

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
Buford Highway Safety Action Plan
Safe Streets and Roads For All (SS4A)
RFQ 23-001

PROPOSAL DATE ISSUED

September 28, 2023

PROPOSAL DATE DUE

October 30, 2023

CONTACT

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City of Doraville

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770-451-8745 x229



Gwinnett



I. PURPOSE

The City of Doraville (“Doraville”), in partnership with the City of Brookhaven, City of Chamblee, City of Norcross, Gwinnett County, and the Chamblee-Doraville Community Improvement District (CD CID) is seeking proposals from qualified firms for the opportunity to create a Safety Action Plan for the Buford Highway corridor for an approximately 13-mile segment from Brookhaven to Norcross.

The goal of this plan is to develop a work plan with low-cost, high-impact projects that can be quickly implemented by the cities, counties, and other entities that have partnered together on this application.

II. HISTORY

Buford Highway, designated as State Route 13 (SR-13), is a 50-mile corridor that connects Midtown Atlanta to Gainesville, Georgia, northeast of Atlanta, passing through four counties and over a dozen municipalities.

Since the 1970s, the corridor has become a hub of immigrant and multiethnic businesses, and a key showcase of diversity in the Atlanta metro region. Particularly in DeKalb and Gwinnett Counties, Buford Highway is known regionally and nationally as a hotspot of various authentic international cuisines.

As the population in the Atlanta region grew, so did the scale of Buford Highway. This expansion means that the road is now as much of an obstruction and hazard for as it is an economic engine and transportation corridor.

III. LOCATION INFORMATION

The portion of the Buford Highway / SR-13 corridor to be studied begins at W Druid Hills Drive NE in the City of Brookhaven, and terminates at Langford Road NW in the City of Norcross, a distance of approximately 13 miles.

See attached Exhibit A for a map of the full extent of the scope area.

IV. PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

The City of Doraville and its partner jurisdictions have at various times studied and planned for changes along Buford Highway. A highlight of some of these items is below.

Comprehensive Plans

Each of the municipalities along the corridor have at different times incorporated Buford Highway into their Comprehensive Plans, and posited ways to make it a safer corridor for all road users.

Doraville

In the City of Doraville, both the current and previous Comprehensive Plans created a specific land use for the Buford Highway corridor, which stresses its international character and significance, as well as the need for changes to the density. This land use recommends dense, mixed-use zoning, with an emphasis on residential development and better pedestrian infrastructure to make use of the proximity to rail transit.

Both the 2022-2042 and 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plans can be found [here on the City of Doraville website](#).

Chamblee

The *One Chamblee* plan, adopted in 2019, references the need for better safety improvements along Buford Highway. It mentions several key intersections and area that are particularly dangerous for all road users, including the Chamblee Tucker, Chamblee, Dunwoody, and Buford Highway triangle, as well as Buford Highway and Clairmont Road.

The plan also incorporates the recommendations of the 2017 Buford Highway LCI, discussed in detail below.

The full text of the *One Chamblee* plan [can be found here](#).

Norcross

The *2040 Norcross Comprehensive Plan* includes Buford Highway in several of its Character Areas, including its Town Center and Buford Highway / Jimmy Carter Boulevard Activity Center areas. These character areas both envision these portions of Buford as a walkable, human-scaled corridor that embraces the dense, mixed-use character of the Norcross town center as well as future node developments in the City.

The full text for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan [can be found here](#).

2017 Buford Highway (BuHi) LCI

In 2016, Doraville and Chamblee commissioned a study of the corridor through the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Livable Centers Initiative (LCI), a program aimed at creating more walkable and pedestrian-oriented development and redevelopments.

The *Buford Highway Master Plan*, the end result of the LCI, was notable for its focus on the culture and international character of the highway, and its emphasis on preserving and enhancing what makes Buford Highway distinct. Its recommendations include a wide range of improvements both to the infrastructure and programming of Buford Highway, encompassing everything from taking car travel lanes away for dedicated transit, more robust public art that celebrates the immigrant countries of origin, and zoning changes to discourage development that was hostile to pedestrians and cyclists.

The full text can be [found here](#).

3. CORRIDOR VISION

BIG IDEA 14 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT



Map 21.
Proposed Mixed Use
Zoning Map

Mixed Use development example.



Map 22.
Proposed Multifamily
Zoning Map

Multi-Family
development example.

DESCRIPTION

Much of the Buford Highway corridor today has zoning regulations that enable mixed-use development. This plan recommends filling in the gaps from a land use perspective and ensuring that all of the corridor north of the CDC becomes mixed-use-zoned. There are portions of the corridor in Chamblee between the CDC and Plaza Fiesta that are more suitable to multifamily land use and these areas should be zoned accordingly. Big Idea #14 includes the following more specific Zoning: Future Development recommendations:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 **Mixed-Use.** Establish a mixed-use zoning district north of Beverly Hills Drive in Chamblee to the Gwinnett County line and south of Bragg Street to the Brookhaven city limit. Mixed-use includes residential, retail, commercial, office, and service uses.
- 14.2 **Multifamily.** Establish a multifamily zoning district south of Beverly Hills Drive and north of Bragg Street in Chamblee. Multifamily uses include condos, townhomes, and apartments and should enable limited ground floor retail in association with the overall development.
- 14.3 **Open Space.** Require commercial development to provide open space that is equal to a minimum of 10% of the lot area. Require residential development to provide open space that is equal to a minimum of 20% of the lot area.

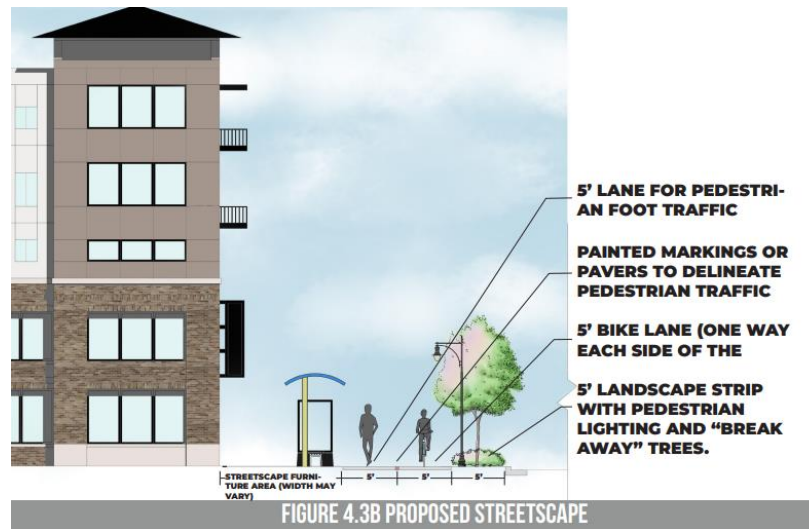
Buford Highway LCI, August 2017 95

Example of recommendations related to zoning from the 2017 Buford Highway LCI.

Buford Highway Master Plan (Norcross)

The Buford Highway Master plan, adopted in June 2021, encourages the development of mixed-use nodes along the corridor, focused key areas or intersections such as the Norcross Town Center, Jimmy Carter Boulevard, and Beaver Ruin Road. It also proposed safety improvements on SR-13 to provide alternatives or alleviate conflicts between pedestrians and automobile traffic, including everything from the addition of trails to a pedestrian bridge.

The full text can be found [here](#).



Example of recommendations related to streetscape design.

V. SCOPE OF WORK

Final Deliverable

As previously stated, the primary goal of this RFQ is to provide an Action Plan with strategies and projects for the participating jurisdictions that can be implemented within a 1–5-year timeframe.

These projects should be low-cost but high-impact, and should be designed to maximize the amount of benefit for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users on Buford Highway.

Ideally, the projects would be able to be accomplished through primarily local means, through cooperation between partner jurisdictions, private development, and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), and without the need for additional funding from federal or state entities.

Vision(s) for Buford Highway

The current reality of Buford Highway is that it has high volumes of all kinds of traffic, but it is only built for one kind of traffic. With up to 3 car travel lanes in each direction, in addition to sporadic center turn lanes, deceleration lanes, and slip lanes, the road serves as an imposing barrier both to cross and traverse for anyone not in a car.

Though Buford Highway is an important corridor in each of the participating jurisdictions, the reality is that the future vision for each city and county may be different depending on the realities of how each place has and will develop. Some places, like Doraville and Norcross, have historic and existing city centers directly adjacent to Buford Highway. In other places, while the road may be more distant from the urban cores, it is still a vital link with Atlanta and other parts of the metro region.

The plan should analyze the stated vision for Buford Highway in each partner jurisdiction, and provide a summary vision for what role SR-13 should play in each place.

Adding + Repairing Sidewalks

In many places on the corridor sidewalks are currently missing or degraded to the point where they are unusable. This includes places where they are overgrown, buried, and/or cracked and crumbling to the point of being nonexistent.

One of the most important short-term projects is identifying these locations, providing guidance on what is needed to correct, and the complexity of said corrections. The Action Plan should give priority to projects that involve minimal or no utility work. The applicant should plan to use the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) standards, which typically recommend 6–10-foot widths for sidewalks.

Better Streetscapes

In addition to providing locations for sidewalk infill, locations should also be identified where better streetscapes can be added. This includes widening sidewalks, the addition

of benches and other pedestrian furniture, street trees, continuous or raised crosswalks, and other amenity areas.

These locations could in tandem with ongoing development, places where existing right-of-way (ROW) provides sufficient space for wider sidewalks, on or near City-or-County-owned property, or are near existing and proposed transit stops.

Closing + Consolidating Curb Cuts

One of the most frequent criticisms of Buford Highway from the perspective of pedestrians is that there are too many curb cuts. This causes constant friction between cars, walkers, and transit, who are continuously put in positions where they could come into conflict with car traffic coming from multiple angles.

The plan should identify locations where curb cuts could be consolidated due to proximity of other curb cuts, sufficient inter-parcel access, and/or alternate access onto other public rights-of-way to disperse automobile traffic.

Mid-Block Crossings

Currently, there are multiple mid-block crossings at various points in Brookhaven, Chamblee, and Doraville. However, there are many points beyond this where the distance between marked crossings is very great. As a result, pedestrians cross whenever possible to minimize the walking distance to their destinations.

While providing better facilities for walking along Buford Highway is important, the plan should also identify locations for new or enhanced mid-block pedestrian crossings. Priority should be given to places that meet GDOT standards for placement, are eligible for GDOT's Quick Delivery program, or are already identified in existing plans.

Better Bus Facilities

As previously mentioned, Buford Highway is a very busy transit corridor. The busiest bus route in the MARTA system, route 39, runs from the Doraville station to Lindbergh station, the majority of which is spent on Buford Highway. There are also several planned projects that may impact Buford Highway, including a systemwide redesign of the bus system, and a proposed replacement of route 39 with Arterial Rapid Transit (ART).

In addition, there are private transit services that run on Buford Highway, largely mirroring the 39 route and also extending into Gwinnett County, outside of MARTA's jurisdiction.

Finally, there are several Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) routes that use Buford Highway and New Peachtree Road to connect to the Doraville station, and some planned expansions of GCT service as well.

The plan should inventory the existing transit stops on the corridor, and make recommendations on where transit facilities can be repaired, replaced, or improved. This could include repairs or upgrades to existing MARTA and GCT stops, as well as City or County projects that could make using transit more comfortable or appealing for riders.

Intersection Improvements

The plan should identify intersections that (1) have high volumes of pedestrian and transit activity, and (2) are missing or lacking adequate pedestrian infrastructure. This could include crossing signals, missing or faded crosswalks, or are not in compliance with ADA requirements.

Recommend Zoning or Code Amendments

Moving beyond infrastructure projects, the plan should also recommend rezonings or text amendments that could be implemented quickly in order to lay the groundwork for better development patterns in the future.

Doraville

In Doraville, most of Buford Highway is zoned for a mixed-use zoning district. A summary of what is permitted in each zoning is below. For a full scope of what is permitted by right in each zoning, please visit [the City's website](#).

Zoning	Max Building Height	Residential Density (Base)	Max Residential Density (with Bonuses)
T-5	6 stories	50 units/ac	100 units/ac
T-6	20 stories	80 units/ac	160 units/ac

In addition, Doraville also has residential unit density bonus options available, which could increase the allowed unit density by up to 100%. A 50% bonus may be given simply for being within a ½ mile of the Doraville MARTA station, encouraging the development of housing near existing transit.

Norcross

Many of the guiding policy documents for the City of Norcross, such as the Buford Highway Master Plan, encourage the development of mixed-use “nodes” along the corridor, focused key areas or intersections such as the Norcross Town Center, Jimmy Carter Boulevard, and Beaver Ruin Road.

The plan highlights key properties on which the City should focus; a key part of this is making sure the correct zoning is in place for the desired development patterns.

Chamblee

As previously mentioned, the City of Chamblee Comprehensive Plan incorporates the recommendations of the *2017 Buford Highway LCI*. Some of the suggested text amendments are minor in substance, but would have a major impact on existing and future development. These include requiring smaller retail spaces to be built alongside big box stores, lowering the speed limit, and a reasonable maximum block area.

VI. INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS

- A. All responses to this Request for Proposals shall be sent **DIGITALLY** to Austin Shelton, Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Doraville, via email at austin.shelton@doravillega.us.

Physical copies are **not required**, but may be sent to the address below:

City of Doraville
Attn: Austin Shelton
3725 Park Avenue
Doraville, Georgia 30340

- B. All responses must be received by **October 30, 2023 @ 12:00 pm ET**. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that the RFQ is received by the City of Doraville by the date and time specified above. Late responses will be returned to the respondent unopened.

To ensure a fair review and selection process, firms submitting qualifications are specifically requested not to make other contacts with City of Doraville staff or City Council regarding this request.

- C. Any questions regarding this Request for Qualifications shall be either in writing or via email to Austin Shelton, Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Doraville (austin.shelton@doravillega.us).

No questions shall be received after 5:00 pm EST on Friday, October 13, 2023.

Responses will be provided in an addendum by 5:00 pm EST on Friday, October 20, 2023.

No Doraville staff, officials, or any partner jurisdictions associated with this project should be contacted regarding this request. **DOING SO MAY RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION.**

All addenda, notices, responses, etc. will be posted to the [City of Doraville website](http://www.doravillega.us).

VII. TIMELINE

The following schedule is supplied as a guideline rather than a set of absolute deadlines. The City reserves the right to modify or alter the schedule. All times are in Eastern.

RFQ Issue:	September 28, 2023
Respondent Questions:	October 13, 2023 by 5:00 pm
Addendum/Responses to Questions (if necessary):	October 20, 2023 by 5:00 pm
RFQ Submittal:	October 30, 2023 @ 12:00 pm
Selection of Respondents:	November 10, 2023
Interviews (virtually or in person if Necessary):	November 6-10, 2023
Award:	November 15, 2023
Alternate Award:	December 18, 2023

VIII. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Executive summary.
- A list of the existing planning efforts and associated documents that are ongoing or completed in the last ten (10) years for each of the associated jurisdictions and partners.
- For each City, County, or other partner, a summary of the general policy guidelines and strategies recommended in official planning and policy documents for actions that should be taken on the Buford Highway corridor.
- A detailed list of projects and action items (as outlined in Section V above) that can be taken to improve infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.
 - Though the entire corridor and its ROW is owned and maintained by the Georgia Department of Transportation, projects included on the above list should be organized alphabetically by the City or County within which it falls.
- A list of zoning changes or other text amendments (as outlined in Section V above) that could be quickly implemented by each partner jurisdiction that may encourage or facilitate safer development patterns moving forward. These should primarily be drawn from existing policy documents and recommendations, though other changes may also be suggested as needed.
 - For the above, please provide recommended verbiage or wording that would best accomplish the desired outcome, and a suggested location within each partner's respective Code of Ordinances or Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).
- Provide details of pending or ongoing violations or board actions against the firm.
- Provide documentation of workload capacity commensurate with the level of service required by the City and its partners.
- Describe the respondent's intended approach to communicate with the City and its partners regarding progress and status reports, recommendations, status of opinions, etc.

IX. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria and scoring system shown below:

Qualifications of the respondent (20%);

Experience of the respondent in the intended type and scale of development (20%);

Availability and capacity of the applicant to provide the requested services (20%);

Understanding of the intent and objectives of the RFQ (20%); and

Viability of the proposed development (20%);

X. TERMS + CONDITIONS

- A. The City reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals, call for new proposals, to waive any informalities in a proposal, and to select the qualified parties. The City reserves the right to accept, reject, and/or negotiate any and all proposals or parts of proposals deemed by the Board to be in the best interest of the citizens of the City of Doraville.
- B. The City reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted and to request additional information from any respondent.
- C. The City reserves the right to award any contract to the next most qualified respondent if the successful respondent does not execute a contract within thirty (30) days after the selection of the respondent.
- D. Any proposal may be withdrawn up until the date and time set above for opening of the RFQ responses. No proposal may be modified or withdrawn for a period of one hundred-twenty (120) calendar days thereafter.
- E. The professional services contract resulting from acceptance of a proposal by the City shall be in a form supplied or approved by the City and shall reflect the specifications in this RFQ. The City reserves the right to reject any proposed agreement or contract that does not conform to the specifications contained in this RFQ, and which is not approved by Doraville City Council.
- F. Ownership of all data, materials, and documentation prepared for and submitted in response to this RFQ shall belong exclusively to the City of Doraville and will be considered a public record and subject to public inspection in accordance with Georgia public records laws. Exceptions may be requested by the applicant, citing applicable statutory authority for holding specific information in confidence. The approval of exceptions will be in the sole discretion of the City.
- G. By submitting their qualifications, all proposing parties certify that their proposals are made without collusion or fraud and that they have not offered or received any inducements from any other person or party in connection with their proposals, and

that they have not conferred on any City of Doraville employee having official responsibility for this procurement transaction of any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services, or anything of value of more than nominal value, present or promise, unless consideration of substantially equal or greater value was exchanged.

- H. Those submitting responses do so entirely at their expense. There is no expressed or implied obligation by the City or its partners to reimburse any individual for any costs incurred in preparing or submitting bids or providing additional information when requested by the City.
- I. If a respondent discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error in the RFQ, they shall notify the City of such error in writing and request modification or clarification of the document. The City will make modifications by issuing a written revision and posting a written notice on the City website.

XI. CONTRACT

Contract Negotiations

Upon selection of the most qualified respondent on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of professional services required, the City will negotiate payment terms which it determines is fair and reasonable and negotiate any other portion of the contract deemed necessary. In the event the City is not able to negotiate successfully with the top ranked respondent, the City shall cease negotiations with that respondent and either begin negotiations with the next ranked respondent or may choose to cancel the solicitation in its entirety. Award shall be made to the respondent whose submittal and subsequent negotiation is most advantageous to the City. The City reserves the right to negotiate terms as needed to obtain the most cost-effective service.

Contract Term

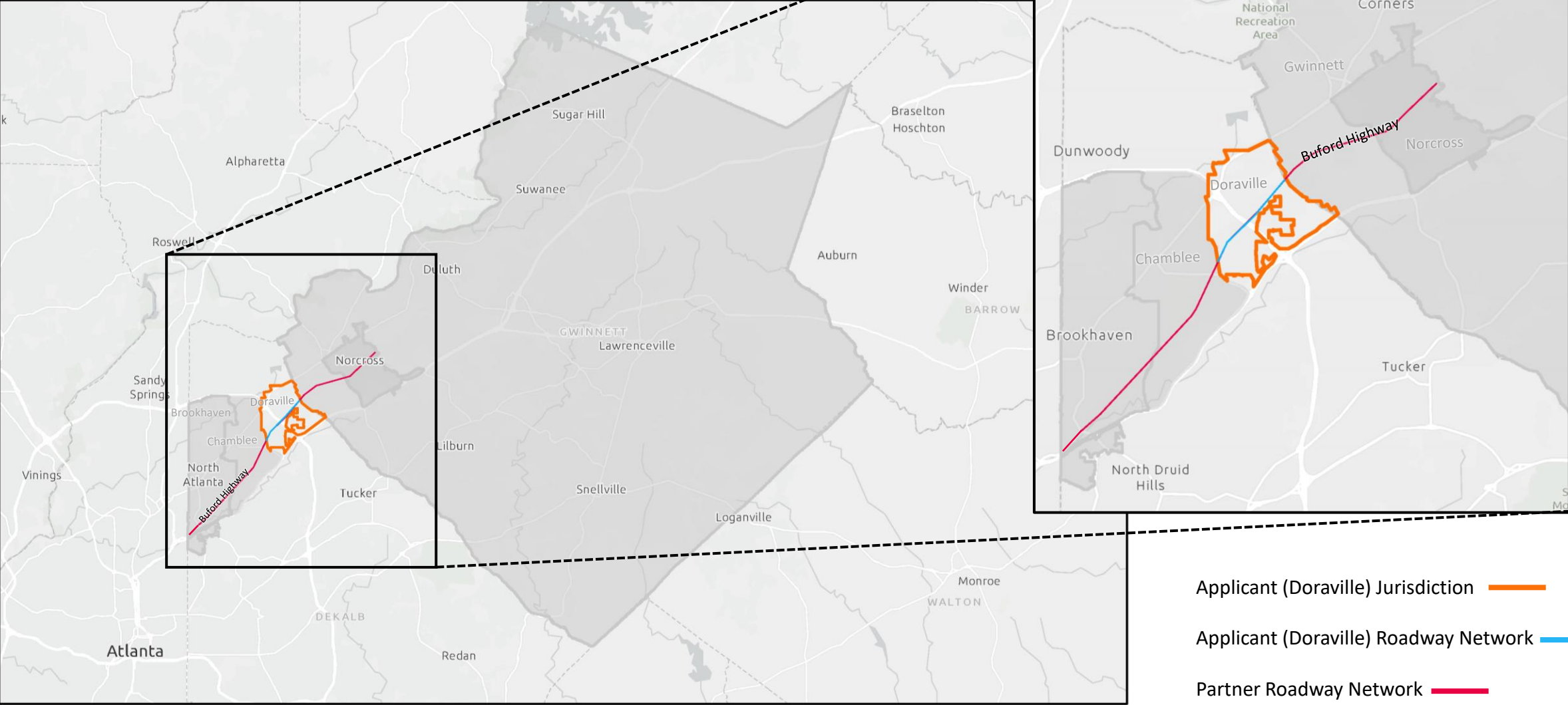
The contract term is one (1) year with the option to renew up to one (1) extension of up to six (6) months upon mutual agreement from both parties. A signed contract extension should be executed within thirty (30) days of the end date of the original contract term.

Termination of Contract

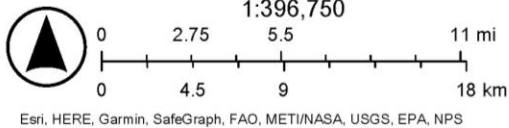
This contract may be terminated, in whole or in part, at any time by mutual written consent, or by the City, with or without cause, upon giving thirty (30) days written notice to the successful respondent.

If this contract is terminated, the City shall be liable only for payment under the payment provisions of the contract for services rendered and accepted material received by the City before the effective date of termination.

Exhibit A: Extent of Scope
RFQ 23-001
Buford Highway Safety Action Plan



8/31/2022



- Applicant (Doraville) Jurisdiction ———
- Applicant (Doraville) Roadway Network ———
- Partner Roadway Network ———