

BUFORD HIGHWAY ACTIVITY NODES MASTER PLAN

North Druid Hills and Briarwood Activity Nodes

COMPREHENSIVE DOCUMENT | 07.21.2023

Buford Highway Activity Nodes Master Plan

City of Brookhaven

Plan Prepared By

HKS

In Collaboration With

City of Brookhaven

Reinvigorating Buford Highway

A place of culture, activity, and recreation that is community oriented, people-focused, environmentally sensitive and open to the current and future generation.

The City of Brookhaven recently updated the Buford Highway Improvement Plan which identifies two (2) key nodes along Buford Highway at North Druid Hills Road and Briarwood Road, near the Peachtree Creek Greenway Trail. The goals of this study are to

- (1) Strengthen design criteria that will support meaningful redevelopment,**
- (2) Create purposeful spaces that encourage human interaction, and**
- (3) Increase activity and improve access to the Peachtree Creek Greenway.**

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The Charge

The Buford Highway Activity Nodes Master Plan represents opportunity for the City of Brookhaven and the community to reconsider the best possible uses for two key nodes along Buford Highway at Briarwood Rd and North Druid Hills Rd.

The Components

- Urban Planning
- Urban Design

The Approach

Our approach has been designed with the end in mind so that the opportunities are driven from a 360° comprehensive perspective.

The Process

Investigate | Explore | Recommend | Document

The Place

To inspire sustainable, resilient, and inclusive design we start with a Nature Of Place study that is made up of 10 measures, reflecting the AIA Framework for Design Excellence. It organizes our thinking, facilitates conversations with our clients and the communities we serve, and sets **meaningful goals and targets for climate action and equitable developments.**

Vision for BuHi – Comp Plan 2034

High Intensity - Highest intensity growth

- 100 – 150 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 10+ Stories

Medium Intensity - Provides a step down from the high intensity district to Buford Highway where a pedestrian environment is desired

- 50 – 100 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 5 – 10 Stories

Low Intensity – Takes the needs of adjoining neighborhoods into account

- 10 – 50 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 1 – 5 Stories

Druid Hills Activity Node - Destination activity node and gateway to Brookhaven. Has great potential for redevelopment. Should allow for intensities similar to those allowed in the high intensity district

Briarwood Activity Node - This area is targeted for redevelopment. Should allow for intensities similar to those allowed in the medium intensity district

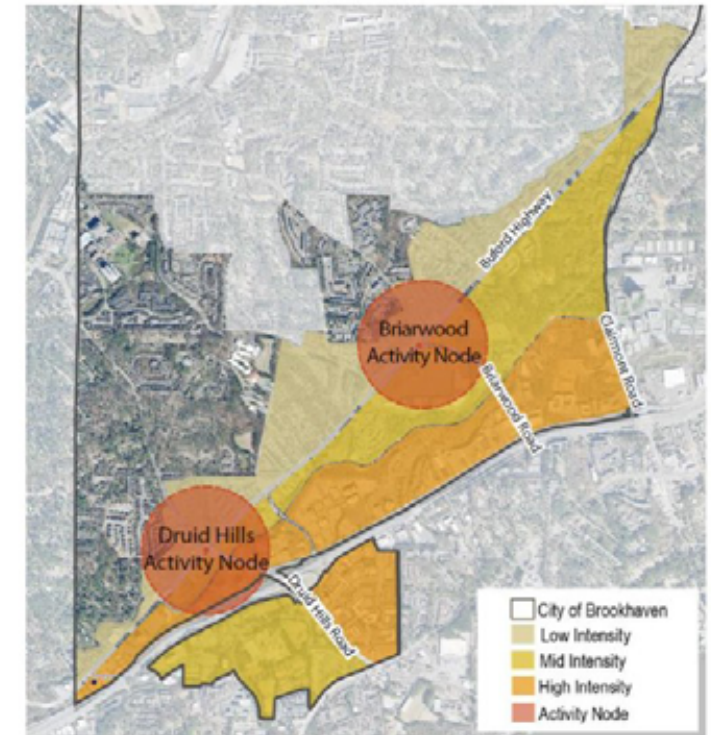


Figure 3-21: Buford Highway Development Intensities Concept Map

INVESTIGATE

EXPLORE

RECOMMEND

DOCUMENT

A four-step process was established to acknowledge the work done through previous efforts and to ground the project by learning from precedents, prioritizing goals, developing actionable recommendations and documenting with clarity for an achievable outcome.

APRIL 2023

MAY 2023

JUNE 2023

JULY 2023

JULY 2023



Collate background analysis that will meaningfully inform the exploration of options

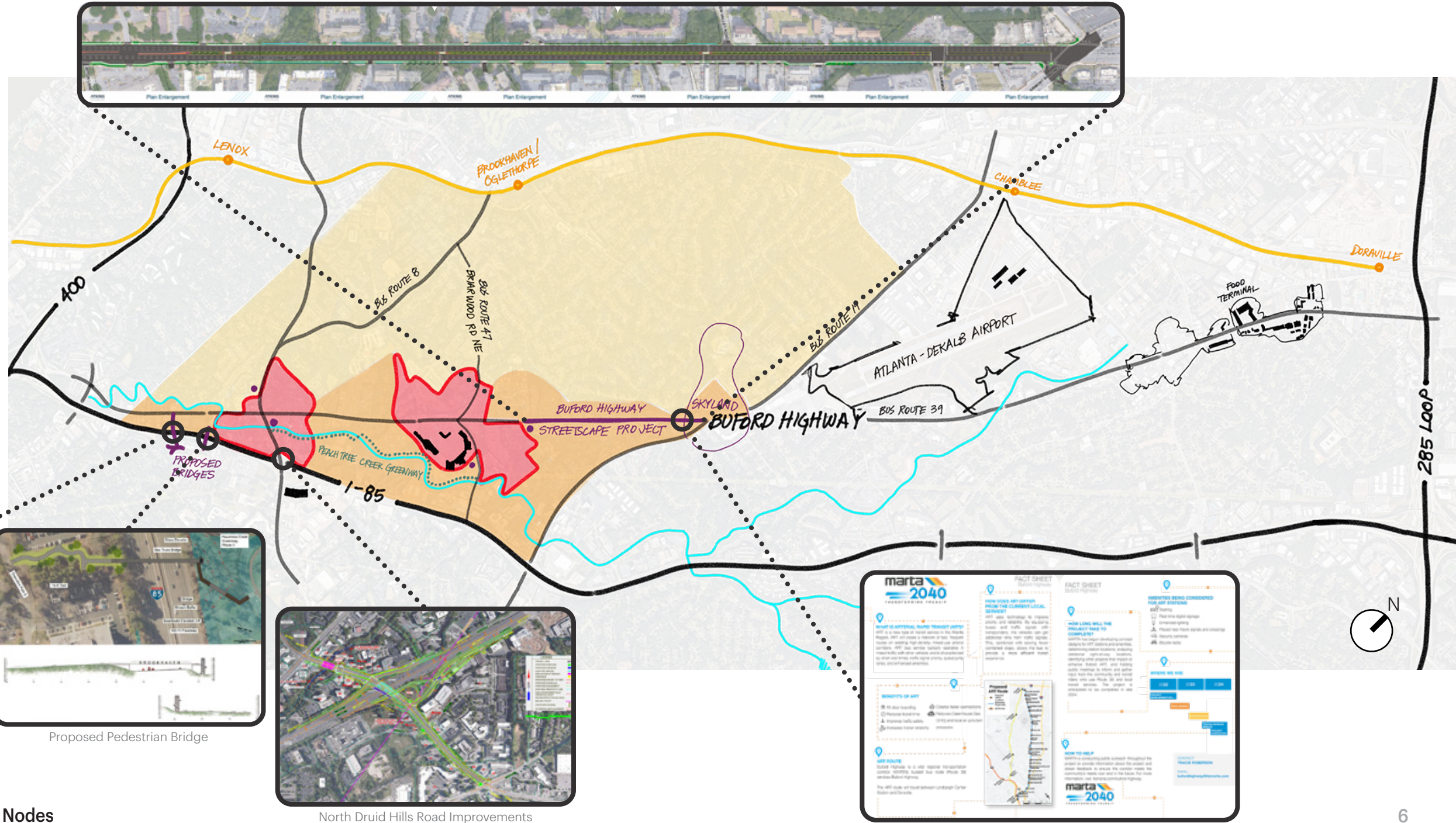
Uncover opportunities and possibilities

Align around a collective vision for the future

Ensure the plan is relevant and impactful over time

A regional contextual analysis examined the relationship of Buford Highway within Brookhaven and the city's neighbors, and the role that the North Druid Hills and Briarwood activity nodes would play in the larger picture.

Future projects, such as the Buford Highway Streetscape Project, MARTA 2040 Arterial Rapid Transit, and proposed pedestrian and vehicular bridges will play a significant role in the development of the masterplan.



Proposed Vehicular Bridge



Proposed Pedestrian Bridge



North Druid Hills Road Improvements

MARTA 2040 Arterial Rapid Transit (ART)

A team site walk in April 2023 revealed discomfort caused by heat, noise, and pollution, as well as the vitality of culture along Buford Highway.



Where are the opportunities to support this thriving culture through thoughtful urban design?



Investigate

Explore

Recommend

How is the framework informed by multiple factors, including site opportunities, research, and environment?

DEMOGRAPHICS

A clear understanding of the demographic within both node study areas lends additional insight toward program uses and cultural activities.



The North Druid Hills and Briarwood Activity Nodes are located in one of the most diverse areas of Atlanta. While most surrounding population identify as White or Black, the stretch of Buford Highway identifies a notably high number of people who identify as Hispanic and Asian.

Therefore, considerations toward cultural programming and culturally diverse grocery/service is a major takeaway.

Race/Ethnicity



Briarwood Activity Node
-Diverse
-Large Hispanic population

Druid Hills Activity Node
-Diverse
-Gaps due to office/industrial uses

Buford Highway Activity Nodes

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

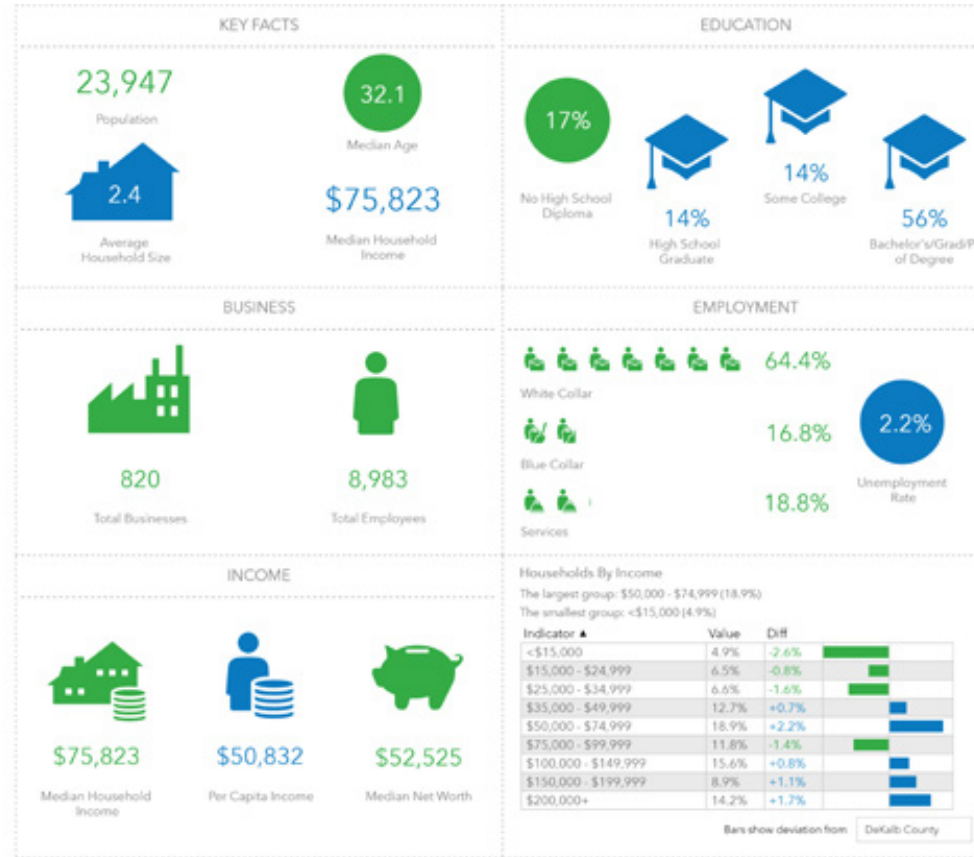


Socioeconomic factors such as household size, median income, education level, and more enable an understanding of what the community needs and how they would use a particular area.



Different types of jobs and the number of jobs in the area are a precursor for understanding the potential of each activity node and who it is serving. While the median age is currently 32 years of age, an increasingly young working population with higher than average household income could indicate that housing may serve white collar employees.

Generally, the metrics indicate accounting for a significantly increasing population on top of a housing shortage for Millennial and Gen Z generational groups.



23,947	10,192	2.35	32.1	\$75,823	\$450,318	81	74	87
Population	Households	Avg Size Household	Median Age	Median Household Income	Median Home Value	Wealth Index	Housing Affordability	Diversity Index

COMMUNITY FACTORS

Analyzing existing access to community assets in the neighborhood allows insight toward what might be missing, and how those missing pieces could fit into the framework.



Within 1mi of the Briarwood node, there is a gap in Parks & Gardens, Playgrounds, Libraries, Food & Beverage, Entertainment, and Public Transport. This enables an understanding toward the best uses in the framework that can foster increased access to populations that otherwise do not currently have it.



This infographic was inspired by the visionary [Plan Melbourne](#) and the hyper proximity 15-minute City concept. Points of interest are grouped into civic themes which contribute to livability and community engagement.

Points of interest are sourced from [Foursquare](#) and updated quarterly. © 2023 Esri

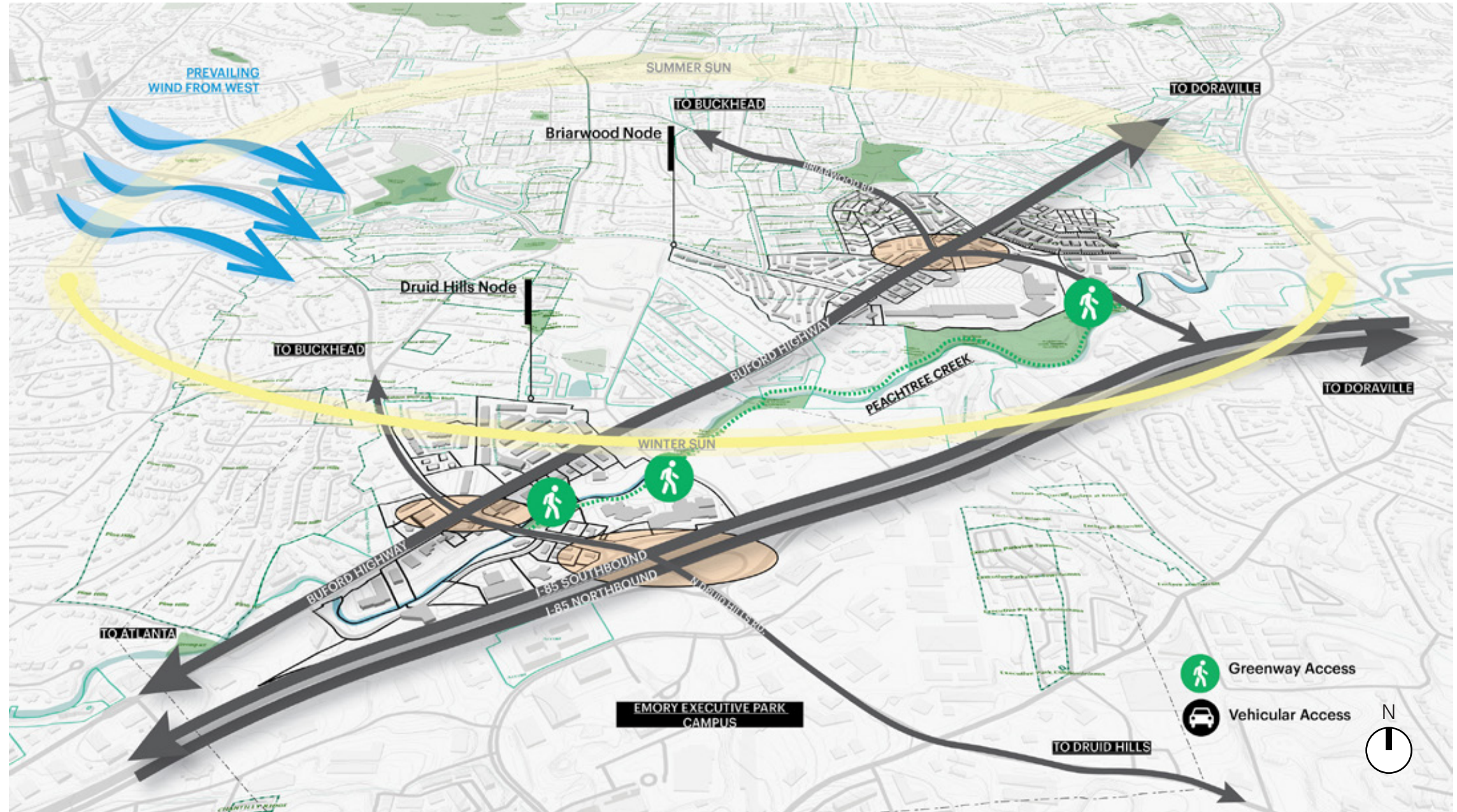
SITE ANALYSIS

Learning about what lies inside and outside of the property lines can help inform the framework through leveraging environmental implications, site adjacencies, sound levels, access/circulation, and more.



While both activity nodes are located adjacent to Buford Highway and Interstate 85, Peachtree Creek's interaction with each differs greatly. The creek runs directly through the Druid Hills activity node, but is south of the Briarwood activity node, enabling different kinds of interaction.

Environmentally, each node is currently of a low density with sun coming from the south and prevailing wind coming from northwest. Therefore, orienting buildings to take advantage of breezes and passive solar are key.



MOBILE DATA ANALYSIS

Through studying movement trends, how much a particular area is used and when is it used can be inferred.



Using mobile data, movement trends within each activity node can be studied to understand which areas people tend to travel to and from. The methodology allows a localized understanding of each activity node, keeping in mind that current uses are highly separated and not currently coexisting with one another.

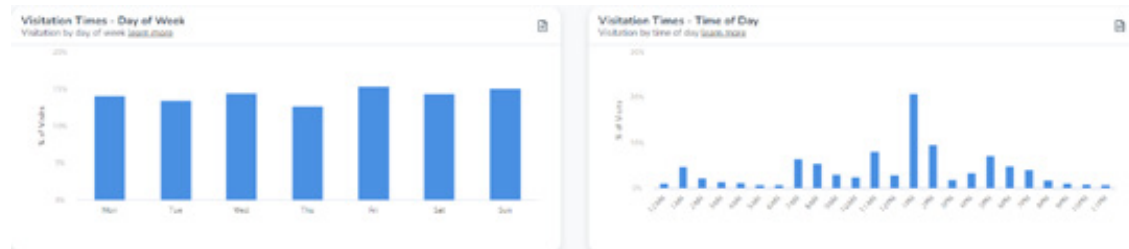
Major takeaways from the study indicated that both trailheads of the greenway were trafficked in the late morning and late afternoon. Existing apartments in the area indicated spikes between 11am-4pm, while NE Plaza in the Briarwood Activity node spiked between 2pm-3pm. Heavier activity among all retail areas occurred on the weekend. Not surprisingly, all office areas had heaviest visitation between 9am-3pm on weekdays with very little activity on weekends.

DRUID HILLS - GREENWAY

Visitation Heatmap



Visitation Times

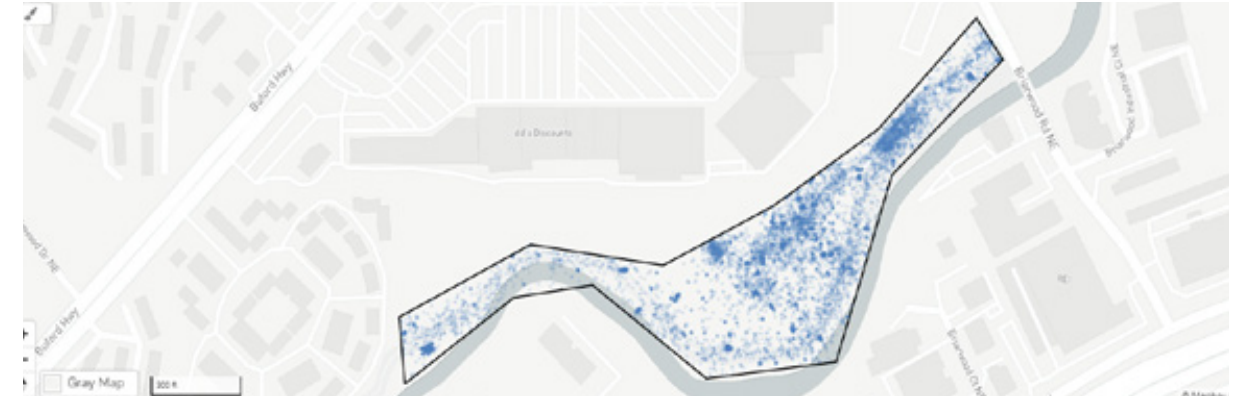


Visitation Over Time



BRIARWOOD GREENWAY

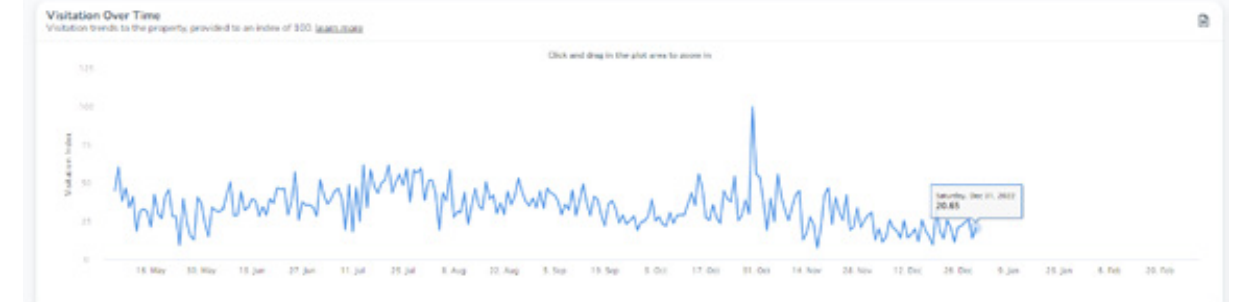
Visitation Heatmap



Visitation Times



Visitation Over Time



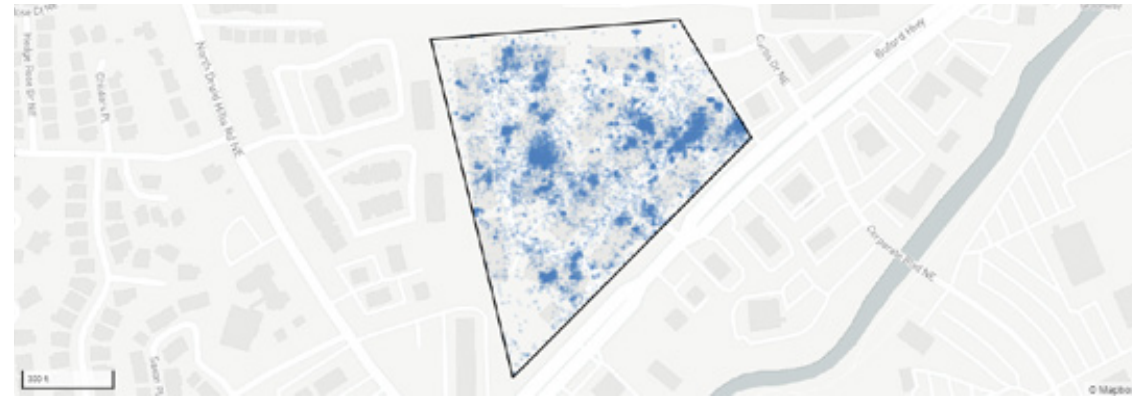


For other areas and uses, visitation to the multifamily apartments in Druid Hills spikes between 11am-12pm, but then drops back to morning levels. This could signify people going home for lunch then going back to work.

NE Plaza visitation peaks at the hours of 2pm and 3pm, signifying busy afternoon use. There also appears to be a slight peak on the weekend, but high usage throughout the week.

DRUID HILLS - MULTIFAMILY AREA

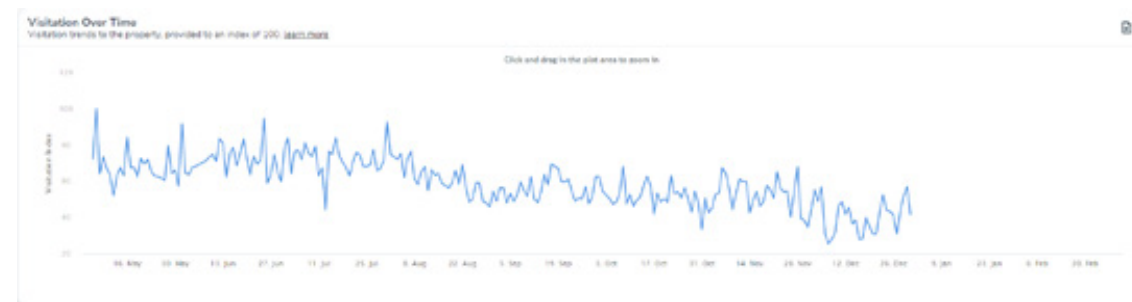
Visitation Heatmap



Visitation Times



Visitation Over Time



BRIARWOOD- NORTHEAST PLAZA

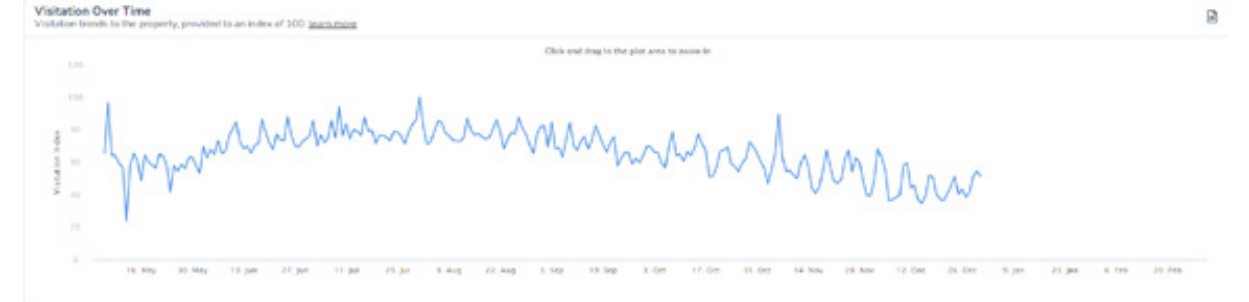
Visitation Heatmap



Visitation Times



Visitation Over Time



TRAFFIC DATA

Traffic can help indicate how many people at a given time are moving through or to a destination, lending insight toward safety and positioning of uses.



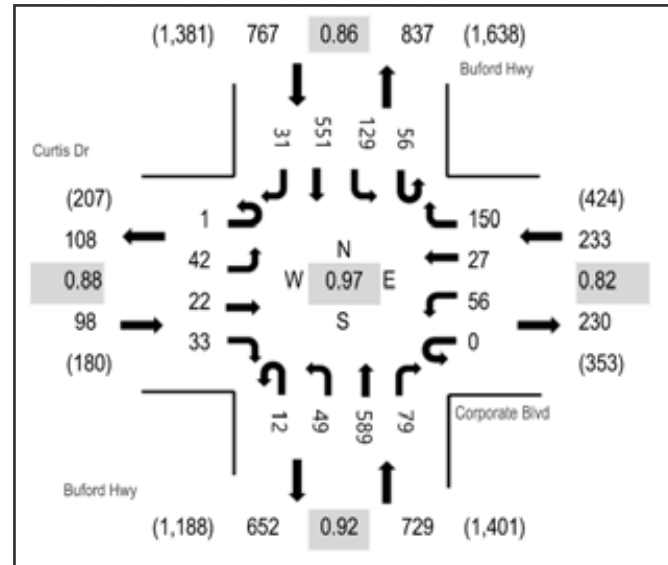
Understanding traffic and its consequences on the major intersections with Buford Highway enables insight toward pedestrian safety and existing roadway usage at different times of the day. This data can be leveraged to understand how new streets can be located and how to best handle vehicular traffic with increasing development.

Major takeaways indicated that southbound traffic is heavy in the morning with light pedestrian usage. N Cliff Valley Rd serves less pedestrians than Briarwood, with moderate traffic in all directions. Lastly, Corporate Blvd serves a very high number of cars and pedestrians, with northbound peaks in the evening.

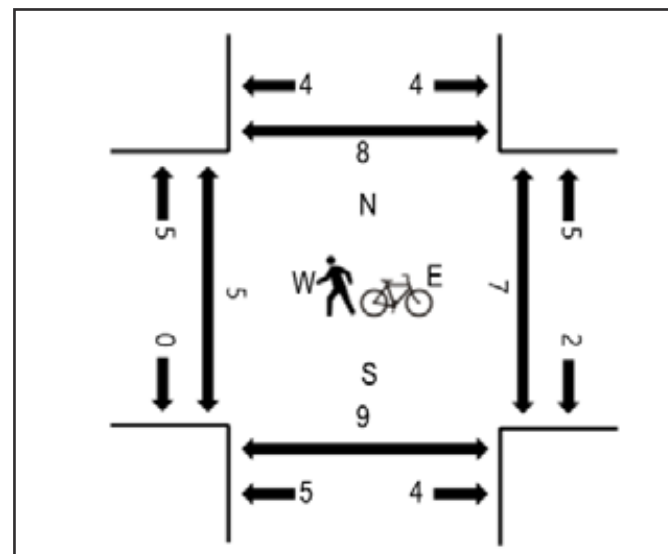
The methodology leveraged three main times of the day of study: morning, afternoon, and evening. The diagrams represented show traffic at the 12pm study time.

DRUID HILLS - 12PM TRAFFIC

Peak Hour - All Vehicles

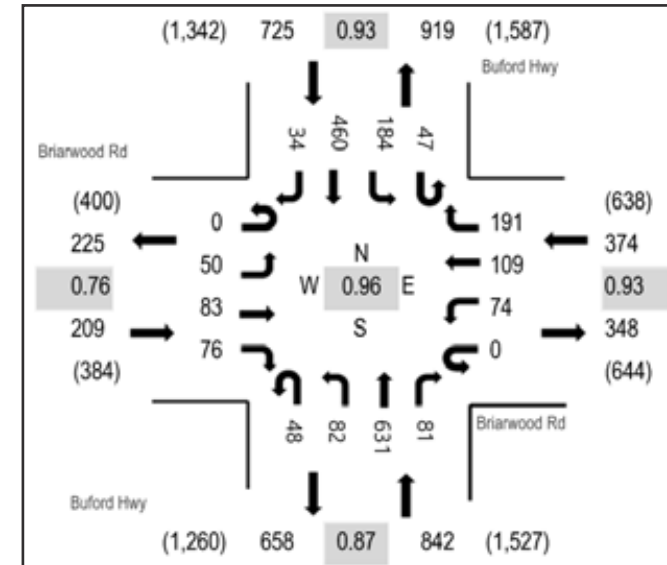


Peak Hour - Pedestrians/Bicycles in Crosswalk

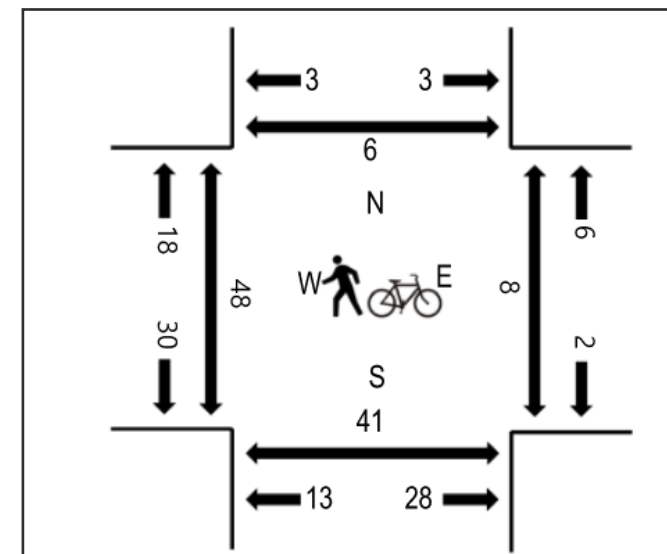


BRIARWOOD - 12PM TRAFFIC

Peak Hour - All Vehicles



Peak Hour - Pedestrians/Bicycles in Crosswalk





The Druid Hills total traffic counts for the afternoon study times indicate highest traffic right before 1pm, with highest traffic being through the Buford Highway intersection northbound and southbound but with very low pedestrian crossing. This indicates high visibility from Buford Highway but an importance for pedestrian improvements to foster safer reliability.

Druid Hills - 12pm Total Traffic Counts

Interval Start Time	Curtis Dr Eastbound				Corporate Blvd Westbound				Buford Hwy Northbound				Buford Hwy Southbound				Total	Rolling Hour	Pedestrian Crossings			
	U-Turn	Left	Thru	Right	U-Turn	Left	Thru	Right	U-Turn	Left	Thru	Right	U-Turn	Left	Thru	Right			West	East	South	North
11:00 AM	0	10	1	6	0	10	6	21	1	11	136	8	9	15	106	9	349	1,559	1	0	2	0
11:15 AM	0	11	3	11	0	10	4	25	5	7	141	13	16	11	111	8	376	1,667	0	3	4	2
11:30 AM	0	9	2	10	0	11	7	40	2	7	151	12	12	22	106	12	403	1,751	1	0	0	2
11:45 AM	0	13	3	3	0	11	9	37	0	9	153	16	17	17	133	10	431	1,788	2	0	1	0
12:00 PM	1	10	6	10	0	7	6	63	3	14	151	19	15	19	128	5	457	1,827	0	0	2	2
12:15 PM	0	11	6	7	0	15	7	33	4	9	166	22	11	29	130	10	460		0	3	1	3
12:30 PM	0	12	1	6	0	19	10	33	3	13	129	18	17	36	138	5	440		0	1	1	3
12:45 PM	0	9	9	10	0	15	4	21	2	13	143	20	13	45	155	11	470		4	3	5	0

Briarwood - 12pm Total Traffic Counts

The Briarwood total traffic counts for the afternoon study times indicates highest traffic a quarter after noon, with totals again being through the Buford Highway intersection northbound and southbound, but with slightly higher pedestrian usage. These outcomes indicate similar takeaways from North Druid Hills in the realm of safer walkability.

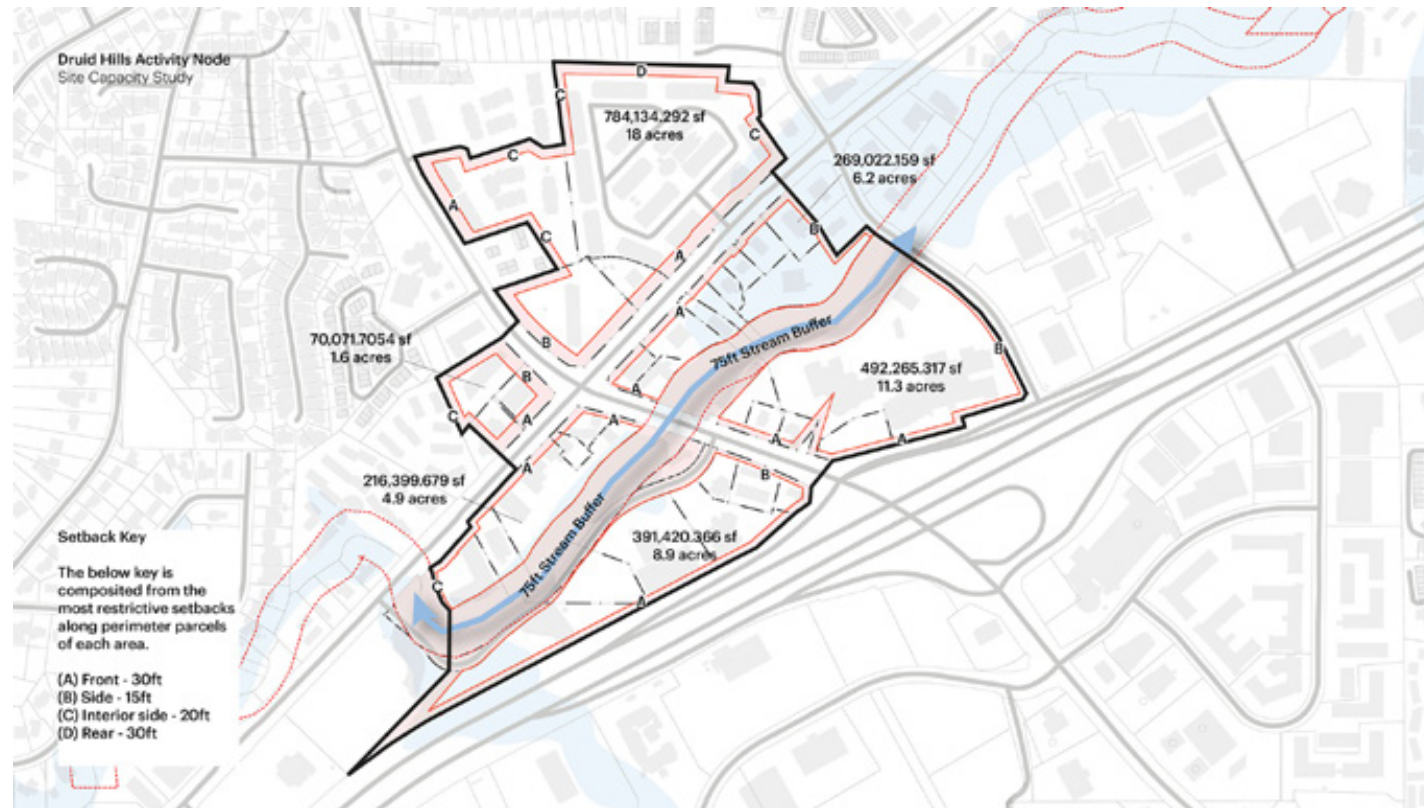
Interval Start Time	Briarwood Rd Eastbound				Briarwood Rd Westbound				Buford Hwy Northbound				Buford Hwy Southbound				Total	Rolling Hour	Pedestrian Crossings			
	U-Turn	Left	Thru	Right	U-Turn	Left	Thru	Right	U-Turn	Left	Thru	Right	U-Turn	Left	Thru	Right			West	East	South	North
11:00 AM	0	10	20	19	0	16	15	19	14	13	102	8	7	30	89	7	369	1,743	8	2	5	0
11:15 AM	0	6	15	21	0	19	19	24	14	17	118	17	4	43	100	7	424	1,910	5	2	7	4
11:30 AM	0	10	16	11	0	8	21	36	17	11	138	16	9	28	98	7	426	2,048	8	6	12	0
11:45 AM	0	14	16	22	0	16	28	39	14	21	158	16	13	53	103	11	524	2,150	9	1	3	1
12:00 PM	0	12	20	20	0	15	25	62	10	23	155	17	4	46	121	6	536	2,148	18	1	13	1
12:15 PM	0	10	14	12	0	18	26	45	13	25	179	24	13	48	127	8	562		9	1	13	1
12:30 PM	0	14	33	22	0	25	30	45	11	13	139	24	17	37	109	9	528		12	5	11	3
12:45 PM	0	8	30	9	0	15	23	49	23	29	116	32	12	41	129	6	522		7	5	6	5

Analysis and Diagrams by All Traffic Data Services Inc.

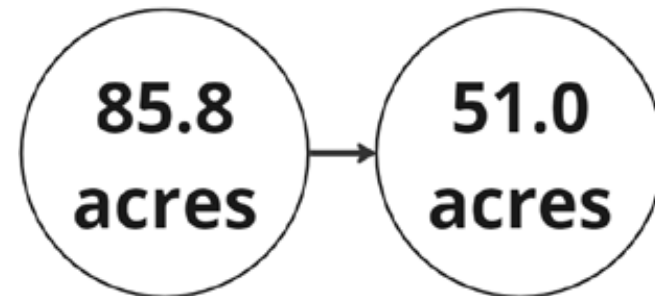
SITE CAPACITY

An initial capacity study taking into account the most restrictive setbacks and stream buffer lends insight toward how much land is buildable.

NORTH DRUID HILLS

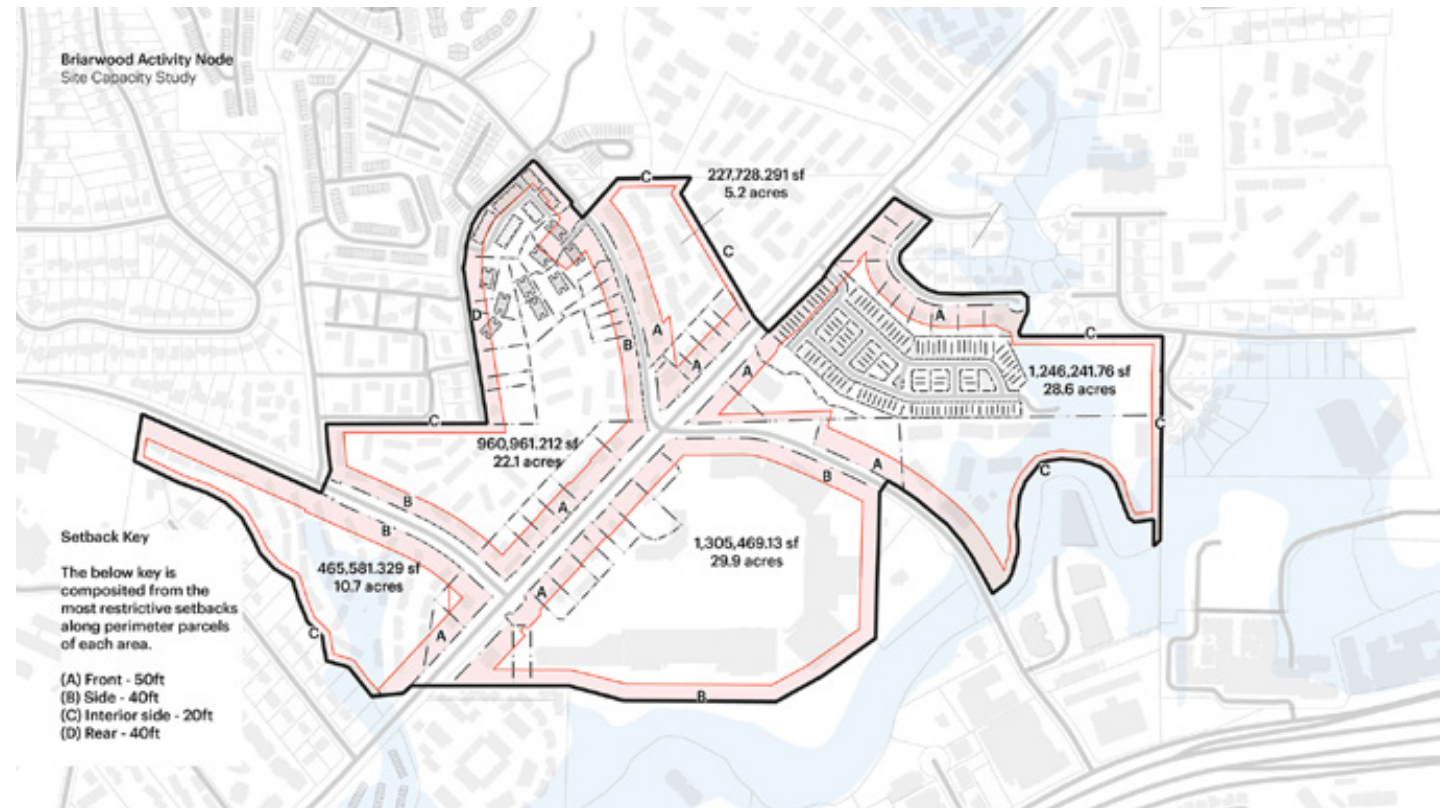


For the Druid Hills Activity Node, a large amount of area is subtracted given the stream running directly adjacent to Buford Highway.



~59% Capacity

BRIARWOOD



The Briarwood Activity Node is largely unaffected by the stream buffer except in the easternmost parcel.



~64% Capacity

ZONING CHARACTERISTICS WITHIN STUDY AREA

- Single Family Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Attached Residential
- Local Commercial
- General Commercial
- Neighborhood Shopping
- Industrial
- Office - Institutional

Total Acreage

85.8

*Site falls within
Buford Highway
Overlay District*



- Zoning_Districts**
- C-1
 - C-2
 - M
 - NS
 - O-I
 - RM-14
 - RM-18
 - RS-75
 - RS-85
 - RSA-5
 - RSA-8
 - Buford Highway Overlay District

SITE ANALYSIS

Different site analysis elements can be analyzed independent of others factors to gain deeper understanding toward how they might influence the future framework.

Multiple analyses of specific site factors at the scale of each node allow a preliminary understanding of the many influencers of design.

There are opportunities for taller buildings along the interstate, mixed uses along Buford Highway to increase access, and taking advantage of topography with buried parking garages or views. While the North Druid Hills Activity Node is smaller in overall area than Briarwood, there is greater change in topography and less urban heat island effect.

Satellite



Assets and Amenities



Walkability



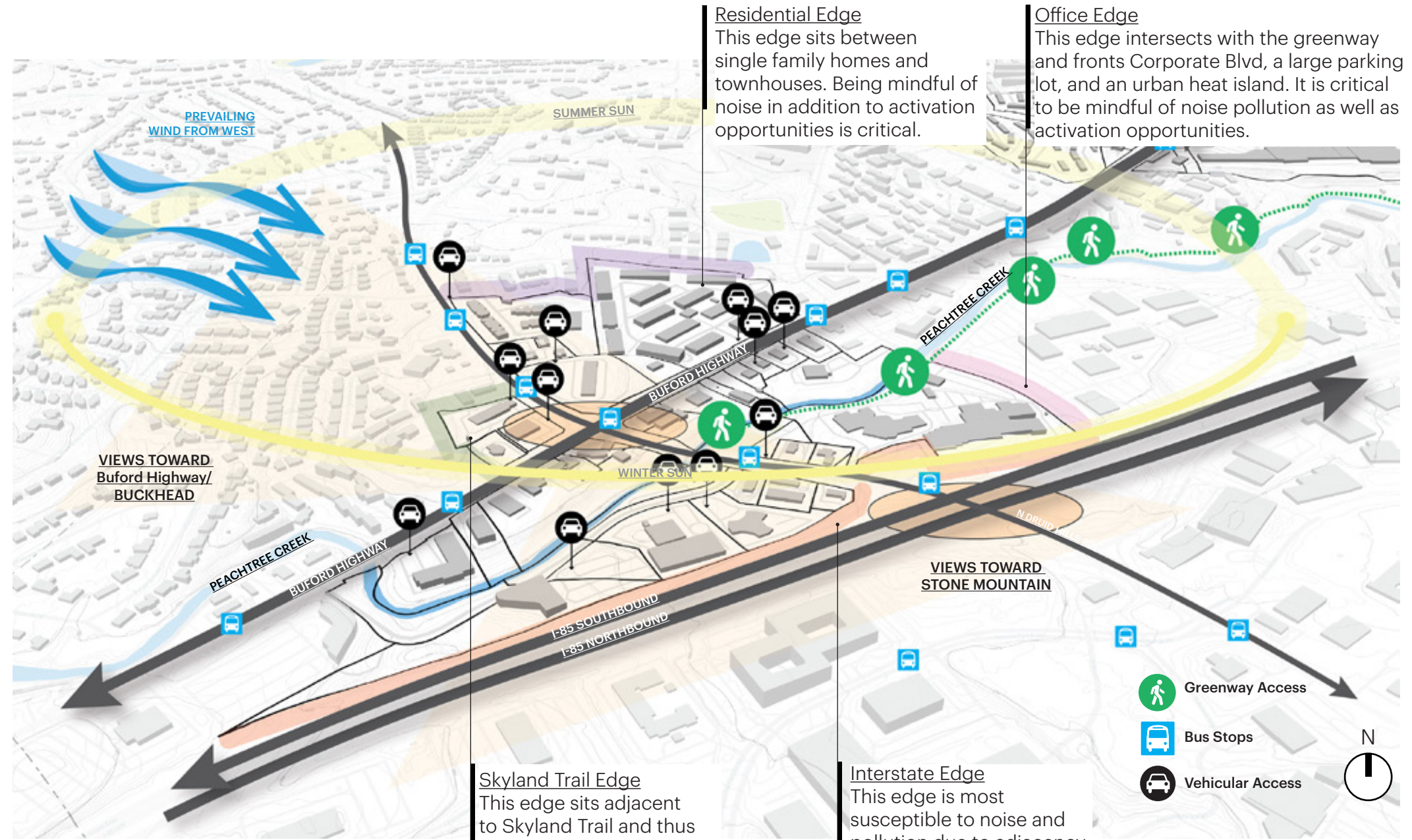
SITE ANALYSIS

Learning about what lies inside and outside of the property lines can help inform the framework through leveraging environmental implications, site adjacencies, sound levels, access/circulation, and more.



Air and Sound Pollution

- █ Very High Pollution Source
- █ High Pollution Source
- █ Moderate Pollution Source
- █ Low Pollution Source



Residential Edge
This edge sits between single family homes and townhouses. Being mindful of noise in addition to activation opportunities is critical.

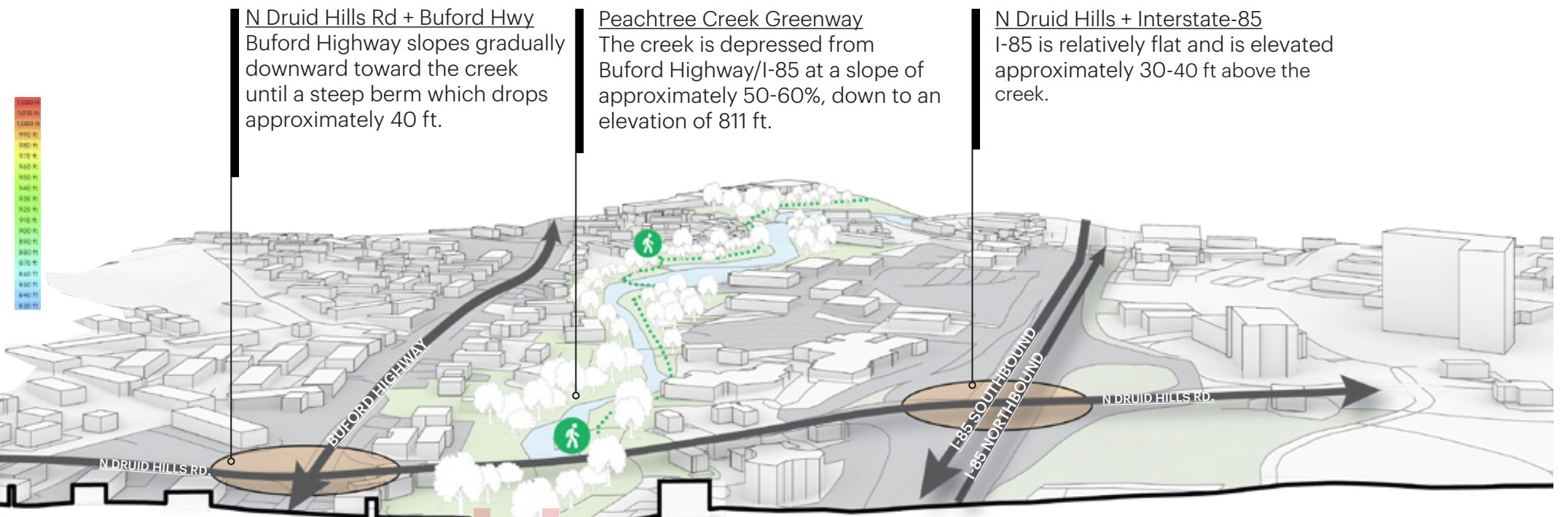
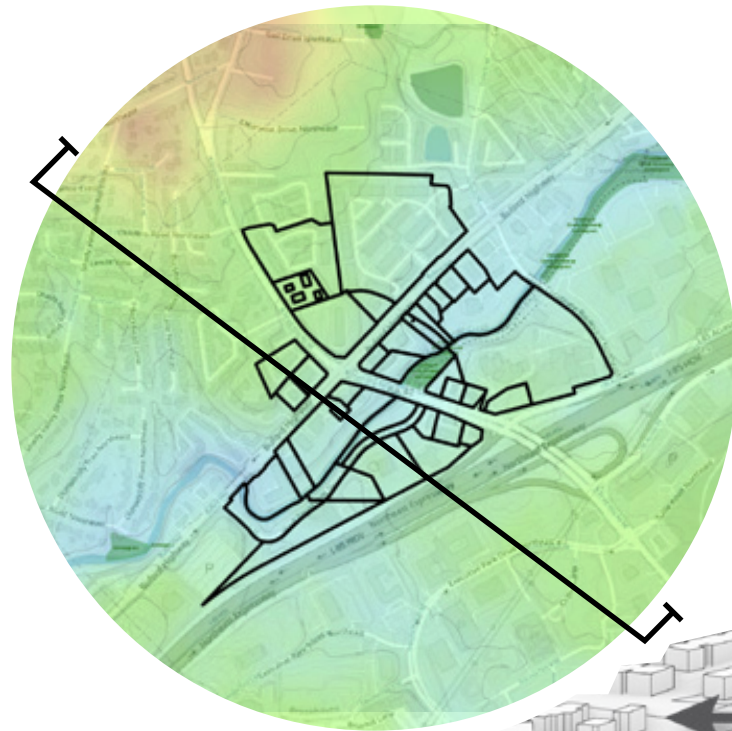
Office Edge
This edge intersects with the greenway and fronts Corporate Blvd, a large parking lot, and an urban heat island. It is critical to be mindful of noise pollution as well as activation opportunities.

Skyland Trail Edge
This edge sits adjacent to Skyland Trail and thus deserves consideration toward future expansion/health uses.

Interstate Edge
This edge is most susceptible to noise and pollution due to adjacency to I-85, but also presents opportunity for visibility.

SITE ANALYSIS - SECTION

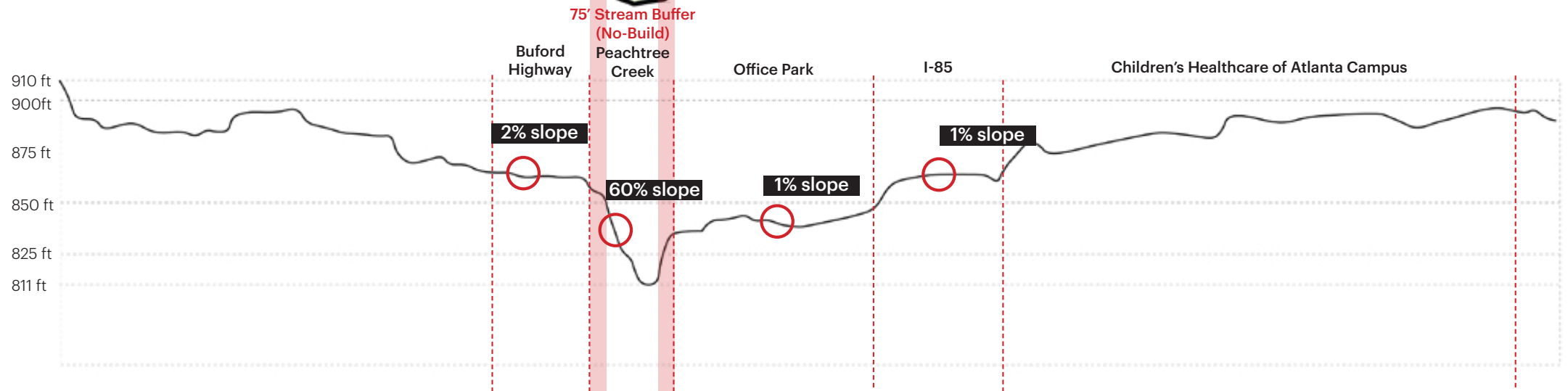
Leveraging how the topography changes throughout the site allows a critical understanding of how sites are buildable and how views can be created.



Topography

A topographic analysis of the North Druid Hills activity node reveals dramatic grade changes throughout the site, oriented the focal point of Peachtree Creek.

This topography creates opportunities for buildings to relate to the Creek, as well as each other, in a unique manner.



BRIARWOOD

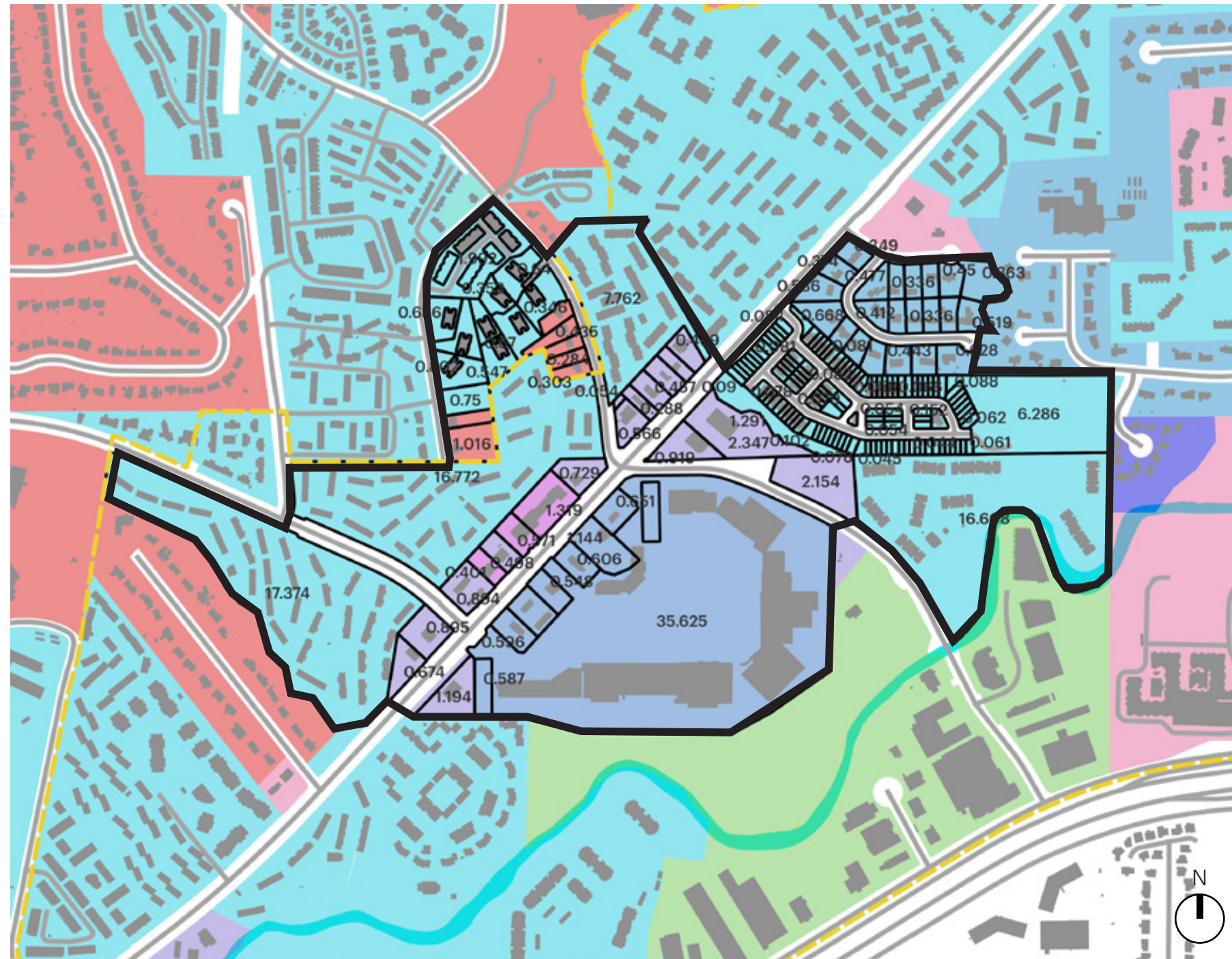
ZONING CHARACTERISTICS WITHIN STUDY AREA



- Single Family Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Attached Residential
- Local Commercial
- General Commercial
- Neighborhood Shopping
- Industrial
- Office - Institutional

Total Acreage

150.1



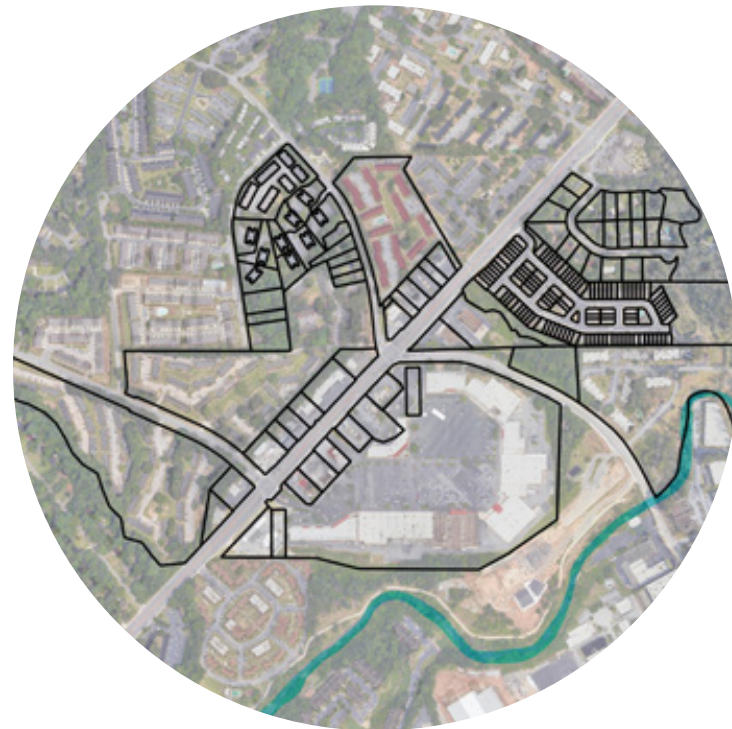
Zoning_Districts

- C-1
- C-2
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- Buford Highway Overlay District

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Different site analysis elements can be analyzed independent of others factors to gain deeper understanding toward how they might influence the future framework.

Satellite



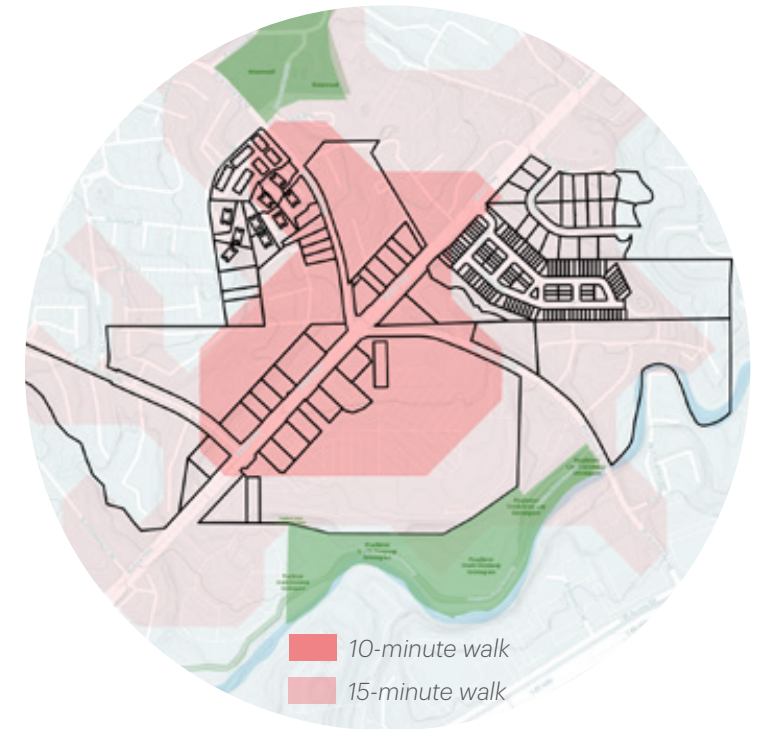
Multiple analyses of specific site factors at the scale of each node allow a preliminary understanding of the many influencers of design.

There are opportunities for greatly reducing urban heat island effect and creating safe pedestrian connections between each node area. The higher topography and interaction with the creek to the south of Northeast Plaza allows for views and direct connection to the existing Peachtree Creek trail.

Assets and Amenities



Walkability



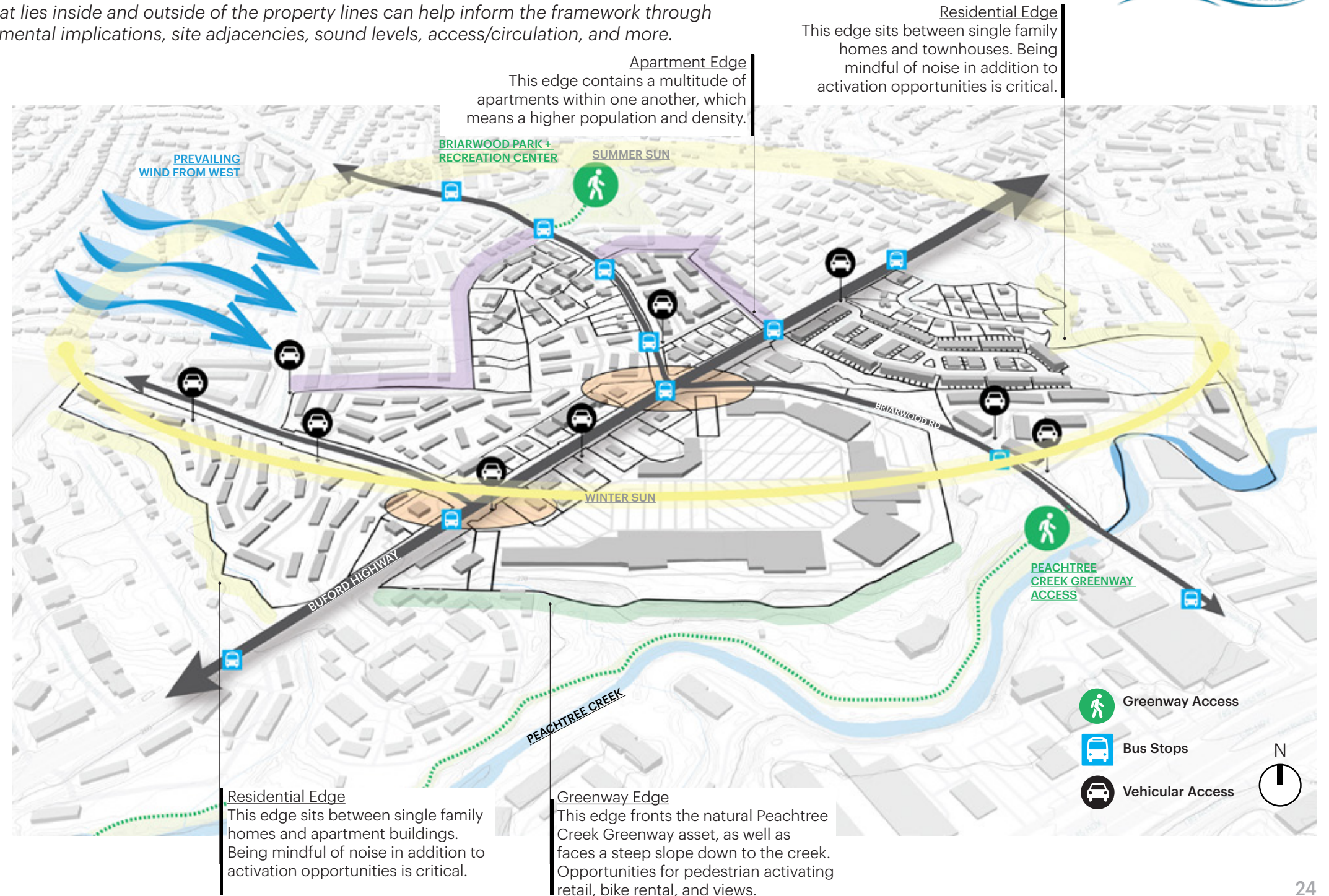
SITE ANALYSIS

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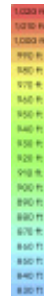
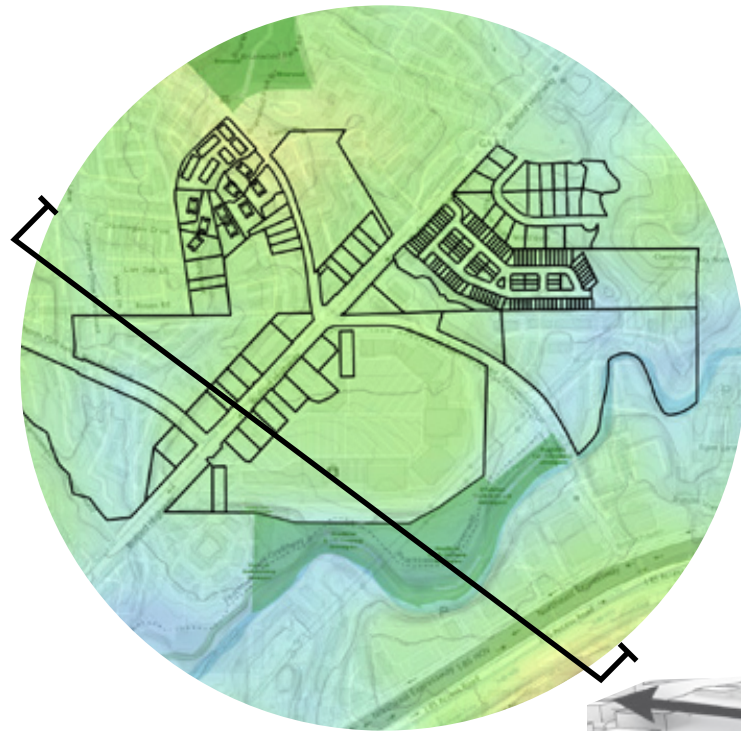
Air and Sound Pollution

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SITE ANALYSIS - SECTION

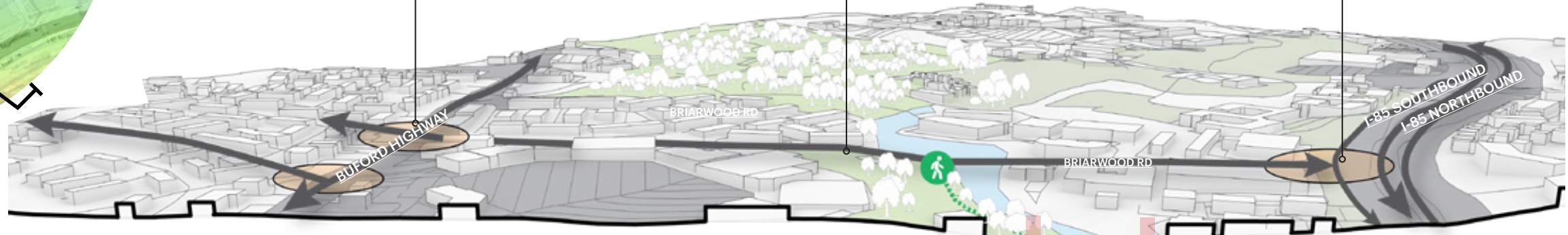
Leveraging how the topography changes throughout the site allows a critical understanding of how sites are buildable and how views can be created.



Briarwood Rd + Buford Hwy
Buford Highway transitions to NE Plaza softly with slopes rarely greater than 2-3%. The entire parking lot of NE Plaza is extremely flat.

Peachtree Creek Greenway
The current greenway terminates at Briarwood Rd. The difference in elevation is approximately 50-60 ft, with gradual elevation changes near SE Plaza and the Visitor's Center.

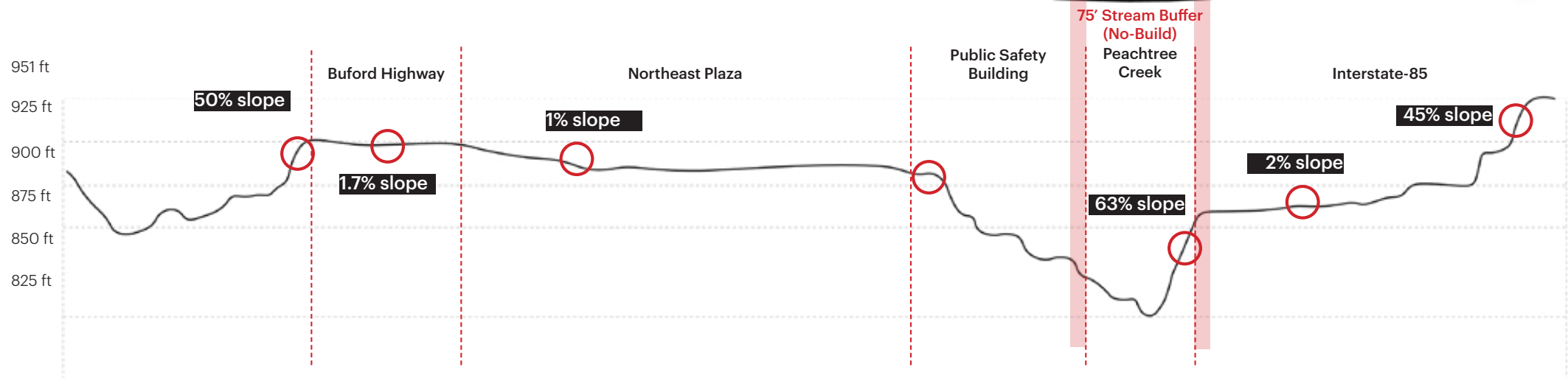
Briarwood + Interstate-85
Briarwood terminates in a one-way I-85 frontage road.



Topography

A topographic analysis of the Briarwood activity node reveals that the Northeast Plaza is relatively level, presenting an ideal center for dense gridded development and open space.

Inversely, steep grade changes around Buford Highway and Peachtree Creek may be more suitable for buried structures and innovative architectural solutions.



COLLECTIVE INSIGHTS - MOBILITY ANALYSIS

What did we learn from the mobile data analysis, and how might they translate to the future framework of the activity nodes?



01 | Greenway Usage

Peachtree Creek Greenway in Druid Hills is used less than Briarwood - but does peak around 1pm, possibly signifying that the greenway is used by those nearby for lunch walks.

02 | Lunch from Home

Visitation to the apartments in both nodes spikes between 11am-4pm, possibly signifying some people going home for lunch or working from home in the afternoons.

03 | Office Services

Office heatmaps indicate highest usage from 9am-3pm. The parking lots can be activated with parks, plazas, and retail

04 | NE Plaza as Anchor

Northeast Plaza visitation peaks at the hours of 2pm and 3pm. There is slight peak on weekend, but high usage throughout the week.

05 | Flipping the Grid

Changing the orientation of key real estate perpendicular to PTC Greenway can create more opportunities for protection from Buford Highway noise, opportunities for engaging the greenway.

COLLECTIVE INSIGHTS - SUSTAINABLE DESIGN ANALYSIS

What did we learn from the sustainable design analysis, and how might they translate to the future framework of the activity nodes?



01 | Sustainability Program

Consider program such as a Water Hub or Resilience Center.

02 | Adaptive Reuse Options

Communicate the value of multiple different ways of development - specifically, an option where buildings are reused rather than demolished in the future.

03 | Future Readiness

Design for future photovoltaic implementation and electric vehicle charging implementation

04 | Solar Rights

Protect existing solar envelopes by massing tallest building masses to the north, and smaller heights to the south

05 | Addressing Surface Lots

Consider porous/permeable pavement and district parking options

COLLECTIVE INSIGHTS - 2023 INVESTIGATION

What did we learn from the overall investigation, and how might they translate to the future framework of the activity nodes?



01 | Safety, Refuge, & Pause

Both intersections are unsafe for pedestrians. One focus of the exploration should be to create moments of safety, refuge, and pause along the busy BuHi corridor.

02 | Mitigating the Heat Island

A major heat island exists at the NE Shopping Plaza. Design should mitigate while innovating new ways of thinking about district parking.

03 | Activating the Greenway

The creek exists as a major asset for both nodes. Consideration towards activation through accessing the greenway from different points, creation of retail, and points of recreation should be explored.

04 | Maximizing the Edge

Creating a new edge along PTC Greenway could increase access at multiple points to the pedestrian trail, and a new way to traverse along BuHi rather than use the sidewalk.

05 | Flipping the Grid

Changing the orientation of key real estate perpendicular to PTC Greenway can create more opportunities for protection from BuHi noise, opportunities for engaging the greenway.

06 | Programmatic Gaps

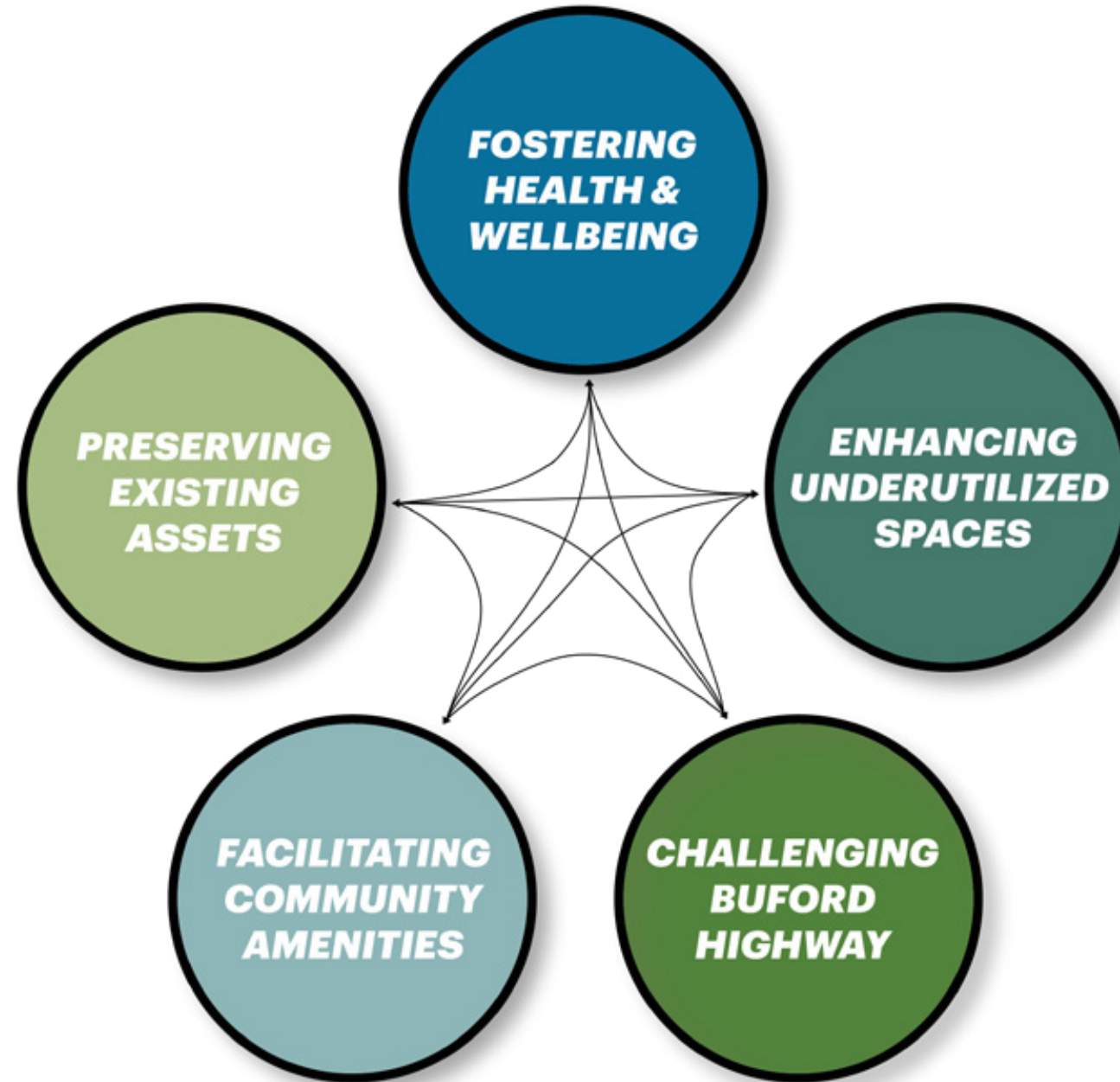
Programmatic gaps are: public transit, playgrounds, parks and gardens, and libraries. Secondary gaps are entertainment and food & beverage

07 | Diverse Population

High Hispanic population in both study areas, compared to the rest of the cohorts - which could signal a need for cultural-related program.



Creating guiding principles allows for design decisions in the framework to be well informed using the multiple insights that were collected during Investigation. The 25 insights were organized into 5 categories that created the guiding principles for this project.





Investigate
Explore
Recommend

How can we leverage the process of exploration to uncover one recommended framework?



Cities around the country embrace their waterways in unique ways, providing respite, activity, and resources for their respective communities.

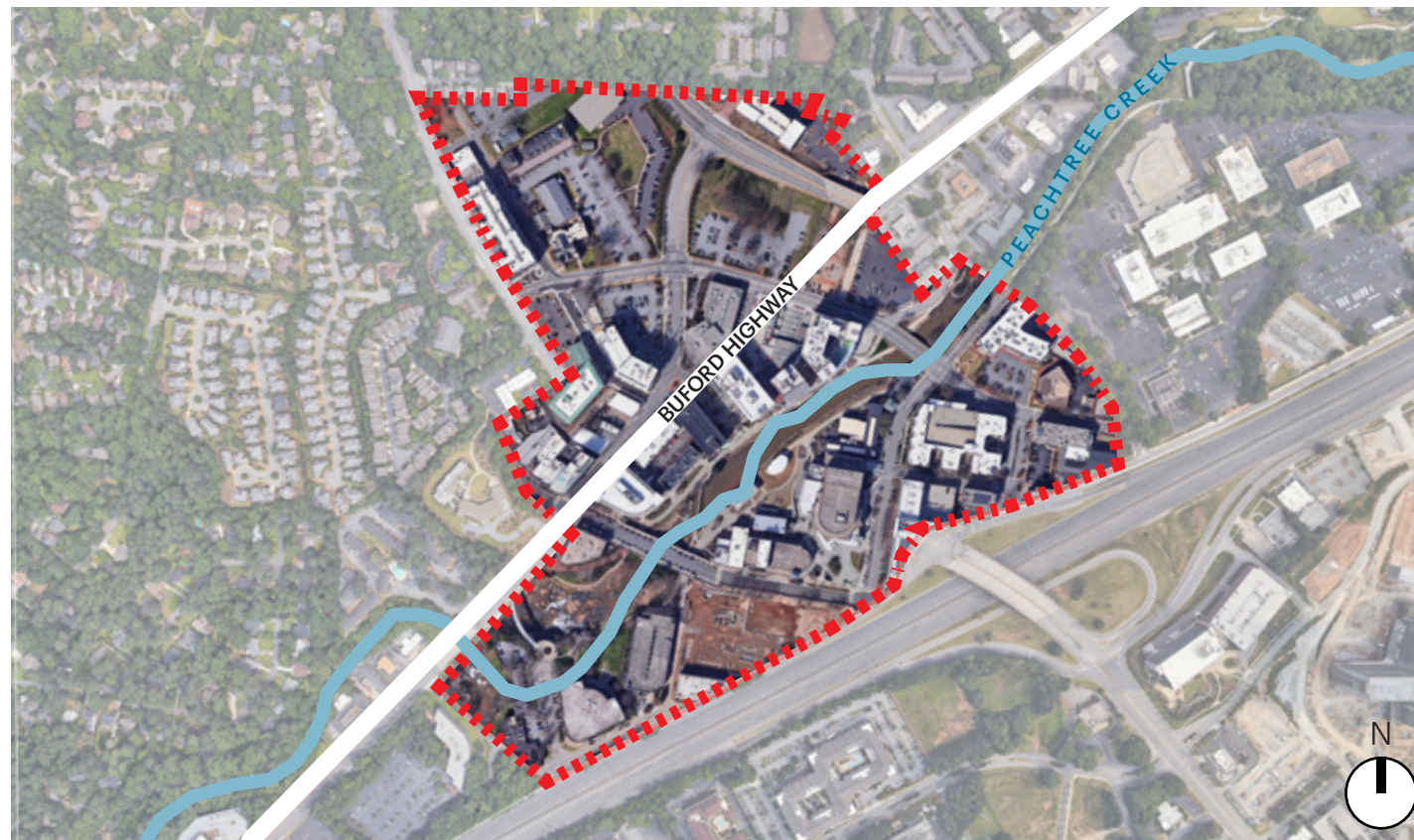
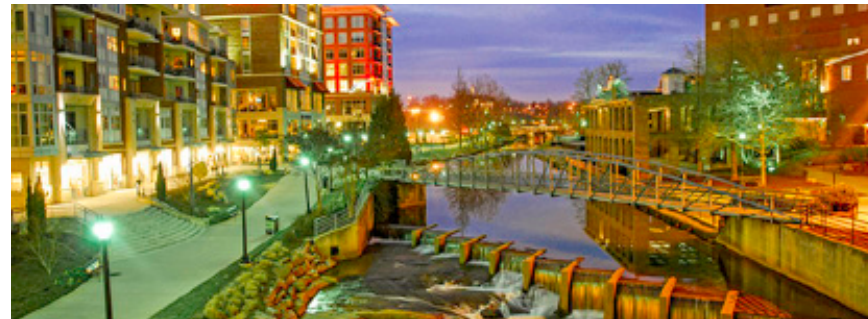
In what ways is Peachtree Creek similar to and unique from these other waterways, and what can we learn from them?

SCALE COMPARISON

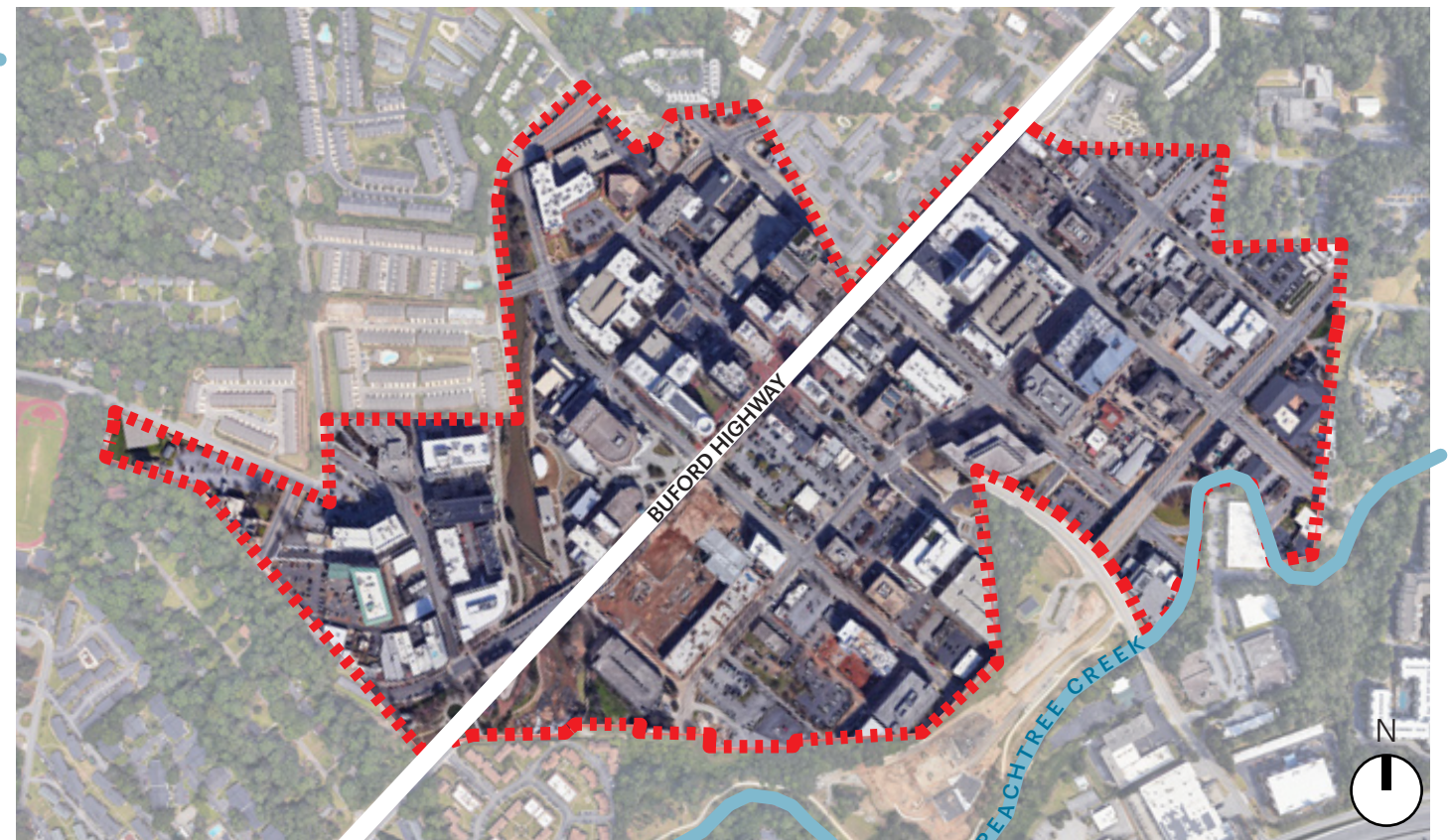
Greenville RiverPlace

RiverPlace includes 10 acres of walking paths, parks, apartments, offices, and hotels along the Reedy River in Greenville, SC.

<https://www.riverplacesc.com/>



The study area outline of the North Druid Hills node was overlaid on the aerial map of Greenville RiverPlace to study the scale, density, and layout through comparison.



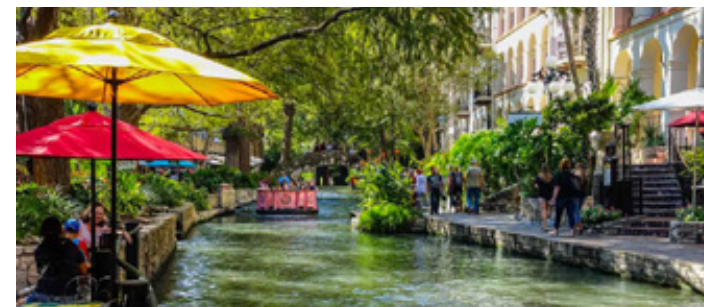
The study area outline of the Briarwood node was overlaid on the aerial map of Greenville River to study the scale, density, and layout through comparison.

SCALE COMPARISON

San Antonio River Walk

The River Walk consists of 15 miles of paths running along the San Antonio River, 5 miles of which run through the heart of the city.

<https://www.sanantonio.gov/>



The study area outline of the North Druid Hills node was overlaid on the aerial map of the San Antonio RiverWalk to study the scale, density, and layout through comparison.



The study area outline of the Briarwood node was overlaid on the aerial map of the San Antonio RiverWalk to study the scale, density, and layout through comparison.

SCALE COMPARISON

Denver River Mile

“Spanning 62 acres, The River Mile is the largest commercial project in the region and one of the large urban redevelopments in the country.”

<https://rivermiledenver.com/>



The study area outline of the North Druid Hills node was overlaid on the aerial map of the Denver River Mile to study the scale, density, and layout through comparison.



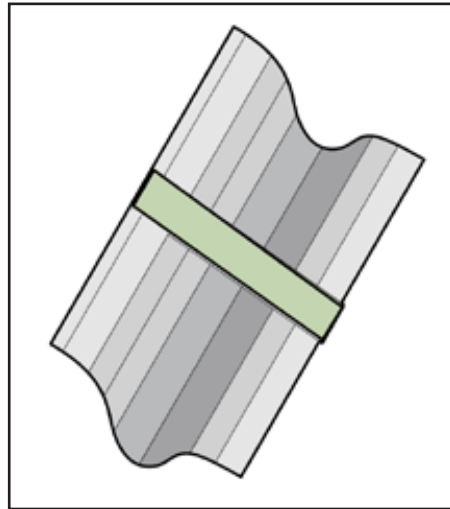
The study area outline of the Briarwood node was overlaid on the aerial map of the Denver River Mile to study the scale, density, and layout through comparison.

PRECEDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

BRIDGE



When access is important from one side of an obstruction to another

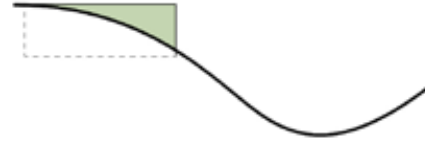


Can be architecturally/structurally iconic

Can challenge the idea of ambulatory space, but maybe not public space



*Timber Bridge
Gulou Waterfront, Jiangmen, China*



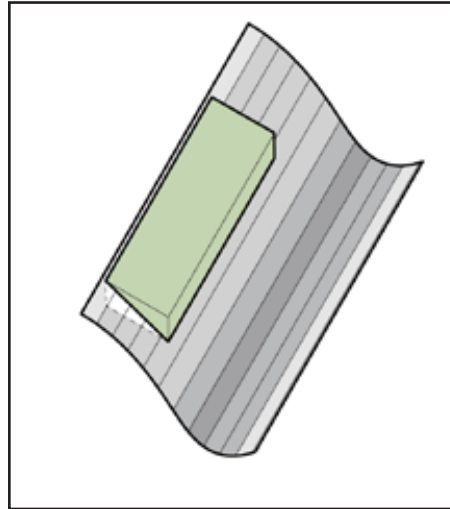
EMBED

Excavation required

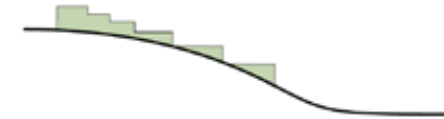
Preferable for gently sloping topographies

Can include occupiable roof

Can include elegant architecture that blends seamlessly with the land



*Magnolia Mound Visitor's Center
Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

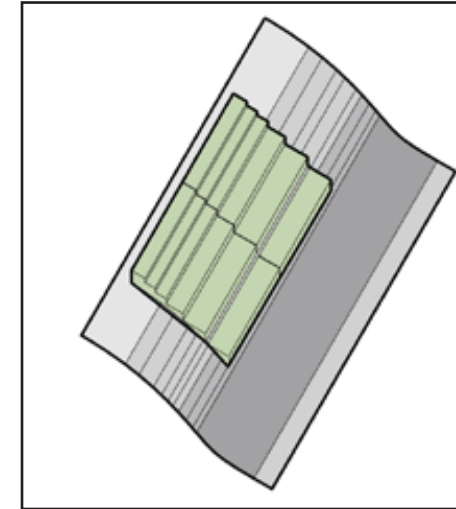


STEP

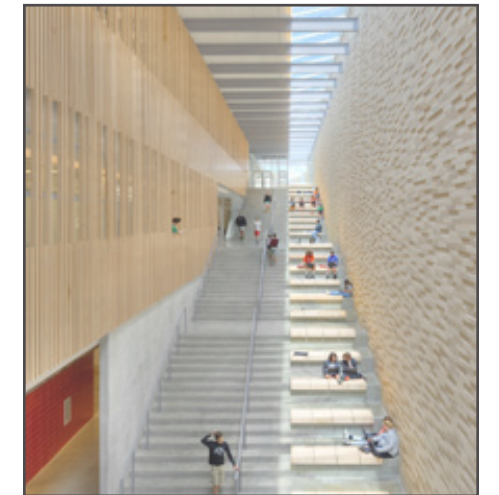
Ideal for steep slopes

Can create public space, buried space

Can integrate and define public and private, elevated vs. sunken space



*Hillside House
Los Angeles, California*



*Reeds Spring Middle School
Reeds Spring, Missouri*

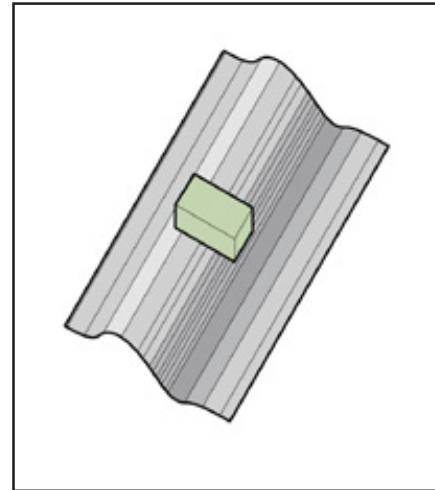
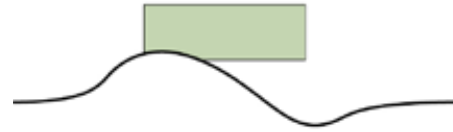
PRECEDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

DEFINE

Definition of an edge of built and natural

Can elevate, or interact depending on topography

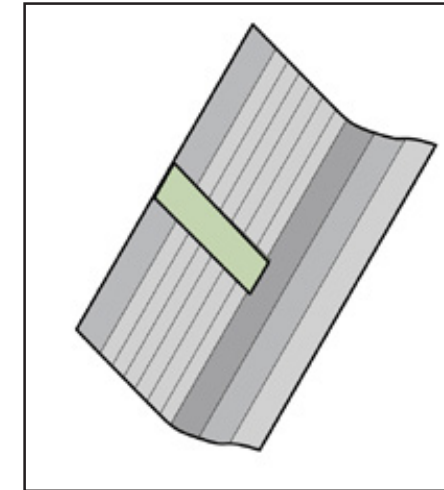
Suitable for potentially dangerous conditions and important separation



PERCH

Ideal for minimal impact, little ground disturbance

Can create views from key areas on sites

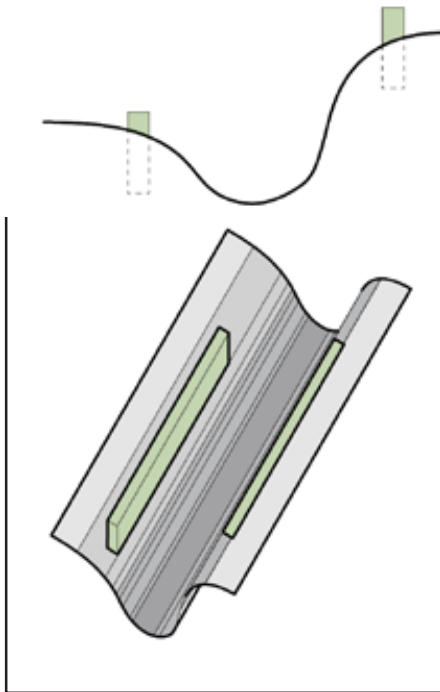


CONNECT

Necessary for water recreation/boat access

Creates connection with the water

Can disturb floodplain, water table, and environment



*Principal Riverwalk
Des Moines, Iowa*



*Principal Riverwalk
Des Moines, Iowa*



*New River Train Observation Tower
Radford, Virginia*



*Half-Tree House
Sullivan County, New York*

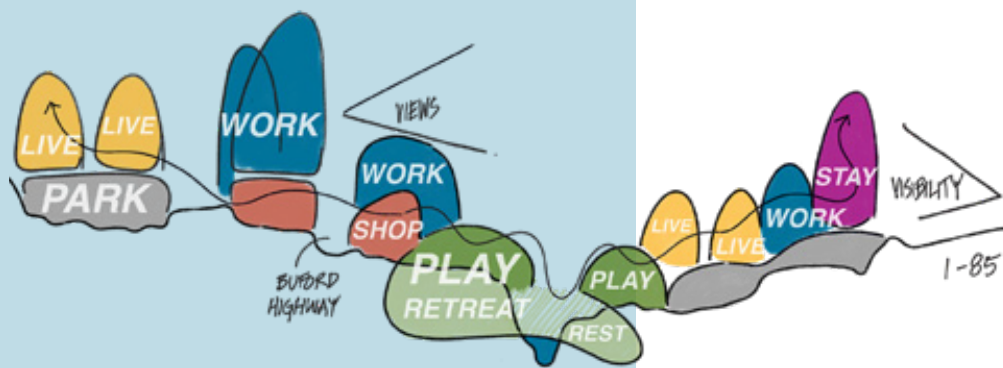


*Heartwood Residence
Portland, Oregon*

CONCEPTUAL IDEA

Gateway

The North Druid Hills Activity Node recommendation allows for greatest density and presence along Interstate 85, and serves as a Gateway to the city of Brookhaven. While the interaction with the creek is currently minimal, the framework connects future development to the planned pedestrian bridge and significantly increases access to ground level retail and public space.

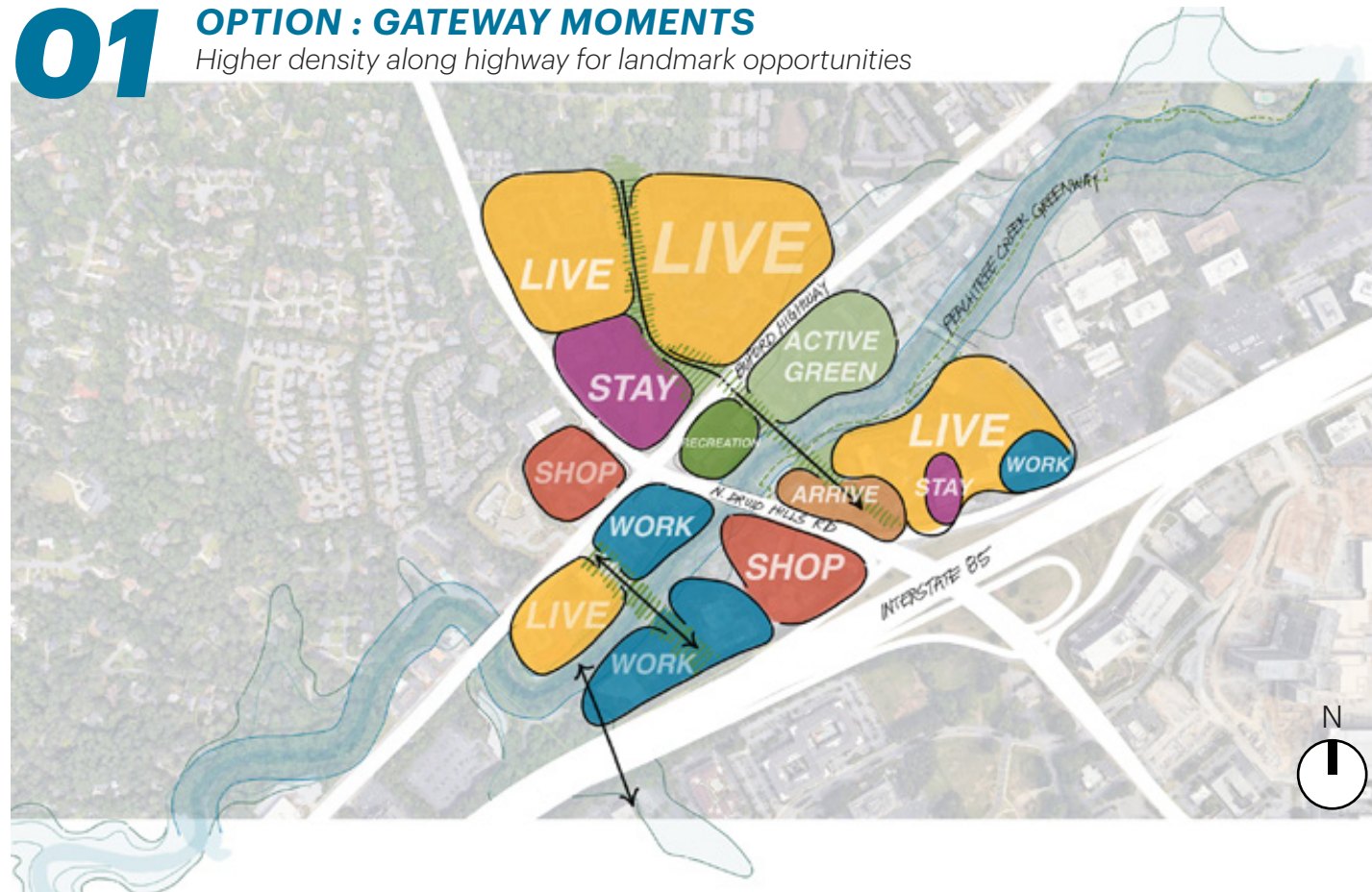


PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION STUDIES

Distribution of land use in an intentional and cohesive manner helps define the character of areas and enhance accessibility.

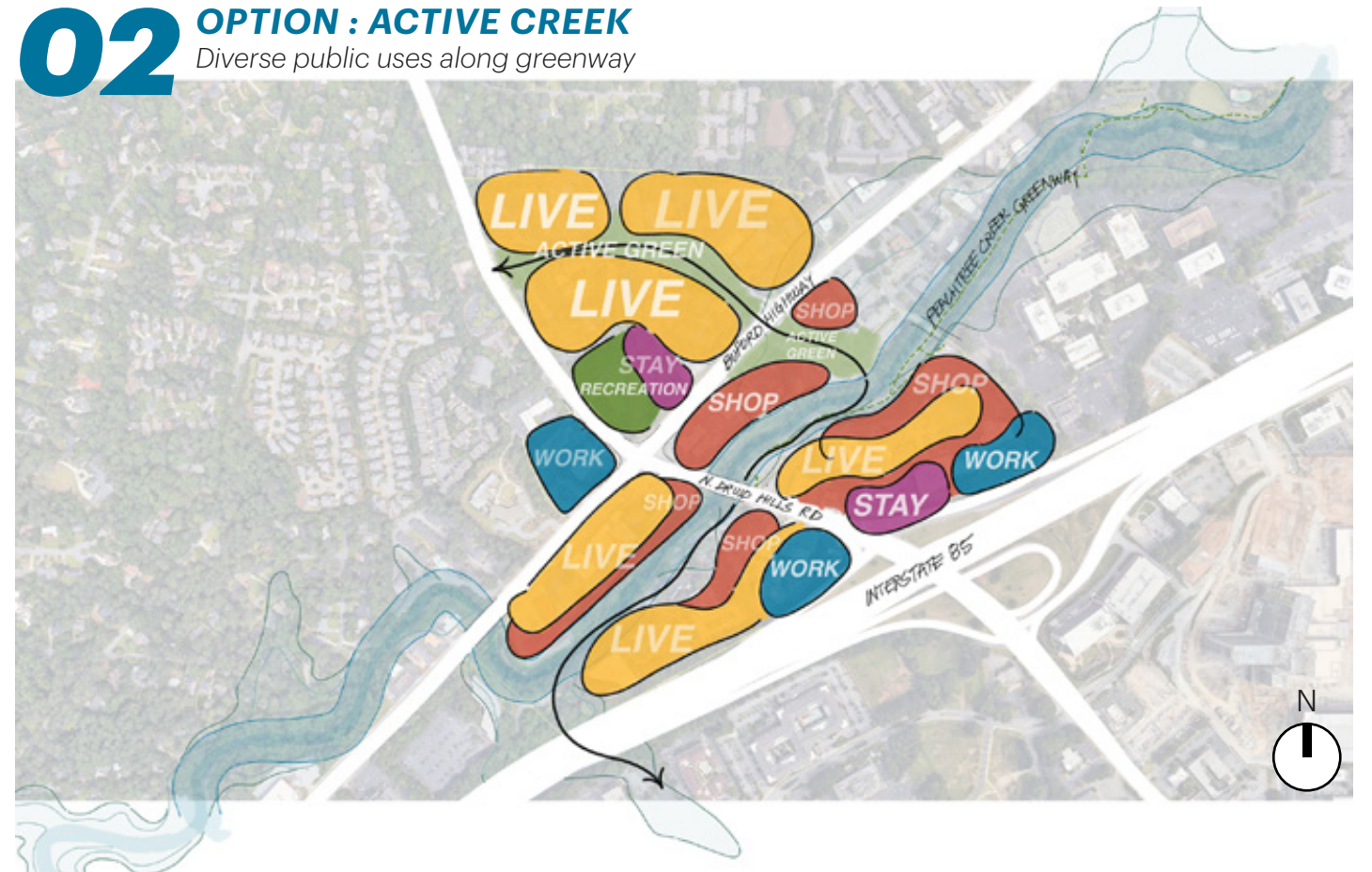
01 OPTION : GATEWAY MOMENTS

Higher density along highway for landmark opportunities



02 OPTION : ACTIVE CREEK

Diverse public uses along greenway



MASSING EXPLORATION

Exploring different options for each activity node through massing unravels framework possibilities and evaluates scenarios for feasibility.

01 OPTION : GATEWAY MOMENTS

Higher density along highway for landmark opportunities



Highlights of Comments from the City

- Capture bridge connection, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta campus connection
- Consider how GDOT traffic improvements tie into the framework, inform decisions
- “The stormwater park plays a big role in equitable development”



02 OPTION : ACTIVE CREEK

Diverse public uses along greenway



Highlights of Comments from the City

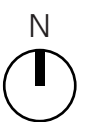
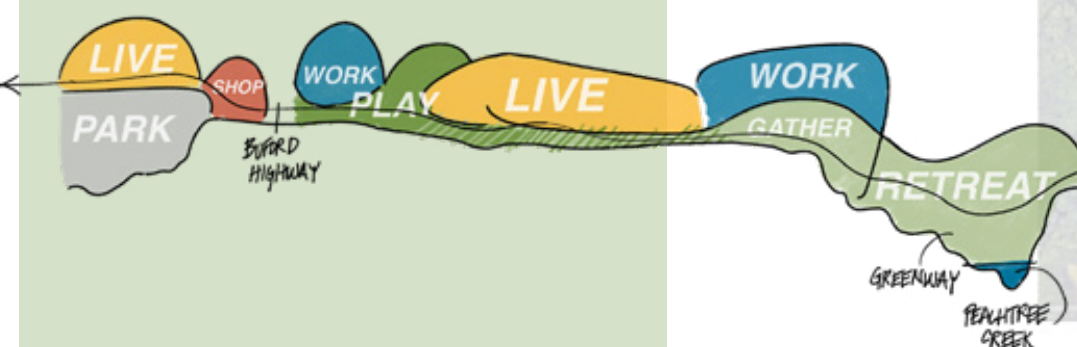
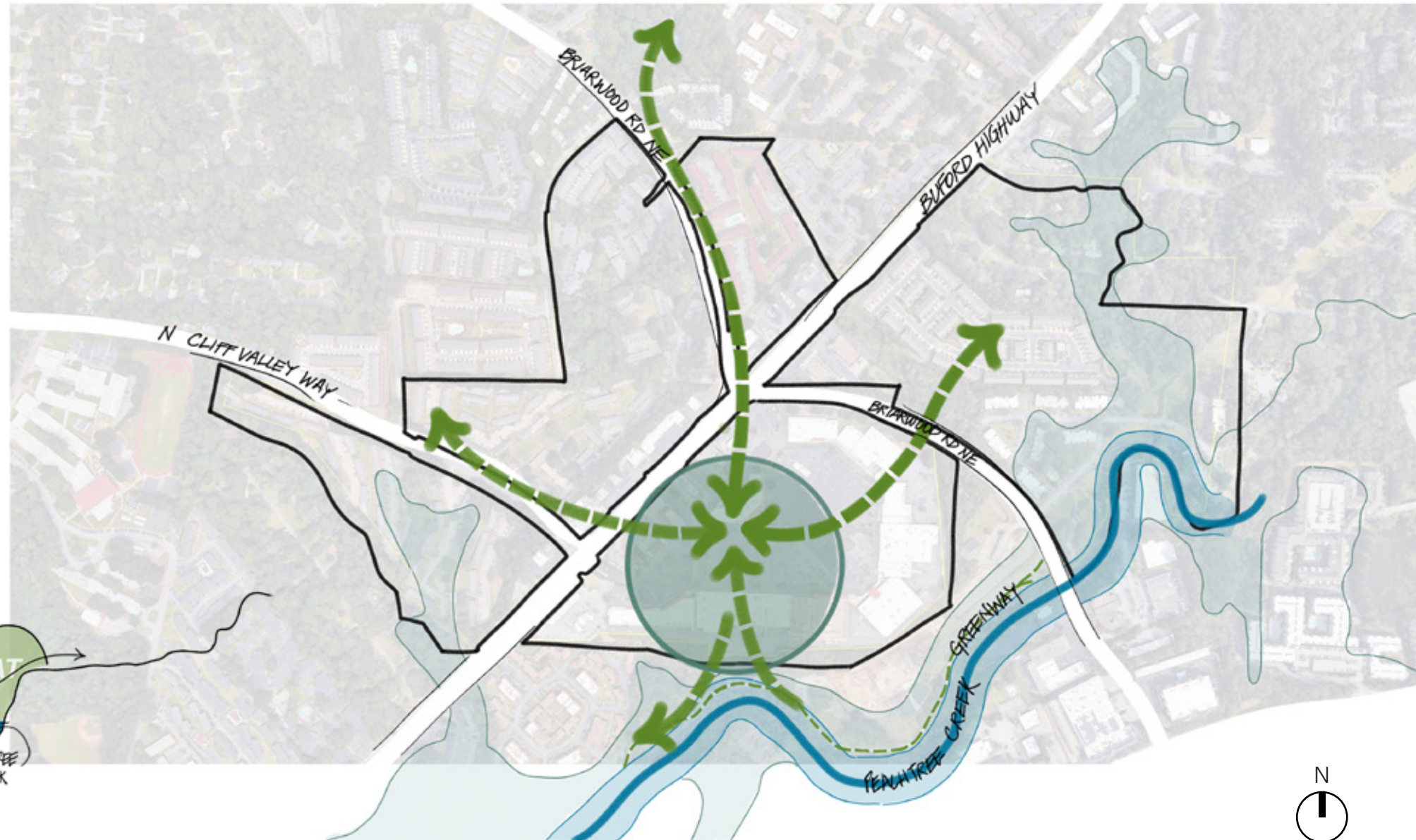
- Consider how green space is leveraged
- Plaza created in this option is nice
- Make sure framework is creatively leveraging stepped topography, buried parking



CONCEPTUAL IDEA

Haven

The Briarwood Activity Node recommendation creates a haven in the existing Northeast Plaza. The plaza currently is a large heat island, but is culturally significant in its hosting of festivals and events. The activity node is reimagined as a place of mixed-uses and activity that seamlessly connect to Peachtree Creek while offering diverse housing options and safe, walkable routes.

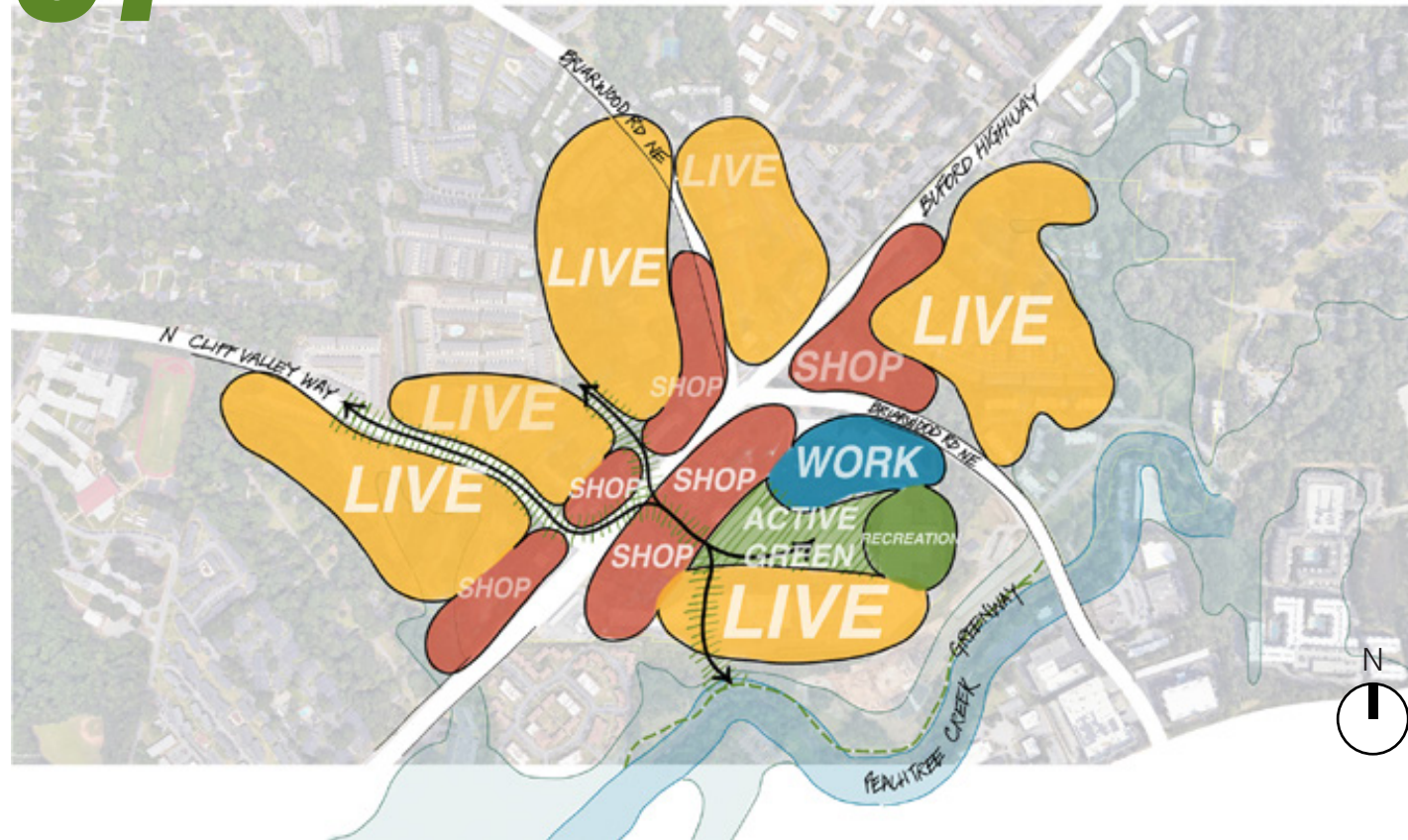


PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION STUDIES

Distribution of land use in an intentional and cohesive manner helps define the character of areas and enhance accessibility.

01 OPTION : SHOPPING PROMENADE

Retail concentration along Buford Highway



02 OPTION : POCKET PARKS

Distributed network of smaller open spaces radiating from a central green



MASSING EXPLORATION

Exploring different options for each activity node through massing unravels framework possibilities and evaluates scenarios for feasibility.

01 OPTION : SHOPPING PROMENADE

Retail concentration along Buford Highway



Highlights of Comments from the City

- Avoid any piecemeal approach, ensure a collaborative effort
- Consider how each area might be distinctly unique
- The internal grid for NE Plaza is nice, other areas might be more challenging to implement



02 OPTION : POCKET PARKS

Distributed network of smaller open spaces radiating from a central green



Highlights of Comments from the City

- NE Plaza is catalytic and can contain a major green space, mixed uses
- Investment can have a ripple effect and allow for streetscape improvements, guidelines
- Study where roads could be thoughtfully implemented



CHARACTER STUDIES

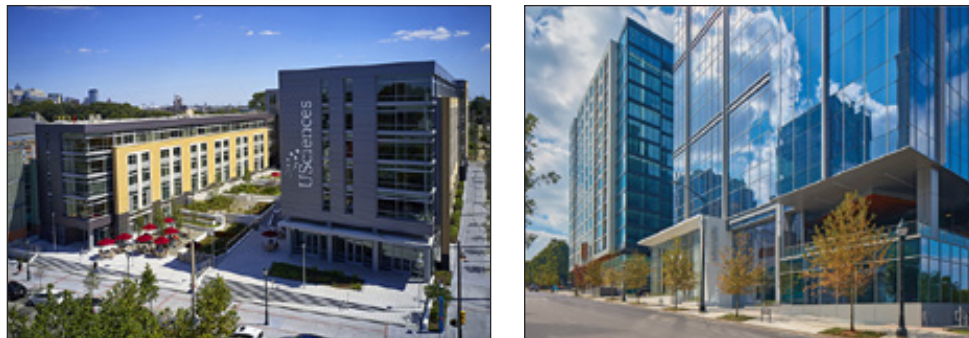
LIVE
Multi-family and townhouse residential buildings



SHOP
Retail and dining facilities



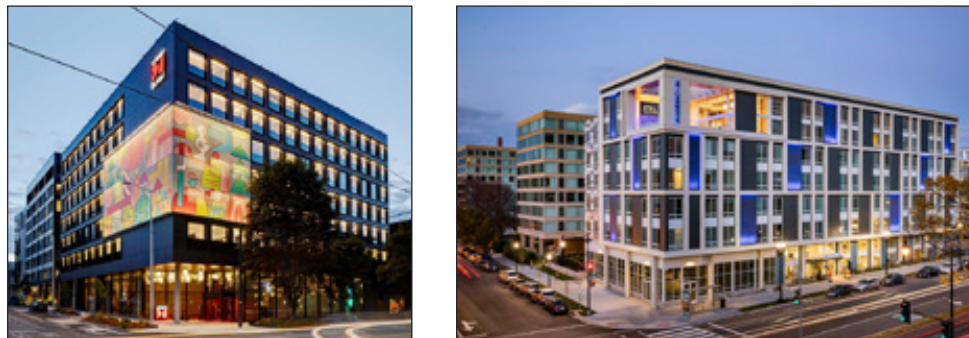
WORK
Offices and collaborative work spaces



RECREATION
Fitness Centers, community center, clubhouse, pavilions and courts



STAY
Hotel



ACTIVE GREEN
Parks, playgrounds, amphitheater, walking paths and gardens





Investigate

Explore

Recommend

How did we position both nodes for the highest and best possible uses, density, and walkability?

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY - OVERVIEW



Total Responses:
145

Comment Period:
07/10/2023 - 07/23/2023

The 16-question online survey covers the following :

- respondents' frequency and types of activity along Buford Highway
- respondents' comfort and ability to access Peachtree Creek Trail
- respondents' preference for design options and input around future improvements

The following responses are summarized for each of the questions.



We are excited to invite you to respond to our survey! HKS has been hired by the City of Brookhaven to envision your ideas for the future of Buford Highway. The City of Brookhaven recently updated the Buford Highway Improvement Plan which identifies two (2) key nodes along Buford Highway at North Druid Hills Road and Briarwood Road, near the Peachtree Creek Greenway Trail. Your responses are critical to helping us understand what these areas need in order to address these three things:

- (1) Strengthen design criteria that will support meaningful redevelopment,
- (2) Create purposeful spaces that encourage human interaction, and
- (3) Increase activity and improve access to the Peachtree Creek Greenway.

The survey will be available online until 23rd July 2023. If you prefer a paper copy of the survey, please contact the City of Brookhaven Planning and Zoning at (404) 637-0500. We look forward to hearing from you!

Start press Enter ↵



¡Nos complace invitarlo a responder a nuestra encuesta! HKS ha sido contratado por la Ciudad de Brookhaven para visualizar sus ideas para el futuro de Buford Highway. La Ciudad de Brookhaven actualizó recientemente el Plan de Mejoramiento de Buford Highway que identifica dos (2) nodos clave a lo largo de Buford Highway en North Druid Hills Road y Briarwood Road, cerca del Peachtree Creek Greenway. Sus respuestas son fundamentales para ayudarnos a comprender qué necesitan estas áreas para abordar estas tres cosas:

- (1) Fortalecer los criterios de diseño que apoyarán una reurbanización significativa,
- (2) Crear espacios útiles que fomenten la interacción humana, y
- (3) Aumentar la actividad y mejorar el acceso al Peachtree Creek Greenway.

La encuesta estará disponible en línea hasta el 23 de julio de 2023. Si prefiere una copia impresa de la encuesta, comuníquese con Planificación y Zonificación de la Ciudad de Brookhaven al (404) 637-0500. ¡Esperamos escuchar de usted!

Comenzar pulsa Enter ↵

English Survey



Spanish Survey



While most respondents live in relative proximity to the activity nodes, some live greater than ten miles away.

While most respondents are age 31 years or older, 14.3% are 18-30, and 2.9% prefer not to answer.

A majority of respondents identify as women, with only 1.4% of respondents identifying as non-binary.

While most respondents have household incomes of greater than \$80,000, 25% of respondents do not or prefer not to answer.

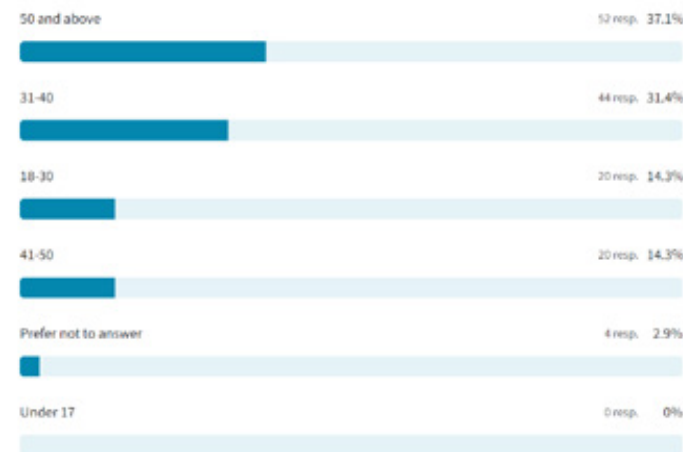
**Do you live in the area?
If yes, then within:**

(141 out of 145 answered)



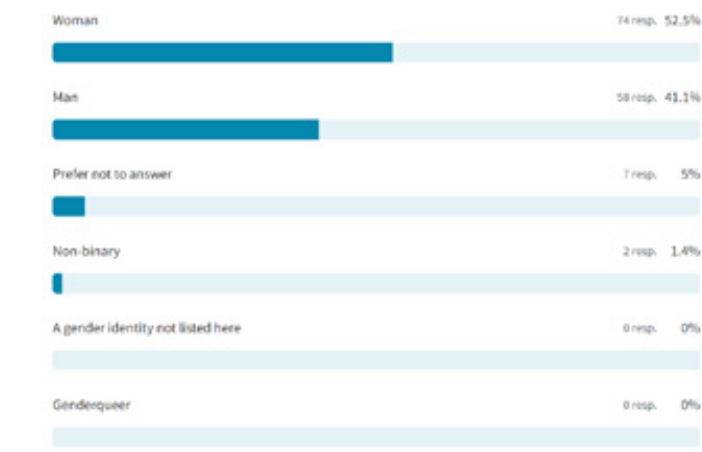
Age

(140 out of 145 answered)



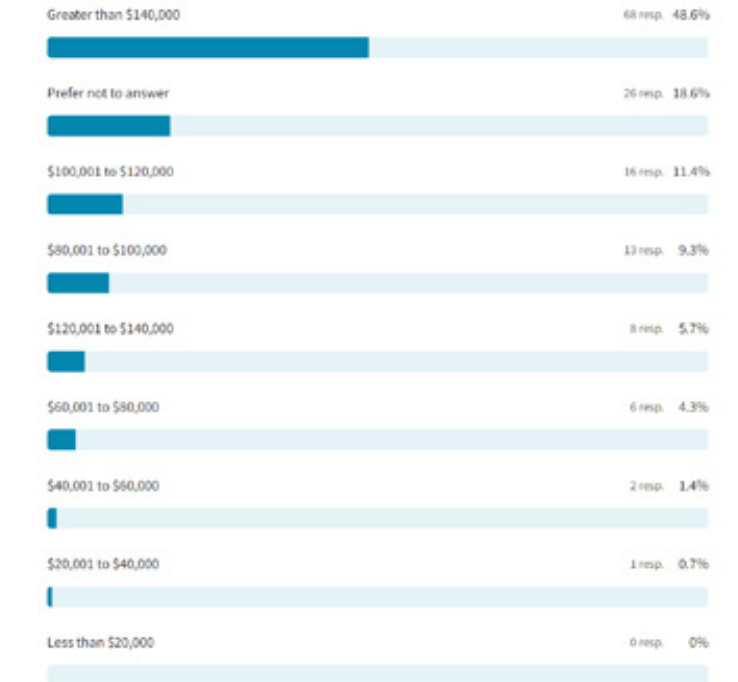
Gender Identity

(141 out of 145 answered)



Household Income

(140 out of 145 answered)



98.6% of respondents typically travel via car along Buford Highway

59.9% of respondents feel that they cannot safely access the Peachtree Creek trail

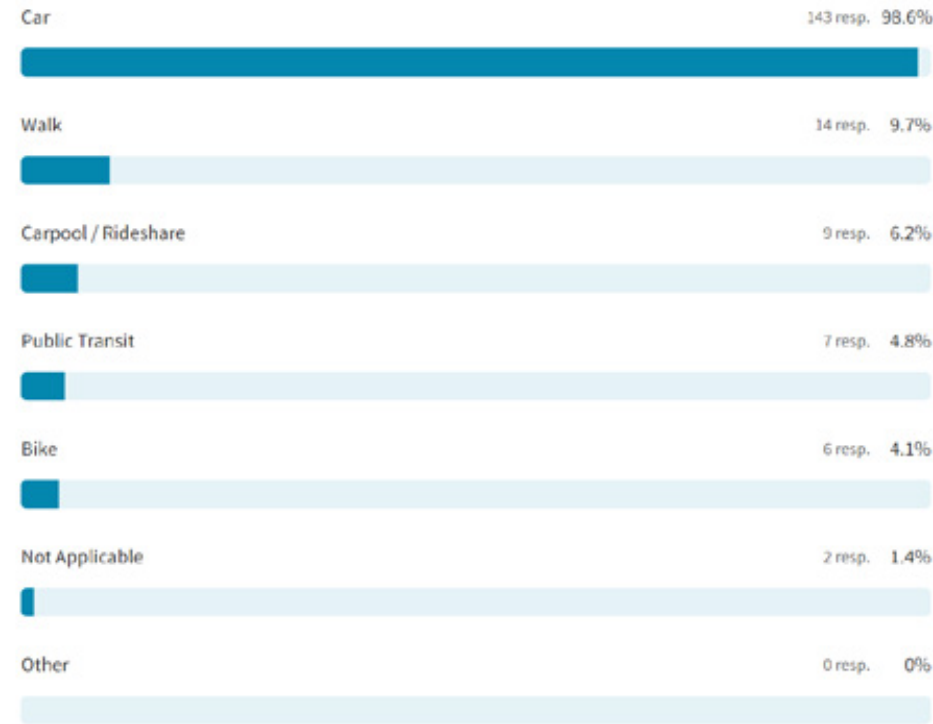
73.6% of respondents travel to Buford Highway for food

44.4% of respondents travel to Buford Highway for shopping

32.6% of respondents travel to Buford Highway for their place of residence

28.5% of respondents travel to Buford Highway for paths/trails

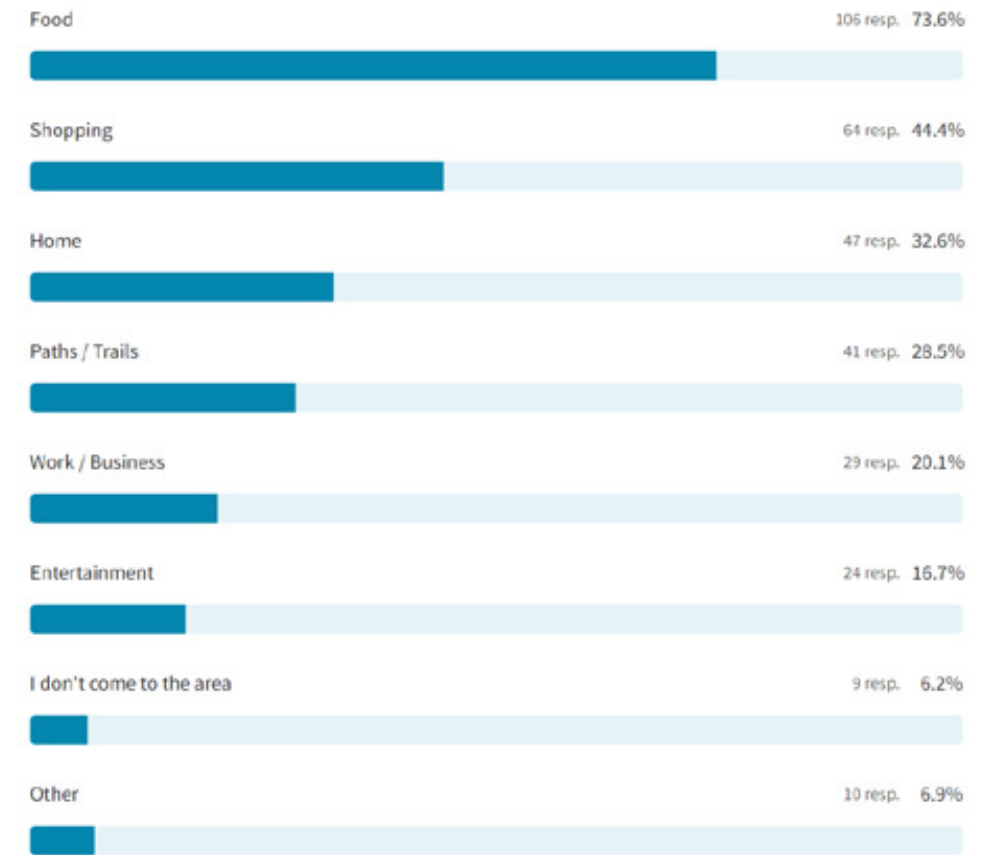
How do you typically travel along Buford Highway?
Choose all that apply. (145 out of 145 answered)



Do you feel that you can safely access the Peachtree Creek trail? (137 out of 145 answered)

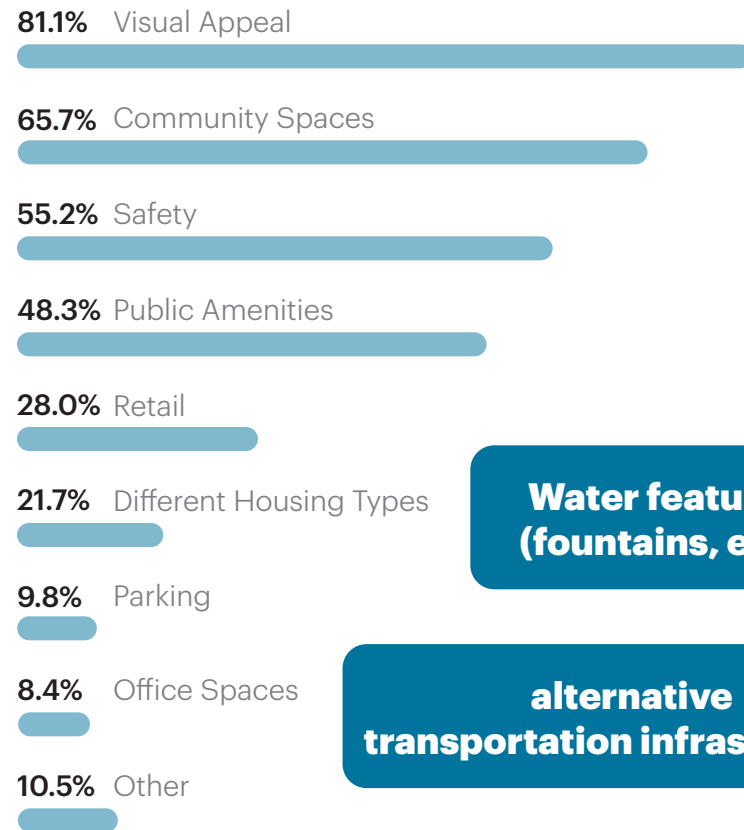


Why do you travel to the area?
Choose all that apply. (144 out of 145 answered)



An overwhelming majority of respondents typically travel along Buford Highway via car.

What features are missing from the area? Choose all that apply.



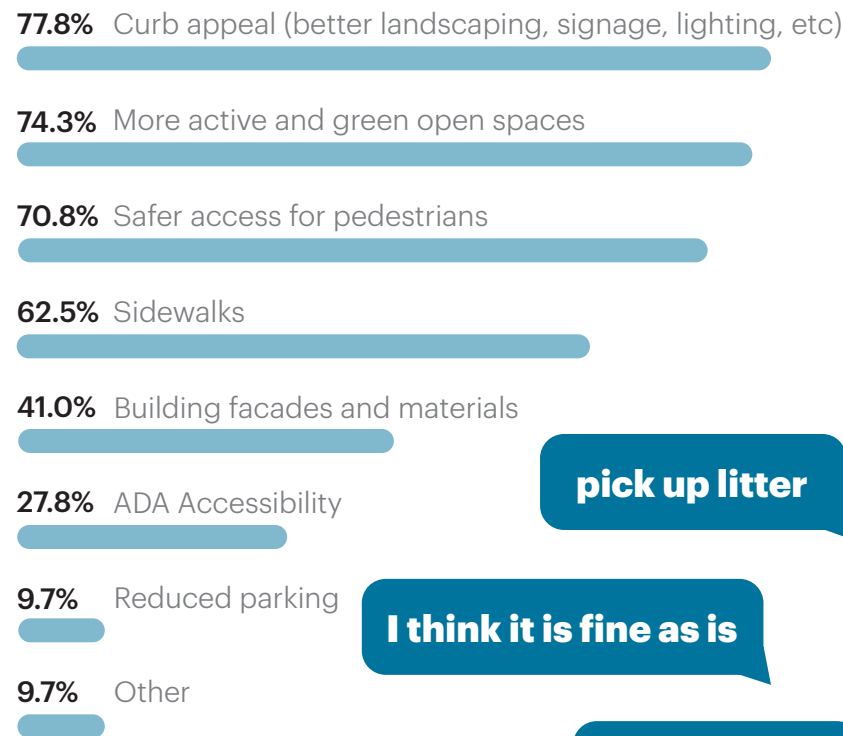
Water features (fountains, etc.)

alternative transportation infrastructure

entertainment (movie theater, bowling alley, skate rink)

Trails and trees

What design elements can help improve the area? Choose all that apply.



pick up litter

I think it is fine as is

water features

bike friendly

Bike access

Bike lanes

concealed or consolidated parking

What challenges, if any, do you have with accessing Peachtree Creek trail?

Crossing Buford Highway, even at a crosswalk, still feels dangerous. Cars drive way too fast.

It is not safe to walk alone on the trail if alone and is not well patrolled.

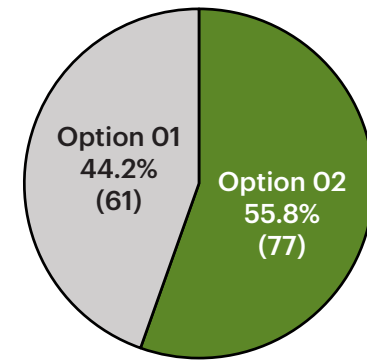
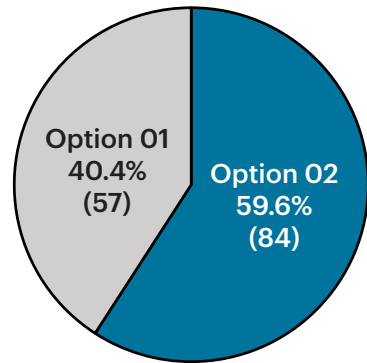
I don't feel like that particular stretch is very safe and would not take my daughter along it

Must cross major roads to access. Patchy, narrow sidewalks, if any Areas Not pedestrian friendly

Traffic crossing bu hi at briarwood can be difficult

Lacks signage

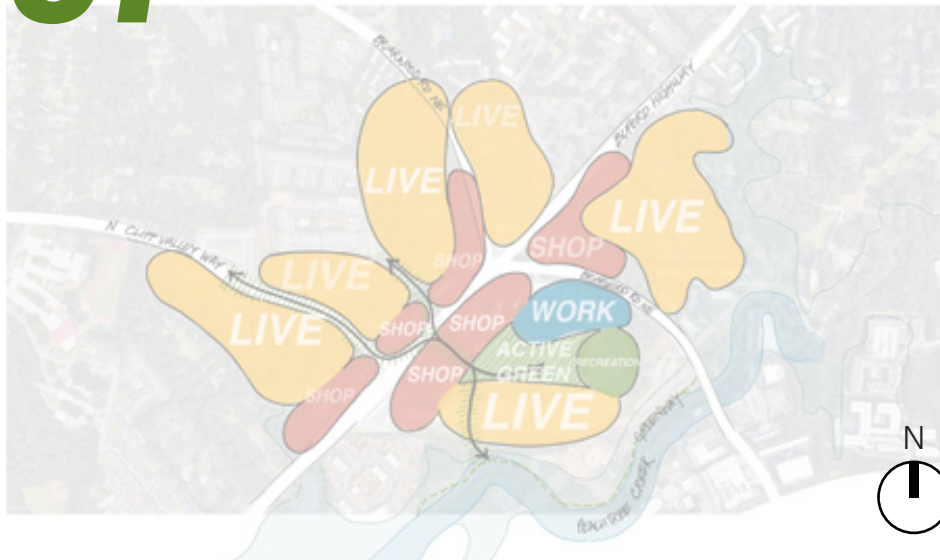
Which option is better for the organization of uses?



01 OPTION : GATEWAY MOMENTS
Higher density along highway for landmark opportunities



01 OPTION : SHOPPING PROMENADE
Retail concentration along Buford Highway



02 OPTION : ACTIVE CREEK
Diverse public uses along greenway



02 OPTION : POCKET PARKS
Distributed network of smaller open spaces radiating from a central green



Live areas should be adjacent to shop areas to reduce traffic and the need for parking. Active green area should be larger

I love the open spaces and ability to walk through

Recreational areas seem more accessible by pathway through main living area

This gives residents easier access. The Greenway should be an aggregate location.

Access to green space from more locations.

Varied green spaces, shopping dispersed, and a location for office/hotel.

**Is there anything else we should know?
Please leave comments here.**



Important takeaways from the community engagement survey indicated that there was a big desire for safety, additional greenspace, access to services, and increased walkability. Some community members also noted concerns of noise, construction, safety, and need for further input.

More shopping, green space, new restaurants, and less run down apartments

Creating an environment where people feel safe in the greenspaces should be addressed

I love the vitality and culture of this multinational strip of Buford Highway. I hope whatever Brookhaven does that we preserve that vibe. Sure would be nice to have a street car running from Lenox Road to the Buford Highway Farmers Market!

I live off briarwood road and would love some more active green spaces but I am concerned about more construction and traffic to the neighborhood

The Greenway is the perfect anchor for generations to improve general physical and mental health

traffic lights need to be synchronized for better traffic flow

During the planning ensure there are some architectural guidelines to help with consistency of design character, so the nodes begin to define a sense of place but not so restricting that development won't happen. Also, if there is a way to get the people living in this area to be part of the process all the way through.

Please make this area much more friendly to pedestrians and alternative modes of transportation

I wish Buford Highway had a safe sidewalk

Make buildings face the creek!

This survey is wonderful but get them more involved then just rezoning signs on the site. Reach out to the HOA and multi-family residences to go speak and make then understand the voice that they have to make this a better place. Go to them, don't ask them to come to you.

The ability to safely walk and access new retail space along this stretch of Buford highway would great improve and transform the edge of Brookhaven

Is there anything else we should know?
Please leave comments here.



Important takeaways from the community engagement survey indicated that there was a big desire for safety, additional greenspace, access to services, and increased walkability. Some community members also noted concerns of noise, construction, safety, and need for further input.

Pedestrian and bicycle access are very important to making these areas safer and convenient for Brookhaven residents. More green space is also best. Plant more trees along Buford Hwy to make this area cooler for those not in vehicles.

Area needs: a place for outdoor open concerts, a nice dog park, a gym like LA Fitness. Build some tall high rise condos, and office towers with good quality companies to attract talent to work and live here.

With the children's hospital wrapping up, services/amenities relating to child care or family support should be considered in close proximity. ADA accessible path to Peachtree Creek for families seeking respite. Consider medical tourism and partnerships with local business with the hospital.

Creating an environment where people feel safe in the greenspaces should be addressed.

Keeping the cultural diversity of the area is very important to me!

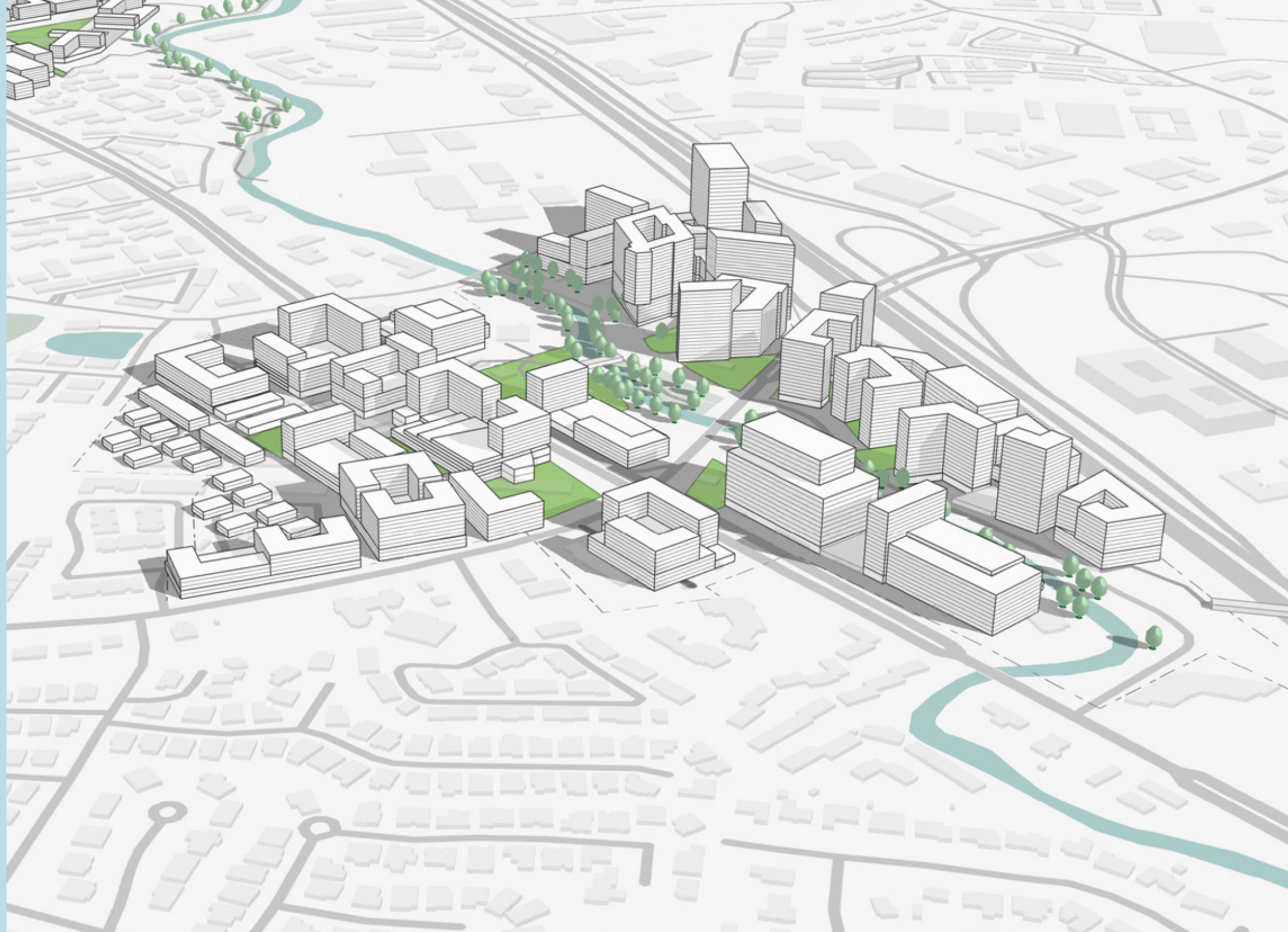
A dog park in the area would be nice

There's a once in the life of the City chance to establish a significant recreation and activity spaces for easy access for residents. The Greenway is the perfect anchor for generations to improve general physical and mental health.

Thanks for improving the area and asking for input. Hopefully the plan will enhance what already exists, not eliminate good things that already exist just to start from scratch.

Hopefully this development happens quickly. It is long over due and can turn into higher end shopping & dining with a Latin feel. Think Mary Village in Brickell but better since it would be in Atlanta and not Miami! If there are ways to incorporate the creek to add natural water features that would be ideal.

NORTH DRUID HILLS



EXISTING



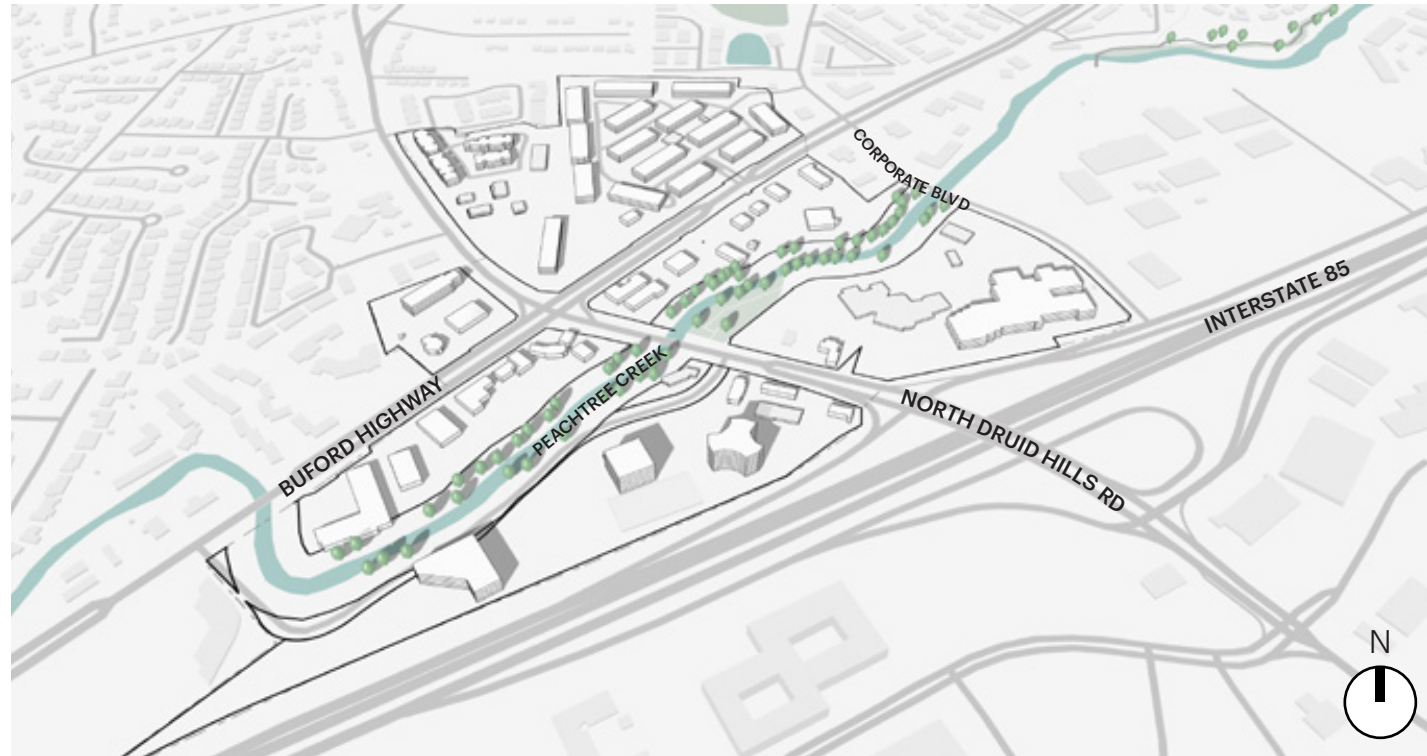
PROPOSED



BULK

Bulk is used in Urban Planning to achieve three similar ends: control over density of population in living and working areas, adequate daylighting of buildings, and sufficient open space around buildings for rest and recreation.

EXISTING



1-8 Floors

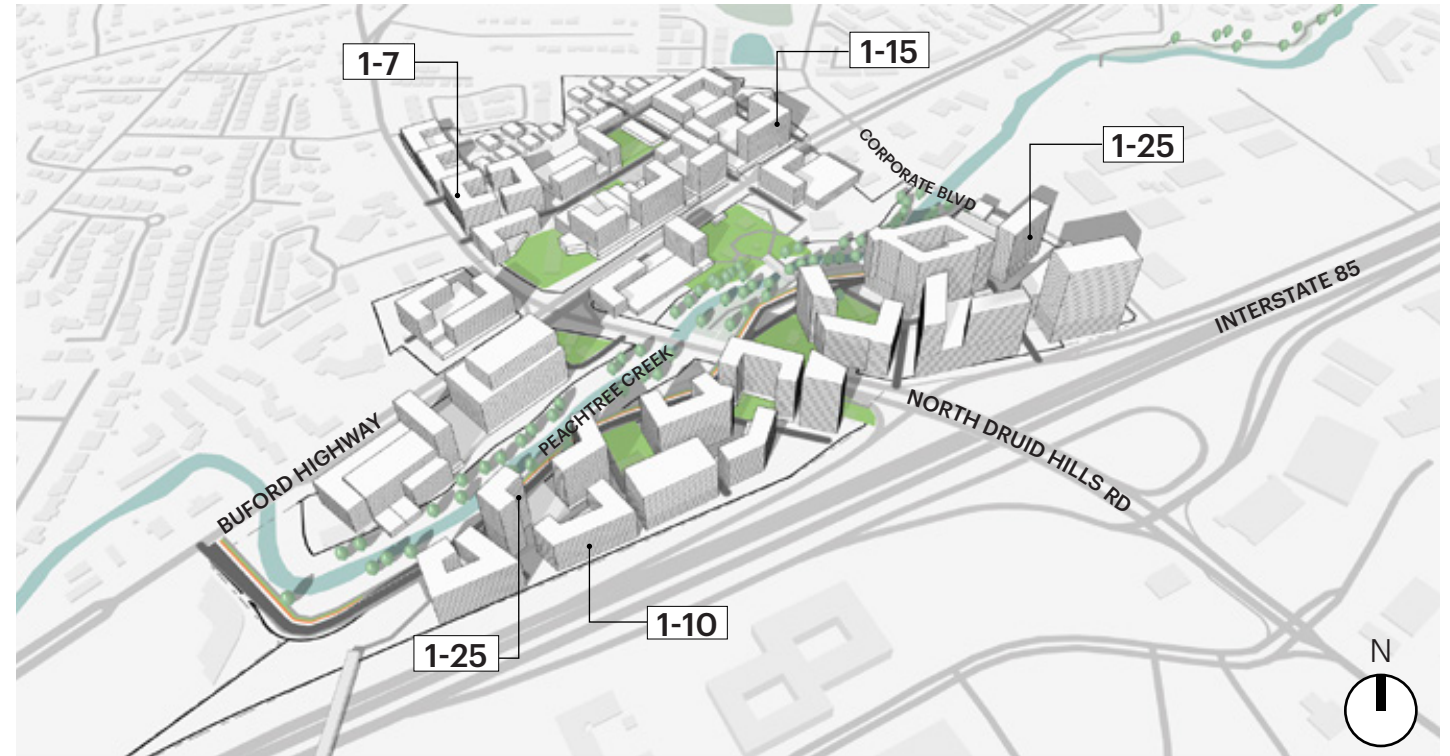
Existing Profile Looking Southeast



Existing Profile Looking Northwest



PROPOSED



1-25 Floors

Proposed Profile Looking Southeast



Proposed Profile Looking Northwest



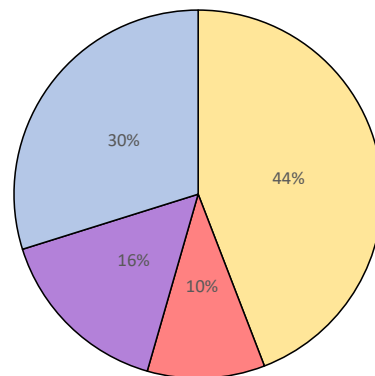
LAND USE

Distribution of land use in an intentional and cohesive manner helps define the character of areas and enhance accessibility.

EXISTING



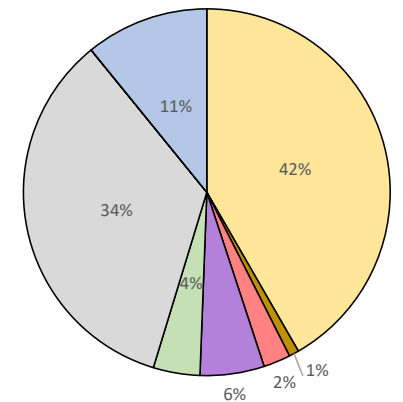
- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office



PROPOSED



- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office
- Townhouses
- Open Space
- ART Bus Stop
- Structured Parking



PROGRAMMED OPEN SPACE

Programmed green spaces reduce the urban heat island effect and provide places for recreation and leisure.

EXISTING



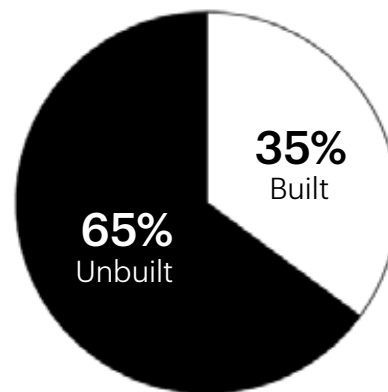
PROPOSED



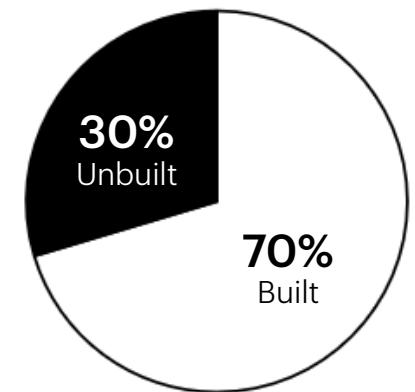
SITE COVERAGE

A figure-ground relationship diagram explores built form patterns and the continuity of open space.

EXISTING



PROPOSED



ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility explores the different, diverse number of uses that can be reached via walking within a given amount of time.

EXISTING



- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office

Program Reached in 5min walk
Multifamily
Retail
Hotel
Office

PROPOSED



- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office
- Townhouses
- Open Space
- ART Bus Stop
- Structured Parking

Program Reached in 5min walk		
+800% Multifamily	Structured parking - new	Programmed open space - new
Townhouse - new	Medical office buildings - existing	Walking paths - new
+70% Retail	Children's Hospital - existing	Pedestrian bridge - new
+245% Hotel	Market - existing	Convenience store - existing
+249% Office	Laundry - existing	

HEALTH ANCHORED DEVELOPMENT FEATURES

The North Druid Hills node creates a regional statement by thoughtfully integrating and anchoring development to the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta campus.



PROPOSED

MULTIFAMILY USES DEFINE STREET THAT SIT ATOP PARKING PODIUM

STORMWATER PARK IN FLOODPLAIN AREA

GROUND LEVEL RETAIL ALONG BUFORD HIGHWAY, SPACE FOR GROCERY STORE

PARKING CONCEALED ALONG CREEK BY LEVERAGING SITE TOPOGRAPHY

FUTURE PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE TO CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE OF ATLANTA CAMPUS

STRUCTURED PARKING SHOULD BE BURIED WHEN ABLE - OTHERWISE, WRAPPED WITH RESIDENTIAL OR HIDDEN. PARKING DECKS SHOULD NOT LINE BUFORD HIGHWAY



TRANSITIONAL HEIGHT (3 STORIES MAX) FOR ANY PARCELS ABUTTING SF ZONE, WITH INCREASE OF 1 STORY BY EACH ADDITIONAL 100FT FROM PROPERTY LINE THAT ABUTS

HEALTH ANCHORED DEVELOPMENT, MEDICAL OFFICES

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION TO CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE OF ATLANTA CAMPUS

HOTEL USES ALONG HIGHWAY FRONTAGE OR AT INTERSECTION OF N DRUID HILLS RD & BUFORD HIGHWAY

PARKLETS AND RESTAURANT ALONG SOUTH CREEK FRONTAGE

- Multifamily
- Townhouses
- Retail
- Open Space
- Hotel
- ART Bus Stop
- Office
- Structured Parking



HEALTH ANCHORED DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

The North Druid Hills node creates a regional statement by thoughtfully integrating and anchoring development to the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta campus.



PROPOSED

BLOCK 01

Multifamily	590,000 sf (715 units)
Retail	85,000 sf
Office	670,000 sf
Open Space	26,260 sf
Parking	1,250 spaces

BLOCK 02

Multifamily	1,355,000 sf (1,720 units)
Townhouses	95,000 sf (95 units)
Retail	145,000 sf
Hotel	200,000 sf (330 keys)
Open Space	130,000 sf
Parking	3,500 spaces

BLOCK 03

Multifamily	1,300,000 sf (1,570 units)
Retail	33,000 sf
Office	210,000 sf
Hotel	255,000 sf (420 keys)
Open Space	140,000 sf
Parking	1,385 spaces

BLOCK 04

Multifamily	185,000 sf (225 units)
Retail	40,500 sf
Hotel	85,000 sf (137 keys)
Open Space	135,000 sf
Parking	560 spaces

BLOCK 05

Multifamily	1,690,000 sf (2,045 units)
Retail	55,000 sf
Office	492,000 sf
Hotel	170,000 sf (280 keys)
Open Space	82,000 sf
Parking	4,075 spaces

OVERALL SUMMARY

Multifamily	5,120,000 sf (6,275 units)
Townhouses	95,000 sf (95 units)
Retail	358,500 sf
Office	1,372,000 sf
Hotel	710,000 sf (1,167 keys)
Open Space	513,260 sf
Parking	10,770 spaces



- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office
- Townhouses
- Open Space
- ART Bus Stop
- Structured Parking



BRIARWOOD



EXISTING



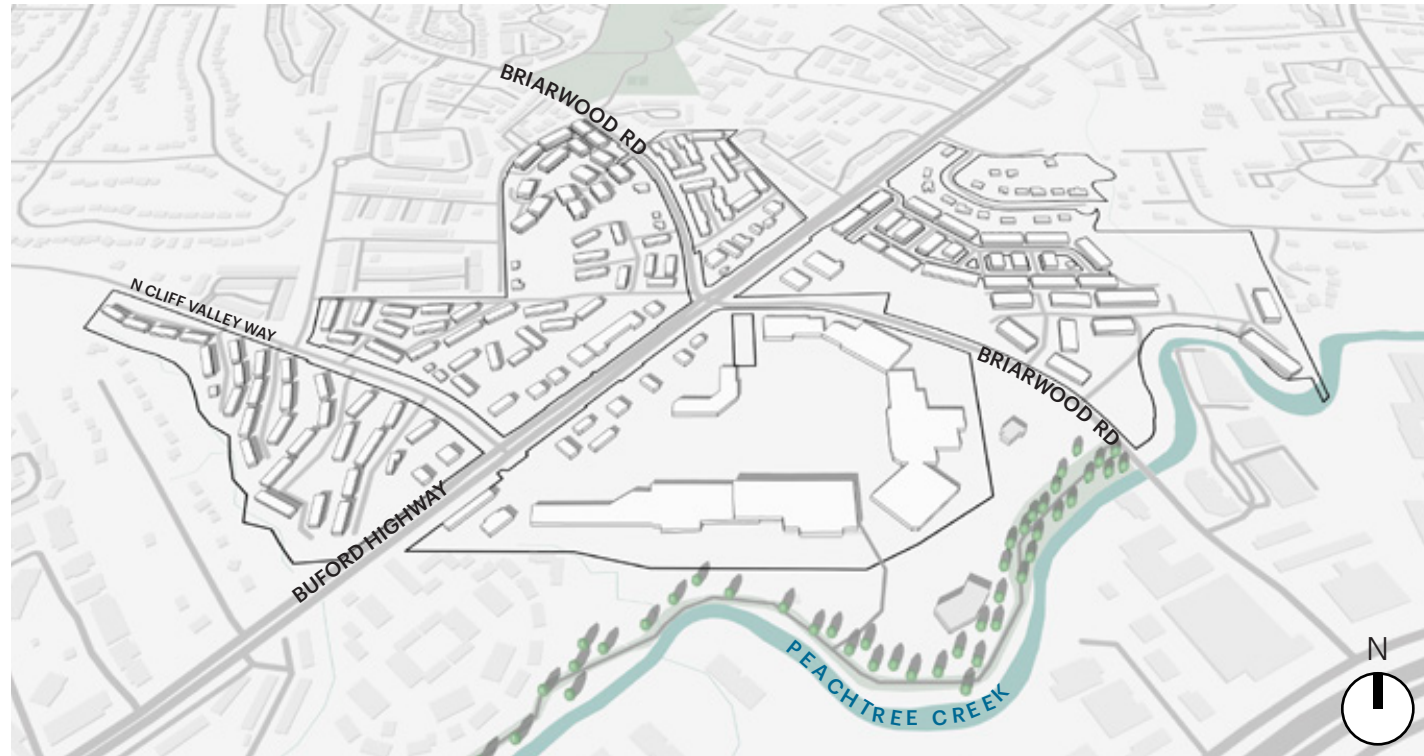
PROPOSED



BULK

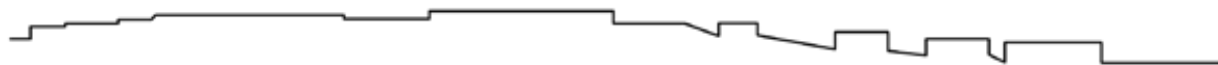
Bulk is used in Urban Planning to achieve three similar ends: control over density of population in living and working areas, adequate daylighting of buildings, and sufficient open space around buildings for rest and recreation.

EXISTING



1-4 Floors

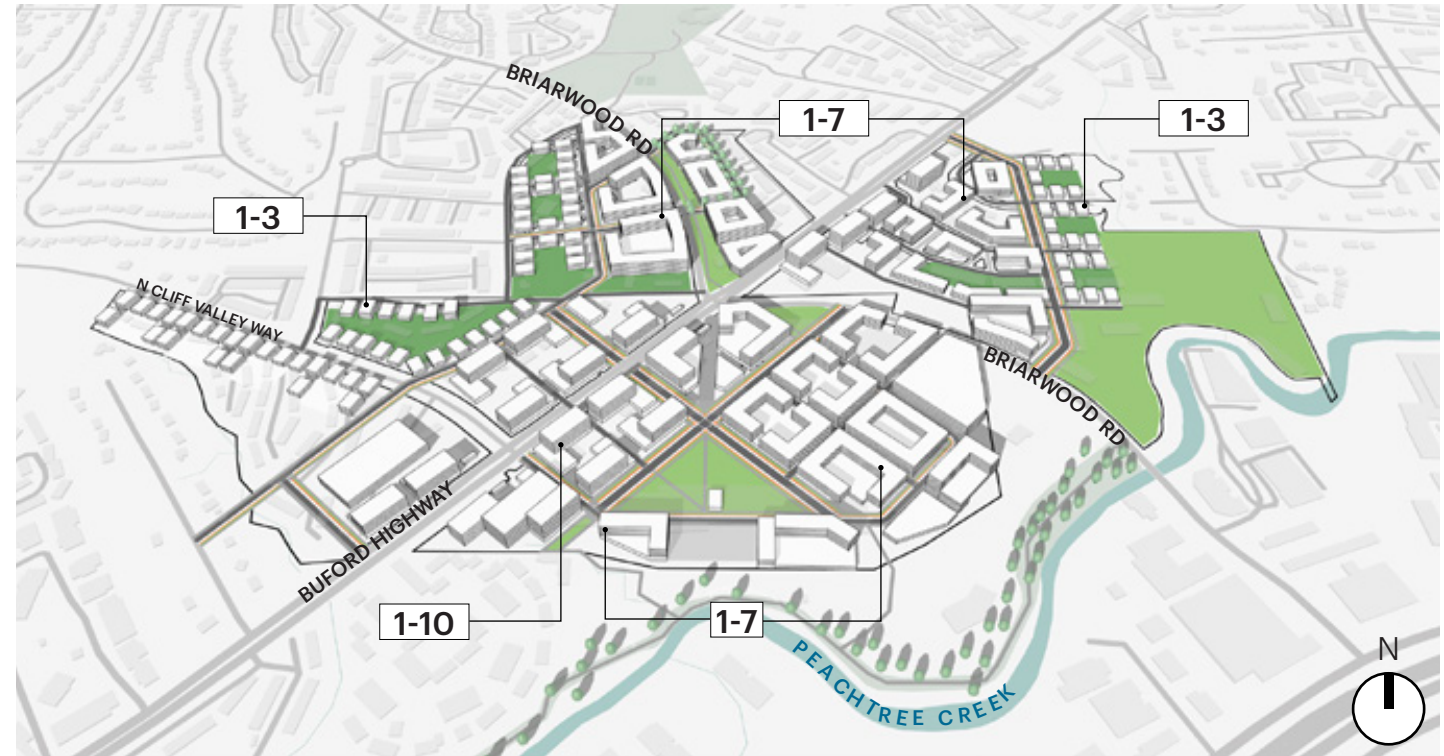
Existing Profile Looking Southeast



Existing Profile Looking Northwest



PROPOSED



1-10 Floors

Proposed Profile Looking Southeast



Proposed Profile Looking Northwest



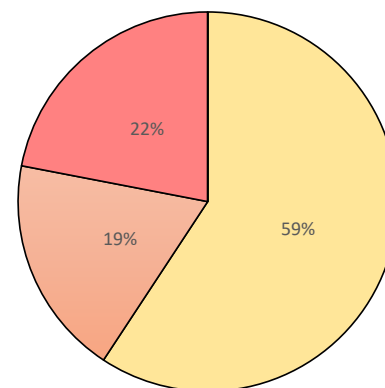
LAND USE

Distribution of land use in an intentional and cohesive manner helps define the character of areas and enhance accessibility.

EXISTING



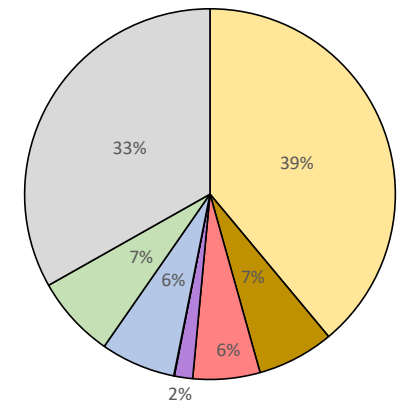
- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office



PROPOSED



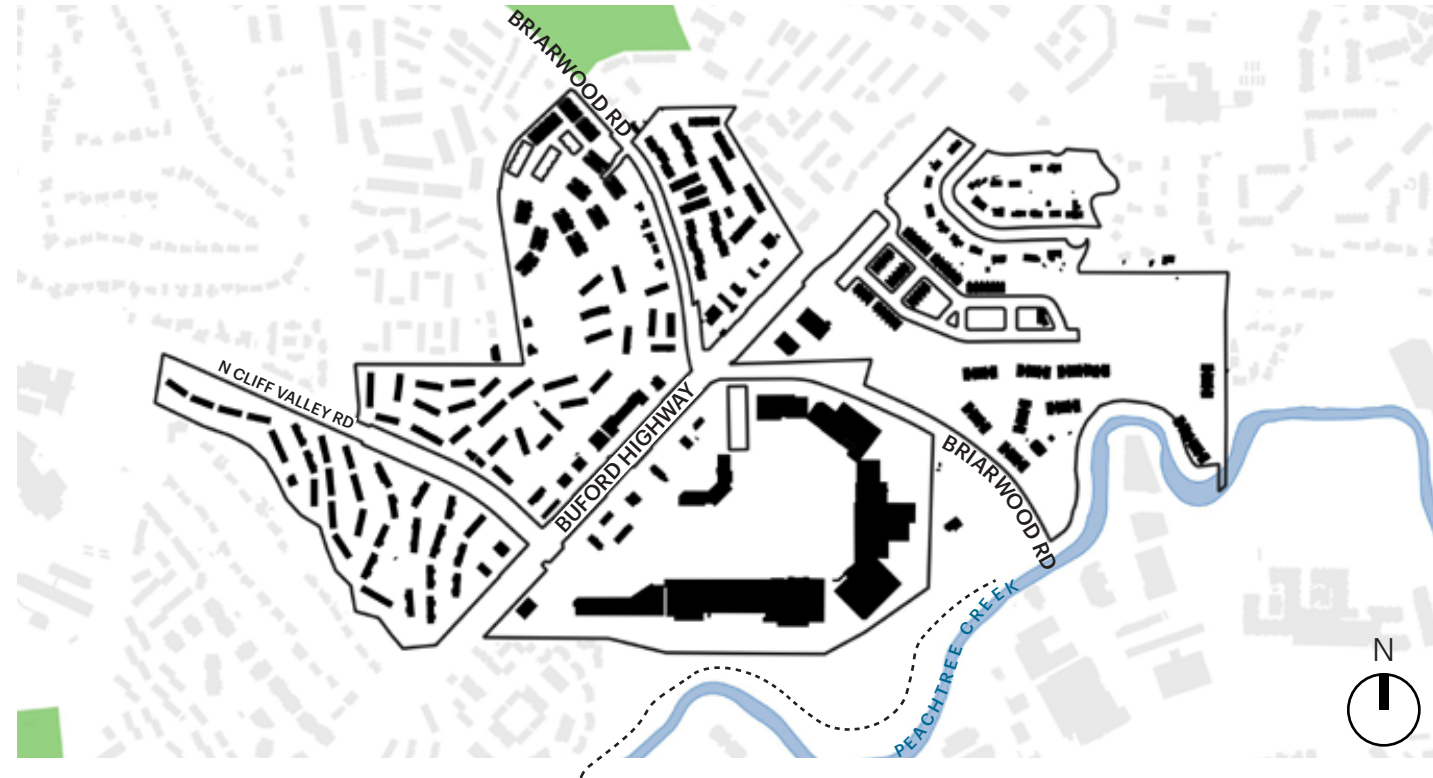
- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office
- Townhouses
- Open Space
- ART Bus Stop
- Structured Parking



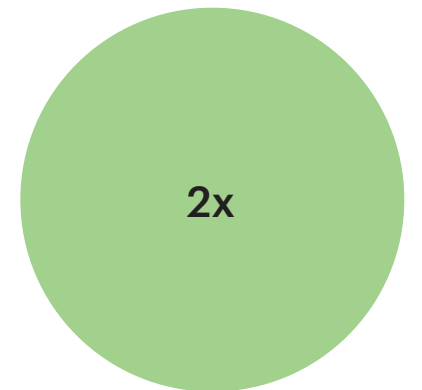
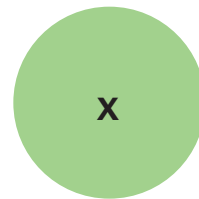
PROGRAMMED OPEN SPACE

Programmed green spaces reduce the urban heat island effect and provide places for recreation and leisure.

EXISTING



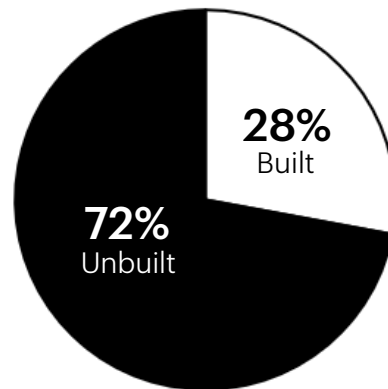
PROPOSED



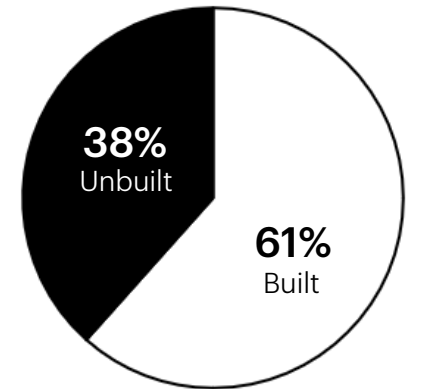
SITE COVERAGE

A figure-ground relationship diagram explores built form patterns and the continuity of open space.

EXISTING



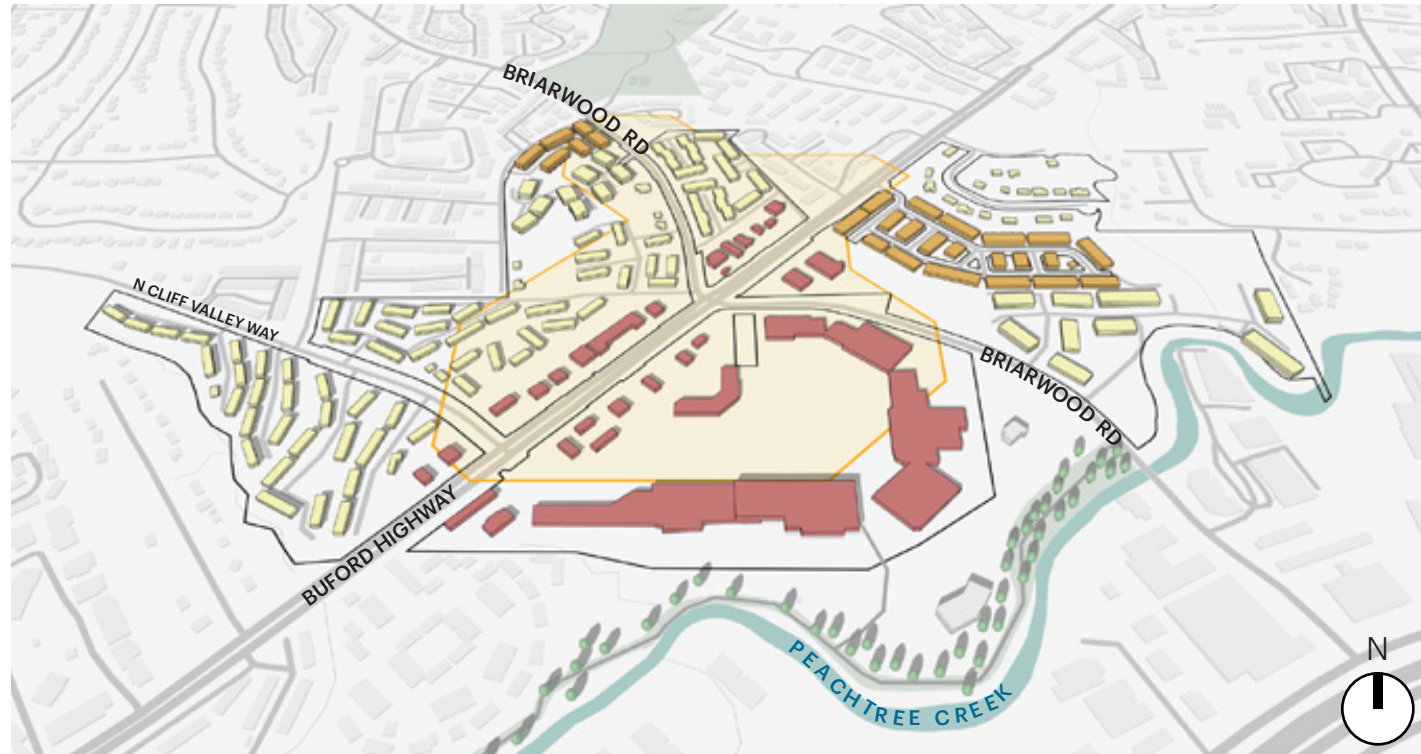
PROPOSED



ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility explores the different, diverse number of uses that can be reached via walking within a given amount of time.

EXISTING



- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office

Program Reached in 5min walk
Multifamily
Townhouse
Retail

PROPOSED



- Multifamily
- Retail
- Hotel
- Office
- Townhouses
- Open Space
- ART Bus Stop
- Structured Parking

Program Reached in 5min walk		
+175% Multifamily	Structured parking - new	Programmed open space - new
+49% Townhouse	Healthcare provider - existing	Walking paths - new
+12% Retail	Farmer's Market - existing	Gym - existing
Hotel - new	Auto parts store- existing	Gas station - existing
Office - new	Performing arts center - existing	

CREEK ANCHORED DEVELOPMENT FEATURES

The Briarwood node creates a regional statement by thoughtfully integrating and anchoring development to Peachtree Creek.

PROPOSED



CREEK ANCHORED DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

The Briarwood node creates a regional statement by thoughtfully integrating and anchoring development to Peachtree Creek.



PROPOSED

BLOCK 01

Multifamily	1,035,000 sf (1,250 units)
Townhouses	255,000 sf (225 units)
Retail	120,000 sf
Parking	550 spaces

BLOCK 02

Multifamily	115,000 sf (140 units)
Townhouses	210,000 sf (185 units)
Retail	40,000 sf
Parking	1,650 spaces

BLOCK 03

Multifamily	1,325,000 sf (1,600 units)
Retail	285,000 sf
Office	355,000 sf
Hotel	150,000 sf (245 keys)
Open Space	140,000 sf
Parking	4,400 spaces

BLOCK 04

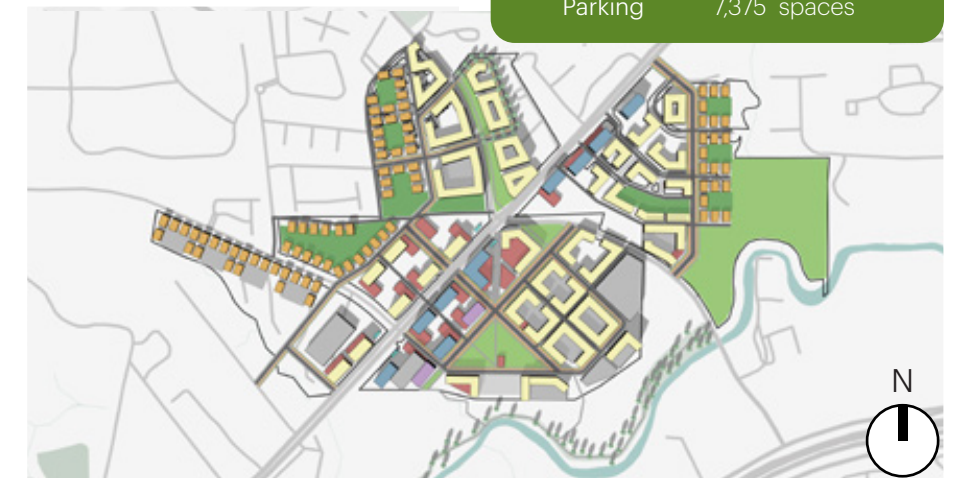
Multifamily	440,000 sf (530 units)
Open Space	90,000 sf
Parking	250 spaces

BLOCK 05

Multifamily	715,000 sf (865 units)
Townhouses	166,330 sf (150 units)
Retail	90,000 sf
Open Space	722,000 sf
Parking	525 spaces

OVERALL SUMMARY

Multifamily	3,630,000 sf (4,385 units)
Townhouses	631,330 sf (560 units)
Retail	535,000 sf
Office	355,000 sf
Hotel	150,000 sf (245 keys)
Open Space	1,102,000 sf
Parking	7,375 spaces





Potential refinements to the master plan:

- Straightening out of Briarwood Road to ease conflicts created by blind spots and congestion
- Cap a portion of I-85 to stitch the north and south developments to enhance pedestrian access, safety and identity.

Reinvigorating Buford Highway