

Application Disclaimer

PRIOR TO STARTING YOUR APPLICATION, DID YOU REVIEW THE LCI GUIDEBOOK, AND DO YOU HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE?

We strongly recommend you review the [application guidebook](#) while filling out this application.

✓ Yes, I acknowledge that I reviewed the guidebook and fully understand the program as explained.

Section 1: Applicant Information

NAME OF ORGANIZATION

DeKalb County

NAME OF PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON

Aprell King

JOB TITLE

Planner

DEPARTMENT

Planning & Sustainability

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Section 2: Type of Assistance

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE

- Catalytic: Promotes the creation of transit-oriented development around an existing or planned Autonomous Rail Rapid Transit, Bus Rapid Transit, Light Rail Transit, or Heavy Rail Transit station.

Section 3: Project Information

NAME OF PROJECT

Kensington LCI

NAME OF LCI AREA AND LAST PLAN ADOPTION DATE

Kensington LCI

TOTAL COST OF PROJECT

\$400,000.00

PROPOSED LOCAL MATCH (MINIMUM 20% OF PROJECT COST)

\$80,000.00

PROJECT LOCATION/EXTENTS

The study boundary area consists of I-285 on the east, from Kensington Road to Porter Road on the south-east, Covington Highway to Kensington Road on the south-west, Clarendon Avenue on the east, and Old Rockbridge Road on the north.

UPLOAD STUDY AREA MAP

- [zoning-01.pdf](#)

HAS THIS PROJECT BEEN IDENTIFIED IN A PREVIOUS LCI STUDY, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OR ANOTHER RECENTLY COMPLETED STUDY?

Yes

PLEASE NAME THE STUDY, AND REFERENCE THE SECTION OR PAGE THAT RELATES TO THIS PROJECT

MARTA 2023 Kensington (DRAFT) Transit-Oriented Development Master Plan; pgs. 6, 48, 53)

IS THE PROJECT WITHIN AN EXISTING LCI AREA?

Yes

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

- [lci-report-of-accomplishments-vf-22825.pdf](#)

PROVIDE A BRIEF STUDY GOAL AND DESCRIPTION. IN YOUR PROJECT DESCRIPTION, PLEASE BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE SPECIFIC PRODUCTS AND DELIVERABLES THAT THIS STUDY WILL CREATE.

Inspired to recover a gem that always was, DeKalb County, the Kensington community, and stakeholders are ready to drive hope through a vibrant, sustainable, equitable, mobility-centric development model. DeKalb County is updating the Kensington Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) to reflect the growth over the last decade. Amid economic shifts and uncertainty, nothing is more needed than reigniting a flame that never quite went out. With the community's input, new administration, and updated policies, DeKalb County is ready to position Kensington as the bold light at the end of the tunnel.

Originally studied in 2002, with a supplemental update in 2012, the Kensington LCI program recently incorporated MARTA's 2023 Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan into our 2012 supplemental plan. This partial update was adopted by our Board of Commissioners (BOC) in November 2024 to further promote transit-oriented development and ensure alignment with our comprehensive plan and key stakeholder (MARTA) for the project.

In propelling forward, DeKalb County seeks funding to hire a consultant to develop a Kensington LCI Master Plan for the 870-acre area surrounding the station. The purpose of this plan is to refine and enhance the concepts from previous studies, creating a final, community-driven concept for planning and transportation within the LCI area.

HOW DOES THIS PROPOSED LCI STUDY ADDRESS A NEED IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

In a market of uncertainty, inflation, and rising housing costs, urban development must address the social determinants of health in the communities it serves. DeKalb County has been closely monitoring planning developments throughout unincorporated DeKalb in the past decade, analyzing those most impacted and those with the most potential for positive health outcomes. With many county-owned parcels in the Kensington LCI area, strong collaborative partnerships, and community buy-in, we believe Kensington can serve as a model for catalytic growth, strategizing and uplifting social determinants that support quality of life. Research and community feedback highlight key needs in Kensington, including affordable housing, pedestrian safety and connectivity, a sense of place, recreation, and green space. The Kensington LCI will address these needs through:

- Land use and zoning recommendations for mixed-use development (residential, retail, office, institutional, and open space)

- Transportation demand reduction, accessibility, and safety enhancements (transit, trails, sidewalk and road improvements)
- Government center development for economic growth, leveraging incentives and subsidies (which is being analyzed under the new administration)
- Public-private partnerships for funding and collaborative stakeholder input

HOW DOES YOUR LCI STUDY ADVANCE OR ADDRESS ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING LCI PRIORITIES. IF THE APPLICATION IS SELECTED, THE ANSWERS PROVIDED WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO THE LCI STUDY SCOPE. PROJECTS DO NOT NEED TO ADVANCE ALL OF THE LCI PRIORITIES.

Through placemaking, building on DeKalb and MARTA's "Safe Path Crosswalk," enhancing safety for youth at the Kensington MARTA station, the county plans to use assets and underutilized spaces to incorporate cultural storytelling through pop-up installations, decorative crosswalks, bus stop enhancements, and major gateway improvements.

Additionally, with a passed resolution by our BOC to develop a Comprehensive Housing Plan, the Kensington LCI will address housing challenges through new housing types, anti-displacement strategies, revitalizing real estate, and reducing housing and transportation costs through zoning reform. Companies like Wellroot are already investing in the area, including their recent purchase of the 7-acre Avondale Patillo property for housing, youth, and community services.

The study will also introduce key environmental strategies, incorporating greenspace, bioswales, rain gardens, and tree preservation. The development of a 1.4-mile Kensington trail will also improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to the Kensington MARTA station. Currently in phase I, this trail will serve as a catalyst for further pedestrian-focused developments. Additionally, we supported DeKalb County Public Works on a \$2.8M grant submittal (awarded - funding paused) through the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure grant for the goal to expand EV charging stations in the area.

ARC STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT LCI APPLICANTS ACTIVELY ENGAGE COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR LCI APPLICATION. LIST STAKEHOLDERS (E.G., COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOS), BUSINESSES AND/OR INSTITUTIONS, AND LOCAL OFFICIALS) INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS APPLICATION, AS WELL AS HOW THEY WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS, IF THE APPLICATION IS SELECTED.

The organizations listed in the attached CBO map (among others) will play key roles in establishing a “social determinants of health” model for inclusive, healthy, and equitable transit-oriented development. MARTA is our primary partner, with their arts arm, Artbound, collaborating on placemaking efforts at key intersections, crosswalks, and bus shelters. Decide DeKalb, the county's economic development arm, will support tax incentives for growth and preservation strategies. Soccer in the Streets will promote healthy lifestyles and engage our youth. We are building relationships with emerging and established artists like Stephanie Brown, who strongly supports the County's goals. Our leadership team, including CEO Lorraine Cochran Johnson, is committed to funding and supporting the project. We also look forward to partnering with regional collaborative stakeholders like ARCHI Collaborative who understands the importance of a strong public private partnership ecosystem.

Additionally, we plan to work with local schools, daycares, religious groups, community centers, senior facilities, and health organizations of all cultures to ensure inclusive perspectives on housing, transportation, green infrastructure, and placemaking needs in Kensington. Lastly, we'll coordinate with the City of Avondale Estates to align planning efforts and maximize resources.

WHO IN YOUR COMMUNITY HAS BEEN HISTORICALLY UNDER-REPRESENTED IN LOCAL PLANNING PROCESSES? HOW WILL THESE INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS BE INCLUDED IN THIS PLANNING PROCESS?

The Kensington boundary area borders the city of Clarkston, dubbed as “the most diverse square mile in America” boasting 40 nationalities and 60 different languages.

The County recognizes under-represented can mean so many things. Our goal in engaging diverse community members and groups is to ensure we address language barriers and culture awareness through storytelling, signage, events, and strong partnerships with local CBOs that are immersed with diverse populations including refugees and established internationals. We plan to target agencies like Clarkston Community Center, Wellroot Family Services, and

other organizations that can aid in bridging the under-representation gap and create a beloved community with wrap around services.

Additionally, part of the County’s goal is to establish strong relationships with all age demographics. Recognizing those individuals aging in place and their accessibility and health needs all the way down to our youth who stand as our next generation of leaders, it is our responsibility as planners to enhance the quality of life for everyone. Partnerships with nearby senior living facilities, various health departments, local schools, and strategizing an approach for community-development anchor institutions are a few of the many steps we aim to take in making this happen.

Section 4: Commitment

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

- [lci-support-documents-vf-22825.pdf](#)