



**DeKalb County**  
**Public Works**  
**Transportation Division**  
1950 West Exchange Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Tucker, Georgia 30084  
Phone: 770-492-5200 - Fax: 770-492-5201

February 23, 2016

Thank you for attending the Public Information Open House for the proposed Panola Road Operational Improvements (Segments 2 and 3) from Browns Mill Road/State Route (SR) 212 to just south of Fairington Road/Minola Drive, P.I. Nos. 0006879 and 0005905. Our goal is two-fold: 1) to provide you with information on the proposed project and 2) to provide an opportunity for you to give us your comments on the proposed project. In this handout package, you will find a description of the project, a location map, and a comment card.

As you enter the room, please take a look at the project display. DeKalb County Public Works, Transportation Division and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) representatives are available to discuss the project and answer your questions. There will be no formal presentation.

We hope you will take the opportunity to tell the DeKalb County Transportation Division what you think. Listed below are several ways to comment on the project. Your comments are important to us and, should you provide comments by one of the methods noted below, we will respond to you in writing usually within 30 days of the close of the comment period. All comments will become part of the project's official record.

While you are attending the open house, you can **provide your comments today** by filling out the comment card provided with this handout and dropping it in the comment box, or you may choose to provide your verbal comments to the court reporter who will transcribe your comments.

You can also **provide your comments by Friday, March 04, 2016** by using any of the following methods:

- Online at [www.dot.ga.gov/PS/Public/PublicOutreach](http://www.dot.ga.gov/PS/Public/PublicOutreach).
  1. From the menu, select the county in which the proposed project is located and click *Go*;
  2. Then select *Panola Rd Operational Improvements*;
  3. Lastly, click *Comment* and follow the instructions to leave your comments.
- Mail in your comment card to Ms. Nicole Reutlinger, P.E., Atkins, Transportation Design, 1600 Riveredge Parkway, Suite 600, Atlanta, Georgia 30328.
- Email your comment to: [Nicole.Reutlinger@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:Nicole.Reutlinger@atkinsglobal.com). Be sure to include the P.I. Nos. 0006879 and 0005905 and meeting date in the Subject line.

The project displays and plans will be available for review for 10 days after this open house at the website noted above. Hardcopies will also be available at the DeKalb County Public Works, Transportation Division office located at 1950 W. Exchange Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Tucker, Georgia 30084. Following the 10-day public comment period, a copy of all comments received will be available by request by contacting Ms. Nicole Reutlinger, P.E., at the address above.

Again, thank you for attending this open house. If you should have any questions or need additional information, feel free to contact Ms. Nicole Reutlinger, P.E. at (678) 247-2435.

Sincerely,

David Pelton  
Interim Associate Director of Transportation  
DeKalb County Public Works, Transportation Division

**Project Background and History:** In 2006, DeKalb County Public Works, Transportation Division sponsored a project that proposed to increase capacity and improve operations along Panola Road from Snapfinger Road/SR 155 to just north of Covington Highway/SR 12, including the Panola Road/Interstate 20 (I-20) interchange. The project contained five GDOT P.I. numbers (0006879, 0005905, 0006880, 0002868 and 0006890) to accommodate phasing of right-of-way (ROW) acquisition and construction along the approximately 5.3-mile project. Three public information open house (PIOH) meetings were held on this larger project. However, in early 2015, DeKalb County recognized a funding shortage, which would prohibit the County from pursuing the large widening project. As a result, DeKalb County assessed their funding ability and identified the most critical needs along the corridor. The area of Panola Road between Browns Mill Road/SR 212 and Fairington Road/Minola Drive (encompassed by P.I. Nos. 0006879 and 0005905) was identified as an area of needed improvements and is proceeding through the preliminary project development phase. Schedules for improvements to the other areas along Panola Road that were part of the original, larger project (encompassed by P.I. Nos. 0002868, 0006880, and 0006890) have not yet been developed.

**Why We Are Here:** The purpose of the current proposed project is to improve operations, safety, and pedestrian/bicycle access and mobility along the project corridor. Panola Road is a heavily traveled, north-south corridor in DeKalb County, and serves as one of southeastern DeKalb County's few access points to Interstate 20 (I-20). Existing (2014) traffic volumes on Panola Road within the project limits range from approximately 11,540 vehicles per day (vpd) near Browns Mill Road/SR 212 to about 29,680 vpd just south of Fairington Road/Minola Drive. Steady growth is expected along the Panola Road corridor. As a result, open year (2020) traffic volumes within the project corridor are anticipated to range from approximately 14,370 vpd to 34,100 vpd, and design year (2040) traffic volumes are anticipated to range from approximately 20,040 vpd to 45,880 vpd.

As a result of these high traffic volumes, operational deficiencies exist along Panola Road within the project limits, and these deficiencies are anticipated to worsen in the future. Currently, nearly half of the intersections within the project area operate poorly during peak traffic hours, and almost all of the project area intersections are anticipated to operate poorly in the future if no improvements are made. In addition, an analysis of accident data from the corridor shows that the frequency of crashes at nearly half of the project area intersections was higher than the statewide average for comparable intersections in the last several years. The frequency of injury crashes was higher than the statewide average for comparable intersections at more than half of the studied intersections. Angle crashes were the most common crash type at unsignalized intersections along the corridor, which is typical with turning vehicles. Rear-end crashes were the most common crash type at the signalized intersections, which is typical due to the frequency of stopping vehicles.

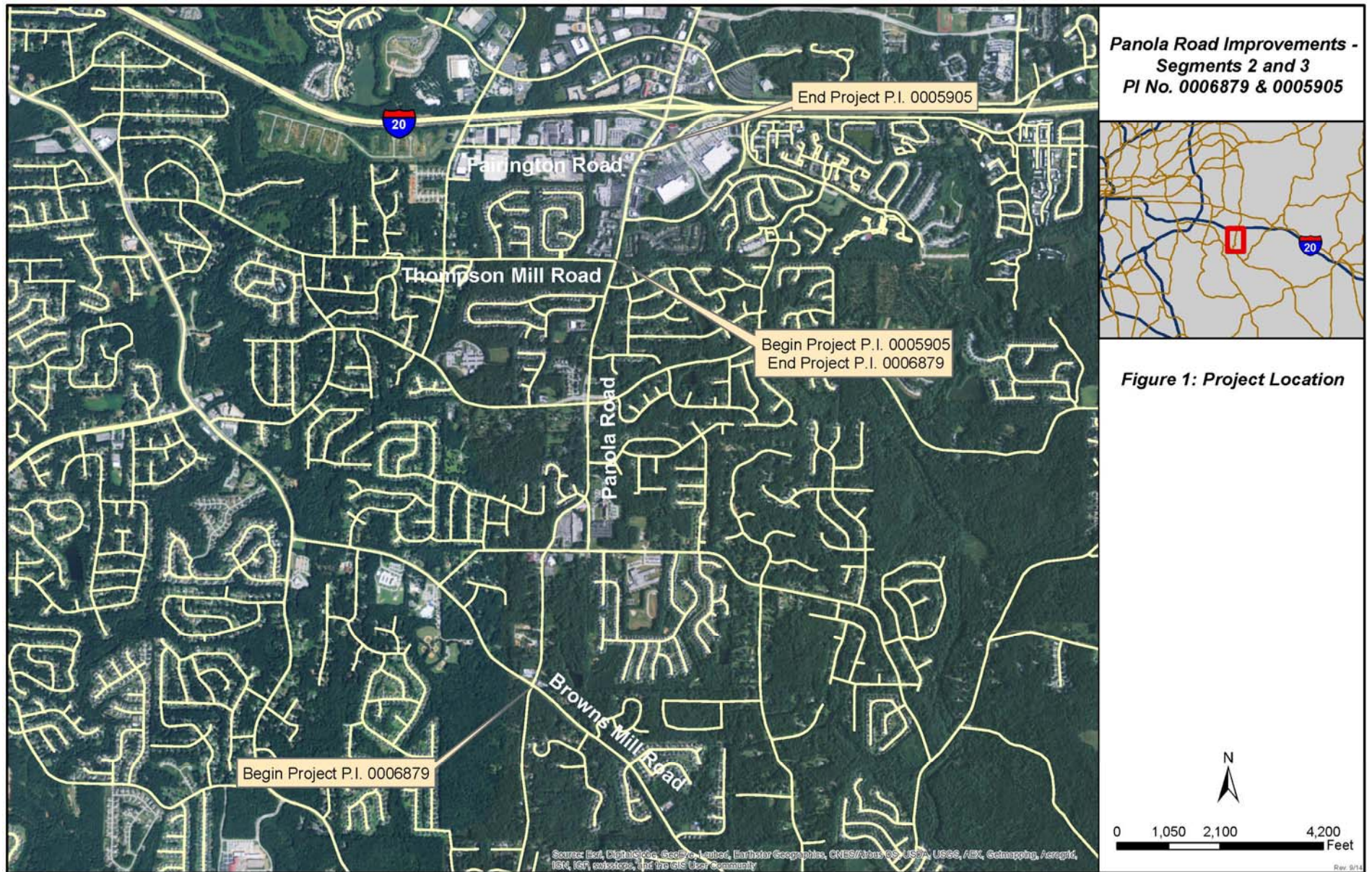
Finally, Panola Road within the project limits currently has intermittent sidewalks and no bicycle lanes. The proposed project would improve pedestrian and bicycle access and mobility between residential neighborhoods, retail facilities, and institutional facilities in the project area, and would provide alternate modes of transportation along the corridor.

**Current Project Description:** The proposed project would improve Panola Road from Browns Mill Road/SR 212 to just south of Fairington Road/Minola Drive, for a total distance of approximately 2.1 miles (see Figure 1). From Browns Mill Road/SR 212 to Thompson Mill Road (Segment 2, P.I. No. 0006879, about 1.7 miles in length), Panola Road would be widened to add a center two-way turn lane, 4-foot bike lanes, 5-foot sidewalks, and a 6-foot grassed buffer strip on each side of the road. Short segments of 20-foot raised median would be constructed in some areas along this portion of Panola Road to enhance aesthetics and provide traffic calming; however, no access would be blocked by these medians. In addition, a continuous right-turn lane would be added along Panola Road northbound from Big Miller Grove Way to the next intersection, Cedar Rock Drive, to the north and along Panola Road southbound from Thompson Mill Road to the next intersection to the south (Panola Mill Drive), for a total length of approximately 740 feet. The proposed ROW width along this segment would vary from 60 to 120 feet. Proposed intersection improvements along this section are as follows, and include the addition of 5-foot sidewalks within the project limits on the cross-street where none currently exist:

- Panola Road at Browns Mill Road/SR 212: The project would add right-turn lanes to all intersection approaches, add a second through lane on the Browns Mill Road approaches (eastbound and westbound), add a second left-turn lane along the southbound approach, and extend the left-turn lanes on the northbound, eastbound, and westbound approaches.
- Panola Road at Salem Road: The project would realign the Panola Road approach to this intersection between Salem Road and Oaktree Trail/Big Miller Grove Way to straighten the existing curve in this area. The project would also add left- and right-turn lanes on the eastbound approach and add a left-turn lane on the westbound approach.
- Panola Road at Oaktree Trail/Big Miller Grove Way: Panola Road at Oaktree Trail/Big Miller Grove Way: The proposed project would add a right-turn lane on the northbound and southbound approaches to this intersection and a left-turn lane on the northbound approach onto Oaktree Trail. Big Miller Grove Way would become right-in, right-out and Oaktree Trail would be a right/left-in, right-out intersection at Panola Road as part of the project.
- Panola Road at Cedar Rock Drive: The proposed project would add a right-turn lane on the northbound approach to this intersection.
- Panola Road at Rock Springs Road: The proposed project would add a second left-turn lane on the northbound approach to this intersection and add a second through lane for approximately 850 feet along Rock Springs Road westbound to receive traffic from right turns from Panola Road southbound.
- Panola Road at Panola Mill Drive/Winslow Crossing: Winslow Crossing at this intersection would be realigned to line up with the existing location of the Panola Mill Drive intersection (currently, these two intersections are offset by approximately 210 feet). The new intersection would be signalized. Right- and left-turn lanes would also be added on the north- and southbound approaches to this realigned intersection.

From Thompson Mill Road to Fairington Road/Minola Drive (Segment 3, P.I. No. 0005905, approximately 0.4 mile in length), Panola Road would be widened to add a variable 8-foot to 20-foot raised median, 4-foot bike lanes, 5-foot sidewalks, and a 6-foot grassed buffer strip on each side of the road. Continuous right-turn lanes would be added along southbound Panola Road between the adjacent retail/commercial entrances along this segment. [Note: Continuous right-turn lanes are already present along northbound Panola Road along this segment.] The proposed ROW width along this segment would vary from 110 to 120 feet. A traffic signal would be installed at the intersection of Panola Road with West Fairington Parkway as part of the proposed project.

The same number of through travel lanes would remain along Panola Road within the project area; the project would not add capacity.



## Comment Card

*Please print responses.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you support the project? (check your response)

- For*       *Against*       *Conditional*       *Uncommitted*

General Comments \_\_\_\_\_

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How did you hear about this Open House? (check)  *Newspaper*  *Signs*  *Website*  *Radio*

*Word of Mouth*  *Social Media*  *Other* \_\_\_\_\_

Was the location of the Open House convenient for you to attend?  **Yes**       **No**

If no, please suggest a general location that is more convenient to your community.

\_\_\_\_\_

Was the time of the meeting convenient for you to attend?  **Yes**       **No**

If no, please suggest a time frame that is more convenient for you. \_\_\_\_\_

Were your questions answered by DeKalb County personnel?  **Yes**       **No**

Do you understand the project after attending this meeting?  **Yes**       **No**

Please share your suggestions on improving the ways DeKalb County conducts Open Houses:

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Mail to:

Ms. Nicole Reutlinger, P.E.  
ATKINS, Transportation Design  
1600 Riveredge Parkway, Suite 600  
Atlanta, GA 30328

Email to: [Nicole.Reutlinger@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:Nicole.Reutlinger@atkinsglobal.com)