

# **Proposed Mitigation Plan for the SR 92 Widening and Reconstruction Project**

GDOT Projects STP00-0186-01(011), CSSTP-0006-00(900)(901) and CSSTP-0007-00(691)  
PI #s 720790, 0006900, 0006901 and 0007691  
Douglas and Paulding Counties

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project is a widening and reconstruction of existing SR 92 from a point just south of Durelee Lane in the City of Douglasville, Douglas County, to Nebo Road in the City of Hiram, Paulding County and the construction of three grade-separated structures at the proposed SR 92 intersections with US 78/East Broad Street, the Norfolk Southern Railroad and East Strickland Street (see Figure 1, Project Location Map). A ramp would be constructed to provide access between SR 92 and US 78/East Broad Street. The total project length would be approximately 9.27 miles.

US 78/East Broad Street is also referred to as Bankhead Highway; however, in this document it would be referred to as US 78/East Broad Street. The SR 92/Dallas Highway railroad crossing is often referred to by locals as the Campbellton Street crossing; however, in this document it would be referred to as the SR 92/Dallas Highway railroad crossing.

From Durelee Lane to Malone Road, the proposed roadway would consist of six 11-ft. travel lanes, three in each direction, separated by a 20-ft. raised median with curb, gutter, a sidewalk on the west side and a multiuse trail on the east side of the roadway. From Malone Road to Bill Carruth Parkway, SR 92 would consist of six 11-ft. travel lanes, three in each direction, separated by a 20-ft. raised median and would have 10-ft. shoulders on both sides, 6.5-ft. paved shoulders that would be striped for bike lanes. From Bill Carruth Parkway to Nebo Road, the proposed project would consist of four 11-ft. travel lanes, two in each direction, separated by a 20-ft. raised median and would have 10-ft. shoulders on both sides, 6.5-ft. paved shoulders that would be striped for bike lanes.

The proposed project would include an up-grade and relocation of the existing railroad crossing at McCarley Street as well as the closing of the existing at-grade railroad crossings located at Brown Street, Mozley Street, and SR 92/Dallas Highway (see Figure 2, Project Location Map in the Area of the Railroad). With the exception of the Brown Street crossing, which must be closed for staging purposes during construction, the railroad crossing closures would not occur until the new grade separated crossing and the upgraded McCarley Street crossing are open to traffic.

### **OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS AND ANTICIPATED COMMUNITY IMPACTS**

Extensive public involvement has been conducted with the residents of Douglasville, GA as a result of community impacts that would occur due to the proposed project. This outreach has occurred with individuals that would be both directly and indirectly affected by the proposed project. With the help of the Stakeholder Team that was put together by the City of Douglasville, numerous workshops were conducted with the residents of Douglasville during August, September and October 2009, where public comments, concerns and suggestions were collected.

Figure 1 – project location map

Figure 2 – location map in area of RR

Community impacts that were of particular concern include impacts to low-income and minority populations, a change in community cohesion and access changes. It was felt that the change in community characteristics from a quiet small neighborhood to having a six lane divided highway needed to be addressed with the residents of Douglasville and mitigation of these impacts would be appropriate.

As a result of this extensive outreach, this proposed mitigation plan was developed by the Stakeholder Team, the City of Douglasville, and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), and revisions to the proposed design of the project were made. First, the draft Mitigation Plan was shown to the stakeholders for their comment and feedback. Next, a follow-up meeting was held with the Brown Street Community because that community would be the one most affected by the project and therefore had the most changes as a result of the draft Mitigation Plan. The follow-up meeting with the Brown Street Community was held on October 20, 2009 at the Alice Hawthorne Community Center. Thirty-eight (38) people attended this follow-up meeting and as a result, twenty-four (24) comment forms were received. Listed below is a break-down of their feedback regarding items in the draft Mitigation Plan.

- ◆ Do you support the project? *Twenty (20) were For, one (1) was Against, three (3) were Conditional and none (0) were Uncommitted.*
- ◆ Do you want cul-de-sacs at Cone and Green Streets? *Eighteen (18) stated "Yes" and one (1) stated "No".*
- ◆ Do you want noise walls at Cone and Green Streets? *Twenty-one (21) stated "Yes" and none (0) stated "No".*
- ◆ Do you want a signalized intersection at Colquitt Street and the new SR 92? *Twenty (20) stated "Yes" and none (0) stated "No".*
- ◆ Do you think these changes help your community? *Ten (10) stated "Yes", three (3) stated "No", one (1) stated "Not Entirely" and one (1) stated "Somewhat".*
- ◆ Have you attended the previous workshops? *Thirteen (13) stated "Yes" and nine (9) stated "No".*

This draft Mitigation Plan and the design changes were then presented to residents at the Public Information Open House (PIOH) that was held at Stewart Middle School on October 27, 2009. At the PIOH, attendees were encouraged to provide their written comments on the draft Mitigation Plan and the revised project layout. A total of 420 people attended the PIOH.

From those attending, 75 comment forms, 1 letter, 1 e-mail and 13 verbal statements were received. An additional 10 comments were received during the ten-day comment period following the PIOH, for a total of 100 comments. However, several of the individuals providing comments submitted multiple comments. These comments have been combined for a total of 94 comments. They are summarized as follows:

No. Opposed	No. In Support	Uncommitted	Conditional
<u>5</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>28</u>

Additionally, any comments that were provided regarding the draft Mitigation Plan were positive overall. As a result of the response by the residents of Douglasville regarding the draft Mitigation Plan and their overall support of the proposed project, it was felt that the draft Mitigation Plan did indeed accomplish its goal of providing mitigation to the residents of the communities that would be directly impacted by the proposed project.

## **MITIGATION MEASURES**

Please find below the proposed solution and mitigation item proposed by the City of Douglasville and GDOT to minimize community impacts from the proposed widening and reconstruction of SR 92 in Douglasville. Each mitigation item includes the resident's issue, background/detailed information, some comments received and the responsible party. The measures have been developed from input provided by community members, from environmental processes such as Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act and Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice), and from federal and state guidelines. All of the measures listed are a direct result of recent public outreach conducted. Some of the mitigation measures listed are a result of verbal conversations with citizens throughout the public involvement process and are not mentioned in any written comments. In addition, the included comments received pertaining to each mitigation item is not an all inclusive list. These comments received are representative of comments from residents; however, it should be noted that comments are gathered throughout the entire environmental process.

Several concerns were expressed by the public that are standard practices of the GDOT; however, they are important enough to reiterate here. These items include:

- ◆ Several workshop attendees expressed concerns about being displaced (timing, availability of affordable housing, etc.). As required by the Uniform Act, no person shall be displaced unless and until comparable replacement housing is available, within their financial means. A request may be made for an additional 30 days occupancy (beyond the 90 day minimum per the Uniform Act), once the Notice to Vacate Letter has been received by an occupant displacee. This request should be made in writing to the Right of Way Agent assigned to assist them. Also, the procedure for requesting additional time of occupancy is detailed in the displacee's Vacate Letter. A timely written response would be provided based on the needs expressed and the project schedule remaining. Every effort would be made to accommodate reasonable requests in this regard.
- ◆ Several business owners expressed concerns regarding access to their businesses after the project is completed. Determining access is a standard part of a GDOT project, which happens later during the Plan Development Process. The most effective access possible would be provided by GDOT.

In addition, several residents commented on the addition or upgrading of pedestrian facilities around the project area. Currently, the City of Douglasville has a project in the design phase that would improve the pedestrian facilities along Dallas Highway and add decorative banners. This project is scheduled to be completed prior to the Letting of the SR 92 projects to construction.

Although not listed under specific proposed measures, the need for adequate pedestrian facilities and overall better lighting was mentioned at almost every workshop and several times in the written comments.

### **COMMUNITY CHARACTER/COHESION**

1. **Issue:** A signalized intersection does not currently exist in the proposed project along the new SR 92 north of the railroad between Ellis Street and Malone Street. Residents are concerned about the distance between signalized intersections. They are also concerned about accessing the new roadway from Colquitt Street and Brown Street and are concerned about how pedestrians would safely cross the new SR 92. There is currently a high volume of pedestrian traffic and many children would need to cross the new SR 92 to get to and from school, the park and the community center.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item: A signalized intersection with pedestrian crosswalk at the new intersection of Colquitt Street and Brown Street with the new SR 92 has been added to the project. Furthermore, additional safety measures would be evaluated. These include the potential addition of landscaping strategically planted to discourage pedestrians from crossing the roadway at points other than the signalized intersections, additional signage in the area to notify drivers of pedestrians, a reduction in the speed limit through the residential areas, and upgraded pedestrian facilities at crosswalks.**

***Background/Detailed Information:*** As part of any GDOT project, justification for placing a new traffic signal at an intersection must be made using federal signal warrant guidelines. A partial signal warrant analysis was completed and although the signal at Colquitt Street would not be warranted based on these guidelines, it is necessary based on feedback from the residents and as mitigation to those residents.

In addition, the City of Douglasville met with the residents of the Brown Street Community (specifically those living on Brown Street, Colquitt Street, Green Street, Cone Street, Elsie Street and in Douglass Village Apartments) on October 20, 2009. They were asked if they wanted the proposed signalized intersection at Colquitt Street and Brown Street's intersection with the new SR 92. Out of the 38 in attendance, 20 provided written comments on the proposed signalized intersection and all 20 were in favor of the signalized intersection.

Pedestrian safety is a major concern in this community, especially due to the pedestrian traffic that Jessie Davis Park and Alice Hawthorne Community Center generates. As a result, the City of Douglasville has agreed to investigate the reasonable and feasibility of additional pedestrian safety measures, as listed above. The reduction in speed limit is supported by the City of Douglasville; however, it is the Douglasville Police Chief who makes the final determination on whether the speed limit can be lowered. The additional pedestrian safety measures are currently being investigated and the City of Douglasville would make the final determination as to which measures they would implement during the plan development process. This determination would be coordinated with GDOT.

**Comments Received:**

- *What about the people in the Cone, Green, Colquitt Street areas who do not want to leave, don't want a new mortgage, and don't want to live on the new road? Consider putting cul-de-sacs on Cone and Green Streets so that an intersection with a traffic signal can be constructed at Colquitt Street and noise walls can be included along Cone and Green. (verbal comment from the 9.10.09 workshop)*
- *There is too much distance between the proposed traffic signals at Malone Street and Ellis Streets. There are not enough proposed pedestrian crossings in this area either. It would be difficult for the children to get back and forth between the houses and park. (verbal comment from the 9.10.09 workshop)*
- *Suggested improvements; signaling the Colquitt/Hwy 92 intersection is also important (written comment)*

**Responsible Party:** GDOT – design and installation of signalized intersection with pedestrian crosswalk. The City of Douglasville – investigation of what additional safety measures would be implemented in this residential area. Also, additional funding to implement additional safety measures. Coordination with the Douglasville Police Chief to determine if speed limit can be lowered.

2. **Issue:** The residents of Cone and Green Streets have expressed that the currently proposed right-in/right-out only design at Cone and Green Streets does not really help their access to the new SR 92. Also, they are concerned about cut-through traffic. Lastly, they are concerned about preserving their current small community feel due to the increase in traffic and noise; therefore they feel that some sort of barrier between their community and the roadway would help maintain their small neighborhood atmosphere. In addition, there is currently a great deal of pedestrian traffic in the area and residents are concerned about the pedestrian's ability to safely cross the new roadway.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item:** Cul-de-sacs would be provided at the intersections of Cone Street and Green Street with the new SR 92 and a noise wall would be added from Colquitt Street to Malone Street on the south side of the new SR 92 roadway to retain neighborhood character, block roadway noise from the new SR 92 and force pedestrians trying to cross the new SR 92 to signalized intersections with safe pedestrian crossings.

**Background/Detailed Information:** The proposed noise wall was evaluated per GDOT standards, which are based upon how effective the noise wall would be at reducing the noise levels of impacted residences and based on state cost criteria. Based on this and the fact that no breaks in access occur along this section of the new SR 92 roadway, the proposed noise wall is both reasonable and feasible.

In addition, the City of Douglasville met with the residents of the Brown Street Community (specifically those living on Brown Street, Colquitt Street, Green Street, Cone Street, Elsie Street and in Douglass Village Apartments) on October 20, 2009. They were asked if they

wanted the proposed cul-de-sacs and noise wall at Cone and Green Streets. Out of the 38 in attendance, 19 provided written comments on the proposed cul-de-sacs and 21 provided written comments on the proposed noise wall. Out of this, 18 residents were in favor of the proposed cul-de-sacs and 1 was against them. All 21 residents who provided written comments on the proposed noise wall were in favor of it.

**Comments Received:**

- *What about the people in the Cone, Green, Colquitt Street areas who do not want to leave, don't want a new mortgage, and don't want to live on the new road? Consider putting cul-de-sacs on Cone and Green Streets so that an intersection with a traffic signal can be constructed at Colquitt Street and noise walls can be included along Cone and Green. (verbal comment from the 9.10.09 workshop)*

**Responsible Party:** GDOT

3. **Issue:** Residents are concerned about cut-through traffic after the project is complete. There is currently a good deal of cut-through traffic through the residential neighborhoods. Also, many residents have children and are concerned for their safety if playing near the roads in their neighborhood. Residents greatly aspire to maintain their small neighborhood feel after the new SR 92 roadway is complete.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item: The City of Douglasville would provide signage to discourage "cut-through" traffic, such as additional speed limit signs and "Children at Play" signs. In addition, the City of Douglasville would initiate the petition process to evaluate the community's desire for speed hump(s) in these residential areas.**

**Background/Detailed Information:** Initially, it was suggested by a citizen to eliminate left turn lanes and median breaks to discourage "cut-through" traffic in residential neighborhoods. The City of Douglasville agreed to evaluate this. However, during this evaluation, it was determined that these measures would decrease vehicular safety if traveling along the new SR 92 roadway; therefore, it was determined that these measures would not be implemented. The main issue of "cut-through" traffic was still a concern for the City of Douglasville; therefore, the additional signage would be implemented prior to project construction. The number of signs would be at the discretion of the City of Douglasville and would be determined based on current signage guidelines. In addition, the City of Douglasville would initiate the petition process for speed hump(s) after project construction since the completion of the SR 92 project would change traffic patterns along these side streets. Since a community majority is required to implement speed hump(s), it is felt that their feedback should be based on traffic conditions in their neighborhoods after project completion. Upon completion of the petition process, the City of Douglasville would contact GDOT's Project Manager and provide the results of this process to them for their files and to note as completed on the Environmental Commitments Table. Part of the petition process is continued consultation with the potentially affected residents; therefore, they would be made aware of any changes affecting their community prior to initiation of such changes.

**Comments Received:**

- *The highway traffic would increase in the residential areas adjacent to the proposed roadway. (verbal comment from the 9.12.09 workshop)*
- *It is important to lower speeds in the residential areas east and west of the proposed roadway. Speed bumps or some other traffic slowing mechanism are needed. (verbal comment from the 9.12.09 workshop)*
- *Speed bumps should be placed in residential areas well before the new road is opened to traffic so that drivers would know not to use residential areas as a “cut through.” (verbal comment from the 9.12.09 workshop)*
- *Aspects that would impair community; although this proposed alignment relieves congestion in the downtown and other areas of Douglasville, it would increase the traffic and congestion in my neighborhood. What's now a quiet, quaint, beautiful residential community would be transformed into a disjointed commercial mixed use. (written comment from Cooper Street resident)*
- *Need protection of speed limit with speed bumps. (written comment)*
- *Hill Street, Cooper Street and Dorsett Street areas speed breakers to slow traffic down. (written comment)*
- *Speed breakers put in place on 4way stop on Dorsett and Cooper up to/on Hill Street so that when project has been completed all these streets would not be used as a cut-through. Hill Street is already used as a cut-through from Connally to Dorsett so traffic is already heavy now as well as Cooper (written comment)*
- *Overall I would like to see all of the roads across the railroad track upgraded with speed humps in some areas. (written comment)*

**Responsible Party:** The City of Douglasville

**PEDESTRIAN ACCESS**

4. **Issue:** Residents are concerned about pedestrian facilities provided for individuals wanting to access the new roadway via walking and/or biking. There is currently a great deal of pedestrian traffic in the area and many residents are concerned about their safety after the new SR 92 project is complete. In addition, many of the children in the area would need to go from one side of the new SR 92 to the other, to access school, Jessie Davis Park and Alice Hawthorne Community Center.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item:** Sidewalks would be added to the project to provide pedestrian access between the proposed cul-de-sac on Dallas Highway and the new tie-in between the realigned SR 92 roadway and Dallas Highway. A new sidewalk would also be provided between Davis Drive and the realigned SR 92 roadway. This would provide more direct pedestrian access between Lake Ridge and Jessie Davis Park, Alice Hawthorne Community Center and Majestic Learning Academy.

**Background/Detailed Information:** These sidewalks would be provided during construction in existing SR 92/Dallas Highway right-of-way. The sidewalks would be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and would meet all current GDOT

standards. This right-of-way and associated sidewalks would remain GDOT right-of-way after project completion for the purposes of maintenance.

**Comments Received:**

- Consider providing pedestrian access between the proposed cul-de-sac on Dallas Highway and the new tie-in to Dallas Highway so that pedestrians from the Lake Ridge area would not have to walk south to the new SR 92 roadway to get access to Dallas Highway. (verbal comment from the 9.15.09 workshop)
- Consider providing pedestrian access between the proposed Davis Drive and the new SR 92 roadway. (verbal comment from the 9.15.09 workshop)
- Consider providing wheelchair accessible pedestrian facilities from Avalon Township to the hospital. (verbal comment from the 9.15.09 workshop)

**Responsible Party:** GDOT

5. **Issue:** Many of the residents have children who currently walk or bike to school. After the proposed project is complete, they are concerned about their children walking or biking safely to school. Currently, along many of the roads around the schools, children must walk in the roadways or on the grass next to the roadway as there are not any existing pedestrian facilities in many of these areas.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item:** The City of Douglasville would develop non-vehicular projects and apply to the “Safe Route to School Program” for grant money for Majestic Learning Academy (previously known as Majestic Learning Center), Victorious Kidz Academy, Eastside Elementary, Burnett Elementary, Stewart Middle, & North Douglas Elementary Schools.

**Background/Detailed Information:** Prior to submittal of the Final Environmental Assessment, the City of Douglasville would complete all necessary paperwork and applications to have the above mentioned public and private schools added to the Safe Route to Schools (SRTS) Resource Center. Once this is completed, the SRTS school outreach coordinator would contact these schools and assist in the process to apply for grant money for non-vehicular projects that would improve the student’s pedestrian and bicycle access to and from the schools. The timing of when the City of Douglasville, in conjunction with the applicable school(s) and school superintendent, would apply for SRTS grant money would be at the discretion of the City, the school(s) and school superintendent and at the advice of the SRTS’s school outreach coordinator. The results of this application process would be submitted by the City of Douglasville to GDOT’s Office of Environmental Services for inclusion in any subsequent environmental documents (i.e reevaluations, etc.) Any questions pertaining to the SRTS Program may be directed to the GDOT SRTS Coordinator at 404-631-1778 or by accessing the Georgia SRTS website at [www.dot.ga.gov/localgovernment/FundingPrograms/srts/](http://www.dot.ga.gov/localgovernment/FundingPrograms/srts/). The SRTS Coordinator has also agreed to be a consulting party during the development of the proposed project. The Environmental Assessment would be sent to them for their review.

In addition, the City of Douglasville is in the process of applying for a SRTS mini-grant of \$1,000 to receive funding to get their SRTS program started. This application is currently being completed and would be submitted prior to the April 7, 2010 application deadline.

**Comments Received:**

- *Provide improved pedestrian corridor to/from Eastside Elementary, Burnett Elementary, Stewart Middle & North Douglas Elementary Schools (verbal comment)*

**Responsible Party:** The City of Douglasville – the addition of above mentioned schools to the SRTS Resource Center, the development of appropriate non-vehicular projects per SRTS guidelines and for the application to the SRTS Program for grant money. GDOT – inclusion of SRTS coordinator as a consulting party during plan development process.

6. **Issue:** Many residents of Douglasville currently walk from the north side of the railroad tracks to the south side and back. Once the proposed project is complete and the three vehicular railroad crossings at Brown Street, Mozley Street and SR 92/Dallas Highway are closed, residents are concerned how they would be able to safely cross the railroad tracks near where their current path is located.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item:** During the preliminary design phase, GDOT would coordinate with Norfolk Southern Railroad and the City of Douglasville concerning possible solutions for pedestrian access across the railroad tracks. Every effort would be made to ensure a safe, convenient method for pedestrians to continue to cross the tracks.

**Background/Detailed Information:** The City of Douglasville has had many discussions with Norfolk Southern Railroad (NSR) regarding pedestrian railroad crossings. During these meetings, NSR has expressed concern with providing pedestrian crossings at the locations where vehicular crossings would be closed. Norfolk Southern Railroad has agreed to continue discussions regarding providing some sort of pedestrian access at the railroad tracks. This would allow pedestrians who live on the north side of the tracks to access the downtown Douglasville area. The new McCarley Street railroad crossing, which would be relocated further west from its current location, would be upgraded to include a sidewalk, and would provide a safe pedestrian crossing. In addition, the SR 92 project would provide a sidewalk and multi-use path along its alignment, including where the new roadway would cross under the railroad tracks. It should be noted that currently there are no railroad crossings in the downtown Douglasville area that meet ADA requirements. As a result of project implementation, two ADA compliant crossings would be provided for pedestrians; one at McCarley Street and one at the new SR 92 underpass. Overall, citizens would not be prohibited from crossing the tracks, which would divide the north side community from downtown Douglasville.

**Comments Received:**

- *We need more than ample pedestrian access across the railroad. How would pedestrians cross the railroad downtown? (verbal comment from 9.14.09 workshop)*

- *How would the people north of the Railroad and along Brown Street get access into town? How would the people along Brown Street get to the Rose Avenue area? How would we get from southbound SR 92 to US 78? How would we get to our churches and our community?*

**Responsible Party:** GDOT – coordination between the City of Douglasville and NSR to determine solution for pedestrian access across the railroad tracks.

7. **Issue:** Currently, there is a great deal of pedestrian traffic along Brown Street. After project implementation, residents are concerned about how they would safely walk and/or bike in the area since it would be adjacent to a six-lane divided highway. In addition, the Brown Street area is a magnet for pedestrian activity due to Jessie Davis Park and Alice Hawthorne Community Center, which are both located on Brown Street.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item:** The existing section of Brown Street, located north of the proposed SR 92 project, would be provided with sidewalks on the north side of the roadway to allow residents along Brown Street to access Jessie Davis Park and the Alice Hawthorne Community Center.

**Background/Detailed Information:** These sidewalks would be constructed within existing Brown Street right-of-way.

**Comments Received:**

- *Suggested improvement; sidewalks on Brown Street (written comment from Brown Street resident)*
- *Verbal suggestion and concern from many Douglass Village residents*

**Responsible Party:** GDOT – design of sidewalks during the design phase and construction of sidewalks.

**EMERGENCY ACCESS**

8. **Issue:** Several residents are concerned about how emergency vehicles would access the new six-lane divided highway from the fire station located on SR 92/Dallas Highway (Douglas County Fire Station #11) once the proposed project is complete. In addition, residents are concerned about how emergency vehicles leaving the fire station would make a left onto the new SR 92 roadway without a median break.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item:** The proposed six (6) inch high concrete median in front of the Douglas County Fire Station #11 (located on SR 92/Dallas Highway) would be reduced to a two (2) inch high median cut to allow for emergency vehicle access. Also, an emergency vehicle notification system would be added to the proposed project to improve access to and from the fire station and to notify drivers that emergency vehicles would be entering or exiting the fire station. The Douglas

**County Fire Department would be coordinated with to determine exactly what is implemented. An example of a similar median opening is shown in Figure 3.**

**Background/Detailed Information:** The two (2) inch high median cut would be designed in such a way as to discourage non-emergency vehicles from using this median break. In addition, the emergency vehicle notification system would be developed by GDOT in the preliminary design phase of the proposed project and in conjunction with the City of Douglasville and the Douglas County Fire Department.

**Comments Received:**

- *Access should be provided between the new roadway and the fire station located on the east side of existing SR 92, just south of Autry Circle. (verbal comment from the 8.1.09 Town Hall Meeting)*

**Responsible Party:** GDOT – for coordination with the City of Douglasville and the Douglas County Fire Department during the design of the median cut and emergency vehicle notification system; construction of the median cut and installation of the emergency vehicle notification system.

**BUSINESSES**

9. **Issue:** Many of the business owners, particularly the Hispanic business owners, along the current SR 92 are concerned about the impact the proposed project would have on their business. In addition, the business owners are concerned that when their businesses are moved as a result of the proposed project, their clientele would not know of their new location and shop elsewhere and they would lose their customers.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item: The City of Douglasville’s Sign Department would provide assistance to businesses displaced by the proposed project by providing LED relocation signs for these affected businesses, which includes the impacted Hispanic Businesses. These LED signs would be provided after the business has been relocated and would notify customers that the business has changed locations. The City of Douglasville’s Sign Department would also provide improved signage for businesses that are located along what would be the “old” SR 92 after project implementation. This assistance would include kiosk-type signs (refer to Figure 4 for example).**

**Background/Detailed Information:** The development of signage for the businesses affected by the proposed project would be designed to adhere to all City of Douglasville planning and zoning regulations and would be at the discretion of the City of Douglasville. Once signage is complete, the City of Douglasville’s Director of Development Services would notify GDOT’s Project Manager for their files and to document as complete on the Environmental Commitments Table. In addition, the LED relocation signs would be provided once the business has relocated. As a result, the LED signs may be provided prior to construction or

during construction, whichever is appropriate. The timing of the installation of the kiosk-type signs would be at the discretion of the City of Douglasville.

**Comments Received:** While no written comments exist for this issue, several side conversations took place during the workshops conducted with the Douglasville community and this was a wide-spread concern of all business owners affected by the proposed project, particularly the Hispanic business owners. Most of the Hispanic business owners were reluctant to submit written comments; however, expressed numerous times to City of Douglasville and GDOT representatives of their concern that their client base would not be able to find their business when they relocate. They also expressed their desire for above mentioned signage and felt that this would greatly assist in notifying clients of their change in location. In addition, the mitigation development team felt it important enough to address in this mitigation plan even though no written comment exists.

**Responsible Party:** The City of Douglasville

**10. Issue:** In talking with the Hispanic business owners that would be displaced as a result of the proposed project, they felt that their clientele is generated from residences near their current location and that it is an asset that they are currently located in a shopping center together. They do not feel that their businesses would prosper if they are forced to relocate in the same shopping center as a big name store such as a Kroger or Wal-Mart and feel that the potential exists for it to actually hurt their business.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item:** A list of available commercial lease options within a half mile of their current location would be provided by the City of Douglasville as a part of relocation advisory assistance for the Hispanic Businesses being displaced. In addition, the City of Douglasville and the Douglasville Chamber of Commerce has agreed to assist these businesses in any way possible.

**Background/Detailed Information:** Jeff Noles, the City of Douglasville's Director of Development Services (the department that includes planning and zoning) is aware of the Hispanic business owner's request. In addition, the Director of Community and Downtown Services is aware of their request and has committed to providing any assistance available. While the City of Douglasville would aid in providing all necessary information to the Hispanic business owners, GDOT would be responsible for the relocation process.

**Comments Received:**

- *The businesses are dependent on the Hispanic population in the nearby apartments, as well as their pedestrian customers. For these reasons, relocation further than ½ mile from their current location would significantly affect their customer base. Also, the Hispanic businesses depend on each other. Can we move to a new location together? (verbal comment from the 9.2.09 workshop)*
- *Businesses would lose money – the nearby apartments are the base of our clientele. The clientele base is from 15 years past, our sales would be low for many years to come/a big*

*loss for us/property owners would benefit not the small businesses. (verbal comment from the face-to-face meeting notification visit prior to the upcoming 9.2.09 workshop)*

- *If we are placed next to Kroger (for example) we would not make any money, we need to be apart from big name stores, but yet nearby apartment complexes, mobile home parks, etc. (verbal comment from the face-to-face meeting notification visit prior to the upcoming 9.2.09 workshop)*

**Responsible Party:** The City of Douglasville – assistance in relocation process per GDOT requests. GDOT – right-of-way acquisition and relocation process.

## **BEAUTIFICATION**

**11.Issue:** Residents have expressed their desire for those traveling to and through Douglasville to recognize when they reach the city. The residents are very proud of their downtown area and want it recognized.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item: Gateway signage would be provided by the City of Douglasville at locations determined by the City of Douglasville.**

**Background/Detailed Information:** Development of gateway signage, which is currently proposed by the City of Douglasville to be at the intersection of SR 92 and Malone Road on the north side and at the intersection of Campbellton Road and Hospital Drive on the south side would be developed to meet all guidelines and requirements as set forth in the City of Douglasville’s planning and zoning regulations. The design of the gateway signage would be at the discretion of the City of Douglasville. Every attempt would be made to complete construction and installation of signage prior to completion of SR 92 construction; however, if it is determined to interfere with the SR 92 project, construction and installation of signage may be postponed until after construction of the SR 92 project in Douglasville is complete.

### **Comments Received:**

- *Consider providing landscaping and signage so that there would be a “gateway” for those coming from the north into the downtown area. (verbal comment from the 9.15.09 workshop)*
- *Hopefully this project would create a more cohesive downtown area. (verbal comment from the 9.15.09 workshop)*
- *Suggested improvement; Landscaping and nice signage (written comment)*

**Responsible Party:** The City of Douglasville

**12.Issue:** Residents have expressed their desire for the proposed project to assist in the beautification of their community and feel that the addition of evergreen trees along the roadway and on both sides of the proposed noise walls would add to the aesthetics of their neighborhoods and allow the new six-lane divided highway to better compliment their community.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item: Evergreen landscaping along the median and on both sides of the roadway as well as the residence side of the proposed noise walls would be provided. The landscaping would be provided from Durelee Lane to Malone Road. This landscape plan would be coordinated with the required landscaping in the areas of the Lois Cotton Mill and Mill Village Historic District, and the East Strickland Street Historic District.**

**Background/Detailed Information:** The landscape plan for the Lois Cotton Mill and Mill Village Historic District, and the East Strickland Street Historic District must be reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) at Georgia’s Historic Preservation Division. The landscape plan that is developed and implemented for the median, on both sides of the roadway, and at the proposed noise walls would complement what is approved by the SHPO. The City of Douglasville has agreed to maintain all landscaping provided by the proposed SR 92 project and is in the process of drafting a written agreement to this affect. The written agreement would be signed by the mayor of the City of Douglasville and submitted to GDOT prior to project construction.

**Comments Received:**

- Consider providing landscaping in the median (verbal comment from the 9.15.09 workshop)
- We need more parks and trees. (verbal comment from the 9.14.09 landlord workshop)
- Consider landscaping at noise walls to improve aesthetics. (verbal comment from the 9.12.09 workshop)
- How much space would be between the houses and the proposed noise walls? They are very unattractive. (verbal comment from the 9.10.09 workshop)
- Opinion of noise walls; I like them, but need to go along with a “beautification.” (written comment)
- Suggestions for improvement; I would like to make sure that it is landscaped sufficiently to help improve our image. (written comment)
- Suggestions for improvement; Attention given to curb appeal, greenspace (written comment)
- Suggested improvement; more trees, more greenery. (written comment)
- Suggested improvement; Landscaping and nice signage (written comment)
- Suggested improvements; Sound barriers can be decorative with shrubbery and trees and flowerbeds. (written comment)
- Suggested improvements: Landscaping, year round greenery planted. (written comment)

**Responsible Party:** GDOT – design and installation of landscaping. The City of Douglasville – maintenance of landscaping.

**13.Issue:** Many residents were also concerned about whether the proposed project would provide lighting. There is currently a great deal of pedestrian traffic in the area as well as insufficient lighting. When the proposed project is complete, many residents are concerned about pedestrians walking along a six-lane divided highway with a high volume of traffic and no lighting. The residents are concerned about safety for the children in the area as well.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item: Lighting would be provided along the proposed SR 92 alignment from Durelee Lane to Malone Road.**

**Background/Detailed Information:** The lighting provided would be standard GDOT lighting. If the City of Douglasville elects to upgrade lighting or to add additional lighting, they would be responsible for the cost of materials. All lighting would be located within GDOT right-of-way. Prior to project construction, the City of Douglasville would sign a maintenance agreement with GDOT to maintain the lighting along the portion of the SR 92 project located in Douglasville.

**Comments Received:**

- *Suggested improvement: lighting (written comment)*
- *Suggested improvement: I would like to see street lights installed in front of Douglass Village Apartments because we have lots of children and elderly residents residing on the property (written comment)*
- *Street lights along the corridor of the new bypass would allow children and others to be seen more readily. Street lights along every intersection to allow all intersections to be well lit is needed. (written comment)*

**Responsible Party:** GDOT – design and installation of lighting. The City of Douglasville – operation and maintenance of lighting.

**14. Issue:** Most people were concerned about the aesthetics of the elements of the proposed project, including the proposed noise walls. Many residents expressed their dislike of “typical” GDOT noise walls, such as the ones currently located along Interstate 20.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item: GDOT would coordinate the specific style and color of the proposed noise walls with the City of Douglasville and Paulding County when the exact dimensions of the noise walls are determined.**

**Background/Detailed Information:** Since these noise walls would be located along a state highway and not an interstate (as is usually seen), GDOT is aware of the need for the noise walls to be designed differently. Once the detailed barrier analysis is complete and the location and dimensions of the noise walls have been determined, the GDOT project manager would contact Jeff Noles, the City of Douglasville’s Director of Development Services, and Erica Parish, Paulding County DOT Preconstruction Manager to coordinate details of the proposed noise walls.

**Comments Received:**

- *Opinion of noise walls: I’m not sure we need walls; however, walls properly designed would not affect quality of life (written comment)*
- *Opinion of noise walls: Like, as long as they are top notch and nice looking(written comment)*

- *Opinion of noise walls: I am in favor of the noise walls and the benefit they provide. With thoughtful design they can add value to the project. (written comment)*
- *Opinion of noise walls: I like them but they need to go along with a "beautification." (written comment)*

**Responsible Party:** GDOT – completion of detailed barrier analysis, coordination with the City of Douglasville and Paulding County regarding details of proposed noise walls, design of noise walls, construction and maintenance of noise walls.

## **CONSTRUCTION**

**15.Issue:** Several residents are concerned that when construction begins, they won't be notified and they won't be given ample time to plan for the delays and inconvenience.

**Proposed Solution and Mitigation Item:** In addition to the standard notification of project construction, the City of Douglasville would post project construction information on the Douglasville TV station, CitiTV, and on the City of Douglasville's website prior to construction.

**Background/Detailed Information:** The information would be provided by the construction contractor to Marcia Hampton, Director of Community & Downtown Services with the City of Douglasville, at 678-715-6091 at least five days before the information needs to be posted.

### **Comments Received:**

- *When project begins provide notification to the neighborhood affected that major work would begin on whatever day it is to start. (written comment)*
- *Suggested improvement; Actual announcement when project would begin in each area affected (written comment from Hill Street resident)*

**Responsible Party:** GDOT – notify Marcia Hampton at appropriate time and provide Ms. Hampton with required information in timely manner. The City of Douglasville – completion of notification to residents process.

## **FOLLOW UP**

If any changes are needed throughout the Plan Development Process or during Construction that would change the impacts to the community or negate, or nullify any of these mitigation measures, GDOT would notify the City of Douglasville and appropriate members of the Stakeholder Team as soon as possible. With their coordination and assistance, GDOT would follow up as appropriate with the community or groups affected by the proposed change as necessary.

CITY OF DOUGLASVILLE

BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mickey Thompson, Mayor

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gerald Ross, Chief Engineer/Deputy Commissioner

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rodney N. Barry, Division Administrator

Figures 3a and 3b: Example of a 2-inch median cut

Figure 3a



Figure 3b



Figure 4: Example of Kiosk-type Sign

