



## 2.0 STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY INPUT

In the first step of establishing a Purpose and Need for the I-20 East Transit Initiative, the study team gathered input on needs and issues in the study area through stakeholder involvement. Among the activities undertaken to help identify the overall purpose and need of the project:

- **Stakeholder Interviews:** At the onset of the study, interviews were conducted with approximately 40 stakeholders in the study area. These stakeholders included members of churches, business organizations, homeowners, and local elected officials. The purpose of these interviews was to educate the stakeholders on the I-20 East Transit Initiative and solicit their input and feedback regarding the challenges and needs within the corridor. While the primary focus of these meetings was regarding the transportation issues facing the corridor, a common theme that emerged from these meetings was that there were large portions of the study area in need of revitalization and these stakeholders felt strongly that a transit investment could serve as a catalyst for redevelopment along much of I-20.
- **Stakeholder Advisory Committee:** From the interviewed stakeholders, MARTA identified a subset of stakeholders to serve on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC). The purpose of the SAC is to provide input at key milestones in the I-20 East Transit Initiative process. As of August 1, three SAC meetings have been held on September 9, 2010, December 9, 2010, and a split session on May 9 and May 12, 2011. At the early meetings, the SAC was presented with a list of corridor issues and asked to confirm these as the primary challenges facing the corridor.
- **Public Meetings:** Two rounds of public meetings have been held thus far. Each round was held in three different locations throughout the corridor in order to provide sufficient access for the public. The first round of general public meetings were held in late October 2010 to introduce the project to the public, get their feedback on the identified needs within the corridor and goals of the project, introduce them to the range of alternatives to be studied, and get their input into any sensitive community, environmental, or cultural resources in the corridor. The second round of public meetings, held in May and June of 2011, were accompanied by an online survey. The meetings and survey sought to measure public support for the proposed Tier 1 alignments.

Through this public and stakeholder outreach, the following main issues were identified:

- **Traffic congestion causes delay and slow travel times**
- **Inadequate access to downtown and other employment centers**
- **Limited east-west roadways; I-20 is the only real choice**
- **Limited planned transportation projects in corridor to accommodate growing demand**
- **Insufficient transit service for a growing demand**
- **Express buses operate in normal traffic**
- **Areas of the corridor are in need of revitalization**
- **Limited transportation options for traditionally underserved populations**



These issues provide the foundation from which a thorough review of previous studies and technical analysis are used to develop a Purpose and Need statement for the I-20 East Transit Initiative.