

Mission Statement

To establish a vibrant, upscale destination area; improve business development opportunities; and enhance property values by developing and promoting coordinated transportation and community character improvements to benefit property owners, business owners, and residents along the Highway 78 corridor.

Mr. Steve Logan on Highway 78 Opportunities and Challenges

As Director of the Planning Division for Gwinnett County, Mr. Steve Logan conducts all long-range planning, zoning reviews and associated applications that go before the Board of Commissioners. The Planning Division also compiles and maintains information related to the county's growth. Mr. Logan recently spoke to the Association about the changes occurring in Gwinnett County and the progress of the Highway 78 Corridor Improvement Association.



In your opinion, what are the most significant changes that have occurred in Gwinnett County over the past five years?

The growth that began in the early 1970s has continued, resulting in the addition of over 125,000 people in the last five years. We also added two new major shopping malls. The most dramatic change is the recognition that growth is not the only factor affecting our area. We are also experiencing the decline of the older portions of the county. We now have a situation where the county is experiencing new, unabated growth combined with the need to deal with issues of decline and revitalization.

How has Gwinnett County collaborated or supported the Highway 78 Corridor Improvement Association to date?

The idea for the Highway 78 Corridor Improvement Association idea began with the Gwinnett County's Revitalization Task Force. Emory Morsberger served as Chair of that committee. The County has also offered support, when we are able to. I personally drafted the request for proposal's to help the Association select a consultant. County staff attends meetings, and we will continue working with the Association to make the needed changes in the county structure that will foster the ideas that the group is putting together, within reason.

What, in your opinion, are the top challenges and opportunities facing the Highway 78 Corridor Improvement Association?

Challenges include dealing with so many property owners and working with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) on developing more than just safety realignment project on the highway. Probably the most important challenge is coming up with a true vision for what the corridor can become. The primary opportunity is creating an area that is a viable, commercial corridor, integrated with the surrounding neighborhoods.

In what ways do you envision the Highway 78 Community Improvement Association contributing to Gwinnett County planning efforts now and in the future?

A lot of ideas for change will be generated by the Association. This will provide an opportunity for the County to see how challenges have been met and apply that information elsewhere in the County.

What is Gwinnett County's role in the Highway 78 median project being developed by GDOT?

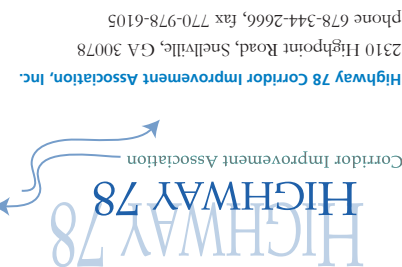
We do not have an official role, as it is a GDOT project, but we are working closely with them anyway we can.

How can GDOT, Gwinnett County, and the Association work together to ensure that the proposed median positively impacts businesses along the highway?

By making it more than just a road project. It can become a project that will enhance and improve the entire area.



Steve Logan (left) and Dwight Harrison (right) at a recent Highway 78 Association meeting.



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Snellville Receives a Livable Center Initiative Study Grant

The vision of a downtown Snellville as a place where people walk and shop at a leisurely pace, traffic jams are unheard of, and travelers on Highway 78 stop to visit might seem elusive now. But things are changing in Snellville. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) just awarded Snellville a \$75,000 Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) study grant to help revitalize the Snellville community. The Livable



Jeff Timler, City of Snellville Director of Planning and Development (left) and Brett Harrell, Snellville Mayor (right), at a meeting with the Highway 78 Association in January 2003.

Centers Initiative program provides planning and implementation funding for communities that demonstrate significant effort and commitment to developing innovative plans for the improvement of their town and activity centers. Snellville joins eight other areas around metro Atlanta in receiving one of these popular, sought-after planning grants awarded by ARC each year. Though \$75,000 alone will not be enough to create a new downtown, Snellville will have access to another \$350 million in competitive federal funding available to cities participating in the LCI program.

Jeff Timler, Snellville's Director of Planning and Development, stated in the AJC, "It's a tremendous grant that will spur other great things for the city. The significance of the grant, he said, is that the ARC has, in effect, given its stamp of approval for Snellville's comprehensive plan to develop a city center where people can walk, shop, work and travel without frustration."

Now that Snellville is part of the LCI program, the city can be more specific in directing growth and improving the traffic problems along Highway 78 and Ga. 124. According to Snellville's comprehensive growth plan, the reconfiguration of that intersection is "the biggest single issue affecting the future of Snellville."

The Highway 78 Corridor Improvement Association looks forward to working closely with the city on this important planning initiative.

Visit www.highway78.org for additional information!

Funding 101: Federal Transportation Funding

Federal transportation funding, administered in partnership with local governments, provides significant opportunities for Community Improvement Districts.

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is charged with the planning and programming of federally funded projects in the Atlanta region. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) produced by ARC is a long-range plan which includes a balanced mix of projects such as bridges, bicycle paths, sidewalks, transit services, new and upgraded roadways, safety improvements, transportation demand management initiatives and emission reduction strategies. By federal law, this plan must cover a minimum planning horizon of 20 years. But because the Atlanta region does not meet federal air quality standards, ARC is required to update the plan every three years.

The long-range RTP forms the basis upon which an annual short-range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is developed. The TIP includes all projects programmed for federal funding for the next three years. Visit www.atlanta-info.com for projects in your area. Amounts of funding that each state and region receive are determined in the federal transportation bill, updated every six years.

Federal Transportation Bill Reauthorization

TEA-3 is the third iteration of the transportation vision established by Congress in 1991 with the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and renewed in 1998 through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). TEA-21 authorizes the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the six-year period from 1998-2003.

Factors likely to shape the new legislation that will come with reauthorization include the economy, strong public support for alternatives, and increasing demand for accountability.

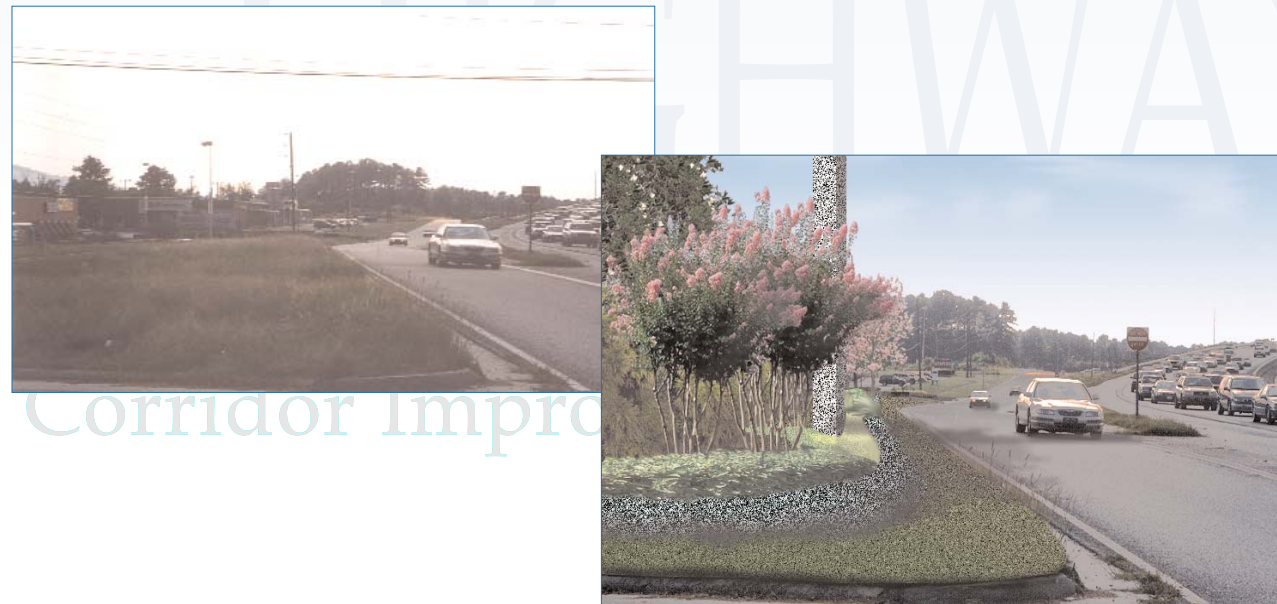
Find More Information

To find out more information or to provide input on the new transportation bill visit: www.fhwa.dot.gov/reauthorization.

Highway 78 Before and After: Planned Infrastructure and Landscaping Improvements

The Association submitted the Highway 78 Access and Beautification Plan to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in September 2002. Its purpose is to complement the GDOT median design plans with recommendations for infrastructure and landscaping improvements to Highway 78. The Association's recommended improvements are being coordinated with GDOT for inclusion in the final design plans.

For more information about the Highway 78 Access and Beautification Plan, please visit www.highway78.org.



Highway 78 as it looks today (top left) and after (depicted above) the Access and Beautification Plan is implemented.

Community Improvement District On Track for Certification

Background

The Association is in the process of forming a self-taxing Community Improvement District (CID) along the Highway 78 Corridor from the DeKalb/Gwinnett County line eastward through a portion of the city of Snellville. The CID will leverage its revenues for planning and construction improvements within the district.

To create a CID, it takes the agreement of a simple majority of nonresidential property owners and at least 75 percent of the assessed value of nonresidential property located within the proposed Community Improvement District. Gwinnett County and the city of Snellville must also pass a resolution allowing the creation of the district. Once formed, the CID will continue the Association's current coordination efforts and accomplish improvement projects along the corridor. The CID will remain intact beyond the median completion to fulfill the Association's long-term goals of creating a safe corridor to drive through, an upscale destination area and a first-rate living environment.

CID Progress as of January 31, 2003

Ongoing efforts to form the Highway 78 CID are on track for certification in early 2003. A total of 148 property owners with a total property value of \$182,542,352 have submitted written consent to organize the CID. The number of property owners and the total property value both exceed the minimum requirements to form a CID.

"Our group is growing in strength and the different governmental authorities are beginning to look to us for leadership and coordination for all their efforts in [the Highway 78] corridor. If we don't get organized and begin working together, we will see the decline we saw along Memorial Drive.

There have been a number of CID's created in the Metro Atlanta area. All of them have been successful. There have been no failures."

—Emory Morsberger, President of the Highway 78 Corridor Improvement Association.

Merchants Corner

We are getting ready to form The Highway 78 Merchants Association as a subsidiary of the Highway 78 Community Improvement District.

We need your input! So far local business owners have suggested:

- A Merchants Association website with information on the Highway 78 businesses, including a link to each Merchants Association member's website.
- Group sales flyers and bulk mail outs to a targeted Highway 78 market.
- Association community sales days.
- Coordinated holiday decorations.
- A private security force.
- Clean up days.

If you are interested in being on the Highway 78 Merchants Association Board of Directors or would like to provide input, please submit your name and/or comments to: info@highway78.org.

Congratulations, Parkview and Brookwood on a Great Championship Game!

Our community schools continue to lead Gwinnett County and the state both academically and athletically.

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