

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 1 of 25

## Major Development Nodes

### Simpson Road

#### Concept Vision

**Simpson Road** could potentially generate positive physical and economic impacts on its surroundings. Essentially located on both sides of Simpson Road from Temple Street to Mayson Turner, the node is bounded on the north by the elevated grade of the old Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast railroad. Additional redevelopment areas expand the node north along Mayson Turner and west to Childs Drive. Most of the built environment is represented by garden-style apartment complexes about forty years old, some of which have been recently renovated, but many remain in deteriorated condition. There are also some local-serving small businesses, single-family homes, and a few rail-based warehouses. The major distinguishing features of the node are Herndon Elementary School on the east, the angled intersection with Mayson Turner on the west, and the bed of Proctor Creek and the MARTA Proctor Creek (Bankhead) line straddling the center. Notable historic resources are concentrated along Mayson Turner, with a few older houses and a warehouse transfer facility lining the east side.

The biggest constraint to future development is the perception of blight and abandonment; other concerns are the active freight rail line skirting the node to the west, and the channelized bed of Proctor Creek, which is prone to flooding. However, the node has major assets including the presence of MARTA rail, the proximity of Maddox Park, and the stable and historic neighborhoods of Hunter Hills and Washington Park. The public attitude toward future development in the node included medium-density residential concentrated in the area between Simpson Road and the AB&C rail bed, with mixed-use lining Simpson. Workshop participants also envisioned a new MARTA station serving the Proctor Creek line and the BeltLine; small courtyards internal to the residential areas; environmental reclamation of Proctor Creek; and adaptive reuse of the historic transfer warehouse as a community/entertainment center. The distinct vision for the future of the node – with its transit interchange, major park, elementary school, and ‘main street’ spine – is the development of an intense, transit-oriented downtown for the west side neighborhoods.

#### Land Use & Development

The topography along Simpson Road and the presence of the rail line allow higher density development toward Maddox Park without overwhelming the small scale of nearby neighborhoods—an attribute recognized by the public when discussing building mass and position during the workshop. Consequently, the portions of the node immediately adjacent to the Maddox Park expansion are recommended for medium-density residential uses, in buildings sized from five to eight stories. This would allow views to both the park and the downtown skyline, while blending with nearby neighborhoods. Development would step down at the neighborhood edges, to low-density residential in two- to four-story buildings. Along Simpson Road, the ‘main street’

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 2 of 25

character is reinforced by mixed-use development at four to six stories, decreasing to two to four stories at the western end adjacent to the Hunter Hills neighborhood. As mentioned, the transit warehouse on Mayson Turner Road immediately north of the active rail line is targeted for adaptive reuse as a community center with a direct pedestrian linkage to the Maddox Park expansion. Finally, the concept proposes a new transit plaza and MARTA station between Simpson and Mobile Street, with future low-density commercial uses in a one- to two-story building providing additional neighborhood retail and restaurant space and animating the plaza.

### Parks & Plazas

The Simpson Road redevelopment concept benefits from its location at the southern end of an expanded Maddox Park, which opens onto the proposed Westside Park Project at the northern end. This park system (the Westside Park Project), with its ultimate size totaling around 600 acres, exceeds the 526 acres of Brooklyn's legendary Prospect Park, an Olmstead masterpiece. The Westside Park Project and Prospect Park have striking similarities, from the roughly equivalent size of their lakes to the varied geography, rock outcrops and extensive forest. Prospect Park also has the benefit of an Audubon Center, which focuses on wildlife habitat preservation, an idea applicable to the Westside Park Project. With this in mind, the Simpson Road interface needs to be the equivalent of an appealing urban gateway to this great park, along the lines of the celebratory entry to Prospect Park at the Grand Army Plaza. Both the new plaza at the Simpson Road MARTA station and the plaza near the transit warehouse provide these entry points. The actual BeltLine multiuse trail enters Maddox Park along the MARTA alignment and swings to the northeast to follow the AB&C grade to Hollowell Parkway; although several additional paths branch off at the point of entry to disperse through the park.

### Circulation Network

Several new streets are proposed in the Simpson Road district, opening up access to the expanded Maddox Park. Most critical is a new road framing the south edge of the park, connecting Neal Street to Mayson Turner. Not only does this street provide access to the park and the new development just south, but it adds a promenade to the park and effectively buffers new residential development from the active rail line. A second street frames the west edge of the park, extending Troy Street north along the bed of Proctor Creek. This street would require a new underpass with the railroad, which could be combined with an improved viaduct for Proctor Creek. A similar street is proposed for the east edge of the park, connecting Temple Street with North Avenue. Additional streets link these park drives back to Simpson along the BeltLine, or to Mayson Turner north of the community facility. The BeltLine transit follows the multiuse trail from the MARTA interchange north, shifting on to the AB&C alignment with the trail at Maddox Park. The AB&C grade is elevated above the level of Maddox Park on an embankment, providing sweeping views of the park, but necessitating new bridges at park entry points from the east. Although the BeltLine transit follows Maddox Park around to the Bankhead MARTA station, the multiuse trail continues northeast to link with other trails leading to Georgia Tech and downtown. Another trail connection could head west following a Proctor Creek tributary; and just

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 3 of 25

south is PATH's Westside trail leading to the Atlanta University Center. In the long term vision for transit, however, an east-west connection along Simpson to Ivan Allen Boulevard in downtown, and then to Ralph McGill and the BeltLine at Freedom Parkway would warrant further study.

#### Northside Drive

##### Concept Vision

Strategically positioned between I-75 and Atlantic Station, **Northside Drive** has the benefit of an established office market and adjacency to the Waterworks. The node is bounded on the north by the BeltLine, with little redevelopment opportunity in the existing Northside 75 office complex and the historic neighborhood of Berkeley Park. The redevelopment area is essentially divided between the Northside Drive frontage and the apartment and office-warehouse complexes stretching to I-75. While these existing developments are sound, they could be intensified considering the interstate access and location at the BeltLine (and possibly a Northside Drive transit route to Cobb County). The same holds true for the existing development along Northside, primarily office-warehouse buildings from the 1940s to the 1960s. Generally property is in good repair, with some exceptions of vacant or deteriorated buildings at the southern end. The major distinguishing features of the node are the steep topography, with rock outcrops visible from Northside Drive; a small tributary of Tanyard Creek dividing the office-warehouse (Northside Circle) and apartment complexes on the north; the city sanitation facility at the Deering Road intersection; and the heavily wooded areas along the eastern edge of the Waterworks. Several of the older office-warehouses clustering near Northside and Deering could be considered historic resources, with the sanitation facility and its glazed shed warehouse the most notable; other resources include the neighborhoods of Berkeley Park and Loring Heights, and the Waterworks lodge and pavilion.

Major constraints are the active rail along the BeltLine, and the pedestrian environment including steep slopes, lack of sidewalks and traffic speed and volume; although traffic volume could also be considered an asset to future retailers. Additional assets are the proximity to Atlantic Station and the proposed Waterworks Park. The public was split on future development west of Northside Drive, with some advocating for new parkland and some for medium-density residential; east of Northside, consensus for new residential and office was strong. Workshop participants also strongly agreed on single-family neighborhoods preservation and the maintenance of land use patterns in the area immediately north of the active CSX line. The distinct vision for this node capitalizes on its excellent access by proposing an employment center and transit interchange with a new residential neighborhood framing Waterworks Park.

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 4 of 25

#### **Land Use & Development**

Northside Drive is an existing office destination, and has an identifiable concentration of affordable apartments, which are highly visible from southbound I-75. In this respect the future land use plan intensifies current land use patterns. Much of the node is situated on relatively low ground, so that buildings can be physically taller without the apparent increase in mass. With this benefit, new development in this land west of Northside Drive and flanking the CSX line averages ten stories, both as future mixed-use along Northside and office at the railroad. Portions of the older and more architecturally elaborate warehouses could potentially be incorporated into the higher density development. Medium density mixed-use in four- to eight-story buildings mirrors the situation across Northside to the east, with less building mass applied on elevated topography near adjacent neighborhoods. New residential uses are concentrated behind the mixed-use, in low-scale buildings on the east as a buffer to Loring Heights, and in taller buildings on the west framing the edge of Waterworks Park. Additional residential development would replace the aging apartment complexes visible from the highway, at increased densities. A transit station is proposed at Northside Drive and the BeltLine, providing the interchange between transit routes and modes.

#### **Parks & Plazas**

The major open space move in the Northside Drive node is the extension of Waterworks Park north to the CSX embankment, and into the Berkeley Park neighborhood with a new pedestrian underpass connecting the two. Waterworks Park would also be connected to Northside Drive through an extension flowing around the city sanitation facility to the north. The park extension would continue to the northeast as a greenway along the Tanyard Creek tributary. This is an important feature because in this node the BeltLine multiuse trail would need to disengage from the transit line due to the tight right-of-way shared with active rail. The BeltLine trail would extend south after emerging from the I-75 underpass, along the creek bed and following to the southwest across Northside Drive and on into Waterworks Park. As in other new and existing open spaces, the BeltLine trail would branch out into several different paths around the Waterworks; although the main trail would swing west to parallel Trabert Avenue to Howell Mill Road. Several potential historic resources exist in this expanded park area, which ideally might be incorporated in new recreation facilities.

#### **Circulation Network**

Sanborn maps from the 1940s indicate Trabert Avenue extending from Howell Mill Road to Northside Drive, with a duplicate road (Reservoir Drive West) ringing the edge of the water supply basin. While not following the exact path contained in the Sanborns, an extension of Trabert to Northside Drive is a key feature of the node's future circulation plan. At the eastern edge of Waterworks Park, a new road is proposed that would continue the short segment installed between Green and Henry streets north to intersect Trabert at a grand circle. The road would proceed toward the CSX/BeltLine right-of-way, east to connect with the signalized intersection at the

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 5 of 25

entry to the Northside Circle office-warehouse development. Deering Road would also extend west of Northside Drive to connect to the park. Additional new roads would separate the mixed-use and residential blocks east of Northside, and continue Northside Circle Drive across the creek and greenway. Intersection improvements would accommodate this new infrastructure at Northside Drive crossings. The BeltLine transit, unlike the trail, would adhere to the CSX right-of-way on the south side of the active rail. Northside Drive is a likely candidate for new transit connecting points north with Atlantic Station; the recently completed Northside Drive Corridor Study recommends widening the street to accommodate future transit from the I-75 interchange south to I-20.

### Peachtree Road

#### Concept Vision

**Peachtree Road** is the 'spine' of Atlanta, and has the highest density development along its length. At the crossing of the CSX/BeltLine right-of-way, Peachtree has comparatively low-density development but is distinguished by the popular Bennett Street shopping district and the Piedmont Hospital/Shepherd Center medical complexes. Most of the Peachtree Road redevelopment potential lies to the north of the BeltLine, extending all the way to Biscayne Drive. Peachtree's origin is a Native American ridge line trail, and the ridge is prominent along this portion with the topography falling to either side. Strong landscape features occupy the low ground on either side, with Bobby Jones Golf Club on the west and Peachtree Creek on the east. Most of the node features well-maintained, relatively new development, with only a few small vacant buildings or underused sites to the northeast. There are also few significant historic resources in the node, the exceptions of the Bennett Street district and the 1940s 'garden city' apartment complex of Colonial Homes. However, the node is surrounded by homes in the historic neighborhoods of Collier Hills, Peachtree Hill and Brookwood Hills.

Future development in the node is constrained by congestion on Peachtree and Collier Road, as well as the topography and potential flooding along Peachtree Creek. A large electric utility substation and east-west high-tension line intrude on the urban context, although the substation provides an interesting industrial note to the warehouse character of Bennett Street. Still, the Peachtree Street name and the powerful market overcome many of the constraints; and Bobby Jones and Peachtree Creek are clear quality-of-life assets. Public attitude toward Peachtree favored continuing the trend of high-density development, but with transitions to a low scale near neighborhoods. Workshop participants also envisioned a major plaza at the Peachtree/BeltLine intersection, surrounded by high-density development. The public expressed their support for the Bennett Street district, but acknowledged that the location may dictate long-term redevelopment at a higher density. The distinct vision for the future of the node is a high-density center characteristic of other sections of Peachtree, with the BeltLine transit plaza resembling the plaza areas at Colony Square (Peachtree and 14<sup>th</sup> Street).

#### Land Use & Development

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 6 of 25

Most of the new development and future redevelopment in the Peachtree node is medium- to high-density mixed-use, in keeping with Peachtree's character as a major urban avenue. Buildings between eight and twelve stories in height are compatible with other nearby towers. Future residential uses step down the ridge east to Peachtree Creek, from five- to eight-story buildings adjacent to the mixed-use, to slightly lower buildings along the active CSX rail line, to low-density along the creek across from Peachtree Hills. This residential area would continue east along the peninsula formed by Peachtree Creek, Clear Creek, and the CSX line – essentially a redevelopment of the existing Peachtree Park apartments. South of the BeltLine, the Peachtree Valley apartments would likely redevelop at the same density. At the western edge of the node, high-density residential uses in ten- to fifteen-story buildings frame a possible expansion of the Atlanta Municipal Park (Bobby Jones), carved out of the flood plain of Peachtree Creek and the redevelopment of Colonial Homes. Lower density residential uses to the north and south provide transitions to surrounding areas. The electrical substation would remain with a portion of the Bennett Street warehouses preserved on the west edge of the district. At the BeltLine, an elevated transit plaza and station would contain the necessary vertical circulation to bridge the difference in level between the rails and the street.

#### **Parks & Plazas**

The BeltLine right-of-way is fairly constricted through this stretch; and like the situation at Northside Drive the multiuse trail would separate from the transit line to follow the bed of Peachtree Creek. Once beyond the footprint of Colonial Homes, the trail would turn south and then west to follow the edge of Bobby Jones Golf Course. Linking with PATH's Northside Drive trail midway along the course, the BeltLine trail would turn south again to follow the bed of Tanyard Creek back to the rail alignment. This is one of the few major diversions of the BeltLine multiuse trail from the proposed right-of-way, but it provides significant open space for an area that is limited in its potential for new parks. An additional greenspace is proposed as a focal point or 'town green' of the residential redevelopment of Peachtree Park Apartments, opening on to the forested corridor of Peachtree Creek. A second multiuse trail would split off the Peachtree Creek path at this point and, crossing this town green, would run west along Peachtree Park Drive and a realigned Bennett Street to reconnect with the northern branch at Bobby Jones. Yet another segment would connect to the transit plaza, and Piedmont Hospital. The transit plaza occupies about 200 feet of frontage along Peachtree; ringed by high-density development, it opens at the south to a parking area, which if improved would effectively doubling the transit plaza size.

#### **Circulation Network**

Most of the new streets in the Peachtree node are short connections between existing streets to improve access to development or reduce block sizes to more accessible dimensions. The major exception is the realignment of Bennett Street, which would join Peachtree Park Drive at the signalized intersection at Peachtree. Bennett would run due west for about 600 feet, swinging north to connect in to South Colonial Homes Drive. South of the BeltLine, a new road would connect

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 7 of 25

the rear of the Piedmont Hospital parking deck with Peachtree at the signalized intersection with Peachtree Valley Drive. Peachtree Valley could extend through the redeveloped apartment site, connecting to new low-density development adjoining the Brookwood Hills neighborhood. Intersection improvements would be required at these points, as well as at Colonial Homes Drive, which would have an eastern extension to support new residential development. The BeltLine transit runs adjacent to the CSX freight line, on the south side as it does for this northern third of the northwest cluster. An additional long-term transit amenity is the proposed Peachtree Streetcar, which would run in the roadway of Peachtree Street from Lenox Mall south to West End and beyond. The BeltLine transit and the Peachtree Streetcar would interchange at the transit plaza, making the Peachtree Street node a vital connection point in a citywide transit strategy. The crossing of the two lines would also be a powerful development incentive.

### Ansley Mall

#### Concept Vision

Located around **Ansley Mall**, this node is currently a flourishing retail area set within stable single-family neighborhoods, such as Ansley Park, Morningside and Piedmont Heights. The node boundaries include Piedmont Avenue to the east, the BeltLine to the west, the northern edge of Ansley Mall to the north and the Piedmont Park Northwoods west expansion site to the south. In addition to Ansley Mall, the area includes multiple commercial strip centers, such as the Creek Crossing shopping center south of Piedmont Avenue; out-parcel retail along Monroe Drive and some apartments east of Monroe Drive.

Though Ansley Mall and this surrounding retail provide much-needed neighborhood retail amenities to the area, the low density character and poor aesthetics detract from its potential as a vibrant and unique retail district. While the planning team and the workshop participants recognize that any development at Ansley Mall will be a long-term opportunity, there was general consensus that future development should be higher-density, incorporating the current retail facilities into a mixed-use environment. The overall vision created by the community included a thriving district fronting the Piedmont Park expansion; a development that was urban, but at the same time sensitive to the surrounding residential community. The workshop participants identified traffic congestion as a key deterrent that must be addressed to support any new development around Ansley Mall.

#### Land Use & Development

The central piece for the Ansley redevelopment framework is a medium to high density mixed-use development on the 25-acre Ansley Mall and adjacent Kroger Shopping Center site. The focal point of this development is a central plaza surrounded by a road, which forms a gateway connecting to the BeltLine stop located on the western edge of the development node. Residential buildings with ground level retail varying from six-eight stories buildings front the central plaza and Monroe Drive, creating an urban edge. Buildings toward the western edge of Ansley Mall

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 8 of 25

are mostly two – four storied residential structures, reducing in height and creating a buffer for the Ansley Park neighborhood. This buffer is augmented by the location of the BeltLine Trail, transit and Clear Creek which run between the new development and the single-family neighborhood. Similarly, development east of Monroe Drive is also sensitive to the lower-densities in Piedmont Heights and Morningside, with predominately two-four story residential development replacing the existing apartment complex. A new road connecting Morningside Drive and Monroe Drive creates a frontage for this residential development, as well as an alternative connection between Piedmont Avenue and Monroe Drive. Workshop participants recognized the need to redevelop the Clear Creek shopping complex to provide a better frontage to the Piedmont Park expansion site. New development recommended for the site would include low density mixed-use along Monroe Drive and six-eight storied residential on the park frontage.

#### **Parks & Plazas**

The planned Piedmont Park expansion, which adds recreation fields, play areas and a skate park provides the ideal environment to support the redevelopment of the Ansley Mall area. This ten-acre northeast expansion is just one part of a concerted effort by the Piedmont Park Conservancy to achieve the vision shaped by the Olmstead brothers in 1904. The BeltLine trail runs parallel to the existing rail alignment bridging over Clear Creek at Ansley Mall and entering the park south of Piedmont Avenue through a gateway created by new development fronting the expansion. Further south, the trail experience is enhanced by unique natural features, such as the pristine Northwoods area, granite outcroppings and the Clear Creek. The BeltLine trail is proposed to connect to the community at strategic junctions – Ansley Park, the new Central Plaza at Ansley Mall and the Piedmont Park expansion.

#### **Circulation Network**

Several improvements will be required to support new development in the Ansley Mall area. Extending Morningside Drive to connect Piedmont Avenue and Monroe Drive will provide additional access to both Ansley Mall and the BeltLine stop. But this would also require realignment and improvements to the Morningside Drive and Piedmont Avenue intersection. Streetscape and improvements for pedestrian safety will be critical along Piedmont Avenue and Monroe Drive, as well as the major intersections on both roads. The City will undertake a detailed traffic study along Monroe Drive, with completion anticipated by 2006. The BeltLine transit follows the existing rail line, creating an interesting experience as it travels under Montgomery Ferry Drive, bridges over Clear Creek and then under Piedmont Avenue before entering Piedmont Park. The BeltLine stop is strategically placed at the center of the Ansley Mall development, providing access to the Ansley Park, Morningside and Piedmont Heights communities.

#### **10<sup>th</sup> & Monroe**

#### **Concept Vision**

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 9 of 25

The **10th Street/Monroe Drive** node is the second area of detailed study in the northeast NPU cluster. It includes parcels along the eastern edge of Piedmont Park (in the BeltLine right-of-way), the Midtown Promenade retail shopping center, some parcels along Virginia Avenue and the Georgia Power site west of Ponce de Leon Place. With primary access from 10th Street, Monroe Drive and Virginia Avenue, this area faces traffic congestion, complicated by a difficult road and intersection system. But even with these traffic challenges, this area provides an opportunity for redevelopment due to its proximity to Midtown and its numerous underused parcels. There was general community consensus on key sites within this node - mixed-use development on a portion of the Midtown Promenade site and some higher density residential uses along the BeltLine south of Virginia Avenue. Participants at the workshop recognized that redevelopment of older retail and other underused parcels was inevitable, but they expressed concern about traffic and circulation impacts. The vision for redevelopment was to create a predominately residential node with retail located at strategic, high-traffic junctions. The new development would be compatible in height and density with surrounding development and transition toward single-family neighborhoods.

#### Land Use & Development

New development within this node is restricted to strategic underused sites likely to redevelop over the next few years. During the workshop, the Midtown Promenade Shopping Center was identified as a key opportunity for partial redevelopment. A medium density mixed-use development with heights ranging from five–eight stories would replace the single-storied retail complex, incorporating this retail into ground level storefronts. The workshop participants also supported the expansion and rehabilitation of the Midtown Arts Cinema as an entertainment venue and suggested additional pedestrian connections to the Midtown Shopping Plaza (where Home Depot is located). Higher density development is recommended along the BeltLine south of Virginia Avenue, as a continuation of the edge created by the Archstone development. While the framework plan calls for a new park on the Georgia Pacific site, the final definition of the project may allow some development along the western periphery, closer to the BeltLine. Another area for future development is at the storage facility and adjacent sites north of Virginia Avenue. Medium density residential is recommended for this area with development stepping down to a maximum of four stories on the eastern edge. The BeltLine stop is at the intersection of the Park and Monroe Drive, with a path connection extending to the 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Virginia Avenue intersection. The Framework Plan proposes greenspace for the BeltLine right-of-way at Piedmont Park, reflecting the opinion of a majority of participants who chose a no-build option. Circulation and open space enhancements as discussed below will support these land use and redevelopment recommendations.

#### Parks & Plazas

Any redevelopment at this node would benefit from the adjacency to Piedmont Park, one of Atlanta's most prominent open spaces. Park improvements to the meadows area, a range of new programs and activities, and planned expansions will make this venue even more inviting and

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 10 of 25

popular. The BeltLine trail is envisioned to run parallel to the park edge allowing more visibility and easy access. The gentle grade change between the development site and park provides multiple opportunities for connecting the BeltLine trail to existing park trails. The trail follows the transit line in the remaining section of this node, except at 10<sup>th</sup> street and Monroe Drive, where it realigns to border the new intersection. An additional opportunity for expanding neighborhood open space is at the 18-acre Georgia Power Site east of the BeltLine and south of Virginia Avenue. The new park will provide much-needed active recreation space for Grady High School and create an extension for the 'Field of Dreams' park, which currently serves the surrounding community.

### Circulation Network

As discussed earlier, transportation improvements, especially at 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Monroe Drive, would be critical for any new development within this node. A major recommended project is the realignment of 10<sup>th</sup> Street to curve along the northeastern edge of Grady High School's recreation area, and connect to Virginia Avenue through the island between Monroe Drive and Virginia Avenue. This realignment would reduce three intersections at Monroe Drive to just one at Virginia Avenue. Kanuga Street will become a service street with new development fronting Cooledge Avenue or Virginia Avenue. A new street, the extension of Cooledge Avenue west of Monroe Drive with a signalized intersection will be required to access the development on the Piedmont Park edge. Similarly, an extension of Virginia Circle to connect west of Ponce de Leon Place is also recommended to support new development on the Georgia Power site. The transit follows the existing rail alignment except at the Piedmont Park edge, where it jogs along the western edge of the BeltLine right-of-way. The BeltLine runs at grade to the Monroe Drive Crossing, then travels under Virginia Avenue and continues at grade adjacent to the Georgia Power facility.

### Ralph McGill

#### Concept Vision

Of the three development nodes in the northeast NPU cluster, the **Ralph McGill** site is the likeliest to see near-term redevelopment. Located in the Old Fourth Ward neighborhood (but close to the Poncey Highland area), this node has significant vacant land, surface parking lots, unoccupied buildings, and underused properties. The node is bordered by Glen Iris Avenue to the west, the BeltLine to the east, North Avenue to the north and Freedom Parkway to the south. It consists mainly older warehouse properties, some single family houses and some recent new and rehabilitation projects. In fact, some of the reuse projects such as the Telephone Factory lofts, Southern Dairies mixed-use building and NuGrape lofts have become examples for loft conversions in the city. New developments such as Block Lofts and Copenhill lofts have also maintained the high-quality and character appropriate in this area. A major project currently underway is the City Hall East redevelopment at the northern edge of the node, a mixed-use project incorporating a central green space. Even with this development, this node has many challenges, such as a dis-

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 11 of 25

connected local roads system, steep grades and potential brownfields. Assets include historic resources such as the Excelsior building, which is currently occupied by the Masquerade Club and some older warehouse facilities that offer strong conversion opportunities. Numerous additional historic resources such as the loading docks behind NuGrape lofts, railroad crossing signs and signals at Irwin Street will contribute to the BeltLine experience. Community participants at the northeast workshop were supportive of higher density development within this node, which is also consistent with the Old Fourth Ward neighborhood's Redevelopment Plan. The TPL study conducted in 2004 identified this area for a large-scale urban park, which was reaffirmed by workshop participants. Development around the new park would step down in density from the BeltLine to Glen Iris Drive and would be supported by new internal roads.

### Land Use & Development

Building on development currently underway in this node, the redevelopment framework proposes an ambitious plan for increasing the housing stock and providing essential neighborhood facilities. The new development is planned around a 30 plus acre new park, which stretches from Morgan Street to Freedom Parkway. The proposed development is mostly residential, with mixed use strategically set at and around the transit stop at Dallas Street. The topography at the BeltLine allows for eight-twelve storied buildings along its edge, without overpowering existing development west of the rail line. These buildings would benefit from a superb view of the downtown skyline and the new park. Development directly fronting the park varies from eight-ten stories, creating a continuous façade bordering the park.

The BeltLine itself will be a great urban experience in this section with proposed and existing high-density residential uses, creating a tunnel effect broken occasionally for glimpses of the new park. Development along Glen Iris Drive, on the node's western edge, steps down further to four-six stories, creating a transition to the single-family neighborhood on the west. Glen Iris is also anticipated to be a unique experience with a blend of new developments and rehabilitation projects lining the eastern edge. Potential reuse projects include the brick warehouse on Ralph McGill Boulevard and the Aramark Service Center on Glen Iris Drive. Future development is proposed to blend seamlessly into the Ponce Park project by connecting the new park to the proposed open space at City Hall East redevelopment site.

**Section 2. Major Development Nodes**

**A. Node Descriptions**

September 2, 2005

Page 12 of 25

**Parks & Plazas**

The new park within Old Fourth Ward is an opportunity to create a major destination along the BeltLine. With both active recreation areas and a large central green space, the park would create frontage and perhaps greater momentum for redevelopment of the Old Fourth Ward neighborhood. The BeltLine trail runs along the existing rail line and is further supported by an additional trail, which connects Ponce Park to Freedom Parkway through the new park. The BeltLine trail can also potentially connect to Freedom Parkway south of this node using the grade change at Bernina Avenue. An additional trail is proposed along Ralph McGill Boulevard using the wide right-of-way to provide alternative bicycle and pedestrian access to the Carter Center.

**Circulation Network**

This ambitious redevelopment framework is supported by a large scale transportation improvements program. These new internal roads are anticipated to improve circulation and create additional development sites. Road extensions include: connecting Angier Springs Road to Dallas Street; extending North Angier Springs Road to Ralph McGill Boulevard (creating additional development opportunities along the new park frontage); and extending Angier Avenue east to intersect the North Angier Springs extension. Additionally, Ensley Street will be realigned to Ashley Avenue, which terminates into Angier Avenue. At the southern end of the node, an extension of Willoughby Lane through the new park creates a new connection between Ralph McGill Boulevard and the BeltLine. This street will be extended farther north to connect through Angier Avenue to Dallas Street. Finally, a new alley/street bisecting the block east of Glen Iris Drive (and connecting two local roads – Wilmer Street and Fortune Street) opens up development opportunities along the western edge of the new park. Intersection improvements will also be a part of the improvements plan, focused primarily on the intersection along Ralph McGill Boulevard and the crossing at BeltLine and Dallas Street.

**Section 2. Major Development Nodes**

**A. Node Descriptions**

September 2, 2005

Page 13 of 25

**Memorial / Bill Kennedy Way**

**Concept Vision**

The northernmost of the three southeast development nodes, at **Memorial/Bill Kennedy Way**, has a high concentration of active development. The existing momentum in the immediate area offers a strong redevelopment base from which to build. Centered on Memorial Drive, the node stretches east to Gibson Street, west to Pearl Street, north to Fulton Terrace, and south to I-20.

The general character of the area is industrial, with old brick and concrete-frame warehouses lining Memorial and active light industrial occupying most of the western half of this node. This area is also marked by views of downtown Atlanta, and a vista down Memorial Drive.

The central intersection has already undergone almost complete redevelopment, with new three-story condo buildings on all but the southeast corner. The two western corners consist of industrial buildings renovated into lofts, while the northeast corner has new buildings with an industrial aesthetic. The southeast corner has an existing, and recently upgraded, light industrial tenant. At the proposed transit stop in the center, a historic depot building awaits renovation, and could create an excellent landmark and visual terminus at the end of Bill Kennedy Way.

This new construction activity has the potential to affect surrounding areas. During the public involvement phase, participants recommended higher-density (five- to eight-story) mixed-use/residential along the Memorial Drive corridor. Development would step down to two- to four-story residential near the single-family Reynoldstown and Cabbagetown neighborhoods to the north; and transition to one- to two-story light industrial use adjacent to I-20 in the south. Medium density residential (five- to eight-stories) would also continue south along the west side of Bill Kennedy Way to I-20. Finally, a new park (an acre and a half) just northeast of the stop would add to the general activity within the node.

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 14 of 25

#### **Land Use & Development**

As an area in the midst of aggressive redevelopment, a pattern of density has already been set. This light industrial corridor can accommodate mixed-use and residential program in the five- to eight-story range without compromising the integrity of the adjacent neighborhoods. Similarly, there is land available between the corridor and the neighborhoods to allow for the scaling down of buildings near the single-family housing to the north. To the south, an adjacency to I-20 and active light industrial allows a similar level of density without residential compatibility issues.

The transit stop and plaza at the end of Bill Kennedy Way should form the focal point of this node. An existing historic depot at that site offers a restoration opportunity and adjacent right-of-way to accommodate a small plaza.

#### **Parks & Plazas**

As a currently dense area with some active light industrial uses, the node has limited opportunity for large new greenspaces. An approximately one and a half acre, topographically-difficult site exists just north and east of the proposed transit stop. The City's Watershed Management Department plans to use this site for water storage.

#### **Circulation Network**

This node is already set within a fairly established grid street network, but several recommended new roadways could refine oversized blocks. These serve primarily to provide better access between Memorial Drive and the interior of the adjacent neighborhoods, both new and existing. The rest of the node is very well connected. Memorial Drive provides a direct line into downtown Atlanta, and Bill Kennedy Way provides immediate access to I-20. Moreland Avenue and Boulevard Avenue, two main north-south routes, are just outside the study area, to the east and west, respectively.

The BeltLine transit and path would travel north up Bill Kennedy Way and cross Memorial Drive at the intersection, stopping at the existing depot. From that point, the line would continue north into Reynoldstown, until reaching Hulsey Yard.

#### **Boulevard Crossing**

#### **Concept Vision**

The **Boulevard Crossing** node has a large amount of potential greenspace. At the suggestion of the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a large utility easement, feeding off a nearby substation, and a creek setback could provide a swath of land for a park. Beyond greenspace, the node offers potential for redevelopment, especially to the south. This node is bounded on the east by Boule-

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 15 of 25

vard Avenue and on the west by a proposed extension of Cherokee Avenue. The site extends roughly a block north of the BeltLine right-of-way, and Englewood forms its southern edge.

The character of the node is as varied as its boundaries. To the north and east, the Grant Park neighborhood offers some of the most distinct housing in Atlanta, as well as a premier park amenity and zoo. To the west are existing Public Works facilities and some active light industry. To the south, more light industrial uses buffer some older single-family and multi-family housing. The topography is extremely varied, with the land on either side of the line rising or falling dramatically. Some of the higher points offer views of the downtown Atlanta skyline.

While most of the area between the Cherokee Street extension and Boulevard would be new greenspace, development opportunities exist at the intersection of the BeltLine right-of-way at both streets, and south, beyond Englewood. The crossing at Boulevard would feature primarily mixed-use development, ranging from five- to eight-stories immediately adjacent the line and down to two- to four-stories between the existing residential areas. A loft conversion is also suggested for a low-density light industrial use on the northwest corner. Moving south on Boulevard, a high-density residential development, served in all likelihood by some sort of deck, would face the southern side of the BeltLine. As development moved south, this would transition to five- to eight-story residential, backing onto the proposed new park. Turning west on Englewood, the five- to eight-story development would continue on the north side of the street, with three- to four-story residential on the south side, transitioning down to the single family. This condition would be continued back north on the Cherokee Street extension, with another mixed-use center at the rail crossing.

### Land Use & Development

As mentioned previously, the current development pattern along the rail right-of-way represents a core of light industry surrounded by established single-family neighborhoods. The public input reflected interest in a development shift from light industrial use to mixed-use and higher density residential along the rail line, and preserving single-family neighborhoods. At the heart of the node, where utility and creek easements preclude built development, the vision includes park land. Along the streets that line the node (Boulevard, Englewood and Cherokee) five- to eight-story residential buildings transition down to three- to four-story housing away from the BeltLine. There is an existing subsidized-housing project, Englewood Manor, along the southern edge. Participants viewed the site as a strong redevelopment candidate, but also stressed a need to maintain affordable housing. Finally, mixed-use nodes are shown at key intersections, primarily at Boulevard and the BeltLine, and at Cherokee and the BeltLine.

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 16 of 25

#### **Parks & Plazas**

The centerpiece of this node is the addition of a large park within the power and creek easements that bisect the site. Beginning in the northwest corner of the node, at the Horse Park just beyond the utility substation, the park would extend south and east, crossing Boulevard at Englewood. This intersection would include a public plaza, with the park continuing southeast along In-trenchment Creek. The program would include greenspace, primarily along the utility easement, but with tree preservation areas to the north and east.

#### **Circulation Network**

The biggest circulation enhancement in this area is reconnecting Cherokee Avenue underneath the BeltLine and south to Englewood. Since rail severed many of the streets in Grant Park, this improvement would help to reestablish the historic grid. Working off of this extension, additional streets would be added between the new park and Englewood. This would create a series of neighborhood-scaled blocks along the southern edge, aiding in the transition from higher-density uses near the rail line. Intersection improvements may be required at the Cherokee and Boulevard crossings to accommodate the path sharing the right-of-way with the transit. Recognizing the importance of Grant Park to the north, greenways would extend from the BeltLine up along either Cherokee or Boulevard, or both.

#### **University/Pryor**

##### **Concept Vision**

Pryor Road and University Avenue are two primary surface arteries within Atlanta, but are remarkably underdeveloped for their capacity. Intersecting just north of the BeltLine crossing at Pryor, the **University/Pryor** node offers an high-density opportunity for redevelopment. The opportunity occurs along Pryor, encompassing a large block to the north and east of University, both sides of Pryor between University and the BeltLine, and on the west side of Pryor just south of the rail right-of-way. Existing development is primarily older and poorly maintained light-industry and commercial. Topography here is rolling, with Pryor dipping below the BeltLine and the general grade ascending east and west. The most notable features are I-75/85, which is elevated less than a block to the west, and Carver High School, in the southeast corner of the node. These features, combined with active rail to the northeast and new single-family housing to the south, mark the only physical constraints on this otherwise growth-oriented site.

In general, public attitude favored new and higher density uses here, especially given ease of access to the interstate. The primary desire was for retail and commercial, possibly of a regional scale, and an expressed interest in an employment center, perhaps in the form of mid-rise office. Creating a new employment center is a challenging task, but over the long-term, this node should become an active core anchoring an array of uses.

##### **Land Use & Development**

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 17 of 25

The new development proposed for the area is varied. Starting at the northeast corner of the Pryor/University intersection, a one- to four-story commercial center is sited, with industrial land use between it and the active rail farther northeast. This was an area where big box retail could fit suitably, especially along the edges of the node. On either side of Pryor, south of University, five- to eight-story office development is targeted, served by internal parking decks. These office buildings transition to medium-density residential on both sides of the BeltLine (with mixed-use development at the Pryor Road crossing), then to low-density residential, blending into the single family neighborhoods.

#### **Parks & Plazas**

Compared to the Pryor Road crossing and at the tunnel under McDonough to the east, the right-of-way along this stretch is accommodating. Beyond the greenway, however, few open space opportunities remain. The most notable is the area surrounding Carver High and Slater Elementary. This school property could function as a shared park amenity, and serve as a gateway to the schools. Carver in particular would benefit, as its reconfiguration makes it a likely destination for BeltLine commuters. On a smaller scale, a transit plaza would surround the BeltLine stop, providing some open space among the new development.

#### **Circulation Network**

The irregular shape of the node makes it a challenge to establish a grid. However, new roadways are envisioned to provide interior access to the proposed development. The focus should be on intersection improvements, particularly along University at both Pryor and the interstate on-ramps. The awkward angle at Pryor causes vehicular delays and makes pedestrian movement difficult. The on- and off-ramps are poorly configured and often cause jams in adjacent intersections. The area will also need significant improvements to the pedestrian amenities. Sidewalks are in poor condition, and not buffered from heavy traffic.

#### **Metropolitan/University**

##### **Concept Vision**

The **Metropolitan/University** node is essentially the frontage of University Avenue from Metropolitan to I-75/85 and the industrial properties to the south of University. This area is characterized by the underused industrial distribution and warehousing facilities adjacent to the active rail line on the immediate south. The Pittsburgh neighborhood is the northern edge of this development area, which has recently seen a resurgence of investment and energy upon the completion of its Community Redevelopment Plan in 2001. South of the rail line is the stable Capitol View neighborhood and several acres of vacant land adjacent to the interstate.

The biggest asset for this development area is ready accessibility to I-75/85, and the University and Metropolitan Parkway corridors. In general, grade variations, undevelopable land and con-

## **Section 2. Major Development Nodes**

### **A. Node Descriptions**

September 2, 2005

Page 18 of 25

tamination pose challenges for future development in this node. The City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management has plans for the next several years to repair sewers and install new sewers on-site, as mandated under the 1998 consent decree, and use the site as a staging area for the combined sewer overflow (CSO) work in the central city. The long-term vision as expressed during the public workshops suggests reinvigorating this industrial area as a new mixed-use, community. New residential units, retail, community and regional services, office development and open space can serve existing residents as well as attract new visitors, thus improving the economic base for the area.

#### **Land Use & Development**

The Metropolitan Parkway & University Avenue node development plan includes a short-term and long-term redevelopment strategy. The short-term strategy supports the City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management efforts to use the site for the City-wide sewer separation project. Included in this strategy is the development of open space along the southeast quadrant of the site where the sewer trunk line will constrain development. The long-term strategy for this development area builds on the accessibility to the interstate, Metropolitan Parkway and University Avenue by redeveloping the industrial sites and breaking up the super blocks with a new street network and centralized parking and courtyards. The plan recommends four to six story mixed-use development buildings fronting University Avenue. The southern portion of the site includes a series of residential buildings ranging from four to eight stories depending on the grade variations. The eastern edge of the development site suggests new five to eight story office buildings with interior parking to serve as an employment generator for the area.

#### **Parks & Plazas**

The greenspace identified for this node includes a series of centralized plazas that work with the new roadways in the proposed development. The design of the plazas creates a pedestrian oriented environment to serve the proposed retail, residential and office uses. The main plaza, located at the McDaniel extension also contains a transit stop. To assist with new greenspace amenities, the plan recommends a large greenspace opportunity south of the rail line west of the interstate along the CSO trunk line. The BeltLine greenway trail continues along the southern right-of-way of the existing rail line and extends into the proposed greenspace to the south of the development node, providing access into the Capitol View neighborhood.

#### **Circulation Network**

A new street grid is proposed to improve accessibility and circulation within the development node. Recommendations include extending Welch, McDaniel, Garibaldi and Booker south and terminating at centralized courtyards and plazas with a combination of green and hardscapes. To improve the vehicular movements into the new development, the plan proposes interchange improvements in addition to widening University Avenue from I-75/85 to Metropolitan Parkway. To improve the pedestrian environment and connectivity into the neighborhoods, streetscape

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 19 of 25

improvements along University, McDaniel and Metropolitan are warranted. The proposed transit runs along the existing rail line and a new transit stop is suggested in the heart of the development node to serve residents, workers, and the visitors to the area.

### Murphy Triangle

#### Concept Vision

The **Murphy Triangle** node is Murphy Avenue and Lee Street from White Street to the north and White Oak Avenue to the south and Allene to the west. The existing fabric of this area consists of a once active industrial area comprised of one to two story warehouses and distribution centers, some which have been adaptively reused for artist lofts and offices. Many structures, however, are unoccupied and in dilapidated condition. There are small local service retail buildings along Lee Street that possess a historic architectural character that is desired by the surrounding neighborhoods, including Oakland City and Adair Park.

Distinguishing features within this node include the State of Georgia surplus storage facility along Sylvan Road, abandoned warehouses and industrial facilities north of Warner and an active rail line to the north. The biggest constraint for future development in this node is the possible environmental contamination on various sites along Murphy Avenue and Sylvan Road. Other concerns include abandonment and the perception of crime due to the abundance of unoccupied structures along Murphy, Sylvan and Warner. Despite these constraints, the historic single-family neighborhoods of Oakland City and Adair Park offer a sense of stability and activity in the area. The presence of the elevated MARTA rail line and the West End and Oakland MARTA stations immediately to the north and south of the node are major assets as well. Building from the momentum generated by the rebirth of industrial districts throughout the City, the workshop vision suggests redeveloping underused properties and vacant lots within the development node into a new mixed-use community that combines adaptive reuse projects, new multi-family, office, and artist district.

#### Land Use & Development

The development concept suggests retaining the true historic industrial character of this area through the development of new mixed-use and residential development in conjunction with the rehabilitation of several structures where applicable. Within the Lee Street and Murphy Triangle node, MARTA and the BeltLine supports higher density development to take advantage of the transit connection. The area west of Lee Street between White and Donnelly, flanking both sides of the rail line, is recommended for four to six story mixed-use and residential buildings with interior shared parking. Development would step down as it approaches the single-family neighborhood, with low density mixed-use development along the eastern edge of the railroads, allowing views of the Atlanta skyline and avoiding encroachment into the single-family residential fabric. The area bounded by Allene, Warner and Murphy is distinguished by its tremendous opportunity to create a new mixed-use neighborhood with the reuse of existing historically sig-

**Section 2. Major Development Nodes**

**A. Node Descriptions**

September 2, 2005

Page 20 of 25

nificant buildings and new development ranging from four to eight stories and interior parking, plazas and courtyards for light industrial operations, small scale office, retail services, restaurants and residential. The State of Georgia Surplus facility is targeted for adaptive reuse as potential artist studios to tap into the market for office, retail and residential space that is flourishing in Atlanta.

**Parks & Plazas**

The design concept for the Lee Street and Murphy Triangle node calls for a major park and two smaller supporting open spaces flanking the BeltLine at Allene Avenue. The twenty-three acre new park bound by Sylvan Road, the BeltLine and Allene Avenue is anticipated to drive new redevelopment in the surrounding area, in addition to providing open space to support current and future residents. The program for the park includes the artists' studios facing Sylvan Road, new active and passive recreation areas and a transit plaza at the BeltLine transit stop. Sites that are not currently vacant are identified as prime targets for open space opportunities to potentially serve as gateways into Adair Park due to development grading constraints and possible contamination.

**Circulation Network**

An internal street grid is recommended at the development site west of Murphy Avenue to enhance the development potential in the area. This new street network breaks up the super blocks, provides improved connectivity, incorporates on-street parking where appropriate, and adds street trees and pedestrian amenities to enhance function among diverse uses. Pedestrian movements from Lee Street to Murphy Avenue are currently limited due to the lack of crosswalks, signalization and signage. A signalized grade crossing is recommended at Lee/Murphy and Sylvan in addition to improvements at the crossing at Allene and Catherine. To improve transit accessibility, the plan proposes the installation of a transit stop at Murphy Triangle that also serves as a transfer point for a possible expansion of the Peachtree Streetcar that connects to the West End and Oakland City MARTA Stations. The transit alignment is proposed along the existing rail line in conjunction with the greenway trail located on the south side of the right-of-way. This greenway also connects to the White Street Greenway Spur to the west and the Lee Street Greenway that extends south to East Point.

## Section 2. Major Development Nodes

### A. Node Descriptions

September 2, 2005

Page 21 of 25

#### Cascade/RDA

##### **Concept Vision**

The **Cascade/Ralph David Abernathy** node consists of the Kroger Citi-Center property and underused retail structures within a quarter mile of the Ralph David Abernathy (RDA) and Cascade Avenue intersection from Atwood to the east and Oglethorpe to the west. Historically, RDA was a vibrant economic main street for the southside that contained shops, services, small businesses and entertainment that were patronized by the Atlanta African-American community. Several of these structures are located in this node, but are currently underused, unoccupied or in dilapidated condition. While this area has seen a resurgence of activity and an economic boost with the development of the Kroger Citi-Center and new residential development farther south along Cascade Avenue, inactive warehouse and industrial properties remain along White Street and Donnelly Avenue. A below grade rail line straddles the center of the node and is flanked by warehouses and industrial properties. The major physical constraint to future development in this node is the signalized intersection of RDA and Cascade in addition to the below grade rail line that tunnels below RDA. Despite these physical constraints, this node has assets to contribute to future redevelopment, including access to I-20 from Langhorn and the Gordon White Park located at the southwest corner of White Street and RDA. The historic and architecturally significant retail structures along RDA also contribute to the historic main street character of this node. The public consensus for the Cascade and Ralph David Abernathy node includes higher density residential, retail and office uses. Workshop participants also envisioned adaptive reuse of abandoned warehouses for future office/technology development, infill residential above retail along RDA, construction of a transit stop, improvements to an existing City park and plazas integrated with new development sites.

##### **Land Use & Development**

The development concept for the Cascade and Ralph David Abernathy node seeks to capitalize on the access from I-20 at Langhorn, the White Street and Langhorn corridors and the existing economic and residential activity along RDA and Cascade Avenue. The concept calls for a new mixed-use, pedestrian oriented neighborhood center that can serve existing and future residents, workers and an increased amount of visitors drawn by the BeltLine transit stop and greenway trail. The existing surface parking lot at the Kroger Citi-Center presents an opportunity for infill development of four to six story buildings containing mixed-use retail on the ground floor and residential above with a main street character of neighborhood retail services. The opportunity for a centralized parking deck to support the retail and residential units. In addition to the Kroger Citi-Center site, underused retail properties along Cascade Avenue and RDA to the north of this site present opportunities for higher density retail with housing units above. The underused warehouses and industrial properties along White Street and Donnelly Avenue are recommended as a series of medium density residential buildings with an urban four to six story character with internal parking. In order to protect the integrity and views of the adjacent Oakland City neighborhood, these residential structures step down to at Donnelly Avenue.

## **Section 2. Major Development Nodes**

### **A. Node Descriptions**

September 2, 2005

Page 22 of 25

#### **Parks & Plazas**

The plan calls for enhancements to the existing Gordon White Park located at the intersection of White Street and RDA and a proposed new park immediately to the south to promote more activity. The development of open space coupled with a new community plaza positioned at the entrance of the Kroger Citi-Center on RDA serve as gathering areas and gateways for the community. The plaza connects to the new Cascade transit stop and is ringed by housing above active retail and local serving office uses. The improvements include brick pavers, seating and trees, for transit patrons and creating an identity/theme for the development area. Due to the below grade transit line, the plan suggests constructing a greenway spur along White Street. White Street is currently four lanes with an abundance of right-of-way on both sides and provides better accessibility for patrons.

#### **Circulation Network**

New roadways and streetscape improvements are proposed to assist with circulation at this major redevelopment area. The plan proposes a new street at the Kroger Citi-Center to improve the intersection of RDA and Cascade Avenue in addition to breaking up the super block and help frame the new mixed-use development site. Due to associated visibility and safety concerns, intersection improvements are recommended at two key intersections. The Y intersection of Langhorn Street, White Street and RDA should be studied to alleviate safety and operational improvements. In addition the Y intersection of RDA and Cascade has similar safety and operational concerns and warrants operational and pedestrian improvements. Due to the proposed mixed-use and residential development opportunities at the Cascade & Ralph David Abernathy node, the plan recommends the BeltLine transit alignment along the existing below grade rail line and incorporating a transit stop and plaza adjacent to the Kroger Citi-Center development.

#### **Additional Development Areas**

The twelve redevelopment nodes discussed above are only a part of the entire redevelopment potential of the BeltLine. Each node has to some degree additional development opportunities in the areas just beyond its conceptual boundaries – either in scattered individual development parcels such as could be found along Ponce de Leon Avenue; or in significantly large redevelopment tracts like the RDA corridor east of Murphy Street. While the nodes were selected on the basis of concentrations of vacant or underused land at likely transit stops, these sites account for only about 40 percent of the total redevelopment potential along the BeltLine. This corresponds to the projected capacity for new housing in the nodes versus the whole, following the notion that the entire BeltLine corridor is equally suitable and appropriate for residential uses. Commercial allocations were higher in the nodes, however; at about 51 percent of total commercial, the projec-

**Section 2. Major Development Nodes**

**A. Node Descriptions**

September 2, 2005

Page 23 of 25

tions in the nodes reflect the importance of interstate proximity to the office market – reinforcing the strategic locations of the Northside Drive and University/Metropolitan.

The northeast NPU cluster is distinguished by redevelopment areas at its northern and southern extremes, as well as areas along Ponce de Leon that link the 10<sup>th</sup>/Monroe and Ralph McGill nodes into a continuous zone of potential redevelopment. The most prominent is the Lindbergh area, which is already developing as a mixed-use transit-oriented center. Properties around the MARTA Station, including some older apartment complexes and marginal retail along Piedmont Avenue, are envisioned to be a mix of residential and office uses with retail lining the major corridors. South of Lindbergh, Armour Yard provides some opportunities for redevelopment into a high-rise office or residential neighborhood closer to the BeltLine; and just west across the railroads, the Armour Circle-Ottley Drive business/industrial district has a few infill opportunities for warehouses or light industrial buildings.

In the portion of the northeast cluster south of I-85, existing retail districts such as the Ponce de Leon corridor and Amsterdam Walk have the potential of becoming higher density mixed-use areas, with existing neighborhood services incorporated as ground level retail. Any redevelopment in this area should be sensitive to historic resources such as the Ford Factory Lofts, City Hall East, and the historic storefronts and small warehouses on Ponce de Leon Place. South of Freedom Parkway, opportunities for redevelopment are mostly for infill or rehabilitation projects, along DeKalb Avenue, Krog Street and Elizabeth Avenue. Even with good access and a promising housing market, brownfield contamination may be a deterrent for development in this section of the BeltLine. Potential development includes residential multifamily, lofts or live-work units.

In the southeast NPU cluster the accessible rail line, the amount of undeveloped land, and the number of intersections between roads and the BeltLine offer at least three additional opportunities that are just as significant as the detailed nodes. One of the sites is Hulsey Yard. To a certain extent, development is predicated on the method used to get the transit and greenway across the existing intermodal yard. If the strategy involves cutting a tunnel or constructing a bridge (or both), the approach points offer logical areas for concentrated development. If the strategy involves skirting the yard using existing viaducts, then redevelopment might happen wherever the BeltLine runs into existing nodes. Possibly difficult, is the partial or complete relocation of Hulsey Yard. In this event, a major area would open up for new development and open space, creating one of the most desirable properties on the entire circuit. Farther south along the BeltLine and adjacent to the Memorial node, the intersection of Bill Kennedy Way and Glenwood Avenue is an excellent location, already active with redevelopment that would provide momentum for future growth. It has quick access to I-20 and several large light industrial parcels, which should, in the long term, be shifted to the mixed-use and residential uses that are more in keeping with its immediate context. For the remaining parcels, development is suggested similar to that which is occurring at Glenwood Park.

**Section 2. Major Development Nodes**

**A. Node Descriptions**

September 2, 2005

Page 24 of 25

Finally, less than a half-mile to the north and east of the Pryor/University node is a five-point intersection at Hank Aaron Drive and McDonough. Not only a fascinating transit node (five roads come together, as well as the BeltLine and an additional active rail line), there is a great deal of undeveloped land and some excellent connections to adjacent neighborhoods. University provides easy access to the interstate, McDonough travels east into residential neighborhoods, and Hank Aaron Drive provides a direct link north to downtown. Proposed is a medium-density mixed-use development, organized around a transit stop in the wedge between Hank Aaron and the BeltLine.

The southwest has many additional redevelopment areas, some adjacent to the three nodes, but some outside the immediate BeltLine corridor. In fact, potential redevelopment parcels lying outside a one-half mile buffer from the BeltLine transit alignment roughly equal those lying within; primarily because of the redevelopment opportunities around the mode transfer points at the West End and Oakland City MARTA Stations, which could be connected to the BeltLine by an extension of the Peachtree Streetcar. Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard (RDA) from Lowery to Holderness is historically known as an economic and entertainment Main Street for the African-American community in Atlanta. The existing vacant land, underused retail structures and proximity to the West End MARTA Station and I-20 all contribute to the likelihood that this area will transform into a mixed-use corridor.

Farther east along RDA, the West End MARTA Station area provides an opportunity for a dense mixed-use transit-based development node that could attract students and staff from the Atlanta University Center, residents from the surrounding historic neighborhoods, local visitors, and employees of West End businesses. The RDA redevelopment corridor widens as it continues east, culminating at McDaniel Street. The HOPE VI redevelopment of the McDaniel-Glenn public housing complex by the Atlanta Housing Authority anchors this end of RDA; it is a significant and catalytic project that replaces obsolete housing with a new mixed-income, mixed-use community that will have a major impact on the future of the Mechanicsville neighborhood.

Moving in the opposite direction from RDA and Holderness, the intersection of Cascade Road and Beecher Street is a potential site for small-scale mixed-use development on the southern end of Cascade. This traditional, historic neighborhood commercial node has several infill opportunities and is located midway between the BeltLine and White Park; a new streetscape along Cascade would link the two and bring White Park into the network of BeltLine 'jewels.' Finally, the Oakland City MARTA Station area with its abundance of surface parking, vacant lots and deteriorated housing represents a transit-oriented redevelopment area considering the presence of MARTA rail and the site's proximity to Langford Parkway, I-20, and downtown.

Completing the BeltLine circuit, the northwest NPU cluster has additional redevelopment areas distributed throughout - with the exception being north of I-85 - in different patterns such as random infill sites along Howell Mill Road and Bishop Street, or larger more consolidated parcels like those north of Simpson and east of Maddox Park. In fact, this transitional area between Maddox Park and the English Avenue neighborhood connects Simpson Road to another redevelop-

**Section 2. Major Development Nodes**

**A. Node Descriptions**

September 2, 2005

Page 25 of 25

opment corridor, Hollowell Parkway. From the vacant and underused land around the Bankhead MARTA Station, to the vacant frontages along the south and the brownfield sites north of Hollowell, this corridor represents another major redevelopment area considering its proximity to midtown, downtown and Georgia Tech. The MARTA Station provides the leverage for a dense transit-oriented node on the west; and the Upper Westside LCI Plan includes Hollowell as a mixed-use main street between MARTA and Northside Drive.

Hollowell marks the southern extent of the Upper Westside Plan; coincidentally, the remaining redevelopment areas in the northwest cluster are all included within the boundaries of the Plan. In the triangular area between the railroads west of Northside Drive, the former industrial buildings, vacant lots and brownfield sites provide the platform for new construction and adaptive reuse that could fill out the neighborhood in an extension of the mixed-use activity occurring along Howell Mill Road. A similar situation exists just west, along Huff Road south of the Waterworks reservoir, anchored by the Murray Mill complex. Finally, the new mixed-use residential development of M West along Marietta Boulevard, and the exceptional adaptive reuse model of the Lumberyard on Ellsworth Industrial Drive point to an emerging district along Huff Road north to Culpepper Street. Culpepper is the recommended alignment for the BeltLine transit through this area, and could potentially be the spine of another medium-density mixed-use district – although the industrial uses farther north would be maintained and extended.