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## **ELECTRIC SHUTTLE SYSTEM COULD BE ON BOARD TO SERVE THE PERIMETER AREA IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS**

An electric shuttle bus system that will improve traffic congestion by linking office buildings, Perimeter Mall and other shopping areas to MARTA stations is expected to be a reality in the next two years in the Perimeter area of North Fulton and DeKalb Counties.

Under Governor Roy Barnes' recently announced state transportation plan, the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority will lead the effort to implement Activity Center Circulator Systems (ACCESS) in Perimeter and other high activity centers in the Atlanta area. The estimated cost of implementing this program in all activity centers will be \$38 million over the next five years.

"I want to commend Governor Barnes and his administration including GRTA and the State Department of Transportation for including the Perimeter shuttle system in the state's comprehensive transportation plan," said Perimeter Community Improvement District President Yvonne Williams.

Williams said the shuttle bus plan dovetails with efforts by the Perimeter CID to develop a rail circulator system in the Perimeter area. She said her organization is looking forward to partnering with the state on the project.

"The Perimeter CID's leadership in implementing the Activity Center Circulator Systems in their area is welcome news," said Dr. Catherine L. Ross, GRTA executive director.

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## **Page 2 – Electric Shuttle System to Serve Perimeter**

“These ACCESS projects will be both gateways to our regional transportation system and key traffic relievers locally. Perimeter’s efforts can be a model of how GRTA can partner with local communities to serve mutual interests,” Ross said.

Williams called Governor Barnes’ commitment to a circulator system “a response to the call of corporate Perimeter for advanced execution of transit projects.”

The PCID has already sponsored a preliminary study of a circulator system that would improve traffic flow and mobility within the high growth Perimeter area. Approximately 100,000 workers are now employed in the Perimeter market - the largest corporate office district in Metro Atlanta and the Southeast. That number is expected to more than double to 213,000 by 2008. The electric shuttle buses would be a prerequisite and could even have a great impact on the building of a longer term light rail system linking the Perimeter market to MARTA.

Last December MARTA opened two new stations in the Perimeter area to help relieve traffic and improve air quality, but links between Perimeter locations and MARTA are still limited. Williams said the biggest infrastructure issue for retaining corporate investment and employees in the Perimeter employment market is resolving critical traffic congestion issues as soon as possible.

The PCID’s preliminary circulator feasibility study, now scheduled for a \$2 million alternative analyses study in the 2000-2001 Regional Transportation Improvement Plan, was jointly funded by the PCID, DeKalb and Fulton County Governments. GRTA committed funds for the more detailed alternative analyses study in order to satisfy federal requirements if federal money is later pursued to assist in building and operating a circulator system in Central Perimeter. GRTA issued a request for proposal for the study on July 3 with a due date of August 20.

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