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Glossary of Terms

Accessibility: The ability to reach a location; a way or means of approach

Arterial Highway: Arterial highways serve major traffic movements or major traffic corridors. While they may provide access to abutting land, their primary function is to serve traffic moving through the area.

Average Daily Traffic Volume (ADT): The average number of vehicles that travel on a given road during the day. As defined by traffic engineers, it is the total traffic volume during a given time period in whole days (24-hour periods), greater than one day and less than one year, divided by the number of days in that time period.

Bus, Express: A bus that operates a portion of the route without stops or with a limited number of stops.

Bus, Feeder: A bus service that picks up and delivers passengers to a rail rapid transit station or express bus stop or terminal.

Capacity: The volume of vehicles the road was designed to carry in a unit of time, such as an hour; can also be applied to transit or bicycle/pedestrian paths

CDP – Comprehensive Development Plan

CMAQ - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program: A pot of money contained in ISTEA for projects and activities that reduce congestion and improve air quality in regions not yet attaining federal air quality standards.

Collector/Distributor Road: A collector/distributor road, often abbreviated as C/D road, is a one-way road next to a freeway that is used for some or all of the ramps that would otherwise merge into or split from the main lanes of the freeway. It is similar to a frontage road, but is built to freeway standards. It is used to eliminate or move weaving from the main lanes of the freeway.

Collectors: Collectors are those highways that link local highways to arterial highways. In rural areas, routes serving intra-county, rather than statewide travel. In urban areas, streets providing direct access to neighborhoods as well as direct access to arterials.

Corridor: Land area between two designated points within which traffic, transit, land use, topography, environment, and other characteristics are evaluated for transportation planning purposes.

CTP – Comprehensive Transportation Plan

DRI – Development of Regional Impact: Under the Georgia Planning Act, development projects that are likely to have an impact beyond the host local government's jurisdiction are subject to review as Developments of Regional Impact (DRI).

Environmental Assessment (EA): A document prepared early in a planning process that evaluates the potential environmental consequences of a project or activity. An assessment includes the same topical areas as an EIS, but only assesses the effects of a preferred action, and in less detail than an EIS. An EA results in a decision, based on an assessment of the degree of impact of an action, that an EIS is necessary, or that an action will have no significant effect and a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) can be made.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): An EIS is a full disclosure, detailed report which, pursuant to Section 102(2)C of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), establishes the need for the proposed action, identifies alternatives with the potential to meet the identified need, analyzes the anticipated environmental consequences of identified alternatives, and discusses how adverse effects may be mitigated. An EIS is prepared in two stages: a draft statement which is made available to the public for review and a final statement which is revised on the basis of comments made on the draft statement.

Environmental Justice (EJ): The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, culture, education, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. In transportation, this requires review of whether the benefits and burdens of transportation investments appear to be distributed evenly across the regional demographic profile and, if necessary, mitigation of such effects.

Envision6: The Atlanta Regional Commission's planning framework to integrate the future long range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Regional Development Plan, and other planning efforts to address the needs of the region's projected population of 6 million in 2030.

Federal Aid Project: An activity, study, survey, project, or other work related to transportation authorized in advance by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, or other federal agency, and which is paid for either partially or fully by public funds.



Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): The FHWA deals with highway transportation in its broadest scope, administering all federal highway transportation programs.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA): The FTA funds the development of mass transportation systems such as subway and bus systems. (5)

Fixed Guideway System: A system of vehicles that can operate only on its own guideway constructed for that purpose (e.g., rapid rail, light rail). Federal usage in funding legislation also includes exclusive right-of-way bus operations, trolley coaches and ferryboats as "fixed guideway" transit.

Fixed Route: Service provided on a repetitive, fixed-schedule basis along a specific route with vehicles stopping to pick up and deliver passengers to specific locations; each fixed-route trip serves the same origins and destinations, unlike demand responsive and taxicabs.

Frontage Road: An access roadway that is parallel to a highway and is located between the highway and adjacent businesses.

Functional Roadway Classification: The organization of roadways into a hierarchy based on the character of service provided. Typical classifications include arterial, local, and collection roadways.

General-Purpose Lanes: General-purpose lanes are lanes that accommodate all types of vehicular traffic on the highway.

Greenway: A corridor of protected open space that is managed for conservation or recreation purposes. Greenways follow natural land or water features such as ridges or rivers, or human landscape features such as abandoned railroad corridors or canals. They link natural reserves, parks, and cultural and historic sites with one another and, in some cases, with populated areas.

Headway: Time interval between vehicles moving in the same direction on a particular route.

HOT (High Occupancy Toll) Lane: HOT lanes are highway lanes that provide free or reduced cost access to HOVs, and also make excess capacity available to other vehicles not meeting occupancy requirements (typically single-occupant vehicles) at a market price.

HOV (High-Occupancy Vehicle) Lane: An exclusive traffic lane or facility limited to carrying HOVs and certain other qualified vehicles. Motorcycles and certified clean fuel vehicles are permitted access to HOV lanes in the State of Georgia.

HOV (High-Occupancy Vehicle): A passenger vehicle carrying more than a specified minimum number of passengers, such as an automobile carrying more than one or more than two people. HOVs include carpools and vanpools, as well as buses.

Impacts: Positive or negative effects upon the natural or human environment resulting from transportation projects.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS): Refers to the use of advanced technologies (such as traffic sensors and communications equipment) to improve transportation operations.

Lane Miles: The product of centerline miles and number of lanes. A four-lane road, 2 miles long, has eight lane miles.

LCI – Livable Centers Initiative: The **Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)** is a program offered by the Atlanta Regional Commission that encourages local jurisdictions to plan and implement strategies that link transportation improvements with land use development strategies to create sustainable, livable communities consistent with regional development policies.

Level of Service (LOS): A rating of A through F (similar to report card grades) that summarizes transportation operating conditions. It is usually used to describe a section of road or an intersection as experienced by drivers, but can also be applied for users of other modes of transportation.

Limited Access: A limited access highway is a divided highway designed for high-speed travel with specific vehicular access entrance and exit points rather than intersections.

Local Road: Functional classification that consists of all roads not defined as arterials or collectors; primarily provides access to land with little or no through movement.

Managed Lane: A lane that combines various operational and design elements in order to achieve goals, such as increased highway efficiency and/or revenue generation, by managing access via user group, pricing, or other criteria. A managed lane facility typically provides improved travel conditions to eligible users.

Median: The portion of a divided roadway separating the traveled ways for traffic in opposite



Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): A planning group designated for each urban area with a population of 50,000 or more. Members include both private citizens and local government officials. An MPO addresses Federal aid planning mandates by producing local area transportation plans or transportation improvement programs on an annual or biannual basis, or by employing other strategies that make existing systems more efficient.

Mobility 2030: The Atlanta region's current long range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Mobility: The ability to move or be moved easily.

Mode: A way people or goods get from one place to another, such as using cars and trucks, freight and passenger trains, walking, bicycling, and riding buses.

Model: An analytical tool (often mathematical) used by transportation planners to assist in making forecasts of land use, economic activity, travel activity and their effects on the quality of resources such as land, air and water.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): Established by Congress in 1969, NEPA requires that Federal Agencies consider environmental matters when considering to carry out federal actions. This could include the preparation of environmental assessments (EAs) or environmental impact statement (EIS) for projects with the potential to result in significant effects on the environment.

Nonattainment Area: Any geographic region of the United States that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated as not attaining the federal air quality standards for one or more air pollutants, such as ozone and carbon monoxide.

Off-Peak Period: Non-rush periods of the day when travel activity is generally lower and less transit service is scheduled. Also called "base period".

Paratransit: Comparable transportation service required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use fixed-route transportation systems.

Park and Ride: A transportation option whereby commuters park their cars in designated lots and complete their trips using public transportation or joining other commuters in a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) (e.g., buses, subways, and carpool/vanpool).

Peak Period: Morning and afternoon time periods when transit riding is heaviest. In Atlanta, the morning (AM) peak period extends from 6:00am to 10:00 am and the afternoon (PM) peak period extends from 3:00pm to 7:00pm.

Pricing: Imposing a user fee on a lane that helps regulate demand by time of day or day of week. The fee increases during periods of highest demand.

Public Hearing: A meeting designed to afford the public the fullest opportunity to express support of or opposition to a transportation project in an open forum at which a verbatim record (transcript) of the proceedings is kept.

Public Meeting: An announced meeting conducted by transportation officials designed to facilitate participation in the decision-making process and to assist the public in gaining an informed view of a proposed project at any level of the transportation project development process. Also, such a gathering may be referred to as a public information meeting.

Rail, Commuter: Railroad local and regional passenger train operations between a central city, its suburbs and/or another central city. It may be either locomotive-hauled or self-propelled, and is characterized by multi-trip tickets, specific station-to-station fares, railroad employment practices and usually only one or two stations in the central business district. Also known as "suburban rail".

Rail, Heavy: An electric railway with the capacity for a "heavy volume" of traffic and characterized by exclusive rights-of-way, multi-car trains, high speed and rapid acceleration, sophisticated signaling and high platform loading. Also known as "rapid rail," "subway," "elevated (railway)" or "metropolitan railway (metro)".

Rail, High Speed: A rail transportation system with exclusive right-of-way which serves densely traveled corridors at speeds of 124 miles per hour (200 km/h) and greater.

Rail, Light: An electric railway with a "light volume" traffic capacity compared to heavy rail. Light rail may use shared or exclusive rights-of-way, high or low platform loading and multi-car trains or single cars. Also known as "streetcar," "trolley car" and "tramway".

Rapid Transit: Rail or motorbus transit service operating completely separate from all modes of transportation on an exclusive right-of-way.

RTP - Regional Transportation Plan: A planning document that guides the region's transportation development for a 20-year period. Updated every two years, it is based on projections of growth and travel demand coupled with real-world financial assumptions. Required by state and federal law.

Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV): A vehicle in which the driver is the lone occupant.



SPLOST – Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax: SPLOST is a one-cent sales tax, which the State of Georgia allows counties to collect to fund specific improvement projects. SPLOST must be approved by voters in a general referendum in order to be enacted, and last for a maximum of 60 months (five years) or until the total amount of revenue specified in the referendum is reached.

State-Funded Project: The design or construction of an improvement which is funded entirely with state highway or bridge funds.

Study (or project) Limits: The physical end points of a proposed project or study, usually designated at geographic or municipal boundaries, at intersections, at roadway segments where cross sections change, or at the beginning or end of numbered state traffic routes.

Study Area: A geographic area selected and defined at the outset of engineering or environmental evaluations, which is sufficiently adequate in size to address all pertinent project matters occurring within it.

Sustainability: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability to meet the needs of the future.

TAZ – Traffic Analysis Zone: A **traffic analysis zone** is the unit of geography most commonly used in conventional transportation planning traffic, or travel demand, models to evaluate an area’s transportation network. The size of a zone varies, but for a typical metropolitan planning software, a zone of under 3000 people is common. The spatial extent of zones typically varies in models, ranging from very large areas in the exurbs to as small as city blocks or buildings in central business districts.

Time-of-Day Tolling: Facility tolls that vary by time-of-day in response to varying congestion levels. Typically, such tolls are higher during peak periods when the congestion is most severe. Signs indicate the current charge to drivers so they may decide whether or not to enter the lane(s). Many sectors of the economy (telephone, electric utilities, and airlines) use such pricing to manage demand within the available capacity.

TIP - Transportation Improvement Program: This is primarily a spending plan for federal funding expected to flow to the region from all sources for transportation projects of all types. The TIP covers a six year planning horizon and is updated yearly.

TMA - Transportation Management Association: A voluntary group set up by employers or other entities to reduce vehicle trips within certain areas.

TOD -Transit Oriented Development: Development in which public transportation, walking, and biking are designed to play a large role in mobility. TODs sometimes have the features often identified with New Urbanism— that is— using traditional town planning strategies to increase livability.

Toll Road: A road or section of road where motorists are charged a fee (or toll).

Traffic Calming: Measures to reduce the negative effects of vehicles, and improve conditions for walking or bicycling. A familiar example is the orange barrels with the warning to stop for pedestrians.

Transit: Mass transportation by bus, rail or other conveyance that provides general or special services to the public on a regular and continuing basis. Transit does not include school buses or charter or sightseeing services.

Transponder: An electronic tag, placed inside or on a vehicle, or built into a vehicle, that is read by an electronic tolling device. The tag is read electronically by an electronic tolling device that automatically assesses the amount of the user fee. The Georgia 400 “Cruise Card” is an example of a transponder.

Transportation Corridor: Any land area designated by the state, a county or a municipality which is between two geographic points and which area is used or is suitable for the movement of people and goods by one or more modes of transportation, including areas necessary for management of access and securing applicable approvals and permits.

Travel Demand Management (TDM): TDM is a combination of strategies or actions whose goal is to encourage travelers to use alternatives to driving alone. TDM strategies may be developed for a single work site, specific corridor, or area.

Travel Demand Model: A travel demand model is a tool for representing and analyzing the major ways people get around. Usually this tool is a software package which incorporates a road network, land use data, and a mathematical formula to distribute and route trips. The model is calibrated to existing traffic counts. Then it can be used to forecast traffic and test the effect of changes in the road network.

Travel Time: The time it takes to travel door-to-door.

Truck Only Lane (TOL): A lane separated from general-purpose traffic and restricted for use only by authorized truck types.

Truck Only Toll (TOT) Lane: TOT lanes are toll or fee based facilities restricted to use only by authorized truck types.



United States Department of Transportation (USDOT): Establishes the nation's overall transportation policy. Under its umbrella there are ten administrations whose jurisdictions include highway planning, development and construction; urban mass transit; railroads; aviation; and the safety of waterways, ports, highways, and oil and gas pipelines.

Urban Sprawl: Scattered, untimely and poorly planned urban development that occurs in urban fringe and rural areas. It frequently invades land important for environmental and natural resource protection. Sprawl is typically manifested by one or more of the following patterns: leapfrog development; ribbon or strip development; or large expanses of low-density development of one type, such as single family homes.

Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT): Total vehicle hours expended traveling on the roadway network in a specified area during a specified time period.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT): The measurement of the total miles traveled by all vehicles in a specified area during a specified time.

Volume: The number of vehicles that actually pass through a given mile of road in a unit of time such as a day; can also be applied to transit or bicycle/pedestrian paths.

