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# NORTH FULTON

## MARKET REPORT

B SECTION | SEPTEMBER 29 - OCTOBER 5, 2023



SOUTHWEST VALUE PARTNERS

A rendering of the Continuum development by Southwest Value Partners, a redevelopment of the 500,000-square-foot Hewlett-Packard Enterprise site in Alpharetta.

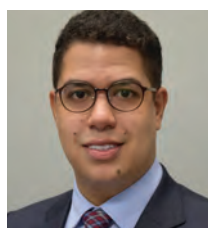
# Large North Fulton office market reimagining traditional properties with density, amenities

BY LESLIE JOHNSON, Contributing Writer

North Fulton County is not immune from the post-pandemic challenges facing the commercial office market in metro Atlanta and nationwide, but it has several advantages in its favor as industry leaders strategize on the recovery.

North Fulton is almost exclusively an office market, with about 36 million square feet of Class A office as compared to less than 20 million square feet in downtown or Buckhead, said Samir Abdullahi, economic development director for Fulton County.

Post-pandemic, most businesses in the metro area continue to grapple with how and when workers return to their offices, he said. "There is no clear path regarding how companies decide we will be back in the office, or we won't be back in the office or it's going to be some version of a hybrid," Abdullahi continued, noting as an example AT&T releasing a number of properties in downtown and Midtown, then leasing more space. "I think you can clearly see the final word on return to work is still



**SAMIR ABDULLAH**  
Economic  
Development  
Director for Fulton  
County

not decided even though we're past this point of the pandemic." Although North Fulton is not immune from the return-to-work pressure on office space, its market fared better than the central business district in terms of first quarter numbers, Abdullahi noted in July. North Fulton had a vacancy of around 22% versus 24% for the CBD for Class A offices.

"So again, [North Fulton is] still not seeing as dramatic an issue of return to work. I think it speaks to the type of companies that are downtown versus out in more of the North Fulton and suburban areas. I think you have a better ability to get people to return to work in the suburban office markets" due to the fact that more of north Fulton companies' talent tends to live closer to their workplaces, and has less of a commute than most of downtown

companies' workforces, Abdullahi said.

North Fulton offices also have lower lease rates than the central business district: \$20-\$30 per square foot versus \$40 to \$50 a foot, he said. The CBD office buildings are great products and offer great branding, but "you pay quite an expensive premium to have that brand name, that location."

Whereas North Fulton's lower office rate "makes it affordable, it makes it more flexible, makes it less of a cost burden. So there may not be as aggressive decision-making of pulling out of office or going back into the office," Abdullahi said. "You're just forwarded a little bit more of that latitude."

That breathing room helps companies continue to work on how to justify workers returning to the office, whether it is to build culture or strengthen relationships or for other reasons, and it also offers property owners time to reimagine the suburban office itself. That's happening throughout North Fulton, where traditional suburban office parks are being reimaged with

a mix of uses and greater density, often reducing the size of surface parking lots, according to Abdullahi.

He cites the recent Boston Scientific lease of the former State Farm campus and developer Mark Toro's adjacent Medley project, both within Johns Creek's emerging Town Center area, the expansion of the Continuum project in Alpharetta, Southern Post in Roswell, as well as similar, denser mixed-use developments like the proposed evolution of North River Shopping Center in northern Sandy Springs, which would add 81 townhomes, 242 apartments in an up to six-story building with a parking deck and 17,000 square feet of new retail.

"The future of suburban office will have a focus on walkability and access to 'stuff,'" said Lance Morsell, economic development manager, community development, City of Alpharetta. "This is why connectivity to mixed-use developments will pave way for office success of the future. If you look at

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14B »

# Celebrating 20 Years of Community Improvements.



TRUENORTH400

True North 400, formerly the North Fulton Community Improvement District (NFCID), is a self-taxing commercial district committed to improving infrastructure and developing efficient transportation services with an emphasis on access, mobility, diversification and modernization throughout the North Fulton community.



[www.TrueNorth400.com](http://www.TrueNorth400.com)

# North Fulton CID rebrands as True North 400 to reflect a broadening mission

BY RANDY SOUTHERLAND, Contributing Writer

The North Fulton Community Improvement District is getting a new name and new look that leaders say will better reflect the vital and growing role the organization plays in powering the local economy. Beginning at the end of September, it will be known as True North 400. The change comes as the CID marks its 20th anniversary and will be formally unveiled during an event in October.

Recently, CID Executive Director Brandon Beach and board Chairman Tim Perry, managing partner of North American Properties Atlanta, talked about the changing role of the CID that inspired its new name and logo.

## Why did the CID need to change its name and rebrand?

**Tim Perry:** It was a way to realign and go back to our basics for our geographic base. At its core, the CID exists so that the property owners and stakeholders in a certain area or district pool their (self-taxed revenues) together to create a larger sum of money that we can use to improve and raise the tide for all the investors and all the owners in the district.

**Brandon Beach:** A lot of people are confused about what a CID is. They don't know that we're a self-taxing commercial tax district. They think we're part of the government, and we're not a government entity. And there is a direct correlation between infrastructure investment, and economic development and job creation. We don't want to take over economic development, but we want to be involved in the economic development arena — because we know it's important.

## Going forward how do you want companies to think of the CID?

**Beach:** We want to be the entity, that if



BRANDON BEACH

a company needs to have information, they can call True North 400. Georgia 400 is the spine of our region, so we wanted to have 400 in the name. And 'True North' serves as our philosophical compass. It defines our purpose, the decisions we make. So it's really the guiding principles that encompass our integrity, loyalty, responsibility and honesty.

## Does this reflect a shift in focus away from the individual transportation projects that may have driven what you were doing in the past?

**Perry:** When I became involved (with the CID) eight years ago, we were very focused on mobility and getting around in the CID and north Fulton County. We wanted people to be able to get home, get to work, get to the store. All of that creates value for our members, but also elevates the quality of life and creates better catalyst for future growth.

## So the CID is investing in more than just roads?

**Beach:** We're looking at making sure that we have the foundation and the tools in the toolbox to be successful from an economic development standpoint. We have typically done environmental studies for roads and bridges. And we still want to do that because we do think roads, bridges and infrastructure that improve mobility are important. If you'd asked me 20 years ago if I thought an Alpha Loop or a



TIM PERRY

greenway or sidewalks were important, I probably wouldn't have said they were that important. Today, after Covid, people use the greenway, they use the Alpha Loop, they walk a lot more. So we want to be involved in that.

## Are there also specific economic issues that the CID can help address?

**Beach:** We're in a situation now where we have some of our members who have vacancy in their office space. As you know, because of the pandemic, people are working hybrid and working from home. And we've got to figure out how we fill up or repurpose this office space. We've got to figure out how we get people to come back to work.

## Why is it important for workers to come back to the office, given the popularity of work from home?

**Beach:** I think when you are a young 22- to 28-year-old, and you're in a one-bedroom apartment, and you're on Zoom or on a computer all day, that is not good for your mental health. People need to be around people. I worry we're going to lose a generation of mentorship and sponsorship and leadership training if we don't get people back in the office. You can't get that on a Zoom call, like you can in person.

## What happens if there isn't a movement back to the office?

**Beach:** We're trying to get people to go

back to work at least three days a week. If we can't get them back in these office spaces, we've got to figure out how to repurpose those office buildings.

## Would you say the role of the CID is to serve as an advocate for your members?

**Perry:** We want to be their resource and their advocate for improvements (in the district). It's not just getting in your car and going to the office and getting home. It's the quality of life. It's amenities, it's access to greenways and wellness. It's public safety, right? It's beautification projects. The scope is larger than mobility. And as an investor looks at their business and considers coming to north Fulton County, we want them to pick the phone up and ask "What's going on?" They can ask for help with a specific issue.

## And does this represent a broader definition of what we used to call economic development?

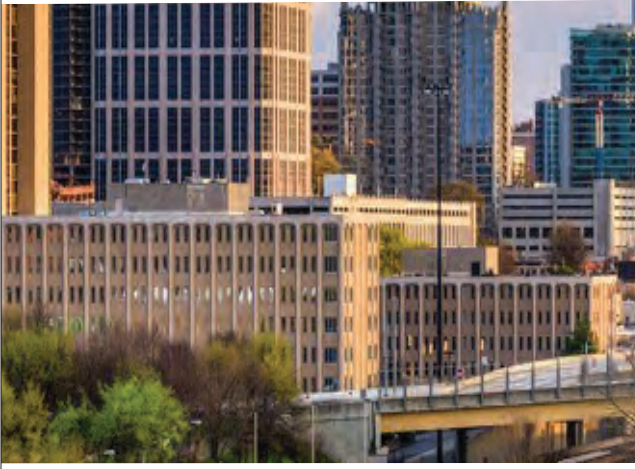
**Perry:** One of the big aspects of economic development is quality of life. It's access, mobility, it's parking and safety. It's all of the things that make economic development in north Fulton County more attractive or very attractive to businesses and investors looking to invest.

## Are there certain projects that are important to the organization?

**Beach:** One of the other things we want to be very involved in is the redevelopment and repurposing of North Point Mall. That's a great piece of property. Obviously, some of these old malls are having challenges. So we've got to figure out how to help the mall overcome those challenges.

## NORTH FULTON CID/TRUE NORTH 400 TIMELINE OF KEY PROJECTS:

<p><b>2009</b> Westside Parkway Bridge</p>	<p><b>2012</b> Old Milton Parkway Interchange Landscaping</p>	<p><b>2016</b> Northwinds Parkway Extension</p>	<p><b>2017</b> Encore Parkway Bridge and Streetscape</p>	<p><b>2020</b> Windward Parkway Phase II</p>	<p><b>2023</b> Davis Drive Extension</p>



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**4 MAJOR INTERSTATES**

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# 203-acre Cauley Creek Park in Johns Creek latest outdoor amenity for North Fulton

BY LESLIE JOHNSON, Contributing Writer



## CITY OF JOHNS CREEK

The pedestrian bridge over the Chattahoochee River from Cauley Creek Park in Johns Creek to Rogers Bridge Park in Duluth.

**N**orth Fulton is blazing trails, not to mention green space and parks.

With several projects completed, in progress and on the way, cities in North Fulton are seeing the outdoor amenities as linking several aspects of life including work, retail and play.

"I believe one of the reasons that North Fulton stands out is the culture of connection in our region," said Kali Boatright, president and CEO, Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce. "This has only been enhanced by the parks and trails that have developed in our cities, entwining them over time. Our network of trails has really grown into something remarkable and continues to expand with miles of new trails and paths added each year. The chamber works to increase economic success for all and that also means enjoying a healthy lifestyle as neighbors and friends who walk to local shops, breweries and restaurants that grow along those trails as well."

One of the biggest projects is Cauley Creek Park in Johns Creek, which had a soft opening in June and a grand opening celebration in July. It's located in the eastern half of the city adjacent to the Rogers Bridge Trail and the Rogers Bridge connection over the Chattahoochee River to Duluth. At 203 acres, it is larger than Piedmont Park in Atlanta, said Johns Creek Mayor John Bradberry. And it represents nearly half of Johns Creek's 447 acres of developed parks.



## CITY OF JOHNS CREEK

Multipurpose, lighted artificial turf playing fields at newly opened Cauley Creek Park in Johns Creek.

"It's a big feather in our cap," he said, and expected to be a draw for the entire region.

The park also includes a 5-kilometer rubberized trail, lighted sports courts, lighted grass and synthetic turf playing fields, pedestrian bridge and overlooks along the Chattahoochee. The property, which took 18 months to construct, is at 7255 Bell Road, south of the McGinnis Ferry and Bell roads intersection.

The concept design construction and environmental design of Cauley Creek Park were funded by a \$40 million parks bond approved by Johns Creek citizens on Nov. 8, 2016.

As an emerging hub for health, wellness and innovation, Johns Creek's "new parks and trails will play a key role in increasing our community's walkability and park access. These are important factors because they directly contribute to a community's health outcomes," according to Erica Madsen, recreation

and parks director, City of Johns Creek.

Other recent North Fulton parks, green space and trails projects include:

- Sandy Springs' groundbreaking for its Trail Master Plan and the announcement of the name of the trail network: Springway, according to Caroline Kinchler, economic development manager for the City of Sandy Springs. "The outdoors, recreation, and trails are very important to Sandy Springs. At full completion, Springway will weave into Central Perimeter Business District. Path 400 is also working its way up into Sandy Springs," Kinchler said in email.
- Kinchler also said Sandy Springs will open Veterans Park across Roswell Road from its City Springs campus in November.
- Alpharetta is building a \$15 million section of the Alpha Loop which is a greenway running from Roswell in north Fulton County to Forsyth County.

## THE TRAILS OF NORTH FULTON

### ALPHA LOOP

- Location: Alpharetta
- Distance: 5 miles
- Features: Outdoor art sculptures and murals; connects downtown Alpharetta, Avalon, Northwinds and North Point

### JONES BRIDGE TRAIL

(Chattahoochee National Recreation Area)

- Location: Johns Creek
- Distance: 5 miles
- Features: Location along the Chattahoochee River

### EAST PALISADES TRAIL

- Location: Sandy Springs
- Distance: 4 miles
- Features: Trail leads from the banks of the Chattahoochee River to area of bamboo stalks

### BIG CREEK GREENWAY

- Location: Alpharetta
- Distance: 8 miles (the entire trail runs a total of 26 miles)
- Features: One of Georgia's longest greenways; stretches from Forsyth to Fulton counties

### ROSWELL RIVERWALK

- Location: Roswell
- Distance: 7 miles
- Features: Follows the bank of the Roswell River for miles by way of a wooden boardwalk

### PROVIDENCE PARK TRAILS

- Location: Milton
- Distance: Range from 0.3 to 0.75 miles
- Features: Streams, a loop around a pond, a half-mile ADA-accessible option

Source: Greater North Fulton Chamber's 50th Anniversary Guide to North Fulton

- Alpharetta and the North Fulton Community Improvement District are designing a gateway feature and Big Creek Greenway connection at the intersection of Encore Parkway and North Point Parkway.
- Roswell voters in 2022 approved a recreation and parks bond referendum for \$107.6 million for various projects, including recreation, parks, sidewalks, bike and pedestrian paths.

# WHY ROSWELL?

Located 22 miles north of Atlanta, Roswell's award-winning quality of life, easy access to Georgia 400, and close proximity to the world's busiest airport, make it the perfect community for businesses of all sizes—from large corporate offices to small startups.

 Easy access to  
**Georgia 400**

**22 Miles**   
distance from Atlanta



**35 Miles**  
to International Airport



**Wellstar North  
Fulton Hospital**  
217-bed, Level II Trauma Center



**\$285M**  
Restaurant  
Industry

**\$2 Billion**   
Auto Industry

**28 Office  
Buildings**



**\$2 Billion**  
Auto Industry



Historic charm and  
downtown walkability



**1,000+ acres**  
of award-winning parks

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Property Group

**GM** Innovation  
Center

**GreyOrange**

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**Kimberly-Clark**

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# Automotive, IT and healthcare industries thrive in Roswell

BY DOUG DELOACH, Contributing Writer

In April, Roswell held the 12th annual State of the City luncheon at the Computer Museum of America. Mayor Kurt Wilson and Roswell Inc. Executive Director Steve Stroud apprised an audience of business executives, community leaders and regional representatives of the city's recent economic performance. Among the positive economic indicators they cited were the creation of more than 560 new businesses in 2022 and a 3.1% increase in job growth (to 54,600-plus jobs) with average earnings of \$89,000.

Late in the third quarter of 2023, growth and development in Roswell and the North Fulton region continues apace with no signs of letting up.

"One of the first things we did when we took office was to establish an economic development division within City Hall and hire an economic development director," said Mayor Kurt Wilson, who took office in January 2022. "Our economic development team is currently working on a plan that encompasses four different economic pods across the city to spur redevelopment and bring new business into the city."

The bulk of the economic growth in Roswell stems from key industry sectors including automotive and motorsports, information technology, healthcare and mixed-use development.

Roswell has seen recent growth in the information technology sector with SK Battery opening its U.S. IT Center in Roswell earlier this year, Stroud noted.

Korean manufacturer SK Battery America's new IT hub reportedly cost around \$19 million while creating 200 jobs. Concurrently, the Georgia IT Innovation Center, which houses General Motors' software division, is adding 300 new jobs, making it Roswell's largest employer, Stroud said. GM is also making facility and land site improvements.



**WELLSTAR NORTH FULTON HOSPITAL**

The CyberKnife system, located at Wellstar North Fulton Hospital in Roswell, is a non-invasive treatment for tumors and other conditions.

Roswell's second leading industry in gross revenue is the automotive sector, which generates nearly \$2 billion annually, Stroud said.



**STEVE STROUD**  
Executive Director,  
Roswell Inc.

Currently, more than 16 new car dealerships in Roswell generate \$1.8 billion in annual revenue, according to city records. Enterprise recently opened a new Rental and Sales Center in

Roswell. The 25,000-square-foot center includes offices, a vehicle showroom, auto repair center, used car sales, and a vehicle and commercial truck rental department.

Growing interest in motorsports has fueled performance tuning and racing shops such as Mountain Motorsports, Atlanta Motorsports and Solo Motorsports which generate more than \$50 million annually.

"Additionally, two new vehicle dealers are planning to open in Roswell in the next year, including the city's first all-

electric vehicle dealership," Stroud said.

In the medical sector, Wellstar North Fulton Hospital earlier this year opened a \$12 million, 12,000-square-foot comprehensive cancer treatment center that houses Wellstar's second CyberKnife system, a non-invasive treatment for tumors and other conditions.

Accounting for Roswell's economic performance, Stroud underlined the city's close proximity to Atlanta and a high quality of life, which attracts new businesses and companies looking to relocate.

"The City of Roswell continues to invest in improving quality of life," said Stroud.

As examples, the executive director pointed to three bond referendums passed in late 2022. The referendums call for an investment of more than \$100 million in recreation and parks projects, more than \$50 million for public safety and \$20 million for a public parking structure in the historic district.

Roswell is also seeing growth in other

sectors, including freight logistics. The city is home to a United Parcel Service Inc. regional distribution center and East Coast Training Facility, as well as Nolan Transportation Group, a 2021 Inc. 5000 fast-growing company.

Mixed-use development is spreading in North Fulton. In Roswell, Southern Post, a much-anticipated mixed-use project, is nearing completion. The 4-acre development by Virginia-based Armada Hoffer combines 95,000 square feet of loft-style office space; 40,000 square feet of retail, restaurant and entertainment space; 128 luxury apartments and nine townhomes.

"The community is deeply rooted in history and has that small town charm," said Jennifer Harris, vice president of development at Armada Hoffer. "Southern Post will extend those qualities through the architecture and material used to construct the site, as well as in the curated mix of retail shops, loft-style office space, restaurants, and residences."

Roswell is committed to creating a successful environment for businesses to thrive, Wilson said.

## MORE ROSWELL STATE OF THE CITY HIGHLIGHTS:

- More than 560 new businesses opened in 2022
- Roswell saw a 3.1% increase in jobs growth in 2022 to 54,600+ jobs, with an average earnings of \$89,000
- The three fastest growing industries by number of jobs are 1. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services 2. Health Care and Social Assistance and 3. Finance and Insurance
- Roswell Village saw the highest increase in retail traffic of 15.4%, totaling 1.5 million visits. Canton Street attracted more than 675,000 customers, totaling 2.6-million visits.
- Roswell is home to over 265 restaurants, bringing in approximately \$250-million in annual revenue
- More than 16 new car dealerships in Roswell generate \$1.8 billion in annual revenue; Roswell's motorsport industry, comprised of five dealers, generates over \$50 million in annual revenue.
- In 2023, Roswell hotels are expected to generate approximately \$22.5 million in annual revenue and \$1.5 million in lodging tax.



# Greater North Fulton Chamber looks to the future in its 50th year

BY DOUG DELOACH, Contributing Writer

**F**ifty years ago, a small group of business owners established the Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce (GNFCC). Today, the private, nonprofit, 5-star-accredited chamber consists of more than 1,300 business enterprises, civic organizations, educational institutions and individuals.

“The chamber has been the catalyst for the region’s growth, connectivity, innovation, transformation and economic vitality,” said Kali Boatright, president and CEO of the GNFCC.

Among the GNFCC’s significant achievements in the recent past, Boatright listed the creation of the North Fulton Community Improvement District, which co-locates with the chamber and collaborates on economic development projects; Avalon, where the chamber offices are now located; Gwinnett Tech’s Alpharetta campus, where the chamber is focused on getting a second building constructed; The Drake House, a Leadership North Fulton project;



**DANIELLE CHEUNG**  
2023 Board Chair,  
GNFCC

Innovation Academy STEM high school, where the chamber helped craft a curriculum that tied together education and business interests; and the Milton Business Council, the first of the chamber’s city business councils.

Currently, the GNFCC is exploring ways to promote the region by “creating a brand to market North Fulton cohesively on behalf of the six cities” that fall under the organization’s purview: Alpharetta, Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park, Roswell and Sandy Springs.

“We don’t want to separate ourselves from Fulton County or even from metro Atlanta,” Boatright said. “We believe that our six cities with their nearly 400,000 residents represent the best communities in the state. It’s time to tell that story worldwide.”

Power 10 Capital Campaigns has been enlisted to create a feasibility study, which will guide the GNFCC’s initiative, according to current chamber Chair Danielle Cheung, senior vice president, Bank of America.

“They will be interviewing constituents and stakeholders and putting together a plan along the lines of what Gwinnett County did around Partnership Gwinnett and what Cobb County did around Select Cobb,” Cheung said.

In January, the GNFCC celebrated 50 years of operation with a gala and awards ceremony, which recognized past accomplishments and historical leadership, followed by the publishing of the 50th Anniversary Guide to North Fulton. Next on the 2023 calendar is the North Fulton Futures Summit, a gathering of minds from the six cities and the chamber scheduled for Oct. 26.

“The summit will focus around three panels: the mayors’ collective vision

**“The chamber has been the catalyst for the region’s growth, connectivity, innovation, transformation and economic vitality.”**

**KALI BOATRIGHT**

for the future of our region, private developers discussing current economic development projects and an overview of EV initiatives in North Fulton,” Cheung said.



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# Sandy Springs planning second phase of City Springs

BY JESSICA SAUNDERS, Senior Editor

The City of Sandy Springs and its preferred development partner are working on a final plan for Phase 2 of the City Springs Development.

The City Council selected Regent Partners and Morris and Fellows as its preferred partner on June 6. Regent and Morris and Fellows included several development scenarios within their proposal, but they did not represent a final development plan. The city and the development partner are working to refine options that will be presented to the public for input before a development plan is finalized for the property.

When Regent and Morris and Fellows entered the request for proposals process, “they were just guessing what the city wanted. Now we’ve been a little bit more concrete with the details and they’ve expressed to us that they’re very comfortable with what the city wants to do and they think they can deliver that,” Mayor Rusty Paul said in late July.

The project would redevelop about 4



**CITY OF SANDY SPRINGS**

People gather on the green at City Springs for the Stars and Stripes Fireworks Celebration July 4, 2022.

acres along Mount Vernon Highway, Hildebrand Drive and Sandy Springs Circle.

“We’re hoping to get a new hotel across from City Hall, [and] some condos,” he said. “We’ve got a lot of people who want to buy housing in the City Springs District and downsize from a 5,000-square-foot house and get a little bit more compact and be closer to all

the activity that’s going on here in the city.”

In addition to fee-simple housing, the city would also like to see some office space aimed at small professional service businesses such as law or accounting firms, he said.

“We’re excited about where we’re going and we hope to be under construction

sometime in 2024,” Paul said. In its proposal, the real estate team proposed concepts including a boutique hotel, shops, restaurants, offices and apartments or condos. But at the preferred development partner announcement in June, city leaders stressed that the final plan would likely deviate from the initial concepts. They also noted the city could move forward with another development partner if the city and the preferred partner fail to agree on a plan for the site.

Because Regent Partners and Morris and Fellows were still working with the city on the master plan concepts for Phase 2 in early September, the development partner had agreed with city leaders not to comment on the plans, David Allman, owner and chairman of Regent Partners, said. “We hope to have our conceptual master plan tightened up within 30 days, but that is still evolving,” he said via email Sept. 6.

The estimated completion date for City Springs Phase 2 was fall 2026, as of the development partner announcement in June.

## North Fulton transportation projects

BY JESSICA SAUNDERS, Senior Editor

Across North Fulton, transportation projects are underway that are helping to reduce congestion and increase connectivity. Each of its cities have different priorities based on their unique characteristics. Sandy Springs has a more commercial and larger program than the City of Milton, for example. And the majority of the projects are driven by the 2016 Fulton County Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, or TSPLOST. Here are details on some of the projects:

### ALPHARETTA

- **Alpha Link**

The Alpha Link project is currently in design. The North Fulton Community Improvement District assisted the City of Alpharetta in obtaining a \$1 million grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission to fund the Alpha Link design. The project spans from Haynes Bridge Road to North Point Parkway and will connect the Alpha Loop and the Big Creek

Greenway. It is an important piece that provides increased mobility and connectivity to the rapidly growing North Point area.

- **Davis Drive Extension**

The Davis Drive Extension was opened to traffic in spring of 2023. The \$5 million project allows a safe connection from Mansell Road to Westside Parkway, said Kristin Winzeler, deputy executive director, North Fulton CID. The project increased safety by deterring cars from making illegal cut-throughs and opened several acres of land for development opportunities, she said. “The desire to develop this area was so great we were coordinating our road construction efforts with the construction efforts of developers already building on the newly accessible sites.” The project led by the North Fulton CID included Rubenstein Partners, The Davis Group, The City of Alpharetta, and the State Road & Tollway Authority.



**NORTH FULTON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

The \$5 million Davis Drive Extension helps safely connect Mansell Road to Westside Parkway.

- **Encore Greenway Park**

This new gateway park and greenway extension, located at the corner of North Point Parkway and Encore

Parkway, is in the design phase. It is expected to bring people more directly to one of the most valuable North Fulton assets, the Big Creek

# THE FUTURE IS CONNECTED IN ALPHARETTA

From tech to trails and live music to life sciences, Alpharetta is the city that will keep you connected. Built on a solid investment in technology and infrastructure, Alpharetta has expanded city amenities and business partnerships, attracting the best and brightest talent and companies in the region. Walkable, mixed-use developments provide businesses and residents with access to a wide selection of restaurants retail, and entertainment options. Miles of public trails, including the Big Creek Greenway and the Alpha Loop, connect the city's activity centers with Alpharetta's 34 beautiful parks. Unique attractions like the Ameris Bank Amphitheatre and a world-class equestrian center draw talent to make Alpharetta a world of its own - while still providing the convenience of being 30 minutes from downtown Atlanta and less than an hour from the busiest airport in the world.



## ALPHARETTA, GEORGIA BY THE NUMBERS:


Alpharetta is **27.27** square miles, has **34** parks and **15** miles of walkable trails.

**66,419** people reside in Alpharetta and **70%** of those over 25 have obtained at least a bachelor's degree.

**25%** of residents were born outside of the country.

**>700** technology-focused companies are in Alpharetta.

The zip codes in Alpharetta have **3.3X** more tech jobs than the national average. For reference, Palo Alto, CA has 3.4X the national average.

 [linkedin.com/showcase/connected-Alpharetta](https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/connected-Alpharetta)

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NORTH FULTON MARKET REPORT | PAID ADVERTISING

Greenway, Winzeler said. The City of Alpharetta, in partnership with the North Fulton CID, funded the design of the project, costing approximately \$640,000. The City of Alpharetta plans to move forward with construction of the project in 2024.

● **Lane Diets**

The Alpharetta City Council approved lane diets, putting in bike lanes and making car lanes smaller for the Brookside and North Point roadways. Investments in the North Point area are making walkable areas that were once automobile-centric.

● **Encore Parkway Bridge**

The bridge project is an example of infrastructure investment by the North Fulton CID to support future development. The roadway underlying the refurbished Encore Parkway Bridge is wider than necessary due to anticipated use of bus rapid transit. MARTA is looking at placing a BRT station nearby. The CID and MARTA are studying the walk shed – how long it takes to walk from Point A to Point B – and other



**CITY OF MILTON/POND**  
The concept layout for Morris Road from Webb Road/Deerfield Avenue to Bethany Bend in the City of Milton.

connectivity issues.

The bridge is situated between two heavily traveled Georgia 400 interchanges, Mansell Road to the south and Haynes Bridge Road to the north. The old bridge was widened to accommodate four lanes of vehicle traffic, while 8-foot barrier-separated pedestrian lanes on both sides and two 6-foot bicycle lanes were installed.

The Encore Parkway Bridge and Streetscape Project really

kicked off thinking about connectivity and walkability for the North Fulton CID, Winzeler said. “This project is significant because it was the first time that we crossed over the Big Creek Greenway to the west side of Georgia 400.”

She notes the refurbished bridge connects shopping at North Point, the Big Creek Greenway, retail and restaurants and office space, all on the east side, with Ameris Bank Amphitheater, the Sanctuary

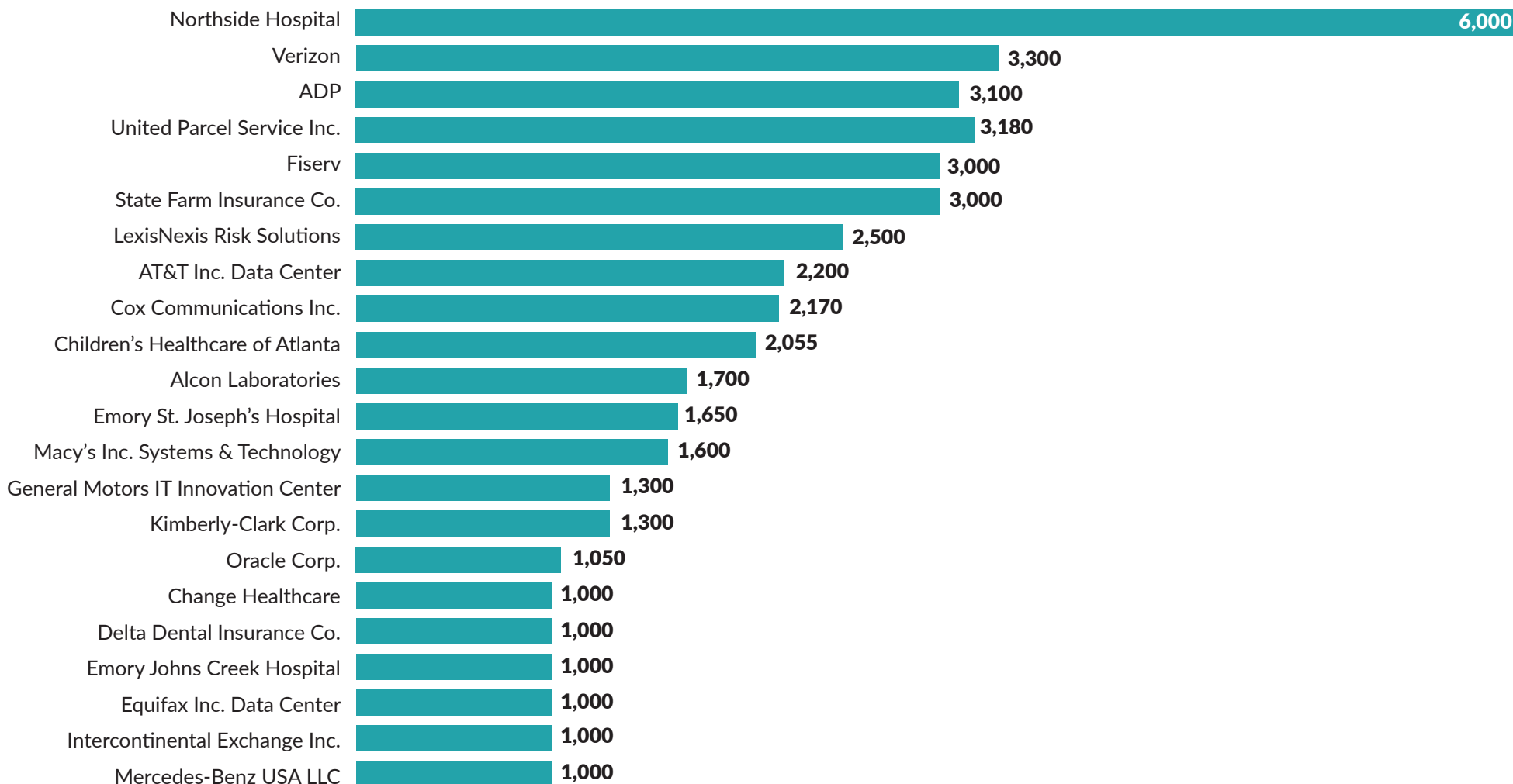
Park large office park, some other commercial space and houses, on the west.

“There’s a lot of development on either side, but there was really not a good way to get across.”

The North Fulton CID, city of Alpharetta, Georgia Department of Transportation, Atlanta Regional Commission, and State Road & Tollway Authority partnered on the \$19 million project, which included lighting and landscaping. By

## NORTH FULTON’S LARGEST EMPLOYERS

North Fulton is headquarters to five Fortune 500 companies: United Parcel Service Inc., WestRock, Veritiv, Intercontinental Exchange and Graphic Packaging.



Editor’s Note: Jackson Healthcare also is among the largest employers in North Fulton, but its employee count could not be determined. Source: Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce

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the ribbon-cutting in 2017, new townhouses and a three-story building with multi-family housing above retail shops had opened along the parkway just west of the bridge.

“Even as we were building the project, we had developers coming to us and they wanted to build out the four corners of Encore Parkway at Westside Parkway of that project,” Winzeler said.

MILTON

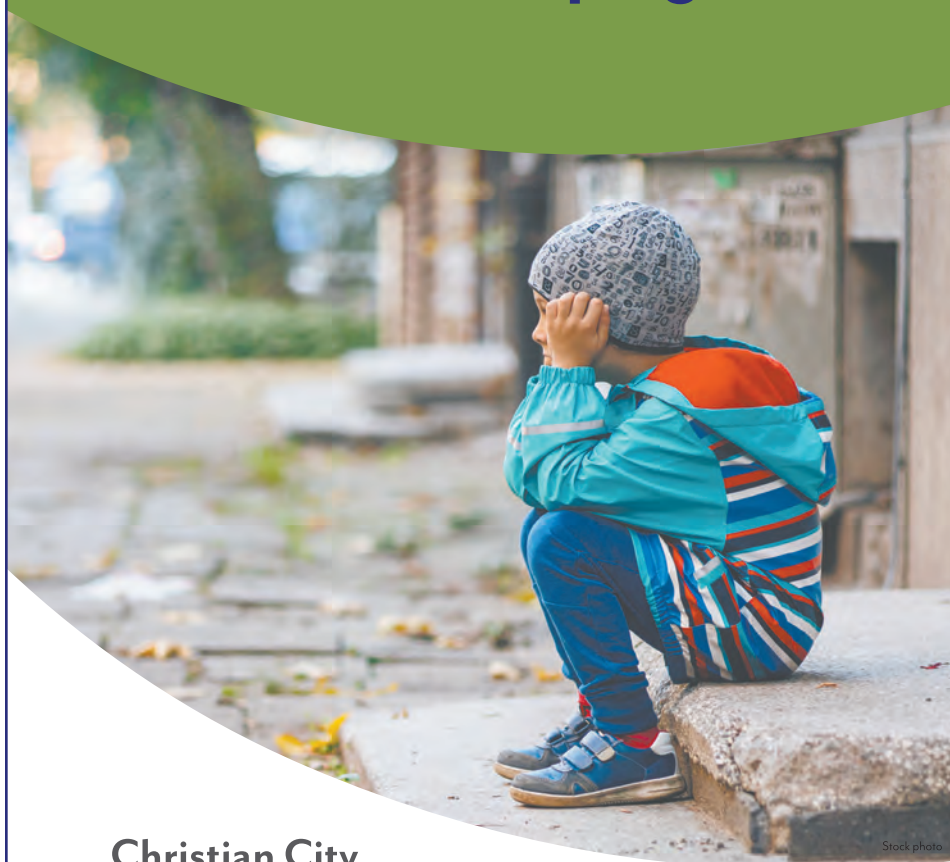
- Mini Roundabout at SR 372/ Birmingham Highway at Birmingham Road**  
 This is a Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) project that has been under construction for a year and will be completed next year. The roundabout replaces a four-way intersection with stop signs at all four points, which had been a pretty big source of congestion, said Robert Dell-Ross, engineering project manager for the City of Milton. The intersection is “operating as a circle now” and the city is already seeing a benefit, he said. “You don’t have that queue of 10 to 20-plus cars every morning and every afternoon going through the the old stop signs.”
- Morris Road Widening**  
 This project will extend four lanes along McGinnis Ferry/ Morris roads from the new interchange at GA 400 (currently under construction by GDOT) further south to the existing roundabout at Webb Road. The GDOT was wrapping up right-of-way acquisition as of Sept. 12 and was expected to begin construction in the next 4-6 months, Dell-Ross said.  
 “In North Fulton, in South Forsyth, people have been talking about the McGinnis Ferry-400 interchange for probably 20 years,” he said. “It’s been under right-of-way construction for a very long time. It’s under construction right now. If you’ve driven on 400, you can see the activity. It is a very large project. Next to it on the east side of 400, they’re also widening McGinnis Ferry to four lanes heading down into Johns Creek going into the southeast. That is getting ready to start construction.”  
 This \$50-\$60 million project has the largest economic development impact of all of the projects on Milton’s list, Dell-Ross said. It will also benefit large developments in south Forsyth County, including Halcyon.

Morris Road will have trails on both sides, providing residents living near State Highway 9 and Deerfield Parkway a walking path over to the Big Creek Greenway, Dell-Ross said.

- Comprehensive Transportation Plan Update**  
 Milton’s original Comprehensive Transportation Plan was adopted in 2009 and updated once in 2016. The city has gone through multiple public outreach efforts in the past several months, and will be continuing into October, November and December with project recommendations and plan adoption. The plan is setting the city’s priorities for what it will be tackling in the next five, 10 to 20 years, Dell-Ross said. “Are we wanting to build more sidewalks? Are we wanting to build more roundabouts? Are we wanting to maintain our bridges? That process is in conjunction with our TSPLOST funding program.”  
 So far, the public has cited bicycle and pedestrian amenities, building more trails and reducing delays, while improving safety and reducing speeding and crashes, as priorities, he said.
- Cox Road Intersection Improvements**  
 Milton is partnering with the City of Roswell to propose operational and safety improvements at three intersections along Cox Road: Cox at King, Cox at Etris/ Ebenezer and Cox at Arnold Mill/SR 140.  
 “All three of those intersections are very close to the city of Roswell,” Dell-Ross said. “In fact, most of the drivers who are on Cox Road are probably heading towards Cherokee County or going to Roswell. Very few Milton drivers are on Cox Road. That’s why we have a partnership with Roswell to look at those three intersections to make sure that we’re building things that both cities support, given the proximity of where they are and the location.”  
 The city transportation department had recently recommended to the mayor and City Council building roundabouts at the Cox-King and Cox-Etris/Ebenezer intersections, he said Sept. 12. Preliminary design is expected by the end of the year, with construction two years or more away.  
 Milton is working with GDOT on the Cox-Arnold Mill concept, Dell-Ross said.



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2B »

office in Avalon or downtown Alpharetta where amenities and walkability are paramount, office vacancy is quite low. Alpharetta has several mixed-use developments with office components that are coming on the market in the next few years, whether it's TPA Lakeview and Northwinds Summit on the Alpha Loop or Windward's Continuum development."

Outdoor amenities are especially attractive now, said Peter McGuone, managing director, Stream Realty Partners, an affiliate of which has proposed redeveloping North River Shopping Center in Sandy Springs' North End. The city approved its rezoning in April.

"I would say the outdoor amenity space was something that was happening pre-pandemic. We were seeing that start to be a trend. But I think the pandemic certainly accelerated that as a 'must-have', not just a 'nice to have,'" McGuone said.

Among the examples in North Fulton of the atmosphere that suburban offices are after is Avalon, the large-scale mixed-use development by North American Properties that opened in Alpharetta in 2014, he added.

"Avalon created what they call the first 'urbanburb' — an urban experience in a suburban environment. People have been trying to emulate that,"

McGuone said. Stream Realty is the leasing agent for Avalon, Edison Lakeview, and Continuum.

"I think people want to still have that urban environment in a suburban setting and [have] places to work outside of the actual office," McGuone said. "They still like to go to the office, but [they want to] be able to go to a tenant lounge in the lobby or to be able to sit outside and work at an outdoor conference table or facility. I think connection — especially in Alpharetta — to the Alpha Loop is a huge component. Actually being able to get out and walk on the trails and have outdoor exercise opportunities — I think that's an important thing we're seeing."

Outdoor areas, "such as courtyards, rooftop gardens, or open-air seating, not only provide employees with a refreshing change of scenery but also promote wellness and collaboration. Outdoor spaces have become essential in creating a well-rounded and appealing work environment that caters to both physical and mental well-being," Sandy Springs Mayor Rusty Paul said.

Regardless of workplace options, office tenants still want to feel safe.

"In today's landscape, potential and incoming suburban North Fulton office tenants highly prioritize the safety of their employees and the overall security of the office buildings," Paul said. "Brokers and prospects frequently inquire about the safety measures



**RUSTY PAUL**  
Sandy Springs Mayor

in place, not only within the office premises but also in the surrounding Perimeter area and citywide. Sandy Springs, in particular, stands out as a reassuring choice, known for its consistently

high safety ratings and low crime rates. Ensuring the well-being of employees is paramount when encouraging them to return to the office regularly."

The most requested or sought-after features that potential office tenants in North Fulton want are an "amenitized" location, including food/lifestyle centers; trails/fitness access; and places to gather that are open after 5 p.m., Abdullahi said.

People also want creative spaces, such as loft concepts, open floor plans, and collaborative spaces versus office/cube culture, he said.

The rise of hybrid work — part in-office, part remote — is another factor. "The rise of hybrid and remote work arrangements has reshaped tenant expectations," Paul said. "Office tenants are seeking spaces that offer the flexibility to adapt to changing staff needs. This means having the ability to scale up or down their office space based on workforce fluctuations."

With flexibility seeming to be the

**“Office tenants are seeking spaces that offer the flexibility to adapt to changing staff needs. This means having the ability to scale up or down their office space based on workforce fluctuations.”**

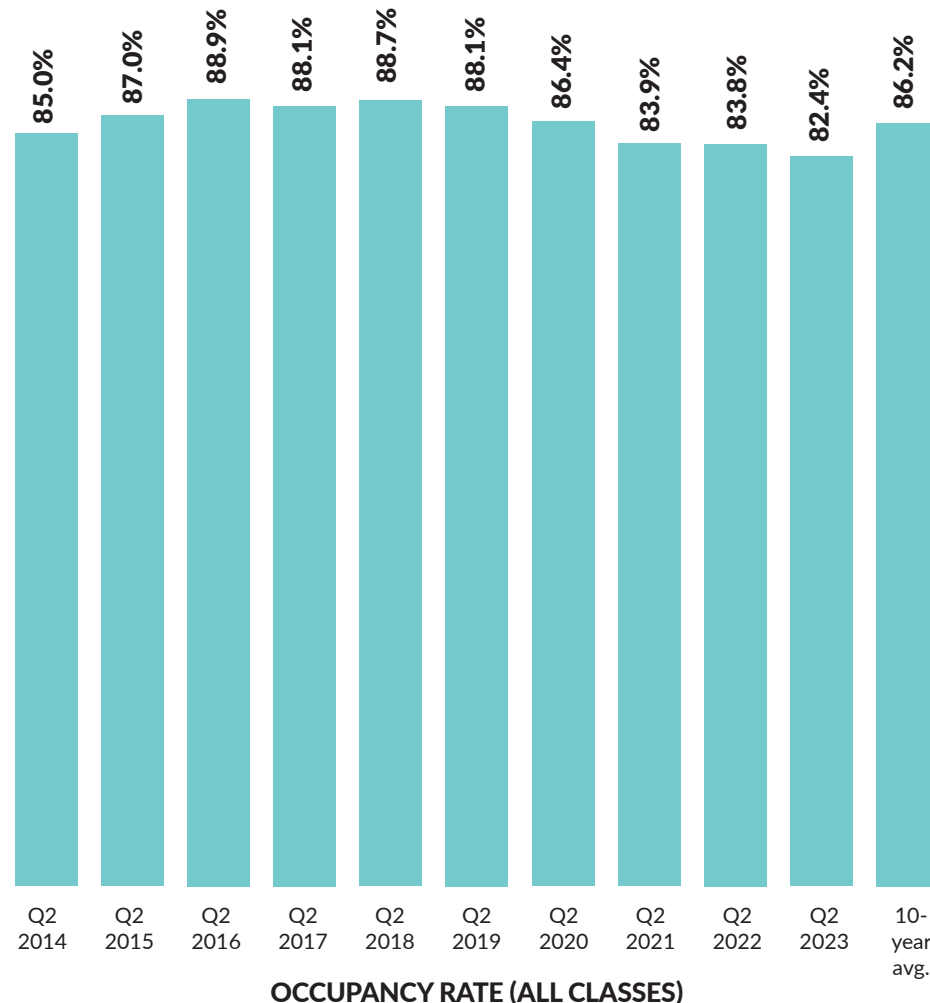
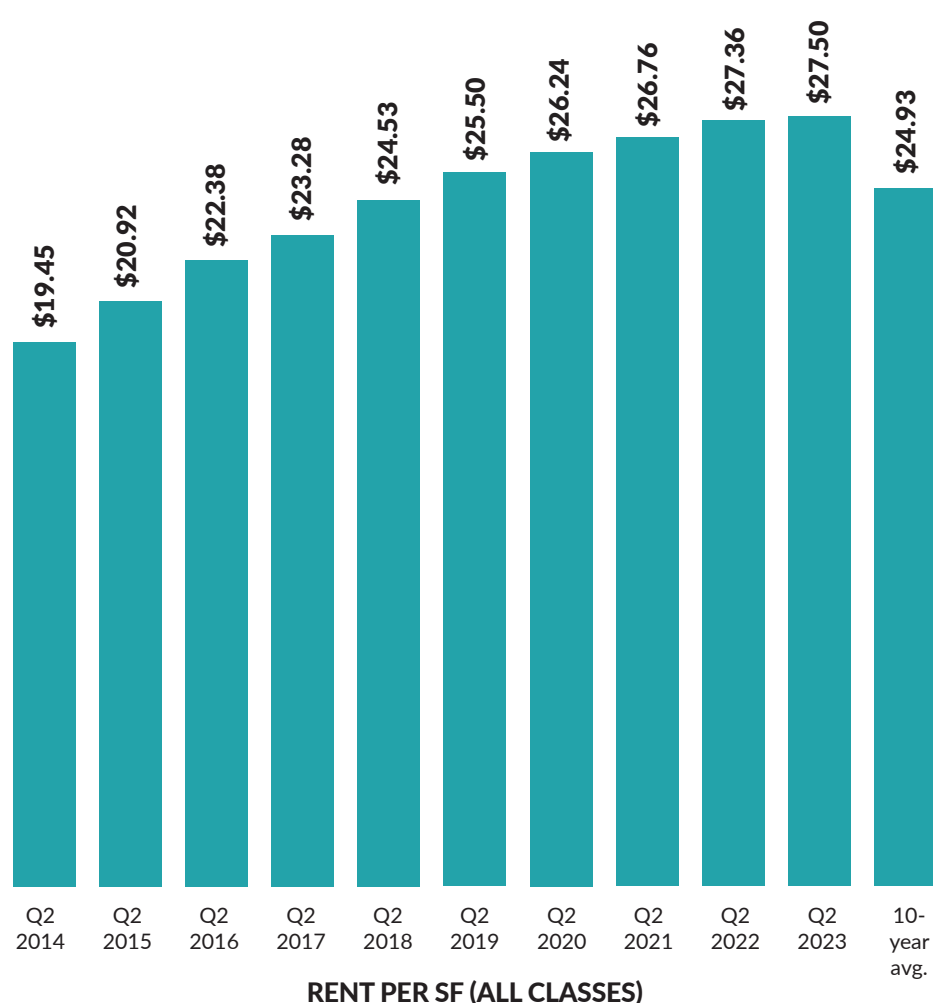
**RUSTY PAUL**

current watchword for office, markets that can offer more of it in terms of price, design and amenities appear well-positioned.

"I think a lot of it just boils down to flexibility to work, not just flexibility to work from home, but flexibility to work from other places within the office, outside of just your desk or your cube," McGuone said, "so providing any kind of that flexibility is important."

**NORTH FULTON OFFICE MARKET — BY THE NUMBERS**

North Fulton County has 60.6 million square feet of office space; 36.6 million SF is Class A office space.



Source: CoStar

# Study underway on the Windward Parkway/Highway 9 corridor

BY LESLIE JOHNSON, Contributing Writer

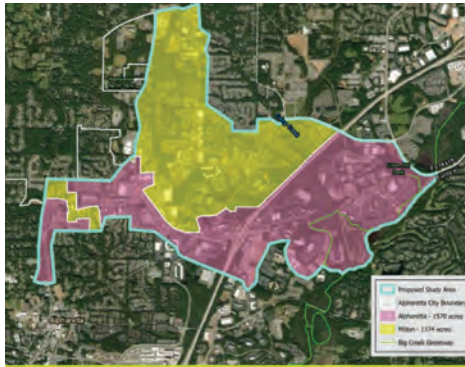
The search is on for opportunities to enhance aspects of a vital North Fulton area.

The North Fulton Community Improvement District is working on the Windward Parkway/Highway 9 Strategic Master Plan with the cities of Alpharetta and Milton. Launched in March, the \$180,000 study is slated to be completed by the end of the year. Each partner is paying equal shares of the cost.

“The goals of this study are to learn more ways to increase the assets the corridor already possesses and carve out new ideas for the future. Whether this means increased connectivity and walkability, creative placemaking, adaptive re-use initiatives, et cetera,” said Lance Morsell, economic development manager, community development, City of Alpharetta.

The cities and CID are undertaking strategic master planning for the Windward Parkway and Highway 9 corridors to create a blueprint for the district, Anita Jupin, economic engagement manager for the City of Milton, said. “This corridor is home to the highest density in Milton with large employers, shopping and dining destinations, parks, and other amenities in the built environment available to Milton residents.”

The study will identify potential investment opportunities in mobility, transportation, green space and connectivity, as well as elements of placemaking to improve quality of life and economic position in the region, she said. “Further, with the



improvements being done by [the Georgia Department of Transportation] along Highway 9 and Morris Road, the mobility of this district will continue to change dramatically.” The study will also identify amenities in the study area and opportunities to expand on them, she said.

The study will note market changes since Covid-19 in 2020 to be addressed in the master plan, as well as changes since the last census. “In a post-pandemic market, the strategy and approach to commercial office space and retail vacancy looks much different than it did even a few years ago,” Jupin said.

The CID is meeting with property owners, city staff, city council members and all other interested stakeholders, Kristin Winzeler, deputy executive director, North Fulton CID, said. People are asking for amenities and walkability.

“Connect us to places people can go after work, connect us to places people can go at lunch. So those are really big themes we’re talking about and I think they play into the economic viability of North Fulton in general,” she said.

“I think all the stakeholders want to see North Fulton successful. We see the value of connecting to green space,

parks, all those amenities, and we’re doing what we can to help build out those connections.”



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