

**LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT
TIER 1 SCREENING**

NORTHWEST CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS STUDY

**Prepared by Urban Collage, Inc.
for Cobb County Department of Transportation**

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

May 16, 2012

INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of Tier 1 Screening within the Northwest Corridor Alternatives Analysis, several alignments/scenarios were analyzed - both quantitatively and qualitatively - with respect to land use, market, and development/redevelopment impact. Six discrete alignment scenarios were evaluated including:

- Alignment 1: I-75 corridor from Acworth to Midtown
- Alignment 2a: US 41 corridor from Acworth to Midtown (with more station locations)
- Alignment 2b: US 41 corridor from Acworth to Midtown (with fewer station locations)
- Alignment 3: I-75 corridor from KSU to Midtown
- Alignment 4a: US 41 corridor from KSU to Midtown (with more station locations)
- Alignment 4b: US 41 corridor from KSU to Midtown (with fewer station locations)

Each corridor was evaluated with respect to three Goals/Objectives each with their own Performance Measures as follows:

Land Use Goal: **More Efficient Use of land.** Measures include Reduced Parking Needs and Improved Bicycle & Pedestrian Infrastructure.

Land Use Goal: **Increased Housing Choices.** Measures include Increased Transit-Oriented Development.

Economic Development/Redevelopment Goal: **Stimulate Local Economy.** Measures include Increased Commercial/Retail Spaces and Creation of More Mixed-Use Complexes within Walking Distance of Transit.

In order to effectively evaluate these Goals and their associated Measures a variety of subjective and objective land use and economic development factors were looked at including:

Potential Transit Stations: the location/quantity/type of potential transit stations;

Susceptibility to Change: the underutilization of existing land;

Availability of Commercially Zoned Land: locations where new commercial development is easiest;

Ped and Bike Facilities: locations where existing facilities exist or are easiest to install;

Market Preferences: locations for redevelopment generally preferred by market forces.

POTENTIAL TRANSIT STATIONS

The opportunity to develop transit stations associated with a new high-capacity transit line is fundamental in the effort to change and enhance land use and development patterns in the corridor commensurate with the overall stated Need and Purpose of this project. Once developed, Transit Stations will forever impact their immediate environs including land use and development but also nearby vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle circulation patterns. In addition, the location, spacing and design of transit stations will have a large impact on ridership patterns. Transit stations, therefore, must be carefully considered both within their impact on the immediate context as well as within the broader context of the system as a whole. In general, future transit stations were considered for location, their timing/phasing and their typological characteristics as described below.

STATION LOCATIONS

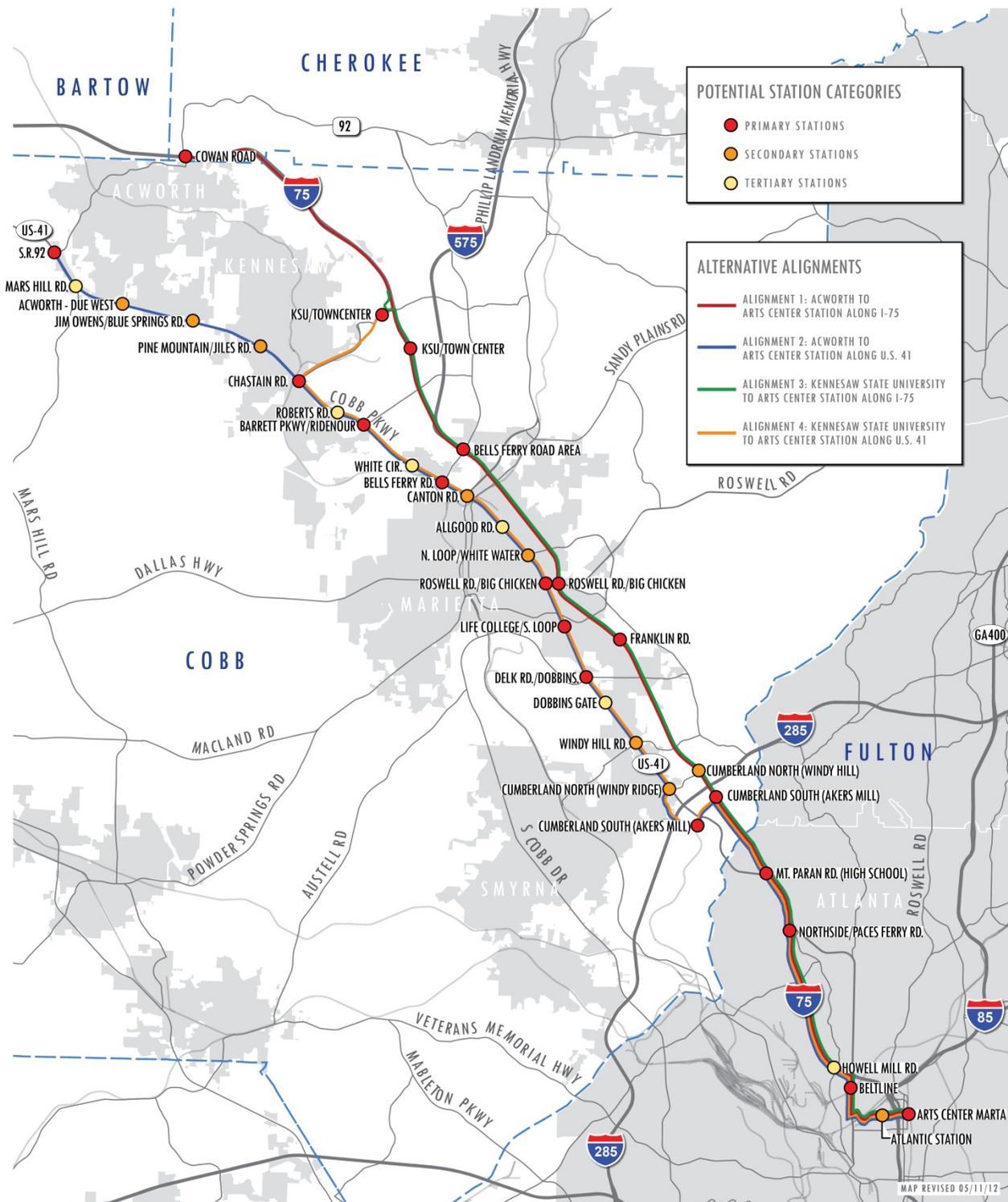
As shown in the map on the following page, the planning team has identified a total of 34 potential station locations for consideration within the 22-mile study area (e.g., from Acworth to Midtown). This includes 20 stations located along US 41 and 14 stations located along the I-75 corridor. It should be noted that at this level of study in Tier 1, hyper-specific locations (e.g., down to the exact parcel or side of the street/interstate) have not yet been identified.

Potential station locations were determined based on balancing a number of factors including:

Existing Roadway Network: Stations should be located in places that provide relatively easy vehicular access, ideally from multiple locations. This is especially important for locations along the interstate that are likely to have a focus on commuters (e.g., riders will be driving to the station). Locations with major cross roads/intersections present the most obvious opportunities.

Ability to Incent Redevelopment: Locations that are near aging and/or underutilized properties – especially with respect to real estate market strengths - present a unique opportunity to create economic development and new mixed-use developments.

Existing Destinations: There are numerous existing destinations that are highly likely to generate large volumes of ridership. This can include large employment centers (e.g., Cumberland, Atlantic Station, Dobbins Air Base), institutions (e.g., Life College, KSU, etc.), shopping districts (e.g., Howell Mill, Barrett Parkway) and connections to other forms of transit (e.g., the BeltLine, CCT, etc).



POTENTIAL STATION CATEGORIES

- PRIMARY STATIONS
- SECONDARY STATIONS
- TERTIARY STATIONS

ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENTS

- ALIGNMENT 1: ACWORTH TO ARTS CENTER STATION ALONG I-75
- ALIGNMENT 2: ACWORTH TO ARTS CENTER STATION ALONG U.S. 41
- ALIGNMENT 3: KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY TO ARTS CENTER STATION ALONG I-75
- ALIGNMENT 4: KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY TO ARTS CENTER STATION ALONG U.S. 41



DRAFT TIER 1 POTENTIAL STATION LOCATIONS
 LAND USE/MARKET ANALYSIS PREPARED BY URBAN COLLAGE, INC. AND BAE URBAN ECONOMICS FOR COBB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
CONNECT COBB: Northwest Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis



MAP REVISED 05/11/12

Spacing: The spacing of potential stations is important in that it has a very large impact on the times of trips and, therefore, the desirability to potential riders. Closer spacing means more stations and access to more riders, but also means longer trip times for trips involving longer distances. In general, identified potential stations are spaced no closer than a half-mile and in several cases farther apart (particularly along the I-75 alignment which is more likely targeted to commuters).

STATION TIMING / PHASING

From an overall Tier 1 perspective for this project, there are still multiple scenarios to be tested including alignment and mode. In addition, and with respect to transit stations, there are still multiple variations possible in terms of the ultimate number and spacing of stations utilized. As mentioned previously, the relationship between station spacing and ridership is critical. There is also an equally important relationship between the number of stations and the ability to impact future land use and development/redevelopment; each station area is likely to create incentives for redevelopment (to various degrees) and therefore the number of new stations will be directly proportional to the amount of economic development. Conversely, increasing the number of stations increases costs to the system (construction and operations) and may ultimately lead to reduced ridership (e.g., longer trip times). Weighing the above factors, each of the 34 potential stations were divided into three categories based on their perceived need and likelihood for coming to fruition.

Primary Stations: These potential station locations are highly likely in that they serve major destinations and/or have a high potential for ridership. This should be considered the minimum recommended amount of stations utilized and/or would be in the first phase of system development. This would represent a system of 11 (I-75 alignment) to 12 (US 41 alignment) stations.

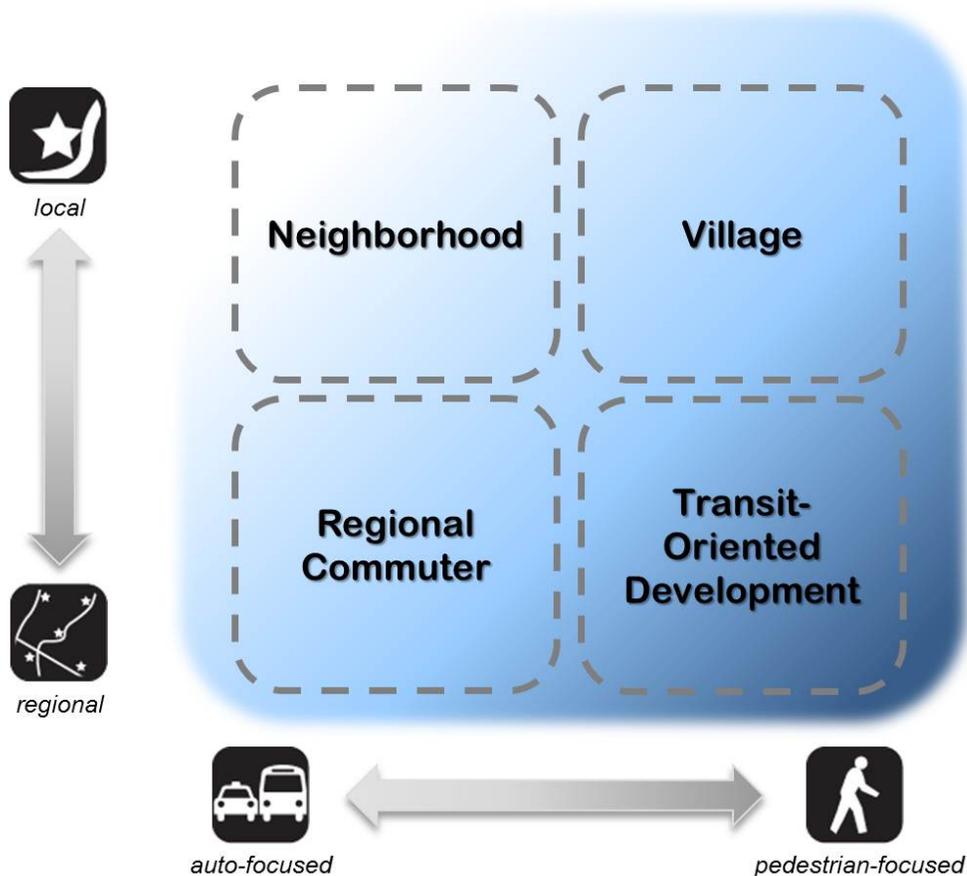
Secondary Stations: These potential station locations generally provide access to secondary destinations with a moderate to high potential for ridership. While these station locations are desirable to create a fuller system, they are not absolutely required (at least from a land use and economic development standpoint). These locations could be included in the first phase of system development but could also be added at a later date as ridership matures. Using both Primary and Secondary stations would represent a system of 13 (I-75 alignment) to 20 (US 41 alignment) stations.

Tertiary Stations: These potential station locations provide good access and visibility but most likely do not have immediate needs from a ridership perspective. On the other hand, these station locations may have a high potential for longer term redevelopment (e.g., more available land) and eventual ridership and present an opportunity to someday build-out the system (e.g., adding in stations at a later date when warranted). Using Primary, Secondary and Tertiary stations would represent a robust system build-out of 14 (I-75 alignment) to 26 (US 41 alignment) stations.

STATION TYPES

The needs of future riders will vary greatly depending upon station location and rider points of origination and destination. Some riders will use transit as a means of commuting long distances to employment centers throughout the region (i.e., along this corridor and throughout the MARTA rail footprint) and will be seeking transit stations with accommodations for commuter parking or new housing within walking distance. Other riders will be using transit to go very short distances for shopping, entertainment and/or commuting.

While each station should and could provide a level of “transit-oriented development” (e.g., walkable, a mix of uses, etc.) stations will vary depending upon context by levels of intensity, density of development, walkability and the number of anticipated parking spaces needed for commuters. In that light, it should be noted that no two stations will be exactly alike. Rather, they will fall within a continuum of typologies. To help understand this, the planning team has created the following diagram depicting four types of stations (although there are variations in between).



Neighborhood Stations: These stations will be more “local” in nature and will tend to serve nearby lower density neighborhoods. In most cases they will not be a destination unto themselves but rather a portal for nearby residents to access the greater system. In this regard, the actual station design is likely to be simple and may be more focused on commuters and parking needs, albeit at a small scale. These stations would be more likely in the US 41 corridor than along I-75. Examples of similar stations within the existing MARTA rail network: Inman Park/Reynoldstown, Oakland City.

Village Stations: These stations are also more “local” in nature and will tend to serve nearby neighborhoods and commercial districts. However, they will typically include a modest amount of mixed-use development and will function as small to medium walkable activity nodes unto themselves. The actual station design is likely to be simple and while there may be a small amount of parking for commuters, it will cater more towards pedestrian access. These stations would be more likely in the US 41 corridor than along I-75. Examples of similar stations within the existing MARTA rail network: Decatur, Ashby.

Regional Commuter Stations: These stations will be more “regional” in nature and will tend to serve a broad audience of commuters – i.e., people who will drive to the station to be dropped off or park for the day. In this regard, the actual station design will be fairly large with a heavy focus on parking - either in surface lots or decks. Typically, they will include very little associated mixed-use development and they will generally not be activity nodes unto themselves. These stations would be more likely in the I-75 corridor than along US 41. Examples of similar stations within the existing MARTA rail network: North Springs, Doraville.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Stations: These stations will be “regional” in nature and will serve as higher density destinations unto themselves. TOD stations are very walkable and typically contain a diverse mix of uses including residential, retail, office and institutions. In this regard, the actual station design will be fairly complex and in some instances appear iconic. These stations would be more likely in the US 41 corridor than along I-75, particularly in higher density environs such as Cumberland and Atlantic Station. Examples of similar stations within the existing MARTA rail network: Lindbergh Center, Buckhead.

In order to provide a measure for evaluating parking needs and impacts, all of the potential stations within the Northwest Corridor were assigned an estimated range of commuter parking spaces that may be required. These ranges are not intended to be a specific recommendation on a station-by-station basis (which would require a much greater level of study). Rather, they are intended as an order of magnitude to compare across stations and ascertain which stations are more or less likely to serve commuter needs.

Estimated Commuter Parking Stations by Location & Alignment

	RANGE OF PARK & RIDE PARKING SPACES					ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PARK & RIDE PARKING SPACES					
	No Parking	< 100	100 - 500	500 - 1500	> 1500	Alignment 1	Alignment 2A	Alignment 2B	Alignment 3	Alignment 4A	Alignment 4B
I-75 Potential Stations											
Arts Center	X					0			0		
Atlantic Station		X				50			50		
Northside/Beltline	X					0			0		
Howell Mill Rd		X				50			50		
Northside/Paces		X				50			50		
Mt. Paran Rd		X				50			50		
Cumberland south (Akers Mill)					X	1500			1500		
Cumberland north (Windy Ridge)			X			300			300		
Franklin Road				X		1500			1500		
Roswell Road (Big Chicken station)			X			300			300		
Bells Ferry Road area					X	1500			1500		
KSU/Town Center				X		1000			1000	1000	1000
Cowan Road			X			300					
US 41 Potential Stations											
Arts Center	X					0	0		0	0	
Atlantic Station		X				50	50		50	50	
Northside/Beltline	X					0	0		0	0	
Howell Mill Rd		X				50	50		50	50	
Northside/Paces		X				50	50		50	50	
Mt. Paran Rd		X				50	50		50	50	
Cumberland south (Akers Mill)					X	1500	1500		1500	1500	
Cumberland north (Windy Ridge)			X			300	300		300	300	
Windy Hill			X			300			300		
Dobbins Gate	X					0			0		
Delk Road / Dobbins area			X			300	300		300	300	
Life College/S. Loop			X			300	300		300	300	
Roswell Road (Big Chicken station)	X					0	0		0	0	
N. Loop/Whitewater			X			300			300		
Allgood Rd	X					0			0		
Canton Road area			X			300			300		
Bells Ferry Road area		X				50	50		50	50	
White Cir		X				50			50		
Barrett Pkwy/Ridenhour				X		1000	1000		1000	1000	
Roberts Rd		X				50			50		
Chastain Road		X				50	50		50	50	
Pine Mntrn/Jiles Road		X				50					
Jim Owens/Blue Springs		X				50					
Acworth-Due West	X					0					
Mars Hill Rd		X				50					
SR 92		X				50	50				
Total Estimated Spaces Per Alignment:						6600	4900	3750	6300	5700	4700

It should be further noted that this study (particularly at the level of Tier 1 analysis) is not intended to be final answer on transit stations. Ultimately, more detailed planning and engineering studies will very likely result in refinements to the location, number and design/function of transit stations.

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE

As embodied within the overall Statement of Purpose and Need, the ability to incentivize economic development is one of several fundamental drivers of this Alternatives Analysis. As demonstrated successfully in numerous locations across the United States, public investment in transit and associated infrastructure often leads to private investment in new construction, new housing, and new jobs. In order to help understand the impacts and possibilities for new transit-oriented

development, the planning team conducted a conceptual analysis of existing development patterns relative to their “susceptibility to change” or underutilization. This assessment is intended to show locations where future development/redevelopment is most likely to occur over time.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Given the large size of the study area and the conceptual nature of this portion of the Alternatives Analysis (e.g. Tier 1 Screening), it is important to note that the “susceptibility to change” survey was not conducted on a detailed parcel-by-parcel basis in the field. Rather, a more generalized survey was completed using a combination of online aerial photography (Bing and Google) and local knowledge of the geographic area. Additionally, at this point in time surveying and analysis were limited only to the primary corridors/alignments still up for consideration – more specifically US 41 and Interstate-75 (and major intersecting east-west corridors where appropriate). It should be noted that there are limitations to assessing “susceptibility to change” using aerial photography as a primary resource. For instance, it is difficult to ascertain steep slopes, watershed impacts, public utilities and other potential factors which may limit the . Therefore, the results of this Tier 1 overall susceptibility analysis should be seen as somewhat subjective, representing a high-level snapshot that is useful in comparing various areas of the corridors in question. Results do not include detailed analysis of property values and should not be interpreted as an exact prediction of specific redevelopment quantities.

LEVELS OF SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE

For the purposes of this effort, the planning team identified four basic levels of “susceptibility” as described below.

Greenfield Sites: These are areas that appear to be largely undeveloped and in a natural state. In most cases these properties represent areas that have never been developed and are therefore considered to be highly susceptible to future change (e.g., limited to no demolition of structures required).

High Susceptibility Sites: These areas exhibit a high degree of underutilization relative to their location, access and level of development. Many of these sites were originally developed in the 1980s or earlier and represent a relatively low level of ongoing investment (e.g., low density). These include older gas stations, aging strip commercial centers, motels, discount stores, older outparcel developments, underused industrial sites, sites dedicated to storage, and large underused parking lots. In addition, High Susceptibility Sites could include large lots that are only partially built-out. While not as susceptible as Greenfield Sites, High Susceptibility Sites can be relatively easy to redevelop under the right economic conditions.

Low Susceptibility Sites: These areas are generally not currently underutilized, but may be likely to change in the future, particularly with a nearby investment in transit. Typically (but not always) these include sites that were originally developed in the 1990s or later and represent only a moderate level of investment relative to their assumed land value. These include somewhat newer (10-20 years old) gas stations and strip commercial centers, hotels (2-4 stories), outparcel developments, storage sites, and low density office developments (1-2 stories). These sites can be redeveloped under the right economic conditions but typically require some level of effort and reinvestment.

Not Susceptible: These areas represent properties that are generally resistant to redevelopment (other than renovations/upgrades) and are unlikely to change for quite some time. These locations often include recent or underway construction, stable residential areas, areas with high levels of investment/density (e.g., buildings +/-6 stories or greater), developments with parking decks or other high levels of developed infrastructure.

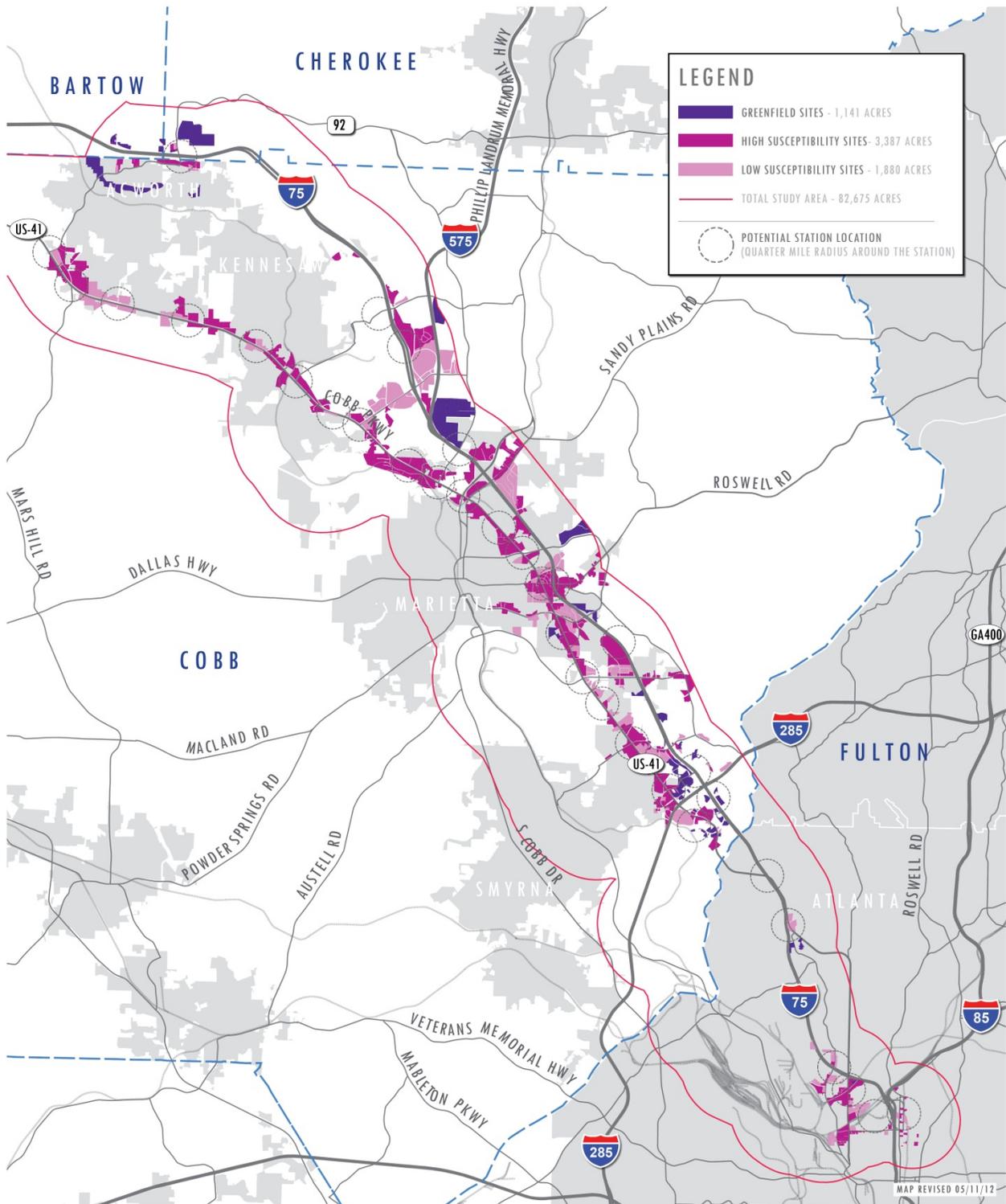
SURVEY RESULTS

Based on the survey methodology and categories outlined above, there are over 6,400 acres of land that could be available for redevelopment over time. While real estate market fundamentals and physical/environmental conditions will not support development/redevelopment of all 6,400 acres in the short term, this large amount of developable area does point out the significant opportunity for investment in transit that would likely incentivize economic development over time.

Of the +/-6,400 acres susceptible to change, approximately 1,100 acres (over 17%) are in the “Greenfield Sites” category, thus demonstrating that most new construction in the corridor will be of the “redevelopment” variety, and therefore more challenging. Furthermore, even though many of the Greenfield Sites are in locations near the Interstate, some are not located at interchanges and are therefore less likely to be prime targets for developers (e.g., having poor access).

“High Susceptibility Sites” represent approximately 3,400 acres (over 52% of the properties that are susceptible to change). While these opportunities all along US 41, there are notable concentrations of high susceptibility lands around Roswell Road, just north of Kennesaw Mountain (aging industrial), just north of Town Center Mall, and around Northside Drive at the BeltLine.

Areas deemed to be “Low Susceptibility Sites” (albeit a challenge for redevelopment) are still prevalent within the study area at around 1,900 acres or. This includes areas such as Cumberland and Town Center Malls, portions of Barrett Parkway and areas along Windy Hill Road between US 41 and I-75.



DRAFT SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE MAP
 LAND USE/MARKET ANALYSIS PREPARED BY URBAN COLLAGE, INC. AND BAE URBAN ECONOMICS FOR COBB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
CONNECT COBB: Northwest Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis

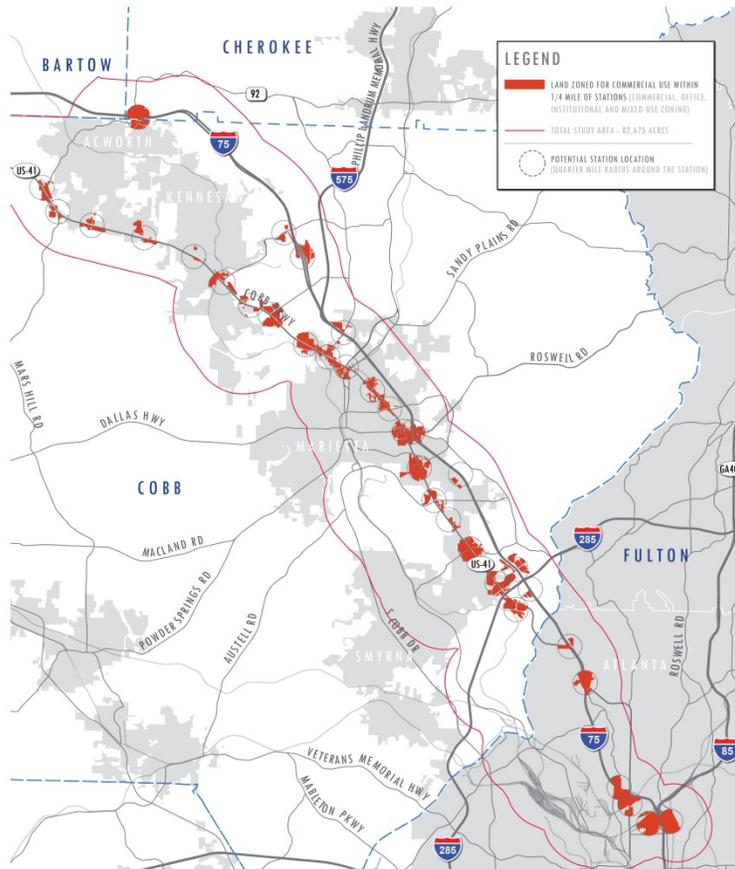


MAP REVISED 05/11/12

AVAILABILITY OF COMMERCIALLY ZONED LAND

In addition to surveying lands that are susceptible to change, another study way of ascertaining the likelihood of future commercial and mixed-use development is to understand existing zoning. Although zoning can and sometimes is changed in response to specific development proposals, it can often be difficult, particularly adjacent to or within existing stable residential areas. Therefore, areas currently zoned for commercial purposes (e.g., Retail, Office, Mixed-Use, O&I) typically represent a path of least resistance for new mixed-use, transit supportive development. The planning team analyzed over 150 individual zoning categories from each of the nine municipalities within the overall study area (counties of Cobb, Bartow and Cherokee; cities of Acworth, Atlanta, Kennesaw, Marietta, Smyrna and Sandy Springs). For ease of comparison, zoning was generalized and collapsed into 7 categories (See separate *Land Use & Market – Existing Conditions Assessment* report). Of the almost 77,000 acres of property in the study area, just over 13,600 acres were zoned in some form of “commercial” category (Commercial, Office –Institutional, Mixed-Use or Office). Not surprisingly, the majority of commercial properties are located within or very near the US 41 corridor, along Barrett Parkway, in the Cumberland Area and in Midtown Atlanta.

Commercial Zoned Property Generally Within ¼ of Station Locations



LOCATION OF PED AND BIKE FACILITIES

The stated performance measure for “improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure” is difficult to assess without first understanding what facilities currently exist and where opportunities for improvement exist that might be associated with future transit infrastructure.

EXISTING BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN SERVICE

In spring of 2011, Cobb County completed a 15-month planning effort to create the Cobb County Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Plan. As demonstrated within that plan, the current Cobb County bike and ped system is generally not adequate (with a few notable exceptions such as the renowned Silver Comet Trail) – particularly along the corridors being considered for new transit service (e.g., US 41 and Interstate 75). The plan includes a street-by-street assessment of “level of service” or L.O.S. for both bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The L.O.S. assessment provides an A-F letter grading system with “A” being the highest/best grade and “F” being the worst.

An overview of the L.O.S. grading results can be seen here (one each for bicycle and pedestrian):

http://dot.cobbcountyga.gov/bikeped/maps_final2010/bicycle%20LOS_final_p%2011x17.pdf

(http://dot.cobbcountyga.gov/bikeped/maps_final2010/pedestrian%20LOS_final_p%2011x17.pdf)

From a pedestrian standpoint, the results clearly show that the US 41 corridor in Cobb County varies between level of service (L.O.S.) “D”, “E” and “F” with the vast majority in LOS “E.”. From a bicycle facilities perspective, the Cobb County portion of US 41 fares better, albeit still below an acceptable level. The majority of US 41 in Cobb County grades out at L.O.S. “D” with some areas also in “C” and “E.”

The southern portion of the corridor in City of Atlanta is primarily along Interstate 75 and therefore does not have sidewalks, trails or any bike facilities to speak of. However, the corridor disengages from I-75 at Northside Drive and proceeds south intersecting with the BeltLine and eventually across Atlantic Station to Midtown. As a more developed urban center, this portion of the corridor has a much higher level of pedestrian and bicycle service. Several years ago, The Atlanta Bicycle Coalition (www.atlantabike.org) assessed and ranked the Midtown/Downtown area with regards to “suitability” for biking (three levels, Red, Yellow, Green). Northside Drive comes in at “Red” for the most difficulty in biking whereas 17th Street through Atlantic Station ranks as “Green” for the least difficulty in biking. From a pedestrian standpoint, Midtown and Atlantic Station have numerous sidewalks and well-landscaped streetscaped areas that facilitate walking and cycling within this

“intown” stretch of the corridor whereas Northside Drive has intermittent sidewalk service varying from one side of the street to the other.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT / ENHANCEMENTS

Equally important to the location and efficacy of existing facilities is the opportunity to create new and enhanced facilities associated with a new transit system. A good way to assess opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian improvements are to compare the number of cross streets/intersections in the US 41 versus the Interstate 75 corridors. Presumably, the design of any new transit station will include the development of sidewalks and bike facilities within close proximity. However, nearby cross streets/intersections provide the best opportunity to expand walkability and bike-ability beyond the station area and connect to a broader system (particularly for bikes).

In this regard, the US 41 corridor far exceeds I-75 in the potential to create extended walking and biking systems. Within the overall study area the I-75 corridor/alignment crosses approximately 30 major cross streets – albeit most have severe grade differentials which will inhibit walking and biking. In contrast, the US 41 corridor/alignment has almost 50 intersections with major cross roads (almost all of which are at grade) plus numerous additional small cross roads, thus the potential for a far greater built-out network of sidewalks and bike routes.

MARKET PREFERENCES

While many of the above factors rely on an assessment of existing and future quantifiable *physical* features (e.g. potential station locations, susceptibility, etc.), another important factor in determining the effectiveness of transit alternatives is the degree to which various alignments will be more or less receptive to the private development market (e.g., a *non-physical* assessment). From a Tier 1 perspective, this assessment is somewhat more subjective and based on the planning team’s involvement in similar planning efforts and contexts along with years of experience in studying real estate development markets, trends and fundamentals. Given that all transit alternatives being considered in Tier 1 involve fixed-guideway systems (e.g. regardless of BRT or LRT), the following real estate preferences will only focus on the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the two primary corridors (e.g., US 41 versus I-75) in terms of delivering new mixed-use, transit-oriented development in and around potential transit stations.

INTERSTATE-75 CORRIDOR

In locations where developable (or redevelopable) land corresponds to potential transit station locations, the I-75 corridor will have a few advantages over a US 41 alignment. First and foremost, the creation of new mixed-use activity centers will have great access to the interstate without having

to navigate through local streets. In this regard, I-75 TODs will be attractive for high-density development, particularly for Class A office space that seeks to attract workers from across the region along with corporate relocations that desire high visibility. In addition, high-density rental residential development may find these locations somewhat attractive in that potential renters will have good access to employment centers along the Northwest Transit line and perhaps throughout the region (depending on how and where this transit line ties into the broader network). However, the market for potential TOD development along I-75 has several weaknesses compared to the US 41 corridor. Developments here will tend to be somewhat isolated “on an island.” While having good access to the region via the interstate, these locations are likely to be situated on busy cross streets near interchanges and thus will miss out on finer grain connections to the surrounding communities and their associated quality of life amenities (e.g., parks, schools, recreation, cultural facilities, unique/local goods and services, etc.). Although I-75 locations can be somewhat developed as self-contained TOD’s, they will tend to lack an authenticity and richness of experiences – two elements that are becoming increasingly important in real estate marketability. These TODs may be attractive to some consumers including commuters traveling far distances and major employers, however they will be far less attractive to most home-buyers, retailers and institutions.

US 41 CORRIDOR

Inherently, the US 41 corridor will contain many more locations for TOD development than the I-75 corridor which is a strength unto itself. Having a greater inventory of potential locations to draw from will create greater opportunities and flexibility to match developer needs with suitable sites. Additionally TOD developments along US 41 will be able to take advantage of a finer grain of connectivity, visibility and, therefore, access to a wide array of area amenities including schools, existing neighborhoods, parks and recreation, social services, civic and cultural facilities and local shopping and dining. These locations will be attractive to specialty retailers that seek highly walkable locations along with smaller-scale local offices, for-sale residential and walkable mixed-use buildings. True mixed-use developments in Atlanta were becoming more popular and “main stream” prior to the economic downturn. In fact one of metro Atlanta’s earliest and most well-known examples of mixed-use development is Smyrna’s Market Village and Village Green. Other built examples in or near the Northwest Corridor include Riverside, Ivy Walk and several developments in Vinings. Mixed-Use developments such as these are generally located near, but not on the interstate, thus giving them the advantage of regional access (e.g., as a destination), along with proximity to nearby local goods, services and other quality of life amenities (e.g., as a housing choice). In this regard, the US 41 corridor is a more advantageous location for mixed-use development.

Despite the advantages of connectivity and proximity to local goods and services, the US 41 corridor does have two fundamental market weaknesses with regard to new TOD development. First, the increased connectivity comes at a price in that local roads can become congested at certain times, thus inhibiting the ability to attract a regional audience. Second, the visual appearance of existing development along US 41 is hit and miss and can be a deterrent to TOD developers in some locations (i.e., as opposed to a more blank slate approach in some I-75 locations).

TIER 1 SCREENING METRICS

Based on the analyses provided on the preceding pages regarding potential transit stations, susceptibility to change, commercially zoned land, ped/bike infrastructure and market preferences, several specific “metrics” have been developed in order to assess the performance of several land use and economic development measures.

The **MEASURES** being screened are:

- Reduced Parking Needs
- Improved Bicycle & Pedestrian Infrastructure.
- Increased Transit-Oriented Development.
- Increased Commercial/Retail Spaces
- Creation of More Mixed-Use Complexes within Walking Distance of Transit.

The **METRICS** being utilized to assess the Measures are:

Metric: Number of New Transit Stations: The relative number of potential new transit stations (and therefore the number of new Transit-Oriented Development nodes) has a direct correlation to increasing ped/bike infrastructure, increasing housing choices, increasing commercial /retail spaces and creating more mixed-use development.

Metric: Anticipated Number of New Commuter Parking Spaces: The relative anticipated quantity of commuter parking spaces needed has a direct correlation to reducing parking needs in the corridor as a whole – fewer stations focused on commuters will lead to a greater degree of walkable, transit-oriented development.

Metric: Acres of Land Susceptible to Change Within ¼ Mile of Station Locations: The overall quantity of Greenfield Sites and High Susceptibility Sites within walking distance of Station Locations will be directly proportional to the ability to create transit-oriented development, increase commercial / retail spaces, and develop more mixed-use complexes. For the purposes of this preliminary analysis (and given that precise station locations have yet to be studied) “Station Locations” include a +/- 500’ radius buffer zone within which stations are likely to occur.

Metric: Acres of Land Zoned for Commercial Use Within ¼ Mile of Station Locations: While land can be rezoned to support new TOD development, existing commercial zoning will be the easiest and least controversial to develop. Furthermore, existing commercial property in new TOD locations will

result in reduced parking needs (more workers taking transit) and will increase opportunities for new commercial / retail spaces.

Metric: Proximity / Ability to Connect to and/or Improve Existing Ped/Bike Facilities: Potential TOD locations near existing ped and bike facilities and/or closer to the local street network will provide the greatest opportunities for improving and expanding the overall ped/bike network.

Metric: Attractiveness to Private Development Market: Locations that are more attractive to the private development market will result in more commercial/retail spaces and more mixed-use complexes.

TIER 1 SCREENING RESULTS

The results of Tier 1 Screening for Land Use and Economic Development/Redevelopment are presented in the table at the end of this report. Analyzing the performance Measures using the above Metrics leads to the following overall conclusions:

- On the whole, alignments that include more potential transit stations, and therefore contain more potential TODs, generally provide a greater opportunity for more efficient use of land, increased housing choices and stimulating the local economy.
- Alignments 2a and 4a (both in the US 41 corridor) include the greatest number of stations and the largest cumulative physical inventory of land likely to redevelop (by a significant margin). Therefore, these alignments have the greatest potential for increasing housing choices and creation of new TODs/mixed-use complexes.
- Alignments utilizing the I-75 corridor (1 and 3) are more amenable to commuter parking given their interstate access. Therefore, these two alignments have the greatest adverse impact on the ability to reduce parking needs.
- Two US 41 alignments have a large number of stations (2a and 4a) and therefore also generate high commuter parking counts. However, these stations also have high quantities of commercially zoned land near stations that equates to potential parking reductions (existing drivers becoming transit riders).
- Alignments utilizing the US 41 corridor (2a, 2b, 4a and 4b) generally have significantly more opportunity to improve and expand walking and biking facilities due to their greater level of connectivity with existing roadways. I-75 alignments can create internalized bike and ped options but will be more limited in terms of connecting to and/or expanding existing facilities.
- Overall, Alignment 2a appears to perform best across all measures.

Summary of Land Use Results for Tier 1 Alternatives						
	Alignment 1	Alignment 2A	Alignment 2B	Alignment 3	Alignment 4A	Alignment 4B
CORRIDOR	I-75	US 41	US 41	I-75	US 41	US 41
EXTENT	Acworth to Midtown	Acworth to Midtown	Acworth to Midtown	KSU to Midtown	KSU to Midtown	KSU to Midtown
# STATIONS	13	26	15	12	22	15
GOAL / OBJECTIVE: More Efficient Use of Land						
MEASURE: Reduced Parking Needs						
METRIC 1: Anticipated Number of New Commuter Parking Spaces	6600	4900	3750	6300	5700	4700
METRIC 2: Acres of Land Zoned for Commercial Use within 1/4 mile of Station Locations	1440	2580	1840	1250	2380	1810
<i>Overall Measure Grade</i>	2	4	3	2	3	3
<i>Alignment Ranking</i>	Fifth	First	Second	Sixth	Third	Fourth
MEASURE: Improved Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure						
METRIC 1: Proximity / Ability to Connect to and/or Improve Existing Facilities	Medium	High	Medium High	Low	High	Medium High
METRIC 2: Number of New Stations to Bike/Walk to	13	26	15	12	22	15
<i>Overall Measure Grade</i>	2	5	3	1	4	3
<i>Alignment Ranking</i>	Fifth	First	Fourth	Sixth	Second	Third
GOAL / OBJECTIVE: Increase Housing Choices						
MEASURE: Increased Transit-Oriented Development						
METRIC 1: Acres of Land Susceptible to Change within 1/4 mile of Station Locations	580	1530	850	540	1290	800
METRIC 2: Number of New Transit Stations	13	26	15	12	22	15
<i>Overall Measure Grade</i>	1	5	2	1	4	2
<i>Alignment Ranking</i>	Fifth	First	Third	Sixth	Second	Fourth
Summary of Economic Development / Redevelopment Results for Tier 1 Alternatives						
	Alignment 1	Alignment 2A	Alignment 2B	Alignment 3	Alignment 4A	Alignment 4B
CORRIDOR	I-75	US 41	US 41	I-75	US 41	US 41
EXTENT	Acworth to Midtown	Acworth to Midtown	Acworth to Midtown	KSU to Midtown	KSU to Midtown	KSU to Midtown
# STATIONS	13	26	15	12	22	15
GOAL / OBJECTIVE: Stimulate Local Economy						
MEASURE: Increased Commercial / Retail Spaces						
METRIC 1: Acres of Land Susceptible to Change within 1/4 mile of Station Locations	580	1530	850	540	1290	800
METRIC 2: Number of New Stations	13	26	15	12	22	15
METRIC 3: Acres of Land Zoned for Commercial Use within 1/4 mile of Station Locations	1440	2580	1840	1250	2380	1810
METRIC 4: Attractiveness to Private Development Market	Medium Low	High	Medium High	Low	High	Medium High
<i>Overall Measure Grade</i>	2	5	3	1	4	3
<i>Alignment Ranking</i>	Fifth	First	Third	Sixth	Second	Fourth
MEASURE: Creation of More Mixed-Use Complexes Within Walking Distance of Transit						
METRIC 1: Acres of Land Susceptible to Change within 1/4 mile of Station Locations	580	1530	850	540	1290	800
METRIC 2: Number of New Stations	13	26	15	12	22	15
METRIC 3: Attractiveness to Private Development Market	Medium Low	High	Medium High	Low	High	Medium High
<i>Overall Measure Grade</i>	2	5	3	1	4	3
<i>Alignment Ranking</i>	Fifth	First	Third	Sixth	Second	Fourth
Average Grade Across All Land Use and Economic Development Measures						
<i>Alignment Ranking</i>	2	5	3	1	4	3
	Fifth	First	Third	Sixth	Second	Fourth
NOTES:						
1. Exact station locations are yet to be determined. Therefore, 500 foot radii buffers have been established to determine a "zone" in which the station is likely to occur.						
2. Measure Grading System:						
5 = Measure fully supports the overall goal						
4 = Measure largely supports the overall goal						
3 = Measure partially supports the overall goal						
2 = Measure largely does not support the overall goal						
1 = Measure does no support the overall goal						
3. "Commercially Zoned Property" includes: Mixed-Use, Office, O&I and Commercial/Retail						