



Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan

DeKalb County 2035 Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment

An aerial, isometric-style illustration of a city block. In the center is a large, rectangular, light-colored building with a flat roof. To its left is a large, open green field with some trees. To the right of the field is a road with a white line. Further right is a curved road with a white line. In the background, there are several tall, modern buildings. The foreground shows a road with a white line and some trees. The overall scene is a mix of urban development and green space.

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Purpose

To adopt the Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan as a Small Area Plan to the 2035 Comprehensive Plan .Adopting the Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan will provide additional guideline for future development within the study area. The overall goal is to reference the Memorial Drive revitalization plan as the guiding principal for economic growth and development.

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA TO ADOPT THE MEMORIAL DRIVE REVITALIZATION PLAN AND TO AMEND THE DEKALB COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, SUPPLEMENTAL PLANS SECTION 5.7 TO INCLUDE THE PLAN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners entered into contracts with Pond, Inc. (the consultant) to implement the Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan contract scope of services for the Memorial Drive corridor, and

WHEREAS, the Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan is located on Memorial Drive, State Highway 78, bounded by Ridge Avenue to the east and Interstate 285 to the west; and

WHEREAS, the Memorial Drive corridor is recognized as a major connection between the City of Atlanta and Stone Mountain Park, and is home to many international businesses, Georgia State University, Georgia Piedmont College, major retail chains, as well as Kensington MARTA Station; and

WHEREAS, a Steering Committee comprised of stakeholders was appointed and a number of public meetings and workshops conducted between May 2019 and December 2019 for community participation and input into the goals and objectives of the plan, and

WHEREAS, this Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan contains recommendations which substantiate the need for sustainable land uses, economic and transportation investment in the area;

WHEREAS, this Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan contains an Action Plan that will guide short- and long-term implementation projects, along with the involvement of a grassroots Community Action Group.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners:

- (1) hereby adopts the attached final draft Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan dated _____ and amends the 2035 DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan, Supplemental Plans Section 5.7, to include this Plan; and
- (2) the recommended policies and development standards contained in the Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan provide specific guidelines to support the character areas of the Future Development Map of the 2035 DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan and serve as the density/intensity standards; and
- (3) adoption of this Plan shall require a land use amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, to ensure consistency by incorporating these specific policies and Future Development Map changes.

APPROVED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this ____ day of _____, 2020.

STEVE BRADSHAW
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County, this ____ day of _____, 2020.

MICHAEL L. THURMOND
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

Why Small Area Plans (SAPs) ?



Occasionally ,communities have unique character due to age, housing style or inefficient services. These small areas' needs aren't captured by planning tools designed for larger areas. Planning staff will partner with other groups in efforts to address these needs.

Two Major Programs

- Livable Center Initiative (LCI) –Offered By Atlanta Regional Commission. This program link transportation and land use development strategies to create sustainable and livable communities.
- DeKalb Master Active Living Plans (MALP)- This program is more health focus through the promotion of physical activity and good nutrition in county policy .
- Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) project. : The objective of this project is to strengthen the functionality and 'sense of place 'of communities.

DeKalb County Existing Small Area Plans(SAPs)

- 2003 Kensington Station Livable Center Initiative (LCI).
- 2012 Kensington Station Transit Oriented Development Supplemental Study.(LCI)
- Candler Road/Flat Shoals Parkway Livable Center Initiative (LCI)
- Medline Livable Center Initiative (LCI)
- North Druid Hills Livable Center Initiative (LCI)
- Wesley Chapel Activity Center (LCI)
- Belvedere Study Area – Master Active Living Plan (MALP)
- Panola Road/Salem Road - Master Active Living Plan (MALP)
- Covington Highway Corridor - Master Active Living Plan (MALP)
- Gresham Road Study - Master Active Living Plan (MALP)
- Indian Creek Marta Station- Master Active Living Plan (MALP)

Note : Memorial Drive is not an LCI nor MALP. However the progress by County Government ,Residents, and Stakeholders position Memorial Drive for a future Livable Center Initiative opportunity.



Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan Background !

- Updated planning efforts needed for the revitalization of a declined Memorial Drive (last plan completed in 2000 by R.C. Lester).
- In October 2018, District 4 Commissioner Steve Bradshaw along with the Planning Department allocated funds to conduct a Memorial Drive Revitalization Corridor Study.
- Scope of Work based on LCI guidelines with a focus on economic development and land use.
- Planning team led by Pond & Company (assisted by Sycamore Consulting and Bleakly Advisory Group).
- The corridor planning process began in the Spring of 2019 concluding in the winter of 2019.



Corridor Plan Process

Three overall
steps were
taken●----->

Step 1. Data Gathering

- Focused on understanding the underlying conditions. Analysis of market conditions, demographics, employment figures ,and a physical assessment of the corridor.

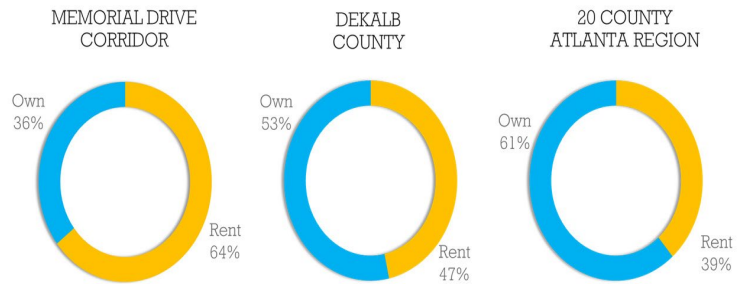
Step 2. Identifying Opportunities

- The second phase of the planning process was robust community engagement process to understand the corridor from the perspective of it's residents, worker, and property owners

Step 3. Action Plan

- The final phase of the study consisted of formulating the vision for the corridor.

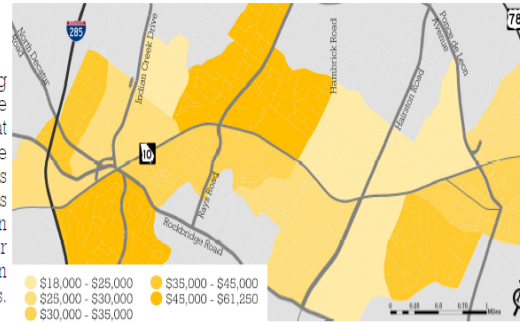




TODAY...

Median Household Income (2016)

Median household incomes along the corridor are fairly low with the highest observed rates topping at just over \$60,000 a year and some areas showing particular struggles with median household incomes less than \$25,000. The median income within the Corridor (\$37,794) is nearly 40% lower than DeKalb County's.



Average Commercial Rental Rates

According to CoStar, average commercial rental rates within the Corridor lag both the surrounding market area and the County.

- **Multi-family** – 28% lower than average rents in DeKalb
- **Retail** – 24% lower than average rents in DeKalb
- **Office** – 28% lower than average rents in DeKalb

Data Gathering

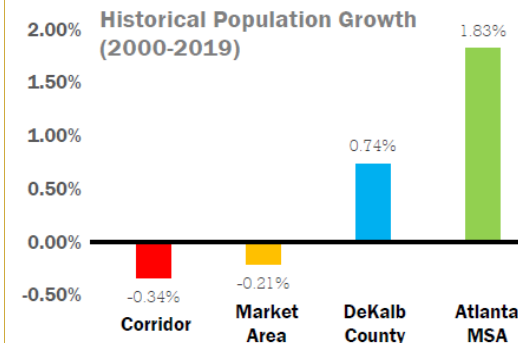
-Amongst the many challenges to the corridor is the relatively low incomes and commercial rental rates.

-There has been practically no new commercial development on the corridor in nearly 30 years and the area has even seen a decrease in population.

-Despite some high-profile retail closures (such as Kroger and Publix) and a few visibly struggling shopping plazas, vacancy rates actually tend to be relatively low along the corridor, showing that most spaces are being well utilized.

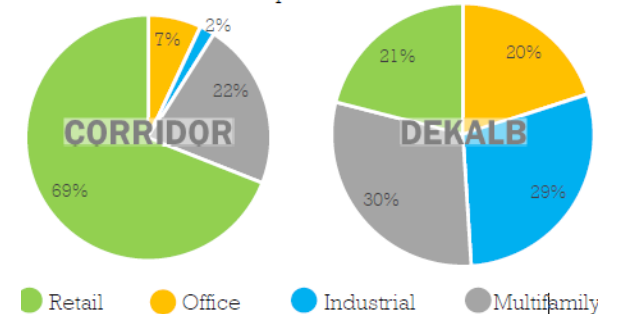
Population

Population has been declining along the Memorial Drive corridor and surrounding area since the year 2000, despite a modest increase in DeKalb County of 0.74% and a metro Atlanta growth of 2% during the same time period.



Commercial Space by Land Use

Especially when compared to the rest of DeKalb County, the Memorial drive corridor has a significant amount of commercial space dedicated to retail.



Commitment to Community Engagement!

June 11, 2019 Business Development Advisory Committee

- (BDAC) (4 meeting)-a group comprised of business owners and operators, area non-profits, and residents, meets for the first time.

“Pop Up” events

- April 23, 2019 – Georgia State University
- May 18, 2019 (International Trade Mall)
- June 20, 2019-Nam Dae Mun grocery store

June 25, 2019-Community Open House!

- Over 200 people attend the first

Design workshops -August 21, 2019

- A multi-hour Design Workshop was held where members of
- the community.

Surveys –Summer 2019

- Over 900 people took our online survey , with an interactive maps.





GATEWAY WEST

GLOBAL CITY

HAMBRICK VILLAGE

GATEWAY EAST

Development Types	Focus Areas			
	Gateway West	Global City	Hambrick Village	Gateway East
Entertainment	◆	◆		◆
Office Locations	◆	◆		◆
Housing	◆	◆	◆	◆
Tourist Attractions	◆		◆	
Open Space & Parks	◆	◆	◆	◆
Restaurant Options	◆	◆	◆	◆
Retail Options	◆	◆	◆	◆
More Grocery Options	◆	◆	◆	◆

Action Plan

There are three (3) overall strategies that should be followed to help encourage and make the revitalization of the corridor more probable

STRATEGY

1

CHANGE THE PERCEPTION

While there are many notable and positive things happening on the corridor, this section of Memorial Drive has a perception problem. Initiatives and activities need to take place to encourage people to rethink these perceptions and see the corridor in a different light.

STRATEGY

2

CREATE DEMAND

Because it has effectively been 30 years since there was demand for new development on the corridor, public sector initiatives will need to take place that fill in that gap and create demand where there is currently none by the private sector. By leading the way, private sector investment can follow.

STRATEGY

3

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY REDEVELOPMENT

A positive regulatory environment can make it easier for the private sector to invest in the corridor by offsetting the risk associated with redevelopment.



Implementation Of The Plan !

A various of initiatives was created to support the three overall strategies.


**MEMORIAL DRIVE**
REVITALIZATION CORRIDOR PLAN

CHANGE THE PERCEPTION STRATEGY 1

Initiative 1.1 – Façade Improvement Program




Action Plan

**MEMORIAL DRIVE**
REVITALIZATION CORRIDOR PLAN

CREATE DEMAND STRATEGY 2

Initiative 2.2 – Establish an Arts Corridor



**MEMORIAL DRIVE**
REVITALIZATION CORRIDOR PLAN

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 3

Initiative 3.3 – Investigate Investor Programs



Schedule of Changes to the 2035 DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 3 County and Local Plans; Supplemental Plans (pg 35 and 36)

Chapter 7 Land Use; The Development Plan Concept; Table 7.1

- GSU/GA Piedmont to list Memorial Revitalization Plan as a Neighborhood Center. Currently there is no study supporting this activity center (pg. 52).
- Village Square/Value Mall to list Memorial Revitalization Plan as a Neighborhood Center. Currently there is no study supporting this activity center (pg. 52).

Chapter 7 Land Use; Table 7.4 Character Area / Land Use Summary. Add "Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan" to the Small Area Plans (SAP) column, for the following Character Areas: Neighborhood Center and Commercial Revitalization Corridor (pg. 52).

Chapter 7 Land Use; Neighborhood Center description (pg. 67) and policies (pg. 69).

Chapter 7 Land Use; Small Area Plans; Add "Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan" to page (pg. 87). Also, add a Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan section with policies, maps and design guidelines from the plan.

Chapter 8 Implementation

- Community Work Program (CWP) – Add timeline for Immediate, Short and Long Term projects for the Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan.

DeKalb County 2035 Comprehensive Plan



Memorial Drive Revitalization Plan Next Steps!

Happening Now !

- Community council Meeting 08/18/2020
- Planning Commission Meeting 09/01/2020
- Board of Commissioners Meeting 09/22/2020
- COW or PEC Committee –TBD
- Development of the Community Action Group (CAG)



GATEWAY WEST

GLOBAL CITY

HAMBRICK VILLAGE

GATEWAY EAST



MEMORIAL DRIVE

REVITALIZATION CORRIDOR PLAN



Contact Information :

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To View the FULL PLAN document on our website:

<https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/planning-and-sustainability/long-range-small-area-plans-and-studies>