

Stonecrest Freight Cluster Plan

Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Plan

Prepared by



For



In cooperation with



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Overview

This Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Plan (Outreach Plan) describes the outreach activities that will support the creation of the Stonecrest Freight Cluster Plan (FCP). The Outreach Plan identifies key citizens, businesses, agencies, and organizations whose participation will be critical to the FCP's outcome.

Throughout the engagement process, various techniques will be used to involve stakeholders and ensure participation is focused on individual and collective contributions to the FCP. The engagement strategies will add value to the planning process by expanding awareness of the FCP and contributing to project recommendations.

Details on the process, schedule, deliverables, and engagement opportunities will be readily available throughout the planning process on a City of Stonecrest website dedicated to this project. Metro Analytics will provide the city with materials for inclusion on the website, including documentation, mapping, and other project related content. To ensure its effectiveness, the Outreach Plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure the outreach activities are reaching the targeted audiences and accomplishing outreach goals.

Atlanta Regional Commission Freight Cluster Plan Program

The 2016 Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan Update identified the need to conduct local, small-area freight planning in the Atlanta region to address transportation issues related to this key part of the region's economy. As a result, the ARC established the FCP Program to provide funding for local planning with a focus on freight movement. Stonecrest is among a handful of areas within the Atlanta region to receive funding through the program.

Project Description

The Stonecrest FCP Plan is being carried out as a part of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) FCP program. ARC's FCPs focus is on facilitating efficient freight movement, improving access to jobs, reducing traffic congestion, addressing changes in the freight industry, and improving safety and mobility for pedestrians and vehicular traffic, and access for all roadway users.

The FCP will specifically accomplish the following:

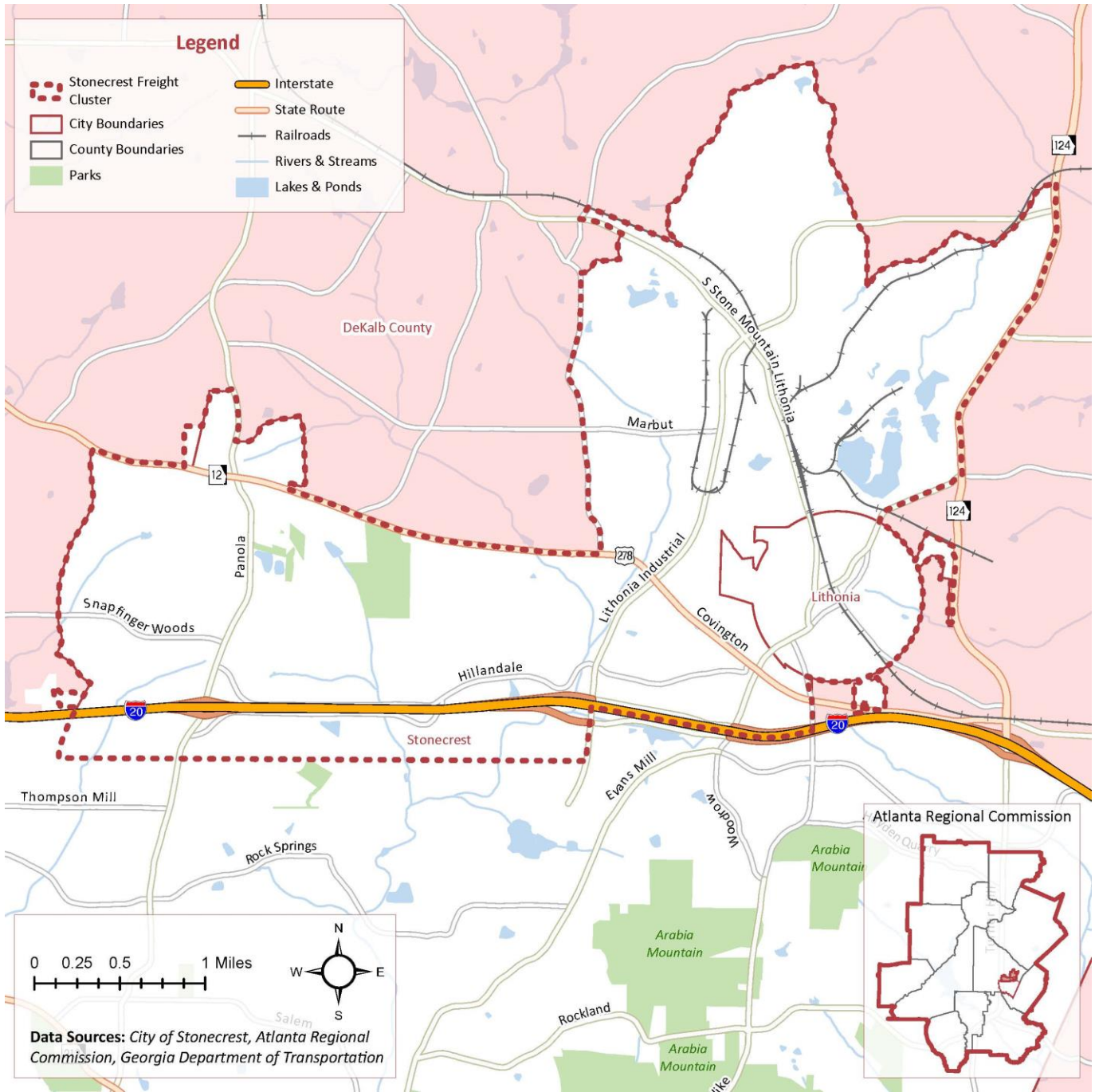
1. Promote a safe, balanced transportation environment for freight and multimodal travel.
2. Promote efficient transportation solutions.
3. Identify land uses and target industries that support compatible future growth and development.
4. Promote economic development.

Key aspects of the planning process include reviewing best practices, existing conditions analysis, traffic study, extensive stakeholder engagement, and development of recommendations.

Study Area

The study area includes the northern portion of the City of Stonecrest municipal boundaries and the City of Lithonia. During the development of the FCP, the Metro Analytics team will focus on two industrial areas, the Lithonia Industrial Park and the Park Central/Panola Road Corridor. It should be noted that characteristics that influence activities from outside the study area will be considered as part of this study. The study area is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Stonecrest Freight Cluster Plan Study Area



Coordination with Project Milestones

Stakeholder engagement and outreach activities are tailored to support distinct planning needs and goals and are timed to align with other outreach activities and key milestones. These connections are further explained via the Outreach Strategies section (beginning on page 4). Figure 2 (on page 5) presents the project schedule with the overall outreach milestones.

Outreach Strategies

A range of strategies and techniques will reach stakeholders in and around the study area. Outreach efforts will educate, inform, and communicate with the public. The efforts will convey the FCP's purpose and progress by highlighting local issues, technical considerations, and potential impacts. Outreach techniques encourage participation in the process and generate meaningful feedback. Opportunities for engagement will be convenient, strategically planned, and respectful of participants' time commitments. Outreach activities include a stakeholder committee, input surveys, interviews, public forums, and presentations. A description of each activity follows. Outreach will be conducted both virtually and in-person as deemed appropriate by the project management team. All outreach activities described below can be accomplished through web-based tools, including Zoom, SurveyMonkey, Wikimapping, and other related technology.

Steering Committee

The City has identified the following Steering Committee members to guide the development of the FCP:

- ARC Representative - Daniel Studdard, AICP, Principal Planner, Transportation Access and Mobility Division DStuddard@atlantaregional.org
- DeKalb County Representative – David Pelton, PE, Associate Director, Public Works Department- Transportation Division dwpelton@dekalbcountyga.gov
- City of Lithonia Representative – Donald DeJarnette, City Administrator & Chief of Police doland.dejarnette@Lithoniacity.org
- GDOT Representative – Paul Denard, PE, District Engineer, District 7 or his Designee pdenard@dot.ga.gov
- City of Stonecrest Representative – Hari Karikaran, PE, City Engineer hkarikaran@stonecrestga.gov
- City of Stonecrest Representative – Ray White, AICP or his Designee rwhite@stonecrestga.gov
- One Business Owner from the Study Area – Alan Burnette (Transportation Advisory Committee Member) alan.burnette@lehighhanson.com
- One Resident/Property Owner from the Study Area – Greg Wright (CID Advisory Committee Chair) Greg gregwright@masterwall.com

It should be noted that two Stonecrest citizen representatives will be engaged throughout the study process and asked to serve on the Steering Committee.

The Plan's successful development will rely heavily upon the input of local officials and staff. We recognize that these individuals and organizations interact with the Plan communities regularly and contribute valuable local information and insights.

The committee will provide input to the identification of needs and proposed solutions. Steering Committee members will also serve as champions for the FCP process, informing their networks about the effort and promoting opportunities to get involved. The momentum generated by the committee will play an important role in implementing the FCP.

The Steering Committee will convene up to four times at key milestones. The anticipated timing and meeting activities are shown here and on the project schedule:

- **Meeting 1** – Discuss FCP Vision, Goals, and Objectives and targeted mobility discussion.
- **Meeting 2** – Present Best Practices and Inventory and Assessment Results and discuss mobility issues and needs.
- **Meeting 3** – Review draft recommendations and collect feedback on priorities.
- **Meeting 4 (if needed)** – Review final recommendations.

The Metro Analytics team will create written documentation of the meeting discussions and feedback.

Public Forums

Two public information forums will be held during the planning process, the first midway through the project and the second upon developing draft recommendations. These sessions will be informational and provide questions from participants with feedback from the study team. Public forums will be conducted in an open-house format to maximize participation.

- **The first forum** will share findings from the study of best practices in the freight industry and the inventory and assessment of existing freight conditions on the ground within and around the City of Stonecrest. This first public information forum will debut the stakeholder/community survey, ensuring nearby community members have a voice in the project.
- **The second forum** will provide an overview and opportunity to review and provide feedback on recommendations that may impact surrounding areas. This forum may be a recorded presentation, and viewers can respond via social media.

Stakeholder Interviews

Up to twelve stakeholder interviews will be held with key stakeholders interested in the process and outcomes of the FCP. The purpose of the interviews is to gather input on:

- Freight-related transportation challenges in the study area,
- How their facilities are operated,
- Trends in the logistics and supply chain industry that are impacting the freight movement industry, and
- Projects they believe could improve movement through the study area.

A questionnaire will be provided for the interviews designed to gather the specific information we need to capture. All interviews will be summarized individually, and a list of shared issues and common themes that emerge from the interviews will be provided.

Project Schedule

PROJECT TASKS	Jun '23	Jul '23	Aug '23	Sep '23	Oct '23	Nov '23	Dec '23	Jan '24	Feb '24	Mar '24	Apr '24	May '24	Jun '24
Task 1: Project Management		1	1										
Task 2: Engagement	2	2								3		3	
Task 3: Best Practices Review					5			5					
Task 4: Inventory and Assessment						6		6					
Task 5: Traffic Study								7		7			
Task 6: Recommendations									8		8		
Task 7: Documentation												9	9
- Vision, Goals and Objectives				4	4								
- Steering Committee Meetings													
- Public Forums													
- City Briefings/Adoption													

- Steering Committee Meetings
- Optional Steering Committee Meeting (If Needed)
- Public Forums
- City Briefings
- Adoption by City
- Project Management Plan
- Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Plan
- Summary of Public Involvement Activities
- Vision, Goals and Objectives
- Best Practices Report
- Inventory and Assessment Report
- Traffic Study Report
- Recommended Work Program/Policy Recommendations
- Recommendations Final Report and Executive Summary
- Denotes Internal Review Period

Input Surveys

Gathering input through surveys will result in increased stakeholder involvement, an expanded understanding of freight priorities and needs within the planning area, and targeted insights from specific stakeholder groups. Three types of surveys will be carried out and targeted to either truck drivers or stakeholders who live and work in the study area, as detailed below. The survey results will be incorporated into the FCP development.

Survey 1. Driver Intercept Survey

Understanding the challenges of accessing the study area by those who pick up and deliver freight is paramount to the FCP's outcome. Driver feedback about access issues, congestion, parking, and safety will be the primary focus. The most effective way to reach truck drivers is to reach out to them while staging and communicating through the Citizens Band radio technology. Up to 20 surveys will be completed with truck drivers and conducted in a hard copy format.

Survey 2. Stakeholder/Community Survey

A survey will target stakeholders who work and live in the study area and nearby community members to understand mobility issues or other challenges they may experience daily. This online survey will help identify areas that are in need of repair or redevelopment and uncover any hidden mobility challenges. The survey will solicit feedback on how stakeholders travel within the area and how they are affected by traffic, especially freight traffic. The survey questions will focus on the following:

- Specific access locations,
- Commute times,
- All modes of travel, including transit, automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, and truck parking.

Survey 3. Follow-up Stakeholder Survey

After draft recommendations are developed, a follow-up survey will be conducted with area stakeholders to identify priorities and ensure their mobility issues are captured in the FCP. This survey will also be conducted online.

Presentations

The project team will present at the following meetings that will occur between August of 2023 and April of 2024. Dates will be finalized with the City of Stonecrest and ARC during project coordination meetings:

- City of Stonecrest meetings
- ARC Freight Advisory Task Force

All presentations will be coordinated through the City of Stonecrest, and feedback received will be documented as a part of the FCP input.

Communications Tools

Project Landing Page

A project information section has been created on the City of Stonecrest website by City staff. Metro Analytics will provide the city with appropriate materials such as documentation, mapping, and other project related content. General information about the planning process will be shared, including a simplified project schedule, planning area map, project timeline, and all community outreach activities, meeting summaries, and deliverables.

The URL for the site is: <https://www.stonecrestga.gov/MajorPlansAndStudies.aspx>

Social Media

Information about key milestones in the planning process will be pushed out via Stonecrest’s social media pages to increase project awareness and participation. It is anticipated that up to ten social media posts specific to the FCP will be made during the process to promote the public information forums, community surveys, and the accomplishment of major milestones. For example, public notification of posting approved documents to the project website. The Metro Analytics team will draft content for posts and pass it on to a direct contact at the City of Stonecrest to push information out via appropriate channels.

The table below highlights tentative posting topics and may be adjusted with the Project Management Team’s guidance.

Tentative Social Media Posting Process

Graphic	Topic
Project Map/website screengrab	Promote planning efforts/share online web presence.
Screengrab from meeting	Recap from Steering Committee Meeting 1
Graphic about public forum #1 and survey going live	Public Information Forum (save the date)
Simple graphic to promote public forum	Public Information Forum 1 (reminder)
Screengrab from meeting	Recap from Steering Committee Meeting 2
Graphic advertising last call for survey participants	Community Survey: Last chance
Graphic about public forum #2	Public Information Forum (save the date)
Screengrab from meeting	Public Information Forum 2 (reminder)
Screengrab from meeting	Recap from Steering Committee Meeting 3
Screengrab from meeting	Recap from Steering Committee Meeting 4
Link to website and with a project logo/map	Final Document Drafted and Uploaded to website

The project team may utilize YouTube or similar online tools to post recordings from public forums to help increase transparency and access to information about the plan.