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**ATTACHMENT B – REPORT OF FINDINGS OF CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT FOR THE HOV
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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to review changed conditions since the May 2007 publication of the *Northwest I-75/I-575 Corridor Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (AA/DEIS) that require reconsideration and refinement of the build alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS, to identify potential environmental impacts associated with several new build concepts, and to describe GDOT's recommended approach for addressing the preferred alternative in a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

A number of factors affect the decision to refine the alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS. They include: review of the AA/DEIS comments, implementation of a new regional 2008 Travel Demand Forecasting Model by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) (ARC 2008a), adoption of new Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) plans and policies addressing elements of the alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS, and changed economic conditions affecting funding and feasibility for project implementation. In particular, GDOT has decided to eliminate the truck-only lane (TOL) element and the bus rapid transit (BRT) element of the proposed alternatives for reasons presented in this report. As a result of this decision, GDOT has reconsidered the project alternatives.

Several additional traffic operational concepts have been identified that represent a revision to the HOV/TOL alternative evaluated in the AA/DEIS. Analysis of these new build concepts indicates they are consistent with the project purpose and need statement, result in less environmental impacts than the alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS, provide improved transportation services over the No-Build alternative, and provide these benefits at a lower cost. Additional financial analysis is planned to assist with the final identification of the preferred alternative for the Northwest Corridor Project. Community outreach also is planned to ensure agency, stakeholder, and public concerns have been resolved by the proposed refinements. A formal action by GDOT's decision-making body is required before environmental analysis of the preferred alternative can proceed.

In light of these circumstances, GDOT has evaluated how to move forward with project development and comply with required environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This evaluation has studied the new information and changes in project conditions. Preliminary travel demand forecasting has been conducted on the several new build concepts. Potential environmental impacts associated with these concepts were identified and compared to the HOV/TOL Alternative without the truck lanes. This effort is summarized in the following chapters:

- Chapter 2 summarizes the project purpose and need, the screening of potential alternatives, the alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS, and the unresolved issues in the AA/DEIS.



- Chapter 3 describes the changed conditions and issues affecting how GDOT moves forward with project planning – conceptual engineering and environmental review.
- Chapter 4 explains the development of the new build concepts.
- Chapter 5 summarizes the travel forecasting model results using the new 2008 ARC model.
- Chapter 6 provides a qualitative assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the new build concepts and compares these effects to those of the No-Build and HOV/TOL Alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS.
- Chapter 7 outlines planned community outreach and agency coordination prior to adoption of the preferred alternative.
- Chapter 8 summarizes the conclusions of the analysis and recommends the appropriate environmental review process to address potential environmental impacts of the preferred alternative and ensure compliance with NEPA.
- A list of references and several attachments of detailed data used in the analysis contained in this report follow at the back of the document.