

# Gateway South



BROOKHAVEN CHARACTER AREA UPDATE

2021



GATEWAY SOUTH CHARACTER AREA

STATE OF GEORGIA  
COUNTY OF DEKALB  
CITY OF BROOKHAVEN

RESOLUTION RES 2021-01-06

**A RESOLUTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE BROOKHAVEN GATEWAY SOUTH CHARACTER AREA  
UPDATE 2034 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUPPLEMENT**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Brookhaven Mayor and City Council adopted the 2034 Comprehensive Plan on November 18, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the City is authorized to review and amend its comprehensive plan document as needed to reflect the desires of the community; and

**WHEREAS**, following the annexation of land area into the City south of Interstate 85, the Mayor and City Council determined that review and citizen input on the vision statements, policies, and recommendations related to this area of the city was necessary; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has held a noticed public hearing on the proposed supplement to the Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, after conducting a noticed public hearing, the City of Brookhaven has determined that the supplement document further implements the policies of the 2034 Comprehensive Plan; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Brookhaven that the City adopts the Brookhaven Gateway South Character Area Update 2034 Comprehensive Plan Supplement.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that any and all resolutions, or any part thereof in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

**APPROVED** by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Brookhaven this 26th day of January 2021.



*[Handwritten signature of John Arthur Ernst Jr.]*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Arthur Ernst Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:

*[Handwritten signature of Susan Hiott]*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan Hiott, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

DocuSigned by:  
*[Handwritten signature of Christopher D Balch]*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
8EAF60E51C83456...  
Christopher Balch, City Attorney

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This document is the result of a collaborative effort of the Gateway South community, including: community members, City of Brookhaven elected officials, the Planning Commission, and City of Brookhaven staff.

A special thank you is given to community members and stakeholders that shared input, ideas, and feedback throughout the planning process to help define the vision and priorities for this fast-growing part of our city.

The following individuals played a lead role in the plan's development:

### CITY OF BROOKHAVEN MAYOR + CITY COUNCIL

- John Ernst, Mayor
- Linley Jones, District 1
- John Park, District 2
- Madeleine Simmons, District 3
- Joe Gebbia, District 4 and Mayor Pro Tem

### CITY OF BROOKHAVEN PLANNING COMMISSION

- Stan Segal, Chairman
- John Funny, Vice Chairman
- Michael Diaz
- Bert Levy
- Conor Sen
- Cary King
- Kevin Quirk

### CITY STAFF

- Christian Sigman, City Manager
- Steve Chapman, Assistant City Manager
- Patrice Ruffin, Director of Community Development
- Linda Abaray, Deputy Director of Community Development
- Aronda Smith, Senior Planner
- Drew Murray, Planner II
- Dominique Lockhart, Planner I
- Ann Marie Quill, Communications Manager

### CONSULTANT TEAM

- Allison Stewart-Harris, Project Manager - VHB
- Amanda Hatton, Senior Planner - Blue Cypress Consulting
- Caroline Evans, Senior Planner - Blue Cypress Consulting
- Allison Bell, Planner - VHB

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
Purpose/Need for Plan	3
Study Area Overview	6
LaVista Park	7
Briar Hills Innovation District	10
<b>2. Process</b>	<b>16</b>
Public Engagement Summary	16
Meeting Series 1	22
Meeting Series 2	24
<b>3. Character Area Update</b>	<b>27</b>
Character Area Planning	27
LaVista Park	28
Briar Hills Innovation District	30
Connectivity to 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update	32
<b>4. Next Steps</b>	<b>33</b>
Update 2019 Comprehensive Plan	33
Other Planning Initiatives	33

# 1 Introduction

Incorporated in 2012, the City of Brookhaven is a rapidly growing jurisdiction in the Atlanta region. To help guide this growth and meet State of Georgia requirements for local planning, the City adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 2014, the *Comprehensive Plan 2034*.

The *Comprehensive Plan 2034* laid the foundations for Brookhaven’s vision, policies, and goals for the next twenty years and provided a short-term work program for the new city. It was later updated in 2016 with a Character Area Study Comprehensive Plan Supplement, which provided additional guidance for land use and development in its 13 character areas. An update to the entirety of the comprehensive plan was completed in 2019.

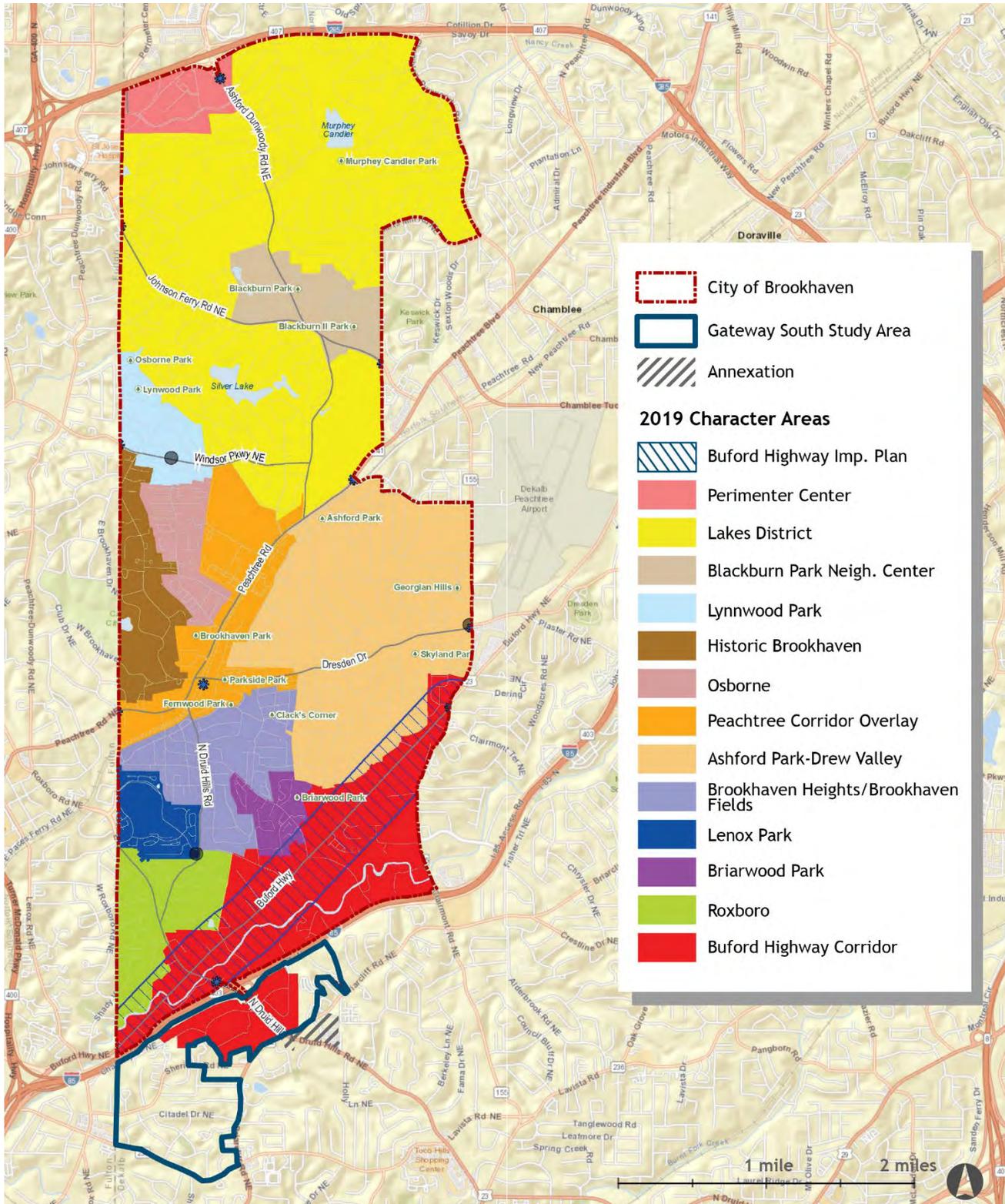
## Purpose/Need for Plan

Since the Character Area supplement in 2016, the City has witnessed significant change—particularly south of Interstate 85 (I-85). In December of 2014, approximately 175 acres were annexed into the City of Brookhaven: 60 acres for the future Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) campus, and 115 acres for Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven and the Brighten Park shopping center. Because this annexation occurred near the end of the first comprehensive planning effort, these parcels were folded into the existing Buford Highway character area.

Over the following years, a series of additional annexations took place. In 2016, the City annexed the townhome communities off Woodcliff Drive, followed in 2017 by a further expansion of the CHOA campus along I-85 toward Cliff Valley Way. This part of Brookhaven continued to expand in 2018, when the multi-family Enclave at Briarcliff annexed into the City.

In 2019, property owners in the LaVista Park neighborhood petitioned for annexation into Brookhaven, adding approximately 300 acres and hundreds of new households into the City. This annexation represents the largest annexation in Georgia history using the “60 percent method,” in which at least 60 percent of property owners and resident electors must agree to the annexation.

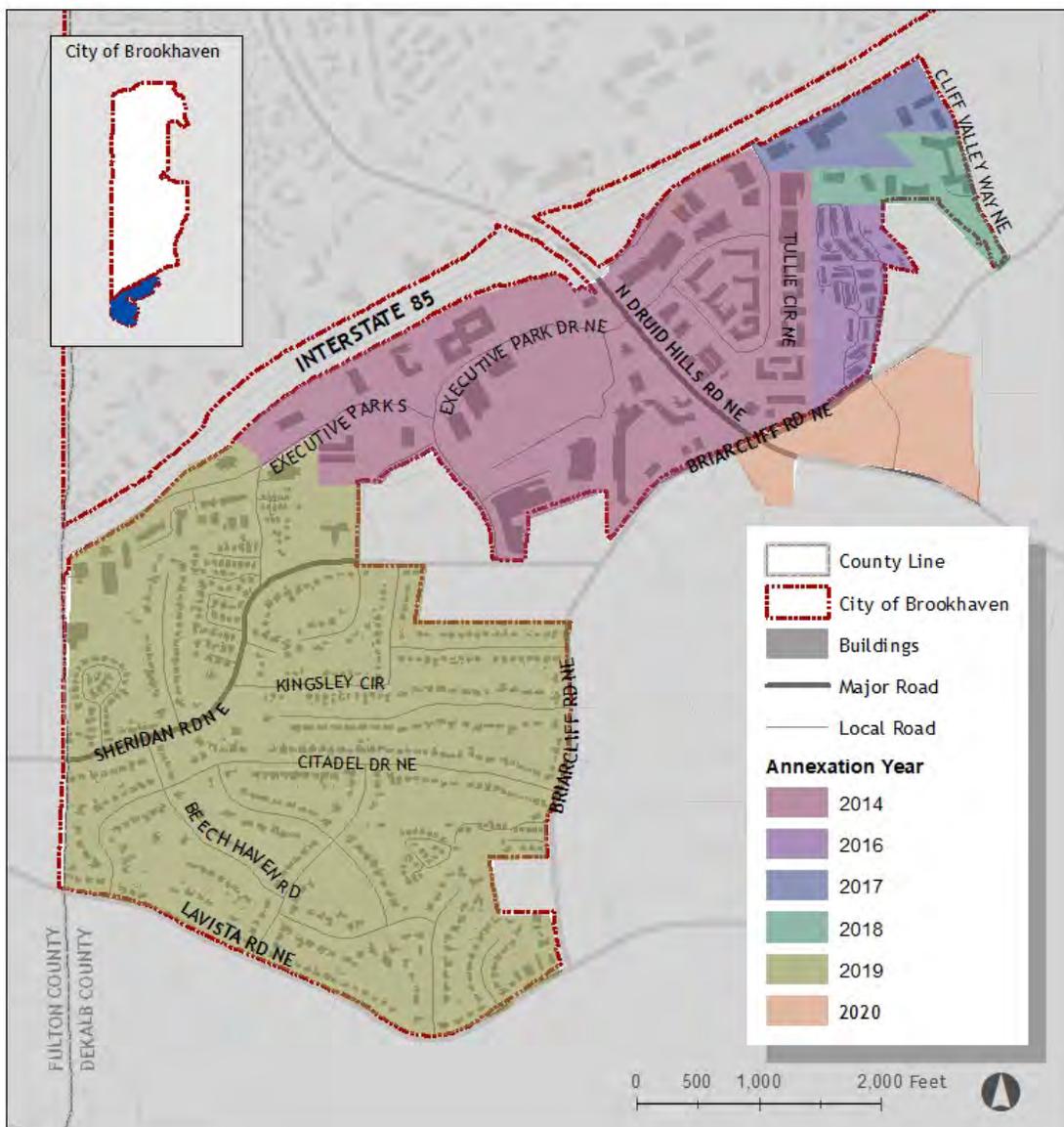
Figure 1: 2019 Brookhaven Character Areas + Gateway South Study Area



Even during this planning process the boundary of Brookhaven has continued to evolve. Approved in October 2020, the Related Group petitioned for annexation of 27 acres at the corner of Briarcliff and North Druid Hills Road. This annexation is the first set of parcels east of Briarcliff Drive to become part of the City of Brookhaven.

In total, these annexations expanded the City of Brookhaven land area by almost 9%. Together, these multiple annexations encompass a broad range of land uses, from intense medical activity centers, to strip commercial, to townhomes and single-family residential neighborhoods. Although the area is in close proximity to Buford Highway, the presence of I-85 between the two and their markedly different characters sparked the initiation of this character area study. This area, referred to throughout this document as Gateway South, is the subject of this planning process.

Figure 2: Brookhaven Annexations



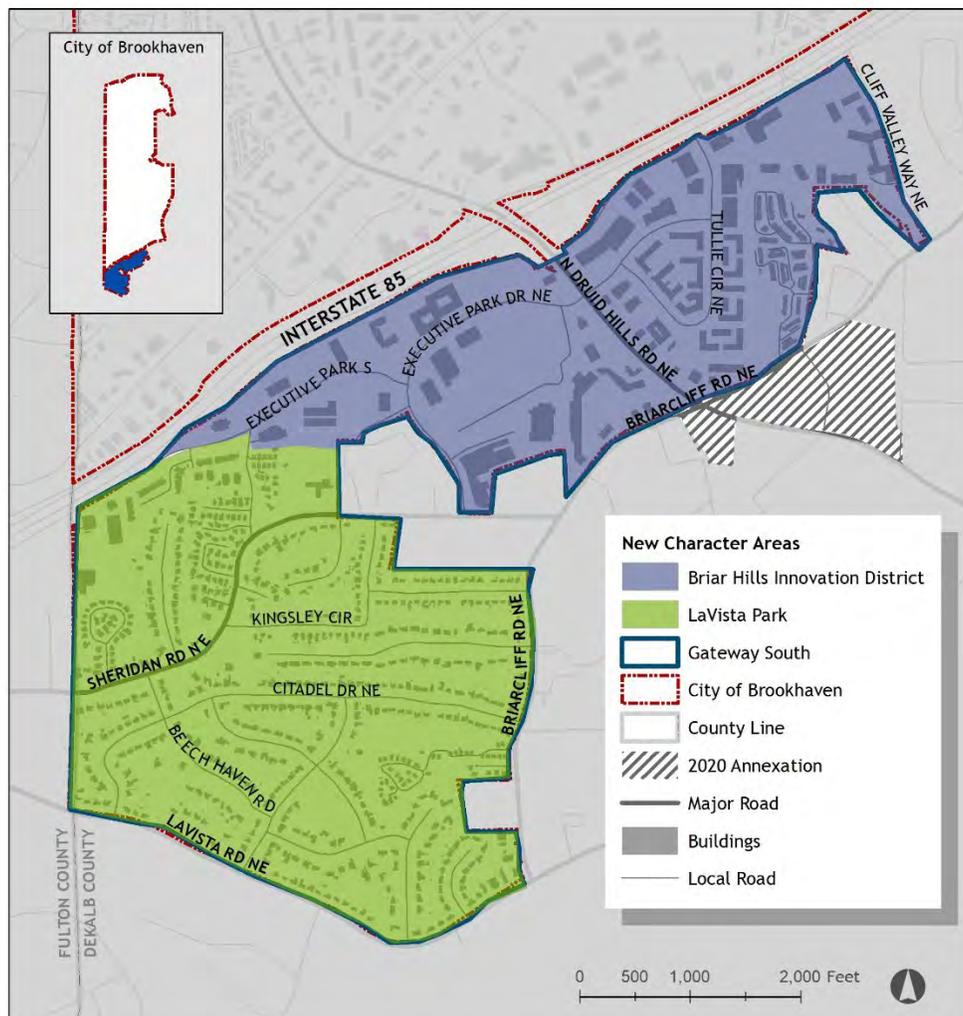
## Study Area Overview

The Gateway South area includes all parts of the City of Brookhaven southeast of I-85, which extends from Cliff Valley Way in the north to LaVista Road NE in the south.

At the onset of the study, two character areas quickly emerged: one representing the residential community of LaVista Park and another centered on the growing activity center around the CHOA campus and Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven. The public engagement process supported the formation of two character areas, including input on the delineation of their boundaries. After polling the community on how to refer to these two areas, the name LaVista Park remained for the southern character area. The activity center proved more difficult, with a variety of suggestions but little consensus. Ultimately, the City selected the name Briar Hills Innovation District to reflect the cutting-edge medical activity that will occur, but an acknowledgment that the activity center will encompass a diversity of uses beyond medicine.

Following is a high-level overview of LaVista Park and Briar Hills Innovation District to contextualize the population, land use, zoning, housing, transportation, economic development, and community facilities and resources of each character area.

Figure 3: New Gateway South Character Areas



## LaVista Park

### Population

In terms of population, LaVista Park is slightly smaller than the Briar Hills Innovation District. With a 2018 population of 1,418, the character area makes up approximately 2.6% of the total City of Brookhaven population. This equals a population density of about 5 people per acre within the area boundaries. Of these 1,418 residents, approximately 76% identified as White. The remaining 24% identified as Black/African American (6%), Asian (10%), or “Other” (8%). The racial breakdown of the LaVista Park character area is shown in Figure 4. The population of the LaVista Park character area has a median age of 45.9 among its residents making it trend slightly older than the Innovation District population<sup>1</sup>.

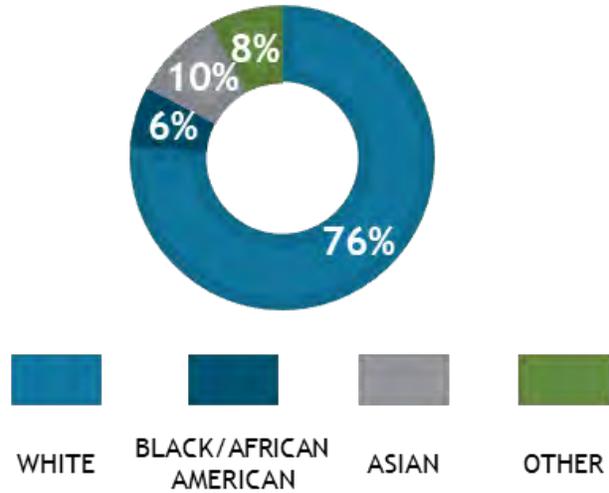


Figure 4: Race Breakdown of LaVista Park Character Area Population

There is a very strong sense of community among LaVista Park residents, who are well organized under LaVista Park Civic Association.

With a median household income of \$110,104, the LaVista Park median income is more than \$20,000 higher than the City of Brookhaven’s median household income of \$87,252.

### Land Use/Zoning

The majority of the land within LaVista Park is comprised of residential uses, with the bulk characterized as single family. The LaVista Park single-family residential neighborhood alone makes up an estimated 85% of the land within the area.

In addition to the Morgan Place Apartment Homes on Chantilly, land abutting I-85 consists of a mix of uses, including light industrial, institutional, commercial, and perhaps, most notably, houses of the Consulate of Mexico. Land in this area is zoned M-Industrial and RM-30 Multi-unit Residential, the latter allowing up to 30 units per acre. These properties have aging structures is poised for reinvestment or redevelopment. Light industrial adjacent to the residential area could pose undesirable externalities that may be addressed with a change in use over time.

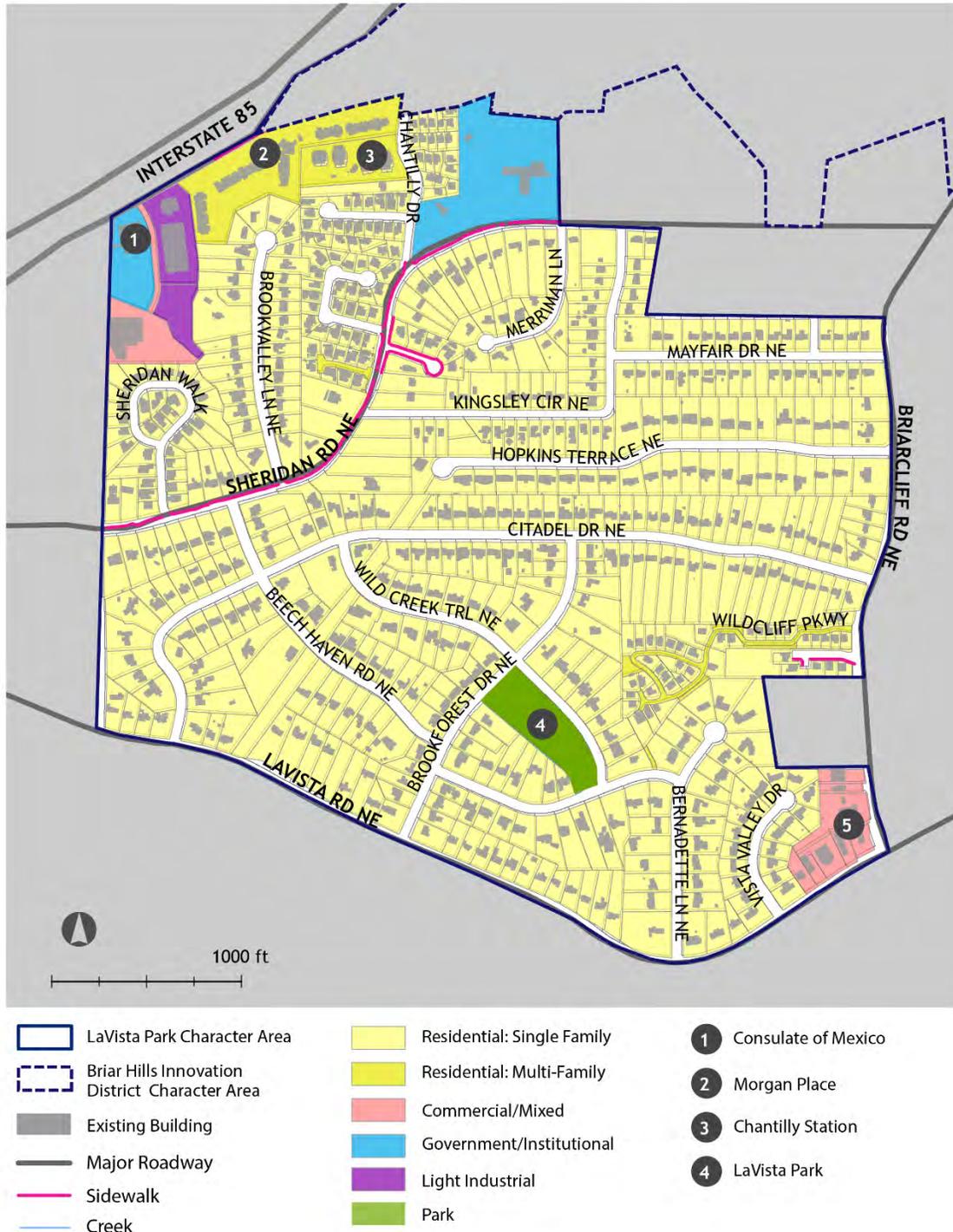
An additional pocket of aging commercial is located at Briarcliff Road and LaVista Road. This eclectic mix of C-1 (local commercial) zoned properties includes auto-oriented retail and services, restaurants, and a mix of other services. Dedicated greenspace is limited to LaVista Park in the interior of the single-family residential area.



Morgan Place Apartment Homes

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Survey, Table B01002

Figure 5: LaVista Park Character Area Overview



## Housing

Most of the residential property within LaVista Park (80%) is zoned RS-85, which allows for a single-family dwelling on a minimum 12,000 square foot lot. With increasing investment, land values, and demand for housing in the area, there is increasing pressure for residential infill. As a result, this area, like much of Brookhaven, has been experiencing increasing housing tear downs and new builds at a greater size and sometimes differing architectural style of what currently exists. The result has been some diversification of design and size, deviating from the area's historic 1950s housing stock.

Housing density increases as land nears I-85 due to zoning and increased housing demand for the area. There are a couple pockets of RSA-8 (single-family attached, up to 8 units per acre) at Wildcliff Parkway and Sheridan Walk, making up an additional 6% of the zoning in LaVista Park. There is one pocket of RS-60 (residential single family with an 8,000 square foot minimum lot size) at Sheridan Park. Chantilly Drive NE includes some limited single-family attached on its eastern edge (Chantilly Ridge development) and two notable multi-family developments:

- Morgan Place Apartments was built in 1989, with a total of 186 one- and two-story units.
- Chantilly Station was built in 1986, with a total of 35 total units.

These properties are zoned RM-30 (multi-family, 30 units per acre) and RM-14 (multi family, up to 14 units per acre).

Overall, there are 841 housing units within LaVista Park, with a 6.5% vacancy rate. The median home value within LaVista Park is \$478,000, which is higher than Brookhaven's overall median home value of \$446,000.

## Transportation

LaVista Park's transportation network is dominated by quiet local roadways serving the residential neighborhood. Typical of neighborhoods built in the 1950s and 1960s, there are few sidewalks and no bicycle facilities.

Two arterials—LaVista Road NE and Briarcliff Road NE—form its southern and eastern boundaries, respectively. Both LaVista Road and Briarcliff Road were identified as priority corridors in the 2020 Brookhaven Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) because they carry substantial amounts of both local and cross-regional traffic. Sheridan Road is a minor arterial in the western side of the study area, separating the main neighborhood of LaVista Park from newer, more densely developed areas closer to I-85. Although there are some sidewalks along these arterials, they are intermittent and as a whole do not provide a comfortable walking environment.

Transit options in LaVista Park are limited. Route 30 operates along LaVista Road providing a connection between Lindbergh MARTA station and Northlake Mall. Route 6 touches the very southwestern boundary of the LaVista Park character area operating along Briarcliff Road and LaVista Road. It should be noted that Route 30 was suspended as part of MARTA's service reduction effort in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, but Route 6 continued operating.

## Economic Development

Largely a residential area, economic development in LaVista Park occurs at a small scale. According to ESRI's business analyst estimates, there are 43 businesses in the area with about 416 employees. These businesses are primarily located in a small pocket of industrial/flex space close to I-85 accessed via Chantilly Drive NE or in the cluster of small retail and service businesses at LaVista Road NE and Briarcliff Road NE. One destination of note is the Consulate of Mexico, which provides services to Mexican nationals from across the southeast, bringing a large number of visitors to the area. Other economic activity in LaVista Park is associated with the construction of small residential infill projects.

## Community Resources

Community resources in LaVista Park support its residential nature. The main green space for the community is LaVista Park, a heavily wooded neighborhood park on Wild Creek Trail NE. From a natural resources perspective, both the extensive tree canopy and the presence of the creek are important features of the neighborhood.

## Briar Hills Innovation District

### Population

The Briar Hills Innovation District is the larger of the two character areas in terms of population. With a 2018 population of 1,440, the character area makes up approximately 2.7% of the City of Brookhaven's total population. This equals a population density of about 6 people per acre within the area boundaries, comprising 302 acres (not inclusive of land acquired via the October 2020 annexation south of Briarcliff Road). The racial breakdown of the Activity Center character area population is shown in Figure 7. Just over half the population (52%) identifies as White, 24% identifies as Black/African American, 16% Asian, and 8% "Other." The median age of the Briar Hills Innovation District population is roughly 32.8 making it trend slightly younger than the LaVista Park character area<sup>2</sup>.

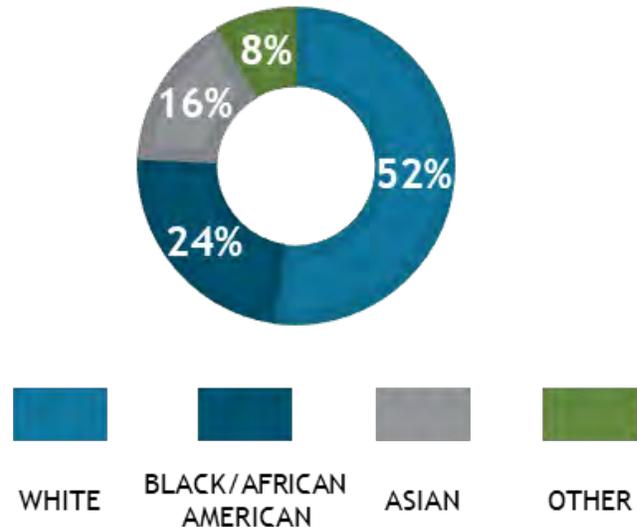


Figure 6: Race Breakdown of Briar Hills Innovation District Population

With a median household income of \$66,430, the Briar Hills Innovation District character area median income is more than \$20,000 lower than the median household income of the City of Brookhaven as a whole, and over \$40,000 lower than the neighboring LaVista Park character area.

### Land Use/Zoning

The Briar Hills Innovation District exhibits a broad mix and scale of land uses, increasingly shaped by the changing character of the CHOA and Emory campuses at the area's core. Land uses include an increasing mix of medical office and research uses, housing, and supportive uses (such as parking decks and open space), commercial (including restaurants and retail), and some aging office spaces. The areas west of North Druid Hills Road in Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven include a growing portfolio of multi-family housing and a hotel.

The areas north of Briarcliff Road were originally included within the Buford Highway Overlay District, which added requirements for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscaping improvements (including tree plantings and vegetation), incentives for workforce housing, and establishes distinct building heights for O-I (Office Institutional), OCR (Office Commercial Residential), and M (Industrial) zoning districts, allowing for increased building heights on the Emory and CHOA campuses.

Typical of major arterial intersections, the corners of Briarcliff and North Druid Hills within the city limits currently house commercial uses, including retail, restaurants, some services, and a gas station. Some of these properties, such as Brighten Park which recently underwent a major renovation, are poised for reinvestment and potentially redevelopment within the near-term. The properties are zoned C-1, local commercial. It is of note that the City's Zoning Ordinance allows for multi-family dwelling units within the C-1 district south of I-85. None of these newly annexed areas south of Briarcliff Road are included within the Buford Highway Overlay District at this point of time.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Survey, Table B01002

## Housing

Housing within the Briar Hills Innovation District is predominantly comprised of multi-family units, within structures ranging from one to six stories. This includes single-family attached along Woodcliff Drive and multi-family along Cliff Valley Way and within the Executive Park Drive area. Housing northeast of North Druid Hills Road is generally owner-occupied and older than housing found southwest of North Druid Hills Road and includes properties along Cliff Valley Way and Briarcliff Road, specifically the following:

- Enclave at Briarcliff Condominiums on Cliff Valley Way, built in 2002 with 270 Units
- Executive Park Condominiums off Briarcliff Road, built in 1972 with 59 townhomes and single-story units
- Executive Parkview Townhomes off Briarcliff Road, built in 1974 with 48 townhomes

Housing within the Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven area is limited to rental properties and includes:

- Cortland North Druid Hills, built in 2016 with 310 one- and two-bedroom units, and
- Oleander, built in 2019 and boasting 348 units ranging from studio to three bedrooms.

It is worth noting that two additional large apartment developments have recently been constructed along Sheridan Road within unincorporated DeKalb County, further intensifying the presence of multi-family housing in the Gateway South area. The Woodcliff Area is zoned RSA-8; Cliff Valley Way is zoned O-I; and the housing within the Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven area is zoning OCR or O-I, both of which allow for multi-family residential development.

There are an estimated 940 total housing units in the area, reflecting the presence of concentrated pockets of multi-family housing as discussed above. The vacancy rate is estimated at 7.4%. The median home value for this area is estimated at \$283,000 - 41% less than the median home value of LaVista Park - a reflection of the predominance of condos or townhomes in this area over the predominance of single-family homes in LaVista Park.

A final note of importance is the recent approval to annex and rezone property along Briarcliff Road, north of North Druid Hills Road, to C-1 (see page 13). The mixed-use development proposed as a part of the rezoning includes a new apartment building, which will further increase the quantity of multi-family housing units within the district. The housing makeup of this area contributes to the growing live/work nature of the area.

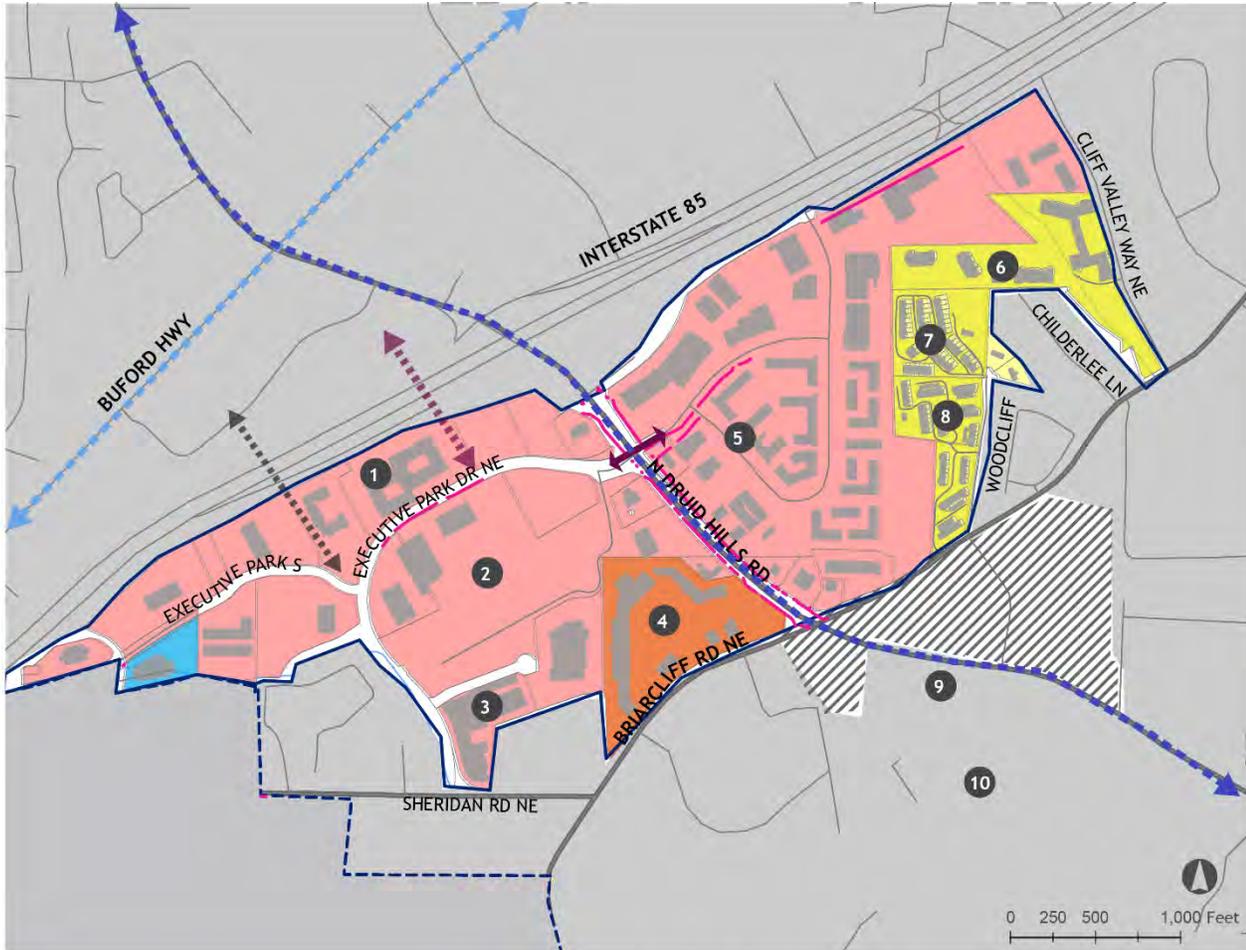


*Executive Park Condominiums*



*Oleander Apartments*

Figure 7: Briar Hills Innovation District Character Area Overview



- |  |  |  |                            |  |  |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|--|--|
|  | Briar Hills Innovation District Character Area |  | Major Roadway              |  | Cortland Apartments                          |
|  | LaVista Park Character Area                    |  | Proposed Vehicular Bridge  |  | Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven        |
|  | Existing Building                              |  | Sidewalk                   |  | Oleander                                     |
|  | Residential: Single Family                     |  | Planned Pedestrian Bridge  |  | Brighten Park                                |
|  | Residential: Multi-Family                      |  | Proposed Pedestrian Bridge |  | CHOA Campus Expansion                        |
|  | Mixed Use Medical                              |  | Proposed ART line          |  | The Enclave                                  |
|  | Commercial                                     |  | Proposed BRT line          |  | Executive Parkview Townhomes                 |
|  | 2020 Annexation                                |  |                            |  | Executive Park Townhomes                     |
|  |  |  |                            |  | Kittredge School Site                        |
|  |  |  |                            |  | Kittredge Park/Elwyn John Wildlife Sanctuary |

## Transportation

Bordered on the west by I-85, the Briar Hills Innovation District is heavily defined by its busy roadways. This area includes I-85 exit 89 onto North Druid Hills Road NE, the primary east-west corridor of the area. Briarcliff Road NE serves as the eastern border of the area. Both North Druid Hills Road NE and Briarcliff Road NE were identified as priority corridors in the 2020 Brookhaven Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The segment of North Druid Hills Road NE between Briarcliff Road and I-85 has the highest average annual daily traffic (AADT) in the city.<sup>3</sup>

Although North Druid Hills Road NE has sidewalks, the high volume of traffic, small buffer zones between cars and pedestrians, and narrow sidewalks discourage walking. Briarcliff Road also has sidewalks for much of its length in the study area; although these sidewalks are larger and attractive, they also lack a substantial buffer from vehicle traffic and residents report an unsafe walking environment. There are currently no bicycle facilities within the character area.

As the CHOA and Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven projects continue to evolve, there will be upgrades to the local transportation infrastructure. In addition to the roadway and sidewalk networks within both of the campuses, there will be a new intersection on North Druid Hills Road NE serving both developments. Currently under discussion is a pedestrian bridge across North Druid Hills Road NE, and CHOA has also agreed to create a multi-use path link to the Peachtree Creek Greenway under I-85. Longer range, the City is considering pedestrian and roadway links across I-85 to serve Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven.

The Briar Hills Innovation District is served by MARTA Route 8, which operates along North Druid Hills Road NE. Route 8 provides a connection between Brookhaven and the Avondale MARTA station. It should be noted that Route 8 was suspended as part of MARTA's service reduction effort in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In the future, an Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) is proposed to operate along North Druid Hills Road NE, and a bus rapid transit (BRT) service is planned nearby on Buford Highway.

## Economic Development

The Briar Hills Innovation District is a major hub of employment, and is projected to grow significantly larger as both the CHOA and Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven projects are built out. Currently, the area is home to about 223 businesses and is the workplace for approximately 2,826 employees.

The CHOA campus development is a major driver of growth. Representing over \$2 billion in investment, the campus' focal point will be a 19-story hospital that will replace CHOA's current facility at Egleston. In addition to the hospital, the master plan includes multiple administrative buildings, a parking deck, and green space. Working with the City of Brookhaven, CHOA has agreed to make investments to the local transportation system, including upgrades to the intersection at its main entrance off of North Druid Hills Road NE, sewer improvements, and a connection to the Peachtree Creek Greenway. The organization has also worked directly with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in the redesign of the I-85 interchange, which will include a direct exit to the campus in the future. CHOA anticipates an opening date of 2025, and expects upwards of 6,700 employees on the campus.

Just across North Druid Hills Drive NE from the CHOA Campus, Emory University is renovating Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven into a live-work-play district. Its master plan, expected to be implemented over the next 15 to 20 years, includes a number of office buildings, medical research facilities, a hospital, multi-family residential development, and hotel space. The redevelopment also will provide a greenway connection to the CHOA campus trail network along the utility corridor. Emory and CHOA are coordinating infrastructure improvements, with a particular focus on their new joint intersection with North Druid Hills Road. Once complete, the Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven renovation will represent over \$1 billion in direct and indirect investment, and is expected to generate almost \$5 million in property tax revenue annually.

---

3

[https://www.brookhavenga.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/public\\_works/page/21951/2020\\_ctp\\_update\\_adopted\\_on\\_oct\\_13\\_2020.pdf](https://www.brookhavenga.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/public_works/page/21951/2020_ctp_update_adopted_on_oct_13_2020.pdf)



Figure 8: CHOA Campus Expansion Plan

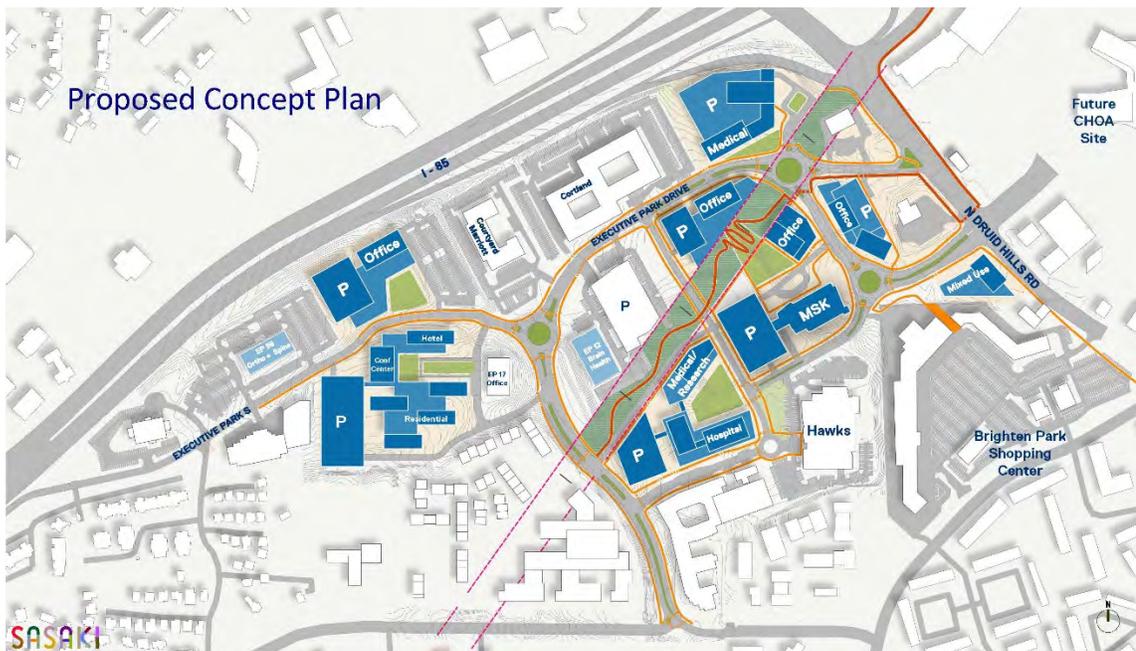


Figure 9: Emory Executive Drive Campus Proposed Concept Plan

These two developments together are a powerful catalyst for additional growth not only in the medical sector, but in supporting office, retail, and residential development. Already they have spurred reinvestment on adjacent properties; for example, the owners of the Brighten Park shopping center—the largest retail center in Gateway South—recently invested over \$8 million in upgrades in anticipation of a growing clientele.

*Community Resources*

There are currently no community facilities or resources within the Briar Hills Innovation District. However, as CHOA and Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven are built, there will be a series of linked green spaces with some degree of public access. The district will also be the area’s link to the Peachtree Creek Greenway.

Just outside its boundaries to the east, there are several resources that impact the Briar Hills Innovation District. This includes the DeKalb County School District’s Kittredge site, which currently houses a magnet school for elementary students. To the south of the school district’s property is Kittredge Park and the Elwyn John Wildlife Sanctuary. In 2018, the school district demolished the former Briarcliff High School, but its athletic facilities remain. Currently there are no firm plans for the reuse of the site, and the School District is embarking on a large-scaled planning process for the district.

**Briar Hills Innovation District: 2020 Annexation**

On October 27, 2020, the City of Brookhaven approved an annexation of 27 acres at Briarcliff Road NE and North Druid Hills Road NE. At the heart of this annexation is the proposed Druid Hills Manor development, a 7-acre mixed use project with multi-family units, a hotel, office, retail, and restaurant space. The multi-family component is proposed as a six-story apartment building with 383 units, 10 percent of which are set aside for workforce housing.



Figure 10: Proposed Development in the New Annexation Area

This project is an example of catalytic growth driven in large part by CHOA and the Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven campuses. Because of its location, economic links, and complementary land uses, this area will be considered part of the Briar Hills Innovation District.

## 2 Process

The Gateway South planning process began in August 2020. Components included:

- Project Kickoff - August 2020 - virtual planning team kickoff to discuss project schedule, goals, and public engagement strategy
- Online Engagement Portal - September - December 2020 - interactive website with project information, updates, and input activities
- Stakeholder Interviews - September 2020 - virtual interviews with a range of stakeholders
- Meeting Series #1 - September 2020 - two virtual community meetings to introduce the project and receive input on concerns, hopes, and a vision for the Gateway South neighborhoods
- Meeting Series #2 - October 2020 - two virtual community meetings to refine the development vision and prioritize implementation strategies
- Development of draft plan - November 2020
- Planning Commission Hearing - January 2021 - presentation of draft plan to Planning Commission
- City Council Hearing - January 2021 - presentation of draft plan to City Council
- Submittal of Final Plan - January 2021

### Public Engagement Summary

Several input activities were held between September and November 2020 to shape the vision for Gateway South. An overview of the public engagement process is described below, followed by major themes from the input process. Additionally, there is a summary of each engagement activity and how the input informed the character area recommendations.

An important element of public engagement was developing awareness of the process and keeping people informed. To accomplish this, the planning team established an interactive website that doubled as the project information portal ([www.brookhavengatewaysouth.com](http://www.brookhavengatewaysouth.com)), executed a social media campaign, leveraged the City's weekly newsletters and press release process, built a project-specific outreach list with regular project updates, and launched the planning process with a postcard campaign to residents in the planning area.

### Input Activities: At a Glance

#### Online Engagement - September 2020 - Project Close (Anticipated in February 2021)

The online engagement hub offered a variety of channels for community members to participate in during the process, all of which were available on demand at some point in the process. Nearly 200 unique visitors came to the site and shared in one or many of the different tools, including a discussion forum, a map-based land planning activity, a name-the-areas activity, and two surveys tied to each meeting series that replicated the discussion held at each of two sets of meetings.

## Stakeholder Interviews – September 2020

A series of one-on-one interviews and small group meetings were held to understand the plans, concerns, and goals of different groups with an influence on the area. Eighteen total stakeholders participated, representing City residents, unincorporated neighbors, major landowners and developers, institutions, businesses, City of Brookhaven leadership, and area organizations.

## Meeting Series #1 – September 15 & 17, 2020

- 49 participants
- 2 virtual meetings
- 5 input activities: character area boundaries, community’s vision, hopes and concerns, and follow-up online input tools

## Meeting Series #2 – October 26 & November 5, 2020

- Estimated 35-40 participants
- 2 virtual meetings
- One large group discussion using chat and several small breakout groups

## Major Themes that Emerged

- Traffic congestion is a major concern.
- Ongoing coordination with DeKalb County is needed, including open lines of communication with adjoining unincorporated neighborhoods and in coordinating infrastructure improvements.
- There is general support for commercial and recreational uses (where appropriate) to improve quality of life.
- Demand for new/more housing needs to be balanced with existing character/infrastructure.
- Development interest will continue to increase in the area and continued change is inevitable.
- The City of Brookhaven is doing a good job maintaining an open dialogue with citizens and developers.
- Preserving the residential character of LaVista Park is a top priority.
- The Briar Hills Innovation District should further the medical cluster but also provide commercial and retail that serves the area; the community envisions this area of Brookhaven as somewhere special that can develop a unique identity over time.
- Walkability is a number one priority along with minimizing traffic cut-throughs to the community.
- Mixing uses in the Briar Hills Innovation District can help meet the needs of the growing medical campuses while also creating a unique destination that serves the residents within the activity center as well as those of LaVista Park and adjoining residential areas.
- Connecting the entirety of Gateway South to the rest of Brookhaven via creative bike and pedestrian solutions will further quality of life.

## ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

The brookhavengatewaysouth.com website served as an online engagement hub for sharing and gathering information from community members throughout the course of the project. Over 200 unique visitors accessed the site during the planning process, which included the following engagement opportunities:

- **Outreach List** – Community members could sign up for an outreach list, which provided up-to-date information on the project. As of mid November, the list had 138 participants.
- **Celebrate Our Area** – One of the first online engagement activities asked visitors to share what they love about the Gateway South neighborhoods. A handful of community members responded:

- "I love that this is quiet, a walkable in-town neighborhood with access to shops and restaurants - we need some more of this!"
  - "The walkability and community feel of the neighborhood is charming- homes are different, but well maintained. It's a nice pocket between busier thoroughfares."
  - "It's proximity to Midtown and Buckhead with easy access to 85."
  - "Great residential neighborhoods located in pockets throughout this region. The new shopping center at Briarcliff/North Druid hills has been a great addition and is well kept and clean."
- **What Should We Call These Areas** - Early in the process, the team asked community members to help name the two emerging character areas. While comments were limited, there was unanimous support for keeping the "LaVista Park" name with the neighborhood for use in the plan. There was less consensus regarding neighborhoods to the north where CHOA and the Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven renovation are occurring; a few ideas were offered, which were vetted during Meeting Series 2 discussions and via the associated online survey. The online discussion showed disagreement around using "healthcare" or "medical" in the activity center name. Ultimately the City settled on "Briar Hills Innovation District."
  - **Mapping Input Tool** - An interactive mapping tool was available beginning with Meeting Series 1 and extended to mid-October. The tool allowed community members to drag and drop comments to indicate where public investments, transition areas, areas where change over time is desired or likely, and areas that are viewed appropriate for staying the same. Highlights are shown in Figure 13, where the letter within a bubble represents the general content of the comment. The color and size of a bubble indicate the comment type and number of upvotes received, respectively; 40 unique comments with several follow-up comments and likes/dislikes were provided.
  - **Meeting Series 1 Survey** - This survey built on input from Meeting Series 1, enabling those that could not participate in a live meeting to share ideas and thoughts on the same topics. Questions asked participants about their biggest hopes and biggest concerns. A total of 11 responses were gathered.
  - **Meeting Series 2 Survey** - This survey built on input from Meeting Series 2, allowing those that could not participate in a live meeting to share ideas and thoughts on the same topics. Topics for each of the two character areas addressed key words that capture the long-term vision, appropriate future land uses, and implementation considerations for each area's core, arterials, and transition space.

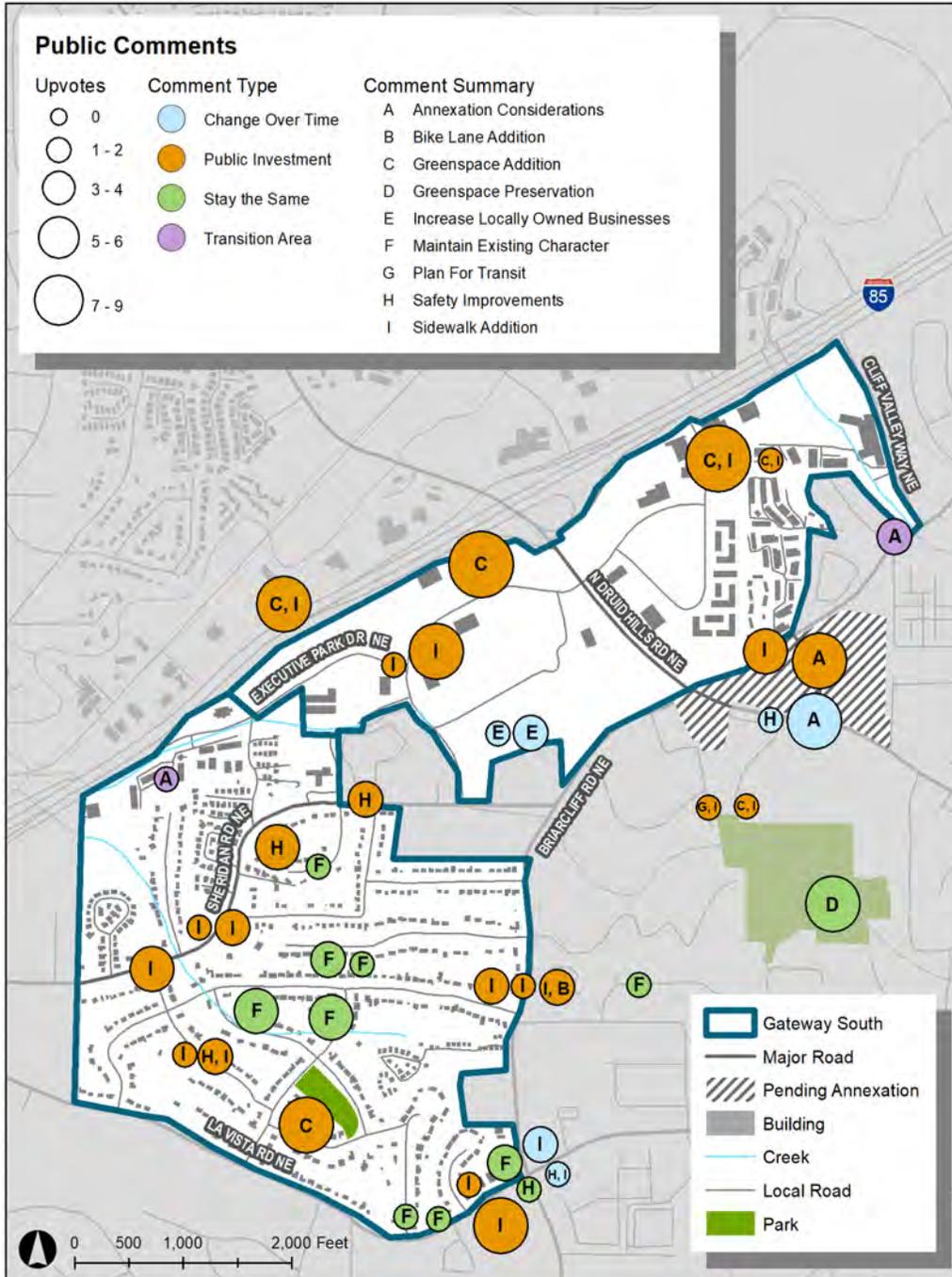


Figure 11: Engagement Hub Map Input by Comment Type and Future Need

## Stakeholder Interviews

The planning team carried out 11 stakeholder interviews at the start of the Gateway South planning process. Interviews were held virtually via Zoom between September 3 and September 21, 2020. The intent was to hear from a representative group of Gateway South stakeholders regarding priorities and current activities, growth and development plans, long-term vision for the area, concerns or hopes, and news on related initiatives that may impact the planning area.

Interview Group	Stakeholder Participants
1. Emory University	Morey Robin, David Payne
2. Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA)	David Tatum
3. City of Brookhaven Planning Commission	Stan Segal, John Funny
4. LaVista Park Civic Association	Larry Hoskins, Steven Graves
5. City of Brookhaven Council District 4	Council Member Joe Gebbia
6. Regency Centers (Brighten Park)	Andre Koleszar, Ward Williams
7. DeKalb County Schools	David Yoke
8. Woodcliff residential area and nearby residential areas	Rick Bennet, Martha Gross
9. Pending annexation area at Briarcliff Rd and North Druid Hills Rd	Woody Galloway, Laurel David, Doug Dillard
10. The Latin American Association	Axia Pascual
11. Mexican Consulate	Lorena Francis Lance

## Major Takeaways

- **The City of Brookhaven is doing a good job.** Interviewees had positive things to say about being a part of the City of Brookhaven. The City has been responsive to resident needs and in addressing key concerns.
- **Open dialogue exists between development proposals and residents.** For both medical campuses, the City has facilitated community investment agreements. Other major proposed changes in land use have been brought to the community for input during the design phase.
- **Maintaining the character of LaVista Park is a number one priority.** This includes the footprint of the neighborhood as well as the tree canopy, park-like atmosphere, and sense of community among residents.
- **Traffic congestion and ability to move around in the study area is a concern.** This concern relates not only to travel by car but also travel by foot.
- **Transportation solutions are being pursued.** The City is working with private and public partners to develop multiple transportation solutions in the area. Major strategies being explored include re-design of the North Druid Hills I-85 bridge and entry ramps; a potential pedestrian bridge and ground-level intersection coordination to connect CHOA and Emory; an I-85 flyover pedestrian bridge connecting LaVista Park with the Peachtree Creek Greenway; potential (bus) transit station near the CHOA campus, and development of a more complete sidewalk network.
- **Establishing a vision and overarching guidelines for transition areas is of top importance.** These transition areas exist between major developments and single-family homes as well as those areas along major corridors that may experience redevelopment.
- **Ongoing coordination with DeKalb County government, schools, and residents will be important to success.** Infrastructure coordination will be essential for the long-term livability of the area. Joint or coordinated projects and initiatives on the City of Brookhaven’s periphery will result in the most positive outcome for all.

- **Infrastructure concerns beyond transportation are being brought forward and solutions identified.** These efforts include CHOA-led sewer capacity improvements and City-led stormwater solutions near the LaVista Park neighborhood.
- **The diversity of workers and visitors coming into the area should be considered in future development and infrastructure improvements.** People will have different needs for getting to Gateway South, including transit, by foot, through rideshare, and other methods. Safe access to and movement around the area will be important.
- **There is generally support for commercial and recreational uses that achieve quality of life enhancements for residents while also supporting the Briar Hills Innovation District.** These ideas range from new restaurants, additional trails or paths, and other ideas like an infusion of art-related uses and enhancements.
- **Accommodating new housing will be important.** As the Briar Hills Innovation District grows into a major employment hub, increased demand for housing is also likely to support live/work opportunities.
- **Creating character and a sense of place matters.** There is a desire by both the medical campuses and residents to create a unique sense of place in the area and create a special gateway.
- **The Pill Hill area in Sandy Springs as well as the Ansley Park neighborhood/Peachtree Street corridor in Midtown Atlanta are benchmarks.** These areas are viewed by many as good examples of positively balancing single-family neighborhood preservation and footprint while thoughtfully with tastefully developing into a major activity center.
- **Development interest in the area will continue.** The area is likely to experience ongoing interest from the development community. Setting a guiding vision that captures community priorities will be essential to influencing outcomes.

## Meeting Series 1: Celebrating Our Past and Future

Meeting Series 1 provided an opportunity to celebrate the addition of the areas south of I-85 to the City of Brookhaven and begin the work to create a tailored vision and policies for these areas in the City’s Comprehensive Plan document, the guiding policy document for long-term growth and development. This summary provides meeting stats, an overview of activities and their impacts on the planning process, and major takeaways.

A series of two meetings was held on September 15, 6:45pm to 8:15pm and on September 17, 11:45 am to 1:15 pm. The intent of the meetings was to introduce the Gateway South Character Area Vision planning effort, educate community members on how it will impact the City’s Comprehensive Plan, gather input to shape character area visions and goals. Approximately 50 people participated.

## Meeting Overview and Impacts

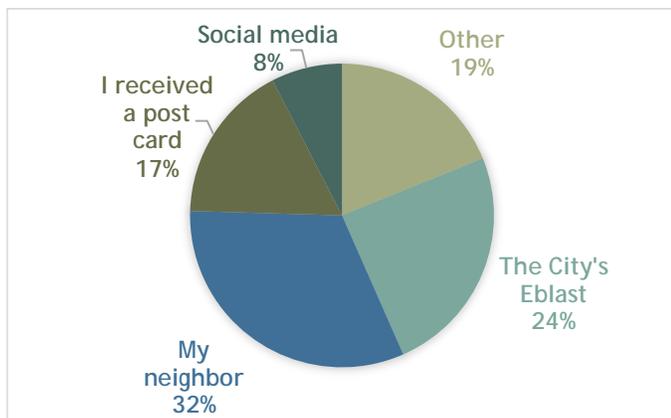


Figure 12: How Participants Learned about the Meetings

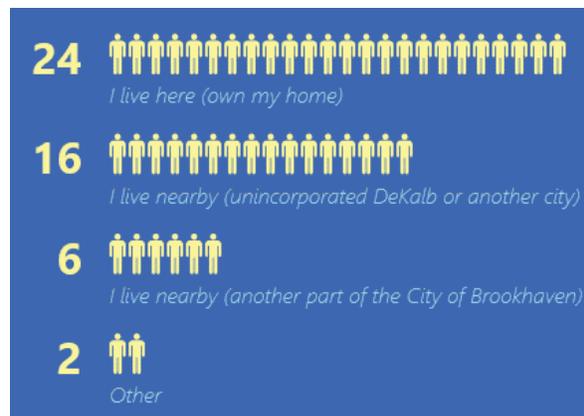


Figure 13: Participants' Relationship to Study Area

Meeting Section	Goals	Impact on Character Area Policy and Documentation
Welcome	Set meeting tone, introduce planning team	Educate about comprehensive plan, study area, and planning effort
Project Overview	Educate community about project purpose, including comprehensive plan and why character areas matter	Educate about comprehensive plan, study area, and planning effort
Celebrating South of I-85	Identify what people love most about the area and understand appropriate boundaries	Inform vision statement and help shape character area boundaries
Breakout Groups	Identify biggest hopes and concerns for each of the two draft character areas	Inform vision statements and implementation strategies for each character area
Regroup	Ensure all voices are heard	Inform vision statements and implementation strategies for each character area
Input Activities at Social Pinpoint	Provide additional opportunities for community input on the areas needs and vision, extend reach	Shape boundaries of character areas, help define needed subareas

## What We Heard - Major Takeaways

### Character Areas & Boundaries

After a brief introduction of the planning effort and the resulting character areas, attendees were asked about the draft boundaries of the two areas. There was consensus that there are two distinct character areas within the study area. The LaVista Park neighborhood serves as the core of Area 1, and Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory’s Brookhaven campuses serve as the core of Area 2.

### What We Love About the Area

Community members were asked, “In two words or less, tell us what you love most about the Gateway South area?” The below images show the responses. There is much to love!

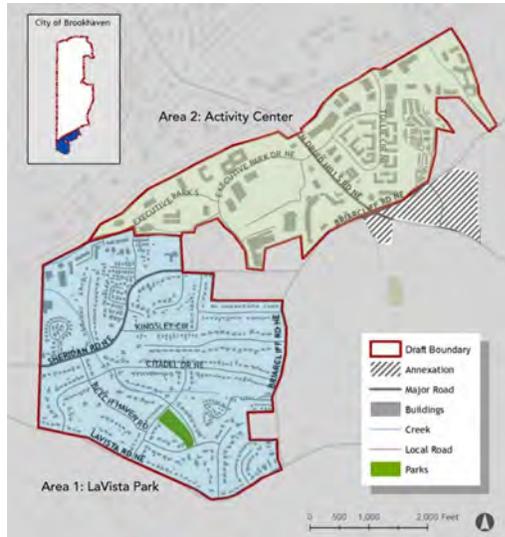


Figure 14: Character Area Map

Do you generally agree or generally disagree with the draft character area boundaries that are shown on the map?



Figure 15: Meeting Series 1 Survey Results



Figure 16: What do community members love most? Convenience, trees, quiet neighborhood, nature, location, greenery

### Biggest Hopes and Concerns

In small breakout groups, community members shared their biggest hopes and concerns for the two proposed character areas over a 20-year horizon. Below are the responses that were repeated by multiple community members.

LaVista Park		Briar Hills Innovation District	
Hopes	Concerns	Hopes	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve residential neighborhood and character</li> <li>• Improve sidewalk connectivity to area amenities</li> <li>• Maintain current density</li> <li>• Add community hang-out spots</li> <li>• Retain tree canopy</li> <li>• Increase property values</li> <li>• Maintain infrastructure</li> <li>• Greater collaboration with DeKalb County</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic congestion</li> <li>• Access to rest of Brookhaven</li> <li>• Over-development</li> <li>• Security (break-ins, etc.)</li> <li>• Loss of tree canopy</li> <li>• Displacement of residents due to increasing taxes</li> <li>• CHOA and Emory being good neighbors</li> <li>• Maintaining property values</li> <li>• Code enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased property values</li> <li>• More greenspace</li> <li>• I-85 interchange improvements</li> <li>• More organized development compatible with vision</li> <li>• Creation of an area identity</li> <li>• Increased walkability</li> <li>• Development of transit center to serve area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over-development</li> <li>• Pedestrian safety</li> <li>• Traffic congestion and cut-through traffic</li> <li>• Increased noise</li> <li>• Blending existing character with new development</li> <li>• Increase in transient residents</li> <li>• Brookhaven developing at the expense of DeKalb</li> <li>• Stormwater issues</li> </ul>

### Meeting Series 2: Setting Our Vision

The Meeting Series 2: Setting Our Vision focused on intricacies of the long-term vision for the LaVista Park neighborhood area and Briar Hills Innovation District. Discussion items built on input collected at Meeting Series 1 held in September 2020.

The virtual meetings reiterated the purpose and role of the planning effort in the area’s growth and development, shared what had been heard to date and how that is shaping the vision, and finally, provided an opportunity for group discussion around preliminary policy recommendations and subarea implementation strategies and approaches.

The meetings were held via Zoom on Monday, October 26, 2020 (7pm to 8pm) and on Thursday, November 5, 2020 (12pm to 1pm). An estimated 35-40 community members participated in the second round of meetings. Of those that took the participant survey, 50 percent live (and own a home) in the study area and another 43 percent live nearby but outside the City of Brookhaven. Among attendees, 60 percent had participated in the Round 1 meetings and 20 percent had given input via the online engagement hub for the planning effort.

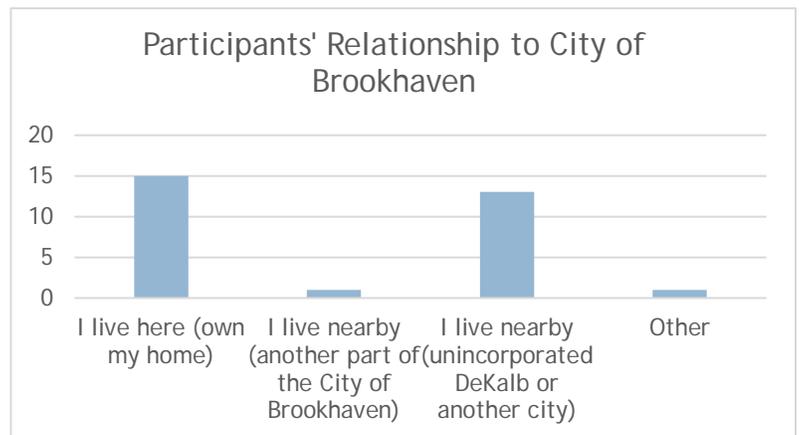


Figure 17: Participants' Relationship to City of Brookhaven

## Meeting Overview and Impacts

The core of the meeting focused on key questions to refine the character area vision and guidance, carried out via a large group discussion and breakout groups. Each of the discussions formats started with a focus on the proposed LaVista Park character area and followed with a focus on the Briar Hills Innovation District.

The group discussion covered three main topics, including key words to be included in the vision statement for the areas, appropriate future land uses, and naming of the activity center. Participants reacted to draft materials presented and offered additional input in the chat function.

The second half of the meeting was spent in small groups, allowing the planning team to ask targeted questions about the interior, arterial, and transition areas of each of the two proposed character areas (see Section 3 for maps of these areas). Attendees met in groups of 10 or less to facilitate all voices being heard.

The meetings ended with a reminder of next steps. The draft plan materials will be up for review in December. Attendees were encouraged to participate in an online survey, with questions matching meeting discussion topics, as a next step.

## What We Heard - Major Takeaways

### LaVista Park Character Area

Topic	Preliminary Approach Presented	Additional Areas of Consensus or Concern Discussed
Vision Key Words	Residential, Wooded, Community, Peaceful, Connected	Support following additional words: Walkable, Friendly, Bike friendly, Safety
Land Uses	Single-Family Residential, Parks and Recreation, Institutional, Townhomes* Neighborhood Commercial*  <i>*in limited locations, to be discussed in breakout groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain current land uses</li> <li>• No to townhomes</li> <li>• No commercial except in transition areas</li> <li>• Desire to limit location of institutional in area</li> <li>• Need to minimize and control uses with noise impacts to residential</li> </ul>
Naming	LaVista Park	N/A - unanimous support for calling LaVista Park
Interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve single-family</li> <li>• Preserve tree canopy</li> <li>• OK with no sidewalks</li> <li>• Maybe a trail in powerline corridor</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Code enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, to further traffic calming in the neighborhood via creative design and/or traffic flow. Consider how navigation apps impact neighborhood</li> <li>• Consider how to retain affordability in neighborhood as homes renovated</li> <li>• Retain similar footprint for infill</li> <li>• Concerns regarding flyover helicopters and planes</li> </ul>
Arterials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want safe sidewalks</li> <li>• Crosswalks, traffic controls on Sheridan Road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain single family on Sheridan</li> <li>• No desire for neighborhood commercial</li> </ul>
Transition Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access/connectivity - sidewalks/trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire to see shift away from light industrial on Chantilly - commercial would be ok</li> <li>• Desire for local, neighborhood commercial at Briarcliff and LaVista Rd. Should have limited hours</li> <li>• Yes, to physical (tree, greenery) buffer as well as noise buffers between these areas and adjacent residential; walls should also be considered for uses causing noise</li> </ul>

*Briar Hills Innovation District*

	Preliminary Approach Presented	Additional Areas of Consensus or Concern Discussed
Vision Key Words	Innovation, Activity, Opportunity, Hub, Accessible	Support following additional words: Healthy, Green(space), Walkable, (Local) Destination, Residential, Community Integrated
Appropriate Future Land Uses	Multi-Family Residential, Commercial/Retail, Institutional, Office, Townhomes, Mixed-Use, Parks and Recreation, Hotel, Neighborhood Commercial, Light Industrial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain current land uses</li> <li>• Limit further development of multi-family</li> <li>• Limit or disallow light industrial in future</li> </ul>
Naming	Brookhaven Healthcare Village, Brookhaven Medical Commons, "Not the Activity Center!" Gateway South Innovation Cluster, Briar Hills Medical Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some like the idea of using medical in name, others do not. Name should be more inclusive</li> <li>• Need unique, attractive name</li> </ul>
Interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want access to new green space, trails</li> <li>• Connectivity to this area from residential areas</li> <li>• Workforce accessibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, to buffering this area from adjacent uses - considering vegetative and "traffic" buffer and use intensity step down as approach residential</li> <li>• Identify areas for active public use within the campuses</li> <li>• Concerns about light bleed</li> </ul>
Arterials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want safer sidewalks and crossings</li> <li>• Retail is a good use here</li> <li>• Be mindful of traffic/ congestion</li> <li>• Opportunity for gateway feature, sense of place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited support of multi-family in this area - it should be limited due to traffic impacts. Townhomes are preferred</li> <li>• Desire for a median on N. Druid Hills Rd</li> <li>• Activities to serve nearby residents</li> </ul>
Transition Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access/connectivity - sidewalks/trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more trees in commercial areas</li> <li>• Some feel affordable housing could go here</li> <li>• As redevelopment occurs, desire commercial, services that serve residents; if more housing, should be in combination with other uses</li> </ul>

# 3. Character Area Update

## CHARACTER AREA PLANNING

One major component of comprehensive planning is defining character areas. Character areas are typically parts of a jurisdiction that are of similar character, development time period, development types, and/or unique traits. They are also areas that are envisioned to grow in much of the same manner in the coming years.

In the 2019 update to the comprehensive plan, the City of Brookhaven identified 13 character areas. Areas south of I-85—which did not include LaVista Park, since its annexation happened late in 2019—were originally included in the Buford Highway character area because of its proximity. However, the Buford Highway area, with its unique commercial character and international population, is quite different than the Brookhaven communities south of I-85. These differences in character only became more pronounced with the annexation of LaVista Park.

Recognizing that the communities south of I-85 are significantly different than their current character designation, the City of Brookhaven is adding character areas for LaVista Park and the Briar Hills Innovation District. The following pages contain a vision, implementation strategies, appropriate land uses, and development guidance for each character area. The interior, transitional areas, and arterials are also mapped to provide clarity in applying development guidance.

## LAVISTA PARK

### Community Vision

A tight-knit community, LaVista Park is a neighborhood of single-family homes and wooded areas that is well connected to nearby retail and job centers. Its walkability, safety, and peacefulness further its desirability as a place to call home.

### Implementation Strategies

- Ensure that the proper zoning protections are in place to maintain the character of the single-family residential neighborhood, including buffers to non-residential uses, light reduction, and neighborhood sensitive noise controls
- Protect single-family neighborhoods from encroachment by higher-intensity land uses
- Continue to coordinate and work with the LaVista Park Civic Association
- Maintain required setback and height requirements
- Establish safe, comfortable walking connections on arterials to nearby commercial areas.
- Evaluate context-sensitive options for traffic calming to reduce cut-through traffic, considering overall traffic flow impacts and creative design solutions
- Explore the possibility of a trail in the utility corridor easement that will connect to the trails and sidewalks proposed at Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven
- Ensure protection of the healthy tree canopy is prioritized in the revision of the City's tree ordinance
- Define a clear vision for the area around Chantilly Drive through the Livable Centers Initiative update or small area study.
- Limit development that will add to roadway congestion
- Work with Brookhaven Police Department and the LaVista Park Civic Association to proactively address and mitigate safety concerns.
- Identify and implement opportunities to further the area's bike friendliness

### Appropriate Land Uses

- Single-Family Residential
- Parks and Recreation
- Institutional\*
- Neighborhood Commercial\*

*\*Appropriate in transition areas only*

### Additional Development Recommendations

The Character Area Study further identified the following land uses, amenities, and development forms and specified where in the character area they would be most appropriate. This list does not replace what is currently present, allowed by zoning or appropriate in this Character Area, but should be consulted when considering residents' desires for future development and updates to the zoning code. See Figure 20 for delineation of interiors, transition areas, and major corridors.

#### INTERIOR OF CHARACTER AREA

- Single-family detached homes
- Context-sensitive infill
- Passive, wooded park space
- Traffic-calming, when part of a comprehensive traffic solution for the neighborhood

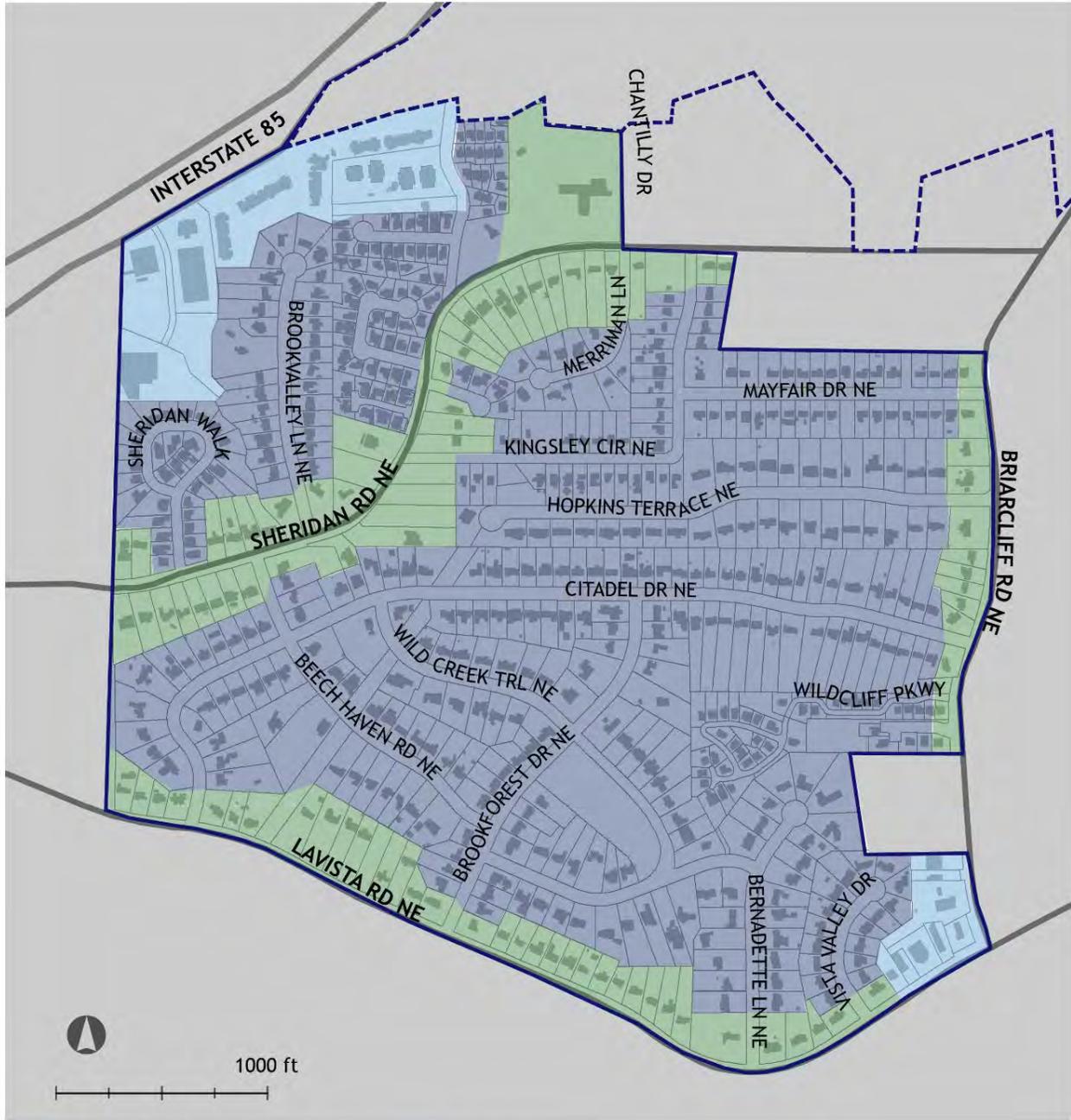
#### TRANSITION AREAS

- Neighborhood commercial
- Townhomes
- Institutional
- Buffers when adjacent to single-family detached homes

#### MAJOR CORRIDORS

- Single-family detached homes
- Sidewalks with wide grassy strip, lighting, and safe crossings

Figure 18: LaVista Park Character Area Sub Areas



- |  |  |  |                |
|--|--|--|----------------|
|  | LaVista Park Character Area                    |  | Interior       |
|  | Briar Hills Innovation District Character Area |  | Transition     |
|  | Existing Building                              |  | Major Corridor |
|  | Major Roadway                                  |  |                |



## BRIAR HILLS INNOVATION DISTRICT

### Community Vision

A mixed-use hub of activity for living and working, Briar Hills Innovation District is a unique job center and accessible community destination. Its thoughtful design and spirit of collaboration and opportunity mark a cohesive southern gateway into the City of Brookhaven.

### Implementation Strategies

- Remove area from the Buford Highway Overlay and consider the addition of a new overlay more reflective of the envisioned character
- Improve pedestrian connectivity and safety on North Druid Hills Road NE and Briarcliff Road NE
- Create pedestrian links across Interstate-85 through the construction of CHOA's connection to the Peachtree Creek Greenway in the north and a potential pedestrian bridge to the south near Executive Park Drive South NE
- Continue to facilitate open communications between CHOA, Emory, and the community regarding ongoing development and construction with a particular focus on buffers as well as light, noise, and traffic mitigation efforts
- Identify opportunities for placemaking and branding, including gateways and public art - integrate and implement as a part of Brookhaven's Arts & Culture Master Plan
- Evaluate opportunities to provide a stronger buffer between intense commercial/institutional land uses and lower scaled residential
- Improve pedestrian connectivity with adjacent neighborhoods both in Brookhaven and in unincorporated DeKalb County
- Clarify and communicate public access opportunities to proposed green space at CHOA and the Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven campuses
- Evaluate multi-modal transportation options to help alleviate congestion on arterials
- Encourage workforce housing opportunities in new development
- Encourage better connectivity between Brighten Park's commercial/retail uses and Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven

### Appropriate Land Uses

- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial/Retail
- Institutional
- Office
- Townhomes
- Mixed-Use
- Parks and Recreation
- Hotel
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Light Industrial\*

*\*Light industrial is viewed as appropriate on the medical campuses only as a supporting land use*

### Additional Development Recommendations

The Character Area Study further identified the following land uses, amenities and development forms and specified where in the Character Area they would be most appropriate. This list does not replace what is currently existing or allowed by zoning, but should be consulted when considering residents' desires for future development and updates to the zoning code. See Figure 21 for delineation of interiors, transition areas, and major arterials.

#### INTERIOR OF CHARACTER AREA

- Institutional
- Greenspace
- Mixed-Use
- Hotel
- Office
- Multi-Family Residential
- Multi-Use Paths
- Light industrial

#### TRANSITION AREAS

- Townhomes
- Sidewalks
- Multi-use Trails
- Neighborhood Commercial

#### MAJOR CORRIDORS

- Mixed-Use
- Commercial/Retail
- Townhomes

Figure 19: Briar Hills Innovation District Character Area Sub Areas



- |  |  |  |                 |
|--|--|--|-----------------|
|  | Briar Hills Innovation District Character Area |  | Interior        |
|  | LaVista Park Character Area                    |  | Transition      |
|  | Existing Building                              |  | Major Corridor  |
|  | Major Roadway                                  |  | 2020 Annexation |

# Connectivity to 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update

The Gateway South Character Area Study was specifically developed to be integrated into Brookhaven’s 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update. In addition to mirroring the format of the original 13 character areas, this character area study is also a reflection of the community vision and many of the goals previously captured in the comprehensive plan.

2019 Comprehensive Plan	Reflection in Gateway South Character Area Study
<p><b>VISION STATEMENT:</b> Brookhaven will be a national model for a walkable, urban community that preserves its unique character and history of neighborhoods, parks, and natural assets while welcoming higher density activity nodes that support transit use, biking, community hubs, sense of place, and diversity of residents and businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both new character areas call for improved walkability, and preservation/enhancement of community character</li> <li>• The Briar Hills Innovation District is an example of a higher density activity node that will support a variety of activity</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOAL: LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION.</b> Achieve greater walkability, bikeability, and overall mobility for day-to-day activities through transportation and land use coordination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both new character areas place a high priority on improving mobility, particularly through expanding pedestrian infrastructure</li> <li>• Limiting land use to single-family residential along LaVista Park’s arterials is a recognition of the traffic impacts that higher density housing would have on already congested roadways</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOAL: UNIQUE CHARACTER.</b> Establish an identity and brand for the City of Brookhaven.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Briar Hills Innovation District is an opportunity to develop a southern gateway to Brookhaven, and create a unique community brand</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOAL: A CITY OF PARKS.</b> Enhance the City’s parks and recreation system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed trails and green spaces in approved development in the Briar Hills Innovation District will add to the City’s green space; further connections, especially to LaVista Park, are also a priority</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOAL: BUFORD HIGHWAY GATEWAY.</b> Promote Buford Highway to enhance this strategic location in the city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removing the Briar Hills Innovation District from the Buford Highway Character area helps protect the distinct identity of Buford Highways, and enables its vision to be very specific to its unique character</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOAL: NEIGHBORHOODS.</b> Preserve the city’s unique neighborhoods and communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The crux of the LaVista Park neighborhood’s vision is to preserve its existing single-family residential character</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOAL: ECONOMIC PROSPERITY.</b> Ensure a balanced economic environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Briar Hills Innovation District is emerging as a major employment center in the region; supporting its growth in a thoughtful, context-sensitive manner will only enhance the economic health of Brookhaven</li> </ul>

## 4 Next Steps

With the community's vision captured for LaVista Park and Briar Hills Innovation District, the City's next step is to update the 2019 Comprehensive Plan, as well as continue coordination in related planning processes. Specific actions are listed below.

### Update 2019 Comprehensive Plan

- Add Character Areas
- Changes elsewhere in document
  - Update all city-wide maps to show newly annexed areas
  - Ensure discussions of single-family neighborhoods and infill include LaVista Park
  - Update Economic Development element to reflect major Briar Hills Innovation District economic engines like CHOA and the Emory at Executive Park in Brookhaven renovations

### Other Planning Initiatives

- Update bike/ped plan to reflect planned network from CHOA and Emory, potential connection along utility corridor, connection to planned trail system in North Druid Hills neighborhoods
- Consider updating the other 13 character areas with maps that clearly delineate character area interiors, transition areas, and arterials
- Engage in the upcoming DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan process to ensure coordination with surrounding unincorporated
- Revisit the Buford Highway Overlay District to determine if the new character area warrants a separate overlay for the Briar Hills Innovation District
- Continue more detailed planning for transition areas along Chantilly Road, North Druid Hills Road, and Briarcliff Road as a part of the North Druid Hills Livable Centers Initiative Study Update

Figure 20: New Gateway South Character Areas

