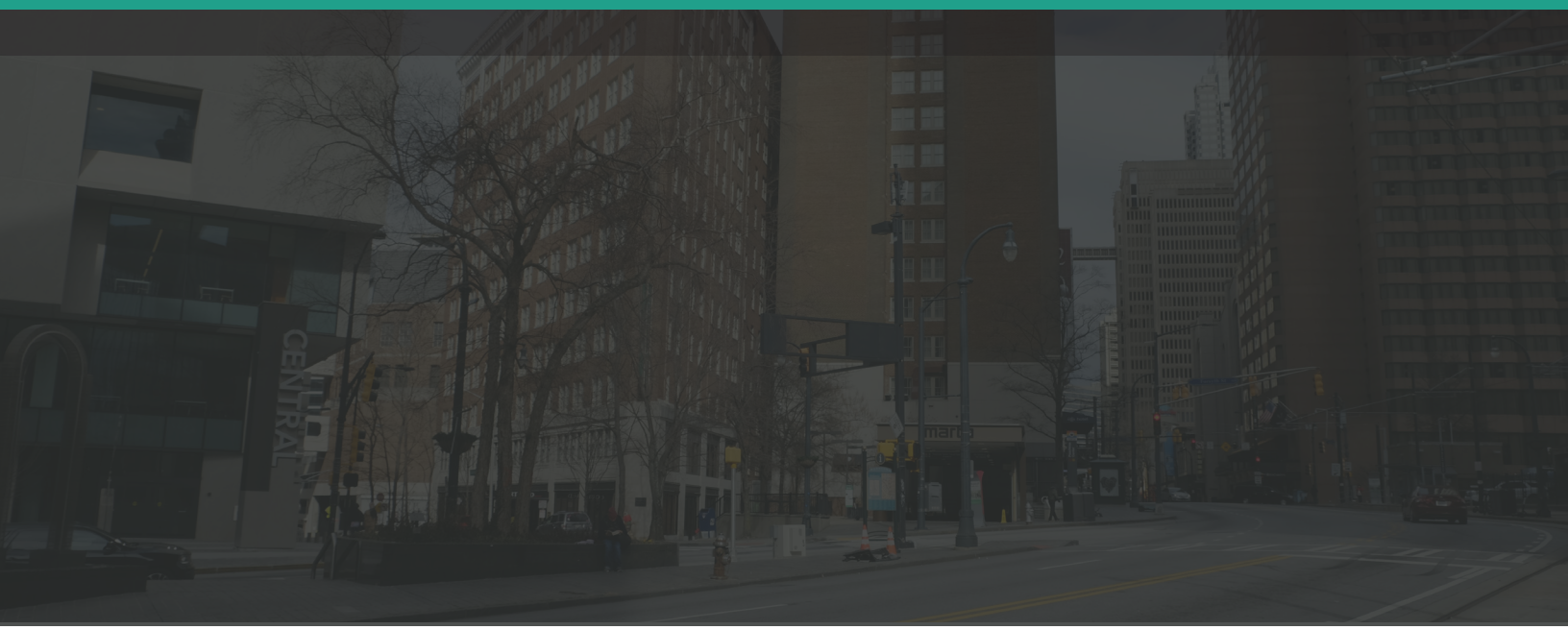
PEACHTREE
SHARED SPACE

Existing Conditions Report | April 2021



Department of
CITY PLANNING

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the community members, Public Space Working Group members, staff, and officials who contributed their time and ideas to help shape this project.

CITY OF ATLANTA

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1.0 BACKGROUND

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Exceptionally designed public spaces don't just happen overnight. They are a reflection and a culmination of an area's history, people, and culture. They tell the story of a place and provide a foundation for the future. As Atlanta's main street, Peachtree Street has been at both the forefront of and backdrop to many of Atlanta's successes and challenges; it is the convergence of the city's history, diversity, and promise. The Peachtree Street Shared Space Study sets the direction for an exceptionally designed public space that puts people first, is beautifully designed, and honors our shared history and Atlanta's aspiration to embody the Beloved Community.

The idea of redesigning downtown Peachtree Street as a shared space emerged from the 2018 Peachtree Shared Street Design Concept produced by the City of Atlanta's Department of City Planning. At the core of report were two questions:

Why does Atlanta's main street, which has served as the center of activity for decades, not function for people anymore?

How can we re-imagine Peachtree Street to enhance public life and improve private development for a new era?

The high-level findings identified that Peachtree Street lost its focus on putting people first. Historical decisions at all levels and by both public and private entities, put a premium on moving vehicles quickly through the city which had rippling impacts on the quality, safety, and vibrancy of the public realm. The impacts to Peachtree Street in downtown can be seen in internally facing retail, a lack of neighborhood-focused amenities, minimal pedestrian activity outside of daytime working hours, and an unwelcoming public realm for all Atlantans. The good news was that people acknowledged a need for change and that change could be in form of a shared space— one that puts people first.

Conceptual rendering of a shared space on Peachtree Street looking toward Hardy Ivy Park from the 2018 concept report

The Peachtree Street Shared Space Study builds on the positive momentum of the 2018 document. The scope of this effort focused on three major deliverables:

1. An illustrative concept report to inspire;
2. A draft Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Concept Report to position the project for state funding, if desired; and
3. A demonstration project to test attributes of shared space on Peachtree Street Downtown.

The Peachtree Street Shared Space Concept Report reviewed existing physical and economic conditions of Peachtree Street, engaged community members and key stakeholders, and identified a concept for how a shared space could change the perception of Peachtree Street from a place people move through to a place people engage with. Over the course of the project, the multidisciplinary project team closely collaborated with the City to answer these five questions:

?

1. Can Peachtree Street become an exceptional public space?
2. Does the broader community support Peachtree Street as a shared space?
3. Where should a shared space happen along Peachtree Street and what does that look like?
4. What are the potential impacts and benefits of shared space?
5. What are key challenges today that can be addressed through design?

PEACHTREE'S ROLE IN OUR GROWING CITY

We're Growing Quickly

Atlanta's vibrancy, diversity, and opportunity continue to draw more people to our city. Our current population of 506,804[1] people is expected to more than double by 2040, reaching about 1.2 million people.[2]

We're getting ready for

2.37x as many Atlantans

We're Growing Strategically

Welcoming these new residents while continuing to provide a high quality of life for those who have long called Atlanta home requires a clear strategy. Our region's legacy of sprawling, car-dependent, suburban development would lead to more trips by car, more congestion and pollution than we can handle, and loss of our urban canopy and natural resources. The City has outlined its strategy to accommodate future growth in a more sustainable way in two major documents: the Atlanta City Design and the One Atlanta Strategic Transportation Plan. They call for organizing growth in areas that have great access to transit, sidewalks, and cycling facilities and everyday essentials like parks, shops, and restaurants nearby, which will maximize our infrastructure and help reduce the need for long trips by car for many future Atlantans.

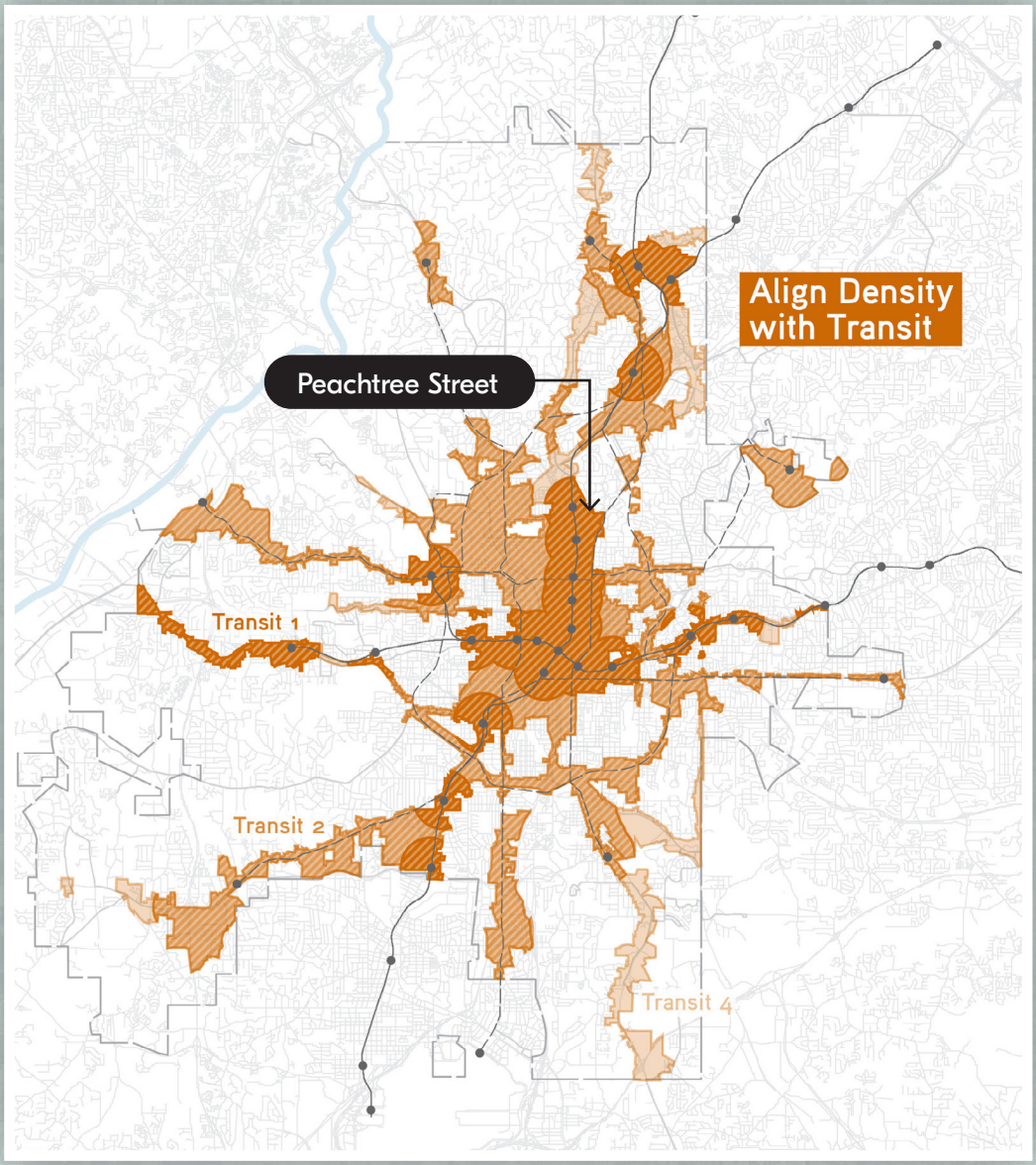
We need **less of this** and **more of this.**

We're Designing for Public Life

If we need a larger share of Atlantans to choose to live in urban areas in the future, those places need

1) U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year Estimates, 2019

2) Atlanta City Design



Atlanta City Design map showing locations within designated "growth areas" that are within 1/2-mile of transit stations.

Peachtree Street is the historic spine of Atlanta and its planned future **"growth areas."** This development strategy aligns density with transit service, encouraging much of the future population growth to take the shape of sustainable urban lifestyles and preserving our urban canopy.

to be appealing places to live and work for everyone. They need to be safe and convenient places to get around and full of the delights of city life. They also need to consider that many new residents in growth areas will not have private outdoor space of their own. That's where the Peachtree Shared Space comes in to play. Downtown is already one of the most dense areas of the city, has excellent regional transit access, and a strong base of job opportunities. This project—along with other ongoing efforts— will add much needed public space in an area with limited and expensive available land; prioritize walking, rolling, biking, and transit in the neighborhood; and help attract more residents and businesses to choose Downtown by continuing to make it a great place to be.

STUDY AREA

While Peachtree Street winds through many Atlanta neighborhoods, this study is focused on Downtown, where an exceptional public space has the potential to foster a dynamic urban neighborhood that delights and serves current residents, workers, and visitors. It is also critical to the sustainable development strategy outlined in the Atlanta City Design, which aims for a higher share of future residents to choose to live in walkable, transit-rich environments like Downtown to reduce the city's auto-dependency, congestion, and emissions.

The study area for this project includes Peachtree Street from North Avenue to Marietta Street, with consideration of the surrounding neighborhood. Within that study area, a preferred location for the shared space demonstration project was selected, and recommendations were made for the remaining segments to create a cohesive corridor with a continuously high-quality, safe experience for people traveling by all modes.

To reflect the unique contexts and character within the study area, it was segmented into subareas for analysis and discussion:

Segment 1

EMORY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL MIDTOWN AREA

(North Avenue to Pine Street)

Segment 2

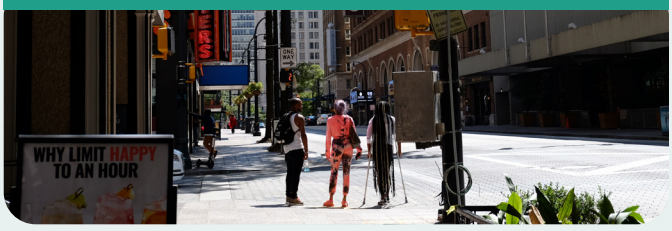
CONNECTOR CROSSING

(Pine Street to Porter Place)

Segment 3

PEACHTREE CENTER AREA

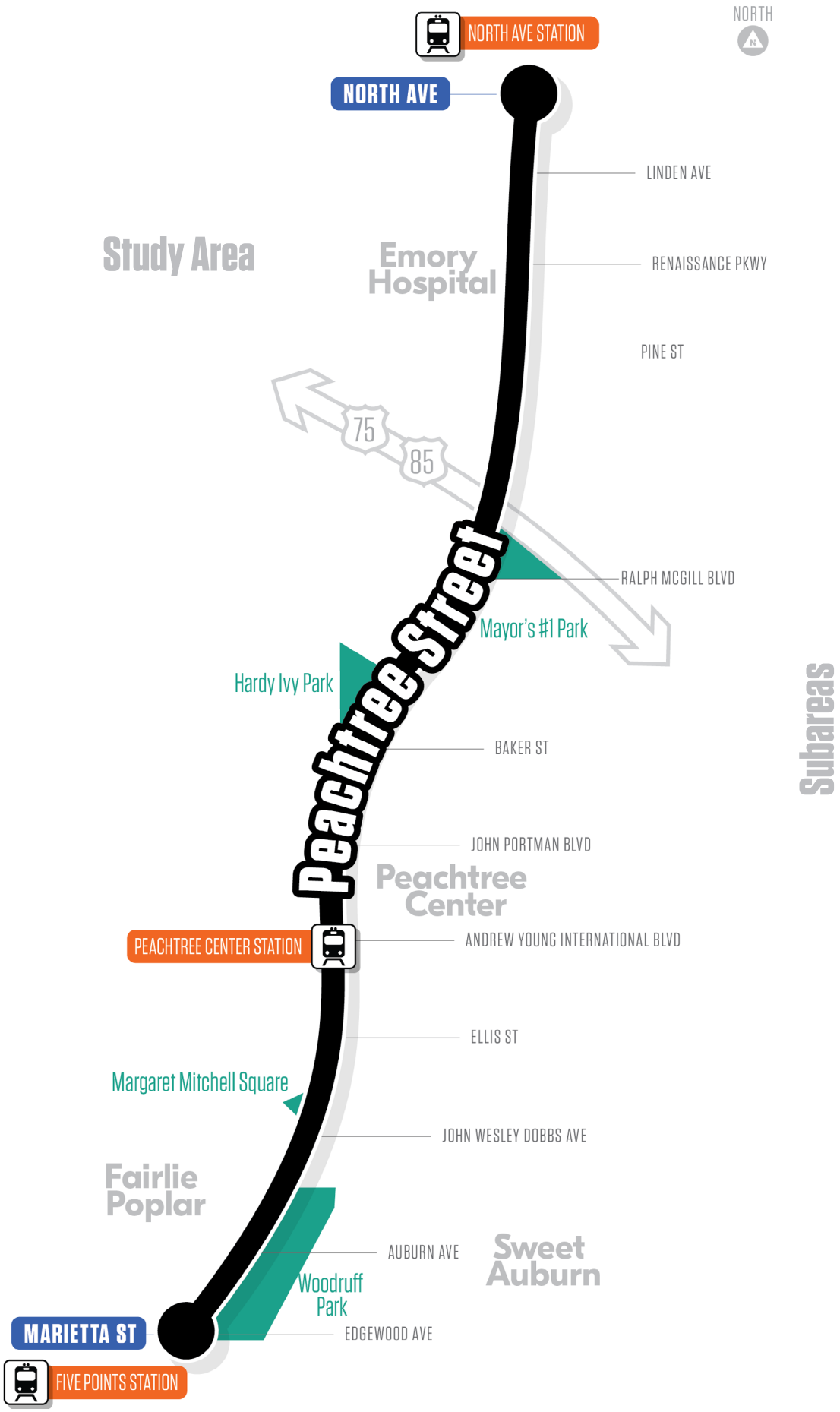
(Porter Place to Forsyth Street)



Segment 4

WOODRUFF PARK AREA

(Forsyth Street to Marietta Street)



Subareas

Segment 1:
EMORY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL MIDTOWN AREA

Segment 2:
CONNECTOR CROSSING

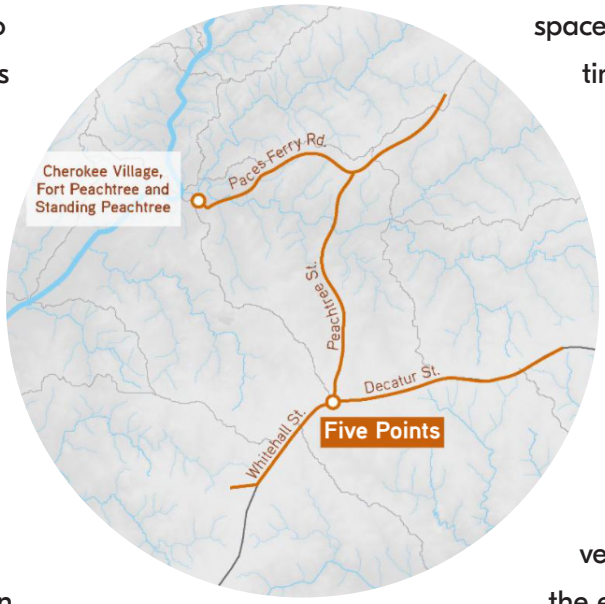
Segment 3:
PEACHTREE CENTER AREA

Segment 4:
WOODRUFF PARK AREA

PEACHTREE STREET'S STORY

Yesterday

The story of Peachtree Street mirrors the bigger story of Atlanta, and that of other major American cities. Peachtree Street has been at both the forefront of and the backdrop to many of Atlanta and the region's successes and challenges, and a witness to its evolution. Long ago, the Muscogee Creek tribe used Peachtree as a trail, following the ridgeline. Over time, the land along the trail was settled and, as a centrally located place, it lent itself to social and economic exchange. The trail became a cartway, then a street, which evolved into the commercial and residential core of Atlanta. Horse-drawn streetcar lines were added in the 1870s, providing convenient access to the older, established neighborhoods like the West End and new developments like Inman Park. The streetcars operated within the public realm along with pedestrians and bicyclists, and over time were electrified. The automobile started to become popular in the early 1900s. Unlike today, there was no dedicated space for each mode. This mixing of modes was a true shared space[1]. Shared space was the norm in cities. In fact, all the streets in Atlanta were shared spaces and always had been. Over time, due to the relative high speeds and danger created by the automobile, the practice of separating the modes began. Pedestrians were no longer allowed to cross streets freely but were required to cross only at intersections and walk along the edges. Public policy and the design focus favored vehicular movement, which began the erosion of the historic qualities and the vibrancy of the public realm.



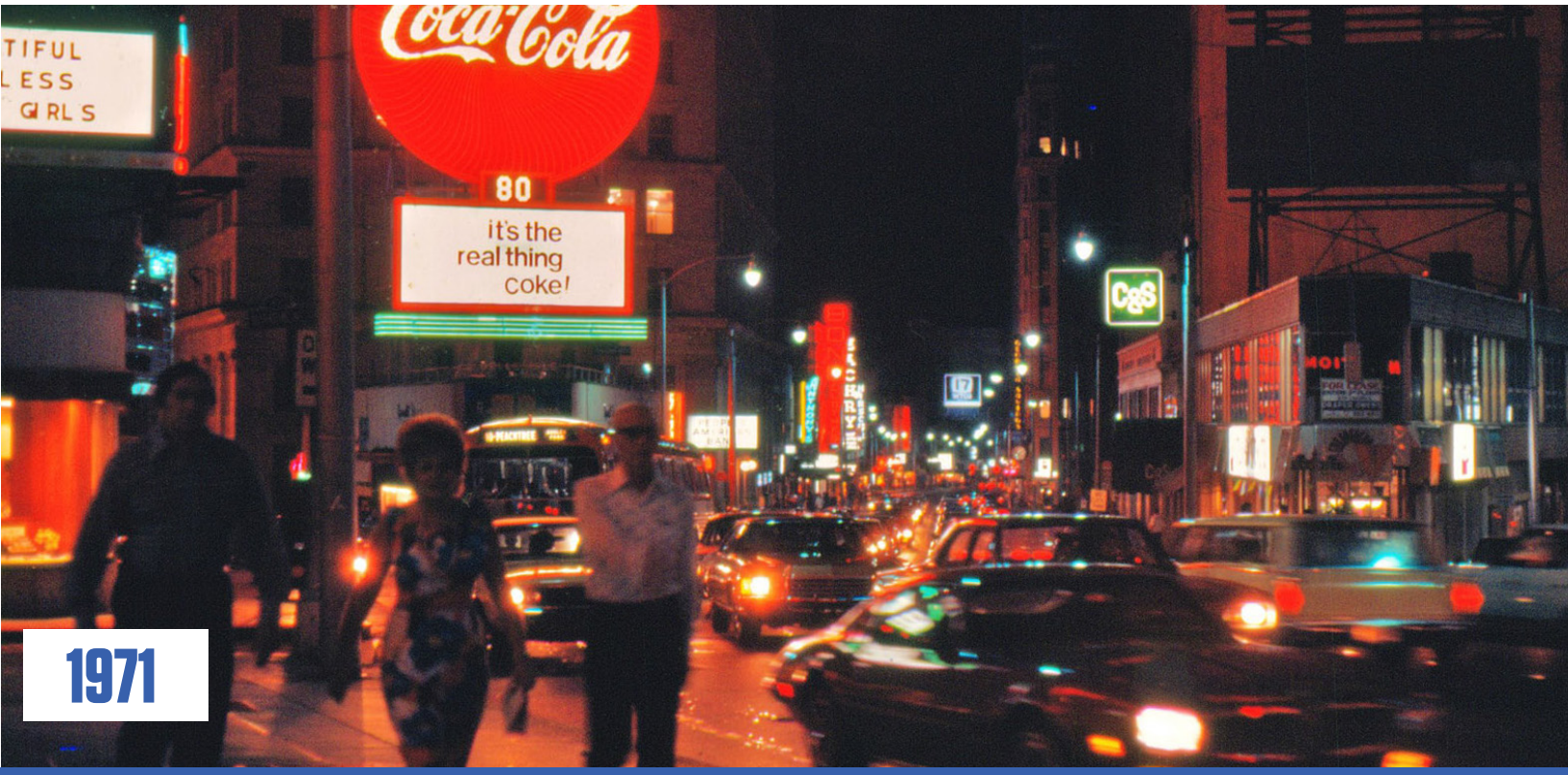
Trails built by Native Americans set the path for many Atlanta streets, including Peachtree Street. (Source: Atlanta City Design)

The automobile, oil, and tire industries along with others lobbied successfully for the creation of the Federal Highway Act and highway building in cities began fostering the car-dependent suburbs. It was characterized as "economic development," even though it eroded the physical, cultural, and historic landscapes of cities, and did tremendous and disproportional damage to Black neighborhoods. The massive highway projects effectively subsidized development of the suburbs for white families and transferred wealth and value from the city to the suburbs. Redlining and other segregation policies at the federal and local levels further eroded the vibrancy of Black neighborhoods and the cities in general. Atlanta was not spared. The construction of the Downtown

"Public policy and the design focus favored vehicular movement, which began the erosion of the historic qualities and vibrancy of the public realm."

1945

1954



1971

Connector (Interstates 75 and 85) highlighted the racist agenda of the highway program. Auburn Avenue, once a vibrant home to Atlanta's Black community and epicenter of the Civil Rights Movement, bore the brunt of these impacts. Peachtree Street was diminished at the same time.

Recognizing the destructive impacts of these efforts, the long and difficult path forward has begun. Part of the journey is restoring some of the historic roles and qualities of parts of the city. Restoring the dignity and multimodal nature of Peachtree Street is one such step.

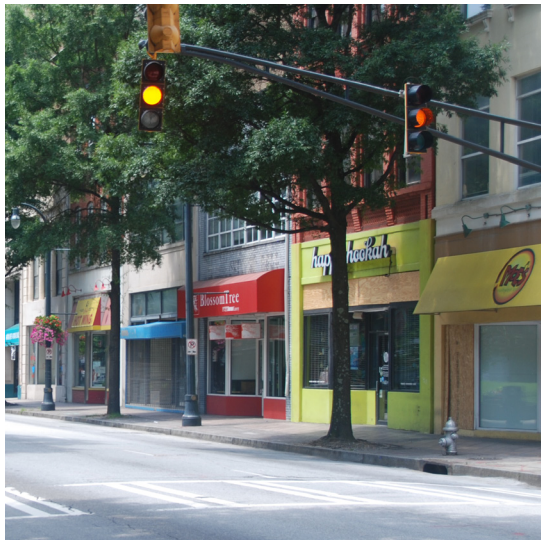
Today

Recent policies, plans, and leadership have positioned the Peachtree Shared Space Study for success. While a review of many existing plans and reports was conducted to determine a baseline for this effort, there were three plans and initiatives, outside of the 2018 Peachtree Shared Street Design Concept, that were influential in shaping this study:

- **The Atlanta City Design: Aspiring to the Beloved Community (2017)** — This document is a framework to "articulate an aspiration for the future city that Atlantans can fall in love with, knowing that if people love their city, they will make better decisions about it." Building on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s concept of the Beloved Community the document focuses on Five Core Values to help guide and prepare Atlanta for growth. They are: Equity, Progress, Ambition, Access, and Nature. The core values are woven into the Peachtree Shared Space Study by designing for and prioritizing people.
- **Atlanta City Studio** — The mission of the Atlanta City Studio (the Studio) is to, "provide leadership in the design of our city with the goal of creating an exceptional public realm and ultimately, a city that all Atlantans can be proud of." Since it's creation in 2016 as the pop-up urban design studio for the Department of City Planning, the Studio has engaged Atlanta residents at three different locations. While at Ponce City Market (2016-2017), the Studio focused on citywide efforts, such as The Atlanta City Design. At Cascade Heights (2017-2019) and most recently in Downtown (2019-present), the Studio has embedded itself in each community through hyper-local public realm projects.
- **City of Atlanta's Vision Zero Policy** — In 2020, the City of Atlanta formally adopted a Vision Zero Policy, one of the key pillars identified in the 2019 One Atlanta Strategic Transportation Plan. Vision Zero policies focus on eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while making walking, bicycling, and other micromobility options safer. The new ordinance also lowered the default speed on local roads to 25 miles per hour, with speed being a key factor that has contributed to traffic fatalities.
- **Public Space Initiatives** — Several ongoing and planned projects on the Peachtree Street corridor are doing their part to continue to enhance the public realm Downtown. The Broad Street Boardwalk used a wooden platform and movable outdoor furniture to provide more places to sit and socialize in a favorite neighborhood spot. Around the Connector, a grand vision to cap the interstate with parks, plazas, and new development called The Stitch would reconnect Downtown and Midtown and is currently being studied for feasibility.

Other public initiatives, private efforts, and individual contributions continue to shape this ever-evolving corridor. Major upcoming initiatives are referenced throughout the Existing Conditions section, including the Downtown Atlanta Master Plan, Underground Atlanta redevelopment, Emory University Hospital Midtown Master Plan, Georgia State University expansion, new developments in South Downtown, park enhancements, art installations, bus enhancements, and bicycle infrastructure.


peachtree
Ellis St
1001
OLYMPIC PARK
ATLANTA STREETCAR
STOP HERE ON RED
POLICE



2.0 A SPACE FOR ALL

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ROLES OF THE STREET

Streets support a range of transportation, access, and civic functions, and their roles have evolved over time. These roles have different—and often competing—design and operational needs. How they are prioritized depends on the context of the individual street. For each street, priorities rank differently depending on the time of day or in response to special events. Street design and curbside management help organize and balance these competing roles. Typical street functions include:

Mobility

Streets allow us to move from one location to another by several modes, including walking, biking, transit, cars, and other forms of mobility.

Public Realm

As publicly owned spaces, they also have a civic function and can be designed with places to rest, gather, eat, or play.

Loading Goods

Good have to be transported between delivery vehicles and buildings, either using designated loading zones or at the curb.

Loading People

People access buses, the streetcar, or cars at the curb or valet drop-offs. Seating, shelter, and shade can help make the wait more comfortable.

Parking and Storage

Private vehicles—including cars, bikes, scooters, and other mobility devices—are sometimes stored on the street while their users are at their destinations.

All these functions must be accommodated within the Downtown network. As Downtown's signature street, the way Peachtree Street will balance these roles must be organized in a way that puts people first to create a space that is not only functional, but safe, vibrant, and beautiful. Figure 1 illustrates how these competing functions may shift in priority throughout the course of a typical day.

Figure 1. Peachtree Street Curbside Use Prioritization Framework

Priority Ranking	Time of Day				
	AM Peak	Mid-day	PM Peak	Evening	Overnight
	6 am - 9 am	9 am - 3 pm	3 pm - 6 pm	6 pm - 2 am	2 am - 6am
1	Mobility	Public Realm	Mobility	Public Realm	Loading Goods
2	Loading People	Loading People	Loading People	Loading People	Parking and Storage
3	Public Realm	Loading Goods	Public Realm	Parking and Storage	Mobility
4	Parking and Storage	Mobility	Parking and Storage	Loading Goods	Loading People
5	Loading Goods	Parking and Storage	Loading Goods	Mobility	Public Realm

PEOPLE OF PEACHTREE

Throughout the planning process, participants voiced a central theme: Peachtree should be a place for ***everyone.*** It should be a place where everyone feels not only safe and comfortable, but welcome and invited. To do this, it must be designed and programmed with its many different users in mind, adding elements that both contribute to universal accessibility and a sense of safety and ease, but also unique features that make people feel like they were thoughtfully considered and cared for in the shaping of the space, with enough interest that they would enjoy spending time there. The many people of Peachtree are what make it a special place. They these and other people:

RESIDENTS

Downtown residents have chosen the "city life," love the neighborhood's character, and enjoy a lifestyle where they can walk, bike, or take transit for many activities. Many are craving more of the amenities of a mature urban neighborhood, like a grocery store and more local shops and restaurants.

SHOPPERS & DINERS

Peachtree's shops and restaurants draw visitors from across the region who want to enjoy the heart of the city, but they compete with businesses in other neighborhoods that have their own dynamic environments.

WORKERS

Downtown's many offices, hotels, and attractions make it one of the region's largest employment centers. Daytime workers add life to the street, but often live outside of Downtown and leave after hours.

STUDENTS

Campuses like Georgia State University and Cristo Rey Jesuit High School call Downtown home, and recent expansions have resulted in growing numbers of students.

ACTIVISTS

Peachtree has continued to be the stage for Atlanta's civic life over the years, and its essential role as a space for protest and dialogue helps our city grow.

TOURISTS

The conference centers, events venues, and hotels Downtown draw tourists from across the world to Peachtree Street. Their visits support Downtown restaurants and shops and contribute to an active public realm. They often need more directional assistance and may be looking to experience Atlanta's unique food and culture.

LEISURE USERS

Great main streets invite people to stroll and linger. People exercising, playing, and resting in the corridor are also part of its fabric.

PEOPLE WITH LIMITED VISION OR MOBILITY

The design of the built environment can support or inhibit people with limited vision or mobility from moving safely, comfortably, and conveniently through the community. Features like curbless spaces or frequent curb ramps, tactile guidance, movable seating, and other elements can help make their experience as seamless as possible.

KIDS

Atlanta's youngest community members need safe places to spark their imagination, play freely, and rest, whether living near or visiting Peachtree. More family-friendly features will help Downtown retain and attract residents of all life stages.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED

People experiencing homelessness are part of the Peachtree community and may have needs like safe places to rest and socialize, access to amenities like restrooms or WiFi, and connections to available housing, jobs, and support services.

WHAT IS A SHARED SPACE?

"Shared spaces" take a holistic approach to how we use the public realm between buildings. They emphasize the social elements of streets as much as the mobility function, with a goal of creating a vibrant and safe space for people to move and gather. Shared spaces are not just streets to move through, they are destinations to go to.

Following the widespread adoption of the car, many streets had become dominated by the automobile by the 1950s. The term **"shared space"** was coined by Dutch traffic engineers Hans Monderman and Ben Hamilton-Ballie in the 1990s as a way to return to streets more focused on people than on cars. Unlike the streets of the pre-automobile era, modern shared spaces benefit from new technology and research, designed with excellent drainage, shade trees, lighting, materials, and accommodations for people with disabilities.

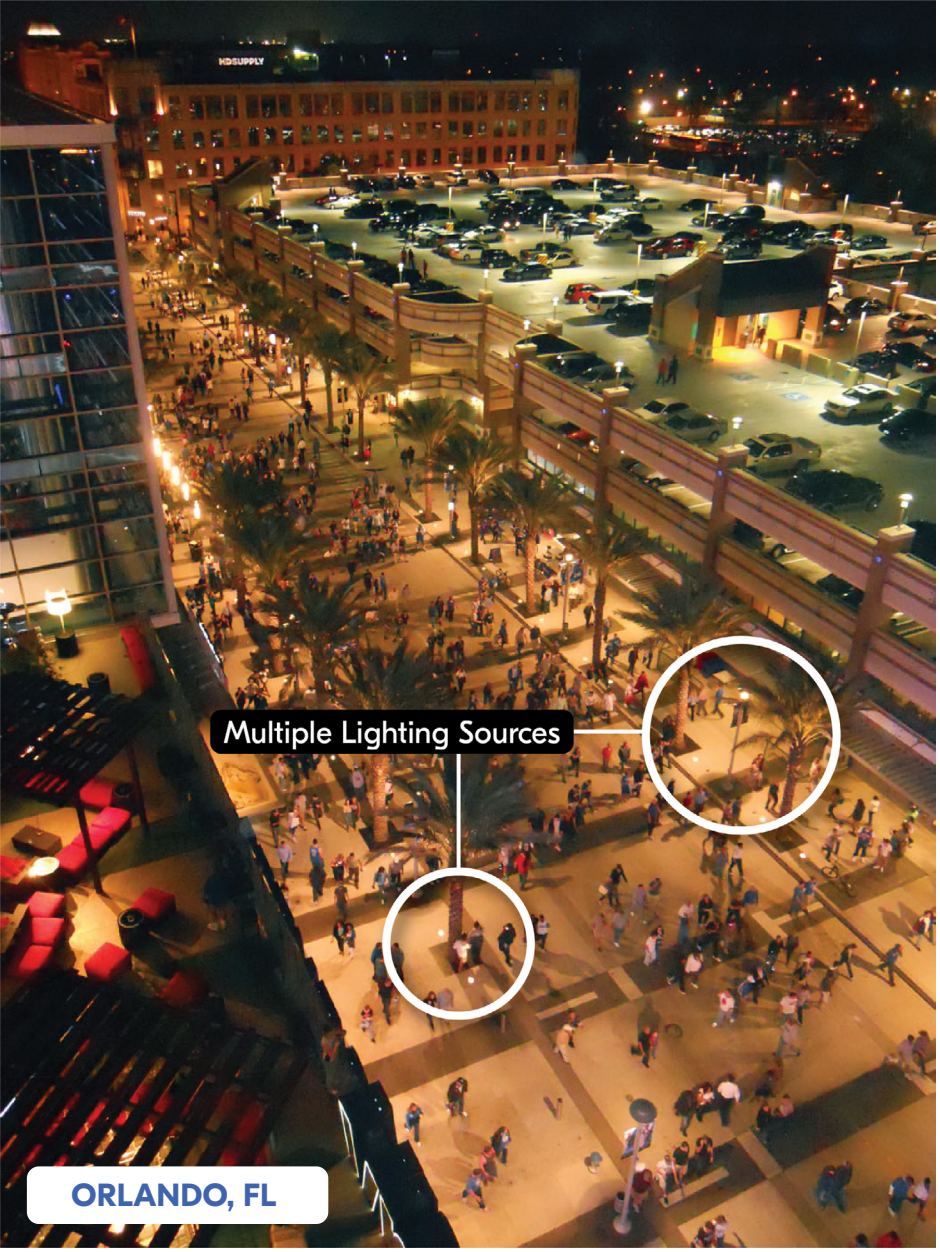
What are the design features of a shared space?

Shared spaces can take on many different forms and there is no single way to design them. While the exact design can vary, they tend to have a several key features that distinguish them from a conventional street:

1. Uses are desegregated by minimizing road markings and signage.
2. Special pavement is used to make the shared space distinct from conventional streets, delineate zones within the shared space, and create an attractive environment.
3. They do not have curbs, making it a seamless experience throughout the space and easier for people with limited mobility, wheelchairs, or strollers to move around.
4. In some cases, a pedestrian-only comfort zone is delineated closest to the buildings for pedestrians who prefer not to mix with other modes. This is typically wider than a standard sidewalk (more than 6 feet wide) and identified through material changes rather than striping or level changes. The center of the street is a shared zone for all types of users.
5. Because they lack curbs, they often use alternative drainage designs to manage stormwater, such as French drains, permeable pavers, or bioswales. Drainage features can help visually and tactically separate the pedestrian-only comfort zone from the shared zone.

6. Lighting is designed at the human scale, rather than the automotive scale. There is soft lighting throughout to both create an inviting atmosphere and make sure all users are clearly visible. Like drainage, the placement of light poles can help separate the pedestrian-only comfort zone from the shared zone.

7. A furniture zone for shade trees, seating, trash and recycling bins, bicycle parking, planters, or other features is aligned with light poles. This helps organize potential obstacles and define separation between the pedestrian-only comfort zone and the shared zone.



8. Places for people to gather and rest are mixed in throughout. These can range from a simple bench in the shade of a tree to larger plaza spaces for events.
9. Tactile warning strips are used at entrances to the shared space and throughout intersections to indicate the change in environment, which is especially necessary for people with limited vision. Defined crossings using tactile materials can also be used to connect pedestrian-only comfort zones for people with limited vision.
10. Gateway features notify people when they are entering and leaving the shared space.
11. On-street parking can be incorporated, if desired.
12. Informational guidance to help people use the space, including signs, kiosks, and auditory cues, as well as information provided to navigational app providers.

The exact design of the Peachtree Shared Space, including which of the typical features described above are appropriate here, will be determined through this process.

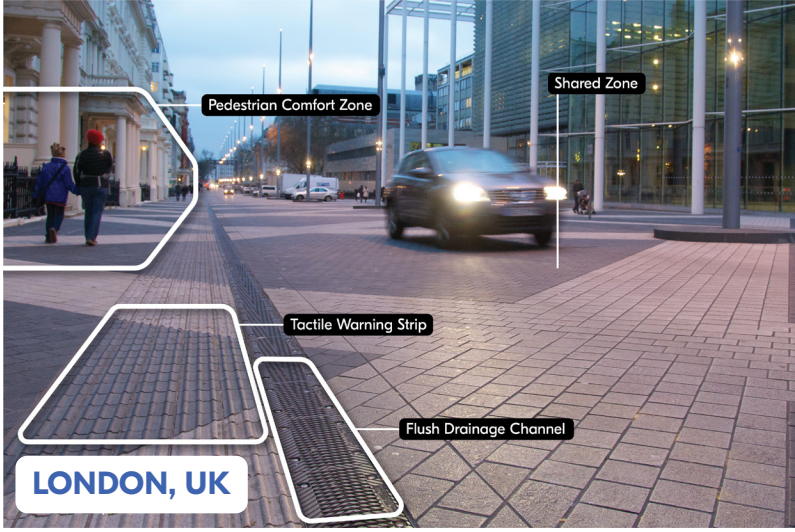
How do people move through a shared space?

Walking, biking, and transit use are encouraged modes of transportation. People walking or biking can get across at any point and are not limited to typical crosswalks. Buses and the streetcar will continue to use the space. Cars are permitted, but most travel at slow speeds (5 to 15 miles per hour). The space is not designed to maximize vehicular throughput, as is often the case for street design. In fact, it is a goal to lower vehicle volumes. For drivers, the primary reason to use a shared space is to access a property or drop off a passenger, not as part of a long-distance trip. Nearby parallel streets tend to be a better choice for drivers passing through the area. While freight loading is also allowed in the shared zone, side streets can provide alternative loading areas in some cases, and deliveries may be time restricted.

CASE STUDIES

A shared space is in many ways a return to the way city streets functioned for centuries, and the modern version has been implemented in cities around the world. In recent years, many global cities have implemented shared space designs for their signature streets. The following case studies illustrate how shared spaces created a vibrant public realm in three such cities:

- Exhibition Road | London, UK
- Bell Street | Seattle, WA
- Wharf Street | Washington, DC



Case Study: Exhibition Road

Location: London, United Kingdom

Year: 2009 - 2011

Length: Approximately 2,600 feet

Completion: Work was completed prior to the 2012 Olympics and Paralympic Games

Context: Urban main street with a mix of retail, office, and national museums. The corridor attracts over 11 million visitors each year.

Cost: $30.0 million

Exhibition Road is often highlighted as the premier shared space example. Its flexible design allows for all users of all abilities to access its world-class museums and academic establishments with a vibrant and safe public realm. But this wasn't always the case. In the 1960's the road that owes its name to the Great Exhibition of 1851, gave way to the automobile and pushed the pedestrian to edges. The original intent of street as a place for ease of access for all modes and to frame important architecture was slowly crumbling.

In 2003 a design competition was held to improve the street and bring back its original intent. The solution was a shared space that would put people-first while still allowing vehicular traffic and access to the museums. Through design vehicular speed was reduced and pedestrian areas were expanded. The project was completed prior to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Previous Condition:

- Two lanes for vehicular traffic, three rows of parking (one of which was in the center of the road), sidewalks on both sides.
- Visual clutter in pavement markings and signage
- Limited pedestrian crossing locations

Shared Space Condition:

- Two-way curbless design
- Visual clutter removed (this includes traffic signs, pavement markings, safety barriers)
- Drainage channel covers and tactile strips demark pedestrian and vehicular areas
- High-volume intersections still retain signals and road markings, while low-volume intersections have signage noting entry into street and ramps into the space
- Vehicle speed is posted as you enter the space
- Flexible space along the corridor allows for on-street parking, pedestrian amenities, café seating, and bicycle parking
- Private vehicles, delivery vehicles and buses area all allowed on the corridor

Application to Peachtree Street:

- Flexibility and simplicity of the space is important
- Parking is prohibited anywhere in the road except in marked parking bays
- Loading and unloading, including drop-offs and pick-ups of passengers, is only allowed in certain locations
- Limit or remove visual clutter
- Use design to slow speeds and designate areas between pedestrians and vehicles
- Increased speed can be an issue when there is low pedestrian volumes — lateral shifts are recommended
- High-quality materials speak to the street's prominence

CASE STUDY: EXHIBITION ROAD

Case Study: Bell Street Park

Location: Seattle, Washington

Year: 2010 - 2014

Length: 4 city blocks (approximately 1,300 feet)

Completion: March 2014; Officially opened April 12, 2014

Context: Urban mixed use neighborhood

Cost: $5.0 million from voter-approved levy ($3.5 million for planning, design, and construction, and $1.5 million for right-of-way acquisitions)

Bell Street Park was the City of Seattle's first shared street in the densely populated Belltown neighborhood. The project established a new typology for streets as parks in Seattle and set a precedent for other cities to explore how their existing right-of-way can be rebalanced to be accessible for all users. A 2008 City audit discovered that the Belltown neighborhood was underserved in its access to open space but acquiring land for new open space was deemed too expensive. In response, voters with support of the community, approved a levy to generate new funds and granted the City of Seattle's Park and Recreation Department ability to create Bell Street Park.

The community was an active participant in designing the street along with various city departments, and other partner agencies. The final curbless design included stormwater features, new street trees and planters, and pedestrian-scale amenities. Care was also taken to program and activate the space with tables and chairs, public art installations, and bike parking. Since construction was completed in 2014, traffic has been slowed and vehicle volumes have decreased slightly. Bus operations remained the same and actually saw improved operations along the corridor.

Previous Condition:

- One-way road with two vehicular lanes, on-street parking on one side and sharrows.
- Critical corridor to buses (over 300 bus pass through daily, most during peak times)
- Mixed-use residential between 3 and 6 stories

Shared Space Condition:

- One-way curbless road
- Flexibility in design to allow for high turnover areas for parking/loading/unloading, outdoor dining, and pedestrian scaled amenities
- Transition to shared space happens at intersections
- Private vehicles are limited but buses and bicycles are allowed along the entire corridor

Application to Peachtree Street:

- Material choice is critical and should be considered with long-term maintenance and accessibility in mind.
- Simplicity of the space lends to its adaptability.
- Coordination across departments and partner agencies is critical from the onset of the project.
- The designation (e.g. street or park) and maintenance responsibilities for a shared space can vary and may include the DOT, parks department, or a partner agency like a CID
- Accessibility design features should be placed to maximize comfort.

CASE STUDY: BELL STREET PARK

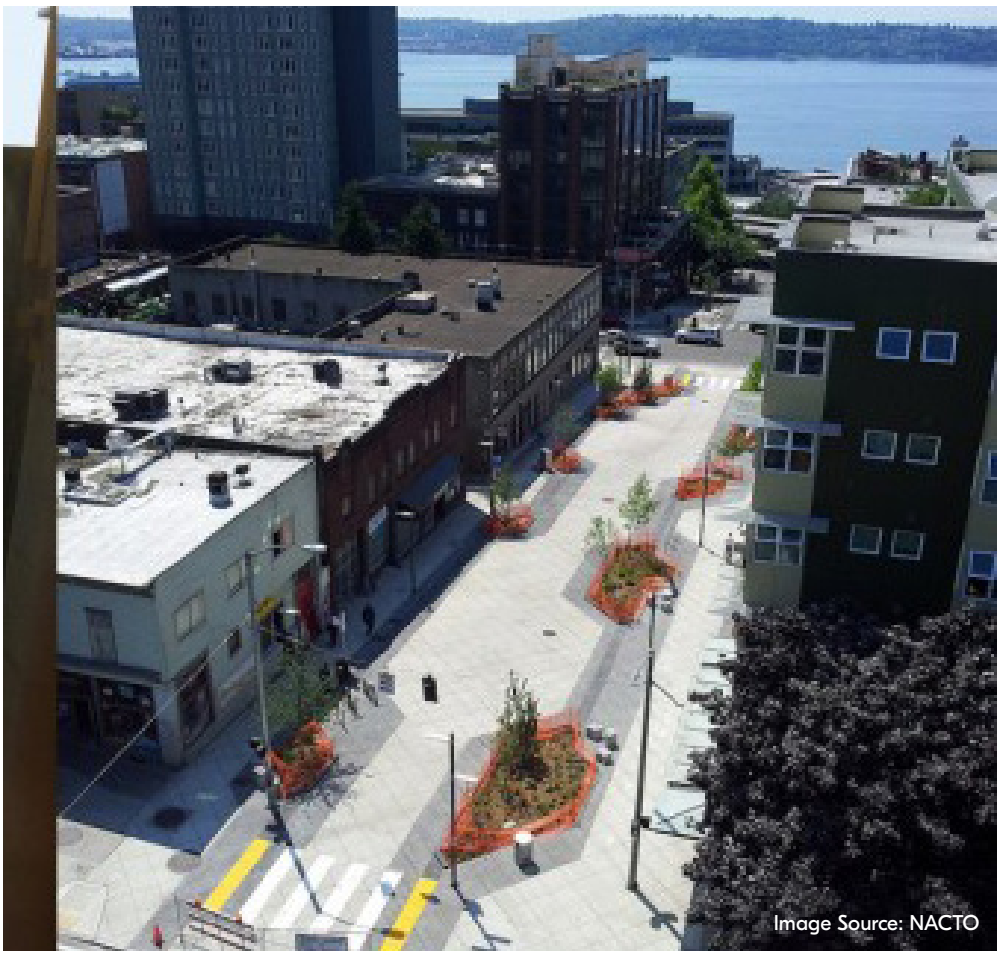


Image Source: NACTO

Image Source: MIG

Case Study: Wharf Street

Location: Washington, D.C.

District Wharf is a public-public private partnership to transform almost one mile of waterfront into a mixed-use development in Washington, DC. Wharf Street is the development's signature street, a 60-foot-wide, highly designed shared space with retail and restaurants on one side and the Washington Channel on the other. The public realm has been designed to put people first and vehicles when necessary. In total, there are 12 blocks of shared spaces on the site. Different paving materials, textures, colors, and patterns help differentiate the spaces for vehicles and people.

Year: Planning and land acquisition between 2003-2014, groundbreaking in 2014

Length: Approximately 800 feet

Completion: Phase 1 of the District was opened 2017

Context: Urban main street

Cost: The cost of Wharf Street itself is not publicly available. Tax increment financing bonds for the development's overall infrastructure totaled $198 million.

Previous Condition:

- Visual clutter in pavement markings and signage
- Limited pedestrian crossing locations

Shared Space Condition:

- 60-foot right-of-way that includes:
  - 20 feet of café seating along the retail edge
  - 20 feet of vehicular circulation (one-way with areas for short-term parking or loading/unloading)
  - 20 feet of dedicated pedestrian circulation
- Paving materials, trees, and drainage features delineate the shared space, including smoother pavers for the pedestrian-only areas and rougher textures within the shared zone
- Bollards are located at intersections
- Design of street and materiality enforce slow driving
- Centralized ridehailing pick-up/drop-off locations on the edge of the site
- Loading docks and primary loading zones located off the main street with restricted delivery hours

Application to Peachtree Street:

- Use design to slow speeds and designate areas between pedestrians and vehicles
- Highly programmed/curated activation
- Use of high-quality materials
- Stormwater and green infrastructure is located throughout the development
- Focus on authenticity
- Variety of human scale lighting sources create an inviting glow
- A public-private partnership between the developers and the District of Columbia's Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development

Image Source: Payton Chung

3.0 PROCESS

3.0 PROCESS

PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Peachtree Shared Space Study took place in late 2020 and early 2021, and implementation is ongoing. the focus is on a 1.25-mile portion of Peachtree Street in Downtown Atlanta between North Avenue and Marietta Street. Through a community process and a review of existing conditions this study identified a preferred location for a shared space within that study area and developed a conceptual design for the project, along with other recommended improvements to the street and public realm throughout the corridor. Project elements included:

- **Community Engagement:** Community members were invited to participate in a series of educational and collaborative activities to help understand key challenges, shape the project vision, and develop the conceptual design. *(See page ## for more information.)*

- **Existing Conditions and Technical Analysis:** To establish a baseline understanding of site conditions and constraints, a technical analysis was conducted for existing plans, geospatial data, site observations, traffic modeling, and environmental and historical due diligence. *(See page ## for more information.)*

- **Alternatives Analysis and Concept Development:** Several alternative concepts for the corridor were developed and refined, grounded in the community input and technical analyses. This included both a design for the shared space in the preferred pilot project location, as well as designs to retrofit the rest of Peachtree Street within the study area to improve safety, enhance the quality of experience, and transition to the shared space. *(Details will be included in the next draft of the report.)*
- **Activation and Programming Strategy:** This strategy will identify interventions and initiatives that will help the shared space and surrounding neighborhood thrive, including recommendations for placemaking opportunities, vacant and underutilized properties, integration of housing, park and plaza improvements, and programming. *(Details will be included in the next draft of the report.)*
- **Demonstration Project:** A demonstration project will be designed and installed in part of the study area as a short-term, low-cost way to test aspects of a shared space using temporary materials. *(See page ## for more information.)*
- **Implementation Plan:** The implementation plan will guide the next steps for the shared space project, outlining key tasks, responsible parties, estimated costs, and potential funding sources. *(This will be included in the next draft of the report.)*

This work was led by the City of Atlanta Department of City Planning in collaboration with the City's Department of Transportation and with support from partner agencies such as Central Atlanta Progress and MARTA, and consultants at Toole Design Group, Modern Mobility Partners, Street Plans, Stantec, James Lima Planning and Development, and Edwards-Pitman. It was funded with support from the Atlanta Regional Commission.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the primary goals of this study was to better understand the community's vision and needs for the future of Peachtree Street. A series of educational, information-seeking, and collaborative activities were hosted to invite community members to join the design process. A project website— sharepeachtree.com— hosted information about the project and engagement activities. Due to social distancing requirements in response to COVID-19, all activities were held virtually, in keeping with the City of Atlanta's COVID-19 response policy. Activities were promoted through social media, press releases and coverage in local publications, and direct outreach through partner organizations, city contact lists, and flyers. Full summaries are available in the Appendix. Activities included:

Public Space Working Group

The Public Space Working Group (PSWG) was created as a steering committee for this project, with the intention of a life beyond this study. A group of about 20 community members was formed, including neighbors and representatives from nearby buildings, hotels, Central Atlanta Progress, MARTA, Atlanta Bicycle Coalition, Atlanta Regional Commission, Sweet Auburn Works, Center for Civic Innovation, and AmericasMart. It is a flexible, growing group meant to evolve over time as it guides the ongoing implementation of the Peachtree Shared Space and supports other public space projects for Downtown Atlanta. The group met four times over the course of the project to ideate, review draft concepts, and discuss implementation strategies and will continue to meet in the future.

Community Input Map

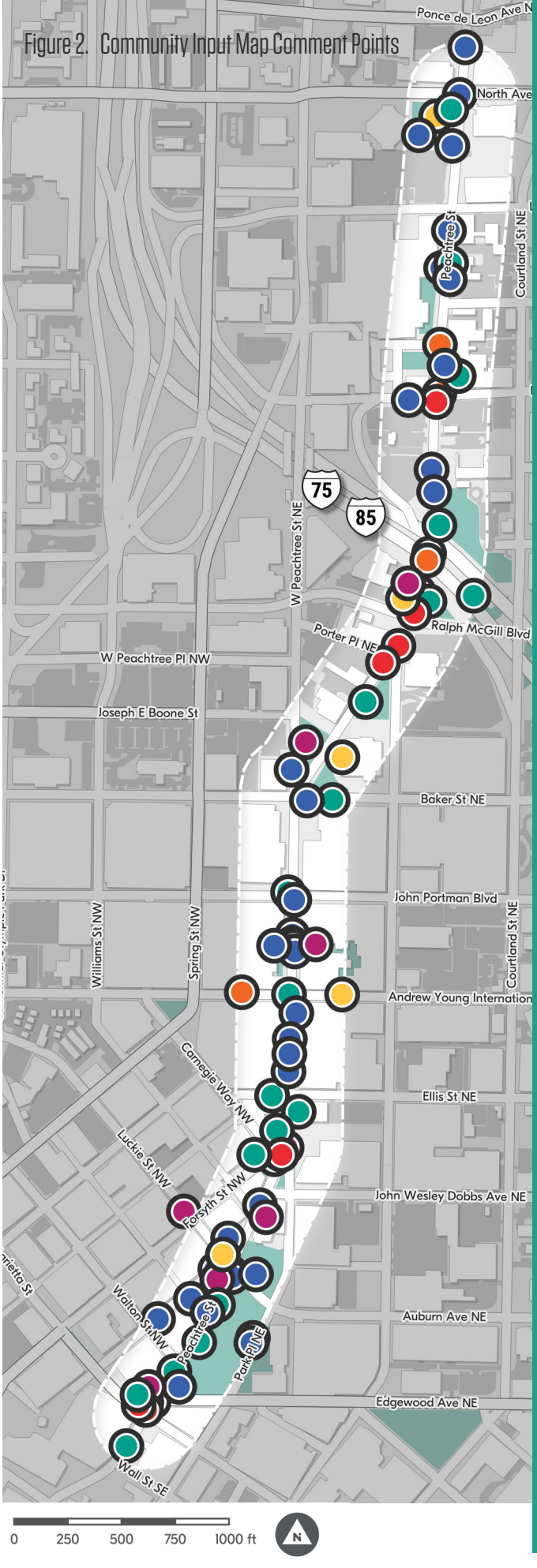
An interactive, online map was used to crowdsource information about and ideas for the study area. More than 200 unique comments were received in November 2020, including 85 original comments and peer feedback to posted comments. They shared insights on places and features they loved and wanted to keep; issue spots for transportation and access; ideas for public space features; ideas for transportation and access improvements; and the best and most concerning spots for a potential shared space. All comments are included in the Appendix.

- Places or features you love & want to keep
- Places where a shared space concerns you
- Issue spots for transportation & access
- Ideas for public space features
- Best spot for a shared space
- Ideas for transportation & access improvements

Themes included:

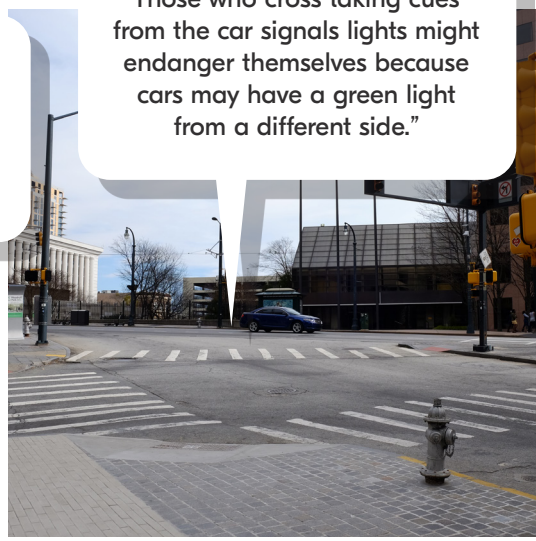
- Interest in refocusing the street to serve the neighborhood rather than regional commuters
- Disappointment with existing streetscape design feeling suburban, boring, and uninviting
- Desire for buildings to better address the street and plazas
- Concerns over the need to maintain clear vehicular access to Emory University Hospital Midtown
- Desire for more sidewalk cafes and vendors
- Desire to spruce up and fill vacant storefronts with new businesses

Figure 2. Community Input Map Comment Points

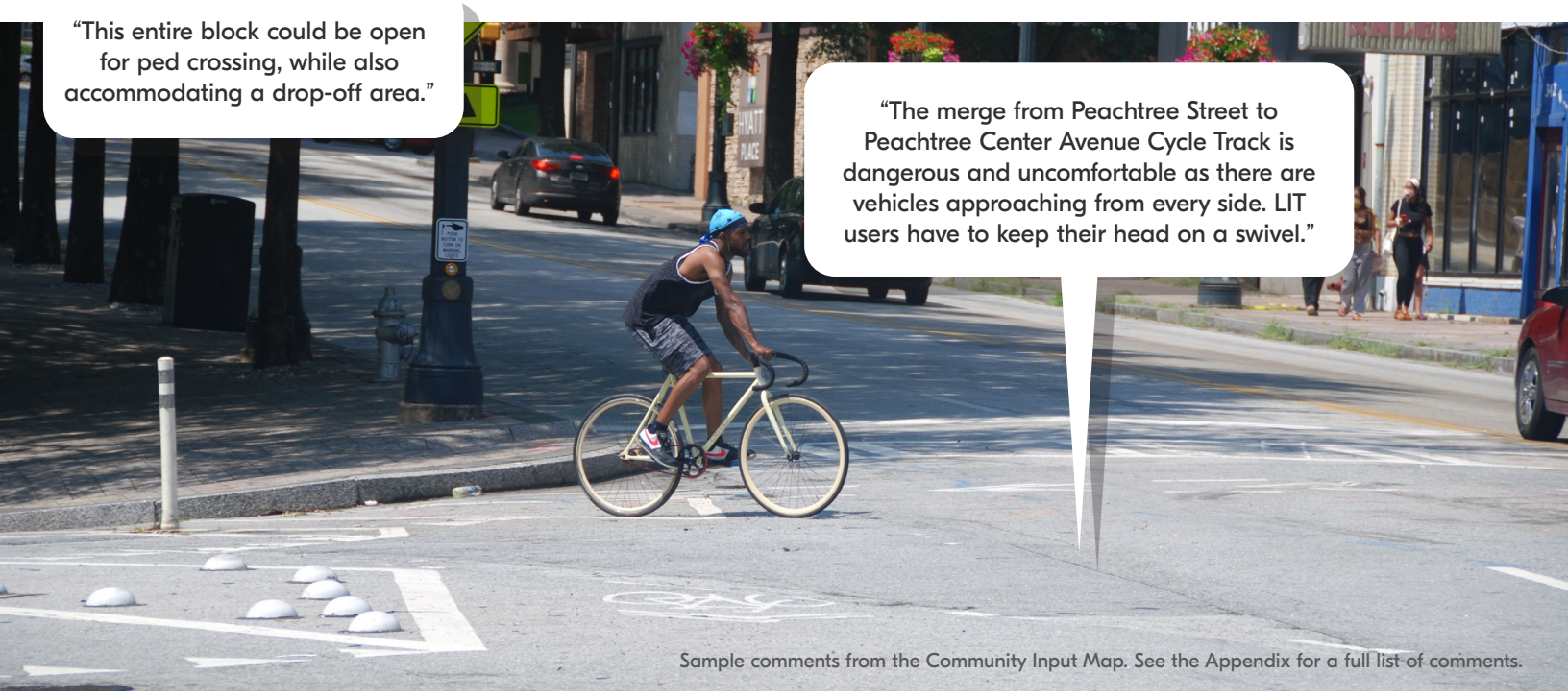


"This entire block could be open for ped crossing, while also accommodating a drop-off area."

"Remove the fencing along the sidewalk. It obstructs pedestrian flow, and thoroughly hinders pick-up/drop-off space for MARTA buses -- especially when buses bridges are replacing trains in emergencies."



"The ped crossing here is terrible if you try to obey the ped signals. The wait is far too long. Those who cross taking cues from the car signals lights might endanger themselves because cars may have a green light from a different side."



"The merge from Peachtree Street to Peachtree Center Avenue Cycle Track is dangerous and uncomfortable as there are vehicles approaching from every side. LIT users have to keep their head on a swivel."

Sample comments from the Community Input Map. See the Appendix for a full list of comments.

- Need for a better pedestrian and bike connection between Civic Center Station and Peachtree Street
- Frustration with the abrupt termination of existing bike lanes on the north end of the corridor, as well as interest in adding protection to the existing bike lanes
- Disagreement over the importance of the bridge over The Connector for vehicular travel
- Intersections that feel hazardous, like Ralph McGill Boulevard, Peachtree Center Avenue, Forsyth Street, Auburn Avenue, and Edgewood Avenue/Marietta Street
- Desire to remove existing driveways and shift access to side streets
- Need to overcome the perceived "end of the road" at The Connector and draw people across
- Interest in upgrading Mayor's #1 Park and Woodruff Park
- Need for better pick-up drop-off zones and loading operations
- Need to serve citizens who are homeless
- Specific design ideas like:
  - Making Peachtree Street a pedestrian-only corridor
  - Locations for new bike racks
  - Reducing the number of vehicle travel lanes to add protected bike facilities
  - Locations to widen sidewalks
  - Spots for new or enhanced wayfinding signs, especially at John Portman Boulevard and Andrew Young International Boulevard
  - Transit-only lane for streetcar
  - Removing slip lanes and expanding plazas

Community Workshops

Two multiday virtual workshops were hosted to dive into deeper discussions with the community:

Discovery Workshop Series

The first workshop series was held in November 2020 and focused on understanding key issues and opportunities for the project through the community's eyes. Participants were asked their opinion on:

- What is the best spot for a shared space?
- What design features would you like to see?
- What issues should the design address?

There were 196 virtual meeting registrants for events, including:

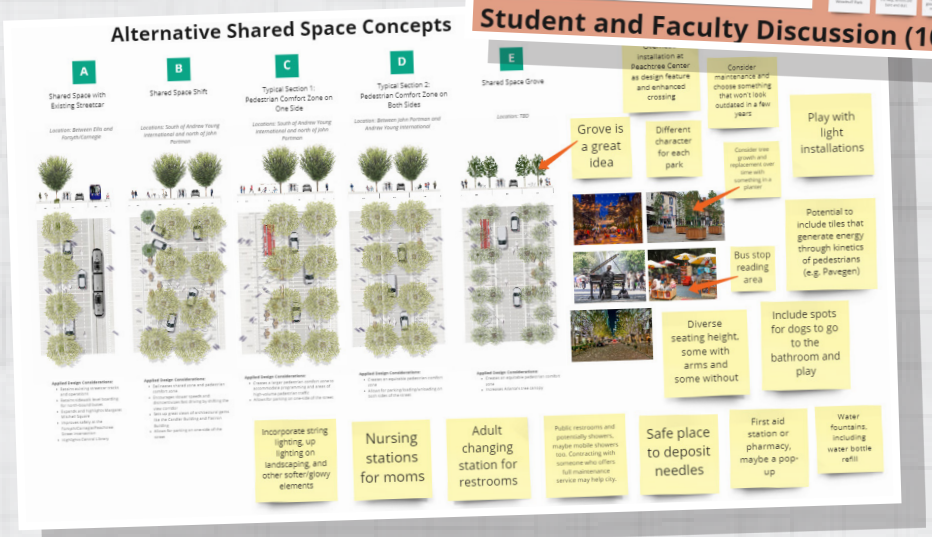
- **Community Kickoff Meeting:** An overview of the project area and shared spaces, with input from participants on the values that should shape Peachtree Street; elements to preserve, change, or add; and potential concerns about a shared space
- **Tactical Urbanism 101:** An introduction to tactical urbanism—an approach to testing infrastructure design with short-term, low-cost prototypes—and how it will be used to test a shared space.
- **Virtual Open Studio Sessions:** A series of collaborative design sessions used small breakout groups and a virtual whiteboard to discuss the existing conditions, aspirations, and potential solutions for each segment of Peachtree Street with community members.

Virtual Community Collaboration

Finding ways to listen to and collaborate with community members virtually was essential to this project, which took place during social distancing requirements in response to COVID-19. An interactive, online whiteboard tool helped the project team work with the community in real time, marking up draft concepts, adding notes, and reimagining the design of Peachtree Street together virtually. Check out some examples of the shared workspace!

Identifying key challenges and dreaming of improvements

Learning the unique perspectives of different stakeholders through small group interviews



Sharing feedback on draft concepts for different ways to configure a shared space & special features to add

- **Community Pinup Session:** A debrief on what was learned from the community through the week's virtual meetings and stakeholder interviews and how it would inform the design direction.

A key outcome of the workshop was the identification of a preferred location for the pilot shared space project. Participant preferences aligned with existing conditions analysis, with a clear preference for the Peachtree Center area (West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street) as the best spot for a shared space. The higher level of density in that area combined with the lack of vibrant public space and relatively low traffic volumes made it the preferred location for most participants. The Woodruff Park area (Forsyth Street to Marietta Street) was also considered a desirable location for a shared space, but considered a next step, given the existing historic architecture, small businesses, and park that already contribute to an enjoyable environment.

Design Workshop Series

The second workshop was held in January 2021 and focused on deepening community understanding of how a shared space would work and developing a conceptual design for the shared space in the preferred pilot project location, as well as retrofitting other parts of Peachtree Street within the study area. Participants were asked their opinion on:

- What are the right values, vision, and goals to shape the design?
- Do the draft design concepts align with those, and if not, how should they be modified to best fulfill them?

"Include features that make the space more livable, like water fountains, places for dogs to go to the bathroom and play, and public restrooms with nursing stations for moms and adult changing stations.

"Incorporate string lighting, up lighting on landscaping, and other softer, glowy elements."

"Consider maintenance from the beginning and choose something that won't look outdated in a few years."

"Movable seating makes it easier for people using wheelchairs or who want to find a quiet spot to regroup. Diverse seating heights and some seats with or without arms also adds helpful options."

"Add more trees, grass, and other natural elements to make it feel softer."

Above: Community members shared their ideas for the shared space design at the community pinup session, highlighted above and detailed in the Appendix. A central theme was to make it feel soft and inviting and to bring in amenities that make public life easy for many different kinds of people.

- How should the demonstration project be designed to test key elements of a shared space?

There were 182 virtual meeting registrants for events, including:

- **Live from Seattle — Bell Street Virtual Tour:** A remote field trip to Seattle's shared space project to help the community better understand shared space operations by reviewing videos of people using the shared space today and hearing behind the scenes stories from the project's designers.

- **Great Streets Forum:** A panel of national experts discussed and answered participant questions about what makes a street great and how best practices can help Peachtree Street succeed, focusing on the topics identified in the Discovery Workshop:

  - **Stormwater Management and Green Infrastructure:** Amalia Leighton Cody, P.E., AICP highlighted how green infrastructure can help manage flooding through a more natural, surface level design that also contributes to the landscape of the public realm.

  - **Activating and Programming Public Spaces:** Tara Green, CSEE discussed how a combination of inviting design features and a curated calendar of community events can bring life to a public space, along with potential models for successful governance and funding.

  - **Paradigm Shifts in Transportation:** Emily Weidenhof shared how the New York City DOT's approach to streets as public space has evolved and the context-sensitive toolkit they have used to rebalance their streets to prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders using strategies like shared spaces, slow blocks with traffic calming, and demonstration projects.

  - **Equity:** Tamika L. Butler, Esq. underscored the importance of equitable planning, both in process and outcomes. She highlighted that we should be aiming for liberation and self determination, ensuring people can move freely. Institutional change needs to shift from power over to power with by genuinely listening to and acting on what people want, creating brave spaces for conversation, intentionally de-centering whiteness, and analyzing and challenging privilege.

- **Demonstration Project Open House:** An update on the in-progress concept for the demonstration project on Peachtree Street, with a discussion of how it should be modified to fit the context and test specific areas of concern.

- **Community Open Studio:** An overview of the draft values, vision, and goals, along with typical sections and public space elements for the draft conceptual design, with small group breakout discussions for feedback and collaboration.

Key direction from the Design Workshop Series included the refinement of the extents of the shared space; an acknowledgement that the space needed to be flexible to respond to today and tomorrow's users; programming and activation of the space will be critical to its success; green infrastructure and shade are important; features like restrooms, seating,

Virtual stakeholder interview with students and faculty from Cristo Rey High School

and water fountains should make it easy for people to spend time in the space; soft lighting should be used to create a warm and iniviting ambience; using features like landscaping to create pedestrian-only zones adds a sense of comfort; adding slight bends to the street to slow down vehicles is desired; loading and unloading areas should be incorporated; sustainable practices should be used; neighbors should be prioritized over tourists; and the space should be authentically Atlanta by incorporating local materials, artwork, cultural programming, and businesses.

Meetings from both workshops were recorded and posted to the project website for people who were unable to attend live. Post-workshop online surveys were open for a week after each workshop series to allow those community members to provide the same input as the ones who joined the live sessions. Community members were also invited to share photos with captions explaining their ideas for Peachtree Street, or to submit sketches of their concepts for consideration through social media challenges.

Stakeholder Interviews

More than 80 people participated in one-on-one and small group interviews that were held as part of both workshops, and as supplemental activities to connect with additional community members.

Comments from participants in these activities are highlighted throughout this document in the "What We Heard" blurbs, alongside other information about the relevant topic. Full summaries of each of the engagement activities are available in the Appendix.

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Check out the ***"What We Heard"*** features throughout the report for comments from community members about corridor challenges, ideas for improvements, and other insights that helped shape the design and implementation strategy.

VALUES

Community members discussed the values that should shape Peachtree Street at several engagement activities. The following emerged as values that should guide the project approach:

- Safe for all people
- Equitable and Inclusive
- Accessible
- Vibrant
- Sustainable
- Flexible
- Serve neighbors and workers first, tourists second
- Context-sensitive

VISION

A vision for Peachtree Street was developed with participants to capture the project's core aspirations:

> "The Peachtree Shared Space will be an exceptional public space for all people every day, supporting Downtown Atlanta as a vibrant, equitable, and joyful neighborhood."

GOALS

Based on community input, along with the existing conditions analysis, the following project goals were identified, which will be pursued through design, policies, programming, and other implementation strategies:

- Design a space that feels authentically and memorably Atlanta
- Create a safe, accessible space that prioritizes walking, rolling, biking, and transit
- Foster, showcase, and attract thriving local businesses
- Make all people feel invited, comfortable, and celebrated
- Enliven the street
- Naturally encourage safe, slow driving
- Support the functions of a healthy neighborhood
- Retrofit surrounding streets as needed to transition smoothly into the shared space and manage traffic

THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

What is a Demonstration Project?

Demonstration projects, also called Tactical Urbanism, are low-cost and short-term ways to change the overall use and feel of a public space prior to committing to a long-term, full build project. These short-term projects have the ability to test a variety of changes within the public right-of-way such as improving safety at intersections, expanding the pedestrian realm, implementation of bicycle facilities, reduction of vehicular lanes, and testing activation and programming strategies at key points just to name a few. This "test before you invest" strategy will allow the short-term concepts to be evaluated and modified with real-time feedback from users that will influence the final design of the shared space.

What Can We Test?

A true shared space would be impossible to test as a short-term demonstration project. At the heart of shared spaces is a curbless design that allows flexibility in movement for transportation modes and expanded pedestrian areas that are seamlessly integrated into the right-of-way. These components would require a significant upfront financial investment. However, there are components of a shared space that can be tested through a demonstration effort. The Peachtree Shared Space Study will test:

- **Reduction in travel lanes:** Shared spaces provide flexibility in vehicular movement and are generally operate in a more constrained

Citywide Context for a Demonstration Project

Since 2017, the City of Atlanta (CoA) has implemented multiple tactical and interim projects through its Placemaking Program where residents apply to receive technical assistance, funding and installation services for public space improvements they'd like to see in their neighborhood. To better support this initiative, as well as, provide an avenue for communities and other organizations to lead their own projects, the City of Atlanta (CoA) released its much-anticipated Tactical Urbanism Guide to support, guide, and empower communities to positively reshape their streets and public spaces to improve safety, vibrancy, and build community capacity for change. Recent passage of the Vision Zero initiative, which aims to make Atlanta's streets safer for all users, and the outdoor, on-street dining ordinance passed in late 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 restrictions further highlight the policies in place to re-examine how we should think about and use our public realm. The 10th Street Pop-up Bike Lane and Atlanta Streets Alive are two local examples of tactical urbanism in Atlanta. We also have DCP's Placemaking Program which has installed multiple tactical projects throughout the city. The Peachtree Shared Space Study's demonstration project will build on these policies and projects to test a new type of space in Atlanta.

Pop-up bike lane on 10th Street in Midtown

area. The current configuration of downtown Peachtree Street is 2 vehicular travel lanes in each direction with dedicated left turn lanes in some location. The demonstration project will test reducing the travel way to one vehicular lane in each direction. Traffic analysis using existing, pre-COVID 19 traffic numbers and growth factors in line with Atlanta Regional Commission's regional traffic model highlighted that a shift from 4 to 2 lanes in downtown is feasible with minimal impacts on the surround network and positive impacts in improved safety with slower speeds along Peachtree Street. Special care will be taken at existing dedicated loading/unloading/taxi areas, particularly between John Portman Boulevard and Andrew Young International Boulevard.

- **Expansion of pedestrian areas and mid-block crossings:** True shared spaces allow pedestrians to cross freely at any location as they are the priority mode. Sidewalks will be expanded in the demonstration project to allow for a more comfortable pedestrian environment. This configuration along with a reduction in travel lanes would provide a narrower and safer pedestrian crossing at the intersections and the potential of mid-block crossings at key locations of the corridor, such as Peachtree Center. Re-allocating existing planters and low fences, that currently line Peachtree Street, to the outer travel lane would further enhance the pedestrian realm.

- **Activation of pedestrian areas:** Expansion of the pedestrian areas affords an opportunity to activate a greater portion of the public realm. Activation ideas can be as simple as expanded seating for dining that is in line with the recent City ordinance, seating areas for bus stops, and new locations for vendors and food trucks.

Where Will We Test?

The preferred location of the demonstration project was determined over the course of this study by engaging with community members and the Public Space Working Group, reviewing existing conditions, discussing with multiple property owners along the corridor, and collaborating closely with City of Atlanta, Central Atlanta Progress and MARTA staff. The conclusion was to create a demonstration project that would frame and test key components of the City's first shared space between Baker Street and Ellis Street.

Funding for the demonstration project was further enhanced through the public participatory budgeting effort of Downtown Decides. District 2 Councilmember Amir Farokhi led the Downtown Decides effort that identified $225,000 to invest in making downtown Peachtree Street a Complete Street.

How Will We Test?

The demonstration project took part in two phases over the spring and summer of 2021:

- **Phase 1:** Lane reduction, curb extension, mid-block crossing
- **Phase 2:** Public space activation

More information about the demonstration project phases, design, and outcomes is available on page X.

4.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

4.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A clear understanding of the existing conditions along Peachtree Street and in the surrounding neighborhood is needed to help answer the key project questions:

?

1. **Can Peachtree Street become an exceptional public space?**
2. **Does the broader community support Peachtree Street as a shared space?**
3. **Where should a shared space happen along Peachtree Street and what does that look like?**
4. **What are the potential impacts and benefits of shared space?**
5. **What are key challenges today that can be addressed through design?**

The existing conditions scope for this study included a review of available data, field observations, and traffic modeling to assess alternative scenarios. It addresses land use, market conditions, transportation, and urban design. It did not include a site survey, which will be completed in the next phase of work and help solidify the understanding of the space and refine conceptual recommendations.

LAND USE

Existing Land Use

Existing Development

The nature and intensity of development along the corridor varies, ranging from a relatively low-density, suburban style of development with ample surface parking around Emory University Hospital Midtown to dense, high rise development around Peachtree Center. Downtown's regional role as a center for employment, tourism, and civic functions are reflected in the balance of existing land uses. Nearby state and local government centers, convention centers, and event venues influence the activity on Peachtree Street. Office, hotel, and institutional uses are predominant along most of the corridor. Residences, while present, constitute a relatively low share of existing development. Major existing uses along Peachtree Street include:

Office	Hospitality	Institutional	Residential	Retail	Other
• Bank of America Plaza • SunTrust Plaza • 270 Peachtree • 260 Peachtree • 230 Peachtree • Peachtree Center • 191 Peachtree Tower • Georgia Pacific Center • 100 Peachtree • FlatironCity • One Park Tower • Additional smaller office buildings	• Hyatt Place • Hyatt Regency • Hotel Indigo • Westin • Ritz-Carlton • Ellis Hotel • Candler Hotel • Residence Inn Marriott	• Emory University Hospital Midtown • St. Luke's Episcopal Church • Atlanta First United Methodist Church • Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus • Fulton County Central Library • Georgia State University	• Windsor over Peachtree • Byron on Peachtree • Commons at Imperial Hotel • Peachtree Towers • Muses Lofts • William Oliver Lofts	• Ground floor and internal tenants in multiple buildings	• AmericasMart • MARTA

Parks and Plazas

Open space along Peachtree Street is a mix of publicly- and privately-owned parks and plazas. Publicly-owned spaces include:

- Hardy Ivy Park
- Mayor's #1 Park
- Peachtree Center MARTA Station plaza
- Margaret Mitchell Plaza
- Woodruff Park

Publicly accessible, privately-owned space along the corridor contributes to the public realm by offering places for people to sit, relax, dine, or retreat. However, they do not have the same reliable standard for equitable access as publicly owned spaces. They may be closed at certain times of day and property owners are not required to invite or allow all people to use the space. They include:

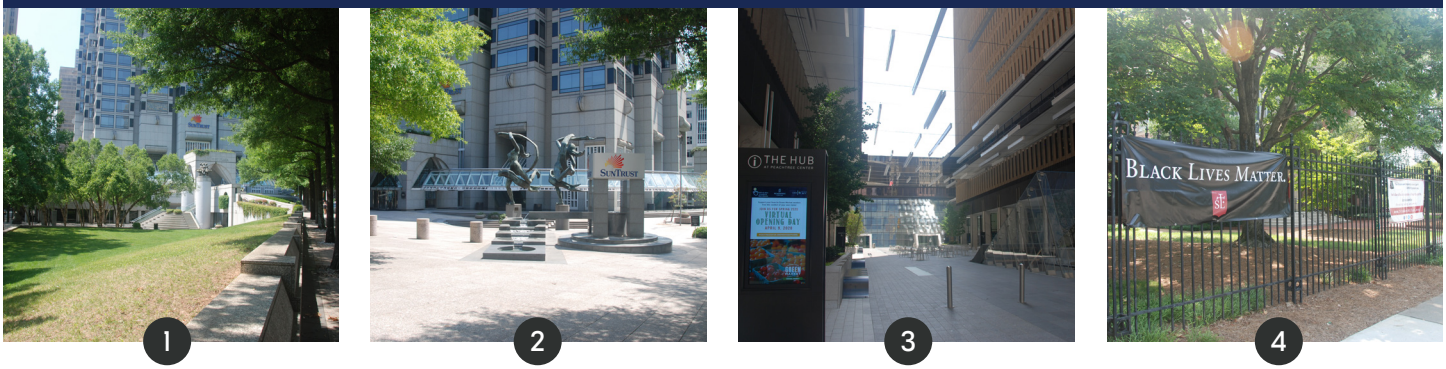
- Bank of America Plaza
- Emory University Hospital Midtown gardens and plazas
- St. Luke's Episcopal Church gardens
- SunTrust Plaza
- Georgia Pacific Plaza

Most are small spaces of less than an acre in size, constructed of primarily hardscape materials, and designed to serve quieter, more contemplative activities with design elements like seating and shade. The 6-acre Woodruff Park offers a uniquely lush park experience within the corridor, with mature shade trees surrounding open lawns, a playground, and areas for games. It is managed by the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (ADID) and regularly programmed with activities like food trucks, yoga on the lawn, rotating art installations, and history tours.

In both publicly- and privately-owned parks and plazas, there are elements of defensive design present, historically intended to discourage people from staying in the spaces for extended periods of time. This approach is evident in features like flower planters placed on top of seat walls to minimize spaces for sleeping.

Opportunities to create additional parks along the corridor are limited, particularly south of the Connector, where there are few undeveloped parcels and land costs would likely be prohibitively high.

Private Plazas



1 & 2) SunTrust Plaza 3) Recently renovated Peachtree Center plaza 4) The grounds at St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Public Parks

1) Mayor's #1 Park overlooking the Connector 2) The lawn on the south end of Woodruff Park
3) Carnegie Monument at Hardy Ivy Park 4) Margaret Mitchell Plaza

1

Activation and Vacant Land Uses

Actively used properties contribute to a vibrant area. There are many properties within the study area that are not being activated to their full potential, notably vacant parcels and surface parking lots. These include several large parcels, as well as contiguous smaller parcels that could be assembled. Directly along Peachtree Street, the highest concentration of underutilized land is located in Segment 2 — Connector Crossing, between Emory University Hospital Midtown and I-75/85. The effects of COVID-19 have further increased the effective vacancy rate, causing some businesses to close permanently and others to close temporarily or reduce their operating hours. In addition, many occupied buildings do not have "active" ground floors, meaning they do not have uses that involve people going in and out on a regular basis, like a shop, restaurant, or bank. The highest concentration of active uses are in Segment 3 — Peachtree Center Area and Segment 4- Woodruff Park Area. Common inactive uses on the corridor include blank walls and windows that have been covered by window treatments, displays, or advertisements. Figure 3 illustrates the status of ground floor uses as of September 2020.

2

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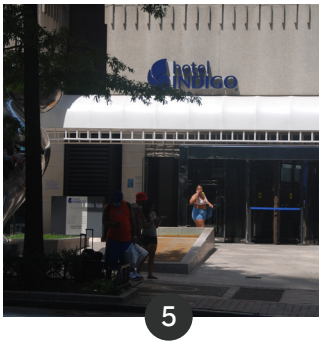

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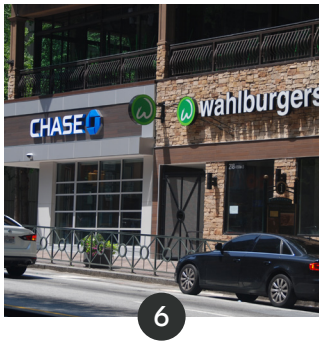

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1) Vacant historic building across from Emory University Hospital Midtown 2) Windows covered with paper at the W.W. Orr Building 3) Bridge over the interstate 4) Interior display covering a ground floor window 5) Hotel Indigo lobby entrance 6) Storefronts at the corner of Andrew Young International Boulevard

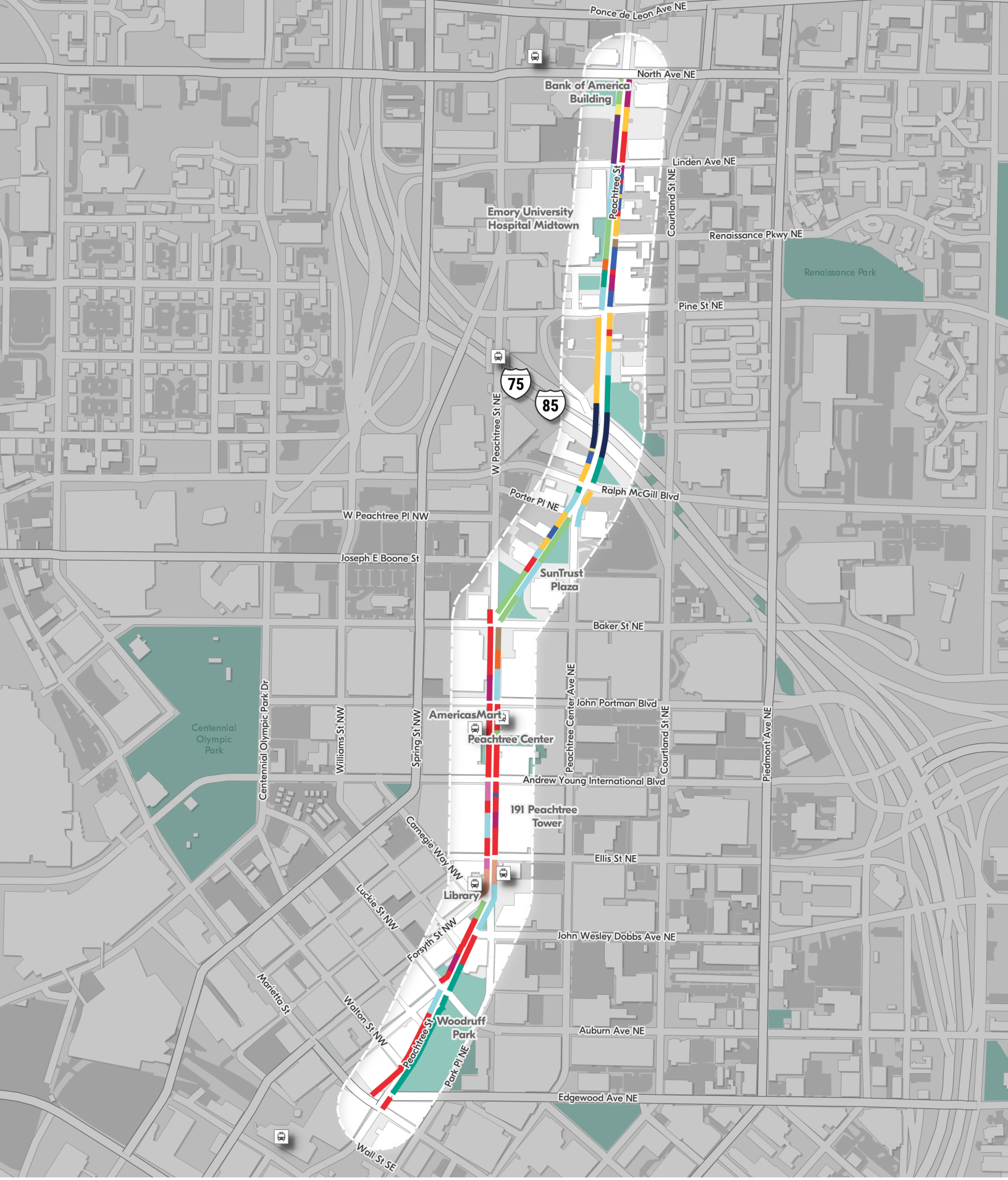

Figure 3. Grounf Floor Activation

0 250 500 750 1000 ft

N

Ground Floor Use

- Active Use - Retail
- Active Use - Non-retail
- Active Use - Vacant
- Park
- Plaza
- Surface Parking
- Garage
- Inactive Use
- Dropoff Zone
- Blank Wall
- Highway
- MARTA
- Construction Site
- Hotel Lobby
- Surface Parking Lot
- Park/Plaza

Future Land Use

The City of Atlanta has designated future land use categories for all properties, which outline the vision for how land should develop over time and help guide rezoning and infrastructure decisions. The City of Atlanta 2016 Comprehensive Development Plan defines these categories and is currently being updated.

Almost every property within the study area, as well as most of Downtown, has a future land use designation of High Density Commercial, defined as including "commercial uses such as retail, restaurants, office, services, etc. at a higher density than the Low Density Commercial land use. Building heights over three stories is typical." This category is considered compatible with more zoning categories than any other future land use category, including a range of residential, mixed use, office institutional, commercial, and planned development zoning classifications. Industrial zoning is not considered appropriate.

At the northwest corner of Peachtree Street and Baker Street near Hardy Ivy Park, there are a few blocks with the Mixed Use future land use designation. This category is defined as allowing for "a mix of uses such as commercial, office, hotels and residential, but not industrial uses." It is considered compatible with a narrower set of zoning classifications than High Density Commercial. These include office/institutional, live/work, commercial, mixed use, and planned development districts. Residential and industrial districts are not considered appropriate, though residential uses would be permitted as part of mixed-use developments.

The permissive, mixed-use, high-density nature of these categories reflects the City's desire for Downtown to be a vibrant, urban area with a variety of activites within a walkable neighborhood. Both market analyses and community input have shown that additional residential development is needed to help balance the concentration of offices and hotels, keep Downtown activated on evenings and weekends, and to support the functions of a healthy neighborhood, like a grocery store.

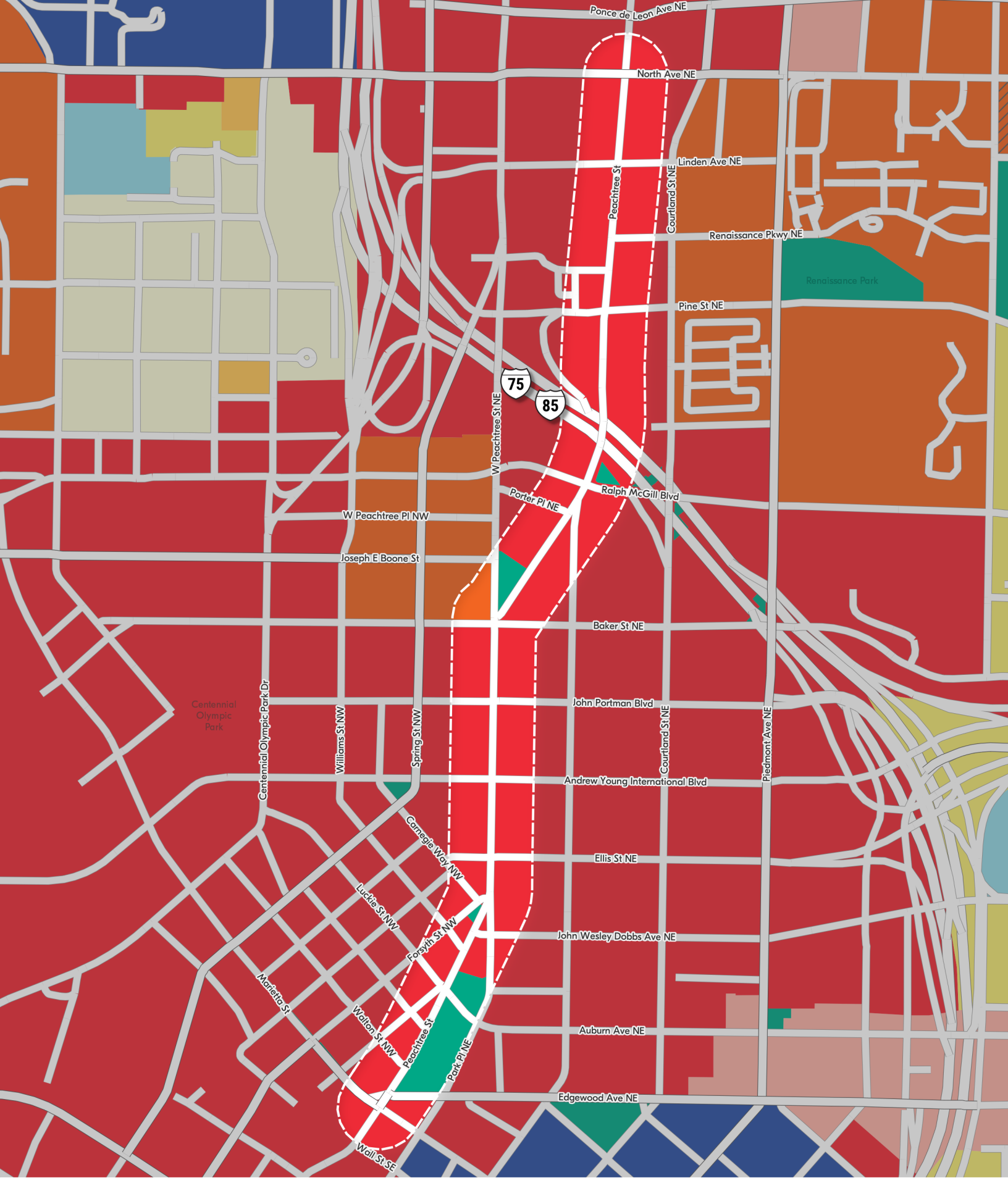

Figure 4. Future Land Use Map

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- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Very High Density Residential
- Low Density Commercial
- High Density Commercial
- Mixed Use
- High Density Mixed Use
- High Density Mixed Use
- Industrial
- Office/Institutional
- Community Facility
- Open Space

Zoning

Properties along Peachtree Street within the study area are part of the Special Public Interest District: Central Core (SPI-1) zoning district. This SPI district is meant to support a 24-hour urban environment where people can live, work, and play; support Downtown's role as the civic and economic center of the Atlanta region; improve the aesthetics of street and built environments; support walking and transit; and preserve and protect Downtown's historic buildings and sites. Properties in the study area fall into one of three subarea zoning classifications:

- **Subarea 1 — Downtown Core (SPI-1 SA1):** East and west sides of Peachtree Street north of Pine Street
- **Subarea 2 — SoNo Commercial West (SPI-1 SA2):** East and west sides of Peachtree Street between Pine Street and Ellis Street and east side of Peachtree Street south of Ellis Street
- **Subarea 7 — Fairlie Poplar (SPI-1 SA7):** West side of Peachtree Street between Ellis Street and Marietta Street

These classifications permit a wide range of residential, commercial, and office uses. There are additional regulations by location based on the Pedestrian Space Plan, which identifies the required sidewalk widths by block and indicates certain streets as Storefront Streets, which have special requirements. Peachtree Street is considered a Storefront Street throughout the study area. Detailed information about zoning requirements for these categories is available here. Some of the key requirements include:

- Active uses are required at sidewalk level for a minimum of 90 percent of the length of buildings facades on Storefront Streets like Peachtree Street:
  - Allowed: Commercial/retail, education/child care, institutional, medical/health, office, recreation/entertainment, residences
  - Prohibited: Parking, non-residential storage areas, driveways, or queuing lanes
- Driveway curb cuts are not permitted on Storefront Streets when access may be provided from a side or rear street located immediately adjacent to a contiguous property;
- Primary pedestrian entrance must be accessible from required sidewalks;
- Fenestration or entryways required every 20 feet, and fenestration required for 65 percent of both residential and non-residential buildings on Storefront Streets;
- Sidewalk width requirements vary by block, according to the Pedestrian Space Plan, and range between 20 and 23 feet, which includes a required 5-foot street furniture and tree planting zone;
- Supplemental zone of 5 to 15 feet required on Peachtree Street north of Ralph McGill Boulevard, not included in the required sidewalk width.

Compliance of existing development with these standards varies widely, as many were constructed prior to the current regulations. On the north end, the primary issues of non-compliance are the frequent driveway curb cuts and parking lots facing Peachtree Street. South of the Connector, a lack of active uses at sidewalk level is the primary concern. The buildings across from Woodruff Park are an example of development that largely meets these standards.

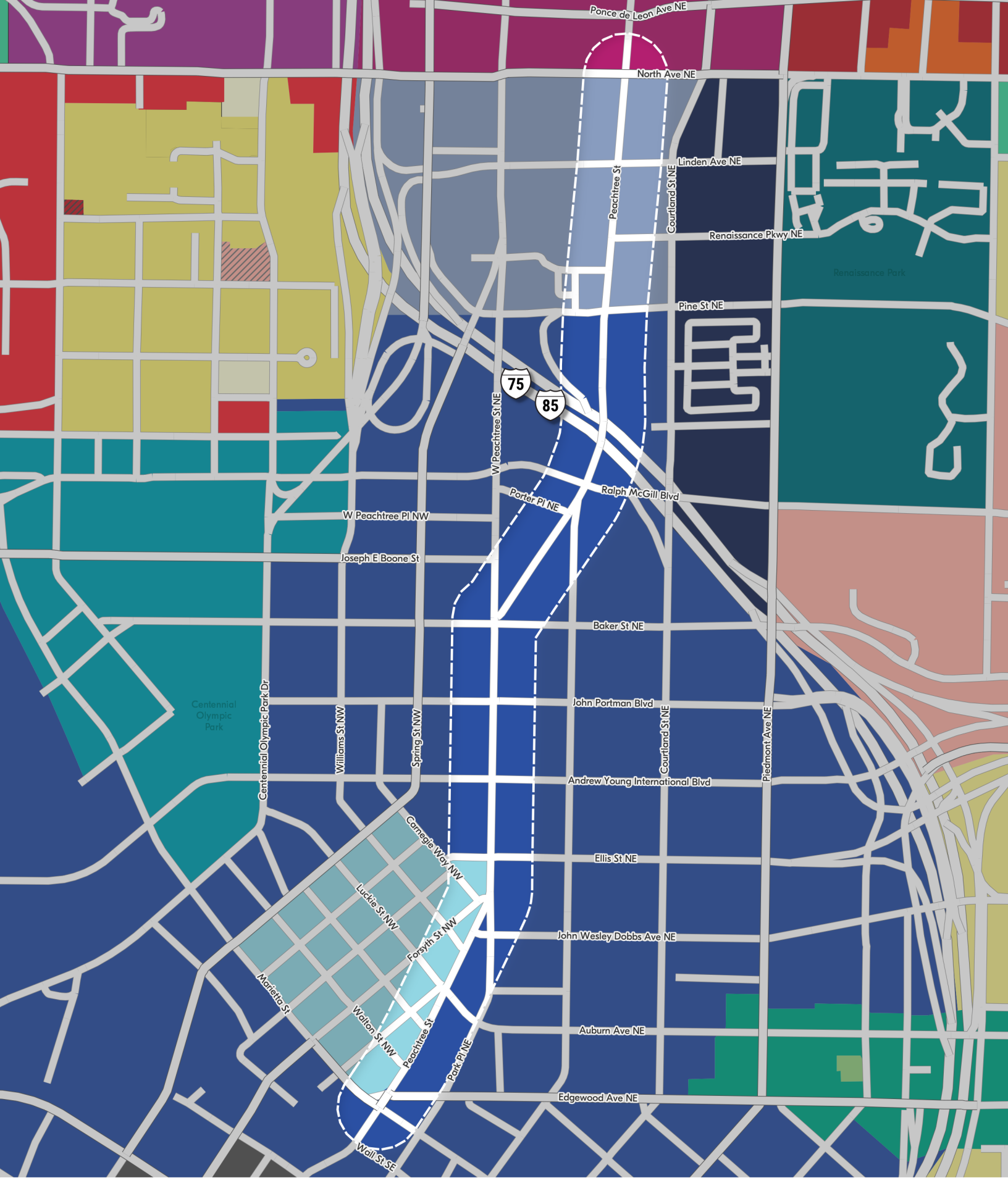

Figure 5. Zoning Map

Topography

Peachtree Street's topography has been central to its history and development:

- The street largely follows the path of a trail used by the Creek people, which followed a ridgeline and made for a relatively comfortable walking route. The street itself is relatively flat, with downward slopes on either side.
- The Peachtree Center area has the highest elevation within the corridor, ranging from 1,075 to 1,080 feet above sea level between Andrew Young International Boulevard and Ellis Street, with gradual inclines approaching it from either side.
- There few locations with steep drop-offs on either side of the street, including at the parking lot by the Medical Arts Building at the northwest corner of Peachtree Street and Ralph McGill Boulevard,
- Several buildings, such as 260 and 270 Peachtree Street, sit higher than sidewalk level and have steps leading up to the building entrances; accessible ramps are generally available.
- Park Place is about 5 to 10 feet lower than Peachtree Street. The stairs and slopes at Woodruff Park help transition between these levels, but also create a visual and physical barrier between the two sides of the park.
- The Eastern Continental Divide is located at the southern end of the study area, running along the railroad tracks from DeKalb Avenue in Decatur to Five Points in Downtown, then heading south toward the airport. This divide separates major drainage basins, with the Atlantic Seaboard watershed on the east from the Gulf of Mexico Watershed on the west.
- The study area does not fall within the 100-year or 500-year floodplains and there are no streams or stream buffers within the study area.
- As a high point, Peachtree Street is a good candidate for supportive green infrastructure, which could help capture and manage stormwater on site before it flows toward surrounding neighborhoods. However, it is not suited to do the heavy lifting for stormwater management, meaning it may be an appropriate place to allocate more space to public realm and allow other streets to have more of a stormwater focus.

Subarea	Typical Elevation Range (Feet)
Segment 1 — Emory University Hospital Midtown Area (North Avenue to Pine Street)	1,015 - 1,021
Segment 2 — Connector Crossing (Pine Street to Porter Place)	1,014 — 1,026
Segment 3 — Peachtree Center Area (Porter Place to Forsyth Street)	1,026 — 1,080
Segment 4 — Woodruff Park Area (Forsyth Street to Marietta Street)	1,046 — 1,070

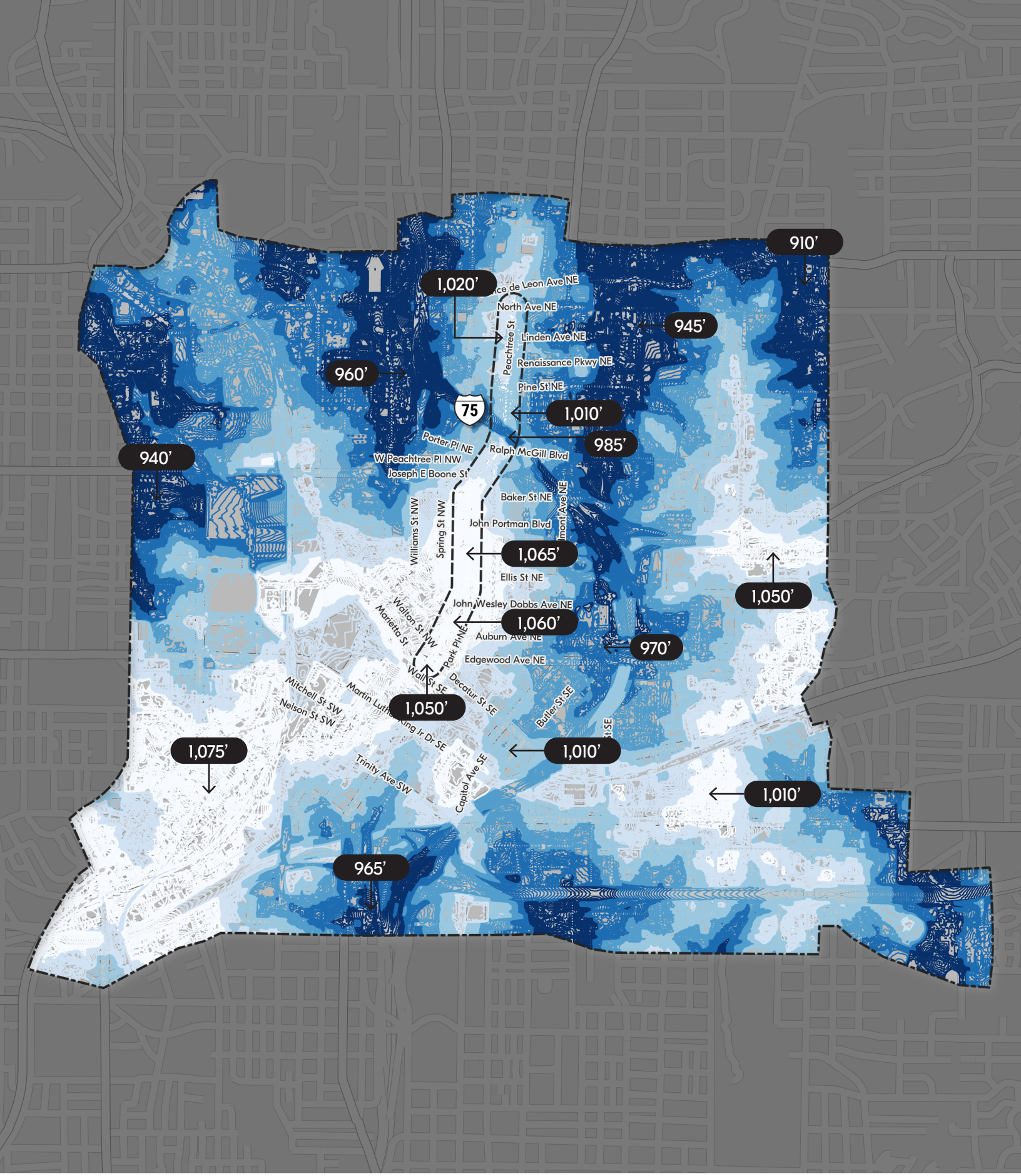

Figure 6. Topography Map

1) North Avenue Presbyterian Church

2) Capital City Club

3) Imperial Hotel

4) Facade detail at the Candler Hotel

Historical and Cultural Resources

As the physical and symbolic spine of the city, Peachtree Street has many historic and cultural resources to celebrate and preserve. These include the buildings, districts, events, and infrastructure that have shaped Atlanta and contribute to the unique character of Downtown.

Historic Buildings and Districts

There are 13 National Register Listed properties within the study area, including:

Districts

- Fairlie-Poplar Historic District (1890s-1930s)
- Peachtree Center Historic District (1961-1988)

Buildings

- English-American Building (1897)
- Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (1898)
- North Avenue Presbyterian Church (1900)
- Rufus M. Rose House (c. 1900)
- First Methodist Church, South (1903)
- Candler Building (1906)
- Imperial Hotel (1910)
- Capital City Club (1911)
- Crawford W. Long Memorial Hospital (1911)
- Winecoff Hotel (1913)
- Rhodes-Haverty Building (1929)

There are 21 additional properties 50 years of age or older—the threshold for potentially eligible historic resources—within the study area. More information on these is available in the Cultural Resources Screening Survey in the Appendix.

1. North Avenue Presbyterian Church
2. Rufus M. Rose House
3. Crawford Long Memorial Hospital
4. First Methodist Episcopal Church, South
5. Commons at Imperial Hotel
6. Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
7. Capital City Club
8. Winecoff Hotel (Ellis Hotel)
9. Rhodes-Haverty Building
10. Candler Building
11. English-American Building (Flatiron Building)

Figure 7. Historic Resources Map

- National Historic Register Listed Buildings
- National Historic District within Study Area
- Nearby National Historic District
- Historic Marker
- Surface Parking Lot
- Park/Plaza
- MARTA Station Entrance

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Historic Markers

According to the Georgia Historical Society, there are two historic markers on this part of Peachtree Street:

Location	Story
St. Luke's Episcopal Church (1864-1964) *435 Peachtree Street*	Commemorates the first 100 years of the church, which remains active today.
The Winecoff Fire *176 Peachtree Street*	Dedicated to the victims, survivors, and firemen who fought the worst hotel fire in U.S. history in 1946. It killed 119 people and was a watershed event in fire safety practices.

There may be an opportunity to add new historical markers or other forms of storytelling through urban design to share more of the events that have happened on Peachtree Street through design.

Historic Streetcar Lines

Atlanta's original streetcar opened in 1871 and grew throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s, connecting the city's intown neighborhoods with a network of more than 50 miles of streetcar service. The line began as a horse-powered streetcar and was later electrified. Several streets Downtown were part of the system, including portions of Peachtree Street. In the post-World War II era, the original streetcar system was replaced by trolleybuses and private automobiles, but remnants remain beneath many city streets. A review of the Georgia Archaeological Site File and Atlanta Streetcar Geographic Information System database indicates there is a strong potential to find streetcar lines within the study area during construction.

Additional information is available in the Cultural Resources Screening Survey in the Appendix.

Major Upcoming Initiatives

There are several major initiatives planned within or near the study area that will impact future conditions, including:

Underground Atlanta

Several iterations of planned redevelopment have been discussed for the 12-acre site next to Five Points Station over the years but have not materialized. It was sold in late 2020 to Shaneel Lalani, a local entrepreneur who has noted he intends to build a walkable development with multifamily residential, street-level retail, entertainment, and structured parking. A grocery store has been one of the most widely discussed and desired potential tenants for the site.

Five Points MARTA Station Renovations

MARTA is in the design phase of renovations to its central rail hub, including studying the feasibility of removing the station canopy, reconstructing the street grid around the station, and future transit-oriented development on top of the station.

South Downtown Newport Development

The Newport development group has acquired about 80 percent of the properties within a multi-block area of South Downtown, including historic buildings and surface parking lots. It is expected to break ground soon on renovations for 222 Mitchell Street, a 290,000 SF building on Hotel Row that will house office and retail uses.

Peachtree Center

Recent work has included plaza and food court modernization; additional renovations are ongoing.

Emory University Hospital Midtown Master Plan

Emory University Hospital Midtown Master Plan outlines a campus growth strategy with an urban approach. Construction of its new Winship Cancer Institute is currently underway on the site of a former surface parking lot at the northwest corner of Peachtree Street and Linden Avenue. A next step will be the new 3,000-space parking deck currently under construction, which will have ground floor retail and consolidate five surface parking lots surrounding the hospital, making the leased lots available for future active development.

Georgia State University Expansion

New and renovated GSU buildings have had a major impact on Downtown, bringing students, faculty, and support staff into the city, attracting Downtown residents, and supporting nearby businesses. Its next major initiative is focused on the Summerhill neighborhood, redeveloping Turner Field and the surrounding properties in partnership with Carter and Associates into an extension of its urban campus south of this study area. A planned bus rapid transit line along Capitol Avenue will conveniently connect the expansion to the Downtown core.

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

CHARACTER AREAS

The character of a place is influenced by factors like the street design, landscaping, materials, surrounding activities, architecture, lighting, art, maintenance, and many other factors that interact to create a unique environment.

Within this study area, character varies dramatically. To reflect the distinct qualities of different parts of the study area, it was divided into four subareas for analysis and discussion:

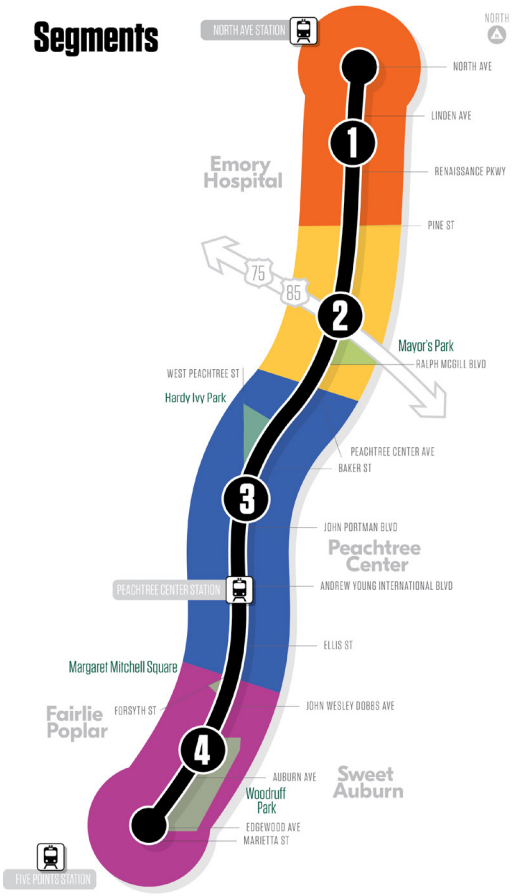


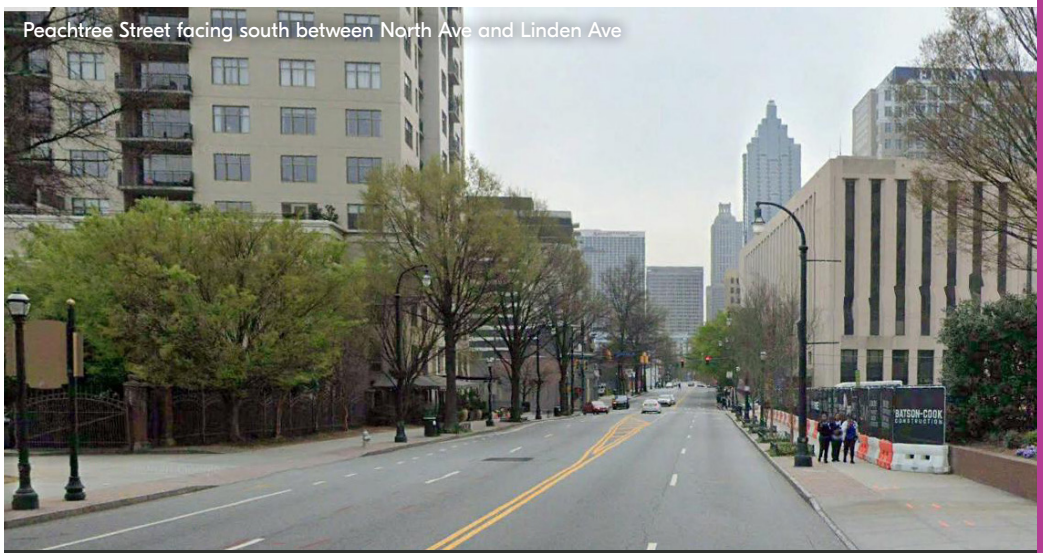
Figure 8. Analysis Segments

Segment 1: Emory University Hospital Area (North Avenue to Pine Street)

Segment 1 begins at North Avenue, where Downtown meets Midtown. The Bank of America office building and North Avenue Presbyterian Church anchor the northern gateway to Downtown. Other development includes Emory University Hospital Midtown, medical offices, condominiums, and a mix of occupied and vacant storefronts. Most of the small, human-scale storefronts on the east side of the street are currently vacant, limiting the number of active destinations in the area. In several locations with occupied ground floors, treatments are used to block the windows, further reducing the amount of street-level interest. Most of the buildings have shallow setbacks, with facades close to the sidewalk. The Bank of America Building and some of the Emory University Hospital Midtown buildings have deeper setbacks with private plazas and gardens at the Bank of America Building and the hospital that serve users of those properties. There are no public parks in this area. There are several surface parking lots, in addition to structured parking available at the Bank of America Building and the hospital. Most of the surface

lots have driveways with curb cuts on Peachtree Street. The new Winship Cancer Institute under construction at the northwest corner of the Linden Avenue intersection will replace the largest surface parking lot in this area with a street-oriented building, helping to create a more continuous experience.

This part of the street has four lanes (two travel lanes in each direction) with turn lanes at the intersection of Linden Avenue. There are continuous sidewalks with street trees and lighting for pedestrians, sharrows for cyclists, and several MARTA bus stops. There are five on-street parking spaces on the east side just north of Pine Street. Utilities on Peachtree Street are underground, but side streets have above ground utilities.



1) Cyclist riding in a shared lane
2) Emory University Hospital Midtown

The streetscape design in this area is generally consistent with the Midtown Alliance standards, including:

- Granite curb
- Concrete sidewalks, with varying widths that do not consistently meet the 15-foot minimum clear zone requirements in the Midtown Alliance standards
- 5-foot street furniture and tree zone with red 6-inch by 6-inch concrete paver
- Trench drains on sidewalks in front of Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse
- A mix of mature and new street trees spaced about 40 feet on center with metal fence guards around the planter beds
- Streetlights spaced about 40 feet on center, alternating between the Type A Atlanta Street Light and Type C Atlanta Pedestrian Light
- Standard Midtown Alliance trash and recycling bins and bike racks

1) Sidewalk and on-street parking near Pine Street 2) Restaurants and entertainment venues in low-rise buildings

WE HEARD...

SEGMENT 1: EMORY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL MIDTOWN AREA

Needs more street trees and flowers to feel inviting.

Bring back on-street dining and slow traffic down to make it more enjoyable.

We would love to find a purpose for the vacant buildings.

People who are homeless tend to gather in this area and need support.

Concerned about ensuring access to the hospital for ambulances and personal vehicles.

Make sure zoning requires future development to be pedestrian oriented.

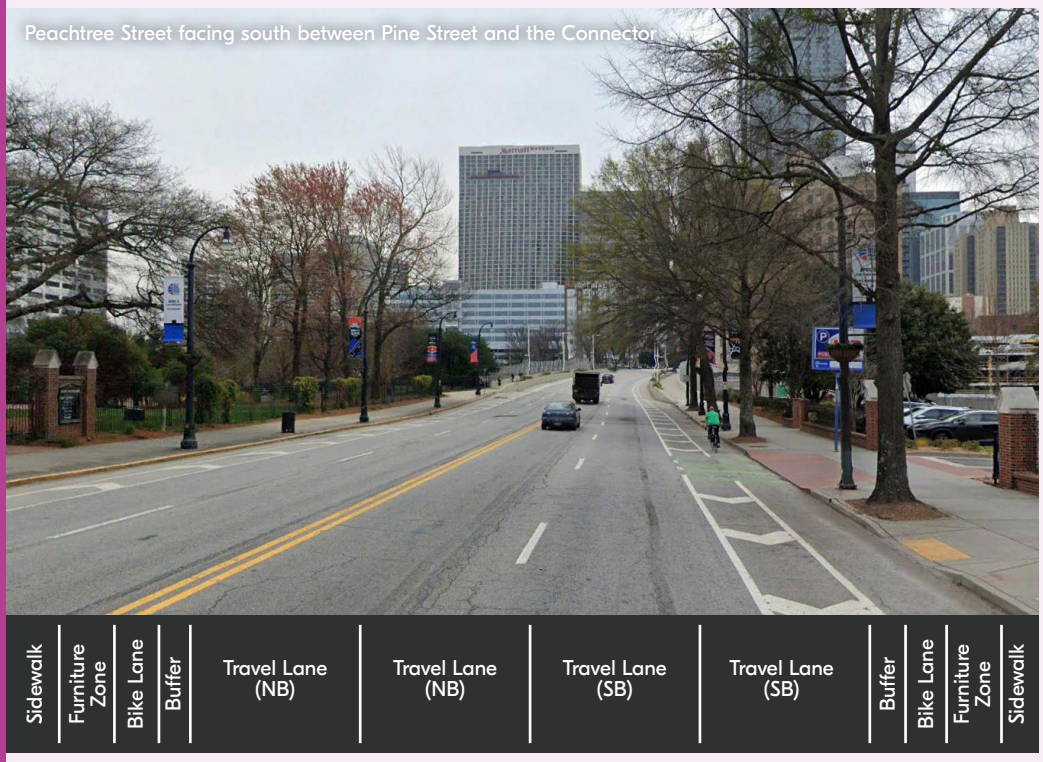
Not enough active neighboring uses for a shared space to make sense here today.

Segment 2: Connector Crossing (Pine Street to Porter Place)

Segment 2 runs from Pine Street to Porter Place, including the bridge over the I-75/85 Connector. Mots of the parcels in this area are surface parking lots with curb cuts on Peachtree Street. They have narrow landscaped buffers between the sidewalk and the parking lots, in some cases paired with low brick walls and metal fencing. Three churches, a sign shop, and the Commons at the Imperial Hotel are the only occupied buildings in this area. The historic Medical Arts Building on the south end is vacant but received a renovation permit in 2019 for conversion into a hotel. There is one public park in this area: Mayor's #1 Park, a small triangular park overlooking the interstate at the northeast corner of the intersection with Ralph McGill Boulevard.

The grounds at St. Luke's Episcopal Church offer additional, privately owned greenspace and are open to the public during the day.

The four-lane street section (two travel lanes in each direction) continues in this segment. On-street bike lanes begin at Pine Street and have variable buffer widths. The bridge over the Connector has a concrete barrier with landscaping to provide protections for pedestrians, but cyclists are on the side with vehicles. The metal fence over the Connector has been adorned on both sides of the street with photo cutouts spelling the word "PEACHTREE" with images of Downtown, added in 2016. Utilities on Peachtree Street are underground, but side streets have above ground utilities.



1) Surface parking lot 2) St. Luke's Episcopal Church

The streetscape design in this area generally features:

- Concrete curb
- Concrete sidewalks of varying widths north of Ralph McGill Boulevard/Ivan Allen Jr. Boulevard
- 5-foot street furniture and tree zone with concrete pavement
- Mostly mature street trees spaced about 40 to 50 feet on center without metal fence guards, except for on the bridge over the Connector
- Type A Atlanta Street Light spaced about 40 feet on center, with Cobra Head Atlanta Roadway Lights on the bridge over the Connector
- Standard City of Atlanta trash bins
- No recycling bins or bike racks

South of Ralph McGill Boulevard/Ivan Allen Jr. Boulevard, the streetscape design changes. In that area, the sidewalks are made of granite pavers, there are no street trees, the street furniture zone narrows to about two feet, and the sidewalk clear zone tightens to about five feet, impeded by utility boxes and poles in some places.

WE HEARD...

SEGMENT 2: CONNECTOR CROSSING

Need more destinations in this area to give people a reason to be there.

Want to reduce the appeal of street racing.

Civic Center MARTA Station is a missed opportunity and better lighting and pedestrian connections to Peachtree Street would help.

The transition from the bike lanes to a shared lane at Pine Street feels intimidating.

Bridge is an opportunity to tell the story of how the interstate impacted the city.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church is considering affordable housing and other improvements to its property.

Being on the Historic Register has made renovating and occupying the Medical Arts Building difficult.

The bridge is currently a deterrent—people stop there and turn around. Need it to feel human scale and inviting with art and a sense of enclosure.

1

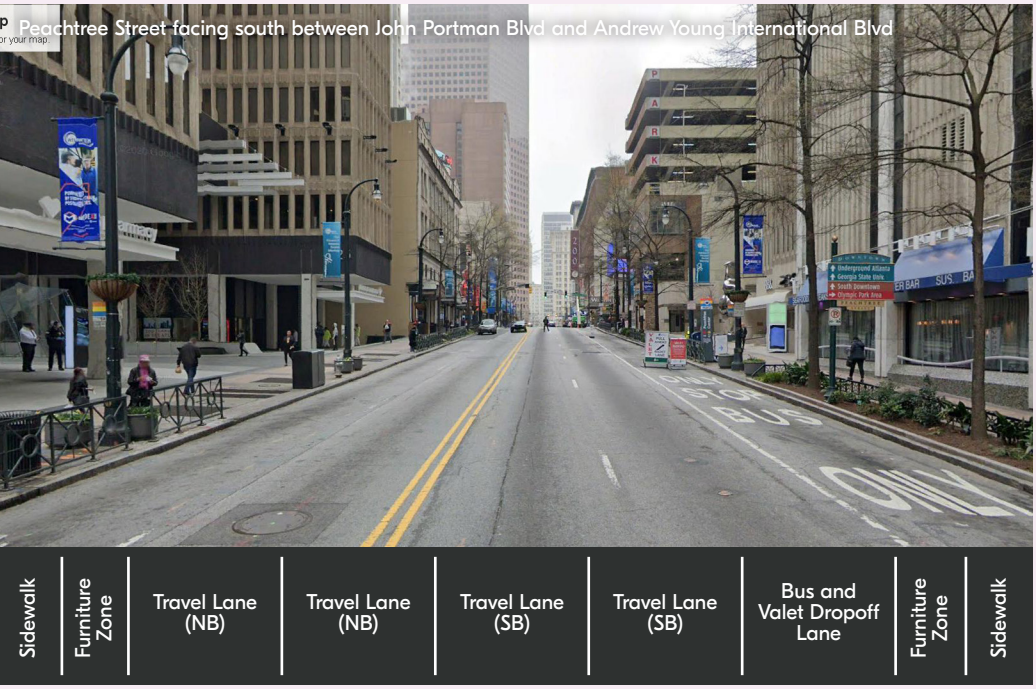
2

1) Bridge over the Connector 2) Vacant Medical Arts Building

Segment 3: Peachtree Center Area (Porter Place to Forsyth Street)

Segment 3 picks up at Porter Place and continues through Forsyth Street, ending at the Peachtree Center MARTA Station. The density of buildings and activity increases in this area, which has several major office buildings, hotels, AmericasMart, and restaurants and shops on some ground floors. At Peachtree Center, most of the restaurants and retailers are located in interior malls that are not visible from the street. Hardy Ivy Park and Margaret Mitchell Square are small plazas that bookend this segment. The Fulton County Central Library is located on the southern end of this segment and is currently undergoing internal and external renovations. There are no surface parking lots in this segment and the only curb cuts are for the circular driveway at the Hyatt Regency.

Most of this segment is four lanes (two travel lanes in each direction) with turn lanes at some intersections. From John Portman Boulevard to Andrew Young International Boulevard, a fifth lane on the west side is used for bus and valet drop-off and pick-up and is a key location for curbside management. There are no bicycle facilities south of Porter Place, at which point cyclists and scooter riders can transition to the two-way cycle track on Peachtree Center Avenue. There are northbound streetcar tracks and cables on the easternmost lane between Ellis Street and Auburn Avenue/ Luckie Street, with a level boarding station south of Ellis Street. The streetcar turns west onto Ellis Street at the intersection. There are two pairs of



1) Streetcar south of Ellis Street 2) Sidewalk and plaza at Peachtree Center

entrances to the Peachtree Center MARTA Station, one between John Portman Boulevard and Andrew Young International Boulevard and another between Ellis Street and Forsyth Street, each with an entrance on the east and west side. Utilities on Peachtree Street and side streets are underground. Several of the buildings in the Peachtree Center area are connected via skywalks above the ground level, which allows people to travel between buildings in a temperature-controlled environment without ever leaving the building and reduces the number of people walking between destinations on the street.

The streetscape design in this area generally features:

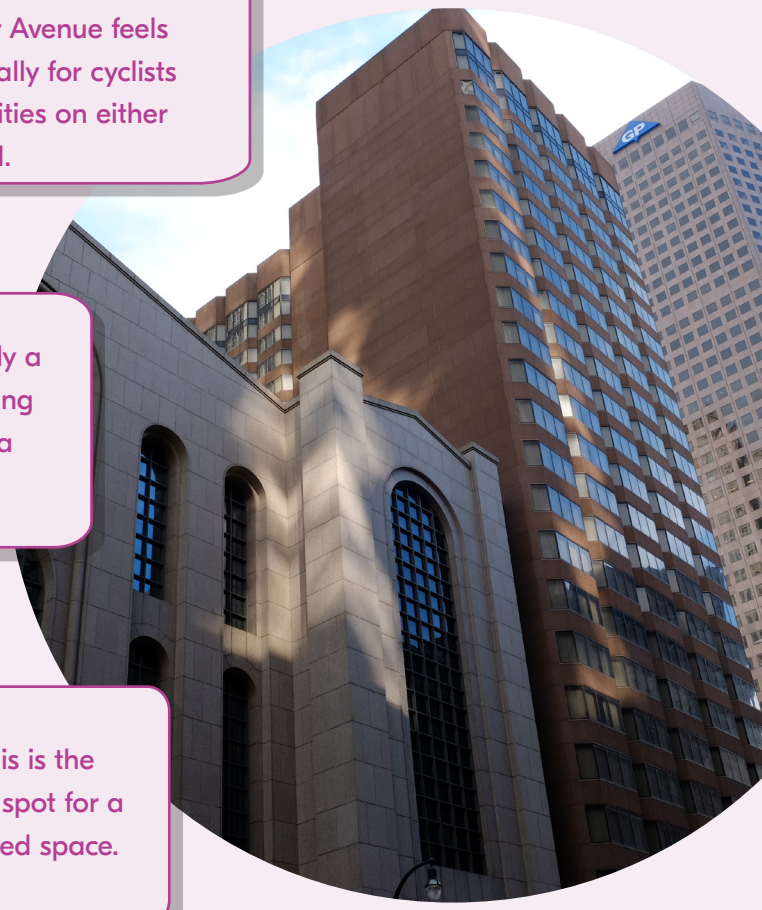
- Granite curb
- Granite paver sidewalks of varying widths and condition
- Street furniture zone of varying widths (2 to 5 feet) with granite pavers
- Mostly mature street trees spaced about 40 feet on center without metal fence guards, with a double allée of trees on either side of the sidewalk next to SunTrust Plaza
- Metal fences and concrete planters by the curb between John Portman Boulevard and Andrew Young International Boulevard to discourage pedestrians from crossing mid-block in an area with a strong natural desire line.
- Type A Atlanta Street Light spaced about 40 feet on center
- Multiple trash and recycling bin styles
- Standard U-shaped bike racks

WE HEARD...

SEGMENT 3: PEACHTREE CENTER AREA

The granite retaining wall on the edge of SunTrust Plaza is uninviting. It would be great to open it up and add

The intersection of Peachtree Street, Porter Place, and Peachtree Center Avenue feels confusing dangerous, especially for cyclists trying to cross to reach facilities on either side of the road.



This area needs greenery, art, and a sense of playfulness.

Peachtree Center is already a great place to work, looking forward to it becoming a great place to live.

Want a place to sit and watch the city go by.

Need programming to activate the space regularly.

This is the best spot for a shared space.

1

2

1) Sidewalk and on-street parking near Pine Street 2) Restaurants and entertainment venues in low-rise buildings

Segment 4: Woodruff Park Area (Forsyth Street to Marietta Street)

On the south end of the study area, Segment 4 runs from Forsyth Street to Marietta Street, ending just north of the Five Points MARTA Station. This area has a mix of offices, condominiums, small ground floor shops and restaurants, and Georgia State University Buildings. There are a number of historically significant buildings in this area, like the Candler Building and the Flatiron Building. Margaret Mitchell Square and the privately owned plazas at Georgia Pacific Center and 100 Peachtree offer small open spaces on the north end. Woodruff Park provides a larger, landscaped park experience on the south end, divided into to parts by Auburn Avenue.

It is a four lane street (two lanes in each direction) with streetcar tracks running in the eastern northbound lane from Auburn Avenue north, but there are no streetcar stops in this segment. There are no bike facilities and no curb cuts. There is a right turn slip lane for northbound traffic at Auburn Avenue/Luckie Street. Utilities on Peachtree Street and side streets are underground, but streetcar cables run overhead on the east side of Peachtree Street from Auburn Avenue/ Luckie Street north, and along Auburn Avenue/Luckie Street.

1) The historic Flatiron Building 2) Cyclists sharing the road with drivers and the streetcar

The streetscape design in this area generally features:

- Granite curb
- Mismatched granite paver sidewalks of varying widths and condition
- No street trees between Forsyth Street and Williams Street
- Mature street trees without metal fence guards along Woodruff Park and on the west side of Peachtree Street south of Poplar Street
- Street furniture zone of varying widths (2 to 5 feet) with granite pavers
- Type A Atlanta Street Light spaced about 40 feet on center
- Multiple bike rack styles
- Occasional green vending kiosks, generally unoccupied

The design of the north end of Woodruff Park will be updated soon through the Atlanta Legacy Makers' initiative. The project will be an artistic tribute to former Mayors Ivan Allen Jr. and Maynard Jackson Jr. at the intersection of Peachtree Street and Auburn Avenue. Design development is ongoing.

WE HEARD...

SEGMENT 4: WOODRUFF PARK AREA

The middle of Woodruff Park feels like a special, expansive place.

It would be great to have more opportunities for stages in and around Woodruff Park.

The crossings of Peachtree Street and Forsyth Street near Margaret Mitchell Square are uncomfortable.

Margaret Mitchell Square needs to be activated and could potentially be integrated with the library, MARTA station, and Georgia Pacific Center plazas.

There aren't enough bike racks for the level of use in this area.

The Flatiron Building and Candler Buildings are beautiful and should be special views.

There are many citizens who are homeless in this area who need support.

People love the activation of Broad Street nearby and are excited for the new library plaza.

1) Shops and restaurants in Fairlie Poplar 2) Southern terminus of the study area at Marietta Street

WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE

There are several different types of signs along the corridor, including wayfinding signs, traffic signs, light pole banners, business and building signs, advertisements, and other informational notices. The frequency and variety of signs can result in visual clutter that detracts from the corridor aesthetic.

Wayfinding Signs

Wayfinding signs help people navigate through a space and are particularly useful to people who are not familiar to an area, like the tourists visiting the hotels, convention centers, and event venues Downtown. Existing wayfinding signs use the standard City of Atlanta design, listing the names, directions, and distances to several nearby destinations, sometimes combined with a map of the area.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping along Peachtree Street is urban in nature and fairly limited. Beyond parks and plazas, the primary forms of landscaping are street trees, flower baskets on light poles or windows, and concrete or stone planters. Along some parts of the corridor, tree planter beds also feature shrubs or ornamental grasses that add color to the street. A few buildings with deeper setbacks have landscaped beds or terraces, like 270 Peachtree and the Hyatt Regency.

A LEGACY OF UNINVITING DESIGN

Making Peachtree Street a place that is inviting for everyone is a central goal of the project. To do that, we must first consider the intentional and unintentional features that may make it unwelcoming today, including:

"What makes Peachtree Street *uninviting* today?"

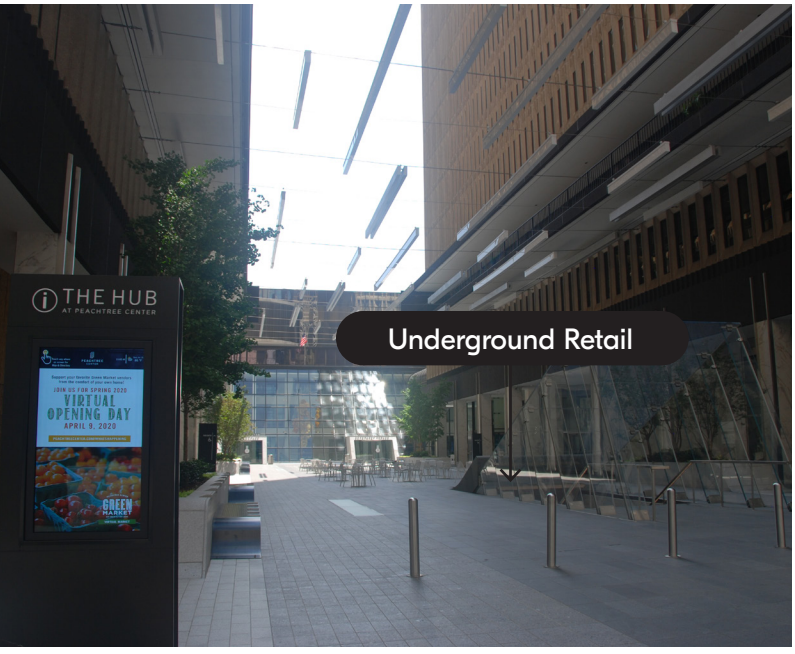
Internally-oriented Architecture

As in many American Downtowns, the nature of of Downtown Atlanta shifted significantly in the mid-20th Century in response to trends like the rise of the automobile, suburbanization, racism, fear of integration, and white flight. In Downtown Atlanta, much of the architecture at that time was meant to make people— mostly white people— feel "safe" from the increasing perception that Downtown was not a place they would want to be. In many cases, this took the form of internally-oriented architecture that allowed people to spend time in Downtown buildings without stepping foot onto Downtown streets, like Peachtree Street. Design features that supported this end remain, including skyway bridges to connect buildings above ground, grand interior atriums, concentrating retailers in interior malls, and few street-facing ground floor storefronts or other tenants. With the MARTA Station access inside Peachtree Center, it is possible for visitors to arrive at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, hop on a train, and visit Downtown hotels and sites without ever stepping foot on a city street.

Hostile Urban Design Elements

Hostile design has continued in some of the contemporary urban features in the area. Often, these are intentionally unwelcoming features are aimed at discouraging people experiencing homelessness from sleeping or spending extended periods of time in parks, plazas, or streets. These features include benches with armrests as dividers, planters placed continuously across seat walls, or a lack of seating altogether.

Skywalk over Peachtree Street at Peachtree Center



Lack of Activity

When participants in engagement activities were asked if there was anything about Peachtree Street today that made them feel unwelcome, they often responded with a pause. It wasn't exactly that they felt *unwelcome*, they said, it was that there was no real reason for them to be there. It was *uninviting*.

To make everyone in Atlanta feel genuinely included in the space, it must give Atlantans a reason to be there through a combination of a softer, more enticing permanent design and programmed activities that will draw people from around the city to the space.

Recent renovations at Peachtree Center (left) have aimed to make its interior and underground retail spaces more visible from the street and to make its open space more inviting.

WE HEARD...

URBAN DESIGN

Reintroduce human-scale building facades.

The design needs to make it feel like a special place with a sensory experience through lighting, activation, art, textures, and outdoor seating.

Community members love shade trees, greenery, and colorful flowers but find them lacking in the corridor today.

Incorporate as much green infrastructure as possible.

Want more places to hang out—everything from pocket parks to beer gardens.

Bring back touches of wild nature.

Need more seating across the corridor for people to rest.

The future design should make it feel welcoming and inclusive for everyone.

Give trees enough space to grow for 50+ years.

Find locations for permanent art installations and rotating, temporary installations.

Create a plan for maintenance from the beginning.

There should be more wayfinding signs, especially around MARTA stations and at John Portman Boulevard and Andrew Young International Boulevard, which are the main routes for tourists.

More lighting on both Peachtree Street and side streets would make it feel safer and more inviting.

Use quality materials that will last and can be easily and seamlessly replaced over time as needed.

It would be great to have interactive, digital wayfinding.

Create experiences for people of every age, from kids to elders.

Landmark architecture and art installations are needed along with wayfinding to help figure out where you're going.

MARKET

DOWNTOWN TRENDS

Central Atlanta Progress' Downtown Atlanta Real Estate Market Analysis (2017) provides a foundational understanding of market dynamics for the greater Downtown neighborhood. It highlights key conditions and trends for the area, including:

- Downtown has the potential to see significant population and employment growth by capturing its fair share of accelerating city growth. By 2032, it has the potential to add over 15,000 residents, 30,000 jobs, 1 million square feet (SF) of retail development, 3.5 million SF of office space, and 3,000 hotel rooms, compared to the 2017 base year.

- Downtown is the core of a larger urban market area, with 170,000 people in the three-mile market area that includes more than 20 neighborhoods surrounding Downtown

- Major trends influencing the future of Downtown at the time of the report include:
  - Participation in the accelerating future growth of the City of Atlanta, which is projected to grow by 270,000 new residents by 2030.
  - Once in a generation development momentum Downtown, spurred by catalytic projects like the Mercedes-Benz Stadium, new residential buildings, and new hotels.
  - Georgia State University's continuing metamorphosis into a major urban

Peachtree Center

university, with 5,000 of its students already living on campus, thousands of others living elsewhere Downtown, and $165 million in new capital projects recently completed or committed Downtown.

- The emergence of Downtown as a hub for next generation startups and technology with places like FlatironCity, Switchyards Downtown Club, and The M. Rich Center.
- The increasing dominance as the region's premier tourism district, with anchors like the Georgia World Congress Center, stadiums, and hotels.
- Opportunities to capitalize on the transit-rich infrastructure environment.

- Factors impeding Downtown's ability to achieve its potential include:
  - The economics of surface parking lots as a lucrative land banking strategy
  - The disconnect between owners' land value expectations and Downtown market realities
  - The linkage between homelessness, panhandling, and the perceived lack of safety in the public realm
  - The need for more residents living Downtown and their positive effect on street life and retailing
  - Lack of an appealing street-level public realm
  - Increased competition from other urban districts in the region

Top: GSU's 200,000 sf College of Law building opened in 2015

Bottom: The Flatiron Building, home to tenants like the FlatironCity co-working space

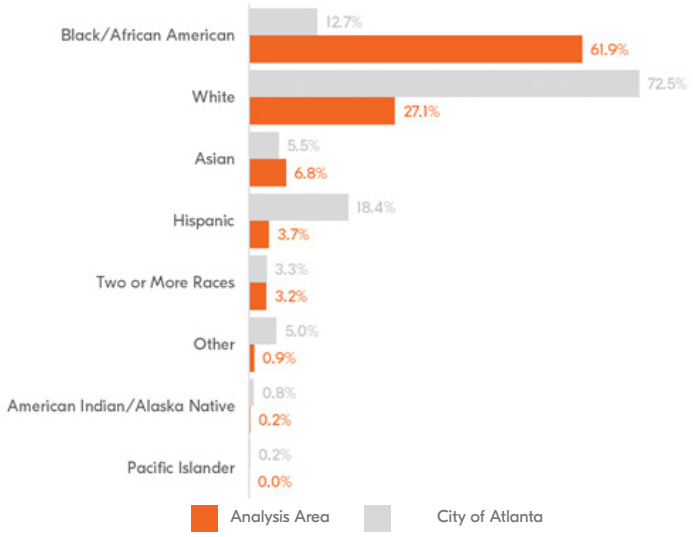
PEACHTREE CORRIDOR TRENDS

To more closely examine the market dynamics of the Peachtree Street corridor and how it compares to Downtown as a whole, this study analyzed a narrower market area, focusing the analysis area on properties within two blocks of Peachtree Street between North Avenue and Marietta Street.

Demographics

Residents of the Peachtree Street corridor are diverse. A significantly higher share of residents identifies as Black/African American (61.9 percent) or Asian (6.8 percent) compared to the city as a whole (12.7 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively). The Emory University Hospital, Connector Crossing, and Peachtree Center segments of the corridor are older than the City of Atlanta overall, with approximately one-third of their residents under the age of 30 (as compared to approximately 42 percent). However, the Woodruff Park Area, which contains a portion of the Georgia State campus, is younger, with roughly 54 percent of the population under the age of 30.[1]

Figure 9. Analysis Area Resident Race and Ethnicity



The residential population has grown over the last 10 years in each segment by at least 14.8 percent, with the highest level of growth occurring in the Woodruff Park Area, which saw a 21.4 percent increase in residents between 2010 and 2020. All of the segments' population growth percentages were roughly on par with that of the City of Atlanta. However, the net growth figure for the four segments combined is quite small, adding a mere 475 residents over the course of the decade.[1]

Table 1. Resident Trends by Segment

	Segment 1: Emory University Hospital Area	Segment 2: Connector Crossing	Segment 3: Peachtree Center Area	Segment 4: Woodruff Park Area
Extents	North Ave to Pine St	Pine St to Porter Pl	Porter Pl to Forsyth St	Forsyth St to Marietta St
Residential Population	1,058	1,148	623	505
Residential Growth (Since 2010)	14.8%	17.1%	21.4%	14.9%
Daytime Population	4,592	1,488	14,290	4,114
Population Below 30	32%	31%	33%	52%

1) Esri Business Analyst

Jobs & Economy

The Peachtree Street corridor contains nearly seven percent of Atlanta's business establishments and more than 10 percent of its jobs, indicating its significance to the metropolitan economy. On net, the four segments have added approximately 8,600 jobs since 2010, which accounts for roughly 8 percent of Atlanta's overall job growth during this period. The sectors that drove job growth along Peachtree Street were information and finance, adding approximately 7,000 jobs between them.[2]

However, this employment growth was not evenly experience by all of the segments. The Peachtree Center Area witnessed a 34 percent increase in jobs, outperforming the City of Atlanta over this period. The Woodruff Park Area also saw a modest increase in employment as well. This is likely due to the existing information, finance, and professional services clusters that existed there.[2]

By contrast, the Emory University Hospital and Connector Crossing Areas saw a decline in jobs. The Emory University Hospital Area's was driven by a decrease in professional services whereas the Connector Crossing's was rooted in the loss of more than 300 manufacturing jobs between 2010 and 2018. Despite the middling performance of the Emory University Hospital Area over the past decade, plans to expand the institution's presence should improve the area's economic performance, both through the direct addition of workers and the indirect benefits of their spending at nearby businesses.[2]

"The Peachtree Street corridor contains nearly 7 percent of Atlanta's business establishments and 10 percent of its jobs."

Table 2. Jobs & Economy Trends by Segment

	Segment 1: Emory University Hospital Area	Segment 2: Connector Crossing	Segment 3: Peachtree Center Area	Segment 4: Woodruff Park Area	City of Atlanta
Extents	North Ave to Pine St	Pine St to Porter Pl	Porter Pl to Forsyth St	Forsyth St to Marietta St	
Businesses	211	121	1,060	421	26,802
Jobs	4,749	3,536	24,005	9,719	517,181
Change in Jobs (Since 2010)	-1.8%	-38.6%	34.4%	6.4%	27.6%
Largest Industry	Professional Services	Utilities	Professional Services	Professional Services	Healthcare and Social Assistance (64,945 Jobs)
Fastest Growing Industry (Since 2010)	Transportation (+1,544 Jobs)	Public Administration (+121 Jobs)	Information (+2,777 Jobs)	Information (+5,132 Jobs)	Professional Services (+14,963 Jobs)

2) U.S. Census Bureau, OnThe Map (Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics)

Housing

Housing makes up a relatively low share of building inventory along Peachtree Street, with a total of 879 residential units housing about 3,333 people within the analysis area.[1] The northern portion of the analysis area (North Avenue to Porter Place) has a higher concentration of residents than the southern portion (Porter Place to Marietta Street), with developments like Windsor Over Peachtree, The Byron on Peachtree, the Commons at the Imperial Hotel, and condominiums on Ivan Allen Jr. Boulevard west of Peachtree Street.

Despite the height and relatively dense clusters of buildings on Peachtree Street, the corridor contains just 0.5 percent of Atlanta's total multifamily housing stock. What's more, the analysis area has added just 65 housing units since 2010, which accounts for approximately 0.1 percent of the new housing stock created within Atlanta during this period. Fortunately, the area has 629 units either planned or under construction which constitutes about 7.4 percent of the City's total units in the pipeline.[2]

"The corridor contains just 0.5 percent of Atlanta's total multifamily housing stock [...] Fortunately, the area has about 7.4 percent of the City's total units in the pipeline."

In terms of cost, while Peachtree Street has higher average rents than the City of Atlanta as a whole, the average unit size is also larger, resulting in comparable rents per square foot (approximately $1.50 for all of the Peachtree Street segments as well as the City of Atlanta). With the exception of the Woodruff Park Area, rents have risen more slowly since 2010 along Peachtree Street than in the City of Atlanta overall. Despite this, residential vacancy has increased by a larger factor in all but one of the Peachtree Street segments, indicating a lack of demand for existing housing in the area.[2]

COVID portends to disrupt the housing sector in both the short and long term in several ways. Demand for multi-family residential in some urban centers has diminished due to reduced consumer confidence, rates of moving and mobility, and the closure of in-person higher education institutions. Claims of the reversal of the trend towards higher density living and increased collaboration spaces may be overblown, as market and migration data remains inconclusive. Typically, multi-family rental demand is resilient to economic shocks, as homeownership remains out of reach for large shares of most metropolitan areas' populations.[3]

1) Esri Business Analyst 2) CoStart Real Estate Analytics 3) JLL, COVID-19: Global Real Estate Implications

Left: Commons at Imperial Hotel affordable senior rentals; Right: The Byron on Peachtreee apartment building

Table 3. Housing Trends by Segment

	Segment 1: Emory University Hospital Area	Segment 2: Connector Crossing	Segment 3: Peachtree Center Area	Segment 4: Woodruff Park Area	City of Atlanta
Extents	North Ave to Pine St	Pine St to Porter Pl	Porter Pl to Forsyth St	Forsyth St to Marietta St	
Multifamily Housing Units	218	479	90	92	193,329
Growth in Housing Units (Since 2010)	65	0	0	0	38,471
Units in the Pipeline	284	0	345	0	8,475
Multifamily Rent/Unit	$1,745	$1,557	$2,596	$1,533	$1,440
Change in Multifamily Rent (Since 2010)	0.7%	31.0%	21.2%	60.7%	32.0%
Average Unit Size (SF)	1,111	1,037	N/A	1,035	958
Multifamily Vacancy	8.7%	5%	11.2%	11.2%	9.4%
Change in Multifamily Vacancy (Since 2010)	+6.7%	-1.4	+4.4%	+8.7%	+0.8%

Office

Downtown Atlanta is one of the largest office markets in the metro area. The Peachtree Street corridor in particular is home to approximately 16.9 million square feet of office space, representing approximately 10 percent of the City's overall inventory.[1] The Peachtree Street corridor daytime population of about 24,000 is roughly eight times its residential population of about 3,000.[2] This is reflective of office uses' outsized presence in the building inventory of the Peachtree Street corridor.

However, the Peachtree Street corridor has actually seen its office inventory decline since 2010 while the Atlanta's grew by 5.1 million square feet. Additionally, there are no planned or under construction office projects within the corridor, indicating that the stagnation of the office market will likely continue.

With the exception of the Emory University Hospital Area, Peachtree Street's per square foot office rents are actually slightly lower than Atlanta's as a whole. The Emory University Hospital and Woodruff Park areas witnessed the sharpest increases in office rents since 2010.[1] This is likely due to many companies' growing desire to be proximate to "anchor institutions" such as universities and medical centers.

However, Peachtree Street may not be able to fully rely on its office worker-heavy daytime user base to support area businesses and activate the public realm in a post-COVID world. Office is one of the sectors most immediately affected by COVID-related economic disruptions. The sharp increase in remote working has caused utilization rates to fall drastically and landlords reliant upon short-term leases or co-working operators

Table 4. Office Trends by Segment

	Segment 1: Emory University Hospital Area	Segment 2: Connector Crossing	Segment 3: Peachtree Center Area	Segment 4: Woodruff Park Area	City of Atlanta
Extents	North Ave to Pine St	Pine St to Porter Pl	Porter Pl to Forsyth St	Forsyth St to Marietta St	
Office Inventory (SF)	2.7 million	1 million	7.6 million	5.6 million	169.5 million
Change in Office Inventory (Since 2010)	0	-13,200	0	-212,000	5.1 million
Square Feet in the Pipeline	0	0	0	0	6.6 million
Office Rent/SF	$31.78	$28.74	$29.29	$26.97	$31.73
Change in Office Rent (Since 2010)	56.0%	36.9%	24.8%	50.0%	45.6%
Office Vacancy	20.6%	0.0%	12.5%	20.4%	13.3%
Change in Office Vacancy (Since 2010)	+7.8%	N/A	-3.9%	+1.8%	-2.6%

1) CoStar Real Estate Analytics 2) Esri Business Analyst 3) JLL, COVID-19: Global Real Estate Implications

1) SunTrust Plaza; 2) 260 Peachtree; 3) Emory University Hospital Midtown; 4) W.W. Orr Medical Office Building 5) 191 Peachtree

continue to be the most at-risk. If periods of closure fast track the adoption of collaboration technologies and remote work, long-term future office demand could be under threat. However, certain sectors (such as life sciences) are increasing their employment and office utilization rates, potentially counterbalancing the shift to remote work in metropolitan areas containing a concentration of the cluster.[3]

"Peachtree Street may not be able to fully rely on its office worker-heavy daytime user base to support area businesses and activate the public realm in a post-COVID world."

Left: Hyatt Regency Hotel; Right: Ellis Hotel

Hospitality

The Peachtree Street corridor is home to more than 6,000 hotel rooms, or nearly one-third of Atlanta's overall hospitality stock. The Peachtree Center Area alone contains nearly one-quarter. What's more, the four segments have also generated nearly 25 percent of Atlanta's new hospitality stock since 2010 and are poised to contribute nearly 300 new rooms. However, the outsized presence of hotels and the reliance on the visitors they bring to Peachtree Street may be a liability for the corridor in a post-COVID world.[1]

The hotel market was arguably the hardest hit by the pandemic, which halted virtually all non-essential travel. Urban hospitality markets were particularly affected, as the limited number of individuals traveling in 2020 overwhelmingly preferred less dense settings. Despite the turn toward recovery, occupancy rates nationally hover around 30 percent. Yet, there are some green shoots as domestic locations are projected to grow In popularity and professionally-run lodging may prevail over alternatives due to higher enforceable hygiene standards.[2]

Table 5. Hospitality Trends by Segment

	Segment 1: Emory University Hospital Area	Segment 2: Connector Crossing	Segment 3: Peachtree Center Area	Segment 4: Woodruff Park Area	City of Atlanta
Extents	North Ave to Pine St	Pine St to Porter Pl	Porter Pl to Forsyth St	Forsyth St to Marietta St	
Inventory (Rooms)	626	102	4,460	950	19,961
Change in Rooms (Since 2010)	0	0	206	265	2,040
Rooms in the Pipeline	194	102	0	0	6,692

1) CoStar Real Estate Analytics 2) JLL, COVID-19: Global Real Estate Implications

Retail

Despite being a hub of commercial and tourist activity, Peachtree Street has a relatively small inventory of retail space with approximately 830,000 square feet or 1.3 percent of Atlanta's overall retail stock. As with office space, Peachtree Street's retail inventory has shrunk since 2010, a 106,000 square foot decrease. Additionally, there are no projects with retail components in the pipeline at present.[3]

Only one third of ground level spaces along Peachtree Street are storefronts, which are a typical source of activity for a vibrant main street. This indicates the need for more creative, non-traditional approaches to bring life to the street. Moreover, a disproportionately large share of businesses in the Peachtree Street corridor are brands oriented toward non-local crowds.[4] This may discourage Atlantans from choosing to spend their time and money in the area.

Top: Restaurants in Peachtree Center area; Bottom: Plaza-level entrance to The Hub, the underground retail center at Peachtree Center

Table 6. Retail Trends by Segment

	Segment 1: Emory University Hospital Area	Segment 2: Connector Crossing	Segment 3: Peachtree Center Area	Segment 4: Woodruff Park Area	City of Atlanta
Extents	North Ave to Pine St	Pine St to Porter Pl	Porter Pl to Forsyth St	Forsyth St to Marietta St	
Retail Inventory (SF)	241,000	6,700	401,000	183,000	62.9 million
Change in Retail Inventory (Since 2010)	-25,858	-77,975	0	-2,508	1.4 million
Square Feet in the Pipeline	0	0	0	0	264,336
Retail Rent/SF	$24.77	$34.92	$19.44	$26.90	$21.93
Change in Retail Rent (Since 2010)	21.5%	51.8%	29.6%	7.6%	34.6%
Retail Vacancy	4.6%	N/A	3.8%	1.1%	4.5%
Change in Retail Vacancy (Since 2010)	-9.3%	N/A	+0.9%	-1.8%	-3.5%

3) CoStar Real Estate Analytics 4) Original Analysis by Toole Design and JLP&D, respectively

Alma Cocina restaurant

The Peachtree Street corridor lacks one of the most basic retail staples: a full-service grocery store. This is likely due to the area's relatively small residential population. According to the USDA, most grocers require approximately 5,000 residents in an area before deciding to open up a location there.[1] Yet, many people would be hesitant to move to a neighborhood that lacks such an amenity, creating a bit of a conundrum.

Retail space along Peachtree Street is also more expensive per square foot than elsewhere in Atlanta, which could partially explain the concentration of chains. However, Atlanta appears to be outpacing much of Peachtree Street in retail rent increases, so parity could soon be achieved. While the vacancy rates in the table below are rather low, they do not take into account the pandemic, which has harshly impacted the sector.[2]

Many of the trends that were already adversely affecting the retail sector have exacerbated in the wake of COVID. Retailers will require robust infrastructure to fulfill online orders and become omni-channel in order to keep up with the shift to e-commerce. This is particularly true for independent restaurants who lack sufficient digitization as well. Retailers in "destination" cities or neighborhoods that rely upon visitor spending will face an extended period of risk due to travel restrictions, advisories and learned aversions by consumers.[3]

Arts and Culture

Atlanta is one of the cultural capitals of America, with a rich and dynamic music, film, and fine arts scene. Despite the rich history, Peachtree Street does not exemplify all that Atlanta has to offer culturally, nor serve as a source of civic pride today. The Peachtree Street corridor is home to just 20 of Atlanta's more than 600 arts and entertainment establishments and generates a mere three percent of the city's annual sales related to arts, entertainment, and recreational activities.[4] What's more, the pandemic has destabilized a number of the arts organizations who are located along Peachtree Street, several of which have been there for decades. Peachtree Street's future vibrancy will have a direct impact on whether and how quickly this arts and cultural ecosystem will recover.

1) Placer Community Dashboard, Grocery Store Density 2) CoStart Real Estate Analytics 3) JLL, COVID-19: Global Real Estate Implications 4) Esri Business Analyst

WE HEARD...

MARKET

It would be great to see a lot more development and activity Downtown with a 24-hour environment.

Need to attract more residents to keep the area feeling lively.

Office workers are the primary customer base for most of the businesses

There's nobody around and few businesses open at night, so it doesn't feel safe or vibrant.

Want more restaurants, movie theaters, performing arts, bars—all kinds of nightlife.

More retail—especially locally owned and neighborhood-oriented businesses—would be great.

A grocery store is a top request from Downtown neighbors.

More outdoor dining, street vendors, and markets would add vibrancy.

Wish there weren't so many surface parking lots.

Commercial rents along Peachtree Street aren't affordable and limit retail occupancy and activation.

TRANSPORTATION

Mobility and access are core functions for streets. connecting people and goods to the city's many destinations. There are multiple modes that together form our transportation network, including walking, rolling, biking, transit, and driving.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Traffic volume on Peachtree Street is relatively low, with an average daily volume of 9,200 vehicles across four to five lanes.
- Minimal truck volume since there are really no loading/unloading along the corridor except for package deliveries.
- Only 16.3 percent of all trips are through trips (starting outside the study area and ending outside the study area)
- There is minimal traffic between Baker Street and Ellis Street due to freeway access pulling a bulk of the traffic volume on either side.
- Travel time along Peachtree Street between North Avenue and Marietta Streets is 5 minutes by car with a typical range of speeds from 16 to 18 mph.
- The Peachtree Street corridor operates at LOS A or B, with the segment between Linden Avenue and North Avenue operating at LOS C.
- The Baker Street and Peachtree Street intersection processes a number of commuter buses.
- Most people walk to transit stops and stations
- Auburn Avenue and the John Portman Boulevard have the greatest numbers of pedestrians crossing Peachtree Street, with relatively high volumes also present at Baker Street, around Woodruff Park, and Marietta Street.
- Rideshare vehicles block the outer lanes, along with deliveries, some on-street parking, and bus stops.

PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing

- There are continuous sidewalks along Peachtree Street throughout the study area. Sidewalk widths vary, including narrower 5- to 6-foot sidewalks better suited lower density areas, as well as more generous 10-foot sidewalks that can accommodate more pedestrian activity.

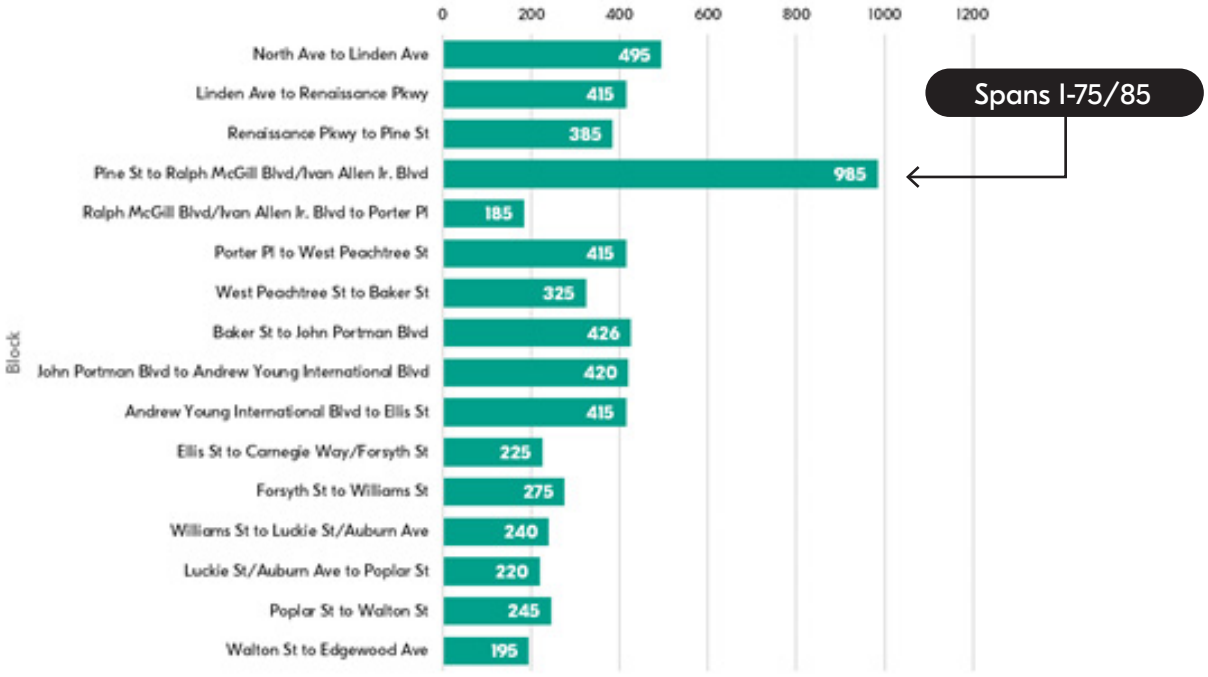
- In most locations, there is a "furniture zone" about 4 feet wide between the curb and the sidewalk that accommodates things like street trees, light poles, fire hydrants, bike racks, and trash cans to help maintain a clear path for pedestrians on the sidewalk.

- There are existing crosswalks at most street intersections, with the exception of east-west crossings at Renaissance Parkway.

- There are mid-block crossings at:
  - The entrance of Emory University Hospital Midtown
  - Georgia Pacific Plaza/Margaret Mitchell Square

- Block lengths affect the distance, options, ease of walking routes in a neighborhood. Most of the blocks on Peachtree Street are shorter than 500 feet—the length generally associated with walkable street networks—for an average block length of about 367 feet, just longer than a football field. The longest block is between Pine Street and Ralph McGill Boulevard, which spans about 985 feet as Peachtree Street crosses over the I-75/85 Connector, nearly double the length of a standard walkable block.

Figure 10. Approximate Block Lengths (Feet)



- Sidewalk curb ramp styles vary, with a mix of parallel curb ramps (in line with the pedestrian path), perpendicular curb ramps (perpendicular to the pedestrian path, generally at mid-block crossings), and diagonal curb ramps (a single ramp installed at a corner to provide access to both directions). Diagonal curb ramps are less desirable because they may make pedestrians less visible to turning vehicles and do not provide directional cues for people with visual disabilities.
- There are metal fences and planters by the curb in the Peachtree Center area, meant to create a barrier to direct people to crosswalks at intersections, rather than cross mid-block as some people naturally desire to do in that active area.

Observed Demand [1]

- Pedestrian count data from 2015 was available for eight locations along Peachtree Street, which showed the highest levels of pedestrian activity in the corridor in the areas with the greatest density of activity: around Peachtree Center and the southern end near Woodruff Park and Georgia State University.
- The intersections with the highest levels of pedestrian activity were Peachtree Street at John Portman Boulevard/Harris Street and Luckie Street/Auburn Avenue.
- Pedestrian counts were highest on weekdays for all locations, showing a decline in evening and weekday activity Downtown.

1) Data collected by All Traffic Data Service, Inc. for City of Atlanta, October 15 and 17, 2015.

BICYCLE AND SCOOTER INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing LIT infrastructure on Peachtree Street Downtown is limited to a few blocks near the connector where there are few destinations.

Existing

The only dedicated light individual transport (LIT) infrastructure on Peachtree Street within the study area is between Pine Street and Porter Place, where there are buffered bike lanes on both sides of the street.

South of Porter Place, cyclists can cross over Peachtree Street to Peachtree Center Avenue to access the two-way cycle track that runs parallel to Peachtree Street.

North of Pine Street, there are "sharrows," a visual reminder that cyclists can share the street with vehicles.

What is "LIT"?

Light individual transport (LIT) vehicles like bikes and scooters generally travel at speeds of less than 20 miles per hour and are human-powered or electric. They're sometimes called "micromobility" devices.

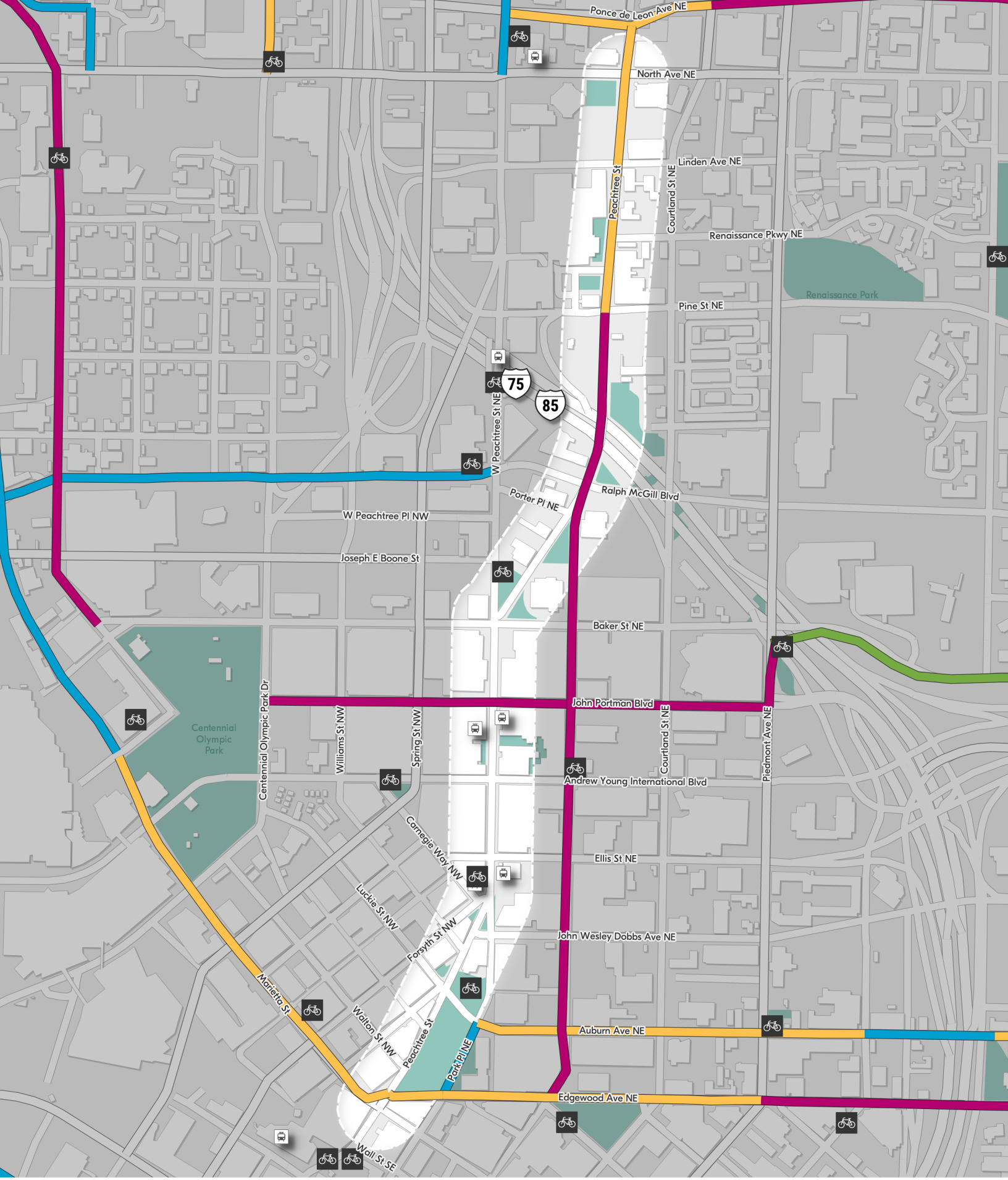


Figure 11. Existing LIT Facilities

Bike Lane
Buffered Bike Lane/Cycle Track
Multi-use Path
Sharrows
Bike Share Station
MARTA Entrance
Park/Plaza

0 250 500 750 1000 ft

N

Even on portions of Peachtree Street without LIT infrastructure, it is still used by cyclists and scooter riders for both transportation and recreation. This may be due to the concentration of destinations and the fact that Peachtree Street follows a ridge line, making it a relatively flat and comfortable route.

Relay is a public bike share program that allows people to rent bikes on demand through a mobile app for individual trips or as membership. There are stations on Peachtree Street at:

- Hardy Ivy Park
- Peachtree Center MARTA Station at Forsyth Street
- Woodruff Park (north end)

There are signs noting scooters are not allowed on sidewalks, but people ride on them regularly.

Other bicycle infrastructure nearby includes:

- Two-way cycle track on Peachtree Center Avenue, which runs parallel to Peachtree Street south of Ralph McGill Boulevard/ Ivan Allen Jr. Boulevard a block to the east
- Two-way cycle track on John Portman Boulevard, which intersects with Peachtree Street
- One-way protected bike lane on the east side of Park Place (Edgewood Avenue to Auburn Avenue) for northbound riders
- On-street bike lanes on Ivan Allen Jr. Boulevard, which end a block west of Peachtree Street

TRANSIT

Routes

The study area is well served by transit, including Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA) rail and bus service, the Atlanta Streetcar, and regional commuter bus service.

MARTA Rail

- MARTA Red and Gold line rail service runs beneath Peachtree Street
- The only MARTA station within the study area is Peachtree Center Station, which has four entrances (one on each side of the street between John Portman Boulevard and Andrew Young International Boulevard, and between Ellis Street and Forsyth Street).
- Three additional MARTA stations are located within two blocks of the study area: North Avenue Station, Civic Center Station, and Five Points Station.

MARTA Bus

- The only MARTA bus route that runs along Peachtree Street is Route 40, which operates north-south between Arts Center Station in Midtown and West End Station.
  - Route 40 offers service approximately every 30 minutes.
  - Its average weekday ridership was 992 in February 2020. [1]
  - There are 20 total MARTA bus stops directly on Peachtree Street within the study area, about 16 stops per mile.
  - Most stops are basic, marked by a simple route sign. The stop in front of Emory University Hospital Midtown is the only one with sheltered seating.
  - Bus loading is on-street at sidewalk level. In the block between John Portman Boulevard and Andrew Young International Boulevard, there is a Bus Only Lane on the west side,

1) MARTA Bus Ridership Data

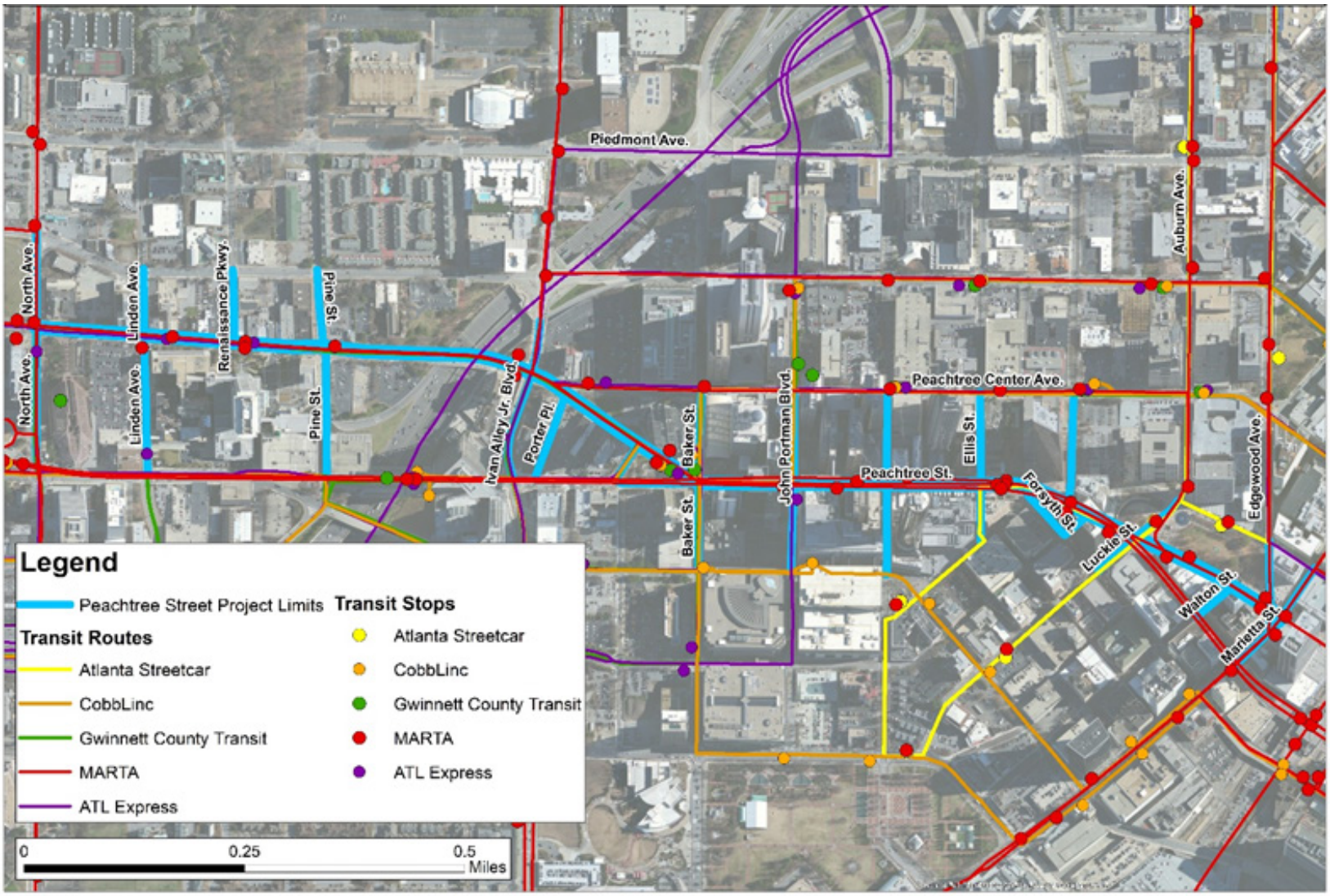
Table 7. Study Area MARTA Bus Stops

	Total Bus Stops	West Side Bus Stops (SB)	East Side Bus Stops (NB)	Segment Length (miles)
Segment 1: North Avenue to Pine Street	4	2	2	0.27
Segment 2: Pine Street to Porter Place	3	1	2	0.24
Segment 3: Porter Place to Forsyth Street	7	4	3	0.47
Segment 4: Forsyth Street to Marietta Street	6	4	2	0.26
Total Study Area	20	11	9	1.24

which is used by southbound buses. The valet at Hotel Indigo also uses the space and other cars often park temporarily in the lane.

- Several additional MARTA bus routes operate on east-west streets in the study area that cross Peachtree Street, including:
  - Route 186 on Marietta Street/Decatur Street
  - Route 816 on Edgewood Avenue, Auburn Avenue, Peachtree Center Avenue, and Ralph McGill Boulevard
  - Route 102 on North Avenue

Figure 12. Transit Routes and Stops



Atlanta Streetcar

- A 2.6-mile streetcar loop opened in 2014, connecting Centennial Olympic Park to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site. It picks up every 10 to 15 minutes.
- The streetcar operates along Peachtree Street between Auburn Avenue/Luckie Street and Ellis Street. It travels northbound in mixed traffic with vehicles in the easternmost lane.
- 750-volt electric streetcar cables are attached to the light poles on the east side of Peachtree Street along that stretch.
- There is one streetcar stop in the study area in front of Peachtree Center Station at Ellis Street, where there is a raised boarding platform with sheltered seating.
- The streetcar can operate at up to 35 mph, but typically travels at a slow speed of 5 to 10 mph.
- MARTA took over operations of the streetcar in 2018.

Regional Commuter Buses

- Regional commuter bus service providers in the area include Cobb County Transit (CCT), Gwinnett County Transit (GCT), and GRTA Xpress.
- Nearly all the regional commuter bus activity near the study area happens on Baker Street near Peachtree Street, where 17 bus routes pick up and drop off commuters during morning and evening peak periods. A few pick up near Peachtree Street on John Portman Boulevard, Renaissance Parkway, and North Avenue.

Figure 12 illustrates transit service in and around the study area.

Access to Stops and Stations

Most of the people accessing the study area by transit are traveling between their homes and their usual workplaces. Visitors make up about 10 percent of people taking transit in the study area. Walking is ranked as the top mode for people reaching public transit stops within the study area (92.5 percent) and reaching destinations after using public transit (88.3 percent for bus riders and 91.5 percent for rail riders).[1]

More detailed information about transit routes, stops, and operations is available in the Appendix.

1) Atlanta Regional Commission 2019 On-Board Survey

VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

Vehicular traffic plays a role in the transportation system, facilitating individual and carpool trips over longer distances that may not be accessible by transit.

Because the COVID-19 pandemic altered travel patterns at the time of this study, "**current**" figures in this report refer to pre-pandemic conditions (2019 unless otherwise specified).

While maintaining or enhancing the efficiency of vehicular traffic is not the deciding factor for urban transportation projects like this, understanding vehicular travel patterns will help assess and mitigate some potential impacts to maximize access for all users.

Current Traffic Volume

Figure 13 shows the current total daily vehicle volume in the Downtown area. The modeled average daily volume of the Peachtree Street corridor between North Avenue and Marietta Street is 9,200. This is significantly lower than other parts of the Peachtree corridor throughout the city, according to GDOT traffic counts, which are publicly available and were used for locations outside of the study area for comparison purposes in the table below. The volume of traffic on Peachtree Street Downtown is about half the volume on Peachtree Street in Midtown, about a quarter of the volume in Brookwood, and about a third of the volume in South

Table 8. Citywide Traffic Volumes on Peachtree Street

Study Area Segment		
	Modeled Average Daily Volume[1]	Typical Number of Lanes
Peachtree Street in Downtown (North Avenue to Marietta Street)	9,200	4-5
Sample Comparison Segments - Peachtree Corridor		
	GDOT AADT[2]	Typical Number of Lanes
Peachtree Street in Midtown (at 12th Street)	25,600	4-5
Peachtree Road in Brookwood (at 26th Street)	40,400	5-6
Peachtree Road in South Buckhead (near Lindbergh Drive)	35,800	5-6

1) Modeled average daily volume for the entire Peachtree Street segment from North Avenue to Marietta Street, based on the CAP VISUM model for Downtown Atlanta. 2) GDOT Traffic Analysis and Data Application, 2019

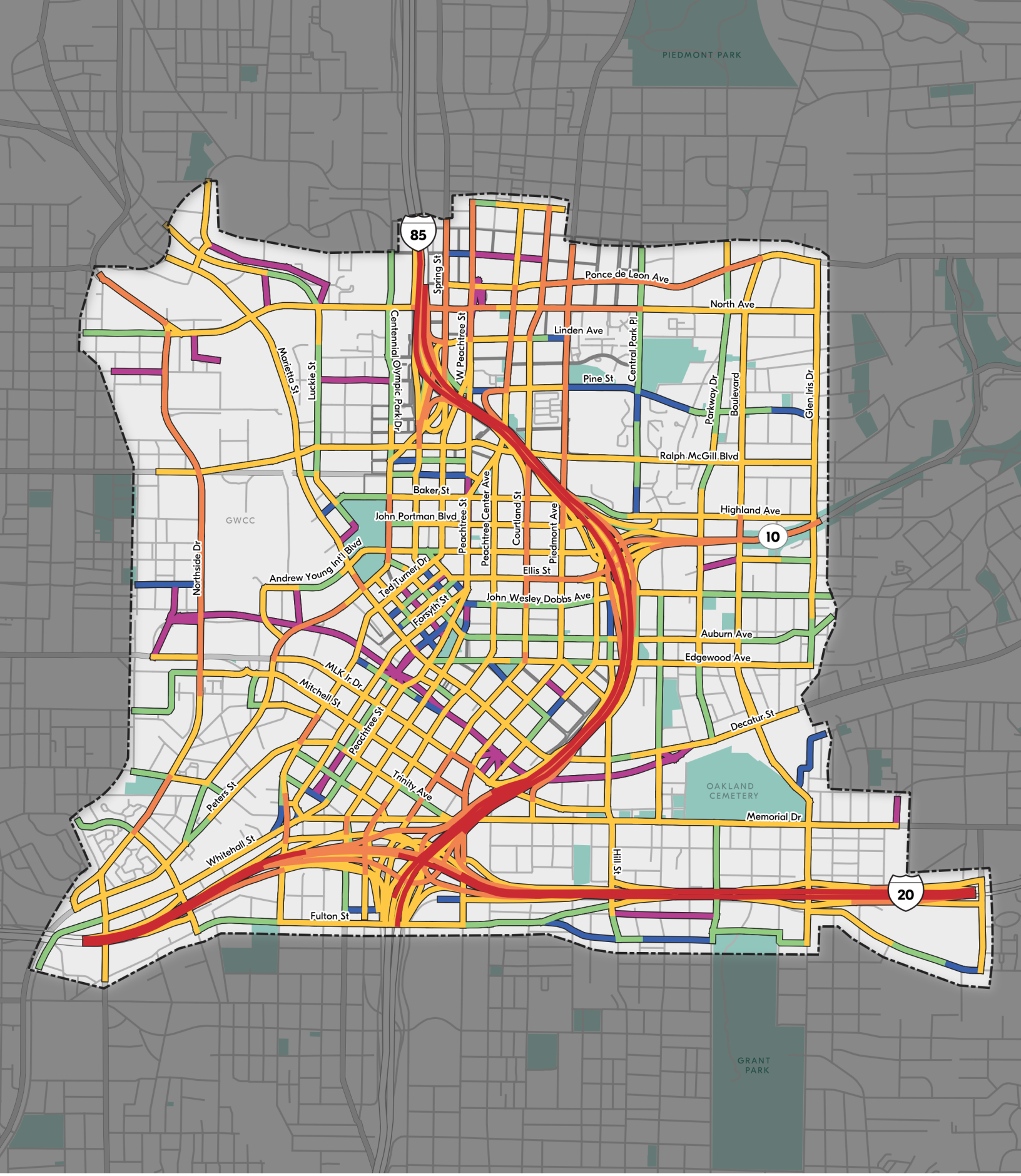


Figure 13. Total Daily Vehicular Traffic Volume

Total Daily Volume

- 0 - 150
- 151 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 3,000
- 3,001 - 15,000
- 15,001 - 50,000
- 50,001+
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Local Street
- Parks & Plazas
- Downtown Analysis Area

Buckhead. Despite having lower traffic volume, Peachtree Street Downtown has the same or only a slightly lower amount of roadway space dedicated to vehicles (4 to 5 lanes) as more heavily traveled parts of the corridor in other neighborhoods.

The volume of traffic on Peachtree Street within the study area is greatest on the north end, between Ponce de Leon Avenue and Pine Street. Almost half (49 percent) of all southbound trips on Peachtree Street at North Avenue turn onto Linden Avenue, many of these heading to the Downtown Connector (Interstates 75 and 85). Similar to the drop-off in southbound traffic at Linden Avenue, about 20 percent of northbound trips exit Peachtree Street at Ellis Street, likely heading to the highway access ramp. Only about 16.3 percent of trips in the Peachtree Street study area are through trips, meaning they are driving on Peachtree Street to get from a starting point (origin) outside the analysis area to an ending point (destination) also outside the analysis area.

The surrounding connected street network offers alternative routes for drivers passing through Downtown, which relieves the number of trips on Peachtree Street. The Connector runs roughly parallel to Peachtree Street and is an alternate route for long-distance trips. For shorter trips, parallel streets like Spring Street, West Peachtree Street, Courtland Street, and Piedmont Avenue offer alternatives and allow for a distribution of traffic across the grid.

Interstates carry the greatest volumes of traffic within the analysis area, with Interstate 20 (I-20) and the Downtown Connector, each carrying more than 50,000 daily trips. Some surface streets have relatively high traffic volumes, such as portions of Freedom Parkway (Highway 10), Northside Drive NW, Piedmont Avenue NE, Courtland Street NE, and Spring Street NW, which have between 15,000 and 50,000 daily trips. None of the street segments that intersect with the Peachtree Shared Space study area has more than 15,000 daily trips.

Current Travel Time

Travel time for cars driving along Peachtree Street from North Avenue to Marietta Street is about 5 minutes during both the morning and evening peak traffic periods. Cars are typically driving below the speed limit of 25 mph, with average speeds ranging from 16 to 18 mph.

Current Level of Service

Vehicular Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of traffic congestion. It is based on the ratio between traffic volume and roadway design capacity. Street segments are assigned one of six categories, ranging from LOS A (least congested with free-flowing traffic) to LOS F (most congested with forced flow and stop-and-go traffic). A certain degree of congestion is typical in healthy downtowns, where higher volumes of people moving are reflective of high levels of activity.

Overall, Peachtree Street between North Avenue and Marietta Street is not congested and has ample vehicular capacity for traffic throughout the day. Most of the segments on Peachtree Street have morning (AM) peak period, evening (PM) peak period, and daily LOS A/B, which means traffic congestion is minimal even during rush hours. The segment between Linden Avenue and North Avenue is the only segment with LOS C during morning (AM) and evening (PM) peak periods, which means congestion is acceptable.

Given its relatively low volumes, vehicular traffic would likely operate at acceptable levels if Peachtree Street were reduced to two travel lanes with a left turn lane north of The Connector and two travel lanes south of The Connector. Traffic modeling illustrating the effects of such a transition on the Downtown network is currently being refined and will be included in the next version of this report.

KEY TRAFFIC FIGURES

9,200 modeled average daily volume on Peachtree Street in the study area

Many vehicle trips on Peachtree Street peel off at highway access points

49 percent of southbound traffic turns off at Linden Avenue

20 percent of northbound traffic turns off at Ellis Street

Only 16.3 percent of trips on Peachtree Street in the study area are through trips

Daily LOS A/B for all segments shows minimal traffic congestion

North Avenue to Linden Avenue AM and PM peak LOS C shows acceptable congestion

CURB SPACE

Many curbside activities take place on the edges of streets, where the travel way meets the buildings and activities next door. These can include: on-street parking, passenger loading and unloading areas, ridehailing and taxies, and direct access to properties.

On-street Parking

- There are only eight total metered, time restricted on-street parking spaces across two locations on Peachtree Street within the study area:
  - Five spaces with a four-hour limit on the east side of the street just north of Pine Street near Emory University Hospital Midtown
  - Three spaces with a two-hour limit on the west side of the street at the southern end of Woodruff Park
- On-street parking is permitted on Sundays only in front of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- "No Parking" signs are posted on curbs throughout the corridor.
- There are many public parking options available on or near Peachtree Street, including surface parking lots, garages, and on-street spaces on nearby streets.
- Bicycles, scooters, and other light individual transport (LIT) devices also require parking. There are few designated LIT parking areas along the corridor today. In many cases, shared dockless mobility devices (rented bikes and scooters) are strewn in places that impede the sidewalk.

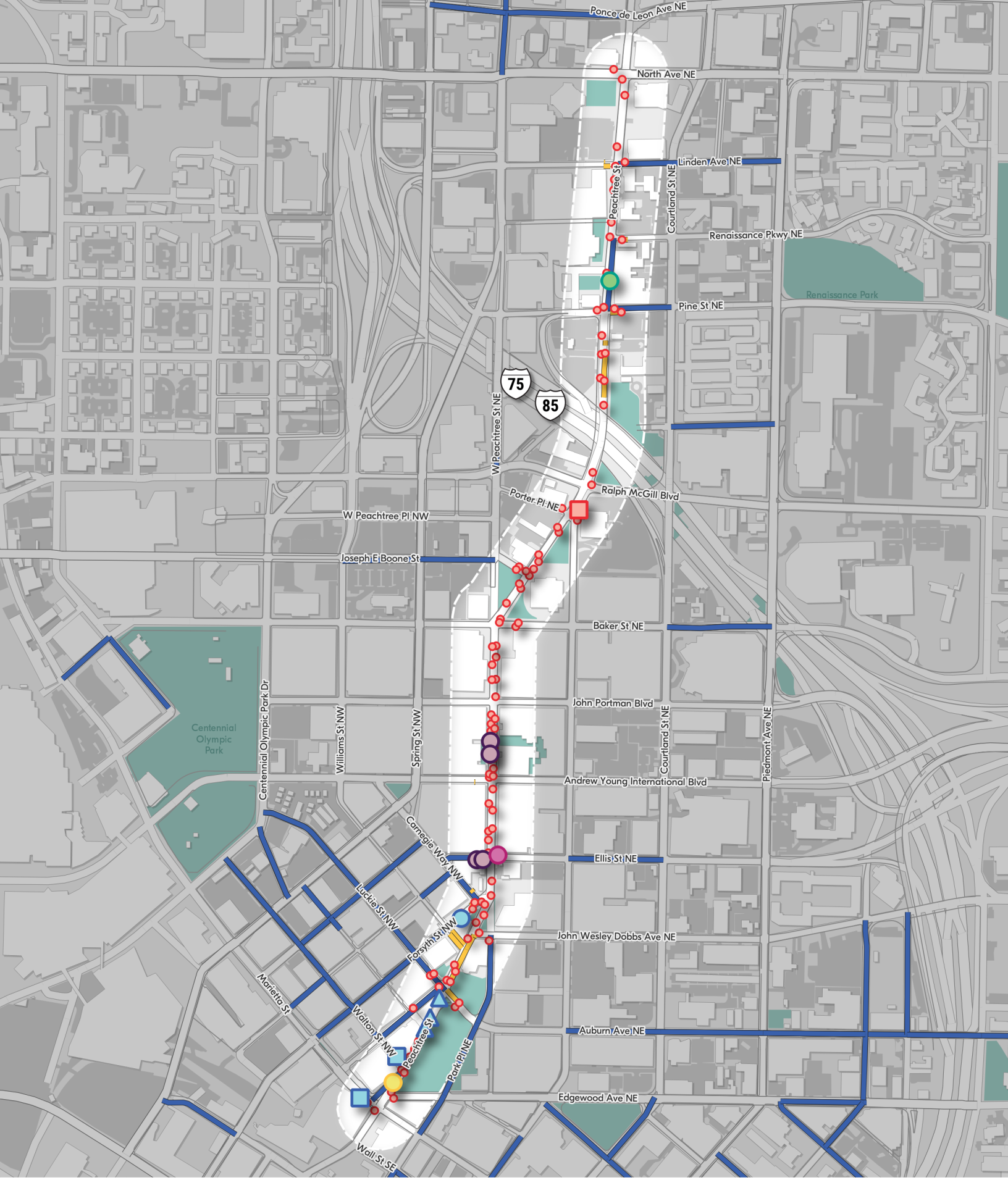


Figure 14. Curbside Activities

0 250 500 750 1000 ft

N

- Metered On-Street Parking
- Yellow Curb Paint
- No Parking Sign
- 2-hour Max. Parking
- 4-hour Max. Parking
- Sunday Parking Only
- Passenger Loading and Unloading
- Passenger Loading and Unloading (10 am - 3 pm)
- 30-minute Loading and Unloading
- Valet Drop-off and Pick-up
- Taxi Stand
- Surface Parking Lot
- MARTA Entrance
- Park/Plaza

Loading and Unloading

- There are several hotels on Peachtree Street, which are key locations for passenger loading and unloading. They use several different models for guest pick-up and drop-off. Hotel Indigo is the only one that loads directly on Peachtree Street.
- Signs throughout the corridor indicate "no parking, stopping, standing any time" and several curbs are painted yellow, though people regularly stop with their flashers on, using the outer lane as short-term parking to pick up or drop off passengers or deliveries.
- There are designated, time restricted passenger loading and unloading areas on the west side of Peachtree Street between Auburn Avenue/ Luckie Street and Poplar Street (10 am to 3 pm only).
- Other designated passenger loading and unloading areas within the study area are on side streets, like Walton Street and Forsyth Street.
- There are no designated freight delivery zones or loading docks along the corridor; however, on-street deliveries have been observed to occur using the outer lanes at locations like the CVS at Peachtree Center. Businesses are encouraged to load from side streets where loading and service areas for these businesses are located.

Table 9. Hotel Passenger Loading Matrix

	On-street	Off-street
Peachtree Street	Hotel Indigo is located mid-block between John Portman Boulevard and Andrew Young International Boulevard and operates its valet directly on Peachtree Street. Valet service and short-term guest parking happens on the western lane, which is designated as a bus only lane. Several hotels have been observed to use the streets for periodic passenger loading, even when other designated areas exist, such as for tour bus parking.	Hyatt Place and Hyatt Regency have driveways and passenger loading occurs off-street.
Other Streets	The Ellis Hotel, Residence Inn at Marriott, and Candler Hotel operate their valet parking services from entrances on other streets, Ellis Street, Forsyth Street, and Park Place, respectively.	The Westin and Ritz-Carlton have vehicular lobbies under the building at ground level, accessed via Andrew Young International Boulevard and Ellis Street, respectively.

Ridehailing and Taxis

- Ridehailing services like Uber and Lyft operate throughout Atlanta, including along Peachtree Street.
- There are no designated ridehailing pick-up/drop-off zones within the study area. Drivers generally pull up to the curb in the outer lane to wait for passengers, sometimes impeding the flow of vehicular travel.
- There is a taxi stand on Ellis Street near Peachtree Street in front of the Ritz Carlton.

Curb Cuts

- Curb cuts are ramps between the sidewalk level and the street level, either for driveways or for pedestrian and wheelchair access.
- Figure 15 illustrates vehicular curb cuts along the corridor, which cut across sidewalks and sometimes bike lanes, creating potential conflict points.
- The highest concentration of vehicular curb cuts is in the northern part of the study area, where surface parking lots and garage access points are common.
- The only vehicular curb cuts south of West Peachtree Street are at the Hyatt Regency hotel's circular driveway on the east side between Baker Street and John Portman Boulevard.
- Sidewalk ramps make it easy for people walking, rolling, or strolling to get from the sidewalk level to the street level. Figure 15 shows the existing sidewalk ramps that meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

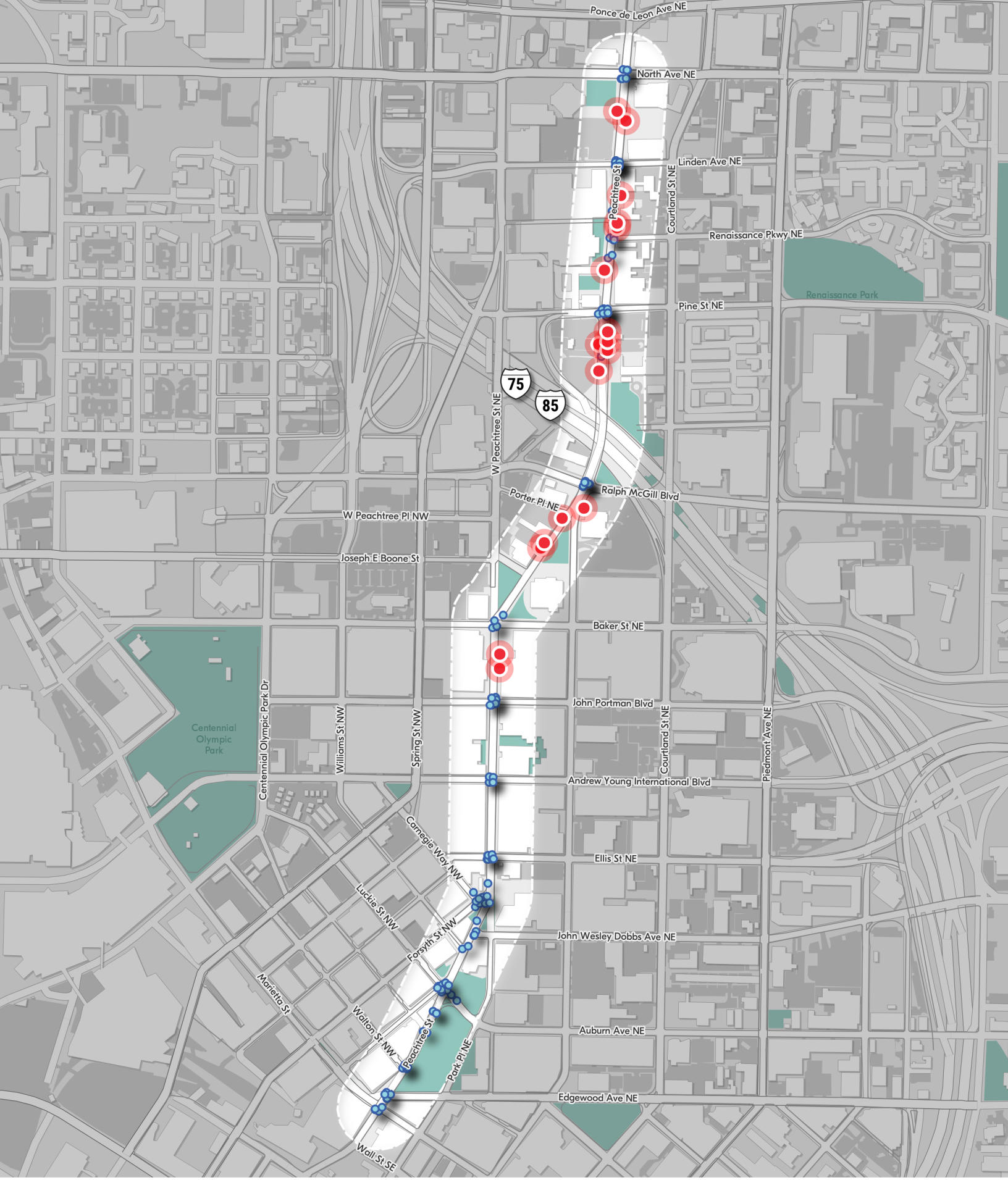


Figure 15. Curb Ramps and Cuts

0 250 500 750 1000 ft

N

ADA Curb Ramp | Vehicular Curb Cuts | Surface Parking Lot | MARTA Entrance | Park/Plaza

MAJOR UPCOMING TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES

Several upcoming and long-term initiatives will impact the transportation network in the project area, including:

Vision Zero Strategic Transportation Plan

The City of Atlanta has committed to prioritizing improving roadway safety and ending traffic fatalities and serious injuries by adopting a Vision Zero policy and beginning to develop an action plan. One of the first initiatives was a recently adopted citywide default speed limit of 25 mph—which will be rolled out over the next year—considering the role of higher travel speeds in traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Peachtree Street is part of the city's High Injury Network, meaning it is one of the streets that has the highest rates of crashes resulting in fatalities or injuries and should be prioritized to create a safer environment.

Streetcar

Peachtree Street is identified as a long-term "Priority Streetcar Corridor" in the Atlanta Streetcar System Plan (2016). It is envisioned as part of a bi-directional corridor that also includes West Peachtree Street, Peters Street, Lee Street, and Campbellton Road, connecting Greenbriar Mall to Buckhead. The plan notes it will operate in mixed traffic, as on most of the other planned corridors. The 9-mile section of the route that includes Downtown ("Crosstown Peachtree South") had an estimated capital cost of $648 million. The route was not included in the More MARTA Atlanta (2019) program, which is a $1.3 billion list of priority, funded projects for the city. The line does not currently have a funding source or timeline for implementation and is considered a long-term goal.

The only intersecting street within the study area also identified as a Priority Streetcar Corridor in that plan, other than those with existing streetcar service, is North Avenue, which is planned as bus rapid transit (BRT) for its first phase. Extensions of the streetcar system to westside and eastside neighborhoods are included in the More MARTA Atlanta program and will connect to the existing streetcar loop.

Bus Enhancements

There are no programmed bus enhancements along Peachtree Street in the More MARTA Atlanta program. Nearby projects will include:

- Bus only lanes on Peachtree Center Avenue
- Capitol Avenue (Summerhill) BRT project

Atlanta's Transportation Plan (2018) also recommends transit improvements, including enhanced transit service on North Avenue (TR-010).

Two-way Street Restoration

Existing plans propose several projects to restore two-way operations to several streets in the Downtown network, including:

- Atlanta's Transportation Plan (2018)
  - Pine Street/Angier Avenue
  - Ellis Street and Andrew Young International Boulevard
  - Baker Street and John Portman Boulevard
- Central Atlanta Progress' (CAP) Downtown Atlanta Master Plan recommended the previous two-way restorations, as well as:
  - Mitchell Street (Ted Turner Drive to Capitol Avenue)
  - Martin Luther King Jr. Drive (Ted Turner Drive to Capitol Avenue)
  - Ted Turner Drive/Spring Street (West Peachtree Street to Martin Luther King Jr. Drive)

LIT Facilities

A network of safe LIT facilities have been proposed throughout Downtown as part of previous plans, underscored by the mayor's Action Plan for Safer Streets, which aims to triple Atlanta's protected bike lane network within two years. Several LIT facilities that intersect with the study area were recommended as either standalone projects or part of complete street projects in Atlanta's Transportation Plan (2018), including:

- Porter Place contraflow bike lane (BI-067) eastbound on the south side of the street to connect to the Peachtree Center Avenue cycle track.
- Ralph McGill Boulevard (Peachtree Street to Glen Iris Drive) multimodal street reconstruction (BI-068) with lane reduction to accommodate protected bike lanes, sidewalk improvements, and an enhanced streetscape.
- West Peachtree Street multimodal improvements (BI-031) beginning at Hardy Ivy Park, including resurfacing, protected bike facilities, sidewalk improvements, and green stormwater infrastructure.

The Cycle Atlanta Implementation Study 1.0 includes a conceptual design for the Ralph McGill Boulevard/Peachtree Street/Peachtree Center Avenue intersection to improve legibility, connectivity, and safety of the existing LIT facilities.

CAP's Downtown Atlanta Master Plan also identified several LIT facility projects, including:

- Peachtree Street as a shared street (Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to Baker Street)
- Peachtree Street protected bike lanes (Baker Street to North Avenue)
- Forsyth Street protected bike lanes (I-20 to Peachtree Street)
- West Peachtree Street protected bike lanes (Baker Street to North Avenue)
- Marietta Street/Decatur Street protected bike lanes (Park Avenue to Piedmont Avenue)
- Ralph McGill Boulevard bike lanes (Peachtree Street to Glen Iris Drive)
- Pine Street bike lanes (West Peachtree Street to Glen Iris Drive)
- Renaissance Parkway bike lanes (Peachtree Street to Central Park Place)

Downtown Decides

Through a participatory budgeting program created by Atlanta City Councilmember Amir Farokhi in partnership with the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (ADID), community members submitted their ideas for how to spend $1 million on Downtown transportation infrastructure and voted on their preferred projects. One of the top projects selected was a complete street for Peachtree Street, which was awarded $225,000. The project description was not specific about the preferred design concept, but outlined that it should improve conditions for walking, biking, and using transit on Peachtree Street. There is potential to integrate this project as part of the Phase 2 Demonstration Project as an interim solution leading up to the long-term shared space, and the project team is coordinating with ADID and Councilmember Farokhi.

Five Points MARTA Station

MARTA is currently working on concepts to redesign the Five Points MARTA Station, which is located a block south of this study area. They are studying the feasibility of removing the existing canopy over the station and creating headhouses for station access. Atlanta City Studio has submitted a proposal to MARTA that would reconnect Broad Street through the MARTA property to improve walkability around and through the station and is working with MARTA to determine feasibility.

Atlanta Curbside Management Action Plan

Recognizing demand for curbside activities has accelerated along busy corridors, the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District and Midtown Alliance are partnering to develop a strategy to better manage these activities in the Downtown and Midtown Community Improvement Districts. The study is currently underway and will identify projects and policies related to parking, commercial loading, transit access, bike and micromobility activity, pedestrian access, ridehailing, and deliveries. It will be completed in Fall 2021 and is being coordinated with this project.

More detailed information about transportation conditions is available in the Appendix.

WE HEARD...

TRANSPORTATION

Downtown should have urban transportation priorities like walking, rolling, biking, and transit.

Sidewalks are too narrow in some spots.

Want to be able to cross the street comfortably.

It feels dangerous to bike the corridor today.

Need more separation between bike lanes and travel lanes to keep drivers and deliveries from parking in bike lane.

Concerned the lack of curbs in a shared space may encourage drivers to speed and want traffic calming features.

On-street loading and drop-off needs to be taken into consideration. Like it or not, people do it.

Worried the shared space may reduce reliability of bus schedules.

It would be great to have amenities like seating, shade, and restrooms for people who are waiting extended periods for commuter buses.

Want to connect to Peachtree Street to the BeltLine someday.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Some of the key existing conditions takeaways that—along with community input— informed the preferred design and recommendations include:

- Route 40 is the only MARTA bus directly on Peachtree Street in the study area. The buses are capable of street-level boarding for all passengers.
- Commuter bus service in the area picks up on nearby streets, with the highest concentration at Baker Street, John Portman Boulevard, Peachtree Center Avenue, and North Avenue.
- The streetcar tracks on Peachtree Street between Auburn Avenue/Luckie Street and Ellis Street were installed in 2014 and should remain in place.
- The design should not preclude the potential planned but unfunded future streetcar on the east side of the street, including overhead cables.
- Intersections with the highest levels of pedestrian activity are Peachtree Street at John Portman Boulevard/Harris Street and Luckie Street/Auburn Avenue.
- The combination of the Connector and the stretch of mostly parking lots to the north creates a barrier that deters people from walking between Downtown and Midtown.
- Several intersections were perceived as dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists, generally those with skewed angles: including Porter Place/Peachtree Center Avenue, Auburn Avenue (right turn slip lane), Forsyth Street/Carnegie Way, and Edgewood Avenue/Marietta Street.
- Vehicular traffic volumes on Peachtree Street Downtown are relatively low compared to in other parts of the city. The modeled average pre-pandemic daily trips for the study area is 9,200.
- Most of the road segments on Peachtree Street have a level of service (LOS) of A/B, which means the level of congestion is minimal. Between North Avenue and Linden Avenue during peak morning and evening commutes, it has LOS C, which means the congestion is acceptable.

- Only 16.3 percent of all vehicle trips on Peachtree Street between North Avenue and Marietta Street are through trips; most are local trips with an origin or destination in the area.
- Many of the vehicle trips within the study area turn off Peachtree Street to access the highways, with 49 percent of southbound drivers turning off at Linden Avenue and 20 percent of northbound drivers turning off at Ellis Street.
- Most of the buildings along Peachtree Street have their designated loading/unloading areas and garage access on side streets.
- The outer lanes are often blocked by passenger pick-up and drop-off and deliveries.
- The highest concentration of driveways that would have to be tied in are located on the north end of the study area; the Hyatt Regency has the only driveways in Segment 3 and there are no driveways in Segment 4.
- There is very little on-street parking today: 5 spaces near Pine Street and 3 spaces near Edgewood Avenue.
- Ongoing plans for renovations at Mayor's #1 Park and art installations at Georgia Pacific Plaza and the north end of Woodruff Park should be incorporated.
- Segments 1 and 2 today have relatively high concentrations of inactive ground floor uses like vacant properties, parking lots, which may make it difficult to activate a shared space to its full potential.
- The highest concentration of active street-facing uses on the ground floor is south of Baker Street (Segments 3 and 4), which is also where there is the highest density of users due to continous and mostly high rise development.
- There are no major environmental or ecological constraints in the study area. Because Peachtree Street is a ridge line, it is not prone to flooding, but could play a role in helping to manage stormwater for the area.
- There are 13 National Register Listed properties within the study area to preserve and celebrate. There are only two historic markers along the corridor today, and there may be an opportunity to better showcase Atlanta history.
- There is a high likelihood historic streetcar tracks or other artifacts will be found underground during the construction process, which could add time and expense.
- Planned private development and infrastructure projects in Segments 1 and 2 are likely to change the character of these areas, including the expansion of Emory University Hospital Midtown and the Stitch project to cap the Connector in that area.
- The relatively low share of residences in the area today contributes to lower levels of activity on evenings and weekends.
- There are a number of people experiencing homelessness who spend time in the study area and should be considered and supported through the project.
- Many of the materials in the area today are hard surfaces with muted tones and are perceived as uninviting by the community.
- Wayfinding signage exists in the area, but the community felt more and clearer signs would help with navigation.

Demonstration project, alternatives analysis, and preferred concept to be included in next draft. Pieces that were included in sections 1-4 in the previous draft but will be relocated to sections 5 or 6 are included on the following pages for staff reference. They will be removed from the published interim draft.

5.0 THE PREFERRED CONCEPT

Modeling Potential Traffic Impacts

Methodology

Although impacts to vehicular travel patterns are not the deciding factor for transportation projects in walkable, transit-rich environments like Downtown Atlanta, understanding those impacts can help make informed decisions and develop network-wide solutions to support all modes. Traffic models are mathematical models of real-world traffic patterns used to analyze traffic conditions, identify impacts of potential projects, and select preferred scenarios. This transportation analysis used a subarea traffic model built for a recent Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (ADID) study to understand how the Downtown road network operates today and predict how it may be impacted by this project. It considers two future shared space scenarios:

- **Scenario 1:** Shared space in the pilot location preferred by community members (West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street)
- **Scenario 2:** Shared space throughout the entire study area (North Avenue to Marietta Street)

For each scenario, two options were considered: one in which Peachtree Center Avenue becomes a transit priority street with dedicated bus lanes (b) and another in which it does not (a).

		Changes to Peachtree Center Avenue	
		No Change to Peachtree Center Avenue	New Dedicated Bus Lanes on Peachtree Center Avenue
Extent	West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street	Scenario 1a	Scenario 1b
	North Avenue to Marietta Street	Scenario 2a	Scenario 2b

The model uses 2017 data from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) travel demand model and was validated to reflect existing traffic counts and data. These data reflect pre-COVID-19 travel patterns and do not reflect the recent adoption of a citywide speed limit of 25 miles per hour (mph) as part of Atlanta's Vision Zero initiative. The model does not include all qualitative factors, such as how the urban design treatment on Peachtree Street may cause people to choose to drive more slowly. The analysis area shown in Figure X includes the Peachtree Shared Space study area and surrounding streets Downtown. More detailed information about the transportation analysis, data sources, and methodology is available in the Appendix.

Findings

Based on the traffic model analysis, key identified impacts of a shared space include:

- Impacts to Peachtree Street
  - Overall decrease in vehicular capacity for shared space segment
  - Decrease in how long and how far people travel on shared space segment
  - Moderate increase in travel delay
  - Increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists due to slight decrease in average speeds
- Impacts to Downtown Area
  - Negligent impact to traffic operations
  - Negligent impact in travel delay (VHD)
  - Nominal monetary impacts to fuel cost, delay cost, and vehicle operating cost, which are offset by non-monetized benefits

Table 1. Scenario 1a Travel Impacts to Peachtree Street

	Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)	Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)	Average Speed (mph)	Level of Service			
					AM Northbound	AM Southbound	PM Northbound	PM Southbound
North Avenue to West Peachtree Street	-6%	-7%	-11%	16.4 → 16.6	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B
West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street	-35%	-21%	+57%	15.4 → 12.9	A/B →A/B	A/B →C	A/B →A/B	C→E
Forsyth Street to Marietta Street	-11%	-14%	-36%	14.9 → 15.4	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	C →A/B

Table 1. Scenario 1b Travel Impacts to Peachtree Street

	Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)	Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)	Average Speed (mph)	Level of Service			
					AM Northbound	AM Southbound	PM Northbound	PM Southbound
North Avenue to West Peachtree Street	-7%	-8%	-13%	16.4 → 16.6	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B
West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street	-35%	-21%	+53%	15.1 → 12.4	A/B →A/B	A/B →C	A/B →C	C→E
Forsyth Street to Marietta Street	-11%	-13%	-24%	14.6 → 15.0	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	C →C

Table 1. Scenario 2a Travel Impacts to Peachtree Street

	Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)	Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)	Average Speed (mph)	Level of Service			
					AM Northbound	AM Southbound	PM Northbound	PM Southbound
North Avenue to West Peachtree Street	-43%	-29%	+20%	16.4 → 13.2	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →C	A/B →C
West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street	-40%	-31%	+26%	15.4 → 13.3	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	C →D
Forsyth Street to Marietta Street	-32%	-25%	+18%	14.9 → 13.6	A/B →C	A/B →A/B	A/B →C	C →C

Table 1. Scenario 2b Travel Impacts to Peachtree Street

	Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)	Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)	Average Speed (mph)	Level of Service			
					AM Northbound	AM Southbound	PM Northbound	PM Southbound
North Avenue to West Peachtree Street				16.3 → 13.2	A/B →A/B	A/B →A/B	A/B →C	A/B →C
West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street				15.1→ 13.0	A/B →A/B	A/B →C	A/B →A/B	C →E
Forsyth Street to Marietta Street				14.6 → 13.4	A/B →C	A/B →A/B	A/B →C	C →C

The analysis also considered the impacts of both scenarios to the overall Downtown street network. It found each scenario would likely result in minimal increases to vehicle miles traveled (+0.03 to 0.07 percent), vehicle hours traveled (+0.2 to 0.16 percent), and vehicle hours of delay (+0.48 to 1 percent), outlined in the table below. Scenario 1a—which had the smaller shared space project area and no new dedicated bus lanes on Peachtree Center Avenue—had the least impact across the network. Scenario 2b involved the most changes to the network—a shared space across the entire study area and new dedicated bus lanes on Peachtree Center Avenue—and resulted in the greatest impact across the network.

Table 1. Modeled Downtown Network Effects

	Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)	Vehicle Hours of Delay (VHD)
Scenario 1a: West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street (No Bus Lanes on Peachtree Center Avenue)	+0.03%	+0.16%	+0.48%
Scenario 1b: West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street (With Bus Lanes on Peachtree Center Avenue)	+0.03%	+0.2%	+0.6%
Scenario 2a: North Avenue to Marietta Street (Without Bus Lanes on Peachtree Center Avenue)	+0.07%	+0.5%	+1%
Scenario 2b: North Avenue to Marietta Street (With Bus Lanes on Peachtree Center Avenue)	+0.07%	+0.4%	+1%

Several sample Downtown destination pairs were tested with the model to illustrate the anticipated impacts on travel times and speeds, and the results were minimal. Routes the pass along or cross the project area were tested. For a vehicle trip along Peachtree Street from Emory University Hospital Midtown on the northern end of the study area to Woodruff Park on the southern end, travel delay ranged from 23 seconds (Scenario 1a) to 41 seconds (Scenario 2a), resulting in a total trip time between 4 minutes 46 seconds (Scenario 1a) and 5 minutes 11 seconds (Scenario 2b). Travel speeds were reduced by about 1 to 2 miles per hour.

Table X outlines the impacts to travel time and speed for all the tested destination pairs.

Table 1. Sample Route Impact Analysis

Destination Pair	Scenario 1: West Peachtree Street to Forsyth Street				Scenario 2: North Avenue to Marietta Street			
	1a: Without Bus Lanes on PCA		1b: With Bus Lanes on PCA		2a: Without Bus Lanes on PCA		2b: With Bus Lanes on PCA	
	Change in Travel Time (Seconds)	Change in Speed (mph)	Change in Travel Time (Seconds)	Change in Speed (mph)	Change in Travel Time (Seconds)	Change in Speed (mph)	Change in Travel Time (Seconds)	Change in Speed (mph)
Emory University Hospital Midtown to Woodruff Park (via Peachtree St)	+0:23	-1.2	+0:23	-1.1	+0:41	-2.0	+0:40	-1.9
Mercedes-Benz Stadium to Marriott Hotel (via Andrew Young International Blvd, Williams St, and John Portman Blvd)	-0:05	+0.4	-0:04	+0.4	-0:05	+0.5	-0:04	+0.4
Motel 6 to City Hall (via Courtland St)	+0:07	-0.3	+0:08	-0.4	+0:07	-0.3	+0:14	-0.6
Five Points MARTA Station to North Ave MARTA Station (via Ted Turner Dr)	+0:01	-0.1	+0:02	-0.1	+0:03	-0.2	+0:03	-0.2

6.0 DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Department of
CITY PLANNING

PEACHTREE
SHARED SPACE