



4800 Ashford Dunwoody Road
Dunwoody, Georgia 30338
dunwoodyga.gov | 678.382.6700

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Michael Smith, Public Works Director

Date: April 25, 2022

Subject: **Westside Connector Project Update**

ACTION

Provide an update on the Westside Connector project and discuss a proposed alternative design for the Ashford Dunwoody Interchange at I-285

SUMMARY

The Westside Connector project was conceived to improve traffic flow on Ashford Dunwoody Road between I-285 and Hammond Drive by providing a direct connection between the westbound I-285 off ramp and Perimeter Center Parkway, where mixed-use developments are becoming concentrated around the Dunwoody MARTA station. After the initial conceptual design was developed, the alignment of the proposed connector had to be shifted further out of the I-285 right of way to make room for the Top End managed lanes being planned by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). This shift placed the new alignment in conflict with development plans for the Ravinia parcel adjacent to the off ramp, which significantly increased the cost for the additional right of way needed for the project.

The Perimeter Community Improvement District (PCID), in partnership with the City, has contracted with KCI to evaluate alternative designs to improve future traffic flow at the Ashford Dunwoody. The preferred alternative calls for widening the bridge by one lane in each direction to allow for more turning capacity on and off the interstate ramps. The design concept also includes a new parallel bridge for non-motorized transportation.

DETAILS

Background

When the Diverging Diamond interchange was constructed at Ashford Dunwoody Road and I-285, it was intended as an interim improvement that would eventually be replaced by a complete reconstruction of the interchange. Over the last decade, the DDI has successfully improved traffic flow but excessive delays in the AM and PM peak periods are projected in the next 10 years even when accounting for the new managed lane system planned by GDOT. The proximity of Hammond Drive and the weaving movements between the interchange and Hammond also have a direct impact on the traffic congestion at the interchange.

The Westside Connector was conceived to mitigate these traffic issues by providing a direct connection between the westbound off ramp and Perimeter Center Parkway, thereby diverting a sizable percentage of traffic away from the interchange and Hammond Drive. As the



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Westside Connector plans have been refined and coordinated with the Top End Managed Lane design, the additional right of way needed has become cost prohibitive causing the city to look at other alternatives to alleviate traffic congestion at the interchange.

Proposed Concept

Eleven different concepts were considered with most being eliminated because they were found to be unfeasible, did not provide a significant traffic improvement, or because they required too much additional right of way. The concept recommended as the preferred alternative involves widening the Ashford Dunwoody Road bridge over I-285 by one lane in each direction and adding a parallel bridge for non-motorized transportation modes. This alternative is projected to reduce vehicle delay by 22% in the AM peak hour and 11% in the PM peak hour.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Improvements to the Ashford Dunwoody interchange are still considered long-range. However, now is the time to determine what long-term improvements may be needed to ensure that the Top End managed lane project is designed to allow for the interchange improvements in the future.

ASHFORD DUNWOODY ROAD AT I-285

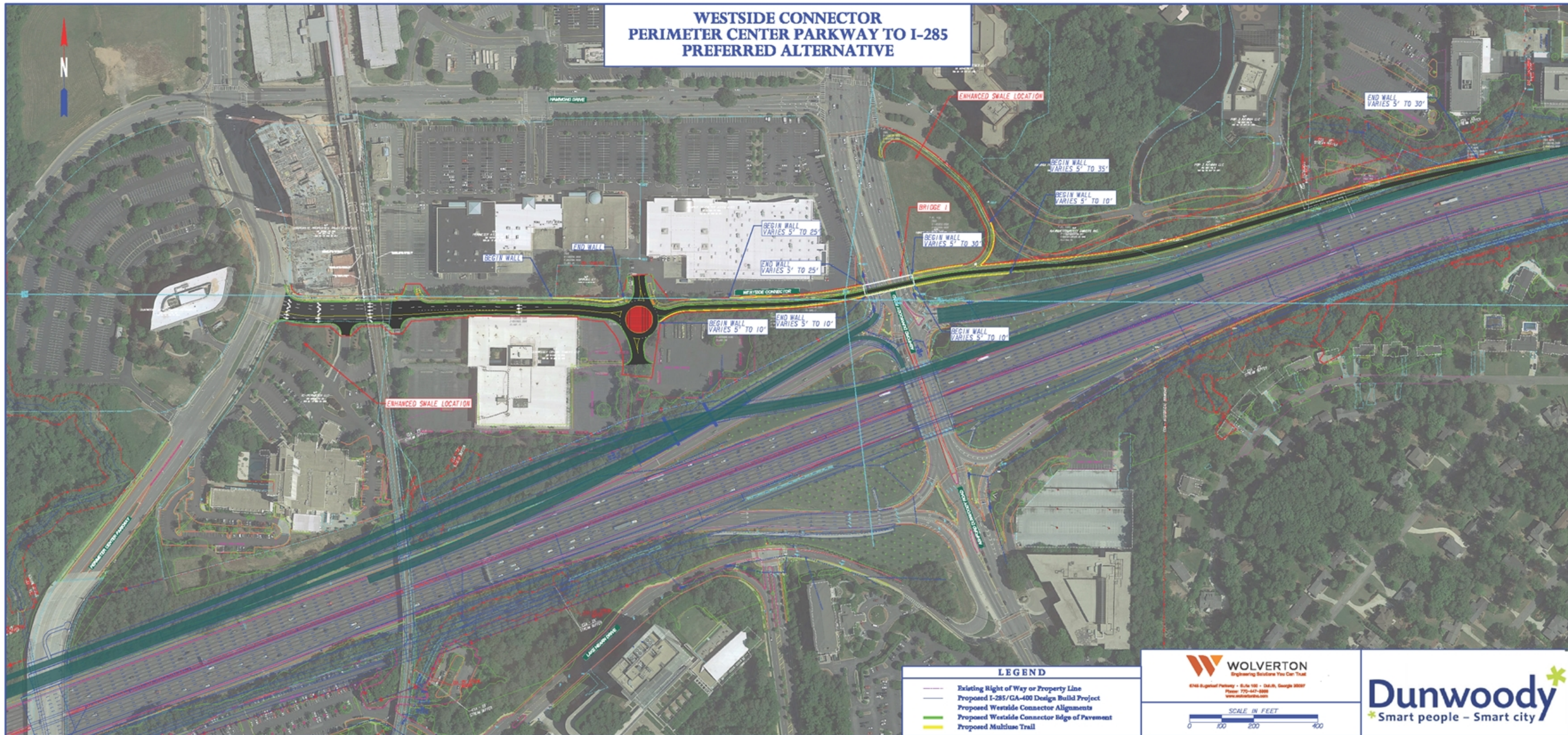
ALTERNATIVE INTERCHANGE STUDY

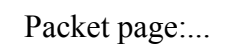
City of
Dunwoody
Georgia



PERIMETER COMMUNITY
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS







New Exit Ramps



CFI at Hammond Dr



Two Level Interchange



Traditional Diamond w/ new street



DDI w/ new street

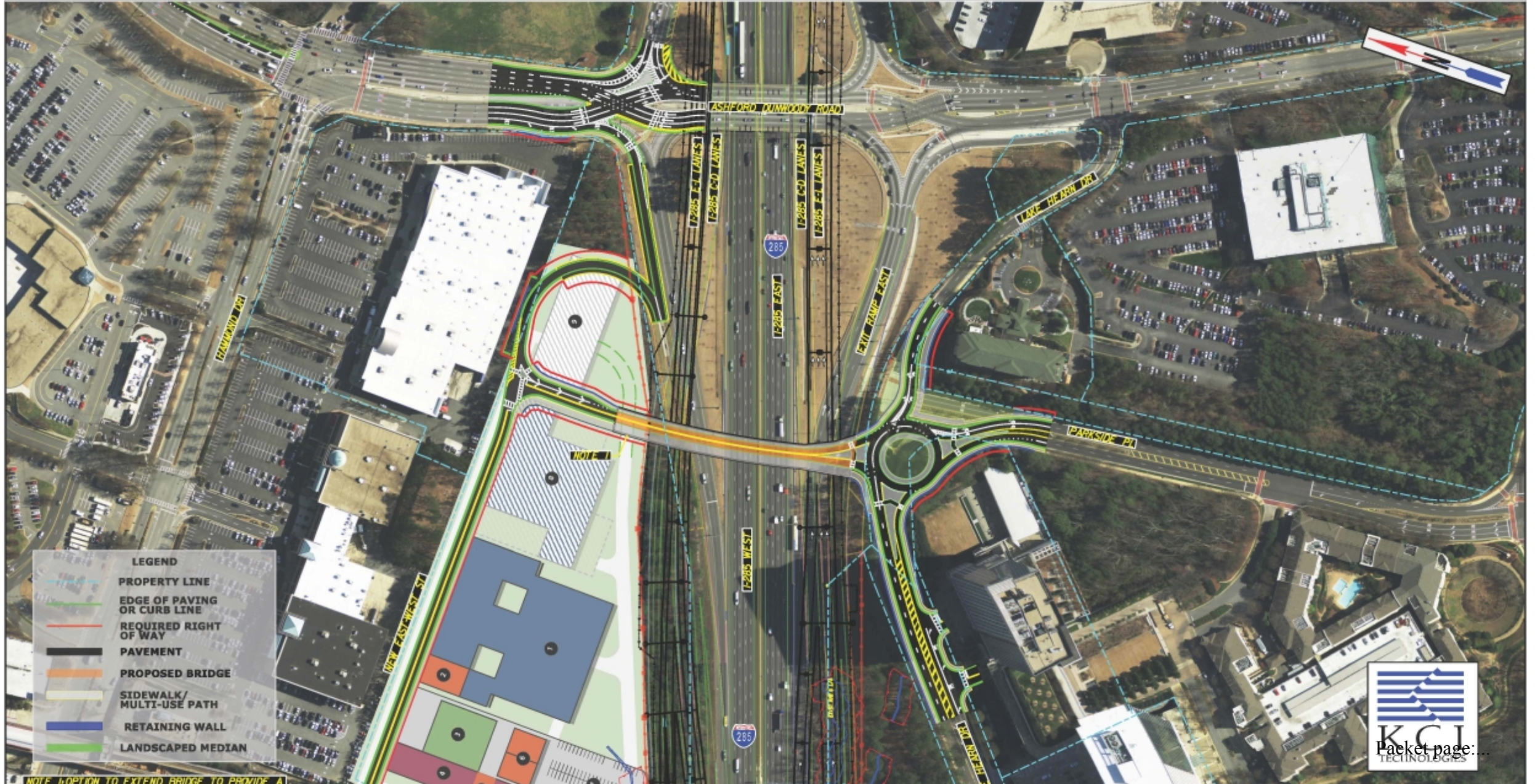


New Bridge over I-285



Ashford Dunwoody Road at I-285 Interchange - Alternative Interchange Study: Alternative #8 - New Location Bridge over I-285

SCALE IN FEET
0 100 200 400



Ashford Dunwoody Road at I-285 Interchange - Alternative Interchange Study: Alternative #10 - Widen DDI

SCALE IN FEET
0 80 160 320





TRAFFIC CAPACITY RESULTS

Summary of Findings			
	No-Build	Alt #8 – New Location Bridge	Alt #10 – Widen DDI
Vehicle Hours Delay AM Peak Hour	193.8	139.0 -28%	150.8 -22%
Vehicle Hours Delay PM Peak Hour	221.3	208.4 -6%	197.4 -11%

*The total vehicle hours delay = route delay(sec) * volume/3600sec*