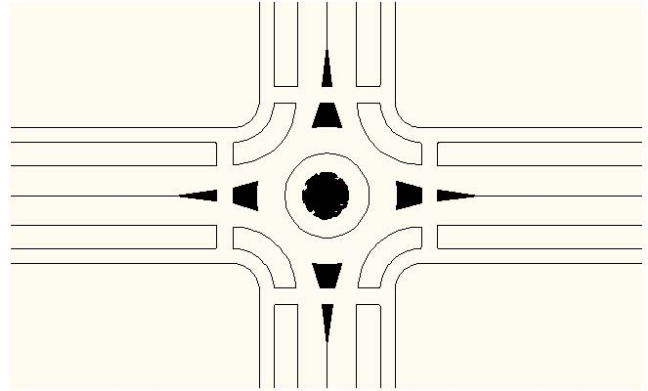
**Figure B10a.** Lee Street before Road Diet



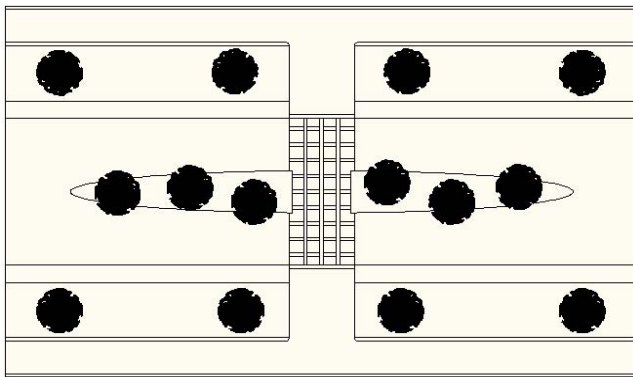
**Figure B10b.** Lee Street after Road Diet



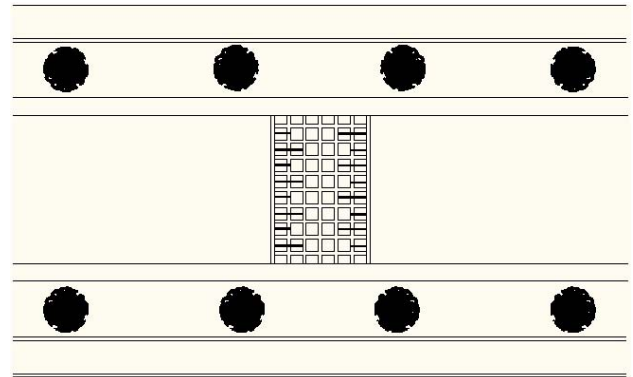
Short Median



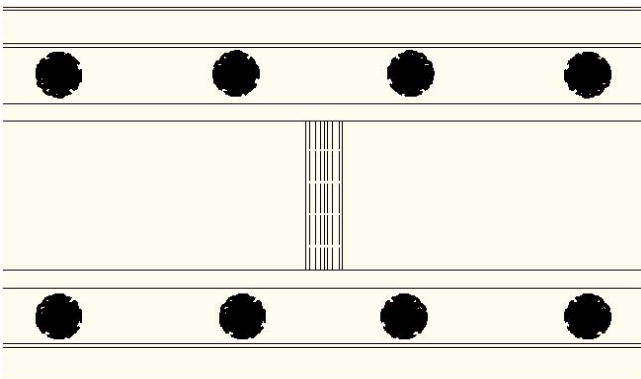
Roundabout



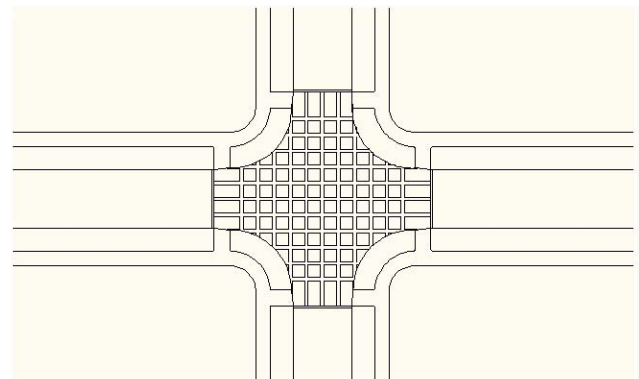
Pedestrian Refuge



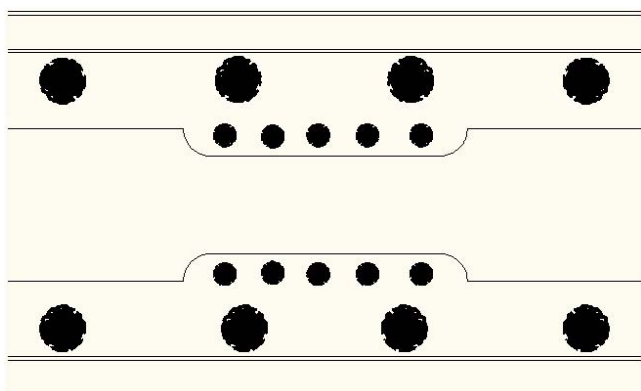
Speed Table



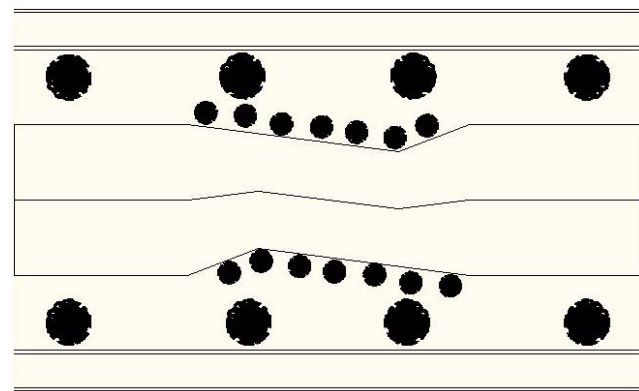
Speed Bump



Intersection Hump



Slow Point Neck Down



Angled Slow Point

A Complete Street is a street that has it all: wide sidewalks, bike lanes, bus lanes, street furniture/landscaping, wide shoulders, crosswalks, pedestrian enhancements, medians, reduced curb cuts, on street parking, and more. All of these elements should be incorporated in a way that is aesthetically pleasing and inviting to the passer-by. Their goal is to provide safe, attractive, and comfortable alternative transit options to the community. The image below demonstrates an example of how to implement a complete street in an urban core. Lee Street and Campbellton Road are ideal candidates to undergo a “Complete Street” transformation.

### *Street Furniture*

Street furniture can be as obvious as a bus shelter to as disguised as a tree grate. No matter how small or large, streetscape furniture adds an important edge to the animation found along a corridor. While some furniture is more aesthetic (benches and fountains) while other furniture is more utilitarian (lighting and signage), an important function of furniture is also to improve pedestrian safety and a healthy walkable environment. Street trees and lighting provide a buffer between a car and pedestrian in the case of an accident while also providing shade and light. Bus stations provide shelter from the elements. Lighting improves the safety of the area while benches may improve community interaction, which also improves neighborhood safety. Strategic placement of streetscape furniture can also be applied towards traffic management. For example, planters can be placed to control parking or limited access streets. Proper utilization of street furniture not only adds to the aesthetic quality of a space, but also contributes to the safety and well-being of the area.

### *Traffic Calming Techniques*

A number of traffic calming techniques can be applied to slow traffic and make drivers more aware of their surroundings. The following images diagram and explain a few of the more common traffic calming techniques used today. Utilization of each increases the safety and comfort of pedestrians interacting with automobiles.

### *The Significance of Streetscapes along Major Corridors*

Applying any of these methods to the streets surrounding Fort McPherson opens up the base to the surrounding community by providing safe and accessible transit routes that offer an alternative to driving. While driving along these arterial roads is still necessary and important, all future development of roads should incorporate the needs of pedestrians and cyclists as well to help improve the livability of the community and the lifestyles of its residents.

## **Neighborhood Streetscapes**

In addition to revitalizing major corridors within the Fort McPherson area, it is important to maintain and improve the existing neighborhood roads in the surrounding community. Implementing urban design guidelines within neighborhoods and communities can improve the lifestyle of its residents by encouraging healthy living, community interaction, and strengthening a sense of place. In addition to increasing connectivity within and around neighborhoods, it is important to create conditions that encourage pedestrian or bicyclist activity. Weather, distance, sidewalk conditions, and safety are the primary reasons residents will choose to drive a short distance instead of walk. By implementing neighborhood design guidelines that promote connectivity and safety, residents may feel more inclined to walk or bike instead of drive. Some elements of design to be considered in the neighborhoods surrounding Fort McPherson may include wider sidewalks with regular street trees, defined crosswalks and walking paths, and continuous sidewalks and improved sidewalk conditions. Additionally, placing neighborhood parks and civic features within walking distance of one another may provide additional reason for residents to walk or bike from their home. The suggested comfortable walking distance is 5 minutes, or one quarter of a mile.

## Safe Routes to School

The Safe Routes to School Program is an initiative that encourages students to walk or bike to school. This program requires the cooperation of local governments in making routes accessible and safe to children, placing a strong emphasis on traffic safety. The purpose of the program is to increase health and livability for children and their communities. The program has been a major proponent in helping fight childhood obesity and improve pedestrian safety. In 2009, more than 6,400 schools across the country received funding for Safe Routes to School. The City of Atlanta is on board with the program as well. Capitol View Elementary School has a plan to implement Safe Routes to school. This is an excellent indication of the community's appreciation and understanding of the importance of pedestrian safety and livability within a community.

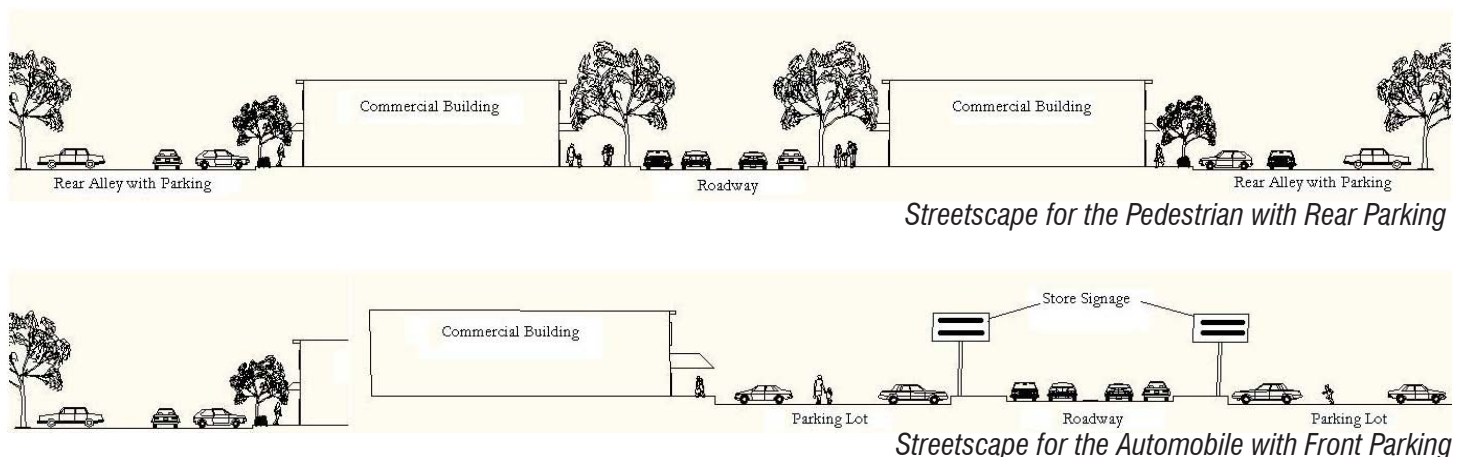
For similar initiatives and pro-livability ideas, residents should visit [www.activelivingresources.org](http://www.activelivingresources.org). This is one of many sites encouraging streetscape and sidewalk improvements to raise health and safety standards throughout communities.

## Smart Growth and Fort McPherson

Fort McPherson itself offers a lot of potential for the surrounding community. Its existing resources and development prospective can result in the establishment of an urban district that promotes walkability and community interaction through connection with the existing residents. Connecting the base to the surrounding community is extremely important in opening up the neighborhoods and promoting social unity. Similarly, it is equally as important to establish design guidelines for the district that promote and uphold the ideals of the surrounding community. This can be done through SPI Zoning, the details of which will be discussed later in the chapter. In various community meetings, attendees expressed interest in establishing a district that is welcoming and walkable; one where the street is a pleasant public space and where cars are inferior to humans; one with open space and opportunity for social interaction; and one that is built in a sophisticated manner with quality aesthetic value.

## Streetscapes

Creating a district that is welcoming and walkable can be accomplished through requiring that the streetscape incorporate designs that encourage pedestrian activity. Landscaping, shade, lighting, crosswalks, traffic calming, benches, and other street furniture can create a certain charisma within a district that attracts people. Additionally, zoning provisions that allow sidewalk dining and unique signage creates a unique charm encouraging people to leave the car and experience life on the sidewalk. Ensuring that the sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate travel, interaction, and dining is critical. Creating the framework for a lively and interactive environment is good for business and good for community.

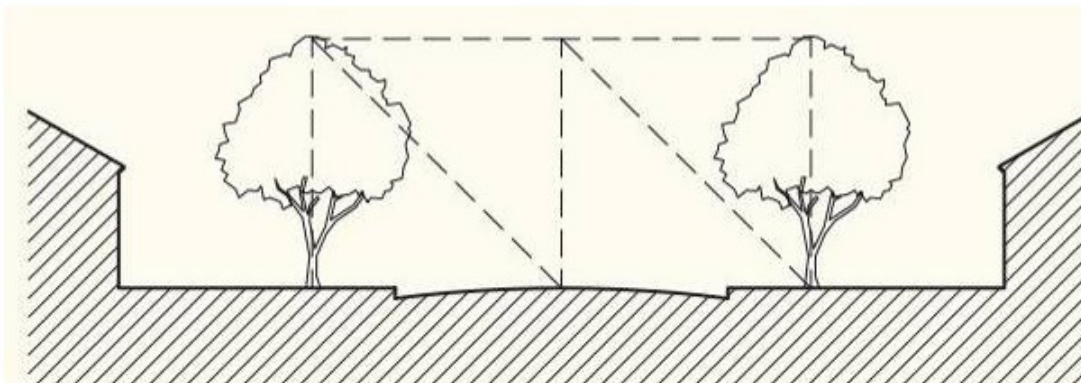


**Figure B11.** Pedestrian and Automobile Streetscapes + Parking

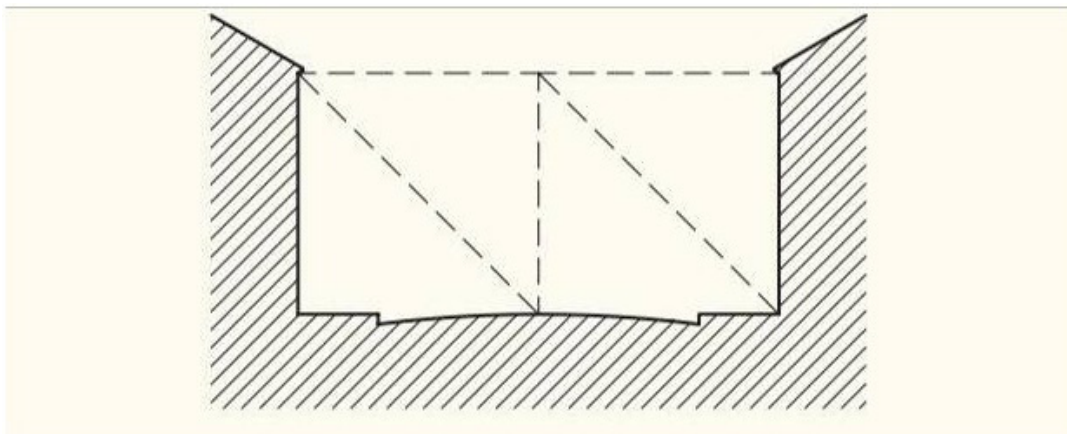
## Building Setbacks

Establishing building setbacks help influence the role of the pedestrian within a development. In a busy urban center where the pedestrian is the center focus, the buildings should create an “outdoor room” by placing buildings directly against the sidewalk. An outdoor environment consists of an urban area, generally a street or plaza that provides the sense of enclosure through surrounding buildings and landscaping. This environment strives to encourage pedestrian activity and interaction by creating comfortable outdoor living spaces. Drawing the buildings to the edge of the sidewalk increases their connectivity and accessibility to pedestrians. By clustering developments and mixing uses horizontally (and vertically), shoppers can more easily access a variety of shops without needing to access their car.

This reduces traffic within the district by allowing visitors to park once and walk instead of driving between stores. Additionally, the majority of parking should be located in the rear of buildings to create an intimate streetscape setting. Back alleys and access streets can accommodate parking without disrupting traffic flow. Some on street parking may be permitted too.



*2:1 Streetscape Diagram using landscaping*



*2:1 Streetscape Diagram using building height*

**Figure B12.** Source: (2002). *The Lexicon*, Duany Plater - Zyberk & Company. 3.2.

## Parking

Providing adequate parking within a development while maintaining the pedestrian focus and scale of the development can be a tricky challenge. In order to accomplish this, the street conditions should prevail to the needs of the pedestrian rather than the car. Limiting store-front parking to an on-street parking lane ensures that the pedestrian environment will not be interrupted with vast parking lots and unnecessary traffic. When designing on street parking, sidewalk bulb-outs or curb extensions should exist at the intersections to narrow the necessary cross walk distance. Supplemental parking in the form of lots or garages locate behind buildings. This additional parking needs to be



accessible via alleys or driveways that intersect side streets, not the main corridor. Fewer curb cuts result in fewer interruptions along the sidewalk and create a safer pedestrian zone. Concealing large parking lots behind buildings or wrapping a parking garage with a building guarantees that the connection between the street and the building is not disturbed. Maintaining this relationship is important to create “outdoor rooms” as discussed above.

### *Scale*

Determining the scale of a development can be a large task, but ensuring that it is built on a human scale is something that the community should have a say in. Regardless of the size of or scale of the development on a whole, the spatial element of the streets and public spaces within a development can be regulated through zoning and design guidelines. The community indicated a desire for the development to be built on a human scale. To ensure the development incorporates public spaces that are appropriate for human interaction, design guidelines must address the relationship of height and bulk within a spatial enclosure. A tree canopy, building height, building recess line, or another physical element along the street can define spatial enclosures. The ratio of height and bulk relates the height of the special enclosure to the width of the area it contains. The Lexicon, a document produced by DPZ, a leading design firm with strong New Urbanist tendencies, recommends a ratio of 1:1 for thoroughfares and 1:3 for public plazas or squares, with a ratio of 1:6 as the absolute maximum. Restricting these relationships will promote the creation of “outdoor rooms” which foster social interaction within public space. The diagrams below, pulled from The Lexicon, illustrate appropriate ranges of height/bulk ratios.

### *Building Aesthetic, Landscaping and Signage*

Aesthetics and building quality may seem trivial, but are truly important in the development of a regional destination. From the building material to the landscaping, every detail of the development is significant to creating a specific environment. When establishing design guidelines for the district make note of the existing architecture in the surrounding community. It is not easy to blend a brand new development into a historic community, but measures can be taken to prevent eyesore. Weaving new development and technology into the existing fabric of the community can create a thriving and sustainable community. This can be done by researching the building materials and determining what types of architectural styles are native to the region. In addition to building aesthetic, natural and local landscaping should line the buildings and accent their features. A shady sidewalk is more enticing than bare pavement, drawing customers closer to the stores. Finally, signage within the development should be context sensitive. For a pedestrian oriented downtown district, signage should be smaller and more intimate to catch the eye of a human on foot rather than that of a driver.

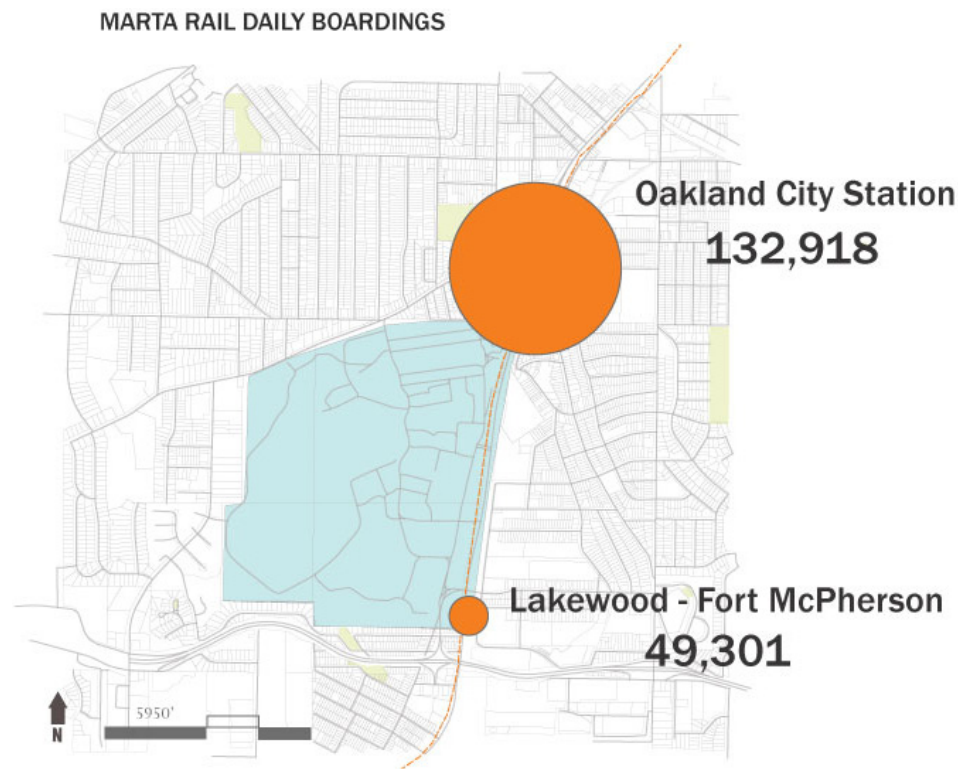
### *Summary*

Each of these strategies mentioned above should be incorporated into a structured set of design guidelines to be incorporated into the local zoning code. Special Interest Zoning and overlay districts are successful means of regulating development and design. The community should remain actively involved with the City of Atlanta through the re-zoning process of the site. By applying these fundamental design characteristics to the development of Fort McPherson, and to the development of the surrounding area, walkable and livable communities will continue to emerge. Establishing design guidelines that promote public health and safety will benefit the community and encourage social interaction. Most importantly, cooperation between government, the community, and the private sector is the key in establishing successful design guidelines that reflect the character and aspirations of the community.

## **High Density and Mixed Use Development**

### *Overview*

Mixed-use developments are a combination of residential and employment functions which allow people to live close to their workplaces and reduce the amount of travel in the cities. This idea has gained wide acceptance, and underpins the concept and design of a 'compact city'. Urban designers have long supported mixed-use as a necessary



**Figure B13.** Oakland Marta Station with a higher ridership

ingredient of successful urban design. From Jane Jacobs, key urban design texts have expounded the importance of mixed-use in providing the foundations for a lively, safe and interesting neighborhood.

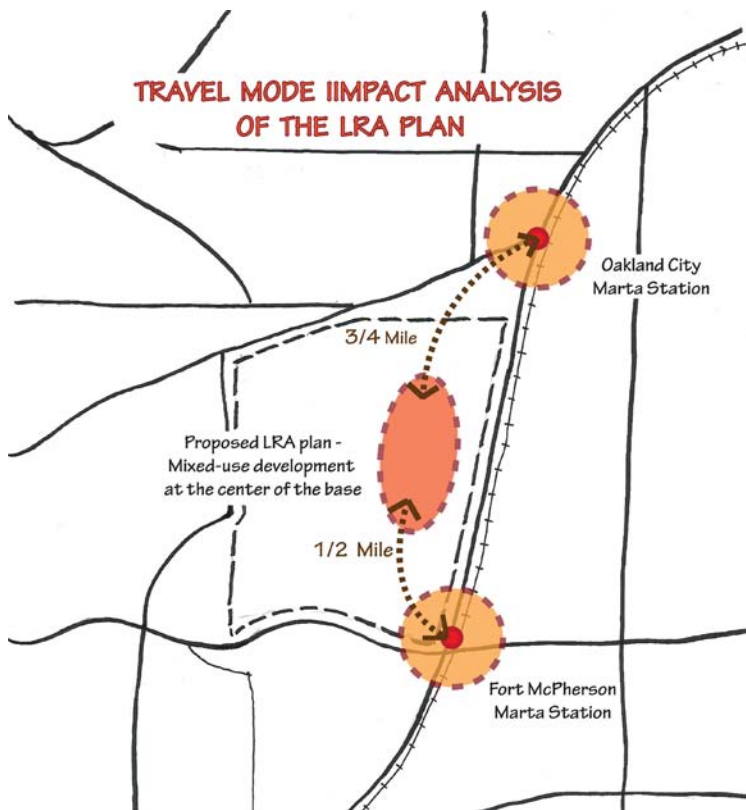
A transit-oriented development (TOD) is a *mixed-use residential or commercial* area designed to maximize access to public transport, and often incorporates features to encourage transit ridership. A TOD neighborhood typically has a center with a transit station or stop surrounded by relatively *high-density development* with progressively lower-density development spreading outwards from the center. TODs generally are located within a radius of one-quarter from a transit stop, as this is considered to be an appropriate walking distance for pedestrians.

Fort McPherson connects two Marta Stations the Oakland City MARTA Stations at the Northeast corner of the site and the Fort McPherson MARTA Station at the Southeast corner of the site. There are new developments which have started to emerge around the MARTA Stations such the new multi-family residential complex found east of the Fort McPherson MARTA Station.

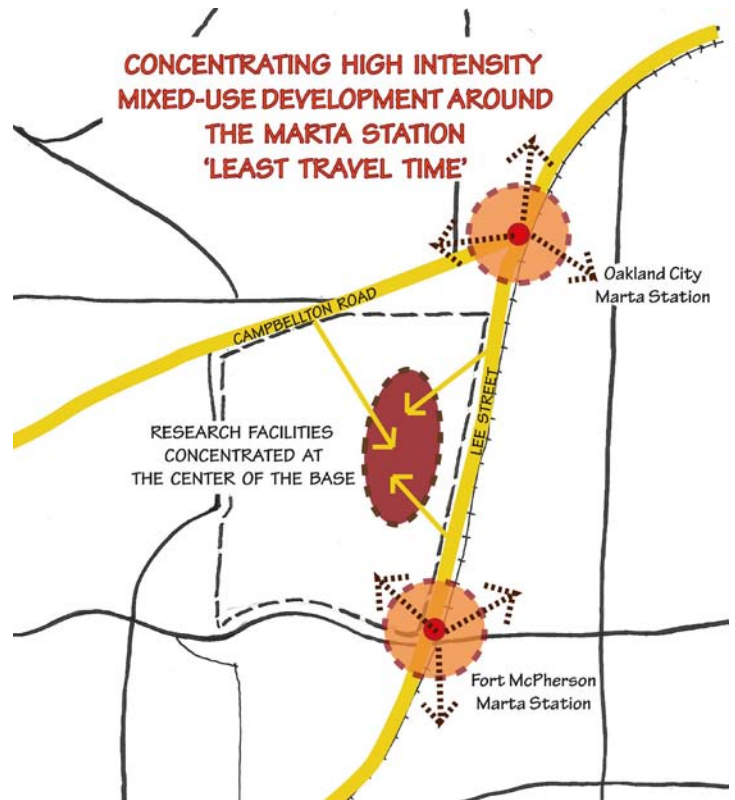
### *Fort McPherson Issues and Opportunities*

The final LRA plan shows high density mixed-use development towards the center which is not easily accessible to both the Marta Stations. The Oakland City MARTA Station has a much higher ridership compared to Fort McPherson MATRTA Station as shown in *Figure B13*.





**Figure B14.** Travel mode analysis for Pedestrians

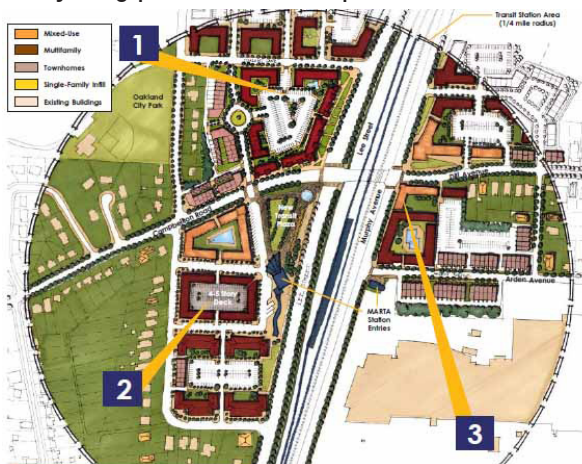


**Figure B15.** Concept of having mixed-use development around the Marta Stations

## Mixed-use development design considerations for Oakland City Marta Station and Fort McPherson Marta Station

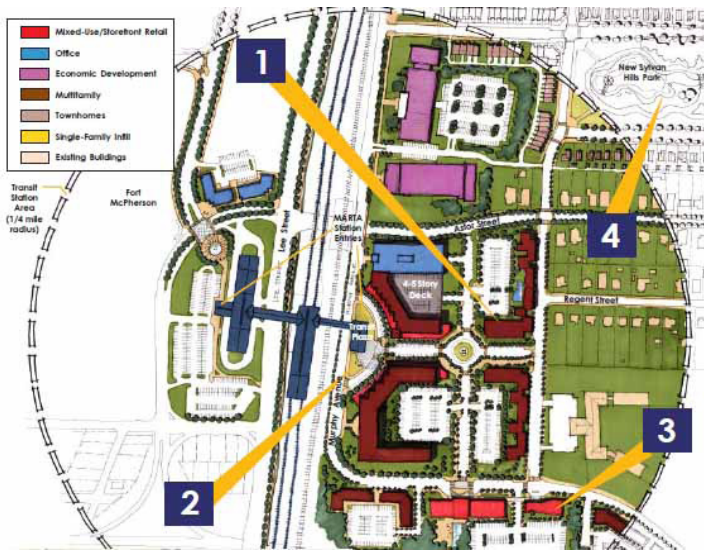
### Human Scale

Everything perceived and experienced from the sidewalk such as the building facades, signs, lighting, open space



**Figures B14 + B15.** LCI study images of mixed-use development around Oakland City Marta Station

should be designed for human interaction from a pedestrian's perspective. To create a visually pleasing building at the first floor level there must be an appropriate selection of quality finishes, materials such as stone, brick, tile and metal on the building façade. Human scale can be achieved by breaking up the first floor façade adjacent to sidewalk by incorporating canopies and awnings, terracing at the second floor and upper floors, cornice treatment, balconies and projected bay windows at the residential base. In addition, short blocks and mid-block connectors, or alleys that provide horizontal distances scaled for pedestrian movement help create an excellent urban framework for the mixed-use concept.



**Figures B16 + B17.** LCI study images of mixed-use development around Fort McPherson MARTA Station

## Signage

Signage should be integrated into the architecture and applied at a scale that is appropriate for the person on the street. It should tell the story and must avoid visual clutter and redundancy. Well-proportioned signage on the window fronts placed perpendicular to the storefront just below the canopy, or at the face of the canopy typically works best. Quality mixed-use condominium projects must have strict standards for signage and information that will be graphically displayed on the building, preferably restricting box signs in favor of hanging blades and other more visually appealing solutions.

## Plazas, Town squares, and Water

Plazas and squares are increasingly popular in mixed-use projects and often go hand in hand with town centers, main streets and other street-oriented designs. Among the critical planning factors for a successful urban plaza or square one that is active and draws people are well-defined edges and surrounding uses that animate the space such as retail shops or restaurants. These urban plazas should have adequate sun exposure, and attractive landscaping, including trees, water and fountain elements and seating. Good pedestrian environments rely on inviting walking paths and an interconnected network of open spaces. Some developments will incorporate plazas as part of an open space network, but others may play a more supportive role by providing strong connections, responsive design elements, or supportive services. Town greens and squares differ from urban plazas in that they are greener and often larger than urban squares, and they are generally less urban and frequently surrounded by lower-scale buildings than would be found around an urban square. Like urban square they frequently include fountains and other water feature and are faced by retail uses to enliven the space. The green is a place for quiet repose, as few retail or restaurant tenants are located in the development.

## Parking

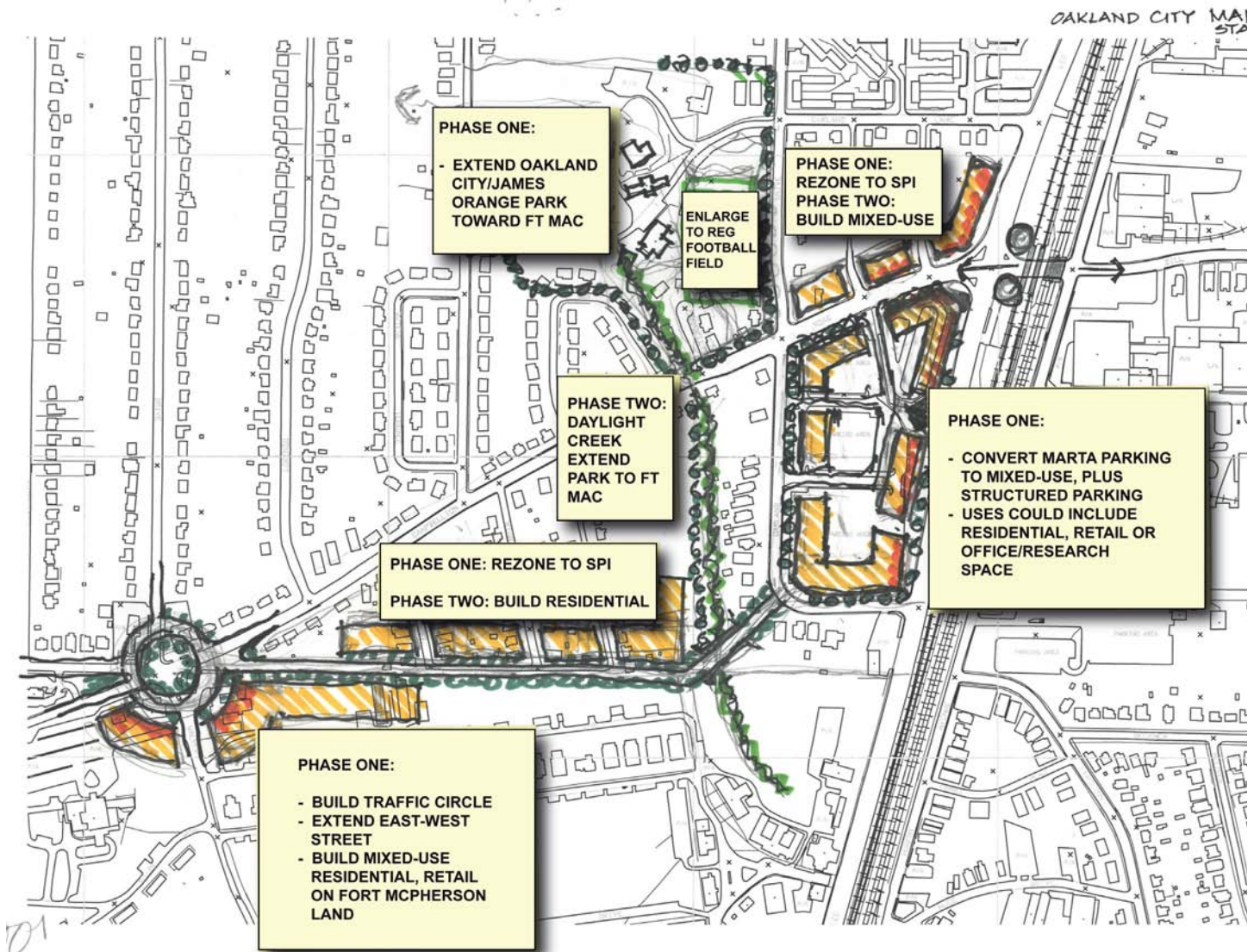
Parking is largest user of land and building space in a mixed-use development, and effectively incorporating large amounts of parking into an attractive and functional urban design is a major challenge. Planning and design of a parking facility begins with an assessment of demand and the opportunity for shared parking. When properly designed and managed, shared parking can reduce the maximum number of parking spaces required.

A fundamental decision that must be made in planning parking facilities for a mixed-use development is whether to provide structured above or below grade parking, surface parking or a combination. Whether to develop structure or









**Figure B19.** Mixed-use development around the Marta Stations and Connectivity

surface parking is largely a function of economics, available land, and aesthetics. The cost of structured parking is always much higher than the construction of surface parking, and the cost of under-ground structures is nearly double the cost of above-ground structures. The design of a parking facility for a mixed-use development dominated by retail space will be different than the project dominated by office or residential space. Major retail components in mixed-use developments generally seek a parking design that can accommodate nonexclusive high turnover parking. Office and residential tenants seek exclusive, assigned spaces that are not used by hotel guests or shoppers.

Parking must be well placed and accessible from surrounding roadways as well as from the building uses such as retail, office, hotel, and residential. The strategic location, design, and programming of parking areas and structures can also create or enhance attractive, well-traveled pedestrian links that can reduce demand for car movement and thus parking spaces. Numerous techniques are being employed to creatively place and design parking structures in today's mixed-use projects. One technique is the liberal use of on-street parking, which can be used effectively to provide attractive and functional parking arrangements in retail areas. Structured Parking lots need to have architectural enhancements and façade treatments to reduce the scale and balance the building proportions. The façade of the parking structure should blend with the surrounding building character.



## *Retail Design*

Retail use, when they are configured as major place-making elements such as a retail main street or a major retail mall, are usually critical to the success of a mixed-use project. A decision about the size, type and timing of retail space to be included in the project should be based on a thorough market study conducted by an experienced

retail market analyst. Retail is the most challenging and difficult program to develop successfully in a mixed-use development. A retail component should be included in a mixed-use development only if a separate and definitive market exists for the retail portion apart from the project's other uses.

Storefront design shall be reflective of the building's overall architectural style and yet highlight the individual character and personality of the use. A successful storefront with inviting display windows will attract passersby and contribute to the overall quality of the streetscapes. Extensive glazing pushed to the sidewalk with recessed entries and niches allowing for landscaping, water features, benches and tables encourage interaction between the pedestrian and the activity established within the commercial frontage. If done correctly and creatively, successfully mixed-use retail projects can create very attractive real estate values and investment returns.

## **SPI Zoning**

### *SPI Zoning Overview*

An overlay district is a "transparent" zone that lies on top of the existing zoning. It is typically used to add additional design standards or restrictions beyond those required by the existing zoning. Unless specifically modified by the overlay district, development adheres to the base district (existing zoning). Overlay Districts are used differently in different communities, but they generally are used to unify streetscape and architecture without monotony, control traffic problems and signage, and provide for open space and landscaping. Overlay Districts do not attract development, but they ensure that the development that occurs is higher quality.

An overlay district is usually used when there is a special public interest (SPI) to be served that does not coincide with already mapped traditional zones. The purpose of the SPI overlay districts is to protect and enhance certain specific lands and structures which, by virtue of their type or location, have characteristics which are distinct from lands and structures outside such overlay districts.

An overlay district may cover parts of several zones or only a portion of an underlying zone. Generally, the underlying zone determines the permitted land uses, while the overlay district restricts the design, requires additional setbacks, or sets into place any other restrictions that meet the district's purpose.

## **Current Zoning Conditions in Fort McPherson**

### *Midtown SPI Zoning – An example*

Midtown Atlanta has been completely transformed after the Blueprint when the SPI overlay zoning 16 and 17 came in place in 1996. The Midtown Blueprint is a comprehensive master plan that guide's Midtown's growth. Called the Blueprint Midtown, the plan was the culmination of a unique visioning process in which the entire community has a voice. Midtown Atlanta is now one of the most cosmopolitan and dynamic districts in the Southeast with its vibrant residential communities, diverse arts and culture, and a bustling retail center. Midtown was able to become this vibrant community because of the SPI zoning - incremental approach and the framework it created that preserves and enhances the existing parcels, and provides relevant design guidance for future developments.

## EXISTING ZONING



**Figure B20.** Shows the existing zoning which is in place for Fort McPherson and the surrounding areas

### *SPI Zoning in Fort McPherson*

***Currently, there is a SPI zoning in place which extends to boundaries of Fort McPherson alone. Our goal is to extend the boundaries beyond the base preserving and enhancing areas around the base. We were able to identify areas less and more susceptible with the help of the community in various MACC community meetings.***

**The areas identified that is more susceptible to change or needs to be enhanced are:**

1. Strip along Campbellton Road Corridor at the Northern portion of the base
2. Area around the Oakland City Marta Station and Fort McPherson Marta Station
3. Area around Oakland City Park and Oakland City Park itself



**Image B5.** Midtown before the Blueprint



**Image B6.** Midtown today after the Blueprint

4. Arkwright School.

**The areas that are less susceptible to change or needs to be preserved are**

1. The single family residences
2. Industrial strip east of Fort McPherson which is a 'job generator'.

The area of North of Fort McPherson between Avon Street and Campbellton has a block structure which can be enhanced by breaking up the super blocks into smaller grids. The north Blocks can be broken up into smaller grids along the foreclosed or vacant houses found in the area. This will create interconnectivity between the super blocks and promote walkability. Oakland City Park should have green trails connecting the activities on this Park to the surrounding neighborhoods and the base. Arkwright School could be converted to an urban agriculture site which will promote nutritional health, personal wellness, urban greening, and an engaged and active citizenry. The SPI overlay district zoning when extended beyond the base will be able positively influence the zones that are more susceptible to change.

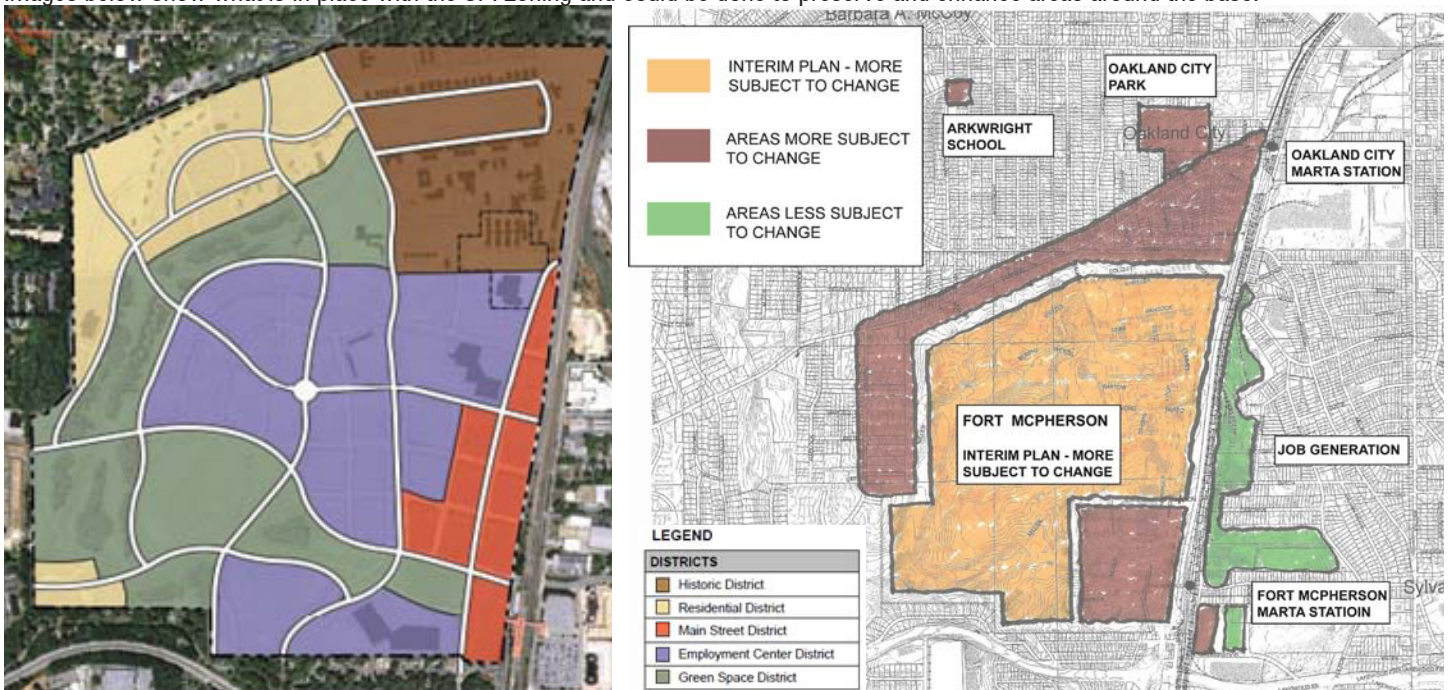
*Fort McPherson SPI Zoning Process*

Fort McPherson requires a Technical Assistance team - Non-profit organization committed to improving and sustaining the quality of Fort McPherson and the surrounding neighborhood. This Non-profit organization will actively engage many diverse groups that shape Fort McPherson businesses, residents, cultural groups, educational institutions, and others.

In the SPI zoning process the Non-profit provides preliminary project review and guidance as liaison for the review process. Every applicant will need to complete Special Administrative permit (SAP) application to receive a permit for any new development within the SPI zoning district at Fort McPherson. The SAP application should consist of a written summary of the proposed development and improvement. In addition the SAP should include a set of drawings such as a site plan, landscaped plan and elevations of each exterior façade.

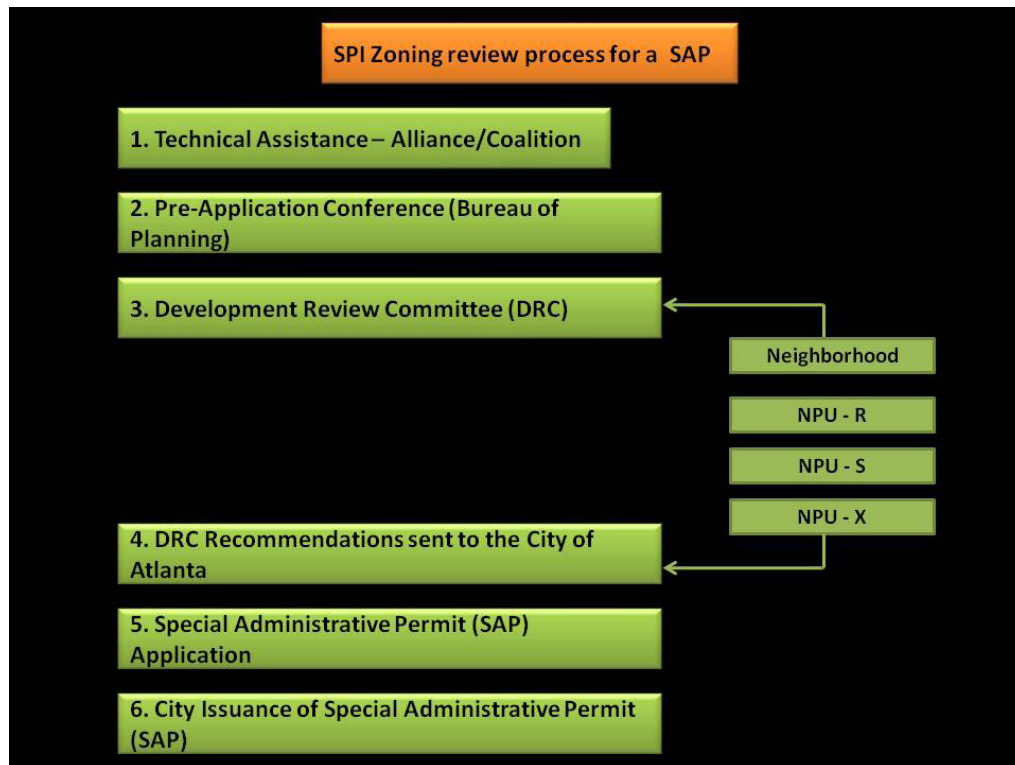
**Figures B21 + B22.**

Images below show what is in place with the SPI Zoning and could be done to preserve and enhance areas around the base.





There should be a zoning oversight board specific to Fort McPherson which is a Development Review Committee (DRC) which makes recommendations for any new development in Fort McPherson to the 'Bureau of Planning'. This DRC comprises of 9 or 11 persons where 3 members are appointed from the Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) – NPU-R, NPU-S & NPU-X and the rest of the members should be appointed from the surrounding neighborhoods with a diverse academic background. Image F shows the SPI zoning process to receive a SAP for Fort McPherson and its surrounding neighborhoods. The non-profit organization will hold a monthly DRC zoning review board meeting where zoning recommendations are made to the Bureau of Planning contingent upon the project.



**Chart B1.** This flowchart shows the SPI zoning process for a SAP

### *Fort McPherson zoning framework recommendations*

The SPI overlay district will create a framework with a set of design guidelines which will enhance and preserve the neighborhood. The Fort McPherson framework should promote economic development and enrich the community life by providing public safety, a cleaner environment, better pedestrian passageways, transportation alternatives, and usable green spaces. With the help of the community and looking into both Midtown and Downtown Atlanta as precedents the following guidelines are recommended:

1. Mixed-use Development – Create a high density mixed-use development around the two Marta stations.
2. Environmentally Sound Design – Incorporate the use of LEED and LID (or similar) principles and practices in the redevelopment of Ft. McPherson and the surrounding community (see Environmental Section for more information) Connectivity – Encourage walkability by including marked crosswalks and incorporating wide sidewalks
3. Character – Create vibrant and interesting new streetscapes along Campbellton Road, Lee Street, Avon Street and Lakewood frwy to enhance the character of residential and commercial buildings
4. Public Safety – Provide appropriate lighting on all the sidewalks to create a safe environment for the pedestrians.



5. Consistency – Always use certain type of paving blocks, light poles, trees that will create a public which is unique to Fort McPherson
6. Transportation – Promote public transit, biking, walking and other fueled vehicles by creating good connecting and improving streetscapes.

More specific goals can be included in each of the divisions such as site planning, parking and building design.

### **Site Planning**

- Orient all parking and service areas away from major streets
- Orient building to major corridors
- Use of Low Impact Development (LID) design principles in site planning

### **Parking**

- Locate parking to the rear of the property
- Utilize co-operative parking arrangements in order to limit the requirements for parking in the area
- Parking decks should use materials and treat the building in such a way that it is indistinguishable from the occupied inhabitable spaces
- Limit the number of curb cuts to two for each site

### **Building Design**

- Establish maximum building heights for geographic areas
- In residential areas, building size and massing should be compatible with surrounding developments
- Private signage should be consistent in appearance
- Articulate building façade with awnings, balconies and bay windows
- Preserve the Historic resources through renovation & adaptive re-use into the a new development
- Use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or similar principles for building design and construction

## **The Effect of the LCI Program on Fort McPherson**

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) is a program founded by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) in 2000 that encourages local governments to link their land use plans with future transportation initiatives. By 2010, the ARC has awarded LCI Status to over 100 communities throughout the Atlanta region. An area can receive LCI designation in one of two ways. Most commonly, local governments or community organizations will apply for funding to perform an LCI Study within their community. Alternatively, a district can be “grandfathered” into the LCI program for submitting an already completed plan funded by a separate organization. In either case, establishing an LCI area benefits the surrounding community by making the area eligible to apply for additional federal funding to perform a supplemental study or implement a transportation project.

In 2004, the City of Atlanta prepared the study along the Oakland City / Lakewood – Fort McPherson corridor and the Atlanta Regional Commission grandfathered the Oakland City / Lakewood – Fort McPherson study area into the LCI Program. The map below outlines the extent of the LCI boundary.

The city is eligible to receive additional funding to perform supplemental studies or implement transportation projects on land that falls within the established boundaries. Establishing a community voice and receiving input from the

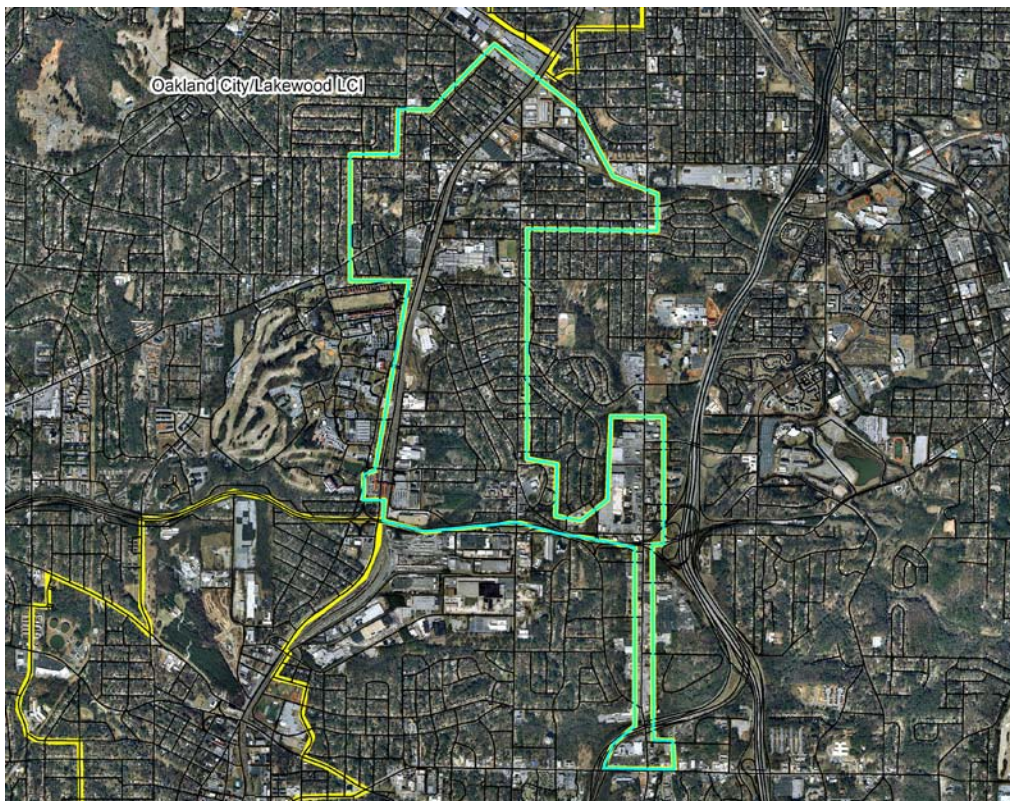
surrounding neighborhoods is an important part of the LCI program.

The Oakland City/Lakewood LCI study formed a vision statement that states the following:

- We envision our community as one of the most desirable locations in the City of Atlanta to live, work, and play: a community of supportive neighborhoods that express their character through quality community gathering places and people- and pedestrian-friendly environments. Our vision is of a community that is sensitive to its historical resources, safe from crime, economically vital, and served by good quality schools.
- We envision a community that provides a healthy mix of housing, retail, employment, industrial, and civic places, that provides housing that is affordable and appropriate for all segments of the community and that actively protects its environmental resources.
- We envision a community that provides excellent, convenient, and safe access to its transit facilities by all means of transportation, and that capitalizes on the opportunities of those facilities by encouraging walking, biking, appropriate intensities of development and an efficient mix of uses within transit areas. Our vision is of a highly-connected community that accommodates all persons, including the disabled, in accessing all of its many benefits
- We see a community where people and quality of life are the focus.

The community also identified issues and opportunities within the LCI study boundaries:

- Underutilized industrial uses along Murphy Avenue



**Figure B23.** LCI BOUNDARY MAP. Image Source: (Oakland City / Lakewood LCI Study, 2004)

- Neighborhood oriented retail not available
  - Potential environmental contamination at industrial sites along Murphy Avenue
- 42 • MARTA stations surrounded by surface parking and low density development

- Non-Continuous north-south connection along Murphy Avenue
- Lack of mixed-use development throughout the study area
- Need of neighborhood nodes
- Lack of development on all major activity nodes within corridors
- Retail and office in general are under represented uses
- Vacant land is an over represented use
- Areas like large parking lots are used inefficiently

The community needs to reinforce these visions and goals they identified for the LCI Study and apply them to the redevelopment process of the Fort McPherson Base. Although the study is from 2004, the outcomes of the study are not obsolete and are effective tools for improving the conditions of the Fort McPherson area. The Five Year Update, completed by the city of Atlanta in 2009, states that the land use goals of the Oakland City / Lakewood LCI area are to: “provide appropriate buffers between more intensive and less intensive uses, increase the mix of uses and density, as appropriate, throughout the community, increase density around the transit stations, provide more opportunities for recreation and entertainment and encourage a live-work community” (Oakland City / Lakewood LCI Five Year Update, 2009).

One of the recommendations of the LCI Study focuses on concentrating development around the MARTA stations along Lee Street. As discussed in another section of this report, the MARTA stations offer a unique opportunity for the development of Fort McPherson as a transit oriented development. The LCI study identifies the land within a ¼ mile radius from the Oakland MARTA stations as “potential mixed use development that will increase MARTA utilization through several hundred units of new housing, a new transit plaza, local serving retail fronting Campbellton and Lee Street, a shared parking deck with dedicated parking for MARTA patrons, reconfiguring the bus turn around as a intermodal drop-off and employment opportunities along Murphy.” Similar ideas are suggested for the Lakewood-Fort McPherson Station. The images below illustrate redevelopment schemes for both MARTA stations.

Currently, the Oakland City / Lakewood - Fort McPherson LCI Area is prequalified to receive \$3,343,874 in LCI transportation funds. The proposed project consists of a Multi Use facility from Donnelly Avenue/Beltline to Langford Parkway/South City limits along the Lee Street corridor. This corridor is directly adjacent to Fort McPherson and will play a major role in the redevelopment process. An LCI area may have up to two transportation projects prequalified at a time. Once a project is prequalified, it is then eligible to receive funding and can move forward in the approval process to the detailed concept study phase. Only prequalified projects can be considered for funding. Having a prequalified LCI project puts the area in good standing to receive funding to improve the Lee Street corridor. Next steps involving the LCI Program may include prequalifying a second project or submitting for a supplemental study application. The LCI Study and adopted plan is an excellent tool and resource for community members to utilize during the redevelopment process. Contacts for the LCI Program include the City of Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development and the Land Use division of the Atlanta Regional Commission.

#### Sources:

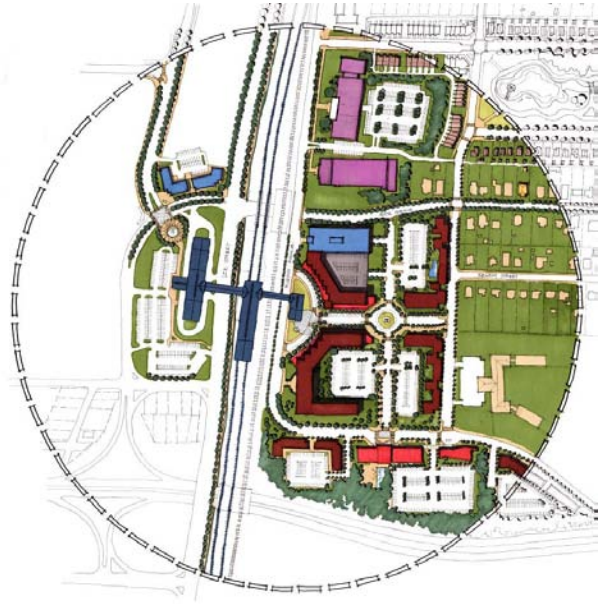
Oakland City / Lakewood LCI Five Year Update. (2009). Atlanta: City of Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development.

*Oakland City / Lakewood LCI Study.* (2004). Atlanta: City of Atlanta Department of Planning and COmmunity Development.





OAKLAND STATION



LAKEWOOD STATION

**Figure 24.** Image source: Oakland City / Lakewood LCI Study, 2004



# Transportation

## *Introduction:*

The transportation infrastructure serving Fort McPherson and the communities around is a mixed bag of great nominal transit access, severe limitations in east-west flow across the MARTA and freight rail corridor, and only a single point of connectivity to the Base, which underscores the historic isolation of the base and the disconnects this imposes on the communities. This study incorporates and updates important planning work from the recent past, including the Oakland City Livable Communities (LCI) study, the Campbellton Road TAD study, the ConnectAtlanta Plan, and the Local Redevelopment Authority's ongoing planning work (to the extent that is available). Citizen input and feedback included workshops and surveys to gauge needs and priorities from the communities' perspective, resulting in organizing analysis and recommendations into three overall categories: automobile mobility, access, and safety; transit options and choices; and pedestrian and bicycle analysis and improvements.

The Base redevelopment planning addresses the disconnect issue by recommending various alternatives for connecting to the larger community street network. Suggestions for improving these proposals are included herein, considering the broader range of Base redevelopment traffic impact than considered in the LRA plans. The report identifies roadways and intersections that need improvement, considering car traffic, transit, biking and walking, and suggests connectivity improvements and geometric, traffic control, signalization, and management methods that can improve safety for all modes and better balance the use of rights-of-way for these modes as well as favoring access to major destination points.

The two MARTA stations at Oakland City and Fort McPherson together with connecting bus lines accommodate a significant proportion of the travel requirements for local residents. Yet the communities, more dependent on transit than many, are pressing for a better, finer grained service network. This report goes into considerable detail on the factors and strategies that could respond to these needs over time, including technologies and funding structures. On the latter point, for example, the report suggests that funding for necessary transit improvements incorporate a blend of Tax Allocation District (TAD) funds, Community Improvement District (CID) funds, a Transportation Management Association (TMA) implementation structure, as matches for City and federal funding for the future. Thus, even as the LRA is contemplating its range of development strategies, it should take steps to commit to partner across its boundaries in providing for a TMA, a CID, and using TAD funds to fully integrate its future with that of the larger community.

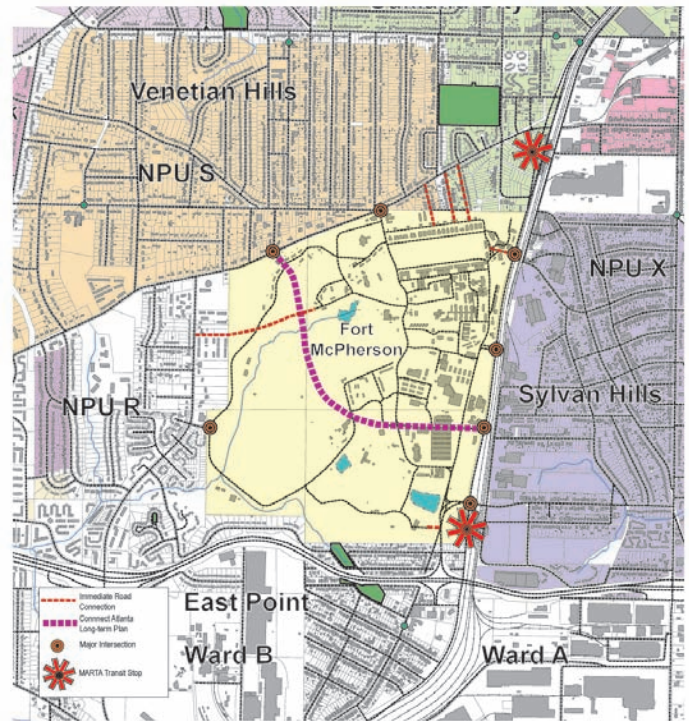
As important, analysis of the disconnected and often badly broken sidewalk and bicycle system leads to affirmative steps to improve the condition of these modes. Overall, the emphasis is on establishing full and functional connectivity within the neighborhood, within the Base, and most importantly between the two. This analysis and the suggestions for improvement take into account the opportunities for connection into the walking trails on the base and the natural assets of the neighborhoods, including parks and natural features, complementing the work of the Land Use and Environment sections. Altogether, the Base redevelopment offers the opportunity and calls out for truly innovative and collaborative approaches for integrating transportation with jobs and housing strategies in a way that incorporates community needs into a balanced overall redevelopment strategy.

## *Current Situation*

The Fort McPherson study area in Southwest Atlanta comprises of the existing base, communities in East Point to the South, and communities in Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) R, S, and X to the North. The area is located west of Interstates 75/85, with the Langford Parkway bordering the base to the South. The study area includes communities



**Figure C1.** Current Situation



**Figure C2.** Enhanced Street Connectivity

south of the parkway. Other major arterials in the community include Campbellton Road and Lee/Main Street. Secondary thoroughfares include Sylvan Road, Stanton Road, Cascade Road, Metropolitan Parkway, and Connally Drive. All of these thoroughfares have potential for improved multi-modal accessibility and intersection safety.

There is existing heavy rail infrastructure and access to the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) rail system. Rail stations Oakland City and Lakewood/Fort McPherson are positioned near the base's Northeast and Southeast corners respectively. With rail access to Downtown and Midtown Atlanta and Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, the Fort McPherson area has the potential to be a center for economic activity. The peripheral vicinity of these stations has not been developed and has much potential for retail and commercial development. Also poor streets conditions and incomplete sidewalks obstruct pedestrian access to rail stations. MARTA provides a comprehensive bus service to the area as well. While the transit authority has eliminated many stops and routes due to budget constraints, most of the stops were cut due to repetition. For example, instead of having three stops in one block, stops have been distributed more strategically. Also, routes have been changed to maximize its ridership while reducing its operating expenses. As a result, the changes have had a profound impact on the community as residents must now find alternative transportation options.

## Issues

The current transportation system for Fort McPherson lacks the connectivity that is crucial for integration of the base with surrounding communities. In terms of roadway issues, there is a need for intersection improvements that will increase the safety for not only automobile driver but for pedestrians and cyclists as well. These opportunities for intersection changes are one part of a series of improvements to the transportation system as a whole to make it more supportive of multimodal transportation options.

Existing transit infrastructure does not currently meet the needs of the community. As mentioned before the changes in route structure and bus stop locations have had an impact on the community. In order to combat this confusion, information should be readily available to riders along these routes. Obstructed pedestrian access to MARTA rail stations contribute to weak links in the multimodal accessibility of the system. For neighborhoods that are not within

walking distance to MARTA rail or bus stops there is a need for alternative transit options that can feed into the system. Additionally, the sidewalks in place are under-maintained reducing their utility due to breaks in access, plant overgrowth, broken concrete, insufficient lighting and mismatched crosswalk curb-cuts at intersections.

An issue addressed in the Connect Atlanta plan, which also applies to the transportation network surrounding Fort McPherson, is lack of connectivity for bicycle lanes throughout the city. Often a bicycle path may exist for one or two blocks before ending abruptly. Improvements in bicycle infrastructure are crucial to fostering this mode of transportation. However in order to truly integrate bicycle transportation into the system there needs to be provision of bicycle lanes on all major thoroughfares.

During community meetings, surveys were distributed to participants to gather more information about the concerns of community members surrounding Fort McPherson. Questions were categorized by topics pertaining to Frequent Travel Destinations, Traffic & Street Conditions, Transit Conditions and Pedestrian Conditions & Safety. Below is a summary of key themes found in the survey responses.

### *Survey Analysis*

#### Frequent Travel Destinations:

Almost all activity destinations reported were found to be locations where food is available such as grocery stores, convenient stores, and gas stations. Kroger on Cascade Road comprised almost half of the responses while the Kroger on Metropolitan Parkway accounted for another 13%. Metropolitan Parkway accounted for 1 out of 5 of the destinations reported. Of the grocery stores, Kroger accounts for 90% of the responses – 70% referred to the Cascade Road location.

#### Street and Traffic Conditions:

Four-fifths of the respondents reported that they own or operate an automobile; 21% do not. Considering where the highest volume of witnessed auto collisions occurred, Cascade Road and Campbellton Road together accounted for one half. 3 people reported Lakewood at Metropolitan Parkway as being a problem intersection as well as intersections along Sylvan Road at Astor Avenue and Route 166. Almost one-fourth of respondents reported that Lee/

Road name	Frequency
Campbellton Road	34
Cascade Road	19
Lee/Main Street	13
Centre Villa	8
Metropolitan Parkway	8
Sandtown/Stanton Road	6
Sylvan Road	6
Venetian Drive	6
Astor Avenue	5
Delowe Drive	5
Lakewood Freeway	4
Route 166	4
Willow Street	4
Joseph Lowery Boulevard	3
Washington Road	2
All streets	6

**Table C1:** Survey results showing roads identified as in need of improvement for pedestrian accessibility and walkability



Main Street had the worst traffic congestion. Cascade Road, Campbellton Road, and Sylvan Road were each identified by 3 people.

#### Transit Conditions:

To conceive the impact that MARTA bus and route cuts are affecting communities surrounding the fort, several questions were designed to address those concerns. Almost 80% of respondents stated that they now rely more on alternative modes other than MARTA. The alternatives reported raises concern for transportation conditions in these communities. 20% reported that they now must take cabs to reach the nearest bus stops and train stations. One respondent reported the personal cost to be \$15 per day in cab fares just to get to work and back. Another reported that they now spend \$100 more per month on transportation expenses. 40% reported more driving, 27% more walking, 2 people reported that those who have cars are charging their neighbors for accompanying rides to the station. One responder also indicated that all of their neighbors were also taking cabs to the nearest MARTA stops, and another reported having to drive their neighbors to work. During rush hours, wait time for transit are reported to be very long, while 64% of responses indicated that wait time in general takes much longer during normal hours. Riders reported that Bus #95 is usually on time while Bus #67 is very unreliable.

#### Pedestrian Conditions and Safety:

To gather pedestrian concerns, the survey questioned about sidewalk conditions, safety and lighting issues. When asked to identify streets with missing sidewalk sections, some respondents cleverly wrote “all areas”. Of those that listed streets with missing sections, Campbellton Road ranked first with 31% of the ‘vote’. Venetian Drive and Centre Villa accounted for 15% of the responses each. Other streets identified include Delowe Drive, Stanton Road and Astor Avenue. Sidewalks which are too narrow are concentration on Campbellton Road, Centre Villa, Stanton Road and Cascade Road each with 13% of the responses. Some responders again iterated that ‘narrow’ does not apply to the situation since most streets have no sidewalks to begin with. Campbellton Road again is reported to have the most uneven sidewalk pavement. Cascade Road and Sandtown along with streets surrounding the Oakland City Station were contenders among results reported. Other sidewalks with uneven pavement reported include Murphy Avenue, Centre Villa, Stanton Road and Lucile Avenue.

Survey-takers were asked to identify areas where they felt most unsafe as a pedestrian. These inquiries were divided into reason categories for getting hit by a bike, getting hit by a car, getting hit by a large vehicle, and lighting conditions. Almost half of responses reported that the greatest fear of being hit occurred in situations involving bikes colliding with pedestrians – 40% noted car collisions and 16% reported fear of large vehicles hitting them. For all three modes, not surprisingly, Campbellton Road was selected as the most dangerous corridor for all three types of pedestrian accidents. Willows Street and Lee/Main Streets accounted for almost 20% of fears for both bike and car accidents, though Willows also accounted for 1 out of 4 responses for large vehicles harming pedestrians. Multiple responses indicated that ‘all intersections’ are dangerous for bike and pedestrian interaction. Other streets listed include Washington Road and Metropolitan Parkway. For lighting conditions, responders identified Campbellton Road more than any other street followed by Venetian Avenue. Multiple responders reported Centra Villa, Stanton Road, Delowe Drive, Lee/Main Street, and Astor Avenue.

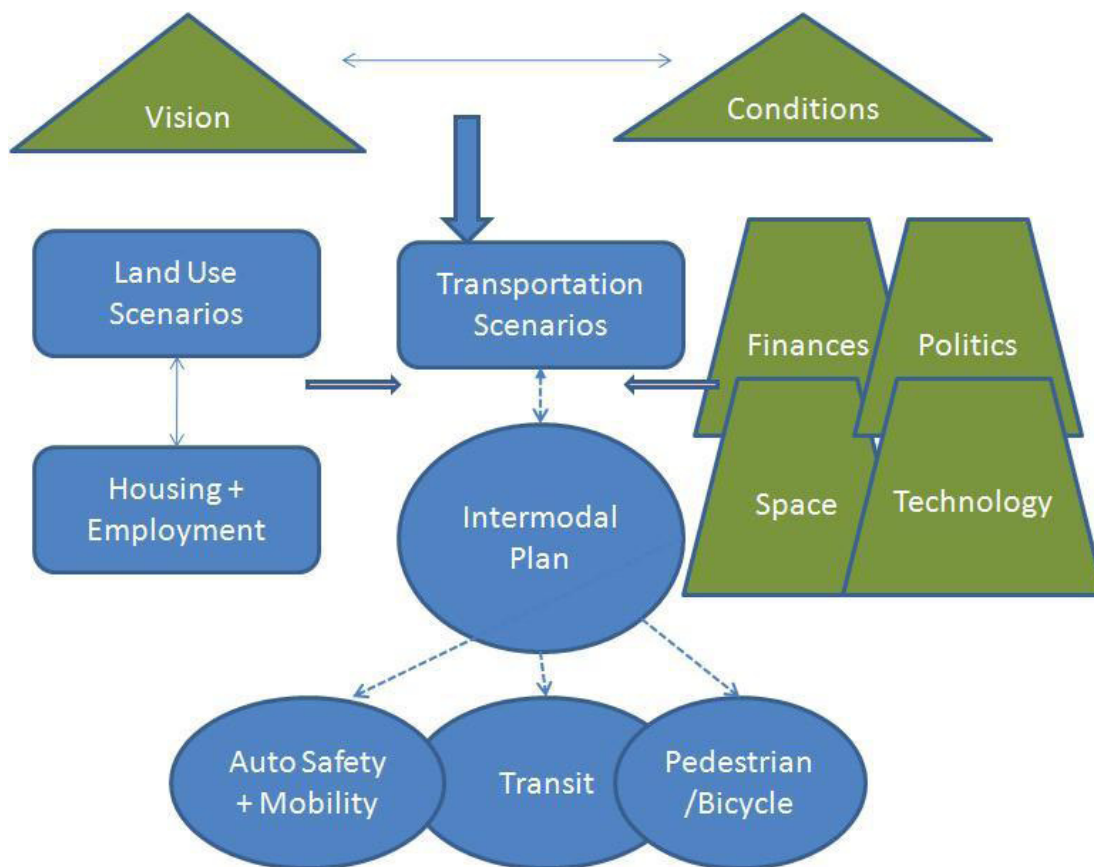
The Table C1 shows the roads that listed in the survey as roads that need improvement for pedestrian accessibility and walkability and the frequency listed:

### ***Opportunities***

There are many opportunities for increased connectivity and accessibility between the Fort McPherson and the surrounding communities. The Connect Atlanta Plan recognizes the prime location of the base and opportunities for economic growth in the area and has included Fort McPherson in its candidate projects. Its location is highly accessible to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport via MARTA rail and thus has the potential to be a



vital area for economic growth. Connect Atlanta recognizes the importance that Campbellton Road as an artery of economic growth. One of the plans candidate projects is The Campbellton Corridor which begins at Fort McPherson on the east and ends at Greenbriar Mall on the west. The Connect Atlanta Plan proposes widening Campbellton Road from two lanes to five lanes to accommodate high-capacity transit. The Connect Atlanta Plan also focuses on the base itself and opportunities for enhanced connectivity. The plan recommends a realignment of Campbellton Road through the base ending at Lee Street, connecting these two local thorough-fare streets. Lee Street runs parallel to the proposed Peach Streetcar line, and there is potential for a connection between the Peachtree Streetcar and Campbellton Corridor transit. Also, the realignment of Campbellton Road allows for there to be a transit corridor through the base and the possibility of a grid-like street network within the base.



**Figure C3:** Transportation System Integration Framework. Conditions in green, processes in blue.

Opportunities for improvements in pedestrian accessibility and the quality of pedestrian environments are also addressed by the Connect Atlanta Plan’s candidate project Westside Complete Streets and Pedestrian Improvements. The plan recommends streetscape improvements and sidewalk additions where there are segments of missing sidewalks.

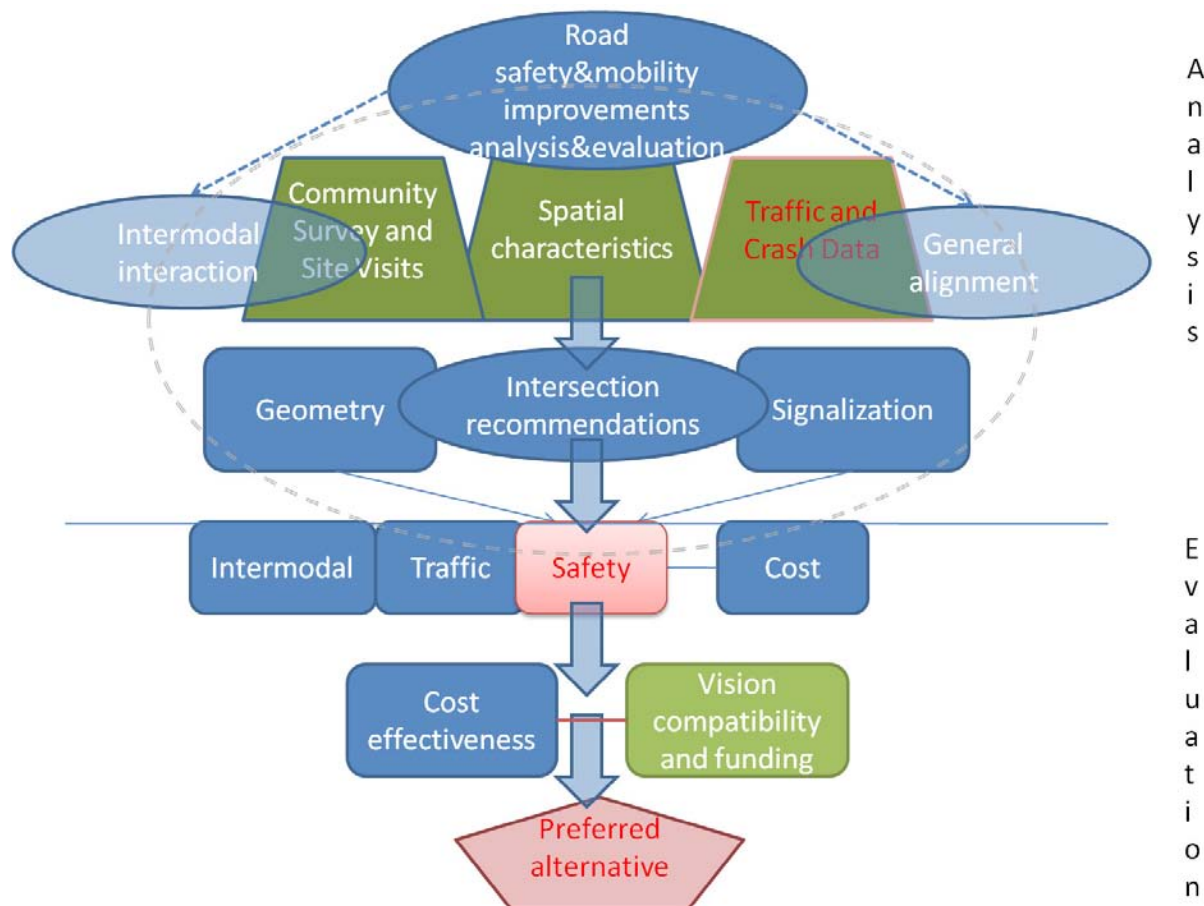
The Oakland City Livable Cites Initiative has proposed nine development areas within its study, and two of these areas are Oakland City and Lakewood/Fort McPherson MARTA stations. The LCI also addresses the potential to increase pedestrian connectivity to the MARTA stations bordering the base and create Transit Oriented Development as well. Oakland City station is roughly 13.7 acres and Lakewood-Fort McPherson station is roughly 14 acres. Currently much of this area is underutilized surface parking with averages of about 48% occupancy of Oakland City station’s 473 spaces and 57% occupancy of Lakewood-Fort McPherson’s 712 spaces. The plans recommended transit oriented development near MARTA stations and improving pedestrian access to these areas.

The graphics below show the contrast between the current lack of connectivity between the fort and surrounding communities with our concept of enhanced connectivity. Under current conditions, access to the base is extremely limited and highly secure. The graphic shows the opportunities for enhanced connectivity that takes into account recommendations made by the Connect Atlanta Plan to redirect Campbellton Road into the base. This allows for an important local thoroughfare to provide accessibility to the base and the possibility for passage of high-capacity transit through the base. For more information on connectivity see the report on “Connectivity and Block Size” in the Land Use section. Figures C1 and C2 show the before and after of an initial high capacity access through the base.

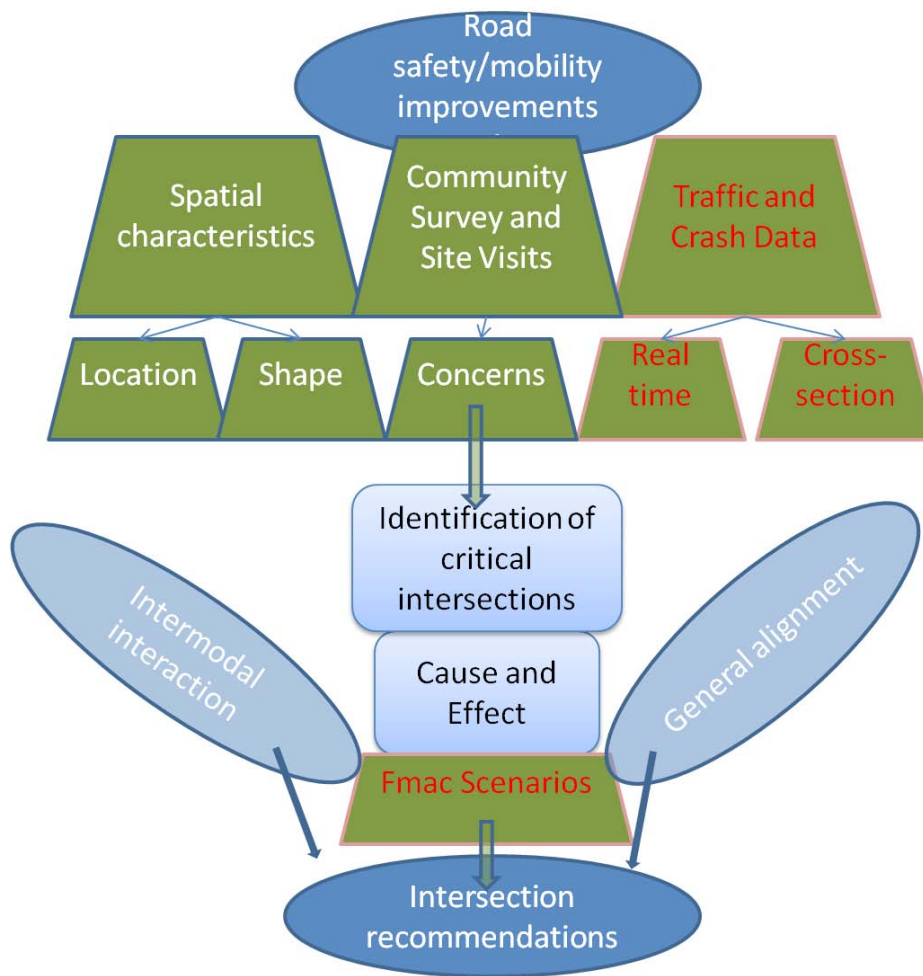
While the Fort McPherson community’s vision need not to agree completely with these plans, it must take into account that in general terms these plans follow reasonable planning, and that they already come with realistic projects and possible sources of funding. Therefore, the focus is to integrate these plans into the community vision instead of working from scratch or present a radically opposing view. Before moving on with detailed recommendations, a step must be taken back should be taken to formally identify priorities and structure a comprehensive vision. The rest of this section will describe the framework needed and give some examples of recommendations that could result from applying it. Opportunities are many and there is no single technical solution to the transportation problem. This study will diagnose what is there and what could be done. It is the responsibility of the people most affected to decide what should be done.

### Priorities

Major priorities for the Fort McPherson Community should be in to increase connectivity between the base and



**Figure C4.** Analysis and evaluation framework for road safety and mobility. Critical steps in red.



**Figure C5.** Detailed analysis framework for road safety and mobility.

surrounding neighborhoods through intersection improvements, better maintenance of sidewalks and the incorporation of alternative transit options. Our overall approach is to work within a intermodal framework that address the integration of all modes into one system. As shown in Figure C3, the framework used for the report takes into consideration multiple factors like current conditions, vision, financial implications, as well as land use and housing issues. The intermodal plan is created within this context and seeks to successfully integrate automobile, transit, pedestrian/bicycle transportation into one system.

### ***Recommendations/Strategies Improvements***

Based on community input and a comprehensive approach to transportation modal integration, here is an overview of our recommendations for improvements:

- Automobile Safety and Mobility
- Alternative Transit Options and Recommendations
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Analysis and Improvements

Automobile safety and mobility

#### ***Approach***

Transportation safety is the most important factor to be considered when proposing mobility improvements. Therefore, any type of solution should put safety as its first priority. On the other hand, any safety improvements achieving a

similar degree of effectiveness should be analyzed in terms of traffic and other impacts. Consequently, even for a single mode, any recommendation needs to take both into account simultaneously. This planning and evaluation philosophy is the basis for this section.

Road safety and mobility improvements generally consist of three areas: intersections, general alignment, and vehicle interaction. The first two comprise the supply side and the latter the demand side, with both sides interacting through the use given to the supplied infrastructure by information and technology. This study only looks deeply at select intersection improvements, since it is the most critical area and where more sizeable benefits can be obtained. General alignment recommendations are a byproduct of the joint land-use-transportation recommendations. These are described in the systems integrations section and serve as input to intersection analysis. A direct assessment of intermodal interaction requires a more detailed dataset which is not yet available and resources beyond the scope of this study. However, the other modal sections within overall transportation study that work as separate-yet-related components will serve as input to this one, and all the modal suggestions will be screened for intermodal compatibility. Future studies can further develop at least one the relatively unexplored analysis areas. Figure C4 summarizes the overall analysis and evaluation framework for road safety and mobility, while Figure C5 shows a deeper look of the

Closest intersecting Roads		Crash statistics 2004 - 2008 (all crashes)		Mobility	
Road 1	Road 2	Crashrate 200m	% intersection	Speed Limit balance	Traffic balance (proy)
Lee St	Van Buren St	27	26%	Low	Low
Lakewood Fwy*	Stanton Rd	28	18%	Medium*	Medium
Campbellton Rd	Venetian Dr	30	17%	Medium	Medium
Alison Ct	Delowe Dr	42	33%	Medium	Low
Campbellton Rd	Delowe Dr	56	16%	Medium	Low

**Table C2.** Accident and mobility characteristics for high crash rate areas.

analysis process.

Figure C5 shows how analysis processes (blue) and information (green) relate. Information is divided into three major types and/or sources: spatial, which generally comes in the forms of static maps or GIS; community survey and visits, which results from all kinds of community input, as well as on-site observations regarding transportation; and traffic and crash data, which usually come from reporting agencies. These types are further divided into processable data types. Traffic and crash data, which comes in real time (e.g. on-site observations, Google Transit) and as a cross-sectional snapshot (e.g. crash reports, traffic counts), are highlighted in red since they are the critical drivers of this analysis. It is important to note that community input from this perspective is meant for informative reasons only; the community's needs and vision are implicit in the "FMac Scenarios" analysis component and in the "Vision compatibility" evaluation component shown in Figure C4. The data taken together helps to identify critical intersections, but before proposing solutions, an additional step is taken. A previous comparable study identified critical intersections solely on aggregated crash rate statistics. This study takes that one step further by disaggregating those crashes by severity, type, and cause, from reported data, as well as complementary data from observed or envisioned situations. This is important since improvements can not only be suggested based on current situation but on projected scenarios based on both natural traffic evolution and redevelopment-caused changes.

## Issues and Opportunities

Accident and traffic data as reported from GDOT were obtained and processed in order to identify the most critical



intersections within a 1 mile buffer from Fort McPherson that would be most affected by the base's redevelopment. An important finding of this exercise was that even disregarding scenarios for the base's redevelopment taken from the land use component, the closer the roads were to the base, the higher the accident rate was. This could be explained by two situations working together: the relationship between irregular block size and irregular traffic; and an inefficient traffic programming. The first can be diminished by providing greater connectivity through the base but block size irregularity must still be kept to a certain extent as with any large city park. The second situation could change if traffic programming is improved in a way that is adaptable to the interim and to full redevelopment scenarios. Accident severity was not correlated with location, but more with speed and traffic imbalances and poor signage. No major geometric driver expectancy issues were found.

Closest intersecting Roads		Crash statistics 2004 - 2008 (crashes at intersection)			Mobility
Road 1	Road 2	% Non PDO	% Signal issue	Dominating type	Intersection LOS
Lee St	Van Buren St	4%	14%	Angle	A
Lakewood Fwy*	Stanton Rd	0%	20%	Angle	A
Campbellton Rd	Venetian Dr	0%	20%	Multiple (no head on)	E
Alison Ct	Delowe Dr	17%	7%	Multiple	A
Campbellton Rd	Delowe Dr	2%	0%	Multiple (no head on)	C

**Table C3.** Accident and mobility characteristics at intersection within high crash rate area.

The following exercise illustrates a specific application of the method previously described. Table 2 shows the five intersections that were identified in both agency reports and community surveys as some of the most dangerous locations. Both accident and mobility conditions are shown in order to describe the relationship between both. The accidents considered were not just intersection-specific, but those occurring within a 200 ft from it, since that buffer area is considered to be most influenced by intersection problems. Delowe Dr has the highest rates. That has to do with its traffic volume, geometric characteristics, and speed differential with its intersecting roads. The Campbellton Rd and Delowe Dr intersection is particularly complicated since it features a right turn only lane that forks out a few feet before the intersection and ends in a yield sign from Delowe onto Campbellton. Signs painted on the pavement only alert the driver approximately sixty feet behind the intersection. That is probably the main reason why that location has the absolute highest intersection crash rate of the study area despite Campbellton having enough turn and through lanes for its traffic volume, and the existence of protected left turns. The Lakewood Freeway/Stanton Rd intersection is particularly complex , featuring a high amount of heterogeneous intersections in a quarter-mile stretch.

Table C3 looks at those same intersections by crash severity (non-property damage only, "Non-PDO"), by percentage of accidents involving a problem with the signal as a factor, and by crash type (direction of colliding vehicles). The "Non-PDO" percentage seems very low, but anything above 0% must be eliminated since it represents injury or death. The Alison Ct and Delowe Dr percentage is particularly high considering none of them are high speed roads. The signal issue percentage is important because from all the contributing factors identified in police reports, this is one of the few that actually acknowledges some contribution from the infrastructure itself. The percentages found are above city average. The type of crash is telling because it gives a better idea of how the crash occurred and which solutions could be more effective. Except Alison Ct and Delowe Dr, most crashes were not head-on and that may be why severity is relatively lower in the other four intersections.

From the mobility side, intersection level of service (LOS) was calculated using abbreviated methods from GDOT counts and observations from peak hour real time traffic conditions. This classification is useful because it basically tells us how well the intersection is working. Except Campbellton Rd and Venetian Dr, levels were above acceptable and some were even excellent. However, those levels would change with projected 2030 levels of current conditions and even more quickly if increased connectivity is provided in the north-south directions. Similarly for accidents,

while rates are not high for some intersection or road segments in their vicinity, this could be because of a low current saturation rate. It is expected that a higher rate currently projected for 2030 and which could be reached faster depending on the density and connectivity characteristics of the base will generate a dramatic increase in PDO accidents and congestion under current traffic infrastructure design. Therefore proposed solutions shall consider higher traffic volume scenarios than predicted current values for some areas.

Closest intersecting Roads		Crash statistics 2004 - 2008 (crashes within 200ft of intersection)			Mobility
Road 1	Road 2	% Non PDO	Dominating factor	Dominating type	Road LOS
Lee St	Van Buren St	0%	Lane change	Sideswipe, same	B
Lakewood Fwy*	Stanton Rd	2%	Lane change	Sideswipe, rear	B
Campbellton Rd	Venetian Dr	0%	Lane change	Sideswipe, same	D
Alison Ct	Delowe Dr	0%	Lane change	Sideswipe, same	B
Campbellton Rd	Delowe Dr	0%	Lane change	Sideswipe, same	B

**Table C4.** Accident and mobility characteristics in high crash rate area excluding intersection crashes.

Table C4 looks at the area beyond the intersection itself, where more crashes are observed as sideswipe (a few rear) and caused mainly by lane changing. These results are expected, and confirm what was observed in the site visits: that lane markings are either insufficient or improper, and could be one of the major sources of accidents and future mobility issues if no action is taken. Road level of service is adequate except on Campbellton Rd. north of the base. Aside from those intersections, there are a two more which were identified during the site visit that may not have high accident or low mobility yet, but could start presenting problems soon. The first is the Langford Pkwy/Lee St interchange, which has different traffic streams converging on the same ramps. While that is not a major issue currently, it already presents problems and in a span of 5 to 10 years will clearly need a definitive solution. This problem was also identified in the Connect Atlanta Plan and GA Tech 2009 FMac's Studio transportation subcommittee report, where it is well documented. The second problematic intersection that would be directly affected by the base's redevelopment is at Campbellton Rd and Sandtown Rd. This intersection is important because it comes right after the end of the base, providing connectivity to East Point, but lanes seem not to be in the right place and signal timing is inefficient even for peak hours.

#### *Intersection recommendations*

Table C5 lists the seven most critical and relevant intersections close to the base described above and gives a brief description of their current geometric and signalization characteristics. Both characteristics are important since they are the two crucial elements that can be modified in order to improve safety and mobility from the supply perspective. Based on the planning and engineering analysis performed following the framework of Figure C5, technically and economically feasible, as well redevelopment-compatible alternatives were identified. Since many options are available, major decision factors that determine their favorability and which should be explored in greater detail in future studies are mentioned.

The intersection of Lee St and Van Buren St is one that creates problems because the driver comes from a very curvy local road onto an arterial directly without much prevention or protection. The stop sign has been ineffective and inefficient. When the redevelopment takes place, Van Buren would likely become crucial for access to and from the base, so a better, yet altering the geometry is costly and complicated, so there is an opportunity to implement an actuated signal that would adapt to the daily level of traffic and would provide protected access.

The Lakewood and Stanton intersection (s) problem cannot be solved effectively with a geometry modification even

Closest intersecting Roads		Current situation		Technical Recommended Improvements	
Road 1	Road 2	Geometry	Signalization	Top alternatives	Other Decision factors
Lee St	Van Buren St	T (Local into arterial	Stop sign	Actuated signal	Fmac Vision
Lakewood Fwy*	Stanton Rd	Split Diamond	4 phase, protected left	Improved lane markings&visibility, Restrict Allison Ct through mvmt.	Cost
Langford Pkwy	Lee st	Interchange	Yield; 4-way stop	Separate traffic: new ramps + dead ending, different configurations	Cost
Campbellton Rd	Venetian Dr	Three-way (Y)	4 phase, protected left	Roundabout, restrict movements + calibrate timing	Cost, Vision
Alison Ct	Delowe Dr	Local-collector/Arterial	3 phase	Appropriate lane marking for local, restrict Allison CT through mvmt.	None
Campbellton Rd	Sandtown Rd	T (2way, 2way), asymmetric lanes	2 phase, unprotected left	Extend only lane markings, keep one lane, Campbellton expansion	Fmac Vision, Cost
Campbellton Rd	Delowe Dr	Arterial/Arterial with fork	4 phase, protected left	Restrict Delowe access, change yield for stop	Cost, Fmac vision

**Table C5.** Summary of intersection, auto mobility and safety improvements

with large capital investments. Traffic will tend to bottleneck there in the future unless crossing streets are dead ended. Yet, this would lead to decreased connectivity and the base cannot afford that. However, the situation can be improved if lane changing is diminished by restoring adequate markings and providing signs in advance that warn the driver effectively about the changes occurring. Also, adequate lighting that compensates the lighting problem presented by the Lakewood Fwy/Langford Pkwy bridge and cutting down trees that reduce visibility from the Delowe Stanton Access Rd westbound are inexpensive yet effective measures. Yet these measures, although cost effective in the short term, might not be enough for the future and further steps should be taken to restrict traffic. The preferred solution is to restrict Alison Ct's through movement. This does not cause major connectivity impacts yet it could reduce the number of accidents significantly. Costs and funding availability should not be a problem, but are still a factor.

Proposed Recommendations for Langford Parkway were evaluated. What Georgia Tech's 2009 Studio report calls "Option 1" was found to be more cost effective assuming a 5% greater traffic volume than ARC 2030 estimates for the involved roads included. Since any solution would try to provide better Interstate access, important capital investment is unavoidable if this issue remains a priority. Of all intersection improvements, this is by far the most expensive, so funding would be difficult to get if it did not make part of the City's priorities.

The Campbellton Rd and Venetian Dr intersection, which has also been identified before as critical, was evaluated again. In the interim, a quick fix is to restrict movements to reduce the number of conflicts, and to calibrate timing by providing more time for drivers on Campbellton Rd, while giving a short but protected phase to Venetian. This solution is similar to previous recommendations but with one less phase. While this solution can help, it would not be as effective with increasing traffic, and the redevelopment of the base is the perfect opportunity to provide a permanent fix. Traffic calming will not help since the problem here does not seem to be caused by speed but by confusion and excess of conflict points. A roundabout was found to be the most satisfactory geometric solution, as others like reducing the number of intersecting streets would like decrease accidents in a current state but transport the problems to other parts of the network, resulting in lower cost effectiveness.

The Alison Ct and Delowe Dr intersection, one of the most dangerous ones, has similar issues to the Alison Ct and Stanton intersection and should also be solved in a similar way, by not allowing through movement on Alison Ct. This solution will reduce connectivity but not in a critical way, since other routes are available to reach the same destinations.

The Campbellton Rd and Sandtown Rd intersection issue must be solved simultaneously with Campbellton's expansion (see the general recommendations of this section, and Georgia Tech's 2009 studio report). If the ROW has a continuous cross-sections, improper lane changing would be solved. The current configuration varying ROW and lane quantity with insufficient informative signs is unacceptable. In the interim, these adequate signs should be provided, since due to the traffic levels during peak hours and the importance of the left turn at Stanton, it is necessary to keep the left turn only lane. Otherwise, the best solution would be to eliminate the additional lane that starts at Ridgewood Dr westbound. However, this left turn only lane should be given approximately 10s of protected to increase its efficiency.

#### *General recommendations (alignment, intermodal interaction)*

Georgia Tech's 2009 Fort McPherson studio did a very good job at characterizing the site and synthesizing recommendations from existing plans and community input. This effort is not repeated here. Rather, recommendations have been built upon previous ones and taken it a step further using the framework described. Still, the main objective has not been to develop implementable design recommendations but to give examples of plausible alternatives based on the information currently at hand. Further studies should focus on performing more detailed engineering analyses once a more defined development plan exists. Following this idea, the list below summarizes the safety and mobility recommendations that do not refer specifically to intersections but to the overall automobile mobility performance of the transportation network around Fort McPherson. We recommend:

- Do not widen Campbellton Rd to 5 lanes unless exclusive transit right of way is to be provided in two of those lanes. The preferred cost effective alternative for mobility purposes is to follow the City of Atlanta's recommendation of two outer lanes with a center turning lane (which requires adequate signing and markings to avoid additional safety issues). The preferred safety solution is to keep two lanes but provide more space for bicycle and pedestrian segregated movements. Both solutions would not require a significant purchase of adjacent land for the additional ROW. The parkway proposed in previous studies provides additional mobility and aesthetic benefits but is costly and less suited for intermodal integration. An issue that arises is the provision of on street parking. An initial recommendation we give is not to provide it on Campbellton Rd, since it would likely increase accident rates, decrease mobility, and take up scarce right of way.
- About circular intersections, traffic circles have not been shown to be effective in most places while roundabouts are a smarter design and must always be considered when building new intersections for conditions like those of Fort McPherson. Roundabouts are important alternative intersections designs that improve mobility and safety compared to traditional signalized intersections when flows and speeds are adequately balanced. They, however, create additional complexities for pedestrians and bicyclists which must be taken into account first before committing for that alternative.
- Since road hierarchy exists, make sure to provide transitioning, adequate signing, and continuous traffic calming. Traffic calming should not make traffic behave discretely. Narrow, naked, and intermodal streets work better than direct calming like speed humps. Mini-roundabouts are not traffic calming solutions per se, but they could have some traffic calming effects that should be taken advantage of.
- The recommendations of the land use subcommittee of increased connectivity need further engineering analysis. Automobile connectivity must be increased but not in a way that new local roads become an alternative route for travelling through the base. Access points should not be placed too close to each other on Campbellton Rd, since





**Figure C6.** ADA Complementary Paratransit Service

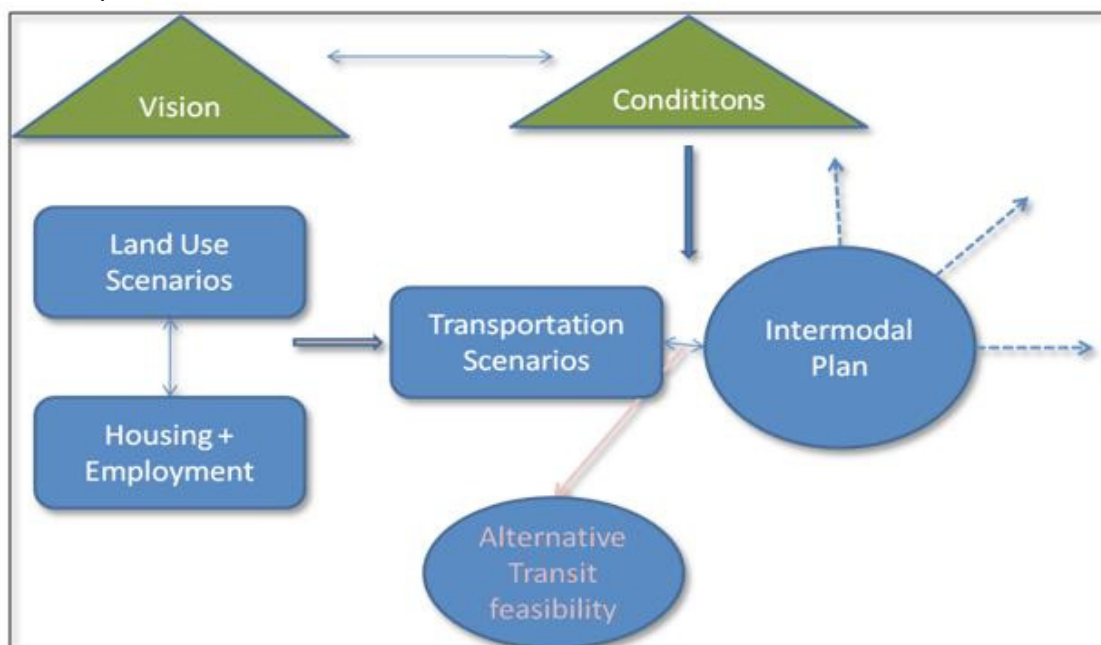


**Figure C7.** Greater Waterbury Paratransit Vans

that would likely decrease LOS and increase accidents.

- Despite our signal timing recommendations focusing on specific intersections, these must follow a comprehensive optimization in which signals in major streets around and crossing the base should be programmed using state of the art technology. This is an opportunity to showcase Fort McPherson nationally as a reference for the mobility of the future.
- Provide signal priority for buses at least in Lee St, Delowe Dr, Campbellton Rd, and Cascade Rd. Evaluate the effect of providing bus semi rapid transit on highway occupancy toll lanes (HOT), and of their access to arterials and collectors, in terms of interaction with automobile traffic.
- Automobile mobility is important but cannot come at the expense of pedestrian, bicycle and transit mobility. The base must not become a bottleneck for traffic that passes but access roads cannot be high speed since that would go against a revitalizing redevelopment effort. Some of the alternatives evaluated solved the automobile mobility cost effectively, but would clearly represent decreased transit service. Since cutting down low cost effective service has impacted the community, solutions that put automobile mobility as the top priority or that sacrifice connectivity for mobility shall not be considered.

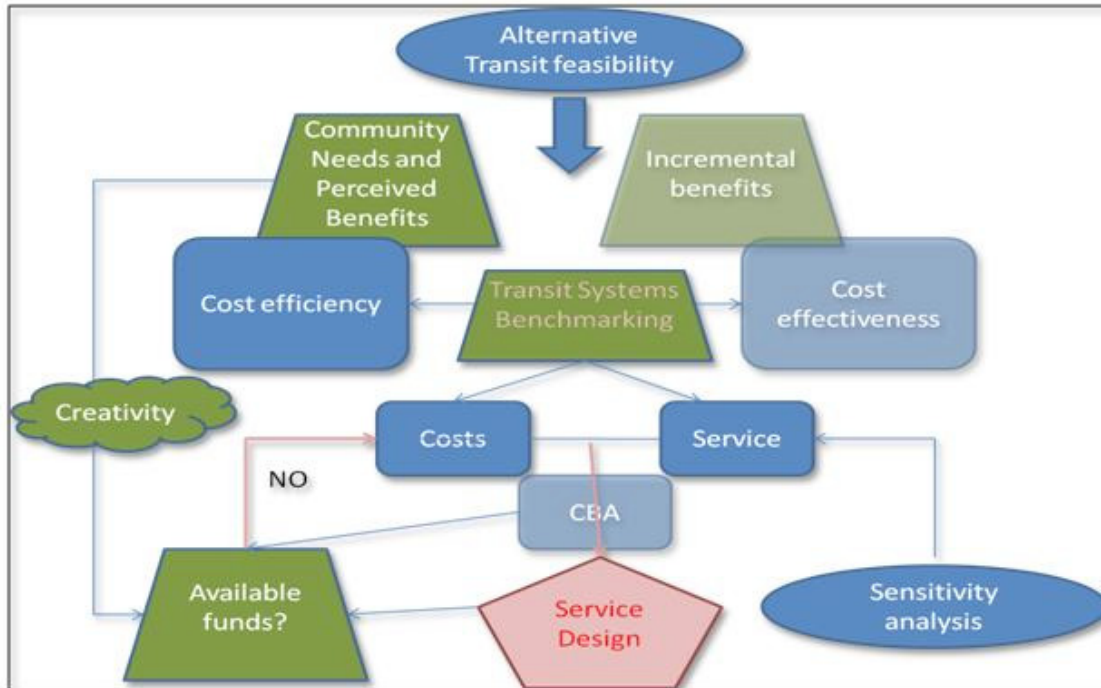
#### *Alternative Transit Options and Recommendations*



**Figure C8.** Alternative Transit feasibility analysis framework.

## Issues and Opportunities

As mentioned earlier, lack of accessibility transit is an issue for the surrounding communities of the Fort McPherson area. Another issue revealed by the community survey was alternative transit options to enhance mobility and provide access to the base's proposed retail development and MARTA rail. As part of our mission to provide connectivity between the fort and the surrounding communities and enhance access to MARTA rail, we are proposing a



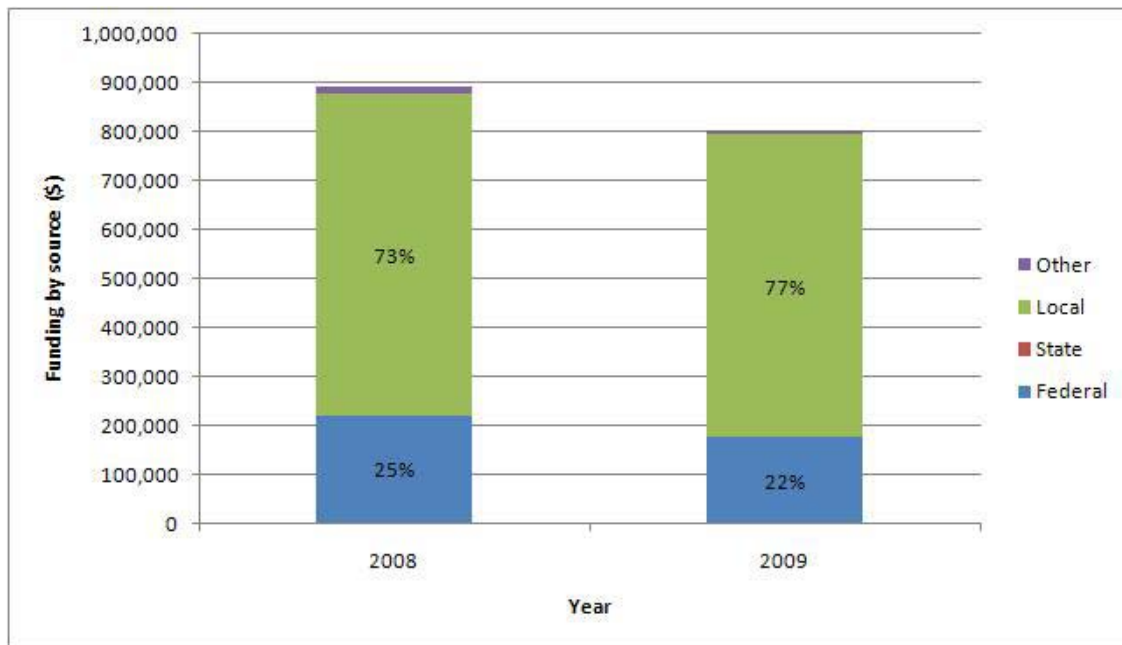
**Figure C9.** Alternative Transit feasibility analysis framework.

complementary transit service for the area. This service would most likely be a fixed route community shuttle with perhaps a low degree of demand responsiveness that would provide the access to the main retail and commercial center, MARTA rail and to nearby universities. Systems that were discussed in community meetings as examples of feeder systems and that received positive reception from community meeting participants were Georgia Tech's Trolley and Buckhead's free shuttle, "The Buc."

Alternative transit options allow a community to address needs that are not addressed by traditional public transit like fixed route bus or heavy rail. These smaller scale services can either provide access to existing transit stations or provide connectivity between residential areas, activity centers, and Atlanta Metropolitan and Atlanta Technical Colleges. Given the large senior population in the communities around the base, there will be a need for services that meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and are accessible to the elderly and those who are physically impaired. Demand-response services such as paratransit or shuttle services (shown in Figures C6 and C7) provide the unique opportunity to cater to the travel needs of the individual. The flexible alternatives to fixed-route systems would be a crucial link in providing connectivity for all in the community but must be provided in a financially sustainable way.

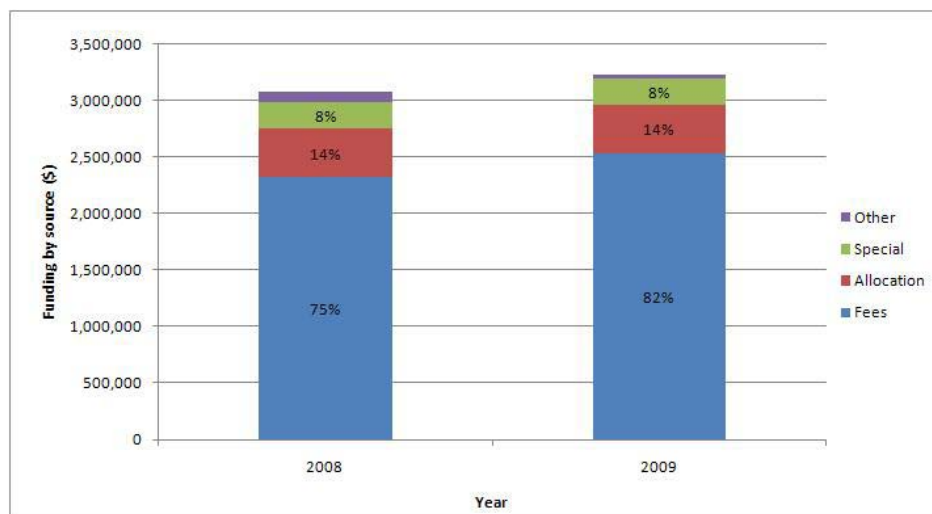
### *Priorities*

In order to determine the most appropriate type of service for the Fort McPherson and surrounding areas community, many aspects should be considered. Mainly, the relationship between land use (linked to housing and employment) and transportation, which are inseparable. Based on the proposed zoning and estimates for population and employment clustering, our group evaluated different solutions based on different transportation scenarios (e.g. levels of connectivity) that resulted from community input, and technical and financial feasibility. Successful solutions must



**Figure C10.** Funding Sources for “The Buc”. Source: National Transit Database

fit into the intermodal plan that includes pedestrian and auto mobility, safety, and accessibility. Figure C8 shows how an alternative transit feasibility study fits into the global transportation and land use planning frameworks. Figure C9 shows how this study should be performed within the infrastructure, cost, political, legal, and other constraints shown before. A cost benefit and a traditional cost effectiveness analysis will both be discarded for now due to data insufficiency. However, solutions should be brought up iteratively based on funding and benchmarking operating cost efficiency. Regarding these elements, a comparison is made based on two example transit systems. In addressing the scope of alternative transit options we also compare the costs of traditional fixed-route services and demand-responsive services. This comparison is the base to determine which type of system could prove cost effective for the community in both short and long term development scenarios. While this study will not give specific route recommendations that go beyond or contradict both GA Tech’s 2009 studio’s recommendations and the land use subcommittee’s vision in this report, it provides the framework under which a study should be performed once the community’s vision exists in an advanced planning stage. Nonetheless, general findings resulting from implementing different connectivity scenarios are shared.



**Figure C11.** Funding Sources for Georgia Tech’s transportation system.  
Source: Georgia Institute of Technology, Department of Parking and Transportation.

### “The Buc”

“The Buc” is a free community shuttle service in the Buckhead community that provides connections between hotels, office buildings, retail, restaurants and MARTA rail. The system operates four lines, all of which provide access to MARTA rail. The Buckhead Area Transportation Management Association manages the daily operation of the service. The service is funded largely through local dollars which are used to leverage federal funds.

The funding mechanism that generates local dollars to operate shuttle service is the Buckhead Community Improvement District (CID). The Buckhead CID is a self taxing entity that receives property tax revenue from non-residential property in the district. Property owners in the CID agreed to commit \$1.5 million of the tax revenue towards the initial startup of the shuttle service and then annually the CID will provide \$1 million towards the project. From the local dollars collected, the CID was able to leverage federal funds of roughly \$4.7 million to fund the first three years of operation.

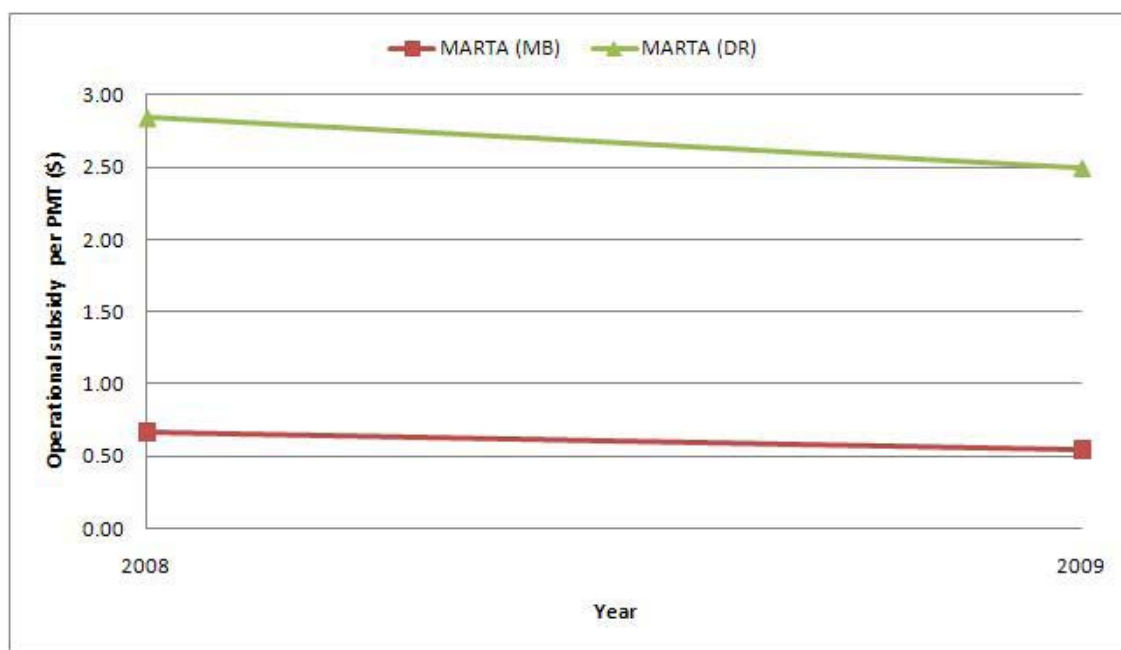


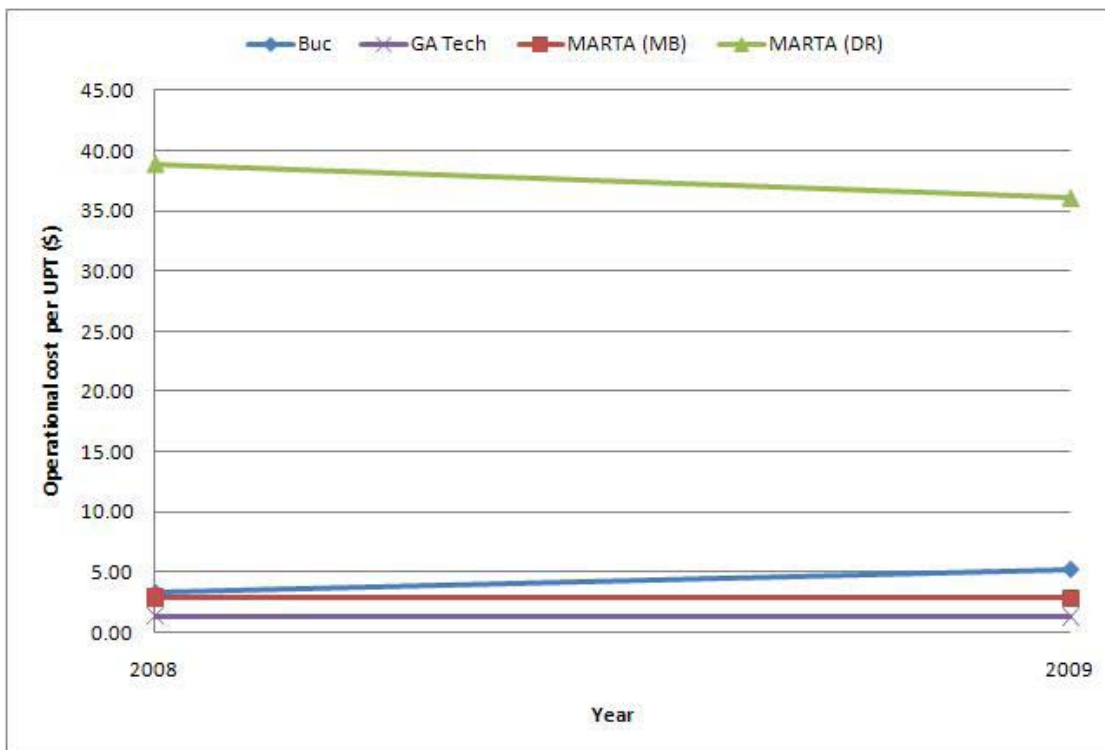
Figure C12. Operational subsidy comparison of MARTA MB and MARTA DR

According to the National Transit Database, in 2008 “The Buc” received \$221,301 in federal funds and \$656,008 from local funds. In 2009 it received \$175,418 in federal funds and \$619,931 in local funds. Thus local funds continue to be primarily how the service is funded. Figure T-10 shows this distribution.

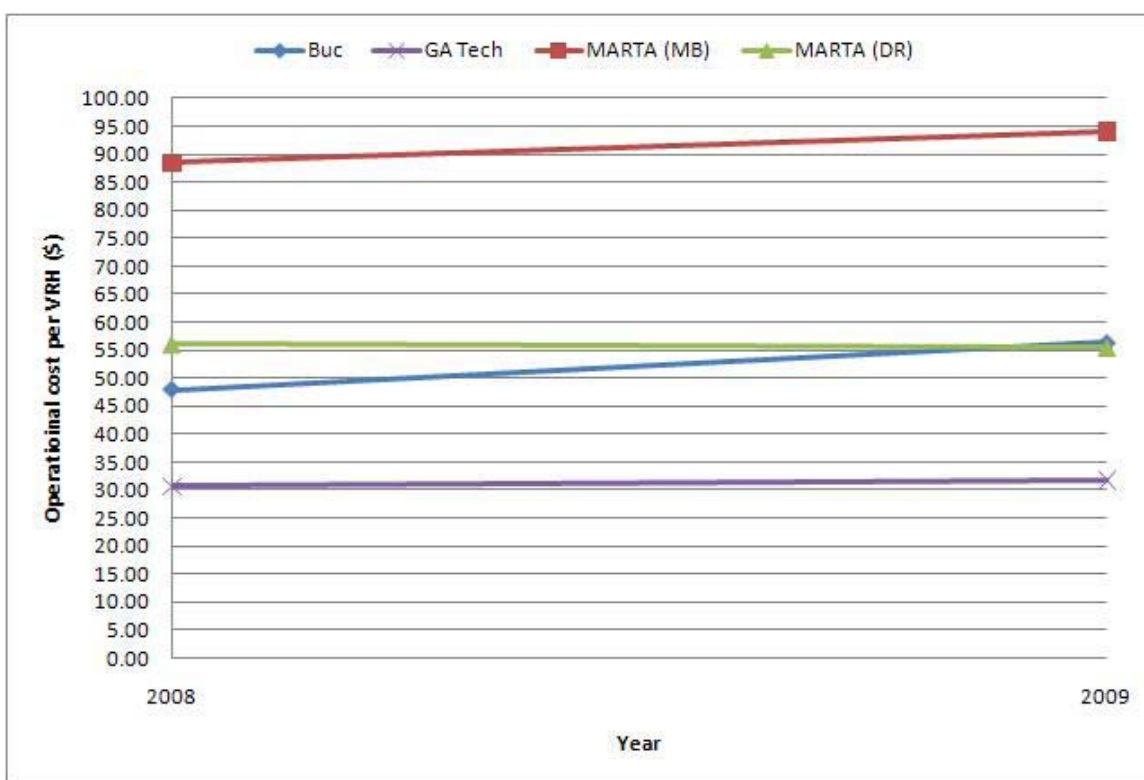
### Georgia Tech Stinger and Tech Trolley

Another example of a transit system is the Georgia Tech transportation system, which consists of four fixed route services running for most of the day using buses and one van-based demand responsive service at restricted stops and hours, which coincide with the times when the fixed route services do not operate. These routes cover most of the campus area and run at variable headways that range from 10 to 40 minutes depending on the time of day. Access is free at boarding, speeding up service, and vehicles are managed using Global Positioning System (GPS) technology. Most of the funding comes from university fees, which are currently \$72 per academic semester (\$187 per calendar year), while the rest is covered by special services, advertisement, and university allocation. Figure C11 shows the distribution of funds for FYs 2008 and 2009. In 2008, more than 2.3 million came from fees and that figure rose to 2.53 in 2009 to cover losses incurred by rising fuel costs in 2008 for 3 of its services. Since these fees are very small compared to the total fee bill, and even less compared to the tuition most students pay, it is very practical to





**Figure C13.** Operational cost per unlinked trip comparison. Source: National Transit Database and Georgia Tech.



**Figure C14.** Operational cost per vehicle revenue hour comparison. Source: National Transit Database and Georgia Institute of Technology.

raise fees by more than the value of money on an ad-hoc basis, since it will not find much opposition unless the raise is out of proportion. Also, for this non-fare type of service, the price-ridership elasticity is practically zero.

### Operational Cost Efficiency Comparisons

This section presents a preliminary comparison of transit service in the region that serves as a tool in further analysis

of feasible alternative transit options for Fort McPherson and surrounding communities. The comparisons focus is on measures that can be estimated during the planning phase, such as operating subsidy per passenger mile, operating cost per unlinked trip, and operating cost per vehicle revenue hours. Comparison is made against at least 3 of the following: “The Buc”, MARTA’s municipal bus (MB) service, MARTA’s demand responsive (DR) service, and GA Tech’s service, the latter non- discriminated by mode. The data analyzed is from fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

Figure C12 shows the operational subsidy per passenger mile traveled (PMT) for MARTA municipal bus (MB) service and MARTA demand responsive (DR) service. In this context, operational subsidy means the difference between operating costs and fare revenue. As seen in Figure C12, MARTA MB is the more efficient than MARTA DR and this is because fixed routes are optimized to lose the least amount of money. Still, it is significant that for each mile a passenger travels in a bus, around \$0.50 of its cost comes from a non-directly generated source. Even though MARTA DR service the more costly than fixed-route service it important to acknowledge the significant social benefits that demand-responsive service provides for communities served.

Figure C13 presents a comparison of operational cost per linked comparison which shows how much it costs to transport the average user for an average trip. Here, the order of magnitude between the only pure demand responsive service analyzed and the other services is. The high cost of providing this service is something that needs to be considered in the feasibility analysis, although obtaining social benefits is difficult for this kind of study. If the total cost with respect to the other services is not significantly high, part of the system’s low efficiency could be captured by differential fees.

Regarding the rest of the systems, Georgia Tech comes as the most efficient, while “The Buc” and MARTA’s MB were similar in 2008 but distanced themselves in 2009 due to the particular characteristics of “The Buc” already mentioned. Georgia Tech’s notable superiority results from the fact that its service area is more compact so it is easier to optimize its operations in terms of occupancy. A system in the base could also achieve a high operational productivity is the transportation network and the land use work together in a way that allows similar demand patterns. Factors like the location of the biotechnology center will also affect the way the system would be designed and its cost efficiency.

Figure C14 demonstrates the efficiency of the vehicle itself, regardless of occupancy. In this case, the difference is not as large as in previous comparisons, but what is more significant is the high value of MARTA’s municipal bus service. This value is high because the buses used are large enough to accommodate many people. In peak hours, the values of Figure C10 and C11 are relatively low due to high occupancy but the system suffers in off peak hours when still a respectable headway needs to be maintained. GA Tech’s service, on the other hand, is more suited to a flatter daily demand curve benefits from this. “The Buc” and MARTA DR services are similar. This is because they both use similar vehicles, meant to transport a smaller volume of passengers at a time.

### *Preliminary Findings and Recommendations*

#### **Cost effective solutions**

Based on that comparative analysis, it is clear that demand responsive services as they are operated by MARTA are very expensive to operate, so immediate implementation of this mode beyond the range of a TOD development is unreasonable. Fortunately, it is not the same for a longer term horizon if creative solutions take place. In order for it to be considered financially feasible using a service type similar to MARTA’s, the theoretical density and occupation levels need to be in the high spectrum of what the land use subcommittee’s recommendations allow, and favorable migration patterns from future elderly cohorts are needed. However, these results come from analyzing a traditional provision of the mode such as with the vans showed before, and with assumptions of conservative estimates for travel cost. Conditions may change, and meanwhile there are intermediate options that could be implemented in phases. This comparative analysis ultimately served to put into perspective the state of the practice, but performing a similar

analysis under different external factor scenarios could yield different results. Other, more innovative and smaller footprint uses of transit were also considered, and although they are ideal in terms of energy and land footprint, questions about reliability and labor costs remain. One specific issue encountered when evaluating these systems is that since there is no benchmarking taking place, many operational assumptions must be made. In spite of this, since this mode is expected to grow along with changing demographics and energy scarcity, it cannot be forgotten during a redevelopment phase. A suggestion that serves to bridge the gap between what is currently possible would be to provide infrastructure that allows mixed use of modes, incorporate them on a trial basis, and see how they work.

Vehicles as golf carts, which came up during the community's input, could work well with the infrastructure and serve as an example of innovation in a sustainable way, but would not work cost effectively that well in a network that competes with the automobile. If automobile use was restricted within the community such that not everybody living inside would be able to access their homes by car, then golf-cart style carts would likely be widely used if their size were increased to somewhere in between current models and small vans. The problem is that limited automobile accessibility is an unrealistic assumption that is currently not desired by the community, since external pressures to reduce auto dependency unfortunately are not coming as soon as they are needed. Yet if the population that from the surveys and meetings that appeared to be possible, stable ridership base actually manifests itself, there would be competition for the market instead of in the market between both modes and the problem would be resolved.

To conclude, it is was found that public provision of a highly accessible system needs some specific conditions (funding and patronage reliability, fast mobility, etc.) to be met that need to be taken into account when narrowing down the possible development options. While all of these conditions may not be met immediately, the urban design and land use policies must be transit supportive so once a critical ridership mass for its expansion is reached, it can be implemented easily. Meanwhile, experiments with fixed route during peak/demand responsive during off peak services branching out from MARTA areas of coverage can be experimented in case MARTA's coverage is to be found insufficient. Whichever the case is, in order to achieve this greater sustainable transit adaptability and evolution, funding sources beyond traditional methods flat fees or fares with a sales tax must be explored.

### **Alternative funding and finance**

A Community Improvement District is a powerful funding mechanism that generates revenue that goes back into the community. We propose the creation of a Fort McPherson Community Improvement District. The tax revenue generated from the Fort McPherson CID could be managed by a Transportation Management Association (TMA) that could oversee the operation of a connector/shuttle service as well as pedestrian access improvements. A pilot service could be put in place for the interim plan and it would expand in phases along the base's development. These funds would be sufficient to support up to a hybrid fixed route/demand response service from the beginning and more

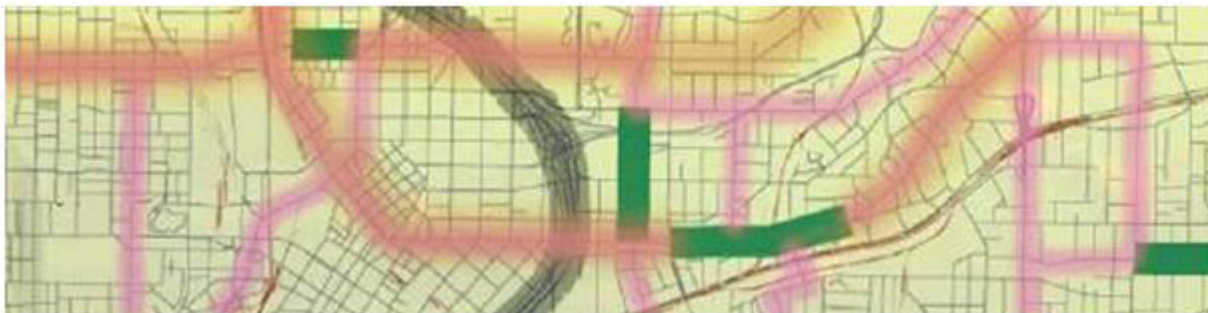


Figure T-15. DISCONNECTED BIKE PATHS (Connect Atlanta Plan: Transportation Action Plan p4)

flexible service in the future. CID funds are also not incompatible with TAD revenues, which would be used mostly for infrastructure provision. If infrastructure as suggested in the previous section is provided to be intermodal, then no additional transit-specific infrastructure would be needed and therefore the chances of funding a surface transit system increase.



In order to fund services beyond basic flexibility, if demand is not high enough, additional steps should be taken. One important step is to provide different kinds of transportation passes based on the people's needs. If through surveys and meetings it is determined that the community for a paratransit service is needed, to give an example, and then designing the most efficient system would be the next step. If the resulting operational fare results to high, then alternative subsidization from other sources (e.g. tourist use, cross-subsidization, etc.) would need to take place. Another option would be to provide a good amount of labor with volunteers. A third option would be to leave it to the business sector to provide rental small personal vehicles with dynamic pricing. If the place becomes a tourist attraction (e.g. a walking museum), the premium paid by tourists for internal transportation could be captured. To lower the risk for operational cost, an experienced contractor could be hired. MARTA has been in this role before and they have shown interest in a TOD development similar to Lindbergh. Bringing institutions like this to make part of the planning and implementation team would make the planning effort more credible and reliable.

The lesson to take from this exploration is that there is no single funding source or financing strategy to fund "public" transportation and previous rigidity in this sense is an old mental paradigm that needs to adapt to current realities. A combination of these schemes could help reduce idling cost and make transit flexible, accessible, and cost-effective. Throughout the report we have used the words "cost-effective" and "feasible", but these basically describe a mismatch between need, and the will and creativity to make this happen. Any of these solutions would be innovative with respect to the state of the practice in this country, leading to greater recognition to the Fort McPherson Community.



**Figure C16.** SIDEWALKS IN DISREPAIR (Connect Atlanta Plan: Transportation Action Plan p4)

### *Pedestrian & Bicycle Analysis and Improvements*

#### **Current Situation**

The current reality for communities surrounding Fort McPherson is that connectivity between activity centers is somewhat non-existent, and in the places where some connectivity exists, these are dominated by roadways in poor condition with limited sidewalk access. Additionally, the sidewalks in place are under-maintained reducing their utility due to breaks in access, plant overgrowth, broken concrete, insufficient lighting and mismatched crosswalk curb-cuts



**Figure C17.** Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity objectives

at intersections.

As mentioned in the Connect Atlanta plan, there is little consistency in bicycle lanes throughout the city – meaning a bicycle path may exist for one or two blocks before ending abruptly and picking back up a few blocks later. Communities around Fort McPherson are no different except that the existence of designated bicycle paths is extremely limited.

## **Issues**

### **Public Safety**

A major community concern is public safety along major thoroughfares such as Campbellton Road. Residents discussed crime along these corridors as well as insufficient lighting for pedestrians or to deter crime in general. Pedestrian lighting is positioned lower than general streetlights to help sidewalk users see better detail at nighttime, and increases general lighting as well. Citizens are concerned to use certain connectors due to crime issues, even though major activity centers are typically located on these major routes. All of the community issues concerning pedestrian and cyclist amenities work hand in hand to promote each other. Repairing sidewalks and aligning the intersection crossings will also increase public safety on these modes in addition to increasing lighting and police presence.

### **Sidewalk Repair**

Many residents expressed concern about the conditions of the sidewalks in their neighborhoods in the vicinity of the fort. Community members complained that the sidewalks were in such disrepair that they were extremely difficult to use, and impossible for persons using a motorized wheelchair or scooter.

While conducting a housing inventory, sidewalk condition was originally part of the survey and most Georgia Tech students reported that sidewalks were in terrible condition and most sidewalks did not follow the streets in their entirety – ending and beginning in an illogical manner adjacent to the street.

### **Connectivity**

One key issue discussed at public meetings included the interconnectivity between the interior and exterior areas of the base. When the base location will no longer be an exclusive operation, an inclusional context for an intermodal, interconnective community must be implemented.

Therefore, the few gateways to the base site must be expanded to many entrances for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. All major community thoroughfares must no longer end at the base line, but should continue through the base in a logical manner that increases travel efficiency and personal access. The mobility mapping must serve the public first, before addressing commercial concerns.

### **Exclusive Modal Access**

While one major accomplishment will be to increase the travel efficiency of the infrastructure currently in place – such as expanding streetscapes to include bicycle and pedestrian access – some modal exclusivity is needed due to the context of each mode. Automobiles travel much faster than cyclist and walking speeds regardless of the speed limits posted, and this poses a safety risk to users who desire to share access with motorized vehicles. Community groups brought this issue up in public meetings that there must be some access points to the base site which are not tied to motorized vehicle infrastructure. There is a demand for bike paths and walking trails throughout the site while also connecting the surrounding neighborhoods. Pedestrian bridges at major crossing points and traffic-calming raised crosswalks can provide better access to exclusive modal infrastructure. Also, non-motorized travelers may not always want to be exposed to the noise pollution created in using infrastructure in close proximity to auto-congested routes. Providing exclusive non-motorized paths also increase the quality of life associated with the amenities that the base's future development will bring.

## **Intersection Crossing**

Remembering that a significant portion of surrounding communities includes sizable elderly and disabled demographics, a top priority with increasing transportation utility is to repair the context-incompatible state of current transportation infrastructure. Many stakeholders reported that most intersections are impossible to cross for the disabled and very difficult for the elderly because some curb cuts on one side of the street do not have matching curb cuts on the opposite side, and some have none at all. Crosswalks do not align with curb cuts and cause confusion to the pedestrian and motorist alike. Even intersections with timed crossing guards are safety risks when the user gets to the opposite side of the street and finds that the crossing time has run out, but there is no curb-cut access to the sidewalk. The City of Atlanta is now requiring all new intersections to include 'countdown' crossing guards, but Fort McPherson communities are located in a historic area where there is also concern that crossing guards will not be replaced in the near future unless community advocates intervene.

## **Recommendations**

1. All major peripheral thoroughfares such as Campbellton Road, Lee Street/Main Street, and Stanton Road must have pedestrian streetlights so non-motorized users can get to major activity centers without significant concern for personal safety. Police presence needs to be visible on these thoroughfares, and Emergency Notification Centers should be positioned along these corridors to additionally deter criminal activity and increase personal feeling of safety.
2. A comprehensive, focused strategy must be implemented by community advocates to eventually repair every sidewalk in the community one at a time. Citizens need to organize and pressure influential allies to move the process forward of sidewalk infrastructure maintenance. Focus should be placed near major activity centers first while neighborhood improvement groups can organize engage the issue as well.
3. Community organizers should agree on a connectivity plan extending the surrounding community infrastructure into the base site creating an efficient flow of intermodal traffic that reduces distinction between surrounding areas and the base. The agreed upon connectivity plan must be documented and utilized during every opportunity when engaging developers and government officials.
4. Pedestrians and cyclists must have access to non-motorized modal infrastructure exclusive from the streets utilizing bike paths and walking trails. These modes should connect the surrounding neighborhoods and major activity centers to planned greenspace areas on the base site such as the existing golf course and general nature areas. These modes should also connect to plans implemented for transit oriented developments in proximity to the Oakland City and Lakewood-Fort McPherson MARTA train stations.
5. Bicycle sharing programs should be provided. Initiatives such as Viacycle are providing lower cost and higher security than traditional services. Supporting this would encourage bicycle use.
6. A strategic plan must be implemented to address the intersection crossing repairs similar to that of the sidewalk repair project tackling one intersection at a time. A survey of every intersection in the fort vicinity must be taken to determine which intersections need improvement. Improving pedestrian safety is key to increasing activity in these communities.

## **Integrated view**

Transportation connects places and people. Not surprisingly, it affects every other component in this study in one way or another. Therefore many variables must be considered with its planning, and specific transportation policies should not conflict significantly across modes and other planning areas. This was the philosophy behind the development and preliminary testing of the analysis framework that was developed in this section. Following that, below we give final recommendations of general transportation policies and projects that should be implemented for a successful Fort Macpherson redevelopment effort.



## **Land use**

- The development of a “BioCenter” or any type of centralizing job activity center in the base is not advisable since it would divert travel from the more efficient, transit-oriented development pattern that can take place between the MARTA rail stations, and the strategically located Campbellton Rd corridor (Cascade Ave corridor could play a role too, although it was not explored in detail in this section). The parking demands from such development would create a traffic load that would cause bottlenecks. Most of the benefits gained from the improvements in signalization would then be lost.
- Following the recommendations of the land use subcommittee, we must add that development should go in the direction from those natural corridors toward the inside of the base as much as possible. Irregular, fragmented development patterns induce more inefficient public transportation services.

## **Connectivity**

Connectivity is a road network characteristic that is considered by many as always better when higher. That is not necessarily the case. While having reduced connectivity limits and reduces the inefficiency of a network in terms of access, when you are dealing with cars that take up lots of space, and induced traffic demand, reaching a desired level of connectivity is not as simple as providing the greatest possible amount of connected links. Therefore, the term should distinguish between modes. Automobile connectivity should be greater than the one currently on the base for integration purposes, but should still be limited. A gridline pattern crossing through most of the base would not only represent extremely high costs, but an incentive for congestion, emissions, and accidents. The right balance should be found when an implementable plan is ready, through traffic simulations that assume efficient operations. On the other hand, emphasis on connectivity should be placed on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to promote alternative transportation trips, given the advantages of Fort McPherson possibly served by: MARTA rail, Beltline, and a Streetcar. This differentiated approach would be the only case of modal discrimination suggested in this section, since it actually works for the benefits of all modes.

## **Multimodal mobility and safety**

Very few parts of Atlanta can be considered appropriate for multimodal mobility. If Fort McPherson and its surrounding areas achieve this in some sense, it would be a major breakthrough for the region. In order to achieve this, infrastructure must be complete for the desired modes on each part of the network based on the people’s needs. Also, state of the art signal timing and the provision of unsignalized intersections (roundabouts, naked streets) shall also be included to enhance mobility and safety. Old school traffic calming should be discarded.

## **Parking**

- In a car based world, there is a tradeoff between economic competitiveness and provided parking. In spite of this, parking should go against that negative feedback and not be as abundant as possible; instead, it should be rightly priced so that mobility, safety, and sustainability goals are met. A way to lessen effects of more limited parking is that business owners cover part of the customer costs through validation. Once enough people live on the base and around, local customers could easily get there by alternative modes of transportation. Also, pricing should be dynamic. This means that it should vary depending on the demand, so that infrastructure is used more efficiently.
- Depending on the zoning: mixed use, commercial, or residential, parking must alternate between: decks, on street and on driveways. Ideally, decks would be limited to the area surrounding the transit stations.
- Legal and administrative issues should be discussed with the city governments so that there is a possibility for collective internal revenue collection and management of parking fees. If possible, private parking companies from inside the neighborhoods should be given priority in contracts.

## **Funding**

- Capital and operational funding can be obtained through different mechanisms such as TADs or CIDs. Parking and tourist attraction fees, event fees, advertising revenues on transit and other sources of funds can help keep the transportation infrastructure moving. Since the emphasis of this section is to low capital intensive yet effective

# Economic Development

## Introduction:

Students interacting with the communities and their economic development committee, have produced this report incorporating background information, findings, and analyses to underpin its recommendations.

Demographic analysis establishes income and job disparities that afflict much of the nearby communities. Analysis of the BRAC process identified criteria that should be met that seem to favor greater coordination and cooperation in meeting community as well as City needs and priorities. Students inventoried all businesses within a two mile radius so that linkages could be made between them and Base maintenance, operations, and development needs.

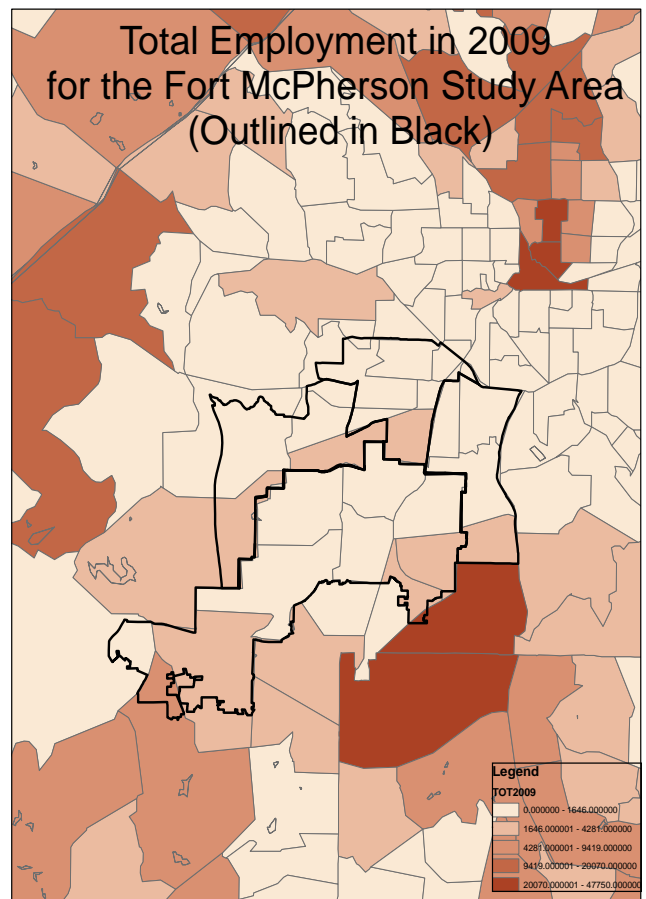
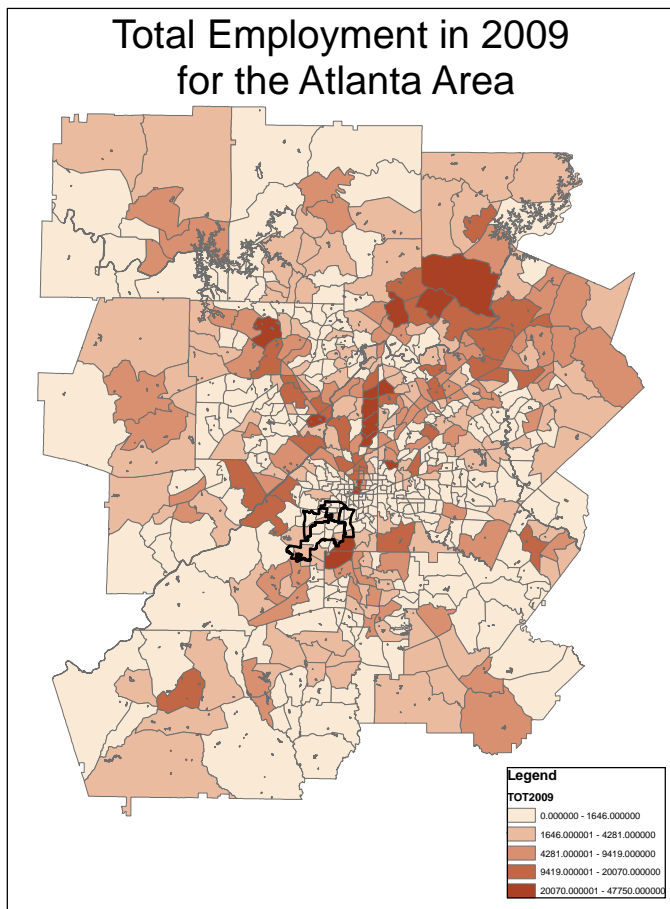
There are at least three economic development tools that offer the communities, the City, and the LRA the opportunity to collaborate on job-generating economic development strategies that at the present time do not seem to be cooperatively planned. The communities and the Base lie in a City-designated federal Opportunity Zone, giving businesses access to employment tax incentives and other benefits. They also lie in the area recently awarded an EPA/HUD Brownfield study grant to develop applications for future Brownfield funding. Finally, the Campbellton Road Tax Allocation District provides the opportunity for co-funding major new infrastructure improvements between the LRA and the City. While the Base has been considering these potential funds as “theirs,” reflecting the potential that much of the tax increment generated may come from Base redevelopment, this resource should be co-planned and co-committed to balance Base redevelopment needs with community infrastructure upgrade needs.

In conjunction with and in addition with these resources, four other priority areas for jobs and economic development strategies have emerged, all directed at removing predictable barriers to job and capital access and favoring community economic development priorities. First, the communities need to continue to press for improved access to capital to support entrepreneurial initiatives. Second, access to workforce development and training in anticipation of Base and other redevelopment initiatives needs to focus on the workforce needs and profiles of the immediate communities. Third, programs that reflect the growing commitment and funding for the full spectrum of “green” jobs should support community deconstruction, rehabilitation, and new construction needs. And fourth, the communities need to formalize their effort to establish a viable, legally constituted community development entity so that all of the above needs and resources can be negotiated into enforceable Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) between the communities, the LRA, the City, the Atlanta Development Authority, and other development entities.

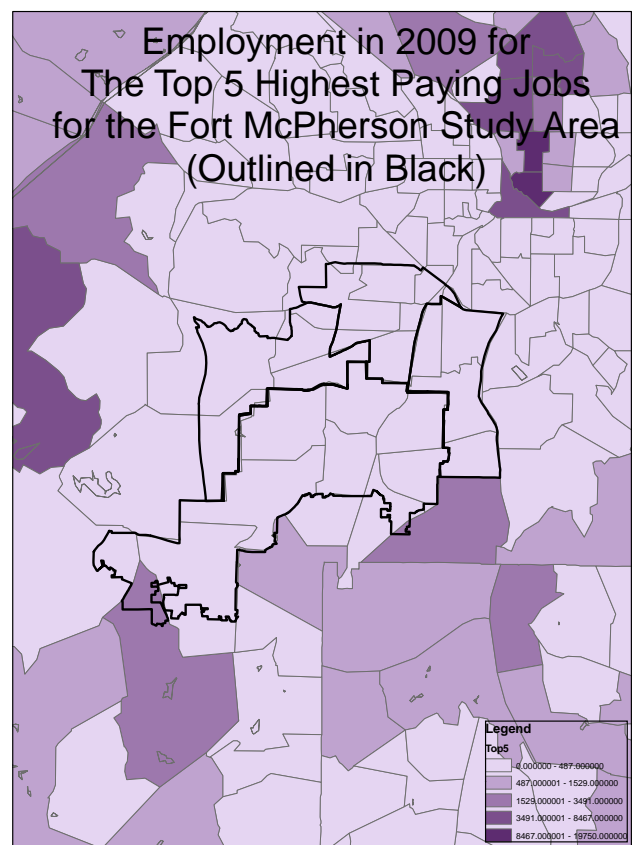
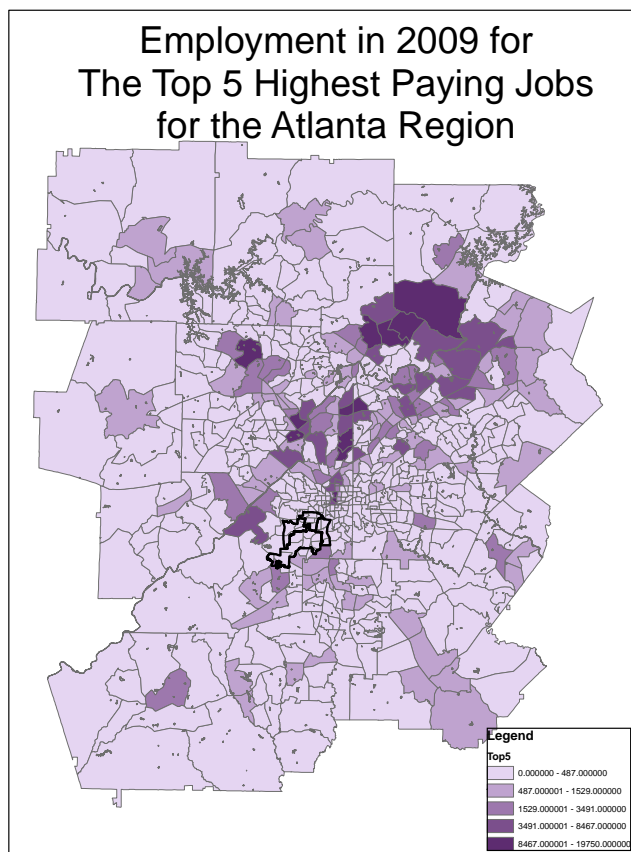
## Current Conditions:

The Jobs and Economic Development section of this report is based on extensive community engagement exercises including the establishment of a set economic development team with both community members as well as student members that met at least monthly (but often weekly) for a period of half a year. The information garnered from these meetings was then solidified and proposed as a set of agreed upon goals and objectives that were put forth in the Fort McPherson redevelopment plan put forth by the Georgia Tech Fall 2009 City and Regional Planning studio.

The conveyances listed in the land transfer from Ft. McPherson to the LRA specify that in terms of economic development and job generation the LRA must demonstrate that sufficient jobs will be generated by their proposed uses in land changes. As the redevelopment process begins to gain momentum and ground is broken on the overall project, jobs in sectors like construction, utilities, environmental services, etc. have the potential to grow rapidly. However, an emerging challenge will be to ensure that short-term job growth can be sustained also in the long run. That is, will the local workforce be able to transition into another sector after the immediate needs are met. As a result, the information provided in this section is aimed at implementing initiatives that can achieve results in the short term with the potential for maintenance in the long-run.

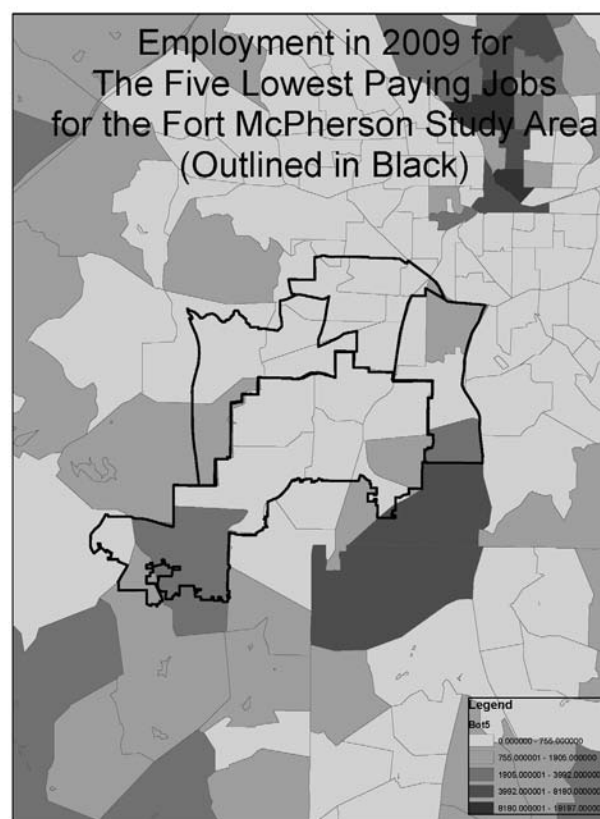
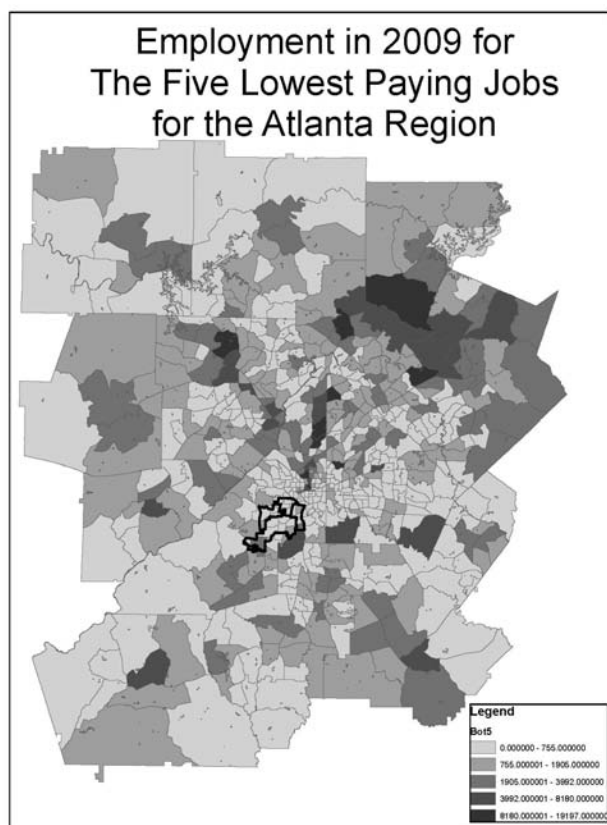


**Figures D1 + D2.** Maps of Total Employment in Atlanta Region and Fort McPherson Areas.



**Figures D3 + D4.** Maps of Highest Paying Jobs in Atlanta Region and Fort McPherson Areas.





**Figures D5 + D6.** Maps of Lowest Paying Jobs in Atlanta Region and Fort McPherson Areas.

Using the goals and objectives identified as community priorities within this report – as well as those goals and objectives identified during further community engagement meetings that occurred subsequently – we are now able to put forth a comprehensive set of goals, objectives and action items that will hopefully allow the community to see Fort McPherson redeveloped in a way that benefits the area’s residents economically, while minimizing the forces that often spur gentrification and forced relocation of such communities.

#### Demographics:

Any plan that is put forth – whether from this body or the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) – must be considered in the context of economic and demographic realities of the communities surrounding the base. In all, there are thirteen separate neighborhoods/communities (including the base itself) that make up the area in and around Fort McPherson. These communities are: Perkerson, the City of East Point, Fort Valley, Fort McPherson, Sylvan Hills, Pamond Park, Cambellton Road, Adams Park, Venetian Hills, Cascade Heights, Oakland City, Capitol View, and Capital View Manor.

The following images show the spatial distribution of total employment, employment in the top 5 paying job sectors, and employment in the 5 lowest paying job sectors

#### What Has Changed:

The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) announcement that stated Fort McPherson was due to close in 2011 was released in May of 2005. Over the next two years (2006-2007) the Fort McPherson Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) set to work drafting a plan whose visions, goals and objectives were rooted in a 2005 mindset of continued economic growth, continued success of the housing market, and continued easy access to employment.

This mindset has led many outsider individuals and organizations to champion the idea of a biotechnology center being developed on the base after its closure. While an admirable goal, and one that continues to be pursued by many active participants in the planning process, the dramatic shifts in the global (as well as local/neighborhood) that have taken place since the beginning of 2008 have greatly diminished the likelihood of such a project being successful/viable. Taking a quick look at some important national statistics (such as employment and annually adjusted growth/decline in gross domestic product (GDP)) on the date of the announcement of the base's closure, exactly two years later, and then again annually until 2010 will show the extent to which things have changed.

Date	Georgia Unemployment Rate	Change in Georgia Real GDP
May 2005	5.2%	+4.6%
May 2006	4.7%	+3.4%
May 2007	4.6%	+2.8%
May 2008	6.2%	-0.6%
May 2009	9.6%	-3.1%
May 2010	9.9%	-

Table D1. Sources: <http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/JOBSHISTORY09.html> + [http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp\\_state/2006/gsp1006.htm](http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2006/gsp1006.htm)

When a state's GDP turns from growing on annually adjusted basis at a rate of 4.6% to shrinking by 3.1% year-over-year, the economic reality of localities within that state will also change. Similarly, when a state goes from one out of every twenty people being unemployed to having one in ten individuals being unable to find work – economic development strategies that had been devised during the one in twenty years no longer seem valid.

It was during the one in twenty years that the notion of a bioscience/biotechnology park being developed on the base's vacated land began to gain in popularity. At the time it seemed like a sure fire way to spur sustainable economic growth in the area and provide much needed jobs for an economically struggling community. However, the downturn has forced such grandiose plans to face tougher scrutiny – and upon such scrutiny, the notion of a bioscience park in the heart of the Fort McPherson community is not high on the list of priorities for job generating strategies.

The “park” itself was to be organized around the premise of Georgia's many quality institutions of higher learning (Georgia Institute of Technology, Emory University, Morehouse, Spellman, etc.) coming together to research under one common roof – significant funding for the project was to come from the institutions and the Georgia Board of Regents. The current economic reality facing the Georgia Board of Regents allows that body little room for excess spending – with tuitions rising dramatically across the board at all of Georgia's colleges and universities, faculty and staff at many Georgia universities being forced to take furloughs, and general cut-backs whenever possible, the likelihood of the Board of Regents funding a project that allows for universities to do work they are already doing simply in a new location is improbably at best.

The dramatic change in the economic reality faced by the nation, Georgia and the local Fort McPherson communities presents the latter body with a unique opportunity to turn back the clock and really have a say in how the areas of economic development and job creation after the base closes are handled. The Local Redevelopment Authority is being forced back to the drawing board – discarding original plans developed by such prestigious firms as HOK and others, and developing new ones that take the economic downturn into account. The new plan (finished, but not yet available for viewing by the public) will hopefully not be as far off-based as the original. Regardless, the following sections seek to present the LRA with an alternate set of economic development and job creation options that may be done more cheaply and with greater appreciation from the community.

## **General Issues/Problems that have been identified:**

**Barriers to the workforce and lack of incentives** – The community has strongly expressed the need to eliminate barriers that prevent entry into the workforce and the lack of incentives and resources needed to develop an effective development and training program. Currently, there is little information about the skill, education, and literacy levels of the affected neighborhoods. Based on the outcome of this survey, programs can be tailored to meet specific needs and focus on areas that require the most attention. Some barriers include lack of education, lack of work history, child care, transportation, health conditions, substance-abuse, ex-offenders, homelessness, language barriers, disabilities. Other barriers include soft skills, especially for those who go from high school directly into the workforce. Lack of such skills can hinder even the brightest young people with great potential. The planning and policy alternatives that are being presented are strategies that attempt to address the diverse array of issues and problems that have had such a dramatic effect on the employment situation in the Ft. McPherson area.

## **General Alternatives with Specific Recommendations to Address these Concerns:**

Each of the “IDEAS” put forth by the community deal with one of four basic economic redevelopment/job creation categories. These four areas of interest include: increased local access to capital; comprehensive workforce development, retraining, and training; development of green jobs across the full career ladder; and the development and use of a Community Benefits Agreement.

### **Recommendation #1: *Increase local access to capital.***

The barriers that prevent the communities surrounding Fort McPherson from having truly equitable access to capital are variable and difficult to address with specific policies – barriers can/do include race, where one lives, employment status, credit history, etc. Since large “outsider” banks have done nothing but perpetuate the community’s lack of access to capital in the past, there is a strong local desire to establish a community-led financial institution that can provide the financing for which many local entrepreneurs/residents have voiced their support.

Two possible objectives arise that could each be used to help achieve the goal listed above. The first objective would be to establish a community credit union that catered specifically to community needs, and – being community driven would always ensure the neighborhoods surrounding Fort McPherson had easy access to credit/capital.

A second possible objective would be to establish a micro-lending institution on the site of the former base. Micro-lending is a newly developed form of financing that provides small loans to persons with non-existent/poor credit history in a manner that both provides the capital requested while also working to build a sense of community that will ensure full repayment. People applying for a micro-loan not only bring themselves to the lending body, but also 3-4 other community members (usually not permitted to be family) who work as personal references for the loan, but also are encouraged to ensure the applicant keeps sound finances if/when the loan is approved.

Unlike commercial loans, no collateral is required for a micro-loan and it is usually repaid within six months to a year. Those funds are then recycled as other loans, keeping money working and in the hands of borrowers. Microfinancing/microcredit has helped bring people out of poverty across the world – especially in India, where the technique’s creator Muhammad Yusuf, first put the plan into practice. <http://www.grameenfoundation.org/what-we-do/microfinance/microfinance-basics>

The opportunity for the Fort McPherson community (and Atlanta as a whole) to gain increased access to capital by means of a microcrediting institution is more real than ever – as the Grameen Bank (Yusuf’s microcredit institution) is currently seeking for a location to expand into the Atlanta market.

## Resources that can help increase access to capital:

- Atlanta Micro Fund – micro businesses with funding and management assistance

For more information about AMF's services, program orientations are held in the Lang-Carson Community Center at 100 Flat Shoals Ave., Atlanta, GA 30316, every Tuesday at 11:00am. To RSVP for orientation, phone (678)-539-6900 or email [mbryant@ahand.org](mailto:mbryant@ahand.org)

- Fort McPherson Credit Union – If the Fort McPherson Credit Union remains after base closure, it will likely provide the best opportunity for developing a community engagement program that provides access to capital for businesses and individuals that are looking to encourage economic growth in the area. Their contact information for community follow up: 1732 Walker Avenue Southwest - (404) 753-4592, [www.fmcu-ga.com](http://www.fmcu-ga.com).

## Recommendation #2: Increase access to comprehensive workforce development and training sources.

The base redevelopment will likely include job generation in the following sectors: weatherization; construction; lab technicians, retail; administrative; biomedical; small business; green jobs; and general entrepreneurial opportunities. There are several avenues for local residents to participate in workforce development activities. The following table presents various agencies that have resources or programs available for training and development. The table includes the agency/organization, brief summary of relevant information, and contact information for follow-up.

**Table D2.** Table illustrates Workforce Development Programs

Workforce Development Program	Summary	Contact Information
North Georgia Building Trades Council (NGBTC)	NGBTC encompasses the northern part of the state, including the Atlanta metro region, and is engaged in activities that promote and improve upon the conditions (wages, benefits, training, etc.) of workers within the trade union.	North Georgia Building and Construction Trades Council 501 Pulliam St., SW Atlanta, GA 30312  Phone: (404) 584-0005 Fax: (404) 584-0009 Website: <a href="http://www.bctc.net/index.cfm">http://www.bctc.net/index.cfm</a>
Atlanta Workforce Development Agency (AWDA)	The AWDA has recently launched an initiative to implement training programs for re-entry into the labor market for individuals who have been previously incarcerated.	Atlanta Workforce Development Authority 818 Pollard Boulevard, Atlanta, GA 30315 Phone: 404.546.3000 Website: <a href="http://atlantaworkforce.org">atlantaworkforce.org</a>  Contact for Re-Entry Program: Dennis Dunn, 404-658-6310



Georgia Work Ready (GWR)	<p>Georgia Work Ready (GWR) is an arm of the Georgia Workforce Development Board and by taking advantage of its resources, local residents can gain a competitive advantage in the local job market and in areas across the job spectrum. Additionally, job seekers can become certified (through the program Work Ready Connect) and will be more attractive as potential employees for companies looking to hire. Communities can seek to improve the pool of qualified applicants by participating in the program. Additionally, this initiative will help highlight the importance of education and training within the community.</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://workreadyconnect.org">workreadyconnect.org</a></p> <p>GWR, Region 3, City of Atlanta and Fulton County</p> <p>Deborah Lum</p> <p><a href="mailto:dlum@atlantaga.gov">dlum@atlantaga.gov</a></p> <p>Note: Deborah Lum is the director of the Atlanta Workforce Development Agency.</p>
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**Recommendation #3:** *Increase access to green jobs across the full career ladder for local community residents.*

Green job-generating initiatives have been identified both on the base and in the communities, and the following are a thorough, but not complete, list of potential opportunities: property deconstruction oriented around recycling, especially of high value materials, property maintenance and demolition; facilities maintenance, operations, and security; food production and distribution; weatherization, among others. Many of the job/career generation options are focused on “green” jobs. Opportunities exist on base as well as within the communities to create new career paths and markets for jobs such as those listed above. This review is considering the applicability of such Office of Economic Assistance (OEA) training resources, the Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, Atlanta Tech, Atlanta Metro College, Southface Energy Institute, Georgia Trade-Up, and others as sources for job training and placement. Part of this program includes consideration of Arkwright school as a mixed use redevelopment opportunity, where training space could be provided as part of a rehabilitation program, replacing what is presently a blighting influence with a community supporting facility. Facilities on the base could be used during its interim period for job training and placement activities as well.

The table below represents opportunities for green job training and development. Much of the above information is adapted from a report detailing a program in Oakland, CA. This program leverages current programs and job sectors with a local community college to increase offerings for training in various green jobs. This is merely a short list of potential jobs and programs to provide training to local residents that could centered on Ft. McPherson and surrounding communities.

Green Job Sector	Green Job Type	Atlanta Tech Current Offerings*	Potential Future Programs for Atlanta Tech
Energy	HVAC, Electrician, Weatherization, Energy Auditor	Air Conditioning Technology, Electrical Construction & Maintenance	Solar, Energy Auditor, Weatherization,
Water	Plumbing, Stormwater Management, Environmental Technician, Water Auditor	Plumbing	Environmental Design, Water Quality Technician, Stream restoration, Stormwater management, Water Auditor
Greenspace	Landscaping, Arborist, Recreation Management, Horticulture, Urban Agriculture	None	Landscape design & maintenance, Tree care, Recreation Management, Turf Management, Horticulture
Transportation	Bicycle repair, bio-fuel production, Auto repair (hybrids)	Supply Chain Management, Procurement, Automotive Technology	Bicycle Repair, Bio-Fuel Production, Hybrid Auto Repair
Green Building / Construction	Sustainable design & drafting, LEED building, LID Site Design	Drafting	LEED Training, Environmental Design, LID, E&S Management
Waste Stream Management	Recycling technician, HAZMAT disposal, materials re-use	Supply Chain Management, Procurement	HAZMAT Disposal, Materials Recovery
Air	Indoor Air Quality Specialist, Mold Specialist, Environmental Technician	None	Indoor Air Specialist, Mold Remediation, Air Quality Technician
Business Management	Sustainability Auditor,	Supply Chain Management, Procurement	

**Table D3.** Green Job Sectors.

**Recommendation #4:** *Draft and implement a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA).*

Perhaps more so than any of the other goals, implementing a CBA with the development organization(s) is extremely important. CBAs are legally binding contracts between a developer and a community group. CBAs can call for a variety of “community benefits” that the developer (by signing the document) agrees to execute or provide in exchange for the right to carry out a development project.

Examples of some of the “benefits” called for in CBAs include:

- A living wage requirement for workers employed in the development.
- A “first source” hiring system, to target job opportunities in the development to residents of low-income neighborhoods.
- Space for a neighborhood-serving child-care center.
- Environmentally-beneficial changes in major airport operations.
- Construction of parks and recreational facilities.
- Community input in selection of tenants of the development.

- Construction of affordable housing.

<http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/pdf/cba2005final.pdf>

Each of these examples should be considered during the CBA negotiation processes, as each would benefit the Fort McPherson communities/neighborhoods.

Additionally, a comprehensive database of local community businesses will greatly assist with informing the process of developing Community Business Agreements (CBA). A CBA that is able to reference a set list of local developers, small businesses, and employment centers is far more effective than one that lacks this resource. The list of businesses found in this report (in Appendix X) includes all those private entities within two miles of Fort McPherson itself. By adding employment requirements into the CBA, developers will be able to reference possible small businesses to use as contractors in the development process.

# Housing

## Introduction:

The communities and students collaborated on a complete study of housing conditions and trends and the generation of housing strategies for the areas surrounding Fort McPherson. This work included a complete inventory of existing housing stock, a thorough review of available program opportunities and initiatives to address problems, and preliminary meetings with City and non-profit agencies geared to acting on the emergent recommendations. Several big picture issues and opportunities emerged.

With the Base closing, the communities face a seemingly contradictory dilemma, which one community member dubbed the “big squeeze.” On the one hand, the neighborhoods have experienced a decline in their housing stock and its value borne of the housing crisis – foreclosures, displacement, abandonment, tax delinquencies, and ensuing blight. On the other, the specter of redevelopment of the Base, with its projection of selling off its “mansions” (grand old houses on “Officers’ Row) early in the process, raise concerns about maintaining stability and affordability in the face of gentrification pressures, speculative investment, and other destabilizing real estate and development practices.

In this context, the community-guided effort focused on addressing existing housing conditions and meeting housing needs, all with the goal of creating stable neighborhoods for the long term. Detailed strategies, support programs and agencies, and follow up steps were developed for each of these priorities, with special focus on incorporating these in future Community Benefits Agreements with the LRA and other public agencies and private developers. Similarly, as a positive way for addressing some of the documented obstacles in meeting housing needs, the study proposed developing a continuum of action that leads through the City’s code enforcement authority, the Atlanta-Fulton County Land Bank Authority’s ability to take tax-delinquent properties, and the emergent Atlanta Community Land Trust Collaborative to hold such properties for rehabilitation or demolition.



## Current Situation

The neighborhoods surrounding the base (according to Census Tract data) are home to a mix of working and middle class families, with 34% of residents earning less than \$1,200/month, 44% earning between \$1,200 and \$3,400/month, and 21% of residents earning over \$3,400/month. While a family earning \$1,200/month can afford no more than approximately \$400/month on rent (approximately a \$43,000 home value), this is difficult to find. Appraised values of homes in the neighborhoods show that only about 10% of residential properties were valued at less than \$50,000.

## Income Statistics

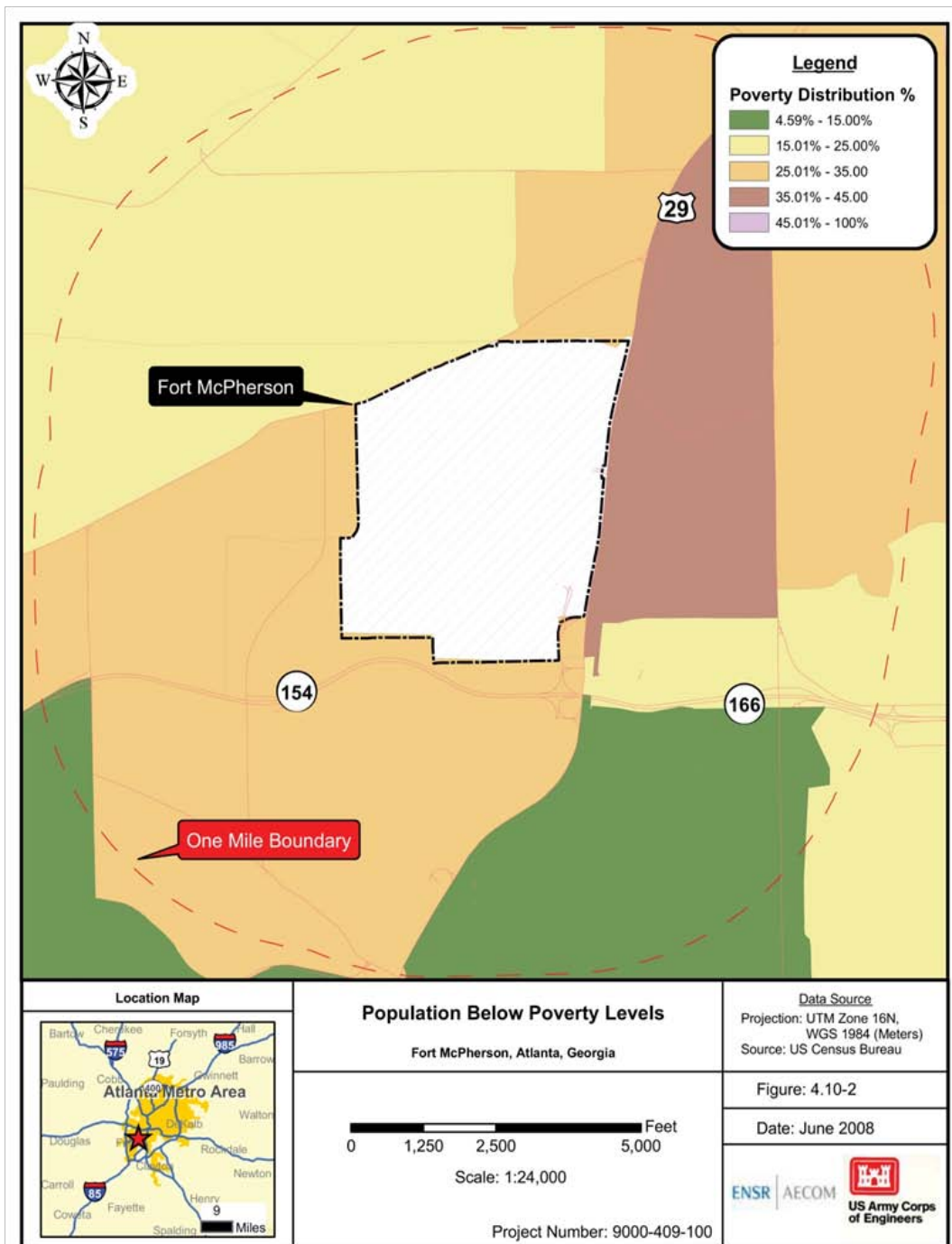
The neighborhoods surrounding Ft. McPherson are located in the 30310 zipcode, which was one of the hardest hit areas in the country by the foreclosure crisis. Much of the housing is deteriorated or has been abandoned by former owners, absentee landlords or real estate investors. Property values have declined in the last several years because of the economic climate, but people continue to be at risk of losing their homes due to foreclosure.

## 2008 Assessed Values of Housing Stock

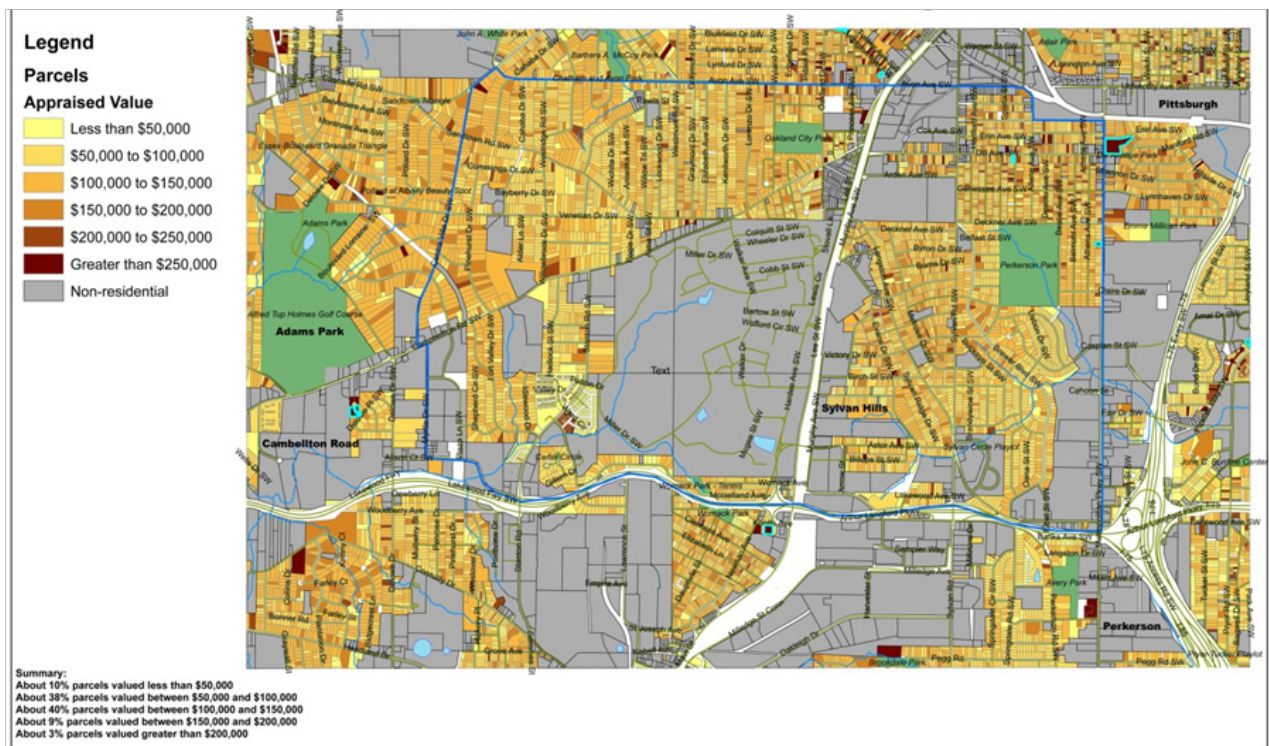
In addition to the problem of affordability, the risk of foreclosure, and the deterioration of the existing housing stock, residents face problems of blight and unsafe conditions because of the increase in vacant lots and buildings in the neighborhood.

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Total workers (2008)	% workers earn under \$1200/mo (2008)	% workers earn \$1201 to \$3400/mo (2008)	% workers earn over \$3400 (2008)
13121006601	Oakland City	978	33%	42%	25%
13121006602		482	43%	45%	12%
13121007601		2,730	40%	50%	10%
13121007602	Adams Park/Sandtown/Benhill	1,134	33%	45%	22%
13121007701	Adams Park/Sandtown/Benhill	4,049	31%	40%	29%
13121007702	Adams Park/Sandtown/Benhill	3,810	30%	41%	29%
13121008000	Cascade Heights	1,989	33%	45%	22%
13121011201		2,003	32%	47%	20%
		<b>Average</b>	34%	44%	21%
		<b>Annual salary</b>	\$14,400.00	\$14,412.00	\$40,800.00
		<b>To Align with Incomes: Rental Affordability</b>	Approximately 1/3 of units should be priced below \$400/month	About 10% are priced less than \$50,000 (as of 2008)	1/3 should be valued under \$43,200
			Approximately 1/2 of housing units should be priced between \$400 and \$1130/month	38% are between \$50,000 and \$100,00 and 40% between \$100,00 and \$150,00	1/2 b/t \$43,200 and \$122,400
			20% (or less) of housing units should be priced above \$1130/month	12% of housing are valued above \$150,000	20%(or less) above \$122,400

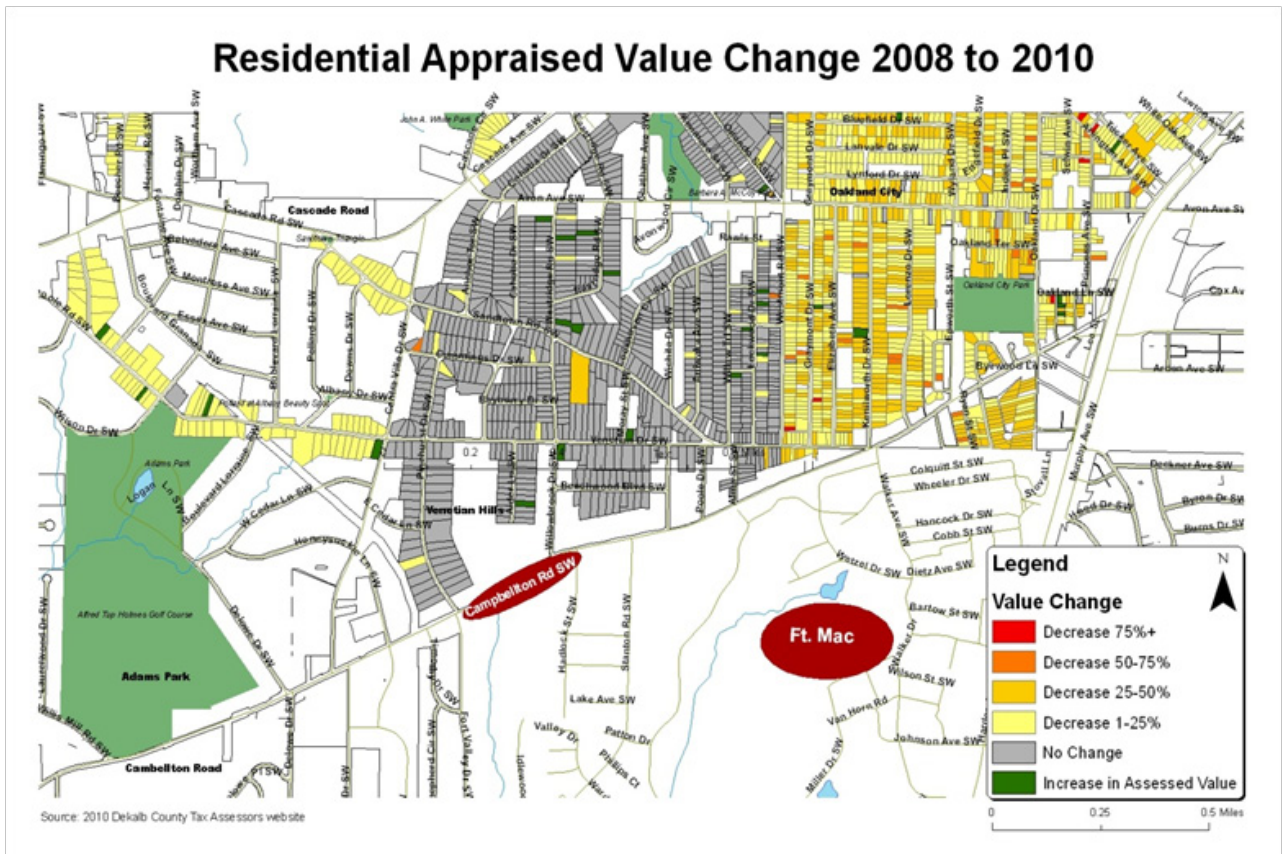
**Table E1.** Income Statistics



**Figure E1.** Map of population surrounding Fort McPherson that is below poverty Level



**Figure E3.** Assessed (by tax assessor) values as of 2008 show a mix of home values in the neighborhoods surrounding Ft. McPherson.

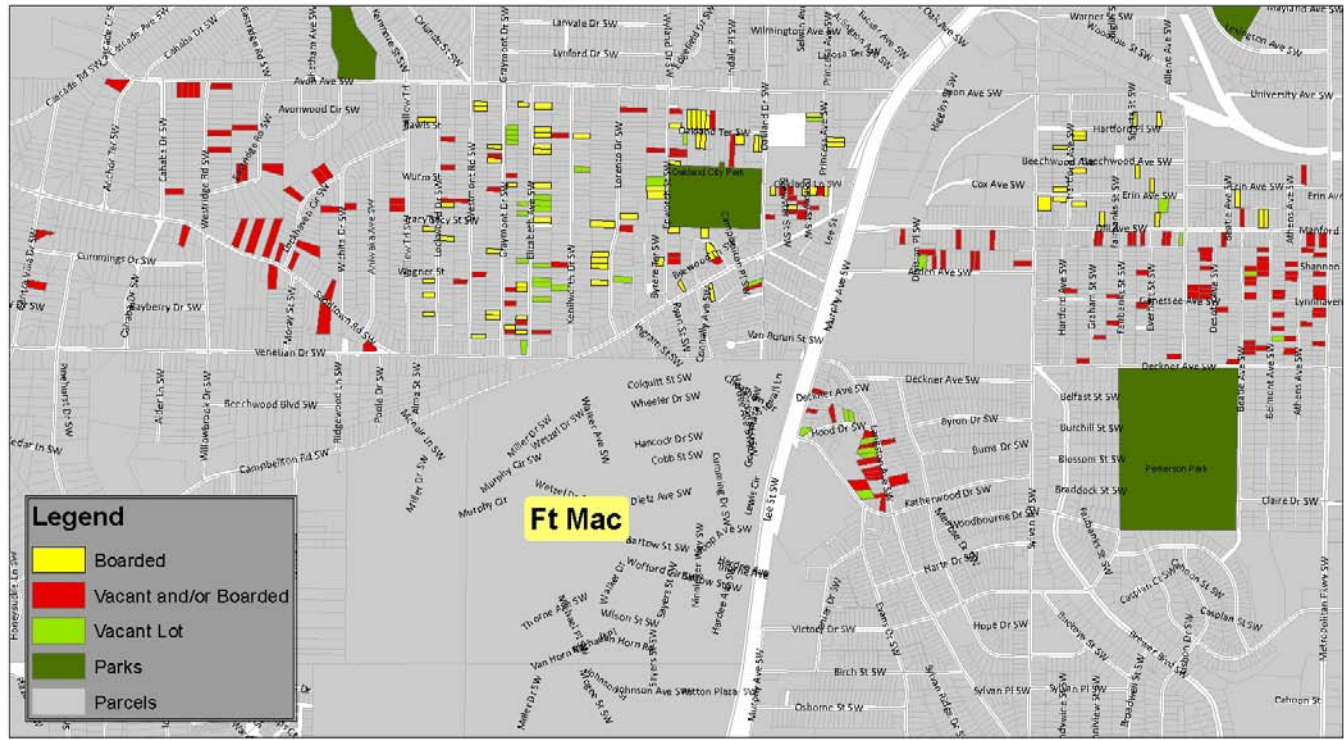


**Figure E4.** Changes in assessed value within several neighborhoods surrounding Ft. McPherson illustrate the value decline experienced by many in the Atlanta area since the economic downturn. Of note is the large area showing no change in assessed value. There could be several explanations for this inconsistency; however, market values of these properties would likely be comparable to the adjacent area that has been reassessed.



## Ft Mac Housing Inventory as of 12/2/2010

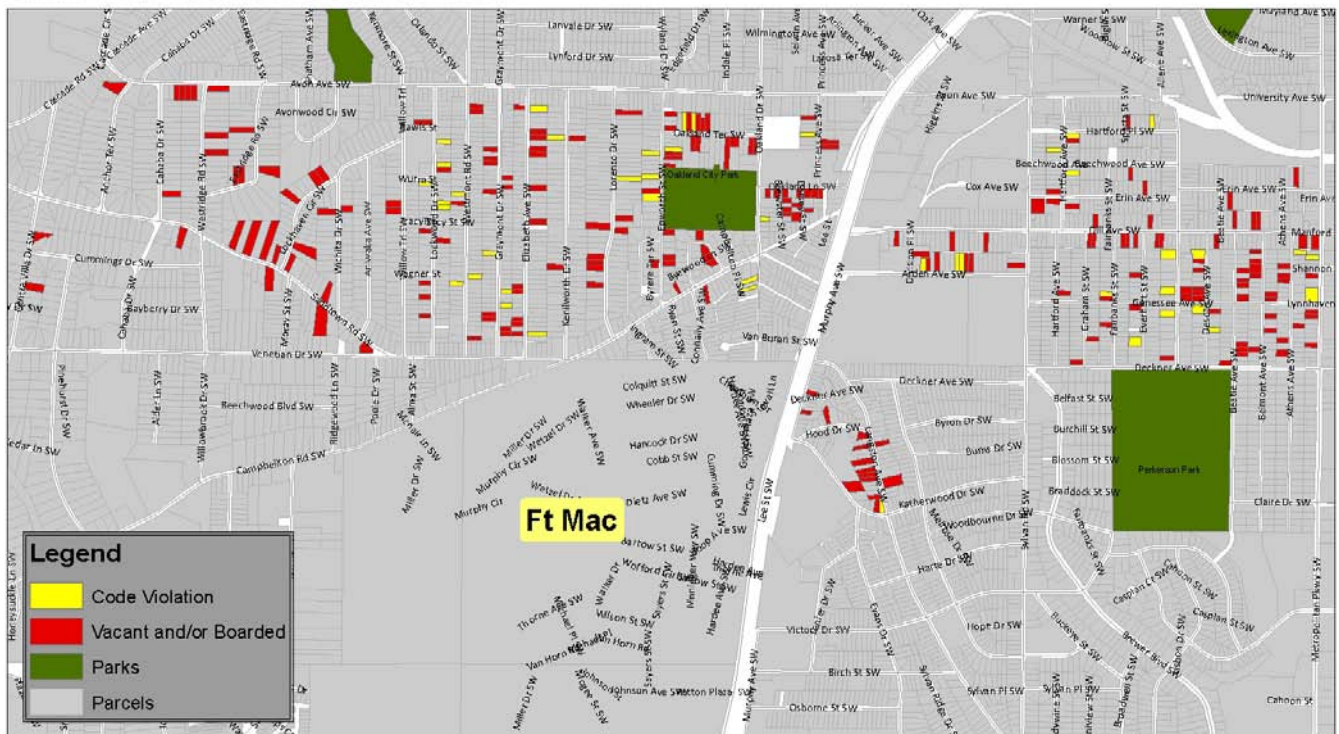
### Vacant and/or Boarded, Vacant Lots



**Figure E5.** This map illustrates the large proportion of distressed houses within these neighborhoods. Vacant lots are included to show their relationship to existing parcels in need of attention, perhaps as a component of improvement through community gardens. and approximately 43% have been vacant for at least 36 months. \* \*Using the following census tracts: 61, 62, 65, 66.01, 74, 75, 76.02, 77.01, 77.02 and 78.02.

## Ft Mac Housing Inventory as of 12/2/2010

### Vacant and/or Boarded & Code Violations

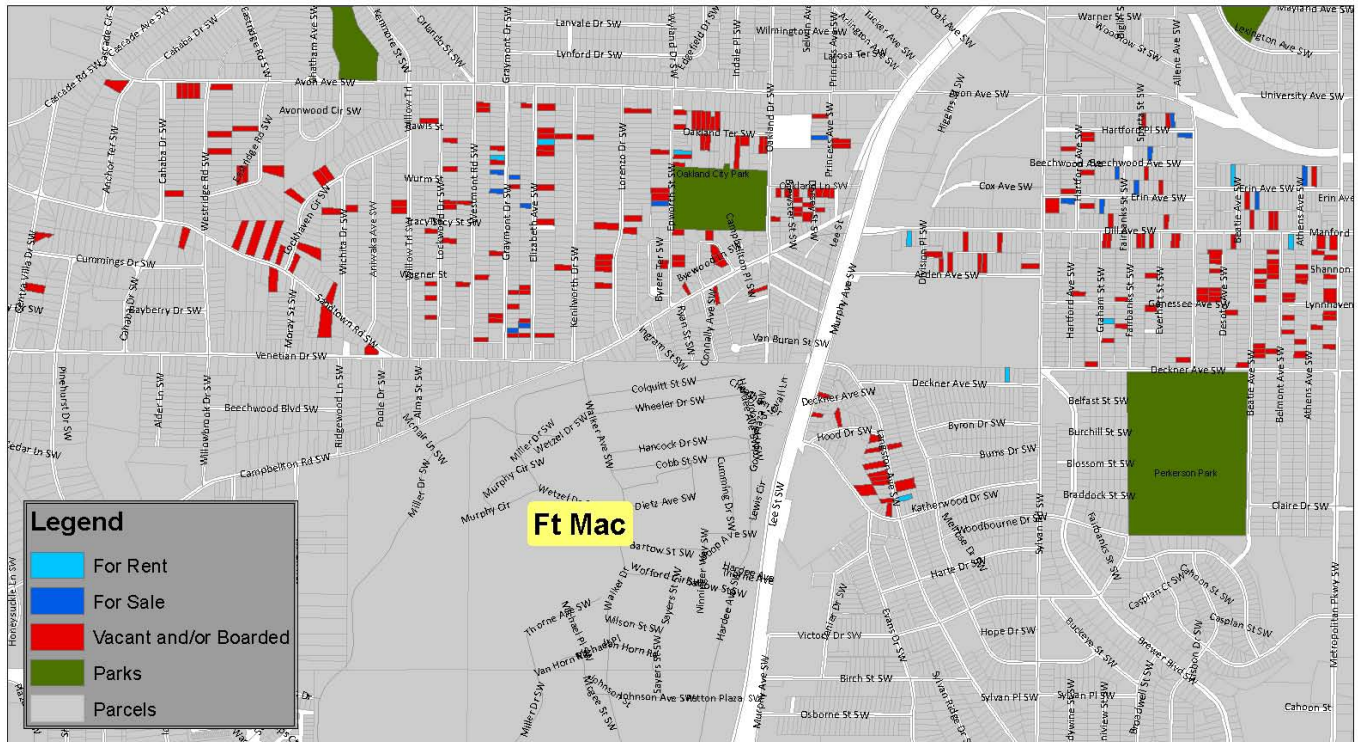


**Figure E6.** Code violations within the community are rampant due to the large number of abandoned properties. The City of Atlanta is in the process of focusing more attention on code enforcement; each NPU has recently been assigned to new code enforcement officers. However, staying on top of violators will continue to be a challenge.



# Ft Mac Housing Inventory as of 12/2/2010

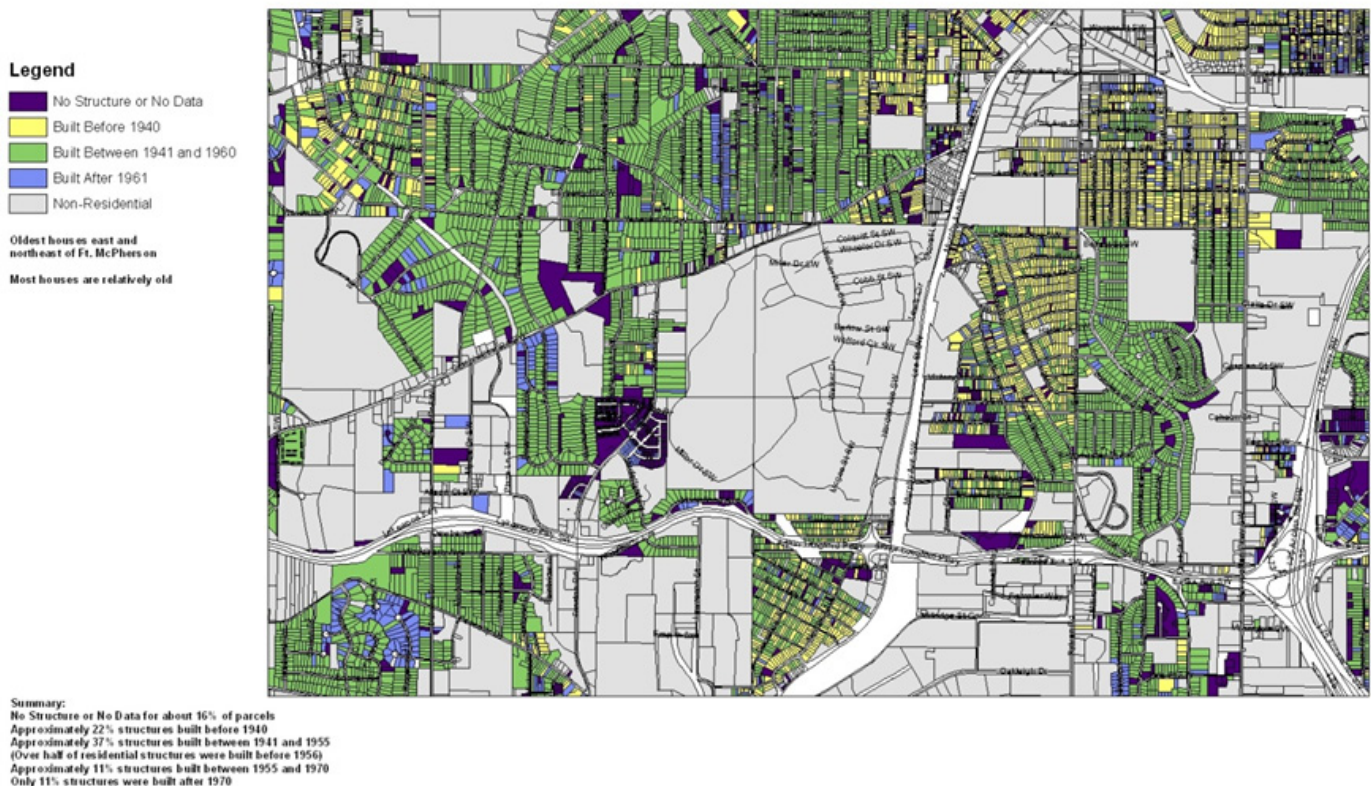
## Vacant and/or Boarded, For Sale & For Rent



\*Map should be used only for representation of distressed residential properties in the area.\*

**Figure E7.** Vacant, boarded and homes that are currently for sale or for rent are graphically combined here to illustrate the instability of housing within these neighborhoods. It simply serves as an additional layer to consider when formulating solutions for improvement.

## Age of Residential Structures



**Figure E8.** An interesting look at the age of houses in the neighborhoods surrounding Ft. McPherson. Many are post WWII construction, typical of the residential boom that began in the mid-1940's. These neighborhoods have a history of stability and possess great potential to return to that state.

In order to document the existing housing conditions in the surrounding communities, students teamed up with neighborhood and MACC leaders to conduct a comprehensive housing conditions windshield survey of the neighborhood. Using the on-the-ground data regarding vacancies and code violations, in conjunction with tax assessor data outlining property values and ownership, a series of maps were developed. More than 325 parcels within the surrounding Ft. McPherson neighborhoods are represented. A clear picture of the current crisis, in addition to opportunities, begins to emerge. Using the HUD Aggregated U.S. Postal Service vacancy rates, the 3rd Quarter 2010 residential vacancy rate is just over 11% for the surrounding area,

While there is a need for increased public and private investment in the neighborhood, there is a clear concern among residents that new development does not displace the current working and middle income residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. The redevelopment of Fort McPherson, and speculation in the real estate market as a result, have the potential to drive property values up and price people out of their communities. Residents want to be able to age in place, and for any new housing to address the current needs.

## Neighborhoods in the Balance:



**Figure E9.** The Big Squeeze

### Issues and Opportunities

The issues and opportunities have been organized into several different categories, with opportunities to address these areas of concern listed below.

#### ***Addressing Existing Housing Conditions:***

##### *Code Enforcement*

- New city administration has prioritized code enforcement and hired new code enforcement officer for each Neighborhood Planning Unit

##### *Land Bank*

- Fulton County Land Bank Authority is proactively seeking out partners to identify, purchase and hold distressed properties for affordable disposition in the future

## ***Meeting Housing Needs:***

### ***Aging In Place***

- The Lily R. Campbellton tenant association is currently working on purchasing their building, which would provide an opportunity to allow current residents to age in place.

### ***Housing For The Homeless***

- The Ft. McPherson redevelopment plan through the LRA must include provisions for housing for the homeless. The proposal is currently under review.

### ***Community Benefits***

- The Ft. McPherson redevelopment has a scope of work and responsibility that may extend beyond Ft. McPherson's boundaries. The review process, zoning decisions and other city processes related to the redevelopment plan is an opportunity to require the LRA to include provisions for stabilizing the housing situation in surrounding communities. The successful negotiations between the city, community groups, and the BeltLine Partnership—which among other provisions required the BeltLine Partnership to create an Affordable Housing Trust Fund—are a good example of possible community benefits.

## ***Creating Long-Term Stable Neighborhoods:***

### ***Community Land Trust***

- The new Atlanta Land Trust Collaborative is available to provide technical assistance to communities interested in creating their own Community Land Trust to create and maintain permanently affordable quality housing.

### ***Funding Opportunities***

- There are Enterprise Community Fund, Atlanta Housing Authority CHDO and HOME Loans, and Neighborhood Stabilization (NSP) Program funds available to support housing-related work.

## **Alternatives and Priorities**

On October 15, 2010 and November 13, 2010, MACC and Georgia STAND-UP held community meetings in which the several groups, based on topic area, convened to determine priorities and necessary actions for improving the communities surrounding the Fort McPherson redevelopment area. From these meetings, the following items were identified as priorities for improving housing in and around Fort McPherson:

1. Maintain housing affordability after Fort McPherson redevelopment
2. Stabilize the housing values in the surrounding area
3. Provide training and education on purchasing and renovating foreclosed and vacant homes
4. Set up a community land trust
5. Identify homes for redevelopment vs. homes for demolition
6. Develop a united Southwest front and organization (CLT/CHDO)
7. Investigate the potential for the Lilly R. Campbell House tenant association (current residents) to purchase their building

## ***Potential strategies to address existing housing conditions include:***

- Increased code enforcement targeted specifically towards investor and bank-owned vacant properties
- Collaboration with the Fulton County Land Bank Authority to 'bank' homes collected through code enforcement or other liens
- The creation of a Community Land Trust (with guidance and assistance from the Atlanta Community Land Trust Collaborative) to take control of vacant properties and create long-term affordable housing stock



- Weatherization and rehabilitation funds for elderly or vulnerable residents

**Strategies that would support the acquisition of abandoned and foreclosed homes and their subsequent renovation include:**

- Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds
- Enterprise Community Partners/Enterprise Green Communities Predevelopment and Acquisition Loans
- Atlanta Development Authority Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Loans



**Figure E10.** Atlanta Community Land Trust Coalition Structure.

Many of these strategies require organization, infrastructure, and technical expertise or assistance at the local level (such as the creation of a Community Development Corporation with CHDO status). The creation of this infrastructure and provision of technical assistance may be useful to include in a Community Benefits Agreement with the LRA for Ft. McPherson, in recognition of the reality that the redevelopment of the base will have a significant and long-lasting impact on the real estate market in the surrounding communities.

### Community Land Trusts

The Atlanta Community Land Trust Collaborative (ACLTC) officially opened its doors in 2010. Its establishment in Atlanta offers the neighborhoods surrounding Ft. McPherson a unique opportunity to address the challenge of strengthening local house values, yet maintaining long-term affordability for existing residents. The organization aims to guide communities in the planning, creation and management of individual community land trusts (CLTs). In addition, ACLTC will work to lay the foundation for a positive and supportive policy environment fostering the improvement of housing conditions similar to those found in the areas surrounding Ft. McPherson.

Most CLTs are crafted as independent not-for-profit corporations, and therefore seek 501 (c)(3) designation for tax-exempt status. However, the possibility exists for a CLT to be created as an affiliate of a currently established nonprofit. Community members discussed the possibility of an existing 501 (c)(3) serving as the launching point for a newly



created CLT.

A CLT's ultimate goal is to acquire and hold property (parcels/land) within specific neighborhoods. Existing, rehabilitated, or newly constructed buildings are sold to new owners, yet the CLT retains ownership of and leases the land beneath the structure. This model of redevelopment essentially removes parcels from the private, speculative market, ensuring a segment of affordable home prices within an appreciating area.

With this goal in mind, neighborhoods surrounding Ft. McPherson must first organize into a cohesive community. As of this writing, an initial meeting has taken place with the ACLTC Executive Director and several residents of the Ft. McPherson community.

### **Aging in Place**

The neighborhoods surrounding Fort McPherson have a large elderly population, many of whom have lived in the community for many years. These residents often wish to remain in their own houses or at least neighborhood as they age. Aging in place is additionally usually the most efficient solution for the rapidly growing elderly population in the nation. This issue is tied in with housing affordability, code enforcement, rehabilitation, and healthcare accessibility issues. Additionally the ability of residents to age in place is connected to the walkability of the neighborhood and ability of pedestrians to access grocery stores, restaurants, and other neighborhood amenities. Initiatives by residents to assist elderly portions of the community should be supported.

As an example the Lily R. Campbell House Tenants Association is organizing the residents with a goal of buying the building where the residents currently reside with the intention of ensuring permanent affordability. This type of initiative has been successfully applied in Beacon Hill Village in Boston as well as in several other elderly communities throughout the nation. Other models of Aging in Place include CoHousing, a collaborative type of housing in which residents actively participate in the design and operation of their communities, and models which are connected to construction in New Urbanist developments or universities. Additionally HUD has a program known as the Assisted Living Conversion Program which allocates funds for the conversion of eligible subsidized multifamily housing to be converted into an assisted living facility.

### **Homelessness – LRA Application/Reuse Plan for HUD Review**

The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (as amended through FY 05) requires that not later than 60 days after the date that the Secretary of Defense submits to HUD information as to any excess property, surplus property or unutilized or underutilized property on the base, the Secretary of HUD must identify properties suitable for assisting the homeless. On September 22, 2007, the Fort McPherson LRA submitted the Application/Reuse Plan for HUD review. The reuse plan proposed a scattered site strategy for a total of approximately 314 units of Homeless Assistance Transfer Sites to serve approximately 547 households. The reuse plan has not yet been approved by HUD, so at this point the current plan for providing homeless assistance remains to be seen.

### **Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs)**

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) were devised under the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 (NAHA) as part of the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) (HUD Notice CPD-97-11). "A CHDO is a private nonprofit, community-based service organization whose primary purpose is to provide and develop decent, affordable housing for the community it serves. Certified CHDOs receive certification from a PJ [participating jurisdiction] indicating that they meet certain HOME Program requirements and therefore are eligible for HOME funding" (HUD.gov).

### **Funding Sources**

#### *ADA CHDO Loans*

In order to develop more workforce housing in Atlanta, the City of Atlanta, Housing Authority, and Atlanta Development Authority partnered to produce \$75 million in Housing Opportunity Bonds. The first series of bonds (\$35 mil-

lion) closed in April of 2007. Qualified CHDOs may apply for loan funding to finance the acquisition, construction, and renovation of multifamily and single family housing for low and moderate income families.

*Important dates:* The organization must be designated as a CHDO by the City of Atlanta by January 1 of the year in which the CHDO loan is made.

For more information, see <http://www.atlantada.com/buildDev/CHDOLoans.jsp>

#### *Enterprise Community Loan Fund*

The Enterprise Community Loan Fund is a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) established in 1982 that has lent over \$1 billion to develop, renovate, and preserve low income housing in communities across the country. The following loan products are available: (a) predevelopment loans to finance pre-construction costs; (b) acquisition loans; (c) equity bridge loans to assist with low-income housing tax credit and historic tax credit projects; and (d) mini-permanent loans as interim capital for developers to acquire and hold housing properties or develop a long-term re-capitalization strategy. The primary markets for lending activity are New York; Baltimore; Washington, D.C.; San Francisco; Los Angeles; Ohio; the Gulf Coast and the Pacific Northwest (Enterprise Community Loan Fund Fact Sheet).

\*While Atlanta is not listed as a primary market area, there is a local Enterprise office and the importance of maintaining affordability in the area surrounding Fort McPherson, has the potential to make a case for providing funding in this area.

For more information, contact Noni Ramos, Chief Lending Officer (415) 395-0956 or Meaghan Shannon-Vlkovic, Director, Relationship Management – Southeast (404) 523-6060 ext. 12.

### Balanced, Healthy Neighborhoods are Possible



Figure E11. Balanced + Healthy Neighborhoods Diagram

### *Neighborhood Stabilization Program (Phase Three)*

In September 2010, the third phase of Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds (NSP3) was committed by HUD under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. As part of the funding, the City of Atlanta received approximately \$4.9 million, the State of Georgia received over \$18.5 million, and Fulton County received over \$3 million to continue efforts to acquire, renovate and resale foreclosed and vacant housing.

For more information, see [www.atlantaga.gov](http://www.atlantaga.gov); Valerie Fountaine, City of Atlanta, NSP Program Manager (404) 330-6595.

## **Recommendations and Organizational Resources**

### **Recommendations/Actions**

#### *Short-Term Actions*

- Meet with community development professionals and experienced organizations to determine their interest in purchasing and renovating homes in the community as an interim action until an organization is developed in the area to take on these duties;
- Conduct a meeting with representatives from surrounding neighborhood associations to determine the level of interest and feasibility of developing a community land trust;
- Attend ongoing trainings (i.e. locally or via web).

#### *Interim Actions*

- Conduct a housing strategy meeting to determine the strengths and weaknesses of creating a Southwest-wide CHDO and community land trust
- Attend ongoing training

#### *Long-Term Actions*

- Organize a Southwest-wide CHDO
- Organize a Southwest-wide community land trust
- Develop or hire from a workforce training program for renovating purchased homes
- Develop or hire from a workforce training program for weatherization of existing homes
- Continue to receive training on community land trust and CHDO best practices and organizational issues
- Identify employment needs as a result of housing activity (i.e. construction, administrative, professional) and commit to efforts to local hiring
- Develop, or partner with an organization, to provide workforce training for local residents
- Conduct a door to door survey after organizational structure is developed to inform the community of the new organization and to stay abreast of housing conditions in the area (similar to that of Venetian Hills)

## **Organizational Tools: Resources**

### *CHDO Eligibility Requirements*

Qualifying organizations may apply through the City of Atlanta by meeting 3 requirements (see [www.atlantaga.gov](http://www.atlantaga.gov)):

- (1) Legal Status
  - a. Organized under state or local law as a nonprofit organization with tax-exempt status under 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4) or Section 905 status;
    - i. In addition, the organization must have a clearly defined geographical area in which it works.

- (2) Board Organizational Structure:
  - a. At least 1/3 of the board must be from the low-income community
  - b. No more than 1/3 of the board can be from the public sector
  - c. No public or for profit entity control
- (3) Experience & Capacity
  - a. The CHDO must be able to demonstrate at least one year of service to the community in which it intends to purchase HOME assisted housing
  - b. CHDO qualified staff must:
    - i. Be experienced in completing projects similar to those proposed by the CHDO; or
    - ii. Hire an experienced consultant to assist with CHDO projects and provide training to less experienced staff.

### *Aging in Place Resources*

[www.aginginplace.com](http://www.aginginplace.com)

Neighborworks Report on Aging in Place - [http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/seniors/lawler\\_w01-13.pdf](http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/seniors/lawler_w01-13.pdf)

HUD Assisted Living Conversion Program -

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/alcp/alcphome.cfm>

Aging Resources from the Atlanta Regional Commission -

<http://www.atlantaregional.com/aging-resources>



# Environment

## Introduction

The neighborhoods surrounding Ft. McPherson currently enjoy access to some greenspaces such as Oakland City Park, the Outdoor Activity Center, and others. These areas also have large amounts of tree cover relative to other communities within Metro Atlanta, which provide benefits both environmental and aesthetic. Touring the community one can feel a connection to nature and the environment provided by the tree cover, parks, and even some streams that is not always felt in other communities throughout the City of Atlanta.



**Figure F1.** Picture of a topographic model showing streams and other features on and around Ft. McPherson.

Aside from the greenspaces and other natural features within the community, Ft. McPherson is also home to ample amounts of these amenities by way of several waterbodies (streams and ponds), trails that meander through a small forest, a golf course, gardens, and other features. While residents and visitors of Ft. McPherson are able to enjoy these, residents of the surrounding communities are blocked from access by a wall and gates.

Based on community feedback gathered as part of the Fall-2009 and Fall-2010 GA Tech Studios, one of the major desires of the community is to have any development and redevelopment occurring on Ft. McPherson's campus and the surrounding neighborhoods is for the work to be based on more environmentally sound principles. Another important piece of feedback is to increase the amount of greenspace, enhance existing greenspaces, and to increase the connectivity to the base as well as other amenities throughout the community using a system of pedestrian and bicycle friendly greenways. All of the proposed actions and programs attempt to direct community driven redevelopment in two directions; 1) to integrate Ft. McPherson and its amenities as part of the community in an environmentally sound and sustainable way rather than keeping them separate and 2) using Ft. McPherson as a model for sustainable redevelopment by using more environmentally sound development and redevelopment principles and techniques.

Beyond these overall framework issues, the communities guided the student team to investigate and propose strategies for more specific issues and opportunities. These include:

- Measures and criteria to include in assessing environmentally responsible deconstruction, development, and redevelopment
- A special focus on the merits and potentials for Oakland City Park and its projected Rev. James Orange Center, that include possible expansion by buying abandoned, blighted housing, an urban agriculture initiative, and developing better connectivity to both the Base and to the communities around
- A connectivity analysis and strategy that seeks to establish both pedestrian and green and creek systems into a single framework for guiding long term connectivity results
- A stormwater analysis and action strategy
- An urban agriculture initiative for Arkwright School
- A Brownfield remediation strategy that taps the effort and the wisdom of the Restoration Advisory Board, set up in 2005 by the army to oversee issues related to the Base closing, which this report proposes be joined with the newly formed City oversight committee to guide the study funded by the recently awarded EPA/HUD Brownfield grant to the City, again to foster collaborative and integrated effort

### **Opportunities**

This section of the report attempts to take the community's feedback, needs, and desires and work them into various projects, programs, and future attributes to make Ft. McPherson and the surrounding communities into a model for environmentally responsible development and redevelopment. This section will use the information gathered to make recommendations and provide lists of: contacts, potential implementation resources, and possible action items to help make the desires, within the environmental context, of the community reality. In addition, there is also a section under each heading, if appropriate, that lists potential jobs and training that could be associated with these project and programs. As much as possible, each potential job listed will fall into the category of "green jobs" or community driven jobs such as after-care.

The focus of this section will be on the following programs and elements to further the community's environmental goals: Oakland City Park, Urban Agriculture, Stormwater Management, Brownfield Remediation, Connectivity, and Environmentally Responsible Design. The end of this section highlights some of the resources available to support these goals and programs.

### **Oakland City Park**

Oakland City Park is a well-used and popular park within the communities adjacent to it. It currently has pavilions, a recreation center, a pool, playground, tennis courts, baseball field, basketball court, and general open space for the resident to enjoy. While these facilities are utilized and enjoyed by the community, many of them are showing signs of aging and use and could use some rehabilitation and redevelopment. Using the community's love of their park and desire to see improvements could serve well in using the park as an area for piloting many of the suggestions for making the community more environmentally sustainable and at the same time reinvent the park in a way that provides even more benefits and opportunities for community enjoyment.

The idea of using this park as a pilot project area to address some of the desires captured during the 2009 Studio has the opportunity to dovetail with Mayor Reed's proposal of using community rec. centers as "Center's of Hope." Given there is little on the table in terms of action on this goal, the community may be in a position to influence what a Center of Hope looks like and, as mentioned above, show the leaders and development community that they want to and are committed to participating in any type of planning and implementation process.

Located just to the north of Ft. McPherson, Oakland City Park has been identified as a community resource in need of attention. As discussed above, this area could serve as a great catalyst to not only get the community involved and committed to revitalizing their neighborhoods, but also to giving Mayor Reed's "Centers of Hope" idea some detail and direc-

tion. Listed are some of the proposed initiatives and elements that could be included in revitalizing the parks city-wide. If implemented, over-time these elements could be considered for inclusion in the redevelopment plan of Ft. McPherson.

1. Urban Agriculture
  - a. Designate small portion of the park a community garden
  - b. Partner with some existing organization to bring a farmers market to the park
  - c. Explore multiple funding options to finance and use portion of sales of food to fund upkeep and maintenance of garden
  - d. Use community workdays to maintain garden as well
2. Tree Canopy
  - a. Ensure current tree cover is maintained
  - b. Increase through addition plantings where possible
3. Connectivity
  - a. Locate areas where sidewalks and bike paths can be established or improved
  - b. Look for ways to connect park to the base
  - c. Use abandon lots as means of neighborhood and green-space connectivity
  - d. Use park as a way of incorporating Ft. McPherson back into the community
4. Natural Playground
  - a. Plan an area where children from the community can play and learn in a natural setting that is commonly lacking from most urban youth. Learning and playing in a natural setting deepens a sense of appreciation for environmental stewardship
  - b. Use more natural structures to encourage child activity (boulders, etc.)
  - c. Use GIS analysis to determine ideal location(s)
  - d. Incorporate community participation particularly child input
5. Stormwater Management
  - a. Install “green” practices for managing stormwater (i.e. more natural management practices that will be functional and aesthetically pleasing)
  - b. Capture rainwater from the building(s) to provide water for garden
  - c. Remove non-native vegetation and establish drought-tolerant native vegetation
  - d. Use porous materials for parking areas to encourage more infiltration of stormwater
6. Building / Site Renovation
  - a. Renovate existing buildings to meet LEED or other “green” standards
  - b. Work to achieve to stormwater management standards for federal facilities (i.e. plan for the 95% storm event)
  - c. Incorporate low-impact development elements
7. Community Programs
  - a. Work with various organizations to organize park, neighborhood, stream, and other types of clean-ups
    - i. Invite City officials, council members, and LRA members to participate
  - b. Establish after-school, environmental education programs for local school children.
  - c. Create opportunities for senior activities such as exercise classes, gardening, and other activities to engage seniors in the community and outdoors

This is an initial list of elements that could be used to establish Oakland City Park as model for other parks as well as the types of feature that could work within a redeveloped Ft. McPherson. The Community Action activities will not only serve to engage the communities, but also have the potential to foster a more collaborative relationship between the LRA, city, county, and other and the surrounding communities with MACC serving as the lead for the community.

The redeveloping of Oakland City Park and its related elements can occur at a timeframe dictated by the community and as resources allow.

#### Recommended Contacts:

- Park Pride
- City of Atlanta – Parks
- Atlanta Public Schools
- Boys & Girls Club
- Appropriate NPU - Chairs

#### Possible Action Items:

- Work with Park Pride to form a “Friends of Oakland City Park” group
- Determine which improvements and programs need highest priority

#### Potential Jobs / Training:

- Sustainable Landscaping
- Urban Farming
- Weatherization
- Sustainable Retro-fits for buildings
- Child-care / After – care
- Grounds Maintenance

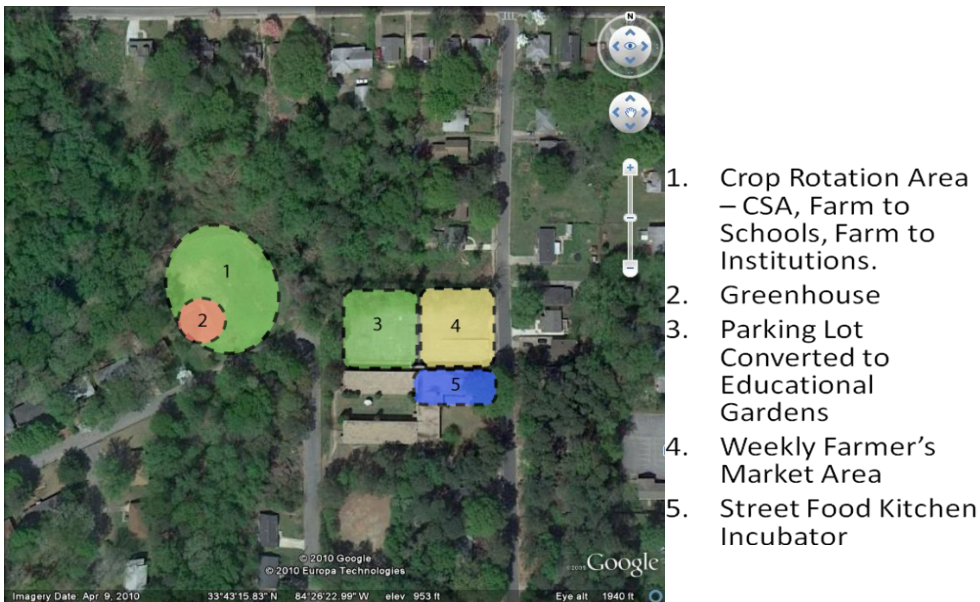
### **Urban Agriculture**

Aside from Oakland City Park, additional opportunities exist within the community to develop urban agricultural programs. These programs could provide locally grown foods for school, churches, and residents within the community. Along with generating a food source, urban agricultural programs could also serve as an economic generator by allowing for the formation of farmer’s market and food co-ops. Many examples of urban agriculture projects can be found through the Atlanta area at places such as Coan Middle School, Decatur High School, Gaia Gardens in East Atlanta, Cabagetown, and others. Multiple opportunities for urban agricultural programs exist throughout the community in places such as Ft. McPherson, Vacant lots, and Arkwright School.



**Figure F2.** Decatur High School Community Garden, Decatur GA





**Figure F3.** One possible scenario using Arkwright School for urban agricultural programs.

Currently, there are lots of resources available to make these kinds of programs a reality. Georgia Organics, Wholesome Waves, Georgia's Resource Conservation and Development Councils (RC&Ds), and the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service (Cooperative Extension) are just a few of the resources available to assist in developing urban agriculture and related programs. Along with some of the potential programs mentioned above, those and additional programs that could compliment urban agricultural programs are:

- Farm to School programs
- Local Farmers Markets
- School programs
- Street Food Incubator

Not only could these sites grow food, but they could also be used to grow various types of flowers or other aesthetically please plants for use around the neighborhood. This could provide another means of these project being self sustaining and creating additional economic benefits and job opportunities for residents within the community.

Along with growing food and providing food, programs exist (primarily through Wholesome Waves) that allow WIC and Food Stamps to be used to purchase local, fresh foods at farmers markets. This program is currently active in East Atlanta, Athens, and Decatur Farmers Market to name a few in Georgia. This program could provide access to fresh food to even more residents rather than relying on convenience stores or other places that do not provide the kinds of foods the community wants or deserves.

#### Recommended Contacts:

- Atlanta Community Food Bank
- Georgia Organics
- Park Pride
- Atlanta Street Food Coalition
- Center for Innovation for Agribusiness
- Emory University Sustainable Initiatives
- Georgia Organics
- Wholesome Waves
- Georgia's RC&D Councils
- UGA Cooperative Extension Service

- LRA
- City of Atlanta – Planning
- Atlanta Public Schools
- NPU – Chairs
- Master Gardener Programs
- Truly Living Well

Potential Actions Items:

- Form local committee to further explore urban agriculture potential
- Work with contacts to organize a plan for agricultural programs

Potential Jobs / Training:

- Horticulture
- Urban Farming
- Street Food vendor
- Food Supplier to restaurants / schools

### **Stormwater Management Tools**

Stormwater management is a problem that exists throughout the Atlanta Metro Area and other highly urbanized areas. Increases in impervious cover, development, and aging infrastructure all contribute to the problem. Stormwater that is not properly handled can cause localized flooding, water quality problems, create community eye-sores and other problems. Traditional methods of stormwater management often times prove inadequate, costly, and unsightly. Given this and the community's desire for a more sustainable home, Ft. McPherson and the surrounding areas provide many opportunities to address stormwater using some of the latest and most environmentally sound tools for stormwater management.

Many of these tools have additional benefits such as flood control, water storage, and aesthetic benefits. Below is a short list of some of the most common and widely use types of stormwater management tools. Each tool listed has a short description and potential timeline for implementation. Timelines are defined as: Short (0-3 years), Intermediate (4-9 years), and Long (10+ years). Some management tools may fit into multiple time frames dependent on where they are implemented first (i.e. on-base might take longer than other places in the community).

- Establish highest priority area within the community to develop a pilot project
- Rain barrels
  - Provide water for gardens / urban agricultural projects
  - Capture runoff from roofs and saves money by not using municipal water
  - A community group could make and sell rain barrels to help fund local projects
  - Timeline - Short



**Figures E4+E5.** Examples of rain barrels capturing storm water runoff.

- Rain garden(s)
  - Allow for slowing, filtering, and infiltrating of stormwater
  - Create aesthetically pleasing features
  - Provides habitat for animals such as birds, butterflies, dragonflies, and others
  - Timeline – Short, Intermediate, Long



**Figures E6+E7.** Examples of rain gardens.



- Permeable paving
  - Reduce impervious footprint of site
  - Allow for filtering of parking lot run off
  - Can help reduce localized flooding and standing water
  - Timeline – Intermediate, Long



**Figures F8 F9 + F10.** Examples of permeable paving.

- Bio-swales
  - Allow for slowing, filtering, and infiltrating of stormwater
  - Create aesthetically pleasing features throughout park
  - Channel water towards urban gardens for irrigation
  - Less expensive than traditional curb & gutter
  - Timeline – Short, Intermediate, Long



**Figures F11 + F12.** Examples of Bioswale.

These are just a few of the many different stormwater management tools available. There are also many different potential sources of funding to help implement these practices. These tools, as well as others, fall into the broader category of low-impact development (LID), which could be required under a Community Benefits Agreement, SPI zoning, or zoning overlay (for more information on these, see the Land-Use & Zoning Section).



### Potential Priority Areas for Stormwater Management

Based on community feedback, there are several areas within the neighborhoods, as well as, on Ft. McPherson that should be considered as priorities for receiving stormwater treatments. The areas and suggested management practices (where appropriate) are:

- Avon Ave. (West of Lee St.)
- Ft. McPherson – restore stream currently piped under golf course
- Oakland City Park – adjacent to Recreation Center

Additional areas and appropriate management practices should be determined using community input and appropriate technical assistance. This will provide for better decision making and ensure the proper tools are implemented to address stormwater management issues.

### Contacts:

- City of Atlanta – Watershed Department
- City of Atlanta – Mayor’s Office of Sustainability
- West Atlanta Watershed Alliance (WAWA)

### Possible Action Items:

- Identify major priority areas in need of better stormwater management
- Meet with City officials to determine how best to address issues
- Work with WAWA to further explore options for stormwater management
- Work with WAWA to create a “community rain-barrel” program

### Potential Jobs / Training:

- Stormwater BMP design, construction, and maintenance
- Rain Barrel building
- Water Quality sampling
- Stream restoration practices
- Low-Impact Development practices design, construction, and maintenance

### Brownfield Remediation

Ft. McPherson is currently undergoing environmental remediation at various locations around the base. This remediation is addressing issues such as soil and groundwater contamination, lead (from the firing range), dry cleaning contaminants, and other. This clean-up is being conducted as required by various Federal and State laws and is outlined in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared in 2008. Current remediation efforts being undertaken by the Army will continue beyond September 2011 until clean-up efforts satisfy all Federal and State requirements. Further remediation will be conducted as required by Federal and State laws as ownership is transferred to other public or private entities.

As a part of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), Ft. McPherson formed a Restoration Advisory Board (RAB). According to Ft. McPherson the RAB is “responsible for:

- Providing advice on environmental restoration issues to representatives from Fort McPherson and other regulatory agencies;
- Holding regular meetings, publicly announced and open to the public, at convenient times and locations;
- Reviewing, evaluating and commenting on environmental restoration documents;
- Identifying project requirements; and
- Recommending priorities among sites or projects.

RABs include members of the local community, Army personnel, state representatives, and employees from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. RABs are jointly co-chaired by an Army and a community representative. The com-

munity members of the RAB are asked to select the Community Co-Chair. RABs meet on a regular basis and meetings are open to the public. Public participation on the RAB is strictly voluntary. The Army does not provide any form of financial compensation to community members who elect to participate.” (Ft. McPherson, 2007)

Community members interested in remediation efforts on base should contact the RAB and attend their quarterly meetings to find out more about these on-going activities. Additional information about the RAB and related activities can be found at: <http://www.mcperson.army.mil/brac/default.htm>

#### Contacts:

- RAB
- LRA
- Garnett Brown. Bureau of Planning. City of Atlanta
- NPU – Chairs

#### Possible Next Steps:

- Enlist community members to attend RAB meetings
- Track remediation activities on base before and after closure
- Work with LRA to monitor remediation efforts by parties that purchase base property(ies)

#### Potential Jobs / Training:

- Materials recovery / recycling
- Environmental Sampling
- Environmental Remediation

### **Connectivity**

The community has been very vocal in wanting increased connectivity throughout the area, especially increased connection to the current parks, schools, Ft. McPherson, as well as MARTA. Much of the area has some sidewalks, in varying conditions, but they are not always extensive enough to allow for easy pedestrian travel. Likewise, streets are currently not entirely bicycle friendly and could be improved to accommodate such modes of travel.

An opportunity exists to connect the above mentioned locations using trails, sidewalks, and the like to create a system of “greenways”. These greenways could utilize existing infrastructure such as the network of sidewalks as well as the trail system that is currently located on Ft. McPherson as well as using vacant lots to expand this connectivity. This system of greenways would be characterized by tree lined paths open to only pedestrian, bicycle, and other non-motorized traffic. Along with using greenways to connect the community, another concept is to use a system of “blueways”.

Blueways are systems of streams that could allow the natural features of the neighborhoods and Ft. McPherson to be connected. Several streams exist within the area, though many are buried underground. By opening up or “daylighting” the streams and restoring them to a more natural state, it would create a more natural setting and, in conjunction with the greenways and greenspaces, encourage what one resident called an “Element of Exploration.” Restoring the streams



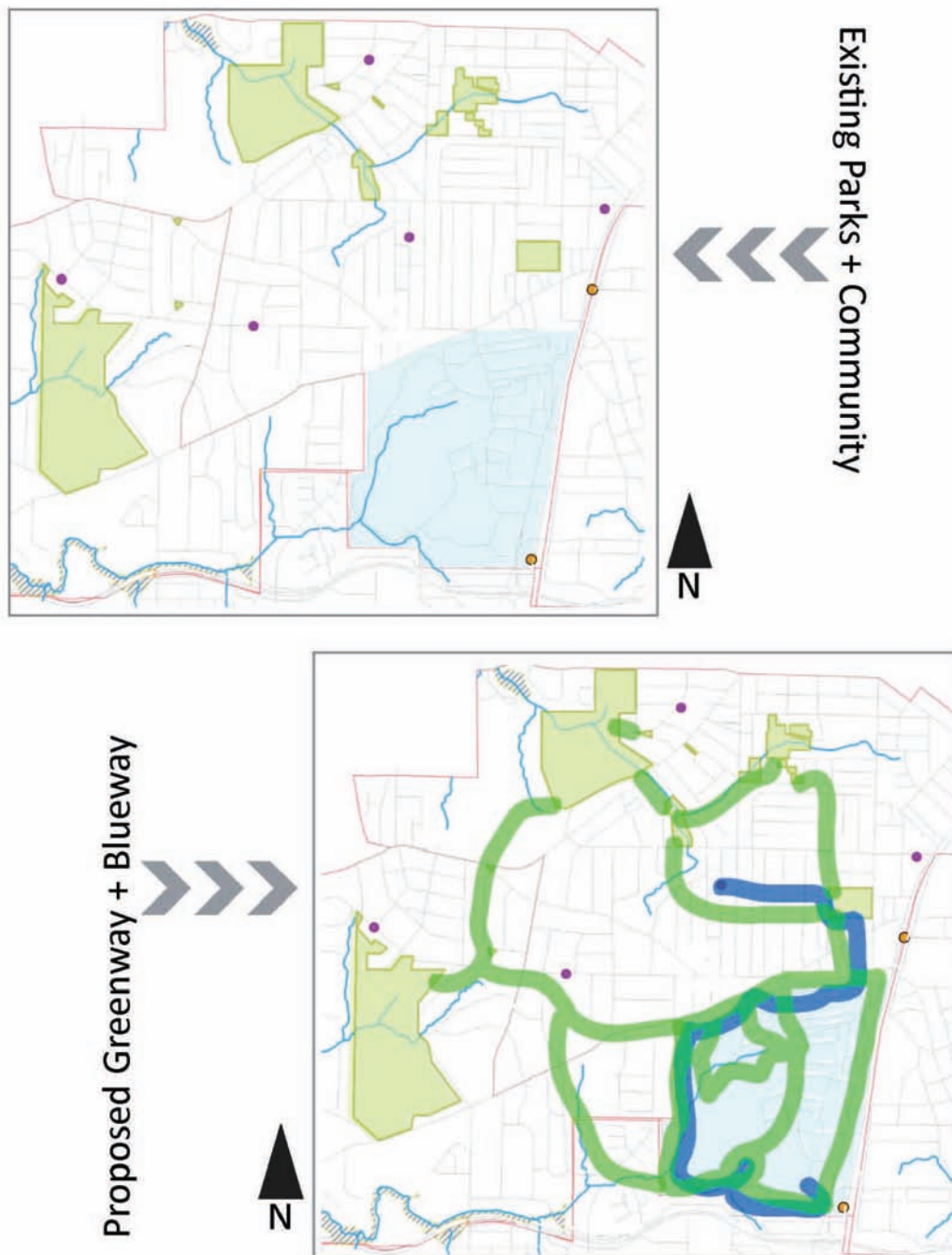
**Figure F13.** PATH Foundation trail through DeKalb County

could provide opportunities for recreation, education, and provide benefits such as water quality improvements, flood control, and others.



**Figures F14 + F15.** Candler Park (Atlanta) stream before (left) and after (right) stream restoration.

Using these less traditional methods of connectivity (i.e. motorized based) could make this community a model of what is possible when outside-the-box thinking is used. Increasing the community's access to MARTA, Ft. McPherson, and even other elements of the adjacent neighborhoods would encourage exercise, social interaction, and give the residents alternate means of getting around without the use of automobiles. The aforementioned "Element of Exploration" would encourage resident and visitors to use the natural elements of the community such as the forested areas, streams, and encourage preservation of tree cover and other existing greenspace components. Additional information on connectivity in and around Ft. McPherson and surrounding neighborhoods can be found within the transportation section of this report.



**Figures F16 + F17.** Maps of existing and proposed community parks and the connectivity between them.

These images depict the existing parks and streams on and around Fort McPherson + a proposed greenway (trails) and blueway (streams) connectivity map.

Contacts:

- PATH Foundation
- Atlanta Bicycle Coalition
- LRA
- City of Atlanta – Planning
- City of Atlanta – Watershed Management
- NPU – Chairs
- Park Pride



#### Possible Next Steps:

- Form committee to develop plan for connectivity
- Identify areas on base and around community to increase connectivity (i.e. sidewalks, vacant lots, parks, trails on base, etc.)
- Work with LRA and City to identify and prioritize streams for restoration

#### Potential Jobs / Training:

- Bicycle repair
- Trail design, construction, maintenance
- Environmental Restoration

### **Environmentally Responsible Development / Redevelopment**

As a result of Ft. McPherson's closure, the future developers, local governments, and community members have the opportunity to steer the base's and community's redevelopment to be conducted in a more environmentally responsible manner. Several model's of this type of redevelopment within Atlanta and around the country. Examples of a more environmentally sound redevelopment project within Atlanta are Glenwood Park and Atlantic Station.



**Figure F18 + F19.** Examples of environmentally responsible design projects: Glenwood Park (left) & Atlantic Station (right).

Using more environmentally sound practices could help address issues with water quality, air quality, energy consumption, water consumption, climate change, and others. The City of Atlanta has already shown a commitment to using these types of practices in ways such as: passing an ordinance “requiring all new and major renovated city financed construction projects (over 5,000 square feet or over \$2 million in cost) will at a minimum incorporate sustainable design criterion and the design and project management teams are required to meet LEED™ Silver-certified level”, and former Mayor Franklin's committing the city to fighting climate change by signing onto the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement in 2007.

Given the apparent level of interest in conducting development and redevelopment in a more environmentally responsible manner the community should consider working with the City of Atlanta, LRA, and other through Georgia Stand-Up and/or MACC to incorporate at minimum the following design principles as requirements for the redevelopment of Ft. McPherson:

- **Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED)** – According to the U.S. Green Building Council, the LEED rating system is designed to provide “third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance across all the metrics that matter most: energy savings, water efficiency, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stew-

ardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts. Developed by the [U.S. Green Building Council \(US-GBC\)](#), LEED provides building owners and operators a concise framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions. LEED is flexible enough to apply to all building types – commercial as well as residential. It works throughout the building lifecycle – design and construction, operations and maintenance, tenant fitout, and significant retrofit. And LEED for Neighborhood Development extends the benefits of LEED beyond the building footprint into the neighborhood it serves.”

- Low Impact Development (LID) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines LID as “LID is an approach to land development (or re-development) that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible. LID employs principles such as preserving and recreating natural landscape features, minimizing effective imperviousness to create functional and appealing site drainage that treat stormwater as a resource rather than a waste product. There are many practices that have been used to adhere to these principles such as bioretention facilities, rain gardens, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels, and permeable pavements. By implementing LID principles and practices, water can be managed in a way that reduces the impact of built areas and promotes the natural movement of water within an ecosystem or watershed. Applied on a broad scale, LID can maintain or restore a watershed’s hydrologic and ecological functions. LID has been characterized as a sustainable stormwater practice by the Water Environment Research Foundation and others. LID can be applied to new development, redevelopment, or as retrofits to existing development. LID has been adapted to a range of land uses from high density ultra-urban settings to low density development.”

LEED and LID principles are just two of the several types of frameworks that can guide development and redevelopment in being more sustainable and environmentally responsible. These types of requirements could be required by way of things like Community Benefits Agreements (CBA), Special Public Interest Zoning (SPI), Zoning Overlays, or others. More on the aforementioned tools (CBA, SPI, etc.) can be found in the Land Use & Zoning section of this report.

#### Contacts:

- City of Atlanta – Bureau of Planning
- City of Atlanta – Zoning Review Board
- LRA
- Georgia Stand-Up / MACC
- NPU – Chairs
- AFL – CIO

#### Possible Next Steps:

- Work with Georgia Stand-Up / MACC to convene a committee to work on requiring environmentally sound redevelopment practices into future work within the community
- Attend NPU and Zoning meetings as appropriate to determine best approach for incorporating these types of requirements
- Monitor zoning and Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) progress to make certain those elements desired by the community to ensure environmentally responsible redevelopment work are incorporated into those works

#### Potential Jobs / Training:

- LEED Certification
- Sustainable Building / Site Design
- Sustainable Construction
- Materials Recovery

#### Potential Resources for Implementation

Below are a few potential resources to aid in the community's implementation efforts. Unless noted, the information captured below is taken from the organization's website.

## FEDERAL

USEPA - Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) is a competitive grant program that offers an innovative way for a community to organize and take action to reduce toxic pollution in its local environment. Through CARE, a community creates a partnership that implements solutions to reduce releases of toxic pollutants and minimize people's exposure to them. By providing financial and technical assistance, EPA helps CARE communities get on the path to a renewed environment.

Website: <http://www.epa.gov/CARE/>

Application Deadline: 2011 – TBA (2010 was March 9, 2010)

Contact: 1-877-CARE 909

USEPA - EPA's Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. To facilitate the leveraging of public resources, EPA's Brownfields Program collaborates with other EPA programs, other federal partners, and state agencies to identify and make available resources that can be used for brownfields activities. In addition to direct brownfields funding, EPA also provides technical information on brownfields financing matters. Available funds include:

- Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program
- Assessment Grants
- Revolving Loan Fund Grants
- Job Training Grants
- Training, Research, and Technical Assistance Grants
- Targeted Brownfields Assessments
- Sustainability Pilots

Website: [http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/grant\\_info/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/grant_info/index.htm)

Application Deadline: 2011 – TBA (2010 was October 15, 2010)

Contact: Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (202) 566-2777

USEPA - Targeted Watersheds Grants Program, Established in 2003, the Targeted Watersheds Grant program is designed to encourage successful community-based approaches and management techniques to protect and restore the nation's watersheds.

Website: [http://water.epa.gov/grants\\_funding/twg/initiative\\_index.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/twg/initiative_index.cfm),

Application Deadline: 2011 – TBA (2010 was May, 6 2010)

Contact: Yvonne Smothers-Pressley, [Initiative.watershed@epa.gov](mailto:Initiative.watershed@epa.gov)

USDA – Community Food Projects, The CFP program is administered by the National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). It supports projects that:

- help meet the food needs of low-income people,
- increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs, and
- promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues, and/or...
- meet specific State, local, or neighborhood food and agriculture needs for infrastructure improvement and development, long-term planning, or the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

Funding preference is given to projects that develop linkages between two or more sectors of the food system, support the development of entrepreneurial projects, involve public and for-profit as well as nonprofit entities, and promote multi-system, interagency approaches with multi-stakeholder collaborations that build the long-term capacity of communities to address their food and agricultural problems.

Only private non-profit organizations are eligible to receive CFP funds directly, but collaborations with public and private, for-profit entities are recommended. Applications will be evaluated by reviewers from the food security community. Applicants may request up to \$300,000 for projects of up to three years' duration. CFP funds requested must be matched dollar for dollar with non-federal resources. Projects should be planned to use a one-time infusion of federal funds to become self-sustaining.

Website: [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/in\\_focus/hunger\\_if\\_competitive.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/in_focus/hunger_if_competitive.html)

Application Deadline: Unknown

Contact: Jennifer Martin, CSREES Staff, (202) 720-8188

## STATE

GAEPD – Section 319(h) Grants provide funds to eligible entities to address water quality related to nonpoint source issues. Eligible activities include watershed plan development and restoration, stream restoration, watershed improvements, education / outreach, and others. Grant provides 60% of total project costs with a 40% local match required. Applicants must be a governmental entity, but are encouraged to partner with non-profits, community groups, and others.

Website: [http://www.gaepd.org/Documents/epdforms\\_wpb.html#nps](http://www.gaepd.org/Documents/epdforms_wpb.html#nps)

Application Deadline: 2011 – TBA, (2010 is November 30, 2010)

Contact: Julie Montainge, 404-675-6242

GEFA – Georgia Land Conservation Program, The Georgia Land Conservation Program (GLCP) works to preserve a statewide network of land and water resources for current and future generations to use and enjoy. The GLCP promotes partnerships between cities and counties in Georgia, state and federal agencies, landowners, and other private sector partners to protect the state's valuable natural resources.

The GLCP provides a flexible framework and land conservation funding options including grants, low interest loans, and tax incentives which augment local, state, and federal funding sources to achieve the permanent conservation of land through the acquisition of conservation easements and fee simple ownership.

Website: <http://glcp.georgia.gov/02/glcp/home/0,2682,82613131,00.html>

Application Deadline: On-going

Contact: Andrew Szwak, 404-584-1035

GDOT - Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Program, The LMIG program is intended to provide more flexibility and can be used for a variety of transportation improvement projects, including patching, widening, turn lanes, rehabilitation, intersections, traffic signals, safety upgrades, culvert/bridge repair and sidewalk/bike lane improvements that are within the roadway right of way. Parking lots are an eligible project, but priority will be given to road and bridge projects.

Website: <http://www.dot.state.ga.us/localgovernment/FundingPrograms/LMIG/Pages/default.aspx>

Application Deadline: 2011 – April 30, 2011

Contact: Office of Local Grants, 404-347-0240

Georgia Organics - Georgia Organics is a member supported, non-profit organization integrating healthy, sustainable and locally grown food into the lives of all Georgians. They believe food should be community-based, not commodity-based. That means more access to fresh healthy food, environment stewardship, and stronger local economies.

Website: <http://www.georgiaorganics.org/home.aspx>

Application Deadline: N/A

Contact: 678.702.0400

## LOCAL

Southface - For more than 30 years, Southface has promoted comfortable, energy-, water-, and resource-efficient homes, workplaces and communities throughout the Southeast. Today, we continue this important mission through the



example of our award-winning Eco Office, a building that uses 84 percent less water and 53 percent less energy than comparably sized conventional commercial facilities; through our Resource Center, which showcases more than 100 residential green building innovations; and through our education programs, hands-on technical assistance, advocacy and research work. Southface believes the marketplace is the greatest force for environmental change. As a result, we focus on entrepreneurial initiatives that benefit the environment. We are proud to partner extensively with business, government and community leaders to deliver programs and services that support environmentally sound building practices.

Website: <http://www.southface.org/>

Application Deadline: N/A

Contact: 404-872-3549

**Park Pride** – This local non-profit offers technical and financial resources to help communities improve their local parks through master planning and implementation assistance. Access to these resources may require establishing a “Friends of the Park” group.

Website: <http://www.parkpride.org/>

Application Deadline: N/A

Contact: Friends of the Park – Ayanna, 404-723-3116 or [ayanna@parkpride.org](mailto:ayanna@parkpride.org)

Funding - Allison Barnett, (404) 546-6760 or [allison@parkpride.org](mailto:allison@parkpride.org)

**Truly Living Well** - Truly Living Well (TLW) traces its roots to founder Rashid Nuri’s undergraduate years at Harvard College. At that time, his future in laws introduced him to Wilson’s, a full working farm in the middle of a Boston suburb. Since its founding in 1884, Wilson’s high quality food has always been just one part of a larger social and educational experience. Wilson’s continues to be a focal point of the community and was an inspiration for Rashid’s career in agriculture.

After 40 years of learning how food is produced and distributed in more than 35 countries, Rashid’s thinking came full circle with the founding of TLW.

Rashid has identified three high priority needs:

1. A return to natural and sustainable production methods that deliver higher quality, food enhance the environment and improve human health.
2. A return of food as a central focus in family and community life. For most of human history, food was produced within walking distance of where it was consumed, resulting in a direct connection between man, land and his food.
3. Development of infrastructure to support the growth of local food production and distribution.

TLW’s vision is to use quality local food production as a platform to provide a range of educational and entertainment activities. This will return a measure of enjoyment and community involvement to the production and consumption of food.

Since its launch in 2006, Truly Living Well has grown approximately 10,000 pounds of food annually on small plots of donated land within the City of Atlanta. The Company has developed strong support among consumers, institutions and community advocates not only for its vision, but most satisfyingly for the superior quality of its food.

Website: <http://www.trulylivingwell.com/>

Application Deadline: N/A

Contact: Rashid Nuri, 404.520.8331

**Local Universities** – Provide technical assistance and capacity building support on a wide array of programs and activities within the community.

- GA Tech – Plan and implementation strategy development
- Georgia State University - Health impact assessment and implementation
- Atlanta University Center – Community engagement and support
- Atlanta Metro College and Atlanta Tech – Provide partnerships for job training and local education enhancement

## OTHER

**The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** – The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and the prevention of child abuse, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties.

Established in 1996, the foundation supports four national grantmaking programs. It also supports three properties that were owned by Doris Duke in Hillsborough, New Jersey; Honolulu, Hawaii; and Newport, Rhode Island. The foundation is headquartered in New York and is governed by a board of 11 Trustees.

The DDCF's activities are guided by the will of Doris Duke, who endowed the foundation with financial assets that totaled approximately \$1.5 billion as of December 31, 2009. The foundation regularly evaluates and modifies its allocation of resources from the endowment to support the programs and properties and to respond to fluctuations in portfolio returns.

Website: <http://www.ddcf.org/Environment/>

Application Deadline: N/A

Contact: DDCF Headquarters & Grantmaking Programs, 212-974-7000

**The Coca-Cola Company** – Through the company as well as the Coca-Cola Foundation, Coca-Cola provides multiple opportunities for acquiring resources focused on community development and engagement.

Website: [http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com/citizenship/our\\_communities.html](http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com/citizenship/our_communities.html)

Application Deadline: On-going

Contact: Unknown

**Foundation Center** - Established in 1956 and today supported by close to 550 foundations, the Foundation Center is a national nonprofit service organization recognized as the nation's leading authority on organized philanthropy, connecting nonprofits and the grantmakers supporting them to tools they can use and information they can trust. Its audiences include grantseekers, grantmakers, researchers, policymakers, the media, and the general public. The Center maintains the most comprehensive database on U.S. grantmakers and their grants; issues a wide variety of print, electronic, and online information resources; conducts and publishes research on trends in foundation growth, giving, and practice; and offers an array of free and affordable educational programs.

Website: <http://foundationcenter.org/atlanta/> (Atlanta Office)

Application Deadline: N/A

Contact: 404-880-0094

**Arthur Blank Family Foundation** - Their mission is to promote positive change in people's lives and to build and enhance the communities in which they live. The Foundation has an especially strong interest in supporting innovative endeavors leading to better circumstances for low-income youth and their families. How can they help create positive and lasting change? Where can they most effectively invest our resources — and ourselves — to increase access to opportunity, build community, and connect with others to help create the change we seek?

Website: <http://www.blankfoundation.org/index.html>

Application Deadline: N/A

Contact: 404-367-2044

# Education, History & Culture

## I. Introduction

Throughout the community engagement process, issues of education, history, and culture represented an undercurrent of concern. There is a lot of pride and a lot of accomplishment in these communities often not recognized or appreciated by the usual forces that drive urban development and redevelopment. For example, residents of Oakland City took pains to get their neighborhood listed as a Historic District. The Base itself has an interesting history of interaction with the communities and with Atlanta. Its buildings and recreational facilities offer the potential to mark these relationships and to enrich both the quality of public education and cultural offerings.

## II. Education

### a. *Improving the education system for the children and retraining programs for adults are key focus areas for the community and the studio.*

Focusing on education and is important factor in community redevelopment but also in attracting new residents and new business. The closing of the base provides a great opportunity to meet these goals and improve the education levels of the existing community and the attractiveness of the area to future residents.

During the community meeting held community members identifies the development of higher level of education (retaining) systems, creating well-designed future schools as centers of community would and ensuring future schools to be public. These goals will give children and adults in the communities more promising future and provide communities with stronger and more competitive human resources. Before, during and when the base closure and redevelopment occurs, education facilities (schools and re-training centers) should be planned and considered for better educational environment.

Around Ft. McPherson base area, there are 12 educational facilities operated by Atlanta Public Schools – 1 Middle/High School, 1 High School, 1 Middle School, and 9 Elementary Schools. See Table 1

There are 12 of educational facilities operated by Fulton County- 1 High School, 3 Middle School, 8 and Elementary Schools. See Table 2

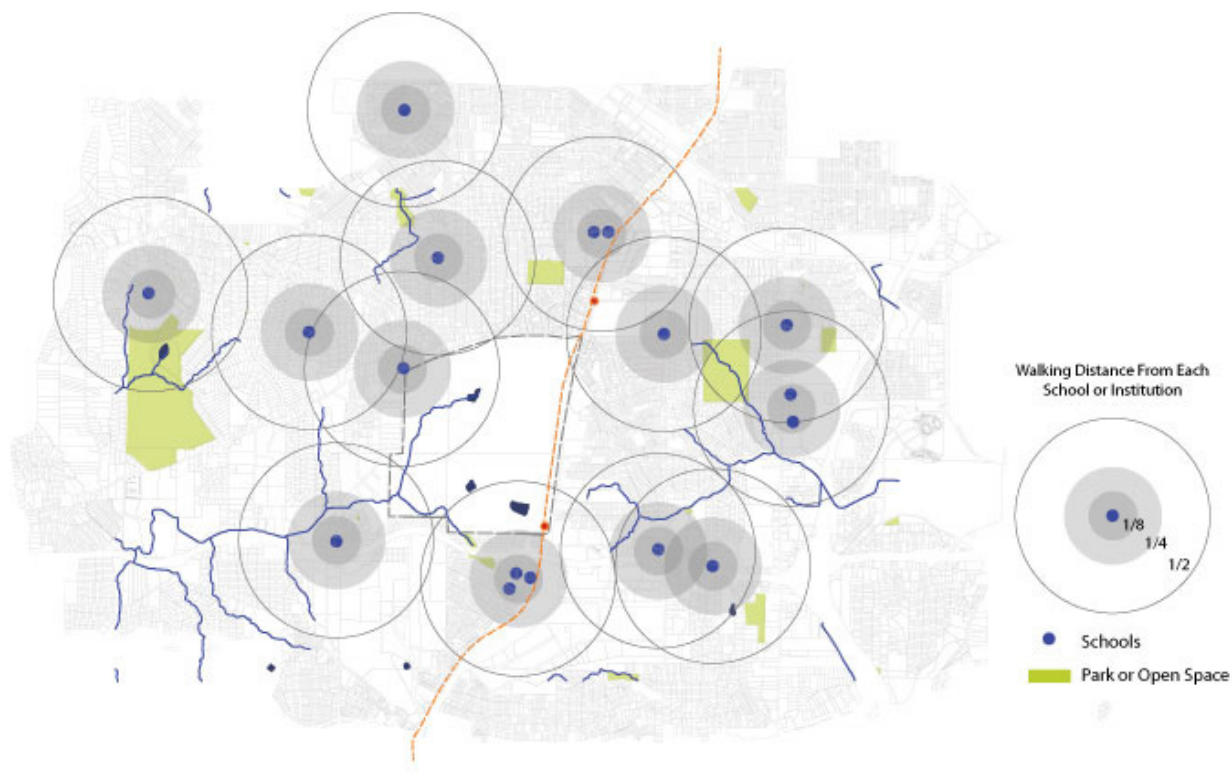
Most of schools around the base are operated by the City of Atlanta (public schools), and the school size is middle-size.

### b. *Identified Existing Conditions*

One factor in analyzing educational facilities and learning environment, the student/teacher ratio is a very important factor in understanding the school scale and size. The only one high school near Ft. McPherson base, Tri-Cities High School is located on about one-mile south of the base. Most residential areas are located north and west of the base making accessibility to Tri-Cities High School poor. Tri-Cities High School now has 1,951 students and 121 teachers. It shows that the student/teacher ratio of Tri-Cities High schools is 16.1 students/teacher. This ratio is a little bit lower than the average of student/teachers ratio of secondary schools with over 1,500 students in 2006(18.5 students/teacher). Two middle schools – Brown Middle School and Sylvan Hills Middle School – are located on the north of Ft McPherson, and their student/teacher ratios are 15.7 students/teacher and 12.3 students/teachers respectively, which also indicates lower ratios than that of US schools.

As for elementary schools, there are 9 elementary schools around the base. Most elementary schools are public

schools (6 schools) except for 2 private schools. Each school has 200 – 600 students and 20 – 40 teachers. The average student/teacher ratio of those 8 elementary schools is 13.5 students/teacher, which shows lower ratio than that of US average student/teacher ratio in 2006(15.1). Finally, there are 2 other educational facilities that cover K6 – 12.



**Figure G1.** School Location in Ft. McPherson(Elementary/Middle/High/Others).



**Table G1.** Present Status of Education Facilities around Ft. McPherson

<b>School Name</b>	<b>Type of Schools</b>	<b>Private /Public</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>No. of Students</b>	<b>No. of Teachers</b>	<b>Student/Teacher Ratio</b>
Tri-CitiesHigh School	High School	Public	K9 - 12	1,951	121	16.1
Brown Middle School	Middle School	Public	K6 - 8	611	39	15.7
Sylvan Hills Middle School	Middle School	Public	K6 - 8	486	39	12.5
Capitol View Elementary School	Elementary School	Public	PK - 5	252	22	11.5
Christ Lutheran School	Elementary School	Private	PK - 5	70	5	10.2 (coed)
Conley Hills Elementary School	Elementary School	Public	PK - 5	607	47	12.9
Connally Elementary School	Elementary School	Public	PK - 5	406	32	12.7
Hutchison Elementary School	Elementary School	Public	PK - 5	464	32	14.5
Perkerson Elementary School	Elementary School	Public	PK - 5	357	28	12.8
Romar Academy	Elementary School	Private	PK - 5	222	10	13.2(coed)
Venetian Hills Elementary School	Elementary School	Public	PK - 5	339	25	13.6
Fulton Community School	Other	Public	16			
South Fulton Crossroads/ Second Chance Programs	Other	Public	K6 - 12	205	20	10.3

(\*) source: [http://www.zillow.com/local-info/GA-Atlanta/Fort-McPherson-schools/r\\_11494/](http://www.zillow.com/local-info/GA-Atlanta/Fort-McPherson-schools/r_11494/)

**Table G2.** Avg. Students/Teacher Ratio of Schools

<b>School Type</b>	<b>Total Students</b>	<b>Total Teachers</b>	<b>Avg. Student/Teacher Ratio</b>	<b>Avg. in US (2006)</b>
<b>High</b>	1,951	121	16.1	18.5
<b>Middle</b>	1,097	78	14.1	15.6
<b>Elementary</b>	2,717	201	13.5	15.1

(\*) source: U.S. Department of Education, 2009 ([http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2009/pdf/31\\_2009.pdf](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2009/pdf/31_2009.pdf))

There is one University on the northern portion of Fort McPherson, adjacent to the historical district. The university site was used as a campus of Georgia Military College (GMC) until the 1990s, but Georgia Military College has since then moved to the Union City. Central Michigan University (CMU) now occupies the university facilities and parade ground in front of the university. The university is not currently open to the surrounding community. At present, CMU has several college-level programs such as general administration, informational resource management, international administration and leadership. CMU provides people on the base with online and offline education and career development programs as regular credit courses.

**Table G3.** College/Universities in Ft. McPherson

University Name	Type of Schools	Private/ Public	Location	Programs
Central Michigan University (Ft. McPherson)	University	Private	1316 Troop Row SW	<b>Graduate Certificate</b> *General Administration *Information Resource Management *International Administration *Leadership  <b>Master of Science in Administration</b> *General Administration *Information Resource Management *International Administration *Leadership



**Figure G2.** Location of Universities in the Base

c. **Recommendations**

Based on the data above, the size of schools may be appropriate when compared with US average, but questions about the quality of education remain. Tri-Cities High School is likely not to have the capacity to meet the educational needs of the students currently in the 9 elementary schools. Designating one of the existing buildings on the northeastern portion of base for a future school would help by adding capacity for future students and accessibility to the communities. Atlanta public schools should be contacted to ensure that ***the high school will be a public school rather than a private.***

Programs at all schools should be evaluated to target areas in which they can reach higher levels of educational quality. In particular, strengthening the areas of math, science and technology have been identified by the community to be of greatest need to ensure better employment potential for the students. Math, science and technology programs could be added through a charter school and/or through improving access to Atlanta Technical College located approximately 2.5 miles east of Fort McPherson.

One college-level facility on the base can be used as a community college during/after the BRAC process. This university will provide online and offline education programs enough to support the demands of high-level education if more extended education services are provided. Also, the existing college facility is located close to historic districts, there are a lot of possibilities that the university campus can be extended into larger area.

### III. History

#### a. Overview

Based on last year's studio and community feedback two main items have been identified to be focused on. The first addresses ***preserving the history of the both the base and the community through the means of a museum***. The second addresses the ***potential to build on the culture of the community through the means of a performance arts center***. This section of the document will discuss the methods for implementing a museum and a performance art center on the Fort McPherson property after the base closes.

#### b. Identified Existing Conditions

The history of the base is available via the Fort McPherson website as well as through the archives at the Atlanta History Center. History of the surrounding communities will need to be researched further. In 2000 the history of Oakland City has been documented in great detail by Georgia State University's Masters in Historic Preservation program.

#### c. Recommendations

To capture and highlight the history of the area, such as what has been documented by Georgia State University about Oakland City, a historic building on the base should be designated to be the history museum. A committee should be established to guide the project and bring the museum into facility that captures the history of the area, provides educational programming for surrounding schools, and provides employment opportunity for members of the community. To serve as a case study is Cyclorama the Civil War Museum located a few miles North of Fort McPherson, in the Grant Park neighborhood. Cyclorama houses a restored 42 feet x 358 feet painting of the Civil War as well as other attractions and educational programs. These features allow the museum to capture and share a piece of important history and create employment for people including surrounding residents.

A funding opportunity for the museum exists through the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This federal agency focuses this funding opportunity in protecting our heritage. This amongst any future funding opportunities should be sought after to ensure the success of the museum.

### IV. Culture

#### a. Overview

Developing local culture helps people have various activities that enrich the community and encourage physical contact with one another, thus building social capital and a strong sense of community. The main cultural goal identified by the community has to develop a fine arts center to house and promote the arts in the community. Other cultural programs that have been identified includes developing programs that connect the three NPU's of the community.

#### b. Identified Existing Conditions

During the existence of Fort McPherson, there has been a lack of interaction between the base and the community. Therefore culture between the two is disparate. The culture of the surrounding NPUs is mostly shaped by the demographics in the area and is rich in culture but poor in cultural facilities. Identifying a building on the northeastern portion of the base to serve as a cultural arts center would be beneficial to the communities and future residents of the base.

Some existing cultural arts centers and programs in Atlanta includes but is not limited to:

Performing Arts Center, Clayton County, GA

Source: <http://www.clayton.k12.ga.us/PAC/pacindex2.asp>

The Performance Arts Center is located in Jonesboro, GA and is owned and operated by the citizens of Clayton County through the Clayton County Board of Education. This unique facility hosts various community events such as lectures, theater shows, fashion shows, a range of musical recitals, and programs for the arts students and community members. The grand opening of the facility was held on May 20<sup>th</sup> 1990 as a result Mr. Ernest Stroud's, Superintendent of Clayton County Schools, efforts to coalesce the citizen vote around the vision he and his constituents held.

The facility cost \$7.5 million dollars to build and furnish. It has been design to hold three events simultaneously in the Lloyd Tarpley Theater, recital hall and the Ernest L. Stroud hall. Collectively, the facility has the capacity to fill 2400 seats. To build the facility today, the architecture firm which developed the facility has priced the project at \$18 to \$20 million.

#### Chastain Arts Center

Source: <http://www.ocaatlanta.com/programs/chastain>

The Chastain Arts Center is one of Atlanta's oldest community art center. The building itself was constructed in the early 1900's. Community art programs began in 1968 making it a great center to contact and learn more about. The programs and held here are likely to provide good guidance for future community art programs on the base.

#### WonderRoot

Source: <http://www.wonderroot.org/>

Wonderroot is a non-profit community organization that seeks to unite local artists. The facility, located off Memorial Drive in the Reynoldstown neighborhood of Atlanta, host a wide array of programs and artistic resources. Anyone can become a member of the non-profit for fees that are kept affordable but vary by art medium. WonderRoot artists believe in uniting as artists to create a better Atlanta. Contacting the board of directors of WonderRoot may prove very beneficial in thinking through a community sustaining and community sustained art space.

#### Pererson Park

Source: <http://www.ajc.com/news/atlanta/kasim-reeds-centers-of-586776.html>

Perkerson Park is an approximately 50 acre park located east of the base in the Capitol View/ Sylvan Hills neighborhoods. This community park's recreation center was closed in 2008, due to steep budget cuts that closed many City of Atlanta recreation centers and re-opened in 2010 by Mayor Kasim Reed. The Mayor intends on transforming the recreation into as center of hope as soon as funding to do so becomes available. The recreation center amenities includes a baseball complex with three fields, senior citizens activities, teen career seminars, tennis courts, summer day camps, and more.

### **c. Recommendations**

Similar to the historic museum, an existing facility on the base should be identified as the future cultural arts center and a committee must be formed to ensure the success of the cultural center. The ***cultural arts center, as identified by the community, should include instrumental, theatrical, and other arts programs and serve as a performance center for the community to enjoy.*** For funding opportunities the Office of Cultural Affairs of the City of Atlanta must be contacted as well as individuals at the Mayor's office involved in the development of Centers of Hope.

The Office of Cultural Arts has a program entitled ARTSCool focused on employing Atlanta's young people with job training in the arts. The program is structured as a studio in which one mentor leads 6 to 12 apprentices. ARTSCool will be a great program to keep up to date on in order to provide positive opportunities for artists in the community. Application deadlines for this program are generally between the months of August and September.

Mayor Kasim Reed has announced his desire and support in developing Centers of Hope. These centers are aimed at promoting cultural enhancement and job training for communities throughout Atlanta. Developing a Cultural Arts center on Fort McPherson would be a great opportunity for both the three NPU's in the community to receive funding and opportunity and for the Mayor's vision to be implemented.



# Public Health & Safety

## Public Health

Hippocrates, the father of western medicine, wrote “a wise man should consider that health is the greatest of human blessings.” Health at both the individual and the public level are important areas to focus on in order to build a thriving community. There are current initiatives at the state and city government levels which can help address target issues and goals identified by the community. These goals include addressing the need for an urgent care facility and a clinic, addressing substance abuse and nutrition issues and continuing to build healthy social capital. The Georgia Health Policy Center conducted a Health Impact Assessment which identified several health outcomes the redevelopment of Fort McPherson should help improve upon. The report identified as priority needs, an urgent care facility free clinic, programs for substance abuse, programs to improve nutrition, programs aimed at fostering greater physical activity, and programs oriented toward community-building and community connectivity. These identified areas will be discussed in this section of the report.

## Urgent Care + Clinic

### Section Overview

Adequate health services for the existing and future residents of the Fort McPherson area should be defined as access to urgent care and a free health clinic.

### Identified Existing Conditions

Currently there is a recently built hospital on the eastern portion of Fort McPherson, the Lawrence Joel U.S. Army Health Clinic (LJAHG), located in Building 125. The surrounding three NPU communities do not have adequate health services. There are currently five urgent care facilities within 10 miles of the base which may be providing adequate service to the surrounding communities but a more centrally located urgent care facility would be best.

There are currently 2 free clinics located in the vicinity of Fort McPherson one North of the base and the second located East of the Fort McPherson. The free clinic North of Fort McPherson, West End Medical Centers, Inc, is located approximately 3.2 miles away. (Reference Figure H1). The free clinic located East of Fort McPherson, Women’s Health Enterprise (also known as Family Health Enterprise) is approximately 5.2 miles away. (Reference Figure H2). These facilities, similar to the five urgent care facilities, may also be adequate because of car-centric development pattern of the community. Looking in to the future potential for a transport oriented development pattern to be used at Fort McPherson, changes the mode of transportation to on foot or public transit. This transportation switch will be a better switch for the current community and a more sustainable fit for the community but will render the distances of the existing free clinics inadequate. Ensuring access to both urgent care and free clinic facilities will be necessary to both improve current conditions and ensure a vibrant community for the years to come.

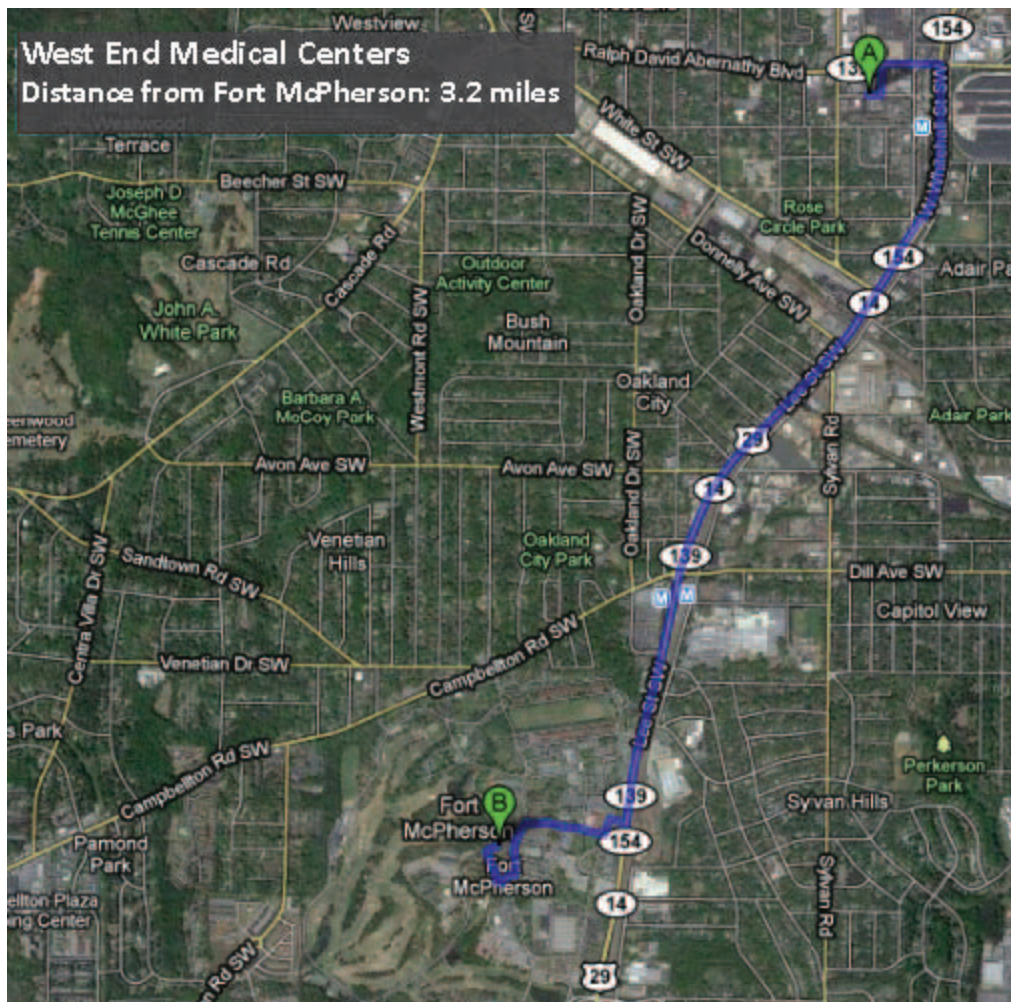


Figure H1. Map of West End Medical Centers relative to Fort McPherson.

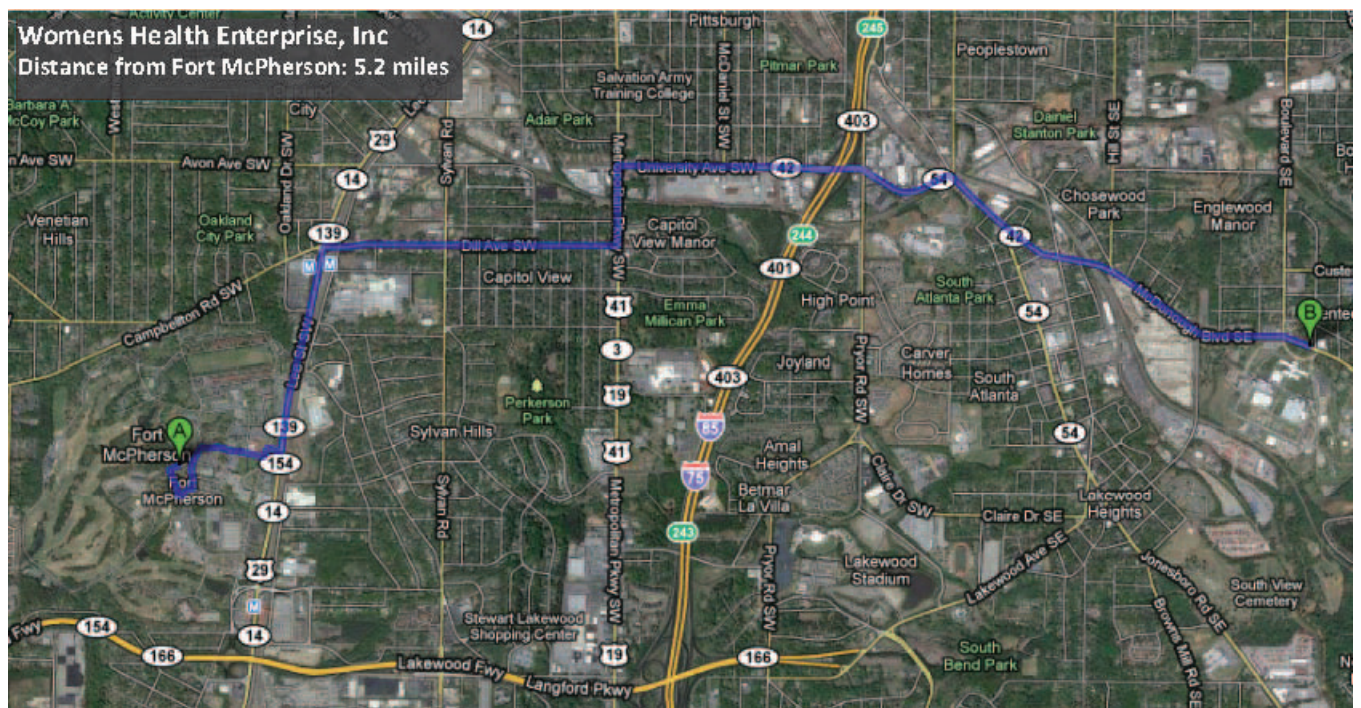


Figure H2. Women's Health Center relative to Fort McPherson.



a. Recommendations

The development process should retain the existing hospital as an urgent care facility on the base and re-using another existing building as the site of the free clinic. The recent trauma tax proposed as a Georgia State Constitutional Amendment was voted down by 53% of the residents vote. This serves as a setback for potential funding of an urgent care facility but not the end of the road. The location of a free clinic should be established based on future transfer oriented development land use patterns. The prerequisites for site selection should take into calculation walkability and community density service area.

**Substance Abuse**

b. Section Overview

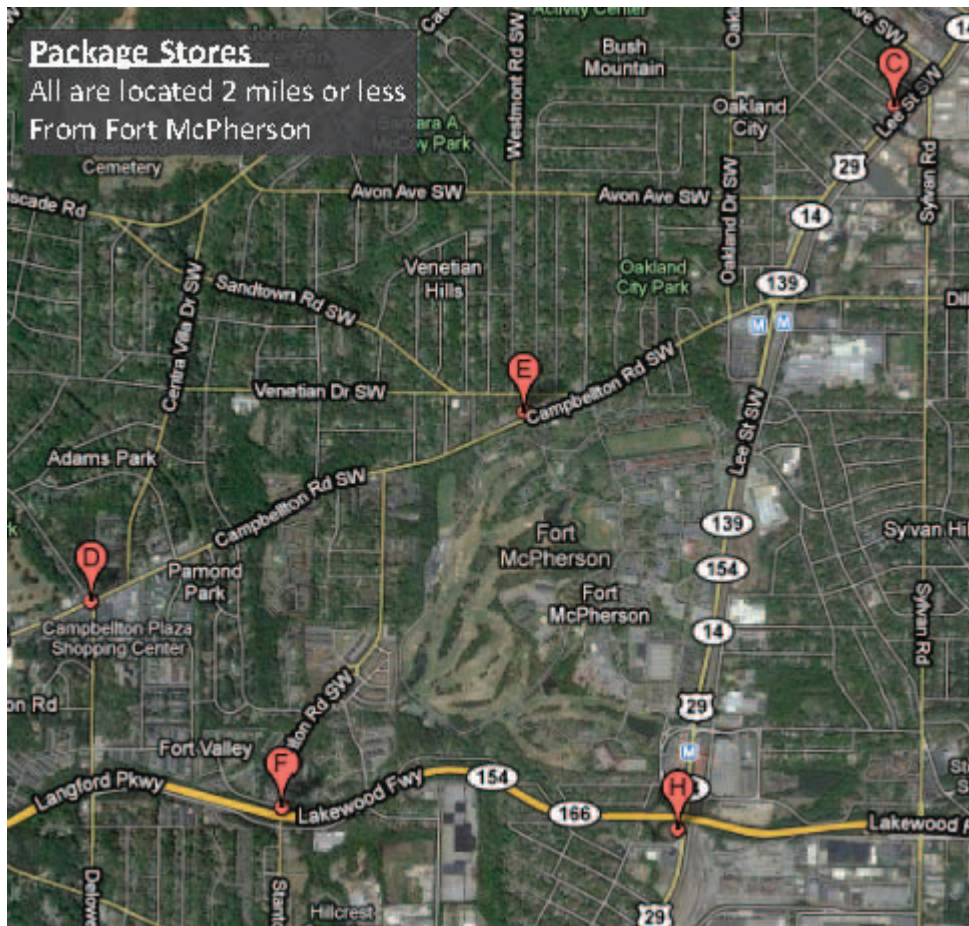
The health impact assessment conducted by the Georgia Health Policy Center at Georgia State University identified substance use as a major aspect contributing to poor health in the existing community. Addressing these issues is of high importance to improve the quality of life of the current residents and attract future residents and businesses to the area. There are various reasons for focusing on the issue of alcohol and tobacco use, including the frequency for which people visit hospitals as a result of using tobacco and/or alcohol and the crime rate associated with tobacco and alcohol use. To minimize the use of alcohol and tobacco use, the HIA, suggests limiting the amount and location of advertisement for both alcohol and tobacco products as well as restricting use from certain areas. Public health programs can be established to address these issues as well.

b. Identified Existing Conditions

The health impact notes that by limiting advertising and commercial use of both tobacco and alcohol is likely to improve the health of community. Creating smoke free environments in certain building types and community areas will help achieve this goal. At the present it is unclear which buildings located on Fort McPherson are to be re-used. Once, these buildings and building uses are identified then existing state and city policies should be enforced to limit advertisement and uses of tobacco and alcohol products. Also, during the zoning process areas should be designated as smoke free. Some of these areas could include public spaces where children or the elderly are likely to congregate. The City of Savannah, Georgia has recently passed The City of Savannah Smoke Free Air Act . This act has undergone a lengthy process to garner buy in from the community, business owners, and policymakers before becoming an act. Businesses are always concerned about the effects of smoking bans on their profit. The Health Impact Assessment notes that “research has shown in some cases, there was an initial dip in profits immediately after a ban on smoking was enacted; however, the effect was short lasting and profits resumed their levels prior to the ban rather rapidly.” (Fort McPherson HIA, 2010). Incorporating guidelines identified in this act could also expand to the rest of the NPU which currently has 5 package stores within 2 miles or closer to Fort McPherson. (See figure H3). Boys and young men of color are 50% more likely than girls to be victims of nonfatal violent crimes (RAND, June2010). As the base closes, health and safety are of big concern to the communities surrounding the base. Engaging boys and young men with a robust and neighborhood specific program can help deter crime and health issues young men and boys are increasingly facing. Health issues such as mental health, substance abuse, gun violence, and other issues raised by the CDC. California has embraced such programs, the Healthy Returns Initiative, Youth UpRising, and the Safe Community Partnership. Each have returned positive improvements in the individuals, the communities, and cost savings to the courts and cop systems. The demographics of the existing community is mostly black with a large youth population which makes these programs favorable.

c. Recommendations

To lower the possibility for substance abuse of existing and future residents it will be important to decrease advertising of alcohol and tobacco, limit use of alcohol and tobacco to certain areas, develop a program to engage boys and young men of color in the community. As noted above, proper use of zoning to designate where advertisement of alcohol and tobacco and designation of where stores that sell either can and cannot be located as well as developing programs to address populations who are statistically most at risk of becoming users are recommended.



**Figure H3.** Proximity of Package Stores to Fort McPherson.

## **Nutrition + Food Desert**

### **d. Section Overview**

The health impact assessment conducted by the Georgia Health Policy Center at Georgia State University identified substance use and inadequate nutrition as major aspects contributing to poor health in the existing community. Addressing these issues is of high importance to improve the quality of life of the current residents and attract future residents and businesses to the area. The community has addressed nutrition as an issue by stating their support for an increase of urban agriculture. This section will not focus on urban agriculture but rather public health programs to educate the community on how to integrate fresh produce into their kitchen.

### **e. Identified Existing Conditions**

The organization called the Consumer Wellness Center provides a grant opportunity for nutrition wellness programs to be implemented. The Chicago based non-profit, Nurture, was recently established as a result of the Consumer Wellness Center's grant program. Nurture focuses on teaching resident to grow nutritious food and cook nutritious meals. The existing community members have identified an interest in urban agriculture because of the low access to fresh produce adding cooking classes could be another beneficial program to establish. In New York City that wic and food stamp programs have added the incentive of increasing the value of the voucher for recipients using the vouchers at locations with fresh produce such as farmer's markets. The increased value of the voucher in and of itself while it serves as a great incentive, does not convince some recipients to purchase fresh produce because of issues such as proximity to farmer's markets or a lack of education in cooking or lack of time to cook fresh produce as opposed to purchasing instant meals. (<http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/nutrition/fmnp/>).



The Health Impact Assessment addresses nutrition by recommending that the development to develop fast food restaurants be limited and prohibited from areas near those where children congregate. This recommendation was based on evidence found on disproportionate racial/ethnic impacts of fast food establishments and consumption of their products. The Health Impact Assessment states the following: “research has shown that neighborhoods with 805 black residents had 2.4 fast food restaurants per square mile compared to 1.5 restaurants per square mile in neighborhoods with 20% black residents.” (Fort McPherson HIA, 2010).

f. Recommendations

To lower the possibility for substance abuse and improve the nutrition quality of existing and future residents it will be important to develop a program to offer affordable cooking classes, and limit the development of fast food restaurants.

**Social Capital**

g. Section Overview

Increasing physical activity is an assured method by which to improve health and combat a multitude of health issues including mental health. Obesity increases the chances of developing heart disease, diabetes, cancer, high cholesterol, respiratory problems, and other health problems which contribute to an estimated \$2.4 billion dollar annual cost to the state of Georgia. (Fort McPherson HIA, 2010). The environmental component of this studio has focused in part on developing trails and the transportation component of this studio has focused in part on the connectivity of the area. Both of these focus areas will be beneficial to increasing access to areas where physical activity can occur.

h. Identified Existing Conditions

At present, Fort McPherson is poorly connected to the surrounding community because of security reasons. In the redevelopment process connecting the community to Fort McPherson will be essential. Data on the obesity levels of the community are not available but statewide data shows that one out of every four Fulton County Resident is likely to be obese. To improve the health of the community the connectivity and development of walking/ biking/ nature trails will be beneficial but programming will help generate participation from the residents.

City of Decatur has recently re-worked their recreation department into their active living department. The switch moves from focusing on recreational organized sport to focusing on organized sports and enticing residents to be more active every day of the week and during the whole day. This promotes a holistic approach to fighting obesity amongst children and adults. Some of the lessons the City of Decatur learned in the process of developing Active Living goals include:

- Develop and invest for the long-term
- Engage with Citizens
- Find new ways to communicate
- Evaluate all transportation choices
- Seek Partners

Increasing daily physical activity presents a greater chance for human interaction which builds social capital and can help fight the development of mental illnesses by decreasing depression and anxiety. Connectivity and development of greenspace will help with increasing daily physical activity and interaction. Making sure that such measures are accessible to all will be of great importance which is possible through recommendations from the Americans with Disabilities Act. (Fort McPherson HIA, 2010).

i. Recommendations

To combat a growing obesity rate and reduce the probability of mental illness development following the guidelines established by the Active Living Department of the City of Decatur will help in developing a healthier community in and around Fort McPherson.

## Introduction

### 2009 Crime

**Legend**

Crime

Offense Description

- Aggravated Assault (Yellow Diamond)
- Auto Theft (Green Circle)
- Burglary (Yellow Triangle)
- Firearms Offense (Red Circle)
- Rape (Red Square)
- Robbery (Green Triangle)
- Other (Grey Circle)
- Interstate (Thick Red Line)
- Major Road (Thick Black Line)
- Atlanta Station (Blue Star)

Scale: 0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles

Author: Alia Awerd  
Date: 10/31/2009

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and by whom? The goal is to tap these resources to improve conditions in the community as a benefit of the base closing.

The neighborhoods surrounding Ft. McPherson experience public safety issues as a result of violence and property crime, lack of adequate lighting and safe design (such as sidewalk accessibility), vacancy and blight in the neighborhood, and lack of adequate social services. Vacant and abandoned houses, drug addiction and mental health issues and lack of access to meaningful job opportunities all contribute to crime and a lack of safety and security for neighborhood residents. There is lack of street lighting in the community and people feel unsafe on sidewalks, at bus stops, in residential and commercial areas as a result.

The Atlanta Police Department breaks down the City of Atlanta into six zones. The Fort McPherson base is located in zone 4. Zone 3 encompasses the area directly east of the base. There are three Police Precincts in zone 4, two of which are located within the community. The two Police Precincts located in zone 3 are outside the community boundaries.

In an analysis for crimes reported to the Atlanta Police Department (for the time period between January 2009 and October 23rd, 2009) provides an overview of some of the issues facing the communities surrounding Ft. McPherson. These incidents are illustrated in the map below.

### **Homicides**

There were 3 homicides around the DeLowe Drive/ Lakewood Freeway area. Additionally, there were a total of 3 homicides near the MARTA line and its stations. The numbers indicate the dire public safety issues near transit, a transportation mode that the community heavily relies on. It also points out to the DeLowe Drive/Lakewood Freeway junction being a problem area.

### **Rape & Assaults**

Assault crimes are shown to be relatively high along DeLowe Drive between Campbellton Road and Lakewood Freeway. Other high-assault crime areas include the neighborhood North of Beecher Road, some neighborhoods along the MARTA line and west of the MARTA line, closer to the West End station.

### **Robberies & Burglaries**

The intersection of DeLowe Drive and Campbellton Road had a relatively high rate of robberies and non-residential burglaries. Residential burglaries appear to occur at neighborhoods close to the MARTA line, both east and west of the transit line.

### **Auto Thefts & Larcenies**

The intersection of DeLowe Drive and Campbellton Road has a high incident rate. In addition, some neighborhoods west of the MARTA line and close to Interstate 20 display a relatively high rate of vehicle-related crimes. The stretch of Campbellton Road along the Fort McPherson base, between the MARTA line and DeLowe Drive also show high auto theft and larceny activity.

### **Issues and Opportunities**

#### **Community Policing & New APD administration**

Strategies to increase police presence in the community include designation as a *Weed and Seed* community and increasing the presence of specialty APD units. Under new Police Chief George Turner, the APD has established a new Community Policing Division which aims to increase police interaction with the community.

**Fire Stations** are a critical resource in ensuring safety in the neighborhood – firefighters are the first responders in case of any emergency. According to the City of Atlanta’s 2007-2012 Capital Improvement Plan, Fire Station #14 is scheduled for improvements, and according to the Atlanta Fire Stations Replacement List, Fire Station #7 (which was shut down in 2008) and Fire Station #25 are both scheduled for replacement.

### **Lighting and Infrastructure**

There is a lack of street and commercial lighting throughout the neighborhood. Residents—particularly the elderly and those with limited mobility—have trouble using sidewalks and streets that do not have curb cutouts, end abruptly, and are too narrow. This is a significant threat to their safety and welfare.

### **Unemployment and Lack of Services**

Property crime typically increases as people find it more difficult to find work or lose their housing. In the current economic climate, and particularly in the cold months of the year, there will likely be an increase in squatting in abandoned homes, burglaries, and other similar activities.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Partnership with the APD’s Community Oriented Policing Division**

Neighborhood residents can approach the new community policing division to request a series of meetings or a community-police planning process that identifies priorities and expectations of community policing in the area. Because the program is still in its initial stages, there is significant opportunity to influence the process.

#### **Neighborhood Watch Program**

Neighborhoods can choose to create a neighborhood watch program with support from the APD. Community members can schedule a planning meeting with a Crime Prevention Inspector and identify Block Captains. After identifying the area, the Neighborhood Watch will create a plan to work with APD to report crime activity, as well as working together to strengthen communication and support among residents.

#### **Neighborhood Deputies Program**

In order to address the public safety issues that are a result of vacant and abandoned houses and lots in the community, residents can partner with the city Office of Code Enforcement to establish a neighborhood deputies program. This will allow community members to organize themselves to identify and submit complaints to the code enforcement officer to address the worst cases of neglect and other property issues in the neighborhood.

#### **Advocate for increased social services**

In order to address the root causes of crime, residents can approach their elected officials and social service providers to increase drug treatment and mental health services for neighborhood residents. Youth services (such as through Mayor Reed’s proposed Centers of Hope) as well as job training and pre-apprenticeship programs (such as Georgia TRADE-UP) will also help to reduce property crime and increase the safety and welfare of neighborhood residents.



## **Lighting and Infrastructure**

The Campbellton Road and Metropolitan Parkway TAD and the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) may be a source of funds for lighting and other infrastructure improvements.











