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**COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (CIDs)
PARTNER TO PUSH FOR I-285 TRANSIT PROJECT AND
COMBINED PLANNING EFFORTS WITH THE
NORTHWEST TRANSIT LINE**

Four Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) have partnered to package two major transit studies and push for their implementation.

DeKalb, Cumberland, Fulton and Town Center CIDs have teamed up to link the proposed northwest transit project and the I-285 corridor transit proposal. They will work to get the I-285 project a high priority in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, expedite the I-285 corridor study, identify capital funding and create parallel planning for both projects.

CIDs are formed within defined geographic areas and enable corporate property owners to tax themselves additional ad valorem taxes to accelerate improvements within those specific districts. This first time collaborative among four of Georgia's largest CIDs enables the CIDs' to combine their efforts to:

- Link the two projects together for environmental and design planning.
- Aggressively pursue bringing a higher priority to the proposed I-285 Transit Project contained in the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) I-285 Corridor Transit Feasibility Study.

- **Strengthen the business community's push for funding priority of the I-285 project in the ARC's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).**
- **Provide combined funding from the partners (DeKalb, Fulton and Cumberland) to conduct the environment impact statement and design study for I-285 estimated at \$1.2 million for Phase I.**
- **Accelerate the timetable for completion of a transit package that connects the employment centers.**
- **Pursue funding from local, state and federal agencies to ensure the implementation of the projects.**

The Sandy Springs Revitalization Project has expressed interest in the partnership and others are expected to join the team soon. The Cumberland CID, the pivotal CID impacted by both projects, will act as the CID coordinator with ARC administering the contract for professional services.

The I-285 corridor has been identified as one of the top 17 congested corridors in Atlanta. The I-285 transit proposal represents one of the few improvements targeted at this corridor which links the largest employment concentrations outside the central city. The ARC recently completed a study recommending Light Rail Transit (LRT) or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) between Cumberland and Doraville (approximately 13 miles). The I-285 project would complement the planned northwest corridor transit line and connects with the Dunwoody and Doraville MARTA rail stations already in operation. It is estimated that the line would carry between 35,000 and 40,000 per day (year 2025). When the northwest transit line is added, that figure doubles.

"The Fulton and DeKalb Perimeter CIDs (PCIDs) contain over 25 million square feet of office space, one of the largest corporate office markets in the Southeastern United States, and contains a number of Fortune 500 companies," said DeKalb PCID Chairman, John

R. Sullivan, Vice President of Equity Office Properties Trust. "When we join the commercial strength of the Cumberland CID, a similar sized business district also containing a large number of Fortune 500 companies and about \$18 million square feet of class A office space, our business effort behind this push for funding becomes even more significant," he continued.

Yvonne Williams, President of the PCIDs (DeKalb and Fulton) states that "This consortium presents an unprecedented single position by the Community Improvement Districts in a business based collaborative. The formation of the partnership in itself is significant. The I-285 corridor is certainly one of the most congested in the region. This study of transit alternatives for that corridor will be of benefit to our districts, and the entire region if we can assist our partners, the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, (GRTA), the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), the Governor's Initiative and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in accelerating project implementation through local, state and federal funding. We are going to actively pursue those capital dollars with the idea of fast-tracking the project."

Cumberland CID's Vice Chairman, Tad Leithead with Cousins Properties says, "We are delighted to participate in a partnership to support GRTA's lead to create a regional transportation system. The CIDs have a vested interest in the success of GRTA's plans for the region. The CID model is to support local and state agency efforts by facilitating and expediting projects where possible. We believe the I-285 partnership is important to the entire region, our economic centers and the traveling

public.”

“This transit project is a critical component of the metro and regional transportation solution and needs to be accelerated. It will benefit the entire region and serve as a model of how multiple and alternative modes of transportation can help alleviate traffic congestion and begin to impact air pollution. This project can also begin to answer the business community’s call for expedited action to relieve traffic congestion on the areas most grid locked roads in particular Interstate 285,” said Robert Voyles, Senior Vice-President with Hines, and Vice-Chairman, DeKalb PCID.

The proposed transit facility extends from the Cumberland area of Cobb County to the Perimeter area of Fulton and DeKalb Counties generally along I-285, Sandy Springs Circle and Hammond Drive. This project is a subset of that identified in the Atlanta Regional Commission’s I-285 Corridor Transit Feasibility Study.

Williams continued, “This will be one of the premier transportation opportunities in the metro region. It will complement and support the concepts we have been working on that create a more complete and comprehensive transportation system for our customers, visitors, and citizens. As a community, we need to show evidence that we are solving our problems in a timely fashion. We need this project to become a priority. Cleaner air, enhanced mobility, transportation options and economic success are all positive benefits to be derived from these projects.”

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