

CID'S The Future Unveiled

Community Improvement Districts

Many, if not all of us in the room know the role and understand the value CID's add to Metro Atlanta. These centers of influence are dramatically changing the communities they serve. CIDs are enhancing the quality of life for their members and citizens through infrastructure improvements, newly added miles of multi-use trails and acres of parks, traffic mitigation, enhancing connectivity, walkability and the beauty of their respective areas. We typically view that progress CID-by-CID. We celebrate what they're each doing. But how often do we pull the lens back to view the collective impact of the CIDs on our region? How often do we step back to appreciate the sense of place CIDs are cultivating across metro Atlanta?

Join me as I take us into the future and visualize what the Metro Region will look like just a decade from now, as the investment and dedication of today's CID's catapults us into a bright future.

Thanks to actions taken by the Governor and the Georgia General Assembly and the continued increase in public-private partnerships in 2015, Georgia and the Metro Region have seen a decade of robust transportation funding, interconnections, expansion of transit options and major new roadways, managed lanes and congestion relief projects. The leadership of these key players has led us to where we are today.

We arrive in Atlanta in 2025 via the world's still busiest airport, of course, in a bustling Aerotropolis Community. (After adding a sixth runway, the airport added a time machine to receive time travelers like us.) We immediately see the result of the nearby South Fulton CID's investment in major upgrades including widening Oakley Industrial Blvd. from 2 lanes to 3, adding sidewalks and enhancing access into key industrial areas, such as SouthPark Industrial Park, a critical logistic center.

As we exit the airport, we see the Airport-West CID's significant improvements in landscaping in the Camp Creek area and providing directional signage and ease of movement to an ever-improving MARTA connection to downtown. Along the way, the Boulevard CID has invested in much-needed roadway improvements on Fulton Industrial Blvd.

Arriving at Centennial Olympic Park, we are greeted by a staple of downtown: the Atlanta Streetcar in the Central Atlanta Progress/Atlanta Downtown Improvement District. Who can resist a ride on the Atlanta Streetcar along Andrew Young International Blvd., Luckie St., Auburn and Edgewood, with views of the breathtaking and iconic National Center for Civil and Human Rights and the College Football Hall of Fame? The streets are filled with Atlantans and global visitors enjoying Downtown's strong sense of place created by streetscapes, parks, plazas and open spaces.

From Downtown's Peachtree Center MARTA station we head to Midtown, arriving in the heart of the Midtown Alliance CID. Midtown Alliance's numerous investments in tree-lined sidewalks surrounded by residential and retail real estate dominated by high-tech company offices. Midtown BLUE's patrol teams are visible and give all residents and visitors that feeling of security; all of this made possible with the investment of the Midtown Alliance.

After lunching at Piedmont Park, the picturesque centerpiece of our City, we head to Buckhead for world-class American shopping at Phipps Plaza and Lenox Mall. After shopping, we ride the free BUC service and walk the sidewalks. All of these are initiatives led and funded by the Buckhead CID with partners. They have transformed Peachtree into a sophisticated corridor, with granite curbs and medians, seasonal color landscaping, bike paths, modern lighting and dedicated left turn lanes at intersections, allowing commercial streets to become pedestrian-friendly corridors. As we head back toward Buckhead Atlanta, which is a \$1Billion, 1.5 million-square-foot mixed-use neighborhood covering six city blocks and eight acres in the heart of the Buckhead Village, we notice Charlie Loudermilk Park, complete with a green open area, patio seating area, waterfall feature, walkways, lighting and shade trees.

As we head north on I-75, through the Cumberland CID, we arrive at the now iconic piece of Metro Atlanta: Sun Trust Park and the vibrant, stunning mixed-use development next to the new home of the Braves. The Cumberland CID has transformed the area with hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure and transportation investments, such as the Windy Hill Diverging Diamond and the improvements for U.S. Highway 41 which widened the road to three lanes in each direction, plus additional turn lanes and medians, resulting in multiple long-term

benefits for the area including safer traffic flow, greater capacity, and improved connectivity between Cobb and Fulton counties.

Proceeding up I-75, the next stop is the Gateway Marietta CID, which has turned a blighted Franklin Road, through the help of a \$68 million dollar redevelopment bond, into a hotbed of activity, education and success, with mixed-use developments and much needed infrastructure improvements.

As we continue to travel North on 75, we find ourselves on the reversible managed HOT lanes, along I-75 from Akers Mill Rd. to Hickory Grove RD. and along I-575 from I-75 to Sixes Rd, a major project for G DOT and one that has proven its value with reduced congestion and led the way for enhancements in traffic options in the Metro Region.

A stop in the Town Center CID requires a look at the very successful CID driven project, the Skip Spann connector which catalyzed the much needed expansion of Kennesaw State University to over 35,000 students and a national championship winning football team. It has also provided commuters with significantly improved highway access to KSU and local commercial amenities. This new bridge over I-75 provides students and visitors to KSU the opportunity to walk, bike or drive to the economic hub that is the Town Center CID.

Right up the road from Kennesaw is the Red Top CID, which completed major transportation improvements in the corridor at the intersections at U.S. 41 and State Road 293 and Allatoona Rd. and State Road 293. The project, which includes new signals, additional turn lanes and intersection reconfiguration, was paid for by the GDOT, Bartow County and private investors. This provides access to the one of a kind LakePoint Sporting Community, a thriving development that includes state-of-the-art sports venues and five million square feet of amenities including onsite hotels, restaurants, themed retail, bowling, ziplines, water parks and a Greg Norman golf course. This economic engine welcomes six million visitors and generates \$520 million in revenue annually while employing 12,000 full-time employees.

Crossing over Cherokee County into Fulton County, evidence of the impact of the North Fulton CID is immediate. Adjacent to Avalon, a mixed-use development featuring retail, restaurants, town homes, apartments and single-

family homes is the Westside Parkway Northern Expansion. Starting at Old Milton Parkway to the south and ending at Webb Bridge Rd to the North. This roadway section finished a larger connection west of Ga. 400 and allows commuters to travel from Mansell Rd. in Roswell to Winward Parkway, all without driving on Ga. 400. The Encore Parkway Bridge over Ga. 400 is now complete, providing critical East-West Connectivity between Northpoint Mall and Encore Park, driven by the North Fulton CID.

Down the road via transit or Ga. 400, is the Perimeter CID, home to 5,000 companies, including headquarters for UPS and Newell Rubbermaid and the State Farm Campus, with over 8,000 employees. The Perimeter CID's investments have been crucial to the growth of the market. Projects like the Ashford-Dunwoody Diverging Diamond Interchange (the first constructed in Georgia) and the new Hammond Half-Diamond Interchange have improved safety and eased congestion in the District. The CID and GDOT wisely initiated and completed the 285/400 Interchange rebuild, one of the largest road projects in GA history. This allowed for tremendous mobility not only for the Perimeter, but for the Region, as nearly 700,000 motorists use this daily. (This is due to the increased growth in the Perimeter Office and Mixed-Use Market). Additionally, the CID funded, "Flyover Bridge" over 285, links the north and south portions of the Perimeter market.

Looking to catch a glimpse of that latest movie star in Atlanta, we only need to visit the Gwinnett Village CID, home to the world-class Atlanta Media Campus, a mixed-use development anchored by the largest film and television media complex outside of California, which includes a media production lab, movie and television studio, emerging media and high tech office space, higher education and research facilities, multifamily and student housing, supportive retail and an on-site hotel. The Gwinnett Village CID was the main driver of the Jimmy Carter Boulevard DDI, at I-85 Pleasant Hill Road and I-85 Jimmy Carter Boulevard, which has proven its worth as a congestion reliever and has increased mobility, as the number of workforce employees and residents has increased in what has become a hub of young professional activity in the last decade.

Just to the north is the Gwinnett Place CID, which led the way to fund a DDI at Pleasant Hill Road and I-85, Gwinnett County's first DDI and the second DDI in Georgia. Funded by the Gwinnett Place CID, Gwinnett County

DOT, GDOT and the State Road and Tollway Authority, results have been monumental on the congested Pleasant Hill Road at I-85 interchange.

Enhancing the connectivity in Braselton has been the focus of the Braselton CID, which has enhanced the walkability of the area, leveraging monies for the Braselton Life Path and revitalizing the business district within the CID by improving its connection through the surrounding residential areas, increasing property values and enhancing the overall quality of life.

As we cannot ignore main street, the Lilburn CID completed the Main Street Realignment Project, which widened the entrance from Highway 29 to Church St and included a 10-ft multi-use trail, pedestrian friendly lighting, roundabout intersections, medians and much more, through the funding of \$800,000 to widen main street and monies for landscaping along Highway 29 and a 16 mile multi-use public trail along Highway 29.

Before leaving Gwinnett, we notice the \$66 million dollar makeover of Highway 78, led by the Evermore CID, which has raised \$17 million since its inception, and whose projects are valued at over \$120 million for the area.

As we near the end of our journey, we come to Tucker, which annexed the Northlake Business District, to create the Tucker-Northlake CID, and has focused on landscaping services for Northlake Parkway and Lavista Road through the Northlake business district downtown Tucker and two interchanges, Northlake & I-285 and Lavista and I-285.

Before leaving town, we catch the laser show at Stone Mountain, where the Stone Mountain CID has re-constructed a section of road that abuts the Mountain Industrial bridge that crosses the CSX tracks.

As we make our way back to the airport, we pass through the last CID on the trip, the East Metro DeKalb CID, which encompasses an area consisting of approximately 39 square miles. The CID serves as an economic development tool to implement major improvements including infrastructure, public safety and beautification enhancements in an effort to increase property values, revive business and enhance the overall quality of life.

What we've just seen in our whirlwind tour represents more than \$1 billion in taxes levied, producing more than \$3 billion in infrastructure investments, new parks and greenspace, public safety, traffic mitigation projects,

landscape improvements. They've translated into major corporations such as, Cox Enterprises, GE Energy, Home Depot, State Farm, UPS and many others locating within the Metro Region's CID's, creating jobs and leading state-of-the-art development along the way.

Since 1988, Community Improvement Districts have emerged as significant centers of influence in the Metro Atlanta region and have in this extraordinarily short time, sponsored numerous investments and improvements, helped to foster a sense of community and improved the overall quality of life and connectivity in Metro Atlanta.

The CIDs won't realize this future alone. It will require the continued partnership of the Georgia General Assembly, GDOT, our chambers of commerce, the business and development community, and many others working in partnership to continue to create a vibrant region. As we have today, looked into the future to catch a small glimpse of a decade of progress, we look forward to the coming decades in a post-2025 world. Our leadership at all levels of government and community partners, collaborated on and implemented a strategic plan and led the Region forward, thereby creating a superior network of connectivity and an unsurpassed hub of economic development.

CID's have become the true centers of influence and without their efforts the Metro Region would not be what it is today. On behalf of The Council for Quality Growth, I would like to commend each and every CID for the lasting impact they are making on our communities, our region and our state. Thank You.