

LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE 2015 REPORT



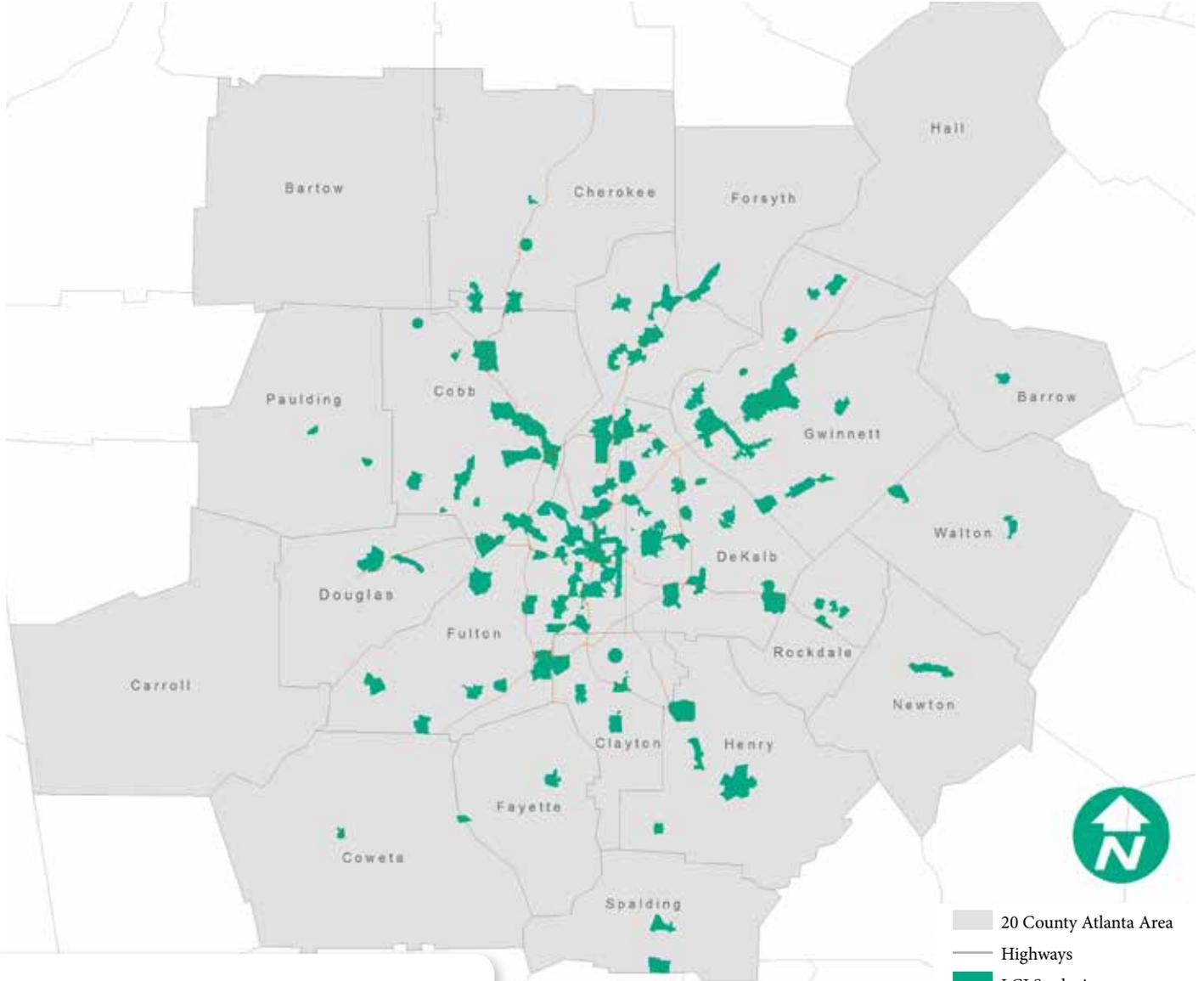
ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Linking residents and the



daily business of life.

The Atlanta region is a collection of vibrant neighborhoods, historic communities and urban places that people and businesses call home. Over the last decade, many of these communities have improved the quality of life for their residents with help from the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI). Through planning grants and construction projects LCI encourages local jurisdictions to implement development strategies that link residents to shopping, dining and other activities via sidewalks and bike trails, rather than strictly by roads. The creation of more walkable communities means fewer vehicles on the road and cleaner air. Since the LCI program began in 2000, the vehicle miles traveled per capita each day has dropped 13 percent, from 32.1 miles to 28 miles.



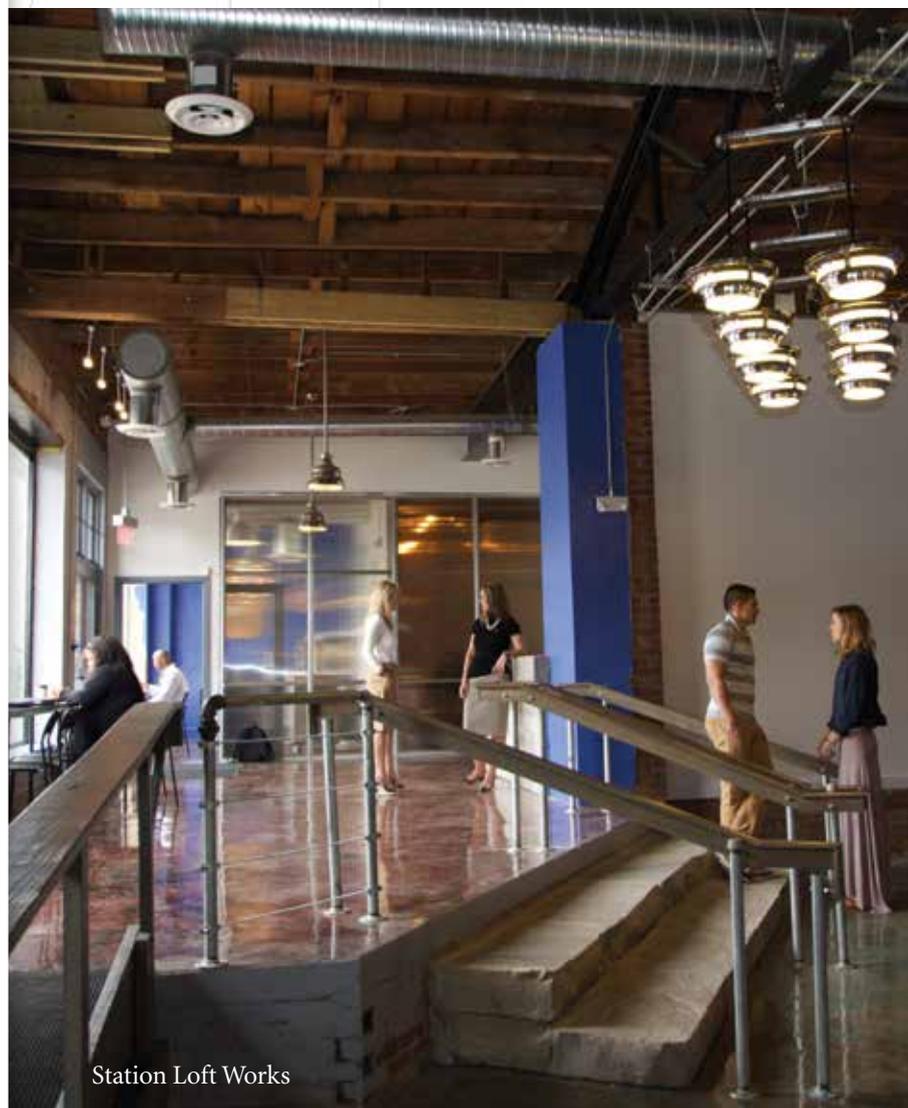
CASE STUDY

DOUGLASVILLE TOWN CENTER City of Douglasville

Since receiving its first Livable Centers Initiative grant in 2001, Douglasville has a track record of steady LCI implementation. The city has built a conference center, been part of several redevelopment projects and has implemented numerous infrastructure improvements. Additionally, sidewalks and gateway improvements have been constructed through three separate LCI grants (totaling \$2.8 million).

The City of Douglasville and the Douglasville Downtown Development Authority continue to redefine their thriving community. The latest project: repurposing a vacant, historic car dealership into a co-working space called the Station Loft Works.

In 2014, the city of Douglasville won ARC's LCI Achievement Award.



Station Loft Works

ARC's Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) awards funds for planning, updating local codes and constructing transportation projects to local governments that focus on increasing livability in the Atlanta area. Through LCI funding, communities create plans that increase mobility options, encourage healthy lifestyles, provide easy access to jobs and services, preserve the environment and focus on long-term economic prosperity.

LCI goals:

- Provide access to a variety of travel modes including transit, roadways, walking and biking
- Encourage mixed-income residential neighborhoods, employment, shopping and recreation options
- Develop an outreach process that promotes the involvement of all stakeholders

Since 2000, the program's first year, the ARC Board has allocated approximately \$1 million in federal grants annually to fund LCI studies. To date, \$8.2 million has been spent to develop 112 LCI Master Plans in 17 counties throughout the Atlanta region. The local government requesting the grant must provide a match of at least 20 percent.

Implementation of LCI studies is supported by supplemental studies and, more significantly, the availability of transportation project construction funds.



\$8.2 million in LCI studies

\$3.7 million in supplemental studies

\$172 million in transportation projects (design, right-of-way and construction of 105 projects) in 63 LCI communities

\$184 MILLION total federal investment



C A S E S T U D Y

OLIVER HOUSE AT ALLEN WILSON

Located in downtown Decatur, the Allen Wilson Terrace was originally built in 1941 as public housing. Phase I of the complete redevelopment of this project by the Decatur Housing Authority opened in 2011, consisting of two row-house style apartment buildings. Phase II is Oliver House, an affordable housing complex for seniors. This four-story, 82,000 square foot public-private partnership contains 80 one- and two-bedroom apartments that address the community’s concern for its aging population.

Oliver House is certified under the Earthcraft Multifamily program and features solar power generation, geothermal heating and air, rain-water harvesting for irrigation and toilets, high-efficiency fixtures and appliances, and paints and carpets with low amounts of volatile organic compounds.

In 2013 the Oliver House won ARC’s Overall Development of Excellence Award.

LCI Development by Use (2000-2014)



* LCI jurisdictions are asked to report developments within the LCI area every two years. We include all developments that have been reported since the area’s designation as an LCI.

Development Inventory

A strong, growing economy is essential to the success of any metropolitan region. The Development Inventory Survey assesses the strength of development in LCI communities. The inventory records the type (residential, commercial, office, or open space), square footage and location of the reported development in the reporting LCI areas. Over time, this inventory tracks how quickly development progresses and what kinds of developments are being built in LCI areas. Eighty of 112 total LCI area sponsors provided updates to this year's development inventory. The following results only include LCI areas that reported in 2014.

Development by county

Development patterns vary from one county to another, but LCI areas consistently have more development than other areas in most counties.

- 74% of developments were in Fulton, DeKalb and Gwinnett counties
- LCI areas from 13 counties reported development

Residential development

While residential LCI development lags behind commercial development, the housing stock is diverse.

- 76% of residential units developed in LCI areas were either apartments or developments that included multiple types of housing.

Commercial development

The LCI program has led to exponential commercial growth in communities that build out their visions.

- Over 43 million square feet of new commercial spaces were built in LCI areas since 2000.

Comparison Between Development in LCI Areas and in the Region

	LCI Communities*	13-County Region**	LCI Share
Land Area (sq ft)	92,167	2,623,105	4%
Office Development 2000-2014 (sq ft)	46,177,433	66,933,586	69%
Commercial Development 2000-2014 (sq ft)	43,778,376	152,481,928	29%
Residential Development 2000-2014 (units)	76,576	1,160,824	7%

* Data as reported in 2014 Development Inventory.

** Data as reported by Costar.

C A S E S T U D Y

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT: New State Farm Campus

In 2014, State Farm announced that one of its three national hubs will call Atlanta home. The new State Farm Campus, located at the Dunwoody MARTA station, in the Perimeter LCI area, will bring 3,000 new jobs to Atlanta over the next 10 years. By choosing to connect with MARTA, State Farm is making it easy for its employees to use public transportation for their commute instead of adding stress to the already strained road network.

In addition to State Farm office space, this development will include retail space, restaurants, entertainment space and a hotel. According to the developer, KDC Real Estate Development & Investments, the 2.2 million square foot mixed-use development's proximity to MARTA will "provide State Farm's workforce a continued platform for success with direct access to a true live-work-play environment and a MARTA station."

Across the country, companies are choosing to locate close to public transit. Atlanta is primed to be a part of this growing trend.



New State Farm Campus

Office development

Attracting new businesses and providing jobs to residents is a strategy for long-term prosperity in any community. One way to assess new business in LCI communities is to count the office projects being developed.

- More than 46 million square feet of office space has been developed in reporting LCI areas.

Hotel development

Hotels help support businesses and retail by attracting new people to the area.

- More than 17,000 hotel rooms have been completed in LCI areas since the beginning of the LCI program.

Mixed-use development

Mixed-use development provides residents with convenient access to places to live, work, play and shop.

- A total of 242 mixed-use developments have broken ground since the beginning of the LCI program.

Civic projects and green space

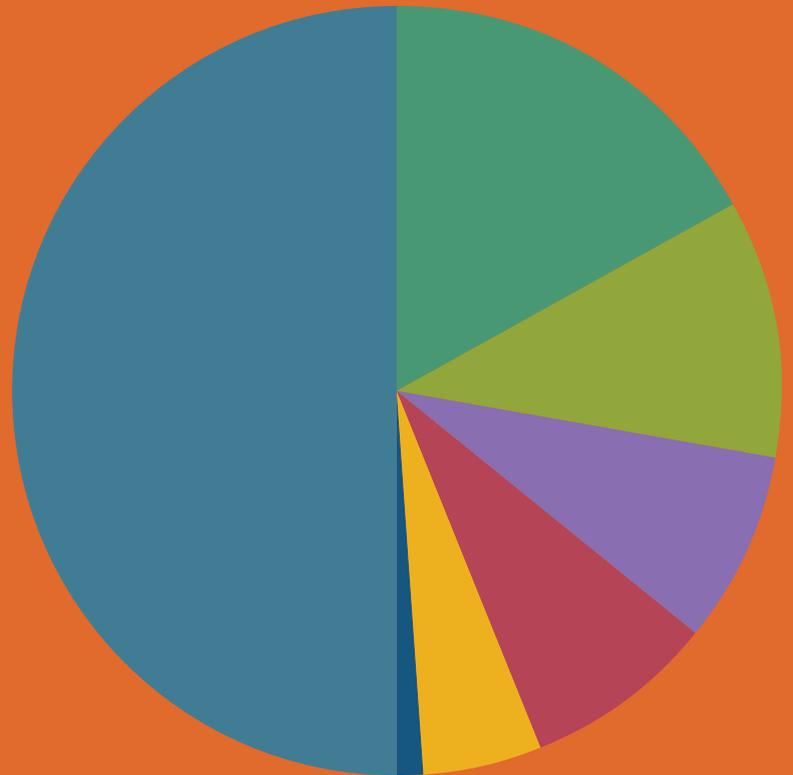
The development of public and civic features, ranging from parks to new city halls, is an important aspect of any community's fabric.

- Reporting LCI areas have developed and renovated 75 public and civic features. This includes schools, parks, senior centers and libraries.



Transportation Projects Funded by Type

- Pedestrian Facility | 50%
- Joint Bike-Ped Facility | 17%
- Operations & Safety | 11%
- Capacity Reduction or Conversion | 8%
- Transit Facilities Capital | 8%
- Sidepaths and Trails | 5%
- Bicycle Facility | 1%



Of 38 MARTA rail stations, 35 are in LCI areas.



Transportation Spending

Transportation improvements are a critical component of the LCI program because they allow for direct implementation of a community's LCI plan. LCI transportation projects focus on reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and creating healthier, more vibrant communities by increasing bicycle, pedestrian and transit use. ARC works with LCI communities and GDOT to keep projects on schedule and to expedite implementation. LCI has funded 105 transportation projects to date.

First and last mile connectivity

Every trip, even one taken in an automobile, starts and ends as a pedestrian trip, whether walking from a parking lot or bus stop. Pedestrian infrastructure and safety in Atlanta lags the national average. In 2014, Smart Growth America included Atlanta in its list of the 10 most dangerous large metro areas for pedestrians. LCI communities are working to reverse this trend by making important improvements in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, particularly in areas around transit.



**38% of LCI
transportation
improvements include
bicycle facilities**

In 2008, the Midtown Atlanta LCI updated pedestrian lighting, introduced a landscape buffer, widened sidewalks around the Arts Center MARTA station and increased connectivity to the station. Similarly, streetscape and bus stop improvements along Alpharetta Street in the Roswell LCI area make it safer and more enjoyable for residents to access the bus.



CASE STUDY

NORCROSS TOWN CENTER

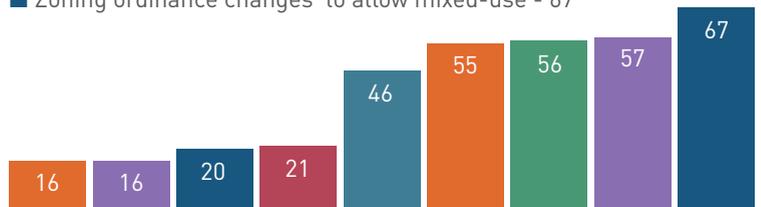
Few communities have done more with their LCI funds than Norcross, which received its first LCI grant in 2001 with a vision of transforming its underutilized downtown into a walkable, livable community. One of the city's first steps was to appoint a citizens' Architectural Review Board and a Design Concept District to encourage design consistency and develop a unified plan for downtown.

In recent years, the city converted an old church into a cultural arts and community center and turned a worn baseball field into a public space for concerts, events and public gatherings. Norcross has had a Safe Routes to School program for many years. Currently, sidewalks and bike facilities throughout downtown Norcross are being improved.

In 2012, the city of Norcross won the ARC's LCI Achievement Award.

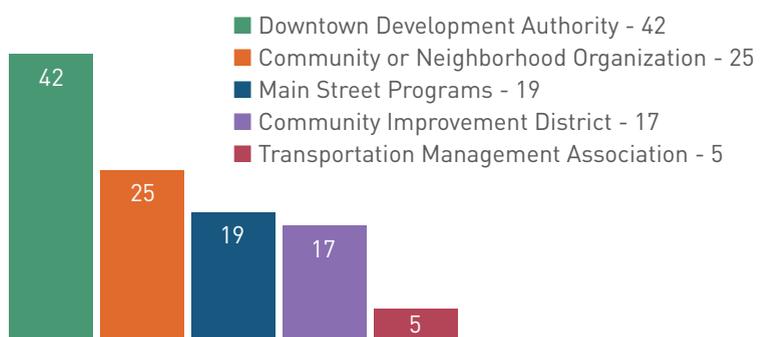
Policy Changes Since LCI Adoption

- Historic Preservation District - 16
- Form-based code - 16
- Special zoning districts - 20
- Master Streets plan or code - 21
- Street design standards or guidelines - 46
- Architectural design standards - 55
- Overlay districts - 56
- Sign ordinance - 57
- Zoning ordinance changes to allow mixed-use - 67



LCI Creates Partnerships

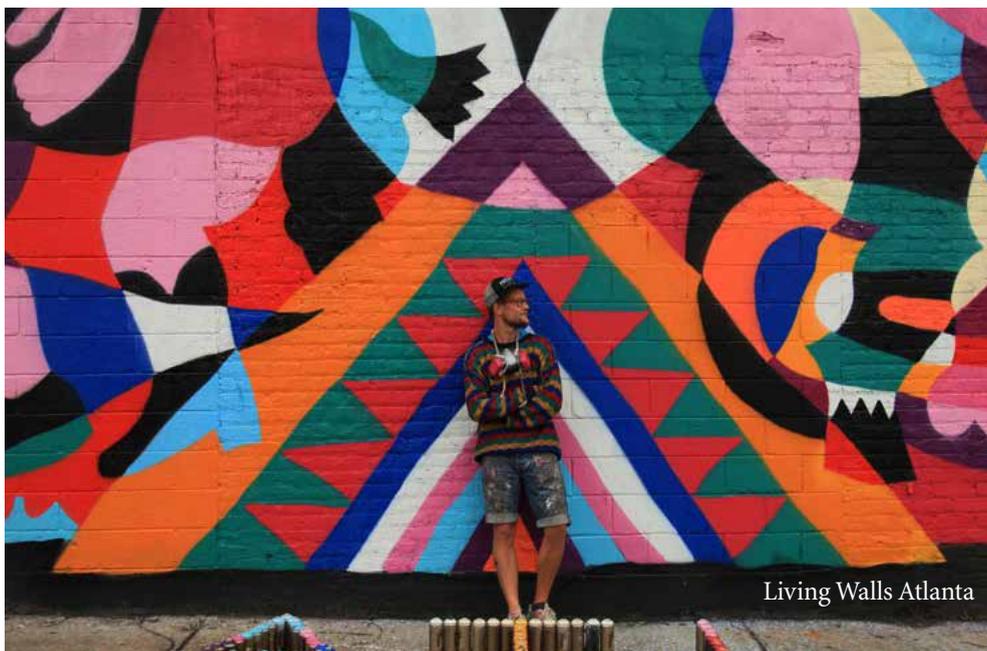
In addition to planning staff, these organizations play a key role in implementing LCI plans.



Livability Features

LCI strives to provide metro Atlanta residents with a higher quality of life by encouraging local governments to reimagine public spaces. The Livability Survey measures how local jurisdictions believe the LCI program has fared at achieving the LCI goals. The survey covered topics such as quality of life, available housing choices, mix of uses, pedestrian-friendliness, transit service and community events.

Through LCI funding, communities create plans that increase mobility options, encourage healthy lifestyles, provide easy access to jobs and services, preserve the environment and focus on long-term economic prosperity.



Arts and culture are integral components of any healthy, livable community and are frequent improvements to LCI areas. While there is no formula for integrating these critical elements, there are many examples of LCI communities doing it well.

- Public parks are established in 55 percent of LCI areas
- Public art is installed in 34 percent of LCI areas

During the past 15 years, the LCI program assisted local governments and Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) with economic development and growth management efforts. LCI's proven success helping metro Atlanta communities attract new jobs and professionals has also made it a model for other metro areas around the country.

To find out more information about the LCI program and data reflected in this report, visit the LCI website at <http://www.atlantaregional.com/land-use/livable-centers-initiative>



Suwanee Town Center Amphitheatre





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