GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

2875 Browns Bridge Road
Gainesville, GA 30504
Tel: 770.297.5541
ghmpo.org

Policy Committee

Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 10:00 AM
Commission Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Hall County Government Center
2875 Browns Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30504

AGENDA

1. **Welcome – Chairman David Gibbs, Chair**

2. **Approval of the February 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

3. **Updates from the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**

4. **Approval of Amendment #7 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) / Amendment #1 to the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**

5. **Approval of the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Road**

6. **Approval of the Hoschton Transportation Plan**

7. **Other**

8. **Jurisdiction and Agency Reports**
   - City of Flowery Branch
   - City of Gainesville
   - City of Oakwood
   - City of Buford
   - City of Lula
   - City of Hoschton

- Town of Braselton
- Federal Highway Administration
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
- Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
- Hall Area Transit
- Hall County
- Jackson County

9. Public Comment

10. Upcoming Meeting Date: August 11, 2026

11. Adjourn

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Policy Committee

Commission Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Hall County Government Center
Draft Minutes of February 10, 2026 Meeting

Voting Members Present:
Chairman David Gibbs, *Hall County* - **Chair**
Mayor Zack Thompson, *City of Gainesville* – **Vice Chair**
Mayor Oliver McClellan, *City of Flowery Branch*
Commissioner Kathy Cooper, *Hall County*
Commissioner Jeff Stowe, *Hall County*
Chairman Marty Clark, *Jackson County*
Megan Weiss, *GDOT*

Voting Members Absent:
Mayor Lamar Scroggs, *City of Oakwood*

Others Present:
Bryan Lackey, *City of Gainesville*
Chris Rotalsky, *City of Gainesville*
Matt Tarver, *City of Gainesville*
Corey Jones, *City of Gainesville*
Casey Ramsey, *Hall County*
Jorge Gomez, *Hall County*
Brent Cook, *Hall County*
Jason Skarda, *Hall County*
Jordan Wallace, *Hall County*
Vamsee Polamarasetty, *Hall County*
Jamie Dove, *Jackson County*
Jennifer Kidd-Harrison, *City of Hoschton*
Dani Nash, *City of Flowery Branch*
John Nagy, *City of Flowery Branch*
Phillippa Lewis Moss, *Hall Area Transit*
Justin Lott, *GDOT*
Elizabeth Johnson, *GDOT*
Joseph Boyd, *GHMPO*

1. Welcome

Chairman Gibbs opened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

2. Approval of November 12, 2025 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Stowe made a motion to approve the November 12, 2025 meeting minutes, which received a second from Chairman Clark, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

3. Update from the TCC and CAC

Mr. Boyd provided a brief recap of the most recent Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings.

4. Approval of the Draft FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Boyd presented the final draft of the FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program, which is the annual operating budget for the MPO, funding all planning activities and any additional studies GHMPO plans to undertake. This document will cover all MPO activities between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027. Mr. Boyd discussed how MPO staff met one-on-one with each jurisdiction in January 2026 to discuss the draft document and to gather any anticipated planning needs that will need to be inserted into the FY 2027 UPWP. Out of those discussions, the UPWP highlights an update to the GHMPO Freight Plan, a Skelton Road Corridor Study, and a State Route 124 Corridor Study as possible planning projects in FY 2027.

MOTION: Chairman Clark made a motion to adopt the FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program, which received a second from Commissioner Stowe, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

5. Approval of the Draft PL Application for the State Route 124 Corridor Study: State Route 332 to Creek Nation Road

Mr. Boyd presented the draft application for additional PL (Planning) funds in order to conduct a State Route 124 Corridor Study: State Route 332 to Creek Nation Road in western Jackson County. This corridor study would pick up where the GH-152 widening project currently terminates at State Route 332 and continue on to the MPO planning boundary at Creek Nation Road. This is a rapidly growing corridor that Jackson County would like explored for possible short and long-term upgrades and safety improvements. If approved, MPO staff will present the application in March 2026 for approval by the PL Funds Review Committee.

MOTION: Chairman Clark made a motion to approve the PL Application for the State Route 124 Corridor Study: SR 332 to Creek Nation Road, which received a second from Mayor McClellan, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

6. Review of the Anticipated Project List for the FY 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Boyd relayed to the committee that GHMPO is required to adopt a new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is the short-term transportation plan for the region, by November 2026. As part of the TIP, projects must be modeled to show air quality impacts. This model is ran by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) with a deadline for projects to be inserted by April 2026. In light of this deadline, GHMPO staff presented a draft list of anticipated projects to be inserted into the model. GDOT Planning will send their final list of projects by March 2026. Mr. Boyd noted that nothing will be finalized with the project list until the TIP itself is adopted in November 2026. Mr. Boyd then ran through the list of expected projects.

Mr. Boyd also highlighted GH-046/PI 0013574/Widening of State Route 323/Gillsville Highway as a project that GDOT was showing in their system needing to be included in the TIP. However, the Policy Committee requested this project be shelved as part of the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update, which was adopted in May 2025. Ms. Weiss responded that GDOT Planning is

continuing to work through this update in their system and she would update MPO staff whenever any changes are made to the schedule of this project.

7. Update on the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Road

Mr. Boyd provided a brief update on the Highlands to Islands Trail Study. He added that a final draft should be ready for review by each jurisdiction in March 2026, with the final document up for adoption at the next Policy Committee meeting on May 12, 2026.

8. Other

There were no other items brought up for discussion.

9. Jurisdiction and Agency Reports

Representatives shared the status of projects being completed by their jurisdictions and agencies: Mr. Nagy for the City of Flowery Branch, Mr. Jones for the City of Gainesville, Ms. Kidd-Harrison for the City of Hoschton, Mr. Lott for the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), Ms. Moss for Hall Area Transit, Mr. Cook for Hall County, and Ms. Dove for Jackson County.

10. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

11. Upcoming Meeting Date: May 12, 2026

Chairman Gibbs reminded the Policy Committee that their next meeting would be on May 12, 2026.

12. Adjourn

There being no other items of business, the meeting adjourned.

_____
Chairman David Gibbs, Chair

_____
Joseph Boyd, GHMPO

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GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

MEMORANDUM

To: **Policy Committee Members**

From: **Joseph Boyd, GHMPO**

Date: **May 5, 2026**

Re: **Approval of Draft Amendment #7 to the FY24-27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) / Amendment #1 to the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**

GHMPO, at the request of the Georgia Department of Transportation, has developed Amendment #7 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which contains all projects receiving federal or state funding between fiscal years 2024 and 2027. Additionally, when an amendment is made to the TIP, it must be made to the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) as well. This will be Amendment #1 to the 2055 MTP.

This amendment includes only one project update, listed below:

- New Project: GH-157 / PI 0021600: New Multiuse Trail Project – Flowery Branch Spur (Spring Street, Mulberry Street, E. Main Street, Phil Niekro Blvd)
    - Preliminary Engineering (PE) funding added for FY 2026 in the amount of $500,000.00

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Approval of Draft Amendment #7 to the FY24-27 TIP / Amendment #1 to the 2055 MTP**

Attachment: *Draft TIP Amendment #7 / MTP Amendment #1*

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GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

FY 2024 - FY 2027
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Amendment #7

&

2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
Amendment #1

Adopted: May 12, 2026

GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

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A Resolution by the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee Adopting Amendment #7 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program and Amendment #1 to the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

WHEREAS, the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for transportation planning within the Gainesville Metropolitan Area Boundary which includes all of Hall County and a portion of Jackson County following the 2020 Census; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee (PC) is the recognized decision making body for transportation planning with the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO); and

WHEREAS, the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program meets the requirement of Title 23 of the U.S. Code; and

WHEREAS, the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan meets the requirement of Title 23 of the U.S. Code; and

WHEREAS, GHMPO did conduct a required 15-day public comment period on this Amendment from April 8 to April 22, 2026;

WHEREAS, the 2024-2027 TIP and the 2055 MTP has been amended, per Attachment #1, to add one new project, GH-157, to the TIP program years;

NOW, THERE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization adopts Amendment #7 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program and Amendment #1 to the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

A motion was made by PC member _____ and seconded by PC member _____ and approved this the 12th Day of May, 2026.

_____
Chairman David Gibbs, Chair
GHMPO Policy Committee

_____
Joseph Boyd, MPO Director
GHMPO

GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

FY 2024 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program – Amendment #7

2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan – Amendment #1

New TIP & MTP Project

Project MPO #	Project GDOT #	Phase	Program Year	Amount Authorized (Federal)	Amount Authorized (State)	Amount Authorized (Local)	Update Type	Fund Code	Description
GH-157	0021600	PE	2026	$400,000	$0	$100,000	New Project	Y306	New Multiuse Trail Project – Flowery Branch Spur Multi-use Trail - Spring St, Mulberry St, E Main St, Phil Niekro Blvd

2024-2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

			FY 2024					FY 2025					FY 2026					FY 2027				
GHMPO No.	GDOT No.	Project Name	SCP	PE	ROW	CST	UTL	SCP	PE	ROW	CST	UTL	SCP	PE	ROW	CST	UTL	SCP	PE	ROW	CST	UTL
GH-016	0003626	Sardis Road Connector from State Route 60 to Sardis Road near Chestatee Road									$61,268	$2,193										
GH-018	0013626	Widening of State Route 369/Browns Bridge Road from State Route 53/McEver Road to Lake Lanier/Forsyth County Line						$1,500														
GH-020A	122060	Widening of US 129/Cleveland Highway from Lakeview Street to south of Nopone Road (Phase I)														$58,241	$2,457					
GH-020B	0016862	Widening of US 129/Cleveland Highway from Brittany Court to south of Lakeview St (Phase II)												$1,500								
GH-020C	0016863	Widening of US 129/Cleveland Highway from Limestone Pkwy to north of Brittany Court (Phase III)												$2,605								
GH-023B	0015280	Widening of Spout Springs Road from Union Circle to south of State Route 347/Friendship Road (Phase II)													$20,243							
GH-038	132610	Widening of US 129/Cleveland Highway north of Nopone Road to State Route 284/Clarks Bridge Road																		$27,982		
GH-119	0015551	Bridge Replacement on State Route 60/Thompson Bridge Road at Lake Lanier/Chattahoochee River			$101																	
GH-121	0017392	Operational Improvements on Green Street/State Route 60 from Academy Street to Glenwood Drive								$9,160											$14,566	$2,239
GH-124	0015702	Widening of State Route 53/Dawsonville Highway from Ahaluna Drive to Shallowford Road					$70				$4,639											
GH-130	0013762	Widening of State Route 60/Thompson Bridge Road from State Route 400 in Lumpkin County to Yellow Creek Road in Hall County						$225											$1,077			
GH-133	0016074	New Interchange at State Route 365 at YMCA Drive/Lanier Tech Drive					$717				$17,023											
GH-141	0017735	Bridge Replacement on State Route 283/Holly Springs Road at Flat Creek								$310												
GH-144	0019079	Bridge Replacement on State Route 284/Shoal Creek Road at Eubank Creek													$250							
GH-145	0016921	Intersection Improvement at State Route 53 and State Route 369				$1,182																
GH-147	0016089	Widening of State Route 211 from Pinot Noir Drive to State Route 347/Friendship Road			$146											$411						
GH-148	0020370	NEVI - Charging Stations along I-985 between State Route 53 and State Route 369							$60		$1,400											
GH-149	NRT 24(04)	Trail Project - Chicopee Woods Area Park Commission									$112											
GH-150	0020731	Widening of State Route 365 from I-985 to Belton Bridge Road in Lula												$10,000								
GH-151	0020735	Widening of State Route 53/Winder Highway from State Route 124 to New Cut Road												$1,500								
GH-157	0021600	Flowery Branch Spur Multi-use Trail - Spring St, Mulberry St, E Main St, Phil Niekro Blvd												$500								
		TOTAL	**$0**	**$0**	**$247**	**$1,182**	**$786**	**$1,725**	**$60**	**$9,470**	**$84,442**	**$2,193**	**$0**	**$16,105**	**$20,493**	**$58,652**	**$2,457**	**$0**	**$1,077**	**$27,982**	**$14,566**	**$2,239**

FY 2024-2027	$ Thousands
SCP	$1,725
PE	$17,242
ROW	$58,192
CST	$158,842
UTL	$7,676
TOTAL	**$243,676**

$ Thousands

5/12/2026

GAINESVILLE TOTAL EXPECTED HIGHWAY STIP FUNDS
(MATCHED)
FY 2024 - FY 2027

FUND	CODE	LUMP DESCRIPTION	2024	2025	2026	2027	TOTAL
NHPP	Y001	NATIONAL HIGHWAY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM	$ 1,050,000.00	$ 4,639,170.00	$ -	$ -	$ 5,689,170.00
STBG	Y238	STBG - AREAS WITH POPULATION <5K	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
STBG	Y236	STBG - AREAS WITH POPULATION <200K	$ -	$ 1,810,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ 1,810,000.00
NEVI	Y134	NATIONAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE FORMULA PROGRAM	$ -	$ -	$ 1,460,000.00	$ -	$ 1,460,000.00
TA	Y306	TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES			$ 500,000.00		
NRT	NRT	NATIONAL RECREATIONAL TRAILS FUNDING PROGRAM	$ -	$ 149,943.00	$ -	$ -	$ 149,943.00
Carbon	Y606	CARBON REDUCTION (IIJA)	$ 453,696.00	$ 747,960.00	$ 753,195.00	$ 753,195.00	$ 2,708,046.00
BFP	Y110	BRIDGE FORMULA PROGRAM	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
State	SGF	STATE GRANT FUNDS	$ -	$ 10,000,000.00	$ 1,802,150.00	$ -	$ 11,802,150.00
Local	LOC	LOCAL FUNDING	$ -	$ 5,584,764.00	$ 20,243,000.00		$ 25,827,764.00
State	HB170	HB170	$ 2,044,297.00	$ 84,059,344.00	$ 64,911,804.72	$ 47,179,733.00	$ 198,195,178.72
Transit	5303	METROPOLITAN PLANNING	$ 133,579.00	$ 136,372.50	$ 145,105.00	$ 145,105.00	$ 560,161.50
Transit	5307	URBAN CAPITAL AND OPERATING EXPENSES	$ 3,490,918.00	$ 3,490,918.00	$ 3,490,918.00	$ 3,490,918.00	$ 13,963,672.00
Transit	5311	RURAL CAPITAL AND OPERATING EXPENSES	$ 150,989.00	$ 85,161.00	$ 85,161.00	$ 85,161.00	$ 406,472.00
NHPP	Y001	LIGHTING	$ 14,000.00	$ 14,000.00	$ 14,000.00	$ 14,000.00	$ 56,000.00
NHPP/STBG	Various	BRIDGE MAINTENANCE	$ 608,000.00	$ 608,000.00	$ 608,000.00	$ 608,000.00	$ 2,432,000.00
NHPP/STBG	Various	ROAD MAINTENANCE	$ 3,782,000.00	$ 3,377,000.00	$ 3,377,000.00	$ 3,377,000.00	$ 13,913,000.00
STBG	Y240	LOW IMPACT BRIDGES	$ 284,000.00	$ 284,000.00	$ 284,000.00	$ 284,000.00	$ 1,136,000.00
STBG	Y240	OPERATIONS	$ 162,000.00	$ 162,000.00	$ 162,000.00	$ 162,000.00	$ 648,000.00
STBG	Y240	TRAF CONTROL DEVICES	$ 405,000.00	$ 405,000.00	$ 405,000.00	$ 405,000.00	$ 1,620,000.00
STBG	Y240	RW PROTECTIVE BUY	$ 20,000.00	$ 20,000.00	$ 20,000.00	$ 20,000.00	$ 80,000.00
HSIP	YS30	SAFETY	$ 1,351,000.00	$ 1,351,000.00	$ 1,351,000.00	$ 1,351,000.00	$ 5,404,000.00
RRX	YS40	RAILROAD CROSSINGS	$ 155,000.00	$ 155,000.00	$ 155,000.00	$ 155,000.00	$ 620,000.00
TOTAL			**$ 14,104,479.00**	**$ 117,079,632.50**	**$ 99,767,333.72**	**$ 58,030,112.00**	**$ 288,481,557.22**

Project Name	GHMPO No.	GDOT No.
Flowery Branch Spur Multi-use Trail - Spring St, Mulberry St, E Main St, Phil Niekro Blvd	GH-157	0021600
	County Hall	**City** Flowery Branch
Local Rd. Name	**GDOT District** 1	**RC** GMRC
US/State Rd. Name	**Funding Source** Federal/Local	

Project Description

Multiuse Trail in Flowery Branch from Spring Street to Phil Niekro Blvd.

Improvement Type Trail **Capacity Adding** No

Project Intent

To expand pedestrian infrastructure in downtown Flowery Branch.

Project Termini **From** Spring Street **To** Phil Niekro Blvd	**Length (miles)** 0.8	
	Exist. Lanes N/A	**Future Lanes** N/A
Bike / Ped Infrastructure Multiuse Trail		
Network Year 2030	**MTP Project Band:** Band 1 (2026-2027)	**Open to Traffic Date** 2027

STATUS	PHASE	SOURCE	LOCAL	STATE	FEDERAL	OTHER	TOTAL
2026	Pre-Engineering	LOC/Y306	$100,000	$0	$400,000	$0	$500,000
		TOTAL	$100,000	$0	$400,000	$0	$500,000

Conformity Determination Report – Short Form
Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Planning Process

Metropolitan Transportation Plan: ***GHMPO 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan***

Transportation Improvement Program: ***GHMPO FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program***

2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

- ☐ **New MTP Adoption**
- ☐ **Administrative Modification**
- ☒ **Amendment – Number *1***
  - ☒ **Planning Action Only**
  - ☐ **New Emissions Analysis Required**

Nature of Action:

A full list of all proposed changes is attached to this form. GHMPO is amending its MTP to add one new project per request from Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). $500,000 in PE funding for PI 0021600, ***Flowery Branch Spur Multi-use Trail*** *(Spring St, Mulberry St, E Main St, Phil Niekro Blvd), is being added to the MTP program years and is being updated within the FY24-27 TIP. There are also no changes to the scope or schedule of any non-exempt status project, as defined in 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 93, which would require updating the regional emissions analysis. Therefore, the MTP and TIP remain fiscally constrained and the conformity determination is relying on the previous regional emissions analysis. See below for the conformity process schedule.*

FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program

- ☐ **New TIP Adoption**
- ☐ **Administrative Modification**
- ☒ **Amendment – Number *7***
  - ☒ **Planning Action Only**
  - ☐ **New Emissions Analysis Required**

Nature of Action:

A full list of all proposed changes is attached to this form. GHMPO is amending its TIP to add one new project per request from Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). $500,000 in PE funding in FY 2026 for PI 0021600, ***Flowery Branch Spur Multi-use Trail*** *(Spring St, Mulberry St, E Main St, Phil Niekro Blvd), is being added to the TIP program years and is being updated within the 2055 MTP. There are also no changes to the scope or schedule of any non-exempt status project, as defined in 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 93, which would require updating the regional emissions analysis. Therefore, the MTP and TIP remain fiscally constrained and the conformity determination is relying on the previous regional emissions analysis. See below for the conformity process schedule.*

GHMPO

Last Conforming Emissions Analysis:

Conformity Determination Report: Page 90 - https://www.ghmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/FY-2024-2027-TIP.pdf

Date of Emissions Analysis: Not Applicable

Transportation Improvement Program: https://www.ghmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/FY-2024-2027-TIP.pdf

2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan: https://www.ghmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/2055-ghmpo-mtp-report_and_appendix_final_reduced_web_2_24_2026.pdf?ver=1746553558

The Gainesville-Hall MPO falls under the 1997 Ozone Standards. For the 1997 ozone NAAQS areas, transportation conformity for MTPs and TIPs for the 1997 ozone NAAQS can be demonstrated without a regional emissions analysis, per 40 CFR 93.109(c). This provision states that the regional emissions analysis requirement applies one year after the effective date of EPA's nonattainment designation for a NAAQS and until the effective date of revocation of such NAAQS for an area. The 1997 ozone NAAQS revocation was effective on April 6, 2015, and the South Coast II court upheld the revocation. As no regional emission analysis is required for this conformity determination, there is no requirement to use the latest emissions model, or budget or interim emissions tests.

Proposed Approval Dates:

Short Form CDR Released to Interagency:	***March 17, 2026***
Interagency Concurrence:	***March 24, 2026***
Public Comment Period Opens:	***April 8, 2026***
Public Comment Period Closes:	***April 22, 2026***
GHMPO Transportation Coordinating Committee:	***April 29, 2026***
GHMPO Citizens Advisory Committee:	***April 30, 2026***
GHMPO Policy Committee:	***May 12, 2026***
Amendment Sent to FHWA for Approval:	***May 13, 2026***

Report Preparation:

Prepared by:	***Joseph Boyd***
Title:	***MPO Director***
Contact Email:	***jboyd@hallcounty.org***
Contact Phone:	***770-297-5541***
Date:	***March 16, 2026***

GHMPO

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GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

MEMORANDUM

To: **Policy Committee Members**

From: **Joseph Boyd, GHMPO**

Date: **May 5, 2026**

Re: **Approval the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Rd**

GHMPO, in partnership with Gainesville, Oakwood, Flowery Branch, Hall County, and the University of North Georgia (UNG): Gainesville Campus, has developed the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Road. This document explored all potential routes to connect the existing terminus of the Highlands to Islands Trail on the campus of UNG to downtown Flowery Branch and the planned multiuse path along McEver Road. Three potential alignments were identified as the best possible routes and cost estimates were created to assist the community when planning to utilize expected SPLOST IX revenue dedicated for this expansion project, along with other potential funding mechanisms.

The full document is available for review and comment via the following link:

http://www.ghmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/0504_-1250532-Highlands-to-Islands-Trail-Study_reduced.pdf

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Approval of the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Road**

Attachment: *Draft Highlands to Islands Trail Study*

HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS

UNG TO MCEVER ROAD TRAIL STUDY

MAY 2026

POND

GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PROJECT TEAM

GHMPO – Joseph Boyd, AICP

HALL COUNTY

CITY OF GAINESVILLE

CITY OF OAKWOOD

CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA – GAINESVILLE

PROJECT CONSULTANTS

POND & COMPANY | DESIGN TEAM

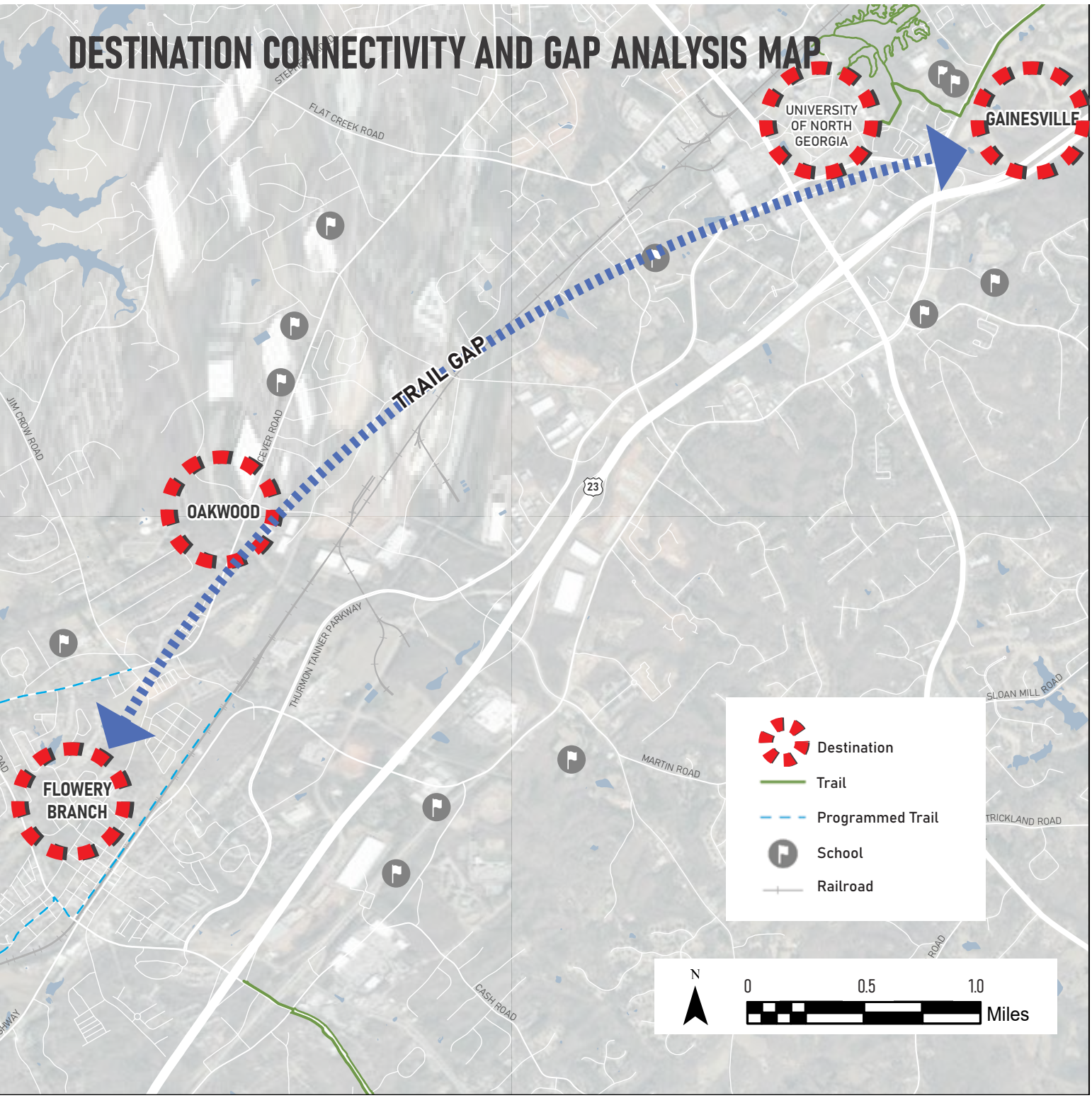
Matt Wilder, **Principal, PLA**
Kat Onore, **Project Manager, AICP**
Elizabeth Burke, **Planner**
Erika Herbel, **Landscape Designer**

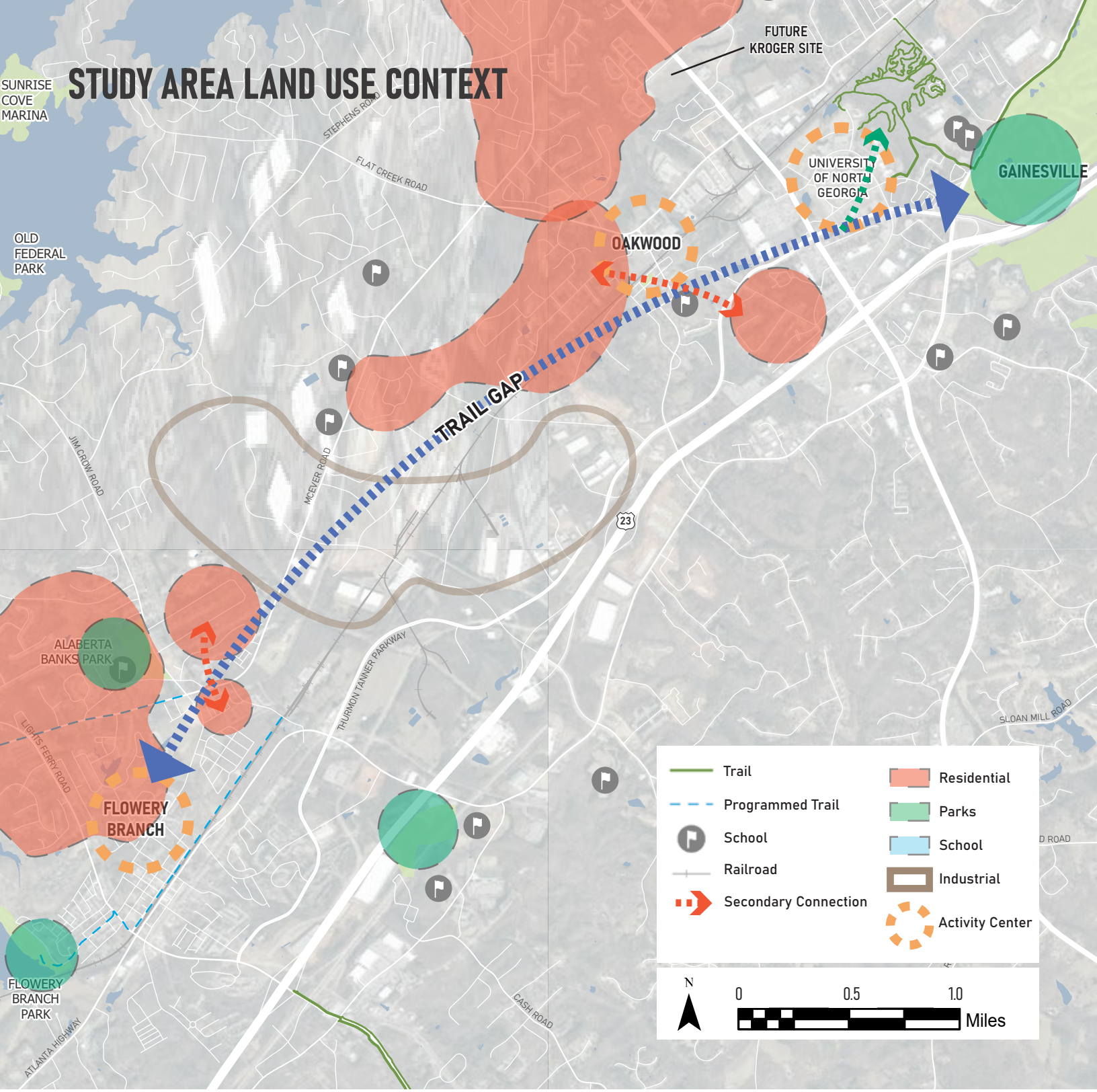
STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Chris McCrary, **Flowery Branch, Planning and Community Development**
Brandon Smith, **Hall County, Parks and Leisure Assistant Director**
Jordan Wallace, **Hall County, Assistant County Engineer**
Adam Strzemienski, **UNG, Director of Facilities and Operations**
Derek Leonard, **UNG, Associate Vice President Real Estate & Auxiliary Services**
Anna Hester, **Vision 2030, Executive Director**
Dan Shulz, **City of Oakwood**
Matt Tarver, **City of Gainesville**
Brent Cook, **Hall County, Assistant Public Works Director**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESTINATION CONNECTIVITY AND GAP ANALYSIS MAP



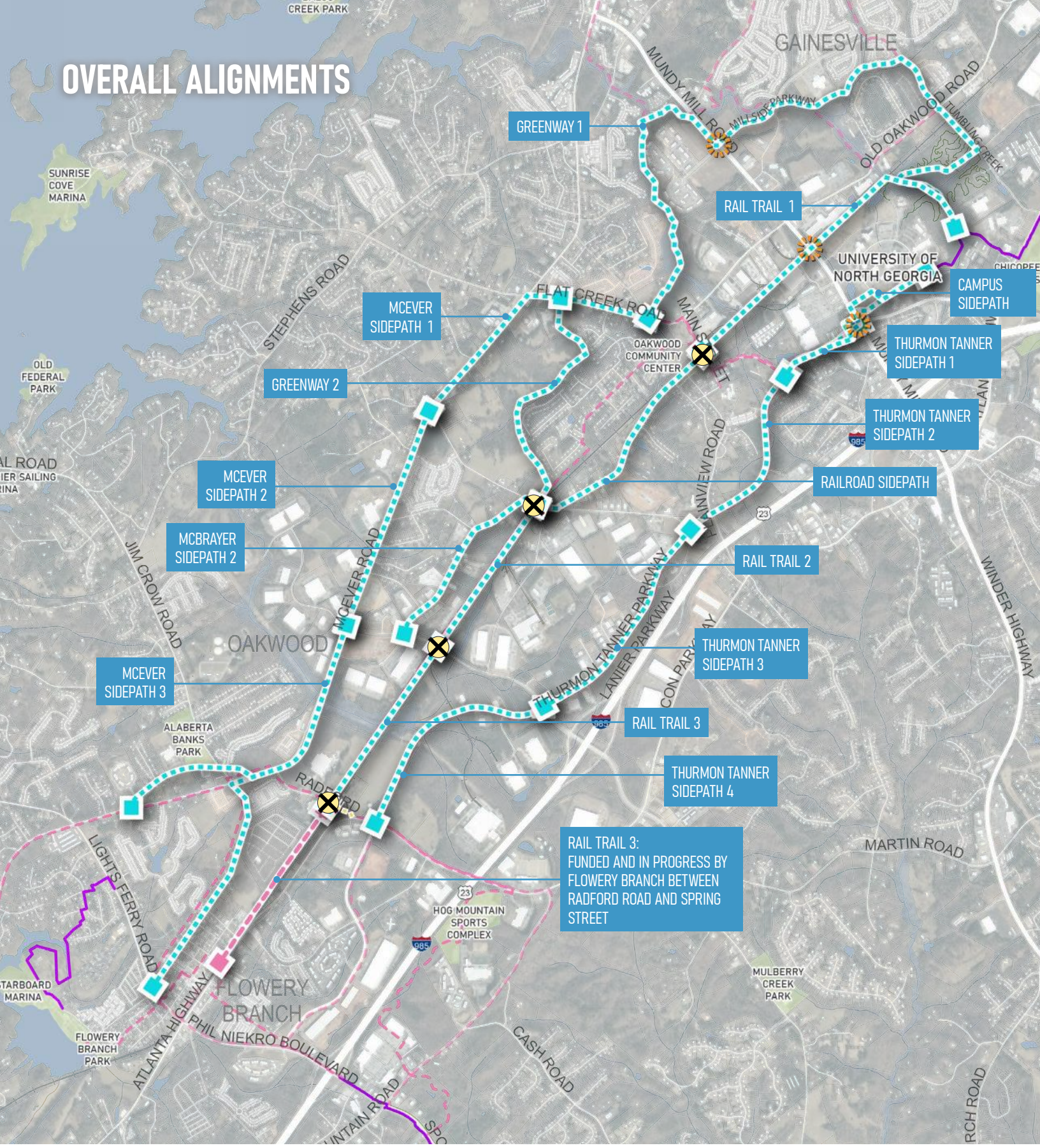


The diagram illustrates some of the key land uses and facilities that would generate trail usage. Residential areas, industrial districts, community facilities, and significant parks are represented as broad influence zones that anchor the corridor. Town centers at each community provide focal points for activity, while surrounding parks and schools contribute recreational and civic destinations.

A potential trail or multimodal connection is depicted as a unifying spine extending from Flowery Branch to Gainesville. This connection links major population centers, employment areas, and recreational assets, establishing a continuous framework for enhanced mobility and wayfinding. By visually organizing these land-use elements, the diagram emphasizes how strategic connections between nodes can strengthen community access, support economic activity, and create a cohesive regional network.

CHAPTER 4
ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

OVERALL ALIGNMENTS



SR 53 CROSSING OPTIONS

RAILROAD CROSSINGS

UNPAVED TRAILS

SEWER EASEMENT

FLOODWAY

HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK SEGMENTS

Status

Complete

Previously Planned

Segment Options

N

0 0.4 0.80 Miles

SECTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

The following pages provide an overview of each segment, including a map enlargement, description, pros/cons, and a decision matrix. The alignments are organized into the following sections:

UNG to Oakwood	Oakwood to Chamblee Road	Chamblee Raod to HF Reed Industrial Parkway	HF Reed Industrial Parkway to Flowery Branch
Greenway 1	McEver Sidepath 1	McEver Sidepath 2	McEver Sidepath 3
Rail Trail 1	Greenway 2	McBrayer Sidepath	Rail Trail 3
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 1	Railroad Sidepath	Rail Trail 2	Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 4
Campus Sidepath	Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 2	Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 3	

For each alignment alternative on the following pages, there is a decision matrix that compares the segment to the others in the same section. The decision criteria and general parameters are described in the table below.

	○ Neutral	◐ Better	● Best
Directness	greater distance, less direct route, multiple crossings	medium distance, limited street and intersection crossings	the shortest, most straightforward path with the fewest deviations or stops
Safety	highest crash risk exposure for trail users	medium crash risk exposure for trail users	lowest crash risk exposure for trail users
Environmental	relatively high impact to environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, floodplains) and undeveloped land	some impact to environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, floodplains) and undeveloped land	relatively low impact to environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, floodplains) and undeveloped land
Cost-Effective	higher cost alternative	middle-cost alternative	lowest cost alternative
Timeline	longest expected timeframe, due to minimal coordination with stakeholders and property owners	middle expected timeframe, due to minimal coordination with stakeholders and property owners	shortest expected timeframe, due to minimal coordination with stakeholders and property owners
Access	access to destinations requires a relatively high amount of out of direction travel	access to destinations requires minimal out of direction travel	provides direct access to many key origins and destinations
Coordination	requires coordination with and cooperation from several key stakeholders	requires coordination with and cooperation from some key stakeholders	requires coordination with and cooperation from few key stakeholders

CHAPTER 5

PREFERRED ALIGNMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

N

0 0.4 0.80 Miles

SR 53 CROSSING OPTIONS

UNPAVED TRAILS

SEWER EASEMENT

HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK

Status

Complete

Previously Planned

SEGMENTS

Preferred Alignment

Alternative Alignment

UNG Campus Alignment

PREFERRED ALIGNMENT
RAIL TRAIL

The preferred alignment is the rail trail option that follows along the existing railroad right of way. The alignment begins on the UNG campus, connecting to their cross country trails as well as a portion of the already complete Highlands to Islands Trail. This starting point aligns with the UNG master plan, which identifies Tumbling Creek and the surrounding open space as key amenities for regional connectivity and mobility. This reinforces UNG 's support for expanded trail access for the university and the surrounding community. The trail would begin on the east side of the railroad tracks, switching over to the west side by crossing at Main Street. The City of Oakwood owns a parcel of land that extends along the edge of the railroad right of way between Chamblee Road and HF Reed Industrial Parkway. The City is willing to allow the trail on that land which is a significant portion of the corridor and supports Oakwood's goal to expand upon the city's multimodal infrastructure and connectivity. Between HF Reed Industrial Parkway and Radford Road, the trail would merge back into the railroad right of way, connecting into Flowery Branch. The City of Flowery Branch has received encouraging feedback on their proposed trail that also utilizes the railroad right of way, into which the trail could connect. This would create a multi-jurisdictional off-road greenway that supports regional connectivity and mobility.

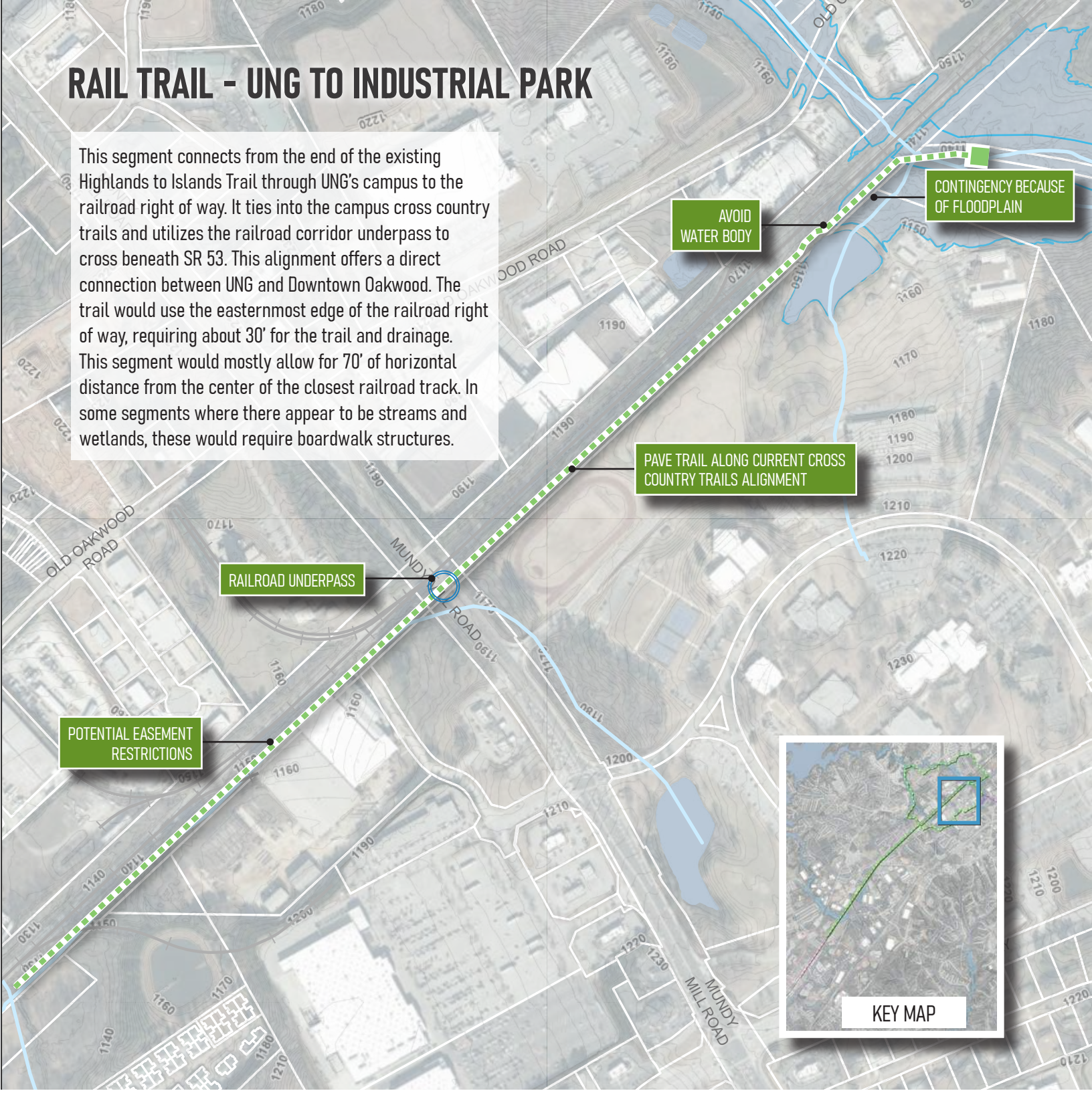
When the alignment options were presented to the stakeholders, the rail trail was the majority preferred option due to its potential for a safe and direct route to connect the surrounding community. The rail trail would be an off the road option with a greenway type of environment, being away from traffic and road noise. It would be a destination experience with direct connections to the different downtowns which is consistent with the growing regional greenway vision reflected in both the South Hall Trail Study and the UNG Campus Master Plan.

This alignment plugs into the Highlands to Islands already built trails at UNG, would transect some of their planned trails that utilize the sewer easements, and connect directly to the Flowery Branch trails.

Norfolk Southern Railroad

RAIL TRAIL - UNG TO INDUSTRIAL PARK

This segment connects from the end of the existing Highlands to Islands Trail through UNG's campus to the railroad right of way. It ties into the campus cross country trails and utilizes the railroad corridor underpass to cross beneath SR 53. This alignment offers a direct connection between UNG and Downtown Oakwood. The trail would use the easternmost edge of the railroad right of way, requiring about 30' for the trail and drainage. This segment would mostly allow for 70' of horizontal distance from the center of the closest railroad track. In some segments where there appear to be streams and wetlands, these would require boardwalk structures.

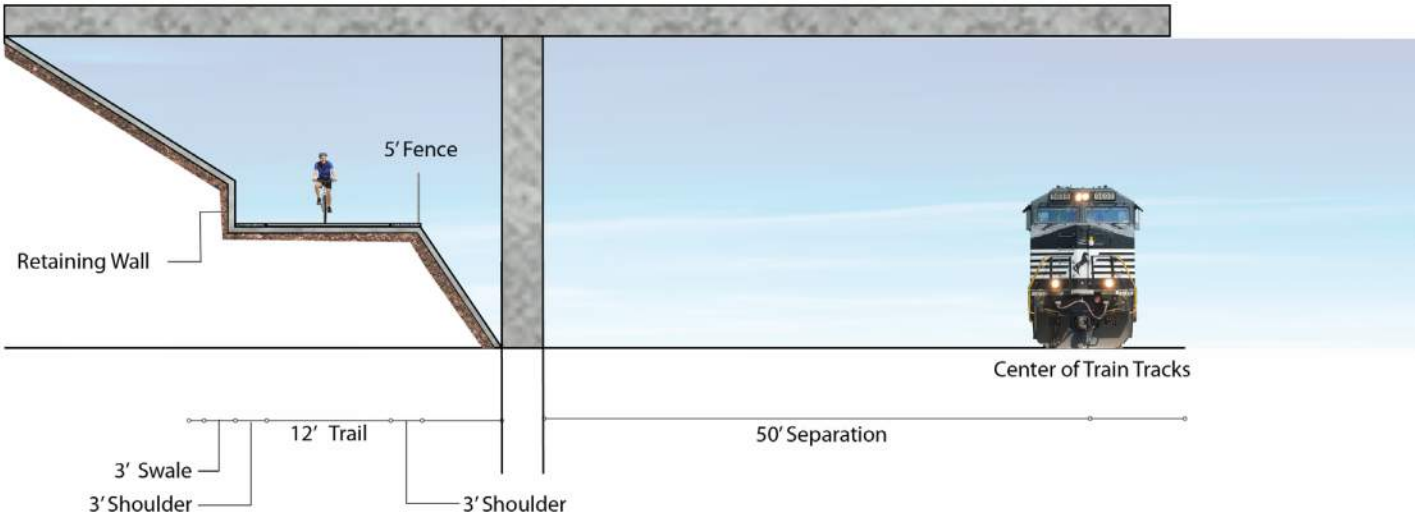


RAIL TRAIL - UNG TO INDUSTRIAL PARK

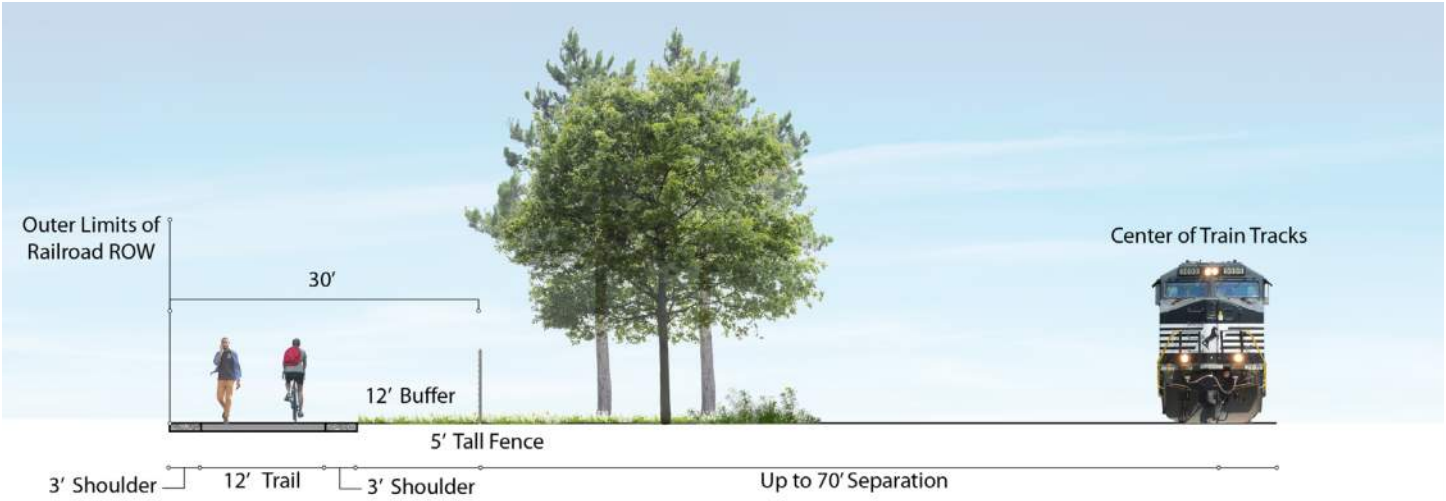
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
UNG to Industrial Park	3150'	UNG, NORFOLK SOUTHERN	$1,493,208	0	220'	0	0

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



ROAD UNDERPASS CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, BUILT INTO EMBANKMENT AND SEPARATED FROM TRAIN BY COLUMNS



TYPICAL CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, +/- 70' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS

RAIL TRAIL - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO MAIN STREET

Continuing from Mundy Mill Road south, the trail transitions from the east side to the west side crossing at Main Street. This crossing needs to be coordinated with Norfolk Southern but would include an asphalt pedestrian crossing at the railroad tracks.

UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
RAILROAD CROSSINGS

N

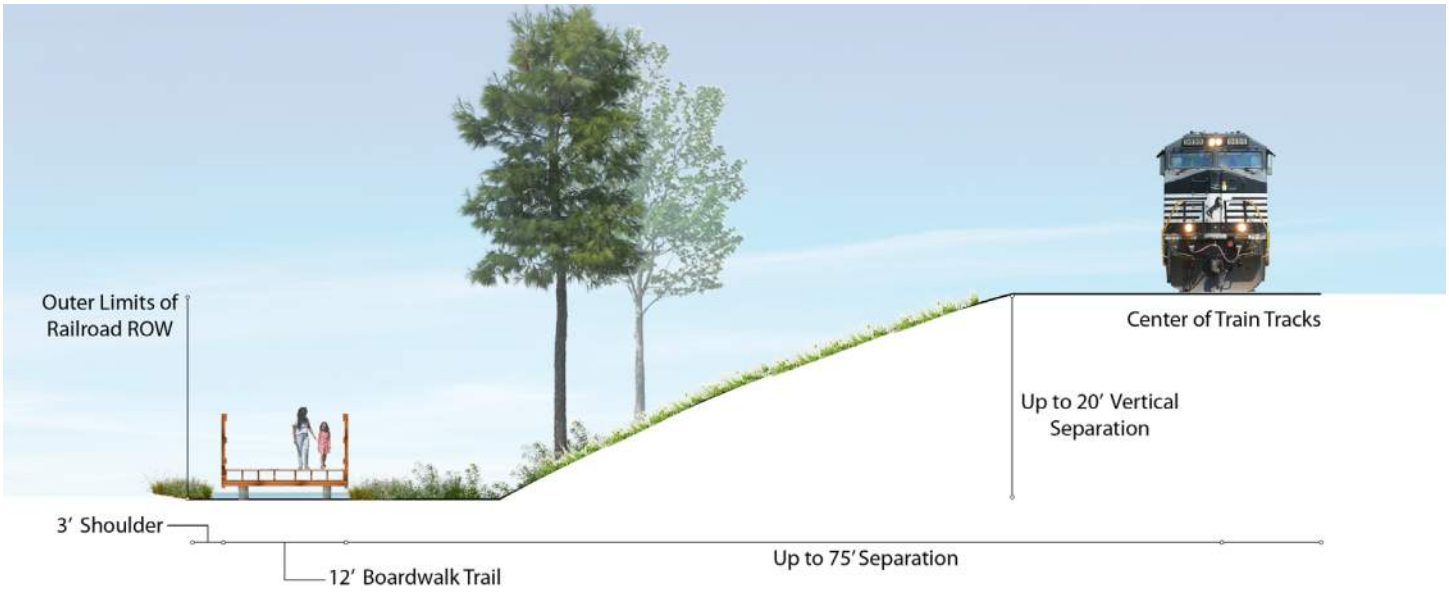
0 0.1 0.2 Miles

RAIL TRAIL - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO MAIN STREET

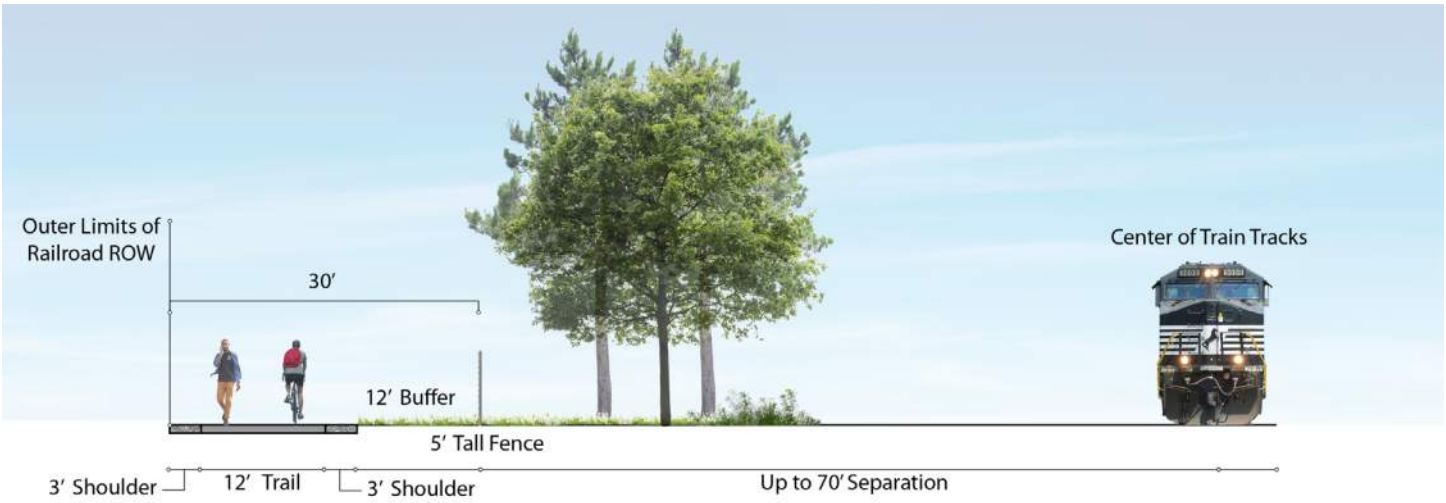
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
MUNDY MILL ROAD TO MAIN STREET	3291'	NORFOLK SOUTHERN	$2,325,990	491'	0	0	0

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



BOARDWALK CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE RAISED BOARDWALK TRAIL, +/- 75' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS



TYPICAL CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, +/- 70' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS

RAIL TRAIL - MAIN STREET TO CHAMBLEE ROAD

This portion begins on the north side of the tracks at Main Street and continues using an approximately 30' easement on the edge of the railroad right of way. Oakwood owns an approximately 30' wide right of way parcel close to Chamblee Road, which the trail would transfer over to in order to minimize the use of the railroad as much as possible.

UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
RAILROAD CROSSINGS

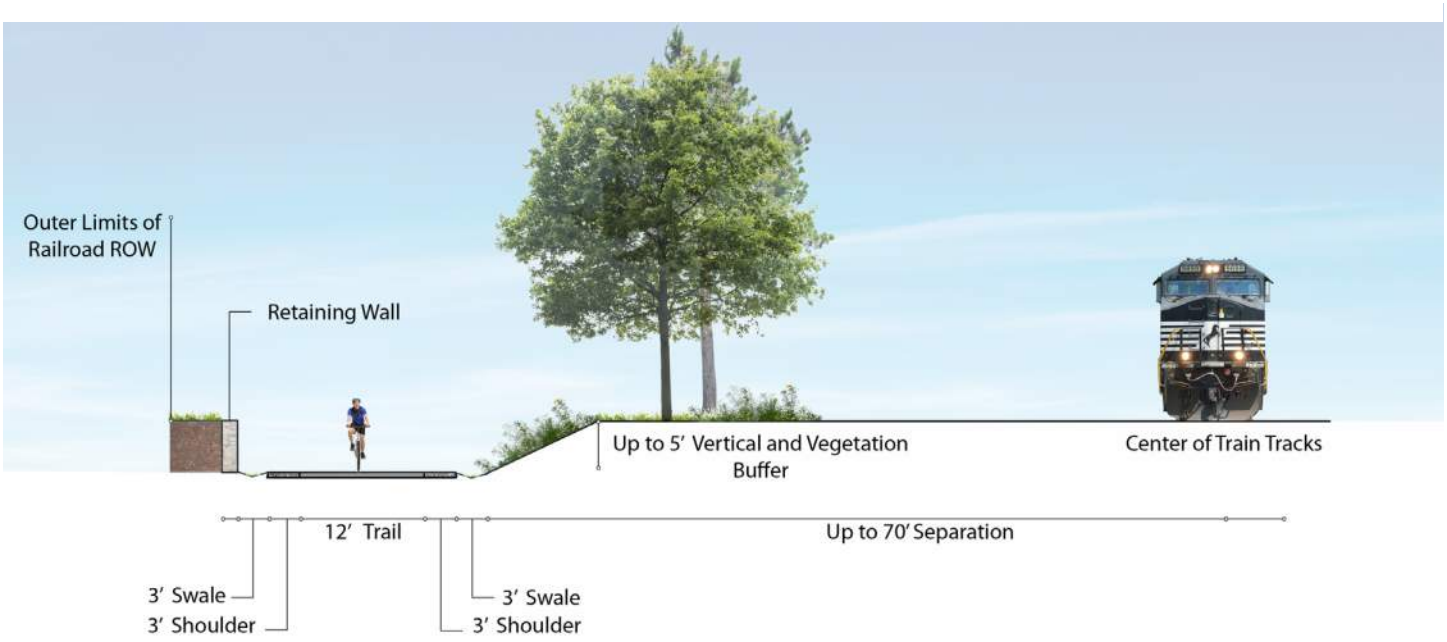
N

0 0.1 0.2 Miles

RAIL TRAIL - MAIN STREET TO CHAMBLEE ROAD
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
MAIN STREET TO CHAMBLEE ROAD	5690'	NORFOLK SOUTHERN	$3,272,261	310'	300'	1	1

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.

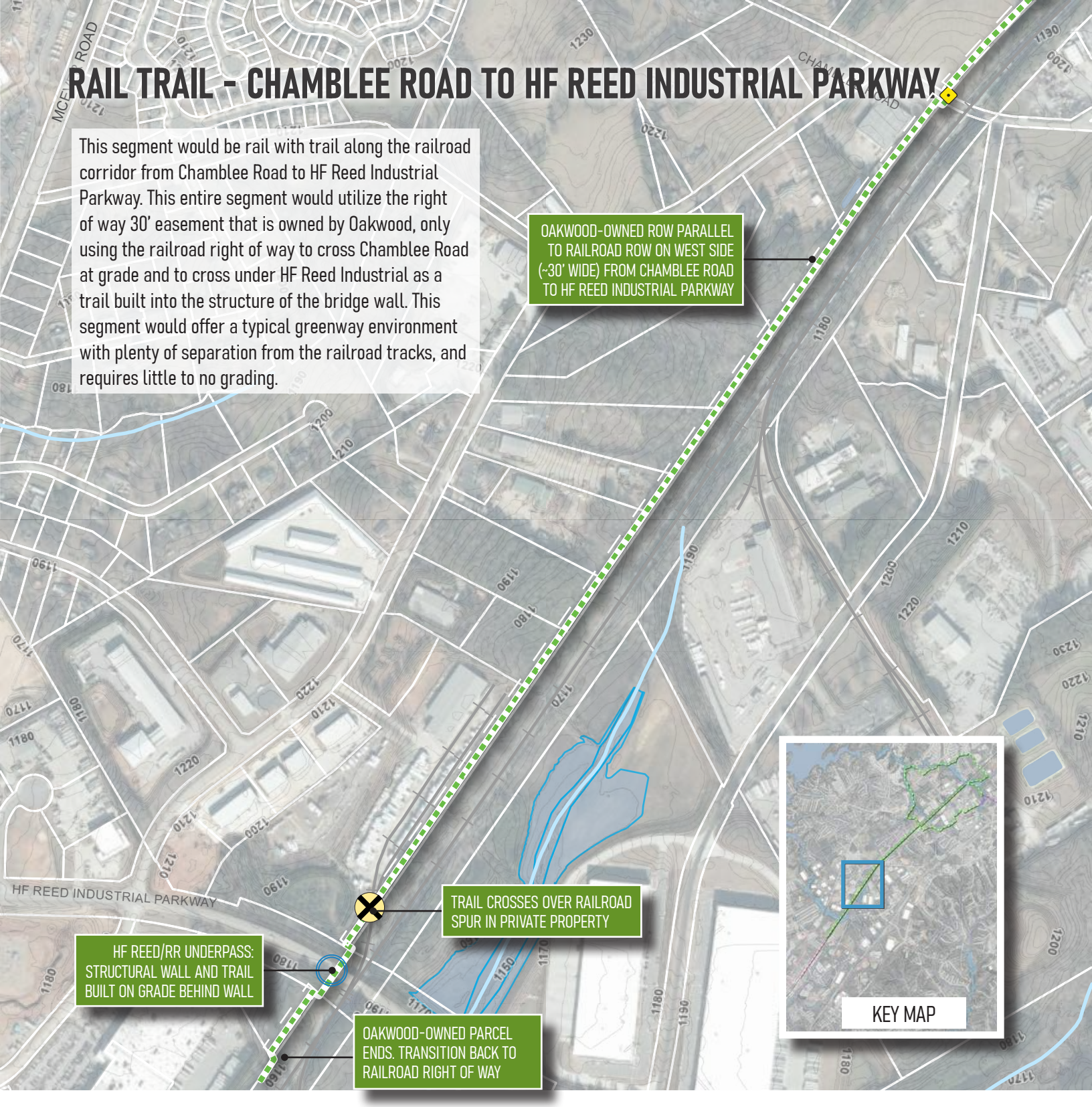


RETAINING WALL CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS AND 3' DRAINAGE SWALES ON EITHER SIDE, SHORT RETAINING WALL

MAIN STREET RAILROAD CROSSING (Will need design and implementation approval from Railroad)

RAIL TRAIL - CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY

This segment would be rail with trail along the railroad corridor from Chamblee Road to HF Reed Industrial Parkway. This entire segment would utilize the right of way 30' easement that is owned by Oakwood, only using the railroad right of way to cross Chamblee Road at grade and to cross under HF Reed Industrial as a trail built into the structure of the bridge wall. This segment would offer a typical greenway environment with plenty of separation from the railroad tracks, and requires little to no grading.



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY
STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
RAILROAD UNDERPASS

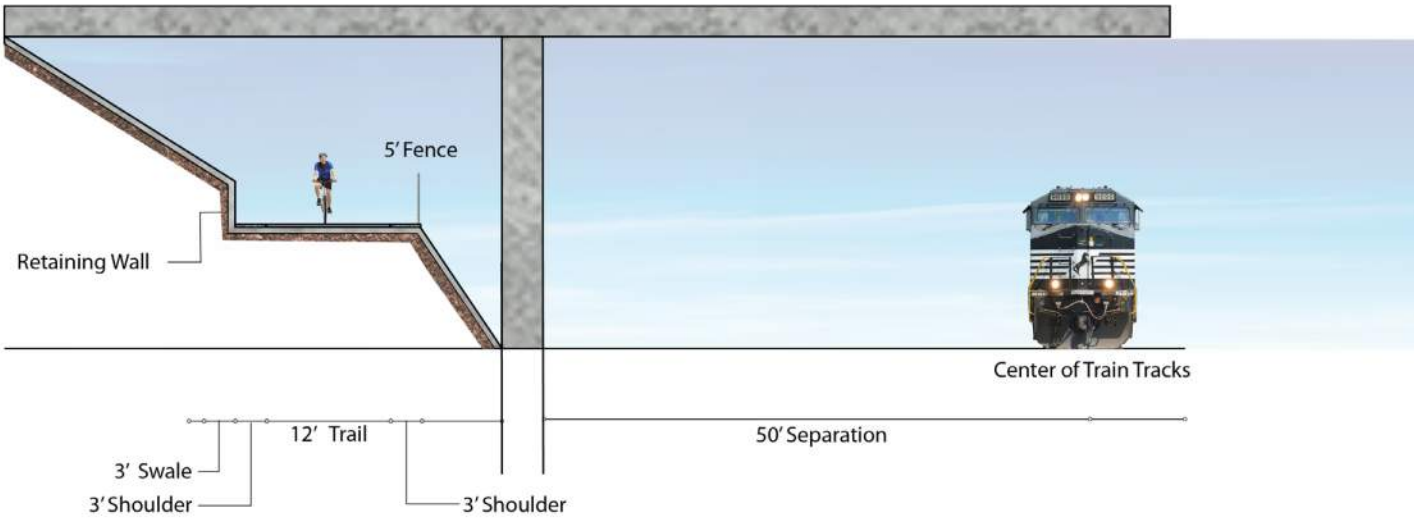
N

0 0.1 0.2 Miles

RAIL TRAIL - CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY	5544'	CITY OF OAKWOOD, NORFOLK SOUTHERN	$2,288,168	0'	177'	1	1

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



ROAD UNDERPASS CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, BUILT INTO RETAINING WALL AND SEPARATED FROM TRAIN BY COLUMNS

OAKWOOD PROPERTY TRAIL TRANSITION TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY UNDERPASS

RAIL TRAIL - HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY TO RADFORD ROAD

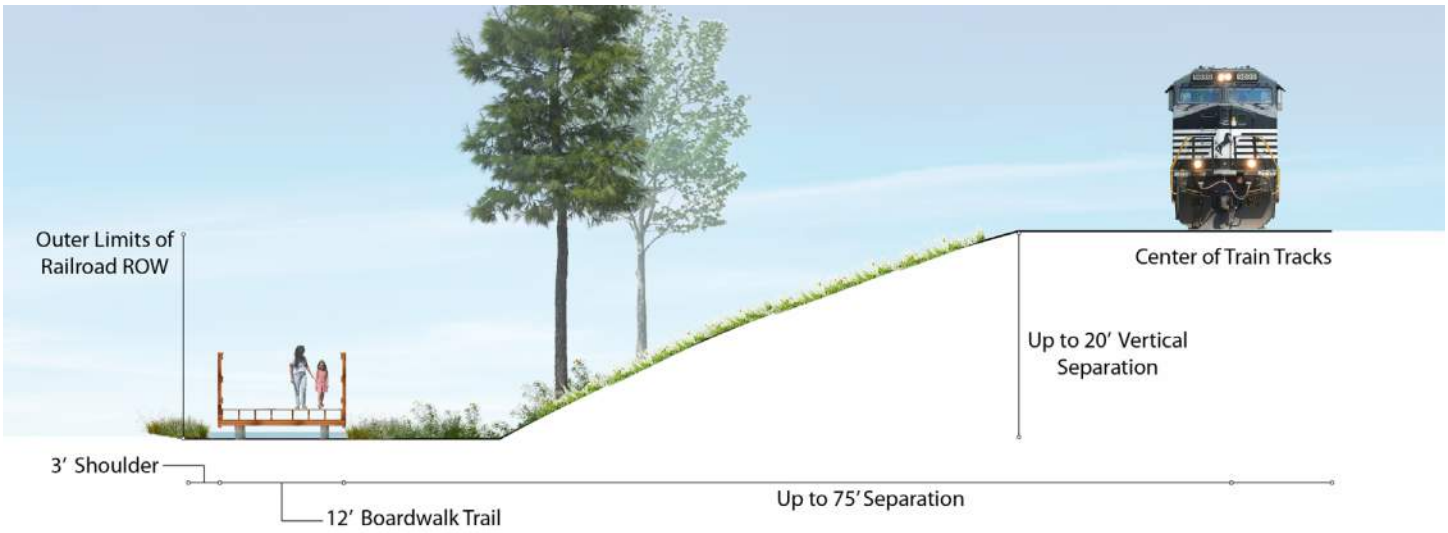
This segment would be rail with trail along the railroad corridor from HF Reed Industrial Parkway to Flowery Branch's programmed trail project on Spring Street. Flowery Branch has already been in talks with Norfolk Southern about installing a trail in their ROW from Spring Street to Radford Road. This segment would require extending that project to the city boundary to the north. The northern portion would rely on coordination and cooperation between the City of Oakwood and Norfolk Southern.

RAIL TRAIL - HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY TO RADFORD ROAD

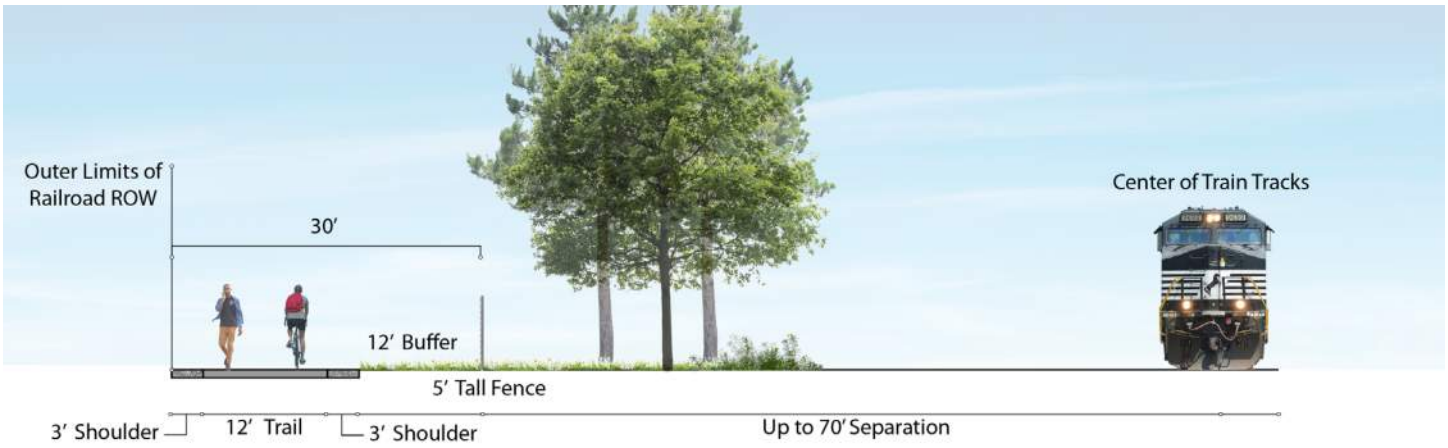
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY TO RADFORD ROAD	4851'	NORFOLK SOUTHERN	$2,264,386	122'	147'	0	0

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



BOARDWALK CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE RAISED BOARDWALK TRAIL, +/- 75' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS



TYPICAL CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, +/- 70' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS

RAIL TRAIL - RADFORD ROAD TO SPRING STREET

This segment would be rail with trail along the railroad corridor from Radford Road to Flowery Branch's programmed trail project on Spring Street. Flowery Branch has received preliminary approval for a trail easement in Norfolk Southern's property in this segment. The City has also allocated some funding for implementation. This segment would require extending that project to the city boundary to the north. The northern portion would rely on coordination and cooperation between the City of Oakwood and Norfolk Southern.

The lease agreement between the City and Norfolk Southern has been signed and executed to allow them to build a trail from Chattahoochee Street to Radford Road.

Norfolk Southern Railroad Right of Way

N

0 0.4 0.80 Miles

SR 53 CROSSING OPTIONS

UNPAVED TRAILS

SEWER EASEMENT

HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK

Status

Complete

Previously Planned

SEGMENTS

Preferred Alignment

Alternative Alignment

UNG Campus Alignment

ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT
GREENWAY

An alternative preferred alignment is the greenway sewer easement trail. Similar to the rail trail alignment, this alignment begins on the UNG campus, connecting to their cross country trails as well as a portion of the already complete Highlands to Islands Trail. This starting point aligns with the UNG master plan, which identifies Tumbling Creek and the surrounding open space as key amenities for regional connectivity and mobility. The alignment reinforces UNG 's support for expanded trail access for the university and the surrounding community.

The trail begins at UNG as a greenway and crosses over the creek, connecting to the existing trail system on campus. It reaches Tumbling Creek Road, continuing on the south side of the roadway as sidepath before following the sewer easement through a wooded area as a greenway facility. The trail then crosses Millside Parkway and continues as a sidepath to Mundy Mill Road, providing access to existing sidewalk along Millside Parkway that connects to the largely residential area and schools along this corridor. At the intersection with Mundy Mill Road, the trail alignment crosses Mundy Mill Road as an enhanced at-grade crossing or with a new walking and biking bridge to provide separation from vehicle traffic. This crossing location capitalizes on future development that may occur on the southern side of this intersection, including a Kroger that is planned for development, providing improved opportunities for active mode trips to this destination.

The trail follows Mundy Mill Road as a sidepath until reaching Balus Creek, where a greenway facility generally follows the creek until reaching the location of future phases of the Oakwood Town Center and connecting to Flat Creek Road. As a sidepath, the trail continues along Flat Creek Road and along Main Street, where the trail terminates at the railroad. This segment through central Oakwood provides direct access to a key activity center and nearby residential areas.

This alignment provides significant connections between many residential areas and key destinations within the study area, providing opportunities for residents to use active modes as a replacement for car trips as well as expanding opportunities for recreation. The varied trail facilities create a unique experience where users can access natural areas and green spaces within the larger urban context.

Mundy Mill Road and Millside Parkway Intersection

GREENWAY - CAMPUS TRAIL CONNECTION

This greenway segment begins at the newest portion of the trail network, the UNG Connector which connects the Chicopee Trail with UNG and provides access to both Landrum Education Drive and the planned Tumbling Creek Trails. The trail begins as greenway until Millside Parkway then turns into sidepath along Millside Parkway until it follows the sewer easement behind the residential development and switches back to a greenway inside of the easement.

UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
SEGMENT BEGINNING/END

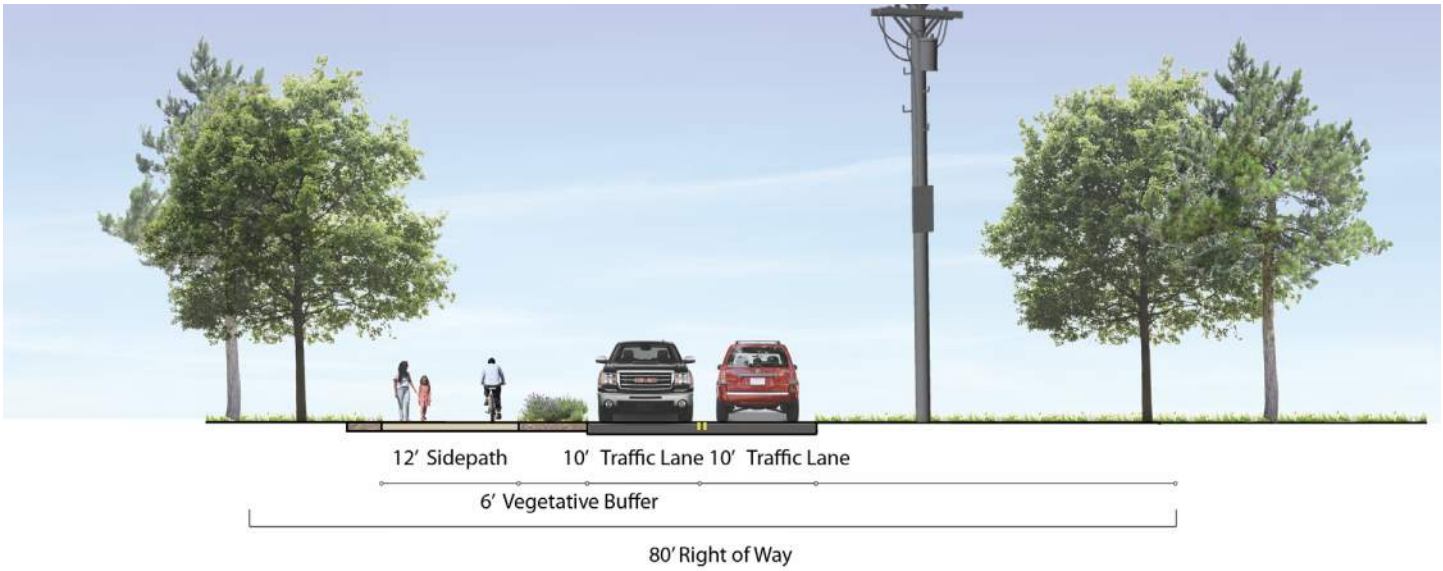
N

0 0.1 0.2 Miles

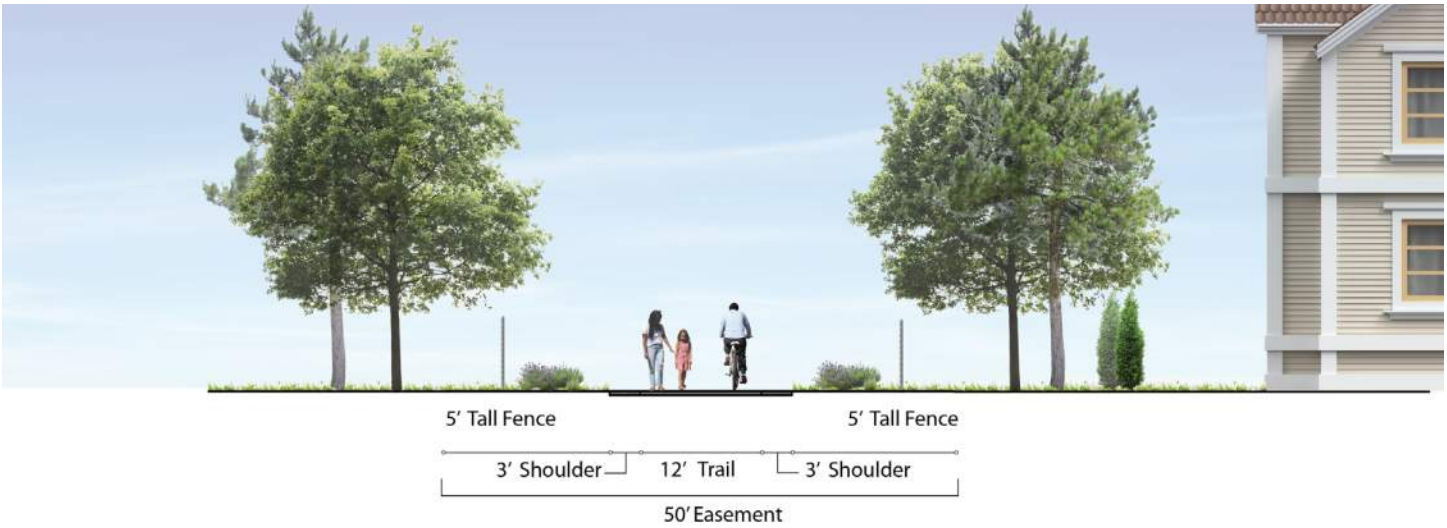
GREENWAY - CAMPUS TRAIL CONNECTION
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
CAMPUS TRAIL CONNECTION	9450'	UNG, CITY OF GAINESVILLE	$4,806,984	500'	0	0	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 96.



SIDEPATH CROSS SECTION: 80' RIGHT OF WAY. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 6' VEGETATIVE BUFFER FROM ROAD TRAFFIC



GREENWAY CROSS SECTION: 50' EASEMENT BETWEEN PROPERTIES. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, 5' FENCES

GREENWAY - MILLSIDE PARKWAY TO MUNDY MILL ROAD

This portion continues as greenway using the sewer easement from Millside Parkway until Mundy Mill Road. The segment of the trail is within the floodway and will cross over the stream so will require boardwalk as well as a bridge or culvert to cross over the stream.

UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
SEGMENT BEGINNING/END

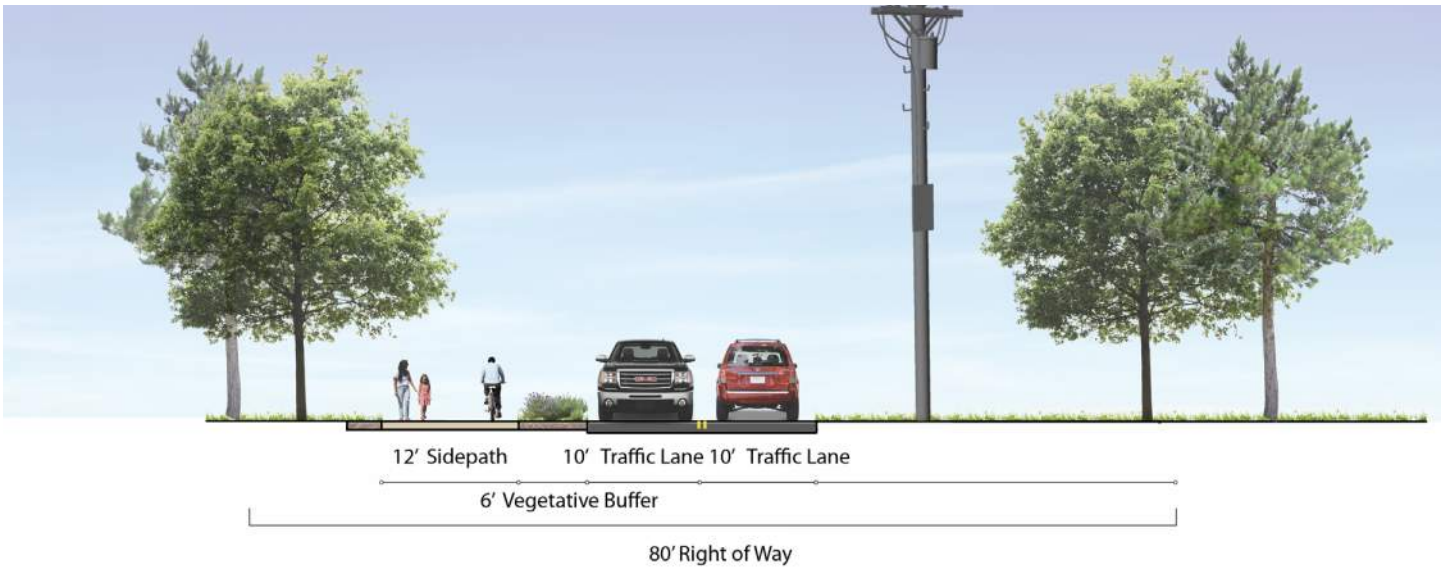
N

0 0.1 0.2 Miles

GREENWAY - MILLSIDE PARKWAY TO MUNDY MILL ROAD
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
MILLSIDE PARKWAY TO MUNDY MILL RD	5830'	CITY OF GAINESVILLE	$16,538,488	105'	0	1	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 96.



SIDEPATH CROSS SECTION: 80' RIGHT OF WAY. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 6' VEGETATIVE BUFFER FROM ROAD TRAFFIC

PROPOSED BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AT THE INTERSECTION OF MUNDY MILL ROAD AND MILLSIDE PARKWAY

GREENWAY - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO BALUS CREEK

This segment uses the sewer easement, crosses SR 53 / Mundy Mill Road, extends for a short distance as sidepath along Mundy Mill Road, and returns to a greenway using the sewer easement south of SR 53 / Mundy Mill Road along Balus Creek. The easement runs through the floodway and may need some boardwalk.

UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
SEGMENT BEGINNING/END

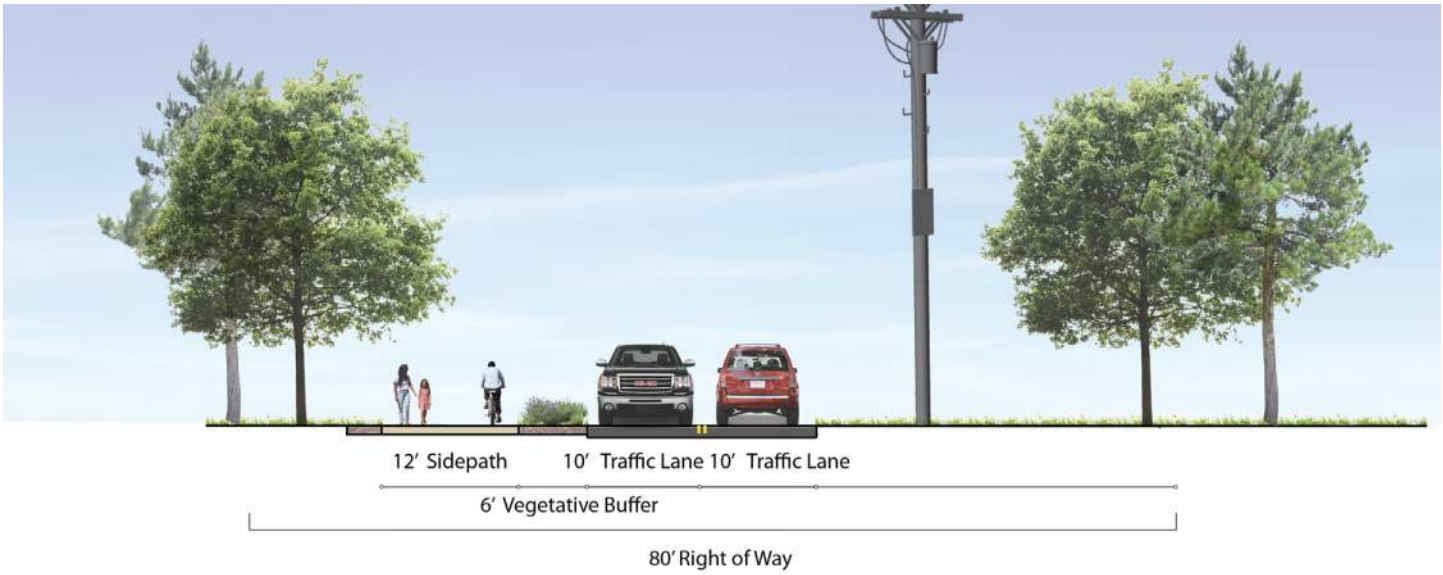
N

0 0.1 0.2 Miles

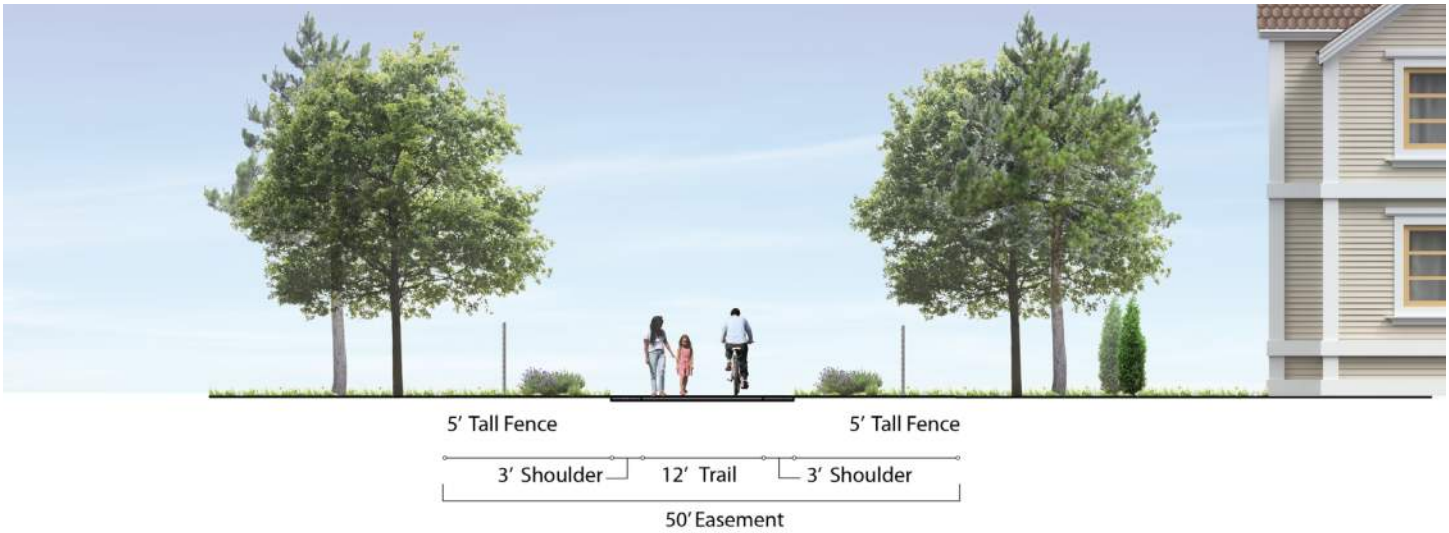
GREENWAY - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO BALUS CREEK
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
MILLSIDE PARKWAY CROSSING MUNDY MILL	5477'	CITY OF GAINESVILLE, CITY OF OAKWOOD	$2,424,666	200'	0	0	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 96.



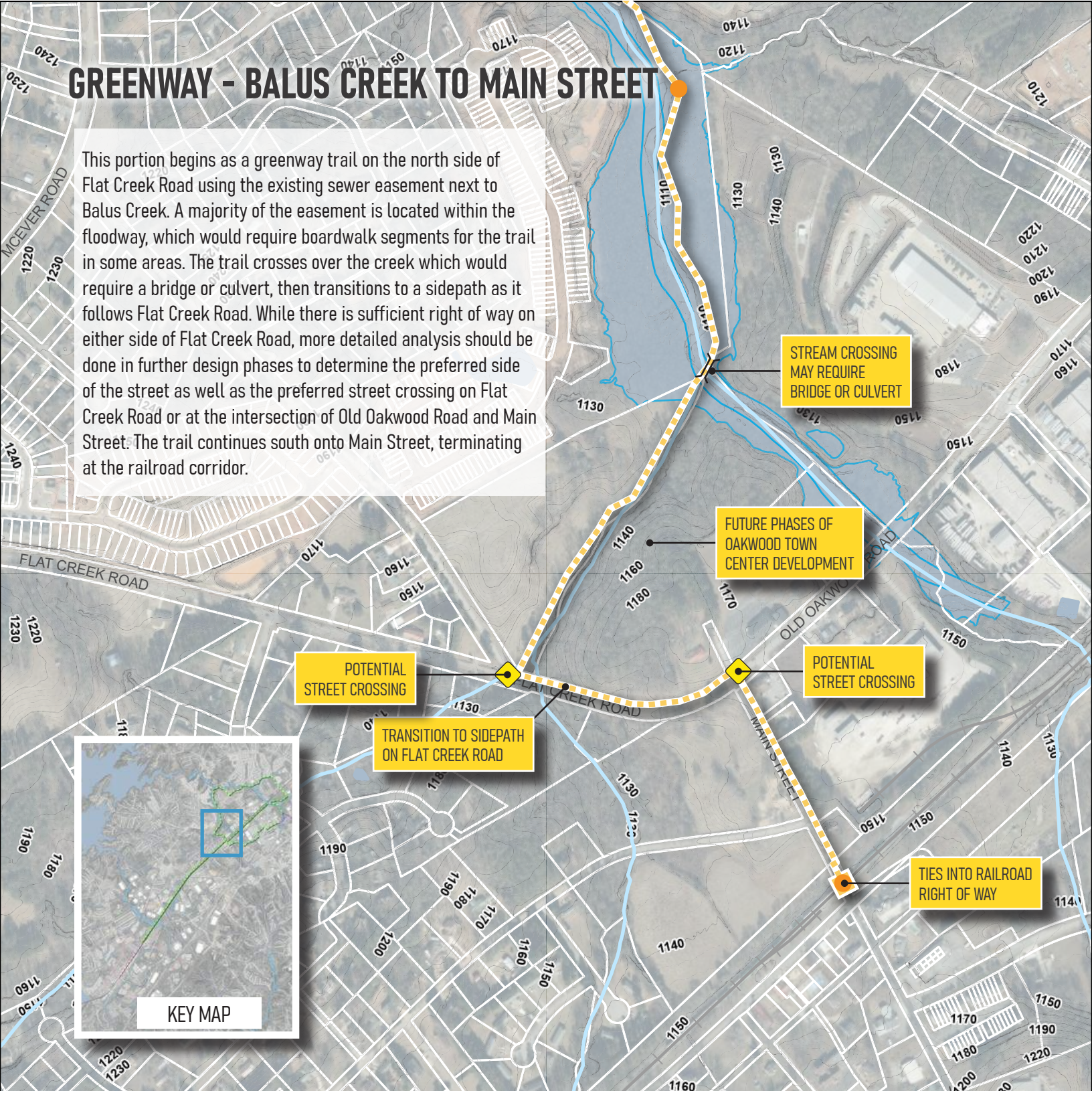
SIDEPATH CROSS SECTION: 80' RIGHT OF WAY. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 6' VEGETATIVE BUFFER FROM ROAD TRAFFIC



GREENWAY CROSS SECTION: 50' EASEMENT BETWEEN PROPERTIES. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, 5' FENCES

GREENWAY - BALUS CREEK TO MAIN STREET

This portion begins as a greenway trail on the north side of Flat Creek Road using the existing sewer easement next to Balus Creek. A majority of the easement is located within the floodway, which would require boardwalk segments for the trail in some areas. The trail crosses over the creek which would require a bridge or culvert, then transitions to a sidepath as it follows Flat Creek Road. While there is sufficient right of way on either side of Flat Creek Road, more detailed analysis should be done in further design phases to determine the preferred side of the street as well as the preferred street crossing on Flat Creek Road or at the intersection of Old Oakwood Road and Main Street. The trail continues south onto Main Street, terminating at the railroad corridor.



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
SEGMENT BEGINNING/END

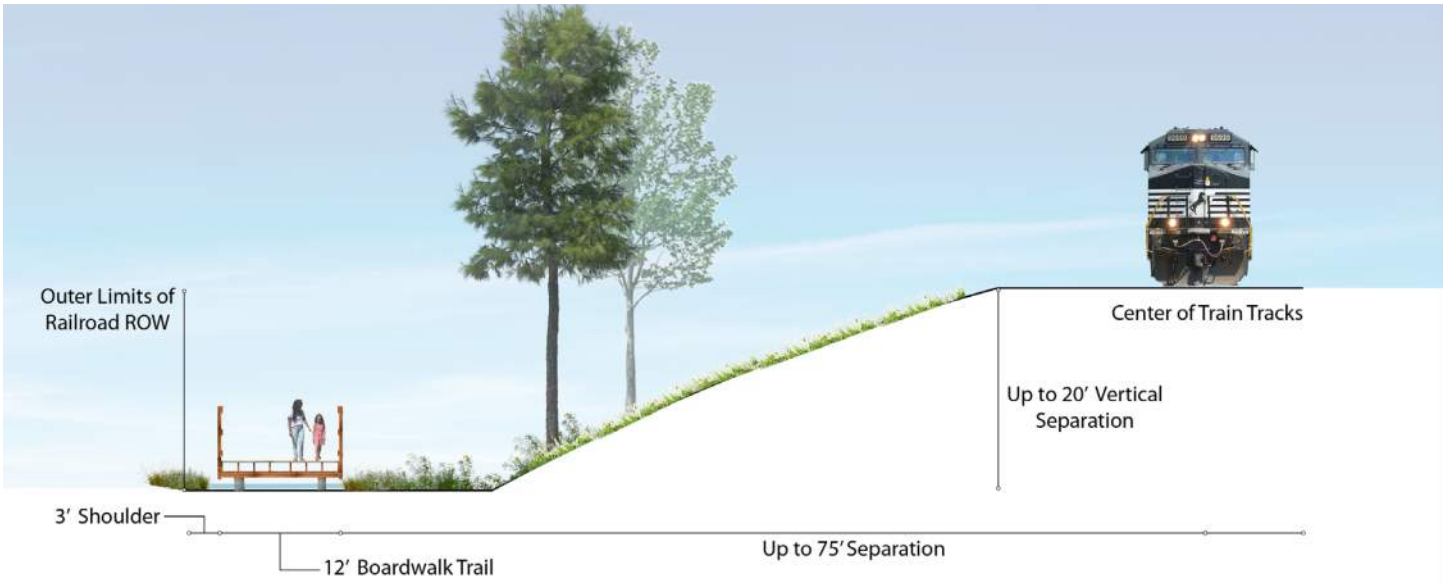
N

0 0.1 0.2 Miles

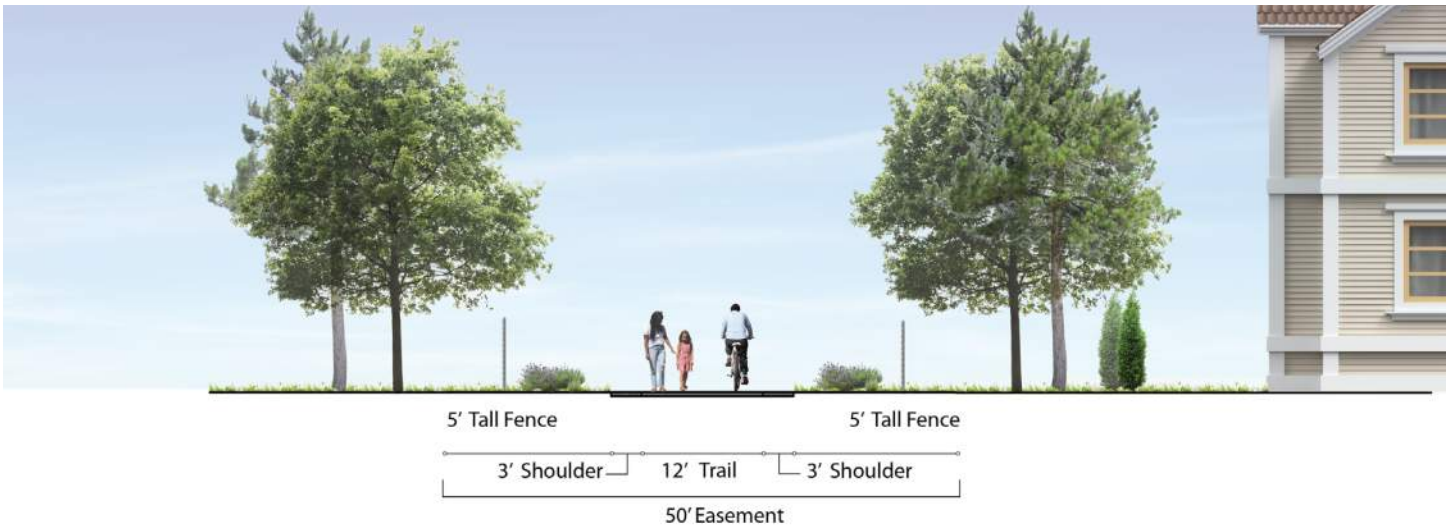
GREENWAY - BALUS CREEK TO MAIN STREET
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
FLAT CREEK CONNECTION	5625'	CITY OF GAINESVILLE, CITY OF OAKWOOD	$2,134,860	115'	0	1	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 96.



BOARDWALK CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE RAISED BOARDWALK TRAIL, **+/-** 75' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS



GREENWAY CROSS SECTION: 50' EASEMENT BETWEEN PROPERTIES. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, 5' FENCES

SR 53 CROSSING OPTIONS
UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT

HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
Status
Complete
Previously Planned

SEGMENTS
Preferred Alignment
Alternative Alignment
UNG Campus Alignment

PREFERRED ALIGNMENT
CAMPUS SIDEPATH

The preferred alignment reflects planned improvements identified in the UNG Gainesville Campus Master Plan. The route originates at the existing Highlands to Islands UNG Connector and proceeds as a sidepath along Landrum Education Drive, incorporating segments of existing sidewalk within the public right of way. This portion of the alignment enhances connectivity for adjacent multi-family residential developments.

From Landrum Education Drive, the trail crosses Campus Drive in a northwesterly direction to the west side of the roadway, then traverses university-owned property between Mills Pond and the soccer field complex. The alignment includes a raised pedestrian bridge over Mundy Mill Road, with the abutment located between the Wendy's and New Lucky Crab House properties. South of Mundy Mill Road, the trail continues to Thurmon Tanner Parkway, where it resumes as a sidepath utilizing existing sidewalks and available right of way, ultimately terminating at Oakwood Road.

This alignment provides a grade-separated crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists, improving safety and continuity. In addition, the UNG Campus Vision Plan identifies the opportunity for a prominent gateway feature; the proposed pedestrian bridge could serve as a distinctive and visually significant entrance to the university.

UNG Campus Pond

CAMPUS SIDEPATH - UNG CAMPUS TO OAKWOOD ROAD

This segment extends from the existing Highlands to Islands Trail on the UNG campus, following a sidepath along Landrum Education Drive. It crosses Campus Drive and continues briefly along its alignment before traversing UNG property adjacent to the fountain. The route proceeds across SR 53 via an elevated pedestrian bridge, then turns toward Thurmon Tanner Parkway. From there, it shifts southwest, turning onto Oakwood Road and terminating at Main Steeet,.

UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT

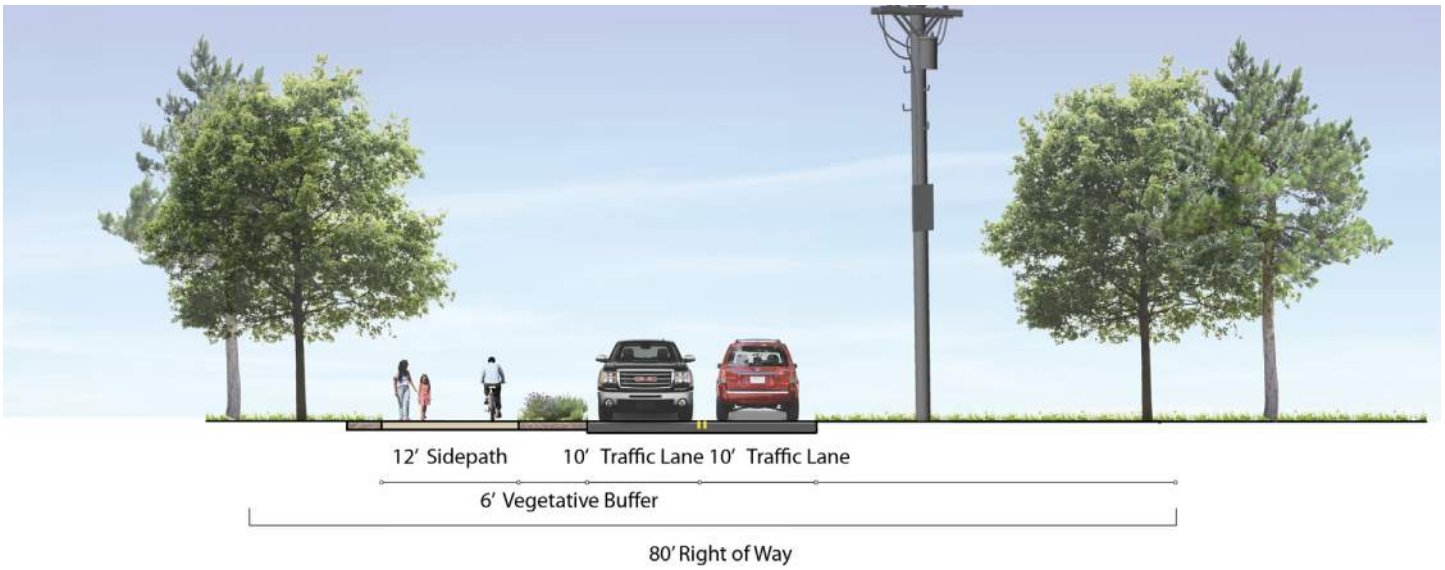
N

0 0.15 0.3 Miles

CAMPUS SIDEPATH - UNG CAMPUS TO OAKWOOD ROAD
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
UNG CAMPUS TO OAKWOOD RD	8000'	CITY OF GAINESVILLE, PRIVATE OWNERS	$26,062,878	135'	0	1	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 97.



SIDEPATH CROSS SECTION: 80' RIGHT OF WAY. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 6' VEGETATIVE BUFFER FROM ROAD TRAFFIC

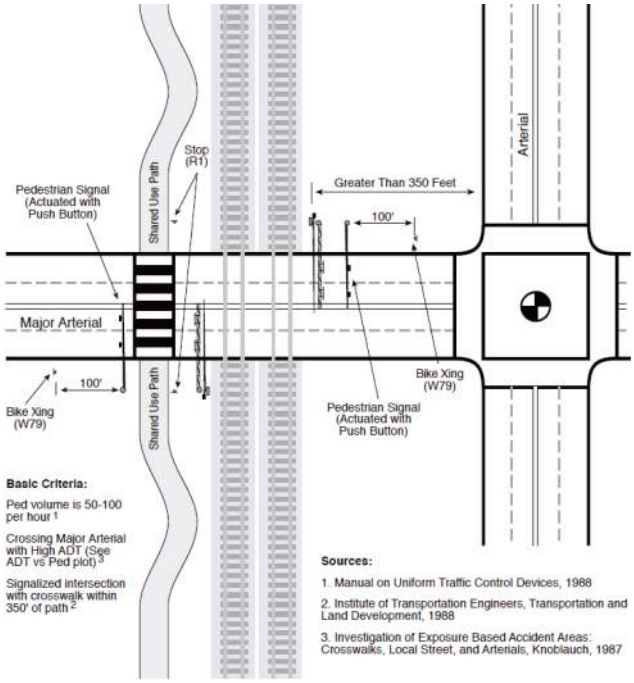
PROPOSED BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE ACROSS MUNDY MILL ROAD

AT-GRADE RAILROAD CROSSINGS: MAIN STREET CROSSING

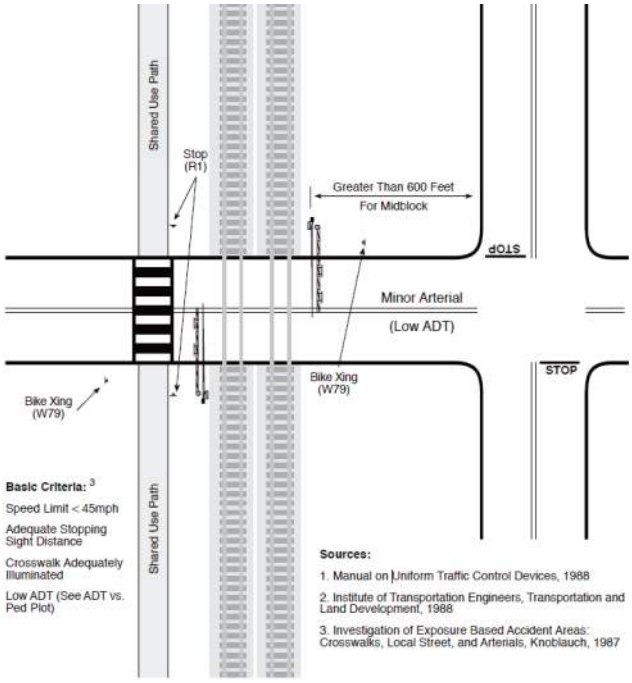
Z-Gate Railroad Crossing example

Z-Gate Railroad Crossing example

AT-GRADE STREET CROSSINGS: CHAMBLEE ROAD AND RADFORD ROAD



Signalized Crossing: involves a reconfiguration of the road and installation of traffic signals and signage. The new signal needs to be coordinated with other nearby signals.



Unsignalized Crossing: can create safety hazards for trail users and motorists but may be used where sight lines are good and traffic volumes are low.

Image Source: *Rails with Trails Best Practices and Lessons Learned.* 2021. Page 71. https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/rails-trails-best-practices-and-lessons-learned-0

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Chamblee Road/
Norfolk Southern
Railroad Corridor

CHAPTER 6

IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE COST (OOPC)

Planning-level cost estimates were calculated for each preferred alignment. Baseline estimates were developed from the characteristics of proposed improvements and determined unit costs, which can be found in the table below.

The cost estimate includes an estimate for Overhead & Profit/Project Management/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance, which was determined to be 25% of construction costs. In addition, a 15% contingency was applied to cost estimates. While these project cost estimates were derived in 2025 dollars, costs may need to be adjusted to account for inflation in the year of expenditure for programming of future costs. An estimated annual escalation of 3% is recommended.

IMPROVEMENT TREATMENT	UNIT	UNIT COST
Concrete sidewalk	SF	$16
High-Visibility Crosswalks	LF	$250.00
CIP Gravity Wall (assumes 5' height)	SF	$180.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	SF	$105.00
Static Sign (assumes 1 static sign installation)	EA	$600.00
Multi-Use Bridge over Roadway	SF	$1,500.00
Enhanced Identity Bridge over Roadway	SF	$1,500.00
Creek Bridge (assumes the bridge has a 12' wide deck and is 60' long. Cost includes structure, basic pier supports, and installation.)	EA	$140,000.00

RAIL TRAIL ALIGNMENT COST ESTIMATE

ITEM	NUMBER	UNIT	COST/UNIT	TOTAL
RAIL TRAIL - UNG TO INDUSTRIAL PARK				
Concrete Sidewalk	37,800	SF	$16.00	$604,800.00
CIP Gravity Wall	1,100	SF	$180.00	$198,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$160,560.00
			Subtotal	**$963,360.00**
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$240,840.00
			30 % Contingency	$289,008.00
			Total	**$1,493,208.00**
RAIL TRAIL - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO MAIN STREET				
Concrete Sidewalk	39,492	SF	$16.00	$631,872.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	5,892	SF	$105.00	$618,660.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$250,106.00
			Subtotal	**$1,500,638.00**
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$375,160.00
			30 % Contingency	$450,192.00
			Total	**$2,325,990.00**
RAIL TRAIL - MAIN STREET TO CHAMBLEE ROAD				
Concrete Sidewalk	68,280	SF	$16.00	$1,092,480.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	3,720	SF	$105.00	$390,600.00
CIP Gravity Wall	1,500	SF	$180.00	$270,000.00
High-Visibility Crosswalk	20	LF	$250.00	$5,000.00
Static Sign	2	EA	$600.00	$1,200.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$351,856.00
			Subtotal	**$2,111,136.00**
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$527,784.00
			30 % Contingency	$633,341.00
			Total	**$3,272,261.00**
RAIL TRAIL - CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY				
Concrete Sidewalk	66,528	SF	$16.00	$1,064,448.00
CIP Gravity Wall	885	SF	$180.00	$159,300.00
High-Visibility Crosswalk	21	LF	$250.00	$5,250.00
Static Sign	2	EA	$600.00	$1,200.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$246,040.00
			Subtotal	**$1,476,238.00**
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$369,059.00
			30 % Contingency	$442,871.00
			Total	**$2,288,168.00**
RAIL TRAIL - HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY TO RADFORD ROAD				
Concrete Sidewalk	58,212	SF	$16.00	$931,392.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	1,464	SF	$105.00	$153,720.00
CIP Gravity Wall	735	SF	$180.00	$132,300.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$243,482.00
			Subtotal	**$1,460,894.00**
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$365,224.00
			30 % Contingency	$438,268.00
			Total	**$2,264,386.00**
RAIL TRAIL - RADFORD ROAD TO SPRING STREET				
Concrete Sidewalk	57,720	SF	$16.00	$923,520.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	2,604	SF	$105.00	$273,420.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$239,388.00
			Subtotal	**$1,436,328.00**
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$359,082.00
			30 % Contingency	$430,898.00
			Total	**$2,226,308.00**
TOTAL TRAIL COST				**$13,840,792.00**

GREENWAY SEWER EASEMENT TRAIL ALIGNMENT COST ESTIMATE

ITEM	NUMBER	UNIT	COST/UNIT	TOTAL
GREENWAY - CAMPUS TRAIL CONNECTION				
Concrete Sidewalk	113,400	SF	$16.00	$1,479,360.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	6,000	SF	$105.00	$630,000.00
Creek Bridge		EA	$140,000.00	$140,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$516,880.00
			Subtotal	**$3,101,280.00**
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$775,320.00
30 % Contingency				$930,384.00
			Total	**$4,806,984.00**
GREENWAY - MILLSIDE PARKWAY TO MUNDY MILL ROAD				
Concrete Sidewalk	69,960	SF	$16.00	$1,119,360.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	1,260	SF	$105.00	$132,300.00
Creek Bridge		EA	$140,000.00	$140,000.00
Multi-Use Bridge over Roadway	5,000	SF	$1,500.00	$7,500,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$1,778,332.00
			Subtotal	**$10,669,992.00**
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$2,667,498.00
30 % Contingency				$3,200,998.00
			Total	**$16,538,488.00**
GREENWAY - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO BALUS CREEK				
Concrete Sidewalk	65,724	SF	$16.00	$1,051,584.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	2,400	SF	$105.00	$252,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$260,717.00
			Subtotal	$1,564,301.00
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$391,075.00
30 % Contingency				$469,290.00
			Total	**$2,424,666.00**
GREENWAY - BALUS CREEK TO MAIN STREET				
Concrete Sidewalk	67,500	SF	$16.00	$1,080,000.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	1,380	SF	$105.00	$144,900.00
High-Visibility Crosswalk	20	LF	$250.00	$5,000.00
Creek Bridge		EA	$140,000.00	$140,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$273,980.00
			Subtotal	$1,643,880.00
O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance				$35,000.00
30 % Contingency				$42,000.00
			Total	**$2,134,860.00**
TOTAL TRAIL COST				**$25,904,998.00**

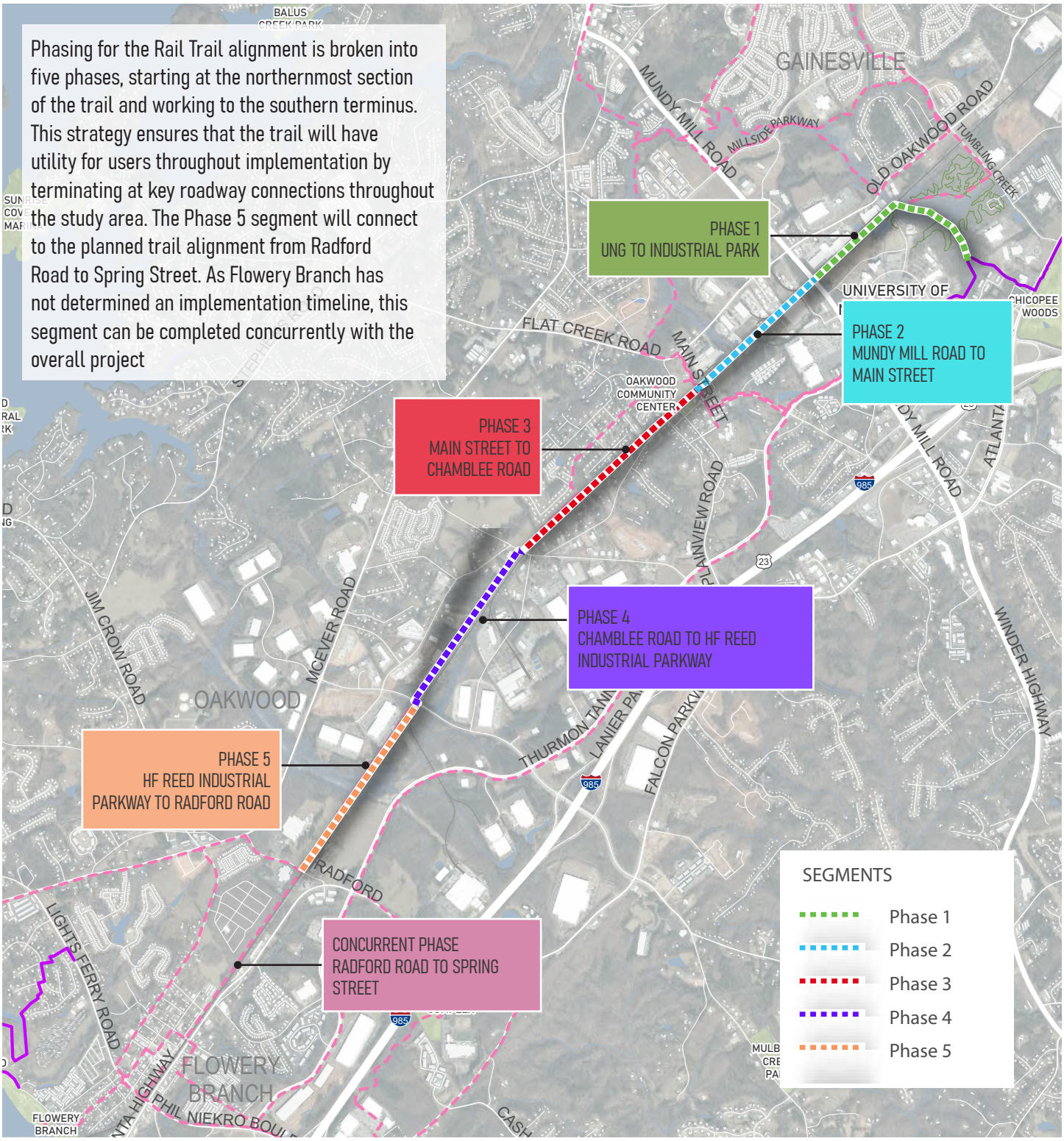
CAMPUS SIDEPATH ALIGNMENT COST ESTIMATE

ITEM	NUMBER	UNIT	COST/UNIT	TOTAL
CAMPUS SIDEPATH - UNG CAMPUS TO OAKWOOD ROAD				
Concrete Sidewalk	80,000	SF	$16.00	$1,280,000.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	1,260	SF	$105.00	$132,300.00
Multi-Use Bridge over Roadway	8,400	SF	$1,500.00	$12,600,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				$2,802,460.00
			Subtotal	**$16,814,760.00**
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	$4,203,690.00
			30 % Contingency	$5,044,428.00
			Total	**$26,062,878.00**
TOTAL TRAIL COST				**$26,062,878.00**

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

PREFERRED ALIGNMENT PHASING MAP

Phasing for the Rail Trail alignment is broken into five phases, starting at the northernmost section of the trail and working to the southern terminus. This strategy ensures that the trail will have utility for users throughout implementation by terminating at key roadway connections throughout the study area. The Phase 5 segment will connect to the planned trail alignment from Radford Road to Spring Street. As Flowery Branch has not determined an implementation timeline, this segment can be completed concurrently with the overall project



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
Status
Complete
Previously Planned

N

0 0.4 0.8 Miles

NEXT STEPS

The recommended next steps for project implementation are described below:

SCHEMATIC DESIGN THROUGH CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

Detailed design concepts can be developed for each phase of the projects in order to prepare trail segments for implementation. Design of later trail phases can be completed while earlier phases are under construction in order to expedite the implementation process.

PERMITTING

Due to the complex environmental systems along the alignment, permitting may be necessary for development within wetlands and near waterways. Organizations such as the Army Corps of Engineers and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division should be engaged early in the process to ensure that any required permits can be completed.

MUNICIPAL COORDINATION

As the trail alignment spans multiple jurisdictions, communication and coordination between municipalities and regional organizations is a vital step. This will ensure that trail development meets the needs and standards of each relevant jurisdiction and that support and progress is consistent.

LAND-OWNER ENGAGEMENT

Key land owners along the alignment should be engaged throughout the implementation progress to maintain support and facilitate coordination. Key land owners include Norfolk-Southern, who will require significant involvement for trail development.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

GHMPO should explore the following opportunities as options for funding sources.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)

The program is a partnership between Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provides funds to local governments for projects that improve the quality of life for citizens in communities, such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, pedestrian streetscape improvements, and other non-traditional transportation related activities. A typical match of 20% is required from local municipalities.

BETTER UTILIZING INVESTMENTS TO LEVERAGE DEVELOPMENT (BUILD-FORMERLY RAISE)

Better Utilizing Investments To Leverage Development (BUILD), formerly Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program provides grants for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact. The awards under the program formerly known as RAISE represent a shift away from funding projects that are solely focused on making it safe to walk and bike. Instead, there is greater investment in increased capacity for motor vehicles, though active transportation is included as an element for a little more than one-third of the projects. Priority for funding will be given for projects that can begin construction in 18 months that meet criteria for safety, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, and economic competetiveness.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

This federal grant program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration and administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The program works to support recreational trails and trail-related facilities. Funds can be awarded to eligible applicants, including local governments, authorized commissions, and state and federal agencies.

GEORGIA OUTDOOR STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

This grant program, administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, provides dedicated funding to support parks and trails and protect and acquire lands critical to wildlife, clean water and outdoor recreation across the state. Eligible projects include those that support state parks and trails; support local parks and trails of state and regional significance; provide stewardship of conservation land; or acquire critical areas for the provision or protection or clean water, wildlife, hunting, fishing, military installation buffering, or for natural resource-based outdoor recreation.

TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (TSPLOST)

A Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) is a 1% sales tax collected for a specific program of transportation projects. For a TSPLOST to be enacted, it must be approved by voters in a referendum. 'Transportation special purpose' includes roads, bridges, streets, sidewalks, bicycle paths and all the infrastructure and services necessary to provide access to these facilities. This includes right of way acquisitions, construction, renovation and improvement, relocating utilities, stormwater improvements, and other repairs necessary.

SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (SPLOST)

A Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) is a 1% sales tax collected that must be used for capital projects, like buildings, equipment, vehicles, roads and drainage projects. Projects financed via SPLOST are intended to benefit the county as a whole—either on their own or in combination with other funding sources.

RAILROAD CROSSING ELIMINATION GRANTS

Administered by the Federal Railway Administration (FRA), this program finances rail crossing improvements, with a focus on enhancing safety and freight mobility. Eligible projects encompass grade separated rail crossings, including planning, environmental review, and design components.

POND

GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

2875 Browns Bridge Road
Gainesville, GA 30504
Tel: 770.297.5541
ghmpo.org

Policy Committee

Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 10:00 AM
Commission Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Hall County Government Center
2875 Browns Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30504

AGENDA

1. **Welcome – Chairman David Gibbs, Chair**

2. **Approval of the February 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

3. **Updates from the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**

4. **Approval of Amendment #7 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) / Amendment #1 to the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**

5. **Approval of the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Road**

6. **Approval of the Hoschton Transportation Plan**

7. **Other**

8. **Jurisdiction and Agency Reports**
   - City of Flowery Branch
   - City of Gainesville
   - City of Oakwood
   - City of Buford
   - City of Lula
   - City of Hoschton

GAINESVILLE-HALL
Metropolitan Planning Organization

MEMORANDUM

To: **Policy Committee Members**

From: **Jennifer Harrison, City Manager, Hoschton**

Date: **May 5, 2025**

Re: **Approval of the Hoschton Master Transportation Plan**

GHMPO, in partnership with the City of Hoschton, has developed the Hoschton Master Transportation Plan, the first of its kind for the City. This document provides Hoschton with a short, medium, and long-term menu of transportation improvements designed to increase connectivity, lower crash rates, decrease congestion, and improve the overall quality of life for its residents and visitors alike. This Study is a supplement to the recently completed Braselton-Hoschton Area Mobility Study (BHAMS), which was completed by GDOT in 2025 and primarily focused on improvements along the State Route 53 corridor. The Hoschton Master Transportation Plan references those projects but also provides the City with options to improve all locally controlled streets. Many projects are bicycle and pedestrian oriented in hopes of removing as many cars as possible from SR 53 and the surrounding surface streets.

The full document is available for review and comment via the following links:

- https://www.ghmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/hoschton-master-transportation-plan_final.pdf

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Approval of the Hoschton Master Transportation Plan**

Attachment: *Draft Hoschton Master Transportation Plan*

City of Hoschton
Master Transportation Plan
May 2026

City of HOSCHTON Georgia

GAINESVILLE-HALL Metropolitan Planning Organization


HOSCHTON

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Hoschton Master Transportation Plan (MTP) provides a strategic framework designed to navigate the challenges of rapid population growth and escalating traffic congestion. This plan establishes a vision for a livable, vibrant, and sustainable transportation network, aimed to reduce dependency on personal motor vehicles and alleviate pressure on the heavily congested State Route (SR) 53 corridor.

The MTP is built upon four primary guiding principles, established through extensive community and stakeholder collaboration: Connectivity, Choices, Safety, and Community Preservation. The plan identifies existing operational and safety deficiencies within the City and outlines projects to improve local connectivity and support alternative transportation modes.

The planning process began with a rigorous assessment of existing conditions, which revealed a high reliance on automobiles and a significant lack of connected infrastructure for alternative modes. Previous regional studies confirmed that the SR 53 segment within the City limit is reaching peak capacity, with several key intersections currently operate at a failing Level of Service (LOS) during peak hours. Furthermore, while crash trends had been declining, 2024 saw an increase in both total incidents and the proportion of injury-related crashes. Public engagement sessions validated these findings, with 69% of residents expressing dissatisfaction with the existing roadway network and 66% reporting dissatisfaction with lack of dedicated walking and biking infrastructure.

By synthesizing technical deficiencies identified in the existing condition assessment, review of previous studies and plans, and public engagement, the MTP identifies a comprehensive list of infrastructure projects improving the categorized concerns in alternative transportation modes, operational improvements, and safety improvements. To ensure fiscal responsibility, projects were prioritized using a weighted scoring matrix focusing on mode choice, safety, and implementation feasibility. Based on the evaluation criteria defined in this plan, projects are categorized into short-term/high-priority, long-term/medium-priority, and aspirational/low-priority tiers.

The MTP goes beyond physical infrastructure by recommending essential policy and guidance enhancements, including updating the Unified Development Code (UDC), implementing and educating the Personal Transportation Vehicle (PTV) ordinance, considering speed studies on corridors with speeding concerns, and promoting Jackson County Transit service as a reliable regional travel alternative.

The Hoschton MTP serves as a direct reflection of the community aspirations and a technical roadmap for the City's future growth. The successful implementation of this plan will require sustained coordination between the City, regional partners like GHMPO, and state agencies such as Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Jackson County. By leveraging a diverse range of funding sources, the City will transition from fragmented local segments to a fully integrated, connected network. Ultimately, the MTP provides the "shovel-ready" framework necessary to enhance safety for all road users, catalyze economic vitality in the downtown core, and preserve the unique character of Hoschton for decades to come.

1. INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

Since its original incorporation as a small town, rural community in 1891, the City of Hoschton underwent rapid population growth, which has seen a fourfold increase in the past decade and is projected to nearly triple over the next two decades. This substantial growth from proximity to I-85 and adjacent high-growth areas has resulted in heightened congestion and safety issues on the local transportation network, particularly on State Route (SR) 53, which serves as the city's primary corridor. In response, the City of Hoschton intends to develop its inaugural citywide Master Transportation Plan (MTP) to establish transportation vision designed to foster a livable, vibrant, and sustainable community.

The goal of the Hoschton MTP is to perform a comprehensive assessment of existing traffic operations, safety, and inventory of the existing transportation infrastructure conditions within the City. All of this will be completed to provide improvement recommendations to promote alternative travel modes, improve local connectivity, and establish secure environments aimed at reducing dependency on motor vehicles and the SR 53 corridor.

While SR 53 is a critical component of the City's transportation network, this MTP focuses on city-maintained roadways. Improvements to SR 53 have been studied in depth in other plans, including the Georgia Department of Transportation's (GDOT) 2024 Braselton-Hoschton Area Mobility (BHAM) Study and Jackson County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP).

1.1. VISION & GOAL

The vision and goals established for the Hoschton Master Transportation Plan are products of collective inputs and collaboration among stakeholders, the consulting team, and the general public. The visions and goals developed in the MTP also align with the Transportation Policies outlined in the City of Hoschton Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045, Five Year Update adopted in October 2025. These guiding principles provide a comprehensive framework to establish transportation recommendations and priorities that align with the community's long-term needs. The MTP is organized to include four primary goals and focal areas, as presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 – Goals and Vision of Hoschton Master Transportation Plan

Goals & Objectives	Descriptions
Connectivity	Develop an integrated transportation network that efficiently connects people to key destinations via city-maintained roadways and reduces reliance on SR 53.
	Prioritize the expansion of multi-modal transportation infrastructure to ensure travel options throughout the City.
Choices	Establish a diversified transportation system that incentivizes non-motorized mode choices and reduces personal vehicle dependency.
	Reimagining the street as space for all road users, with a dedicated focus on pedestrians, bicyclists, and Personal Transportation Vehicles (PTVs).
Safety	Enhance safety for all road users by implementing targeted countermeasures at road segments and intersections with high severity crash histories.
	Align safety interventions with the City's broader vision for risk reduction and conflict mitigation.
Community & Preservation	Protect and preserve Hoschton's unique livability, history, and small-town atmosphere.
	Foster community interaction and regional synergy by improving connectivity with neighboring municipality.
	Promote transparent communication practices to maintain informative and open dialogue with the public throughout the entire lifecycle of transportation projects.

1.2. PROCESS

The following figure presents the timeline of the Hoschton MTP over the 12-month period since the project kicked off in May 2025.

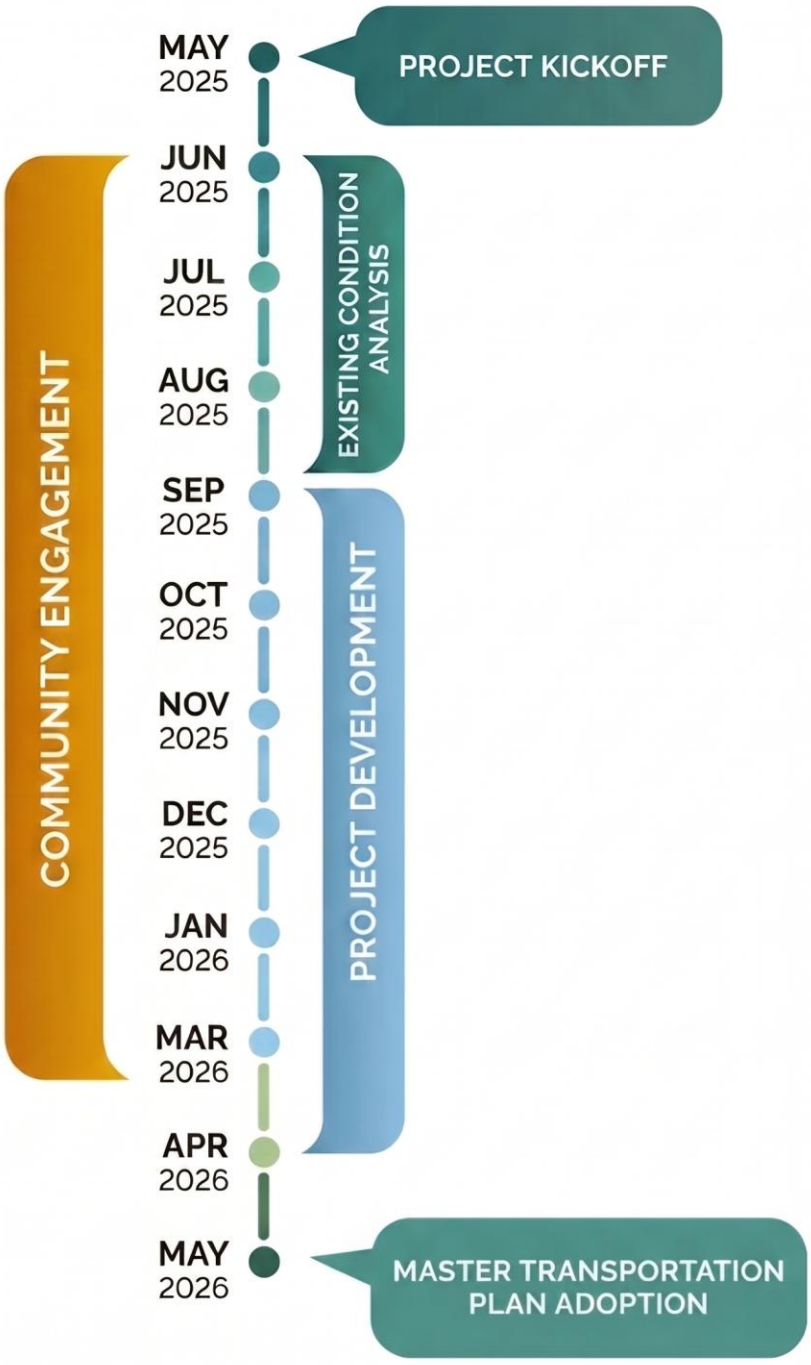


Figure 1.1 – Project Timeline

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Hoschton is located in southwest Jackson County, bordering Hall, Barrow, and Gwinnett Counties. The City is located in the Gainesville-Hall County Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) metropolitan planning area (MPA) boundary. Two major state routes pass through the City - SR 53 connecting I-85 at the Exit 129, and SR 332 connecting to the City of Jefferson.

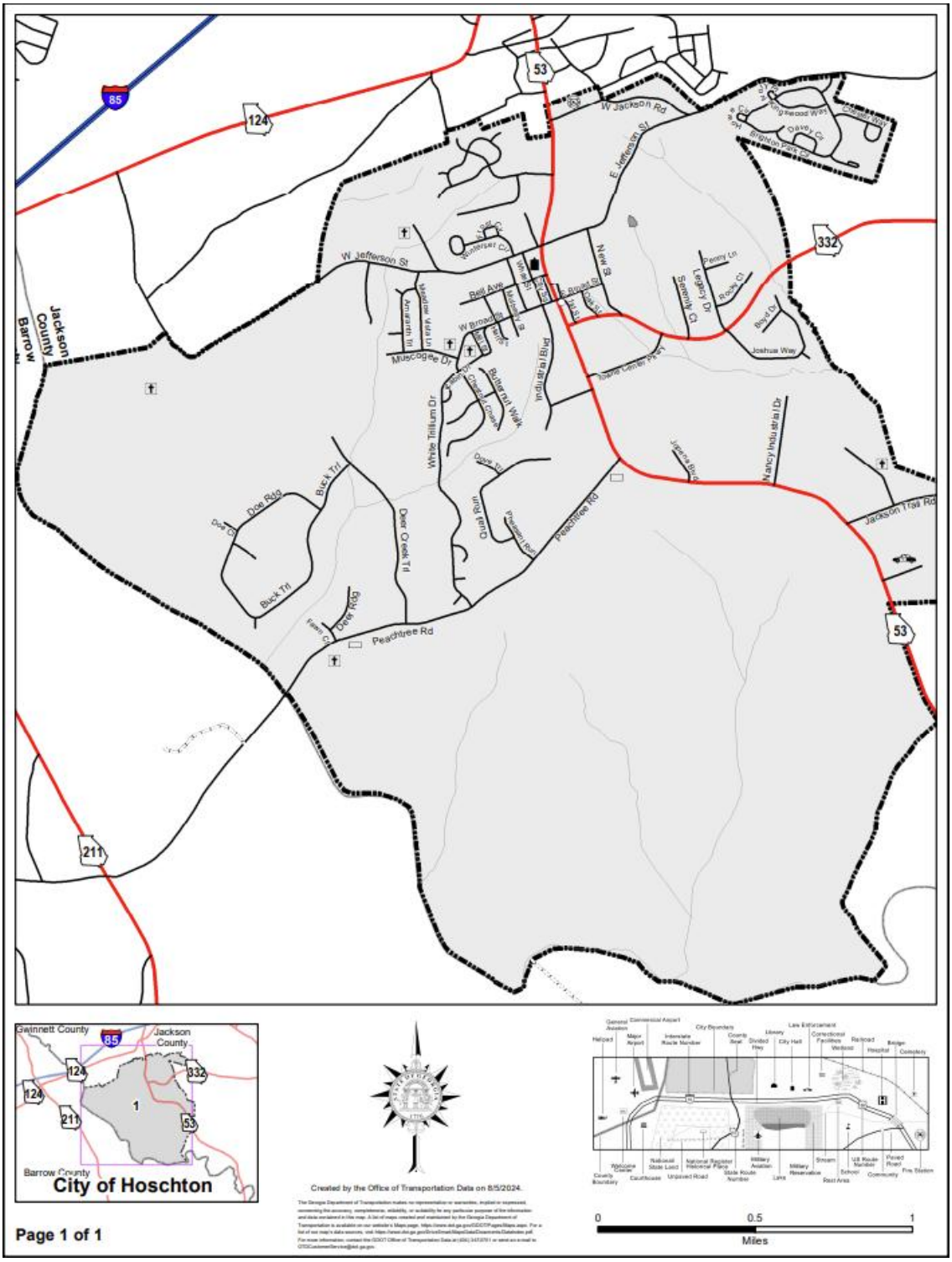


Figure 2.1 – City of Hoschton Map (Source: GDOT Office of Transportation Data 2024)

2.1. DEMOGRAPHIC & SOCIOECONOMIC TRENDS

Hoschton's population has seen a significant upward trajectory, rising from just 1,390 residents in 2010 to an estimated 6,723 in 2024[1]. Due to its proximity to Gwinnett County and the expanding Atlanta metropolitan area, the City continues to face intense growth pressure. The rapid influx of residents and housing is overgrowing the capacity of existing transportation infrastructure, resulting in increased traffic congestion and heightened safety concerns. As indicated in the City's adopted Capital Improvement Element (CIE)[2], this exponential growth trend will continue with the population expected to ultimately exceed 12,000 residents by 2040.

To keep pace with residential growth, there is clear need and support for expanding Hoschton's commercial base, particularly within the downtown core. Adoption of a Downtown Development Authority with design guidelines is recommended as part of this effort. As of 2020, employment within the City was estimated at approximately 500 jobs and projections from the City's adopted CIE indicates future employment level of 1,750 in the year 2040.

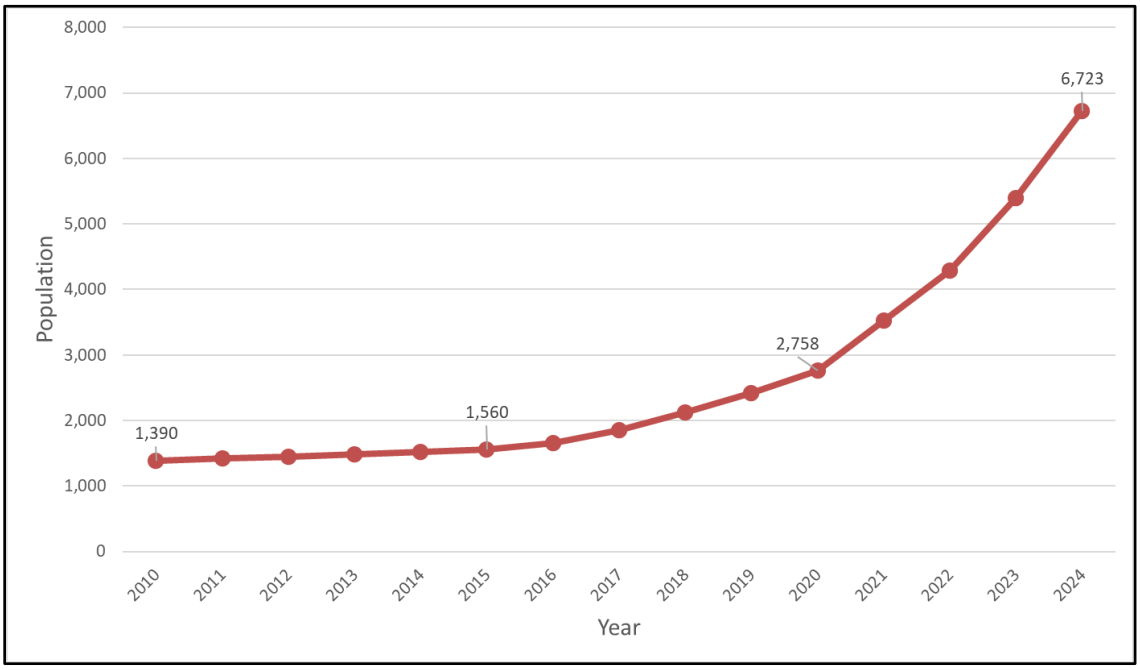


Figure 2.2 – City of Hoschton Population between 2010 – 2024 (Source: US Census Bureau)

[1] US Census Bureau, City and Town Population Totals 2010-2024

[2] City of Hoschton, Georgia Capital Improvement Element (CIE) of the Comprehensive Plan, Adopted August 31, 2020.

2.2. LAND USE & ZONING

While the City of Hoschton is primarily a bedroom community, with most existing land use being residential and approximately 4,000 new units approved for construction, significant portions of vacant land remain available to support nonresidential development. Historically, residential developments consisted of low-density, single-family subdivisions. However, beginning in the late 2010's, larger-scale, higher-density subdivisions were established, such as Twin Lakes Planned Unit Development consisting of 2,350 single-family homes, 250 townhomes, and additional commercial spaces. Existing multi-family development remain small scale and limited to scattered locations.

Most commercial activity in the City is concentrated along the SR 53 corridor. Downtown Hoschton serves as a hub for small-scale retail, service, and office spaces, while highway-oriented commercial spaces are located south of the downtown along Towne Center Parkway, Jopena Boulevard, and Jackson Trail Road. Most recently, Publix and Kroger shopping centers opened along SR 53 in 2025.

Figure 2.3 – Downtown Hoschton

As detailed in the Land Use Element, the City's long-term economic health depends on maintaining a diverse tax base. However, recent trends indicate that properties near Towne Center Parkway, originally reserved for commercial and industrial growth, have been rezoned for residential uses. According to the City of Hoschton Comprehensive Plan 2026-2030[3], many residents have expressed a strong desire for additional sit-down restaurants, cafes, small-scale retailers, and entertainment venues throughout the City. To ensure future economic development is not impeded by a lack of available spaces, Hoschton is in need of dedicating nonresidential land supply and prevent conversion to residential uses. Figure 2.4 on Page 11 presents the City of Hoschton's future development map created by Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC). Details of future land use categories can be found in the City of Hoschton Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045 Five Year Update[3].

[3] City of Hoschton, Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045 Five-Year Update, Adopted October 16, 2025

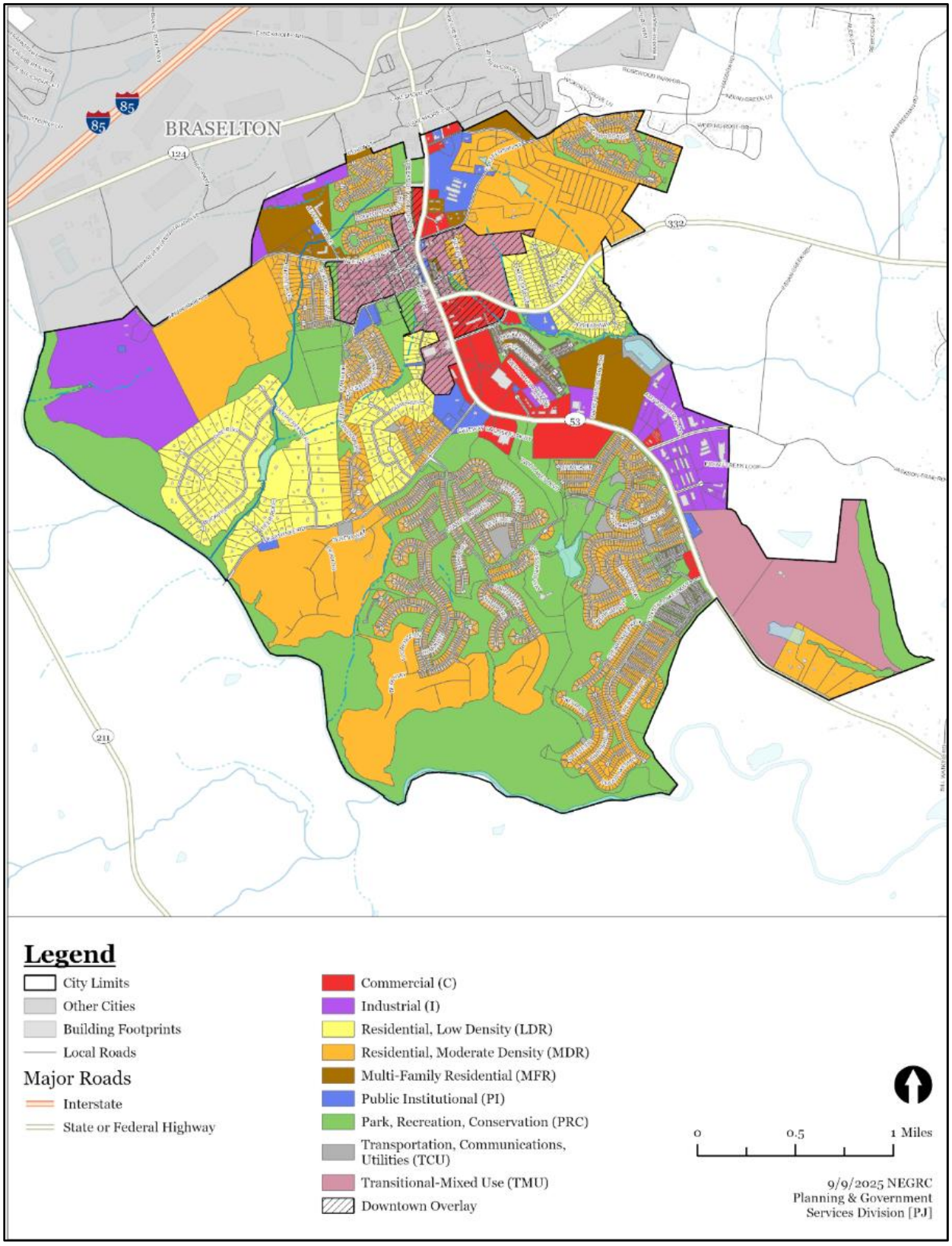


Figure 2.4 – City of Hoschton Future Development Map (Source: City of Hoschton, Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045 Five-Year Update)

2.3. TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

According to the US Census OnTheMap Application, 98% of Hoschton residents commute outside the city limits. Along with a high proportion of intercity travels and proximity of I-85, Hoschton is a city with a high reliance on motor vehicles, characterized by limited infrastructure for non-automobile transportation. SR 53 (Minor Arterial) is the most critical corridor carrying the majority of vehicular traffic through the City, traversing in a north-south direction, serving as a primary access route to I-85 and as a connecting route between Winder and Gainesville. SR 332/Pendergrass Road (Major Collector) and East Jefferson Street (Minor Collector) are collector roads connecting to eastern Jackson County, while Peachtree Road (Local Road) is the only major corridor connecting Hoschton to SR 211 and Barrow County to the west. There are currently two signalized intersections within the City: SR 53 at Peachtree Road and SR 53 at Twin Lakes Boulevard. All other intersections within the city limit are stop-controlled intersections.

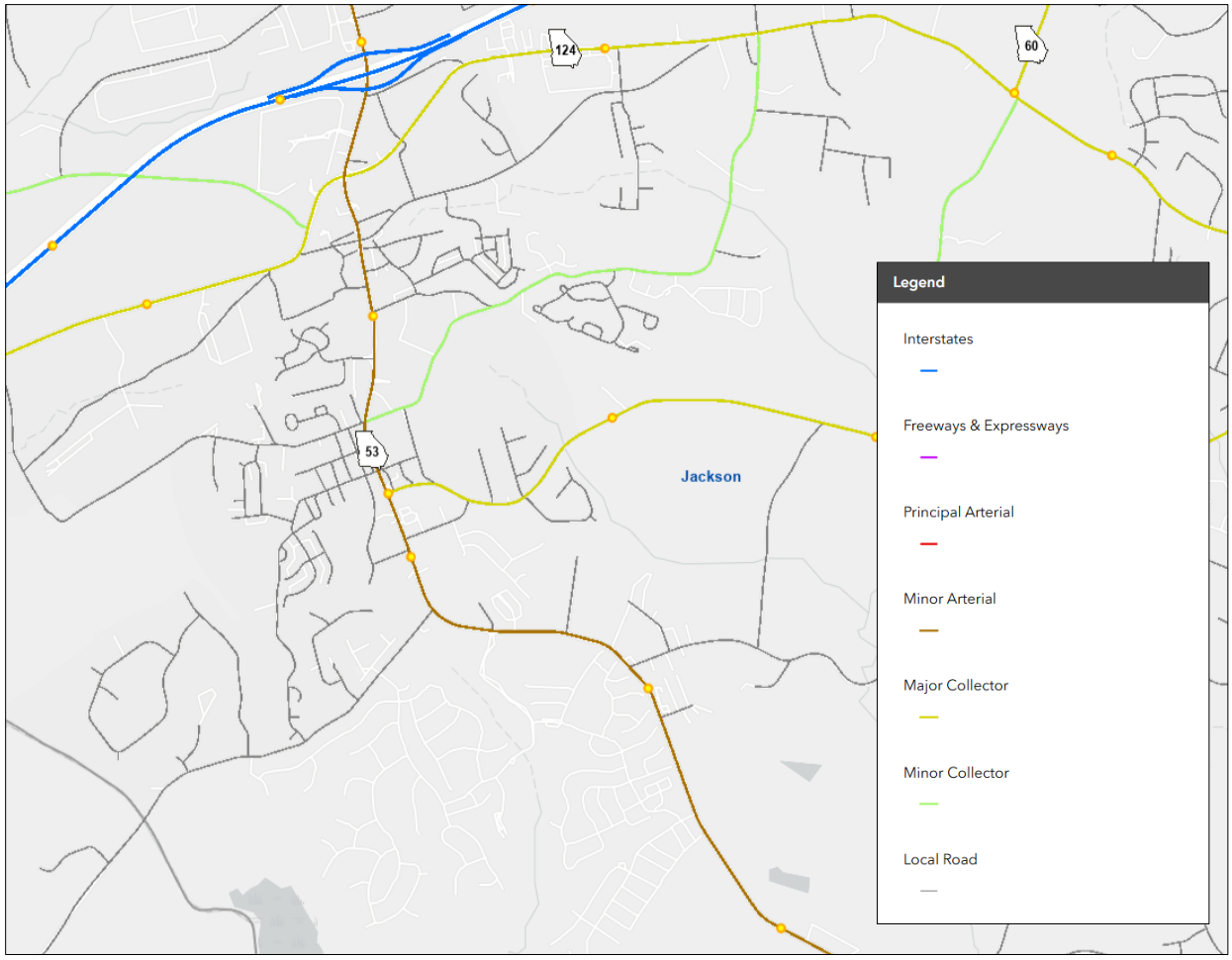


Figure 2.5 – Functional Classification Map (Source: GDOT Functional Classification Application)

Traffic Operations

As a primary corridor through Hoschton, SR 53 experiences significant traffic congestions within the City. According to the GDOT count station, SR 53 at Hoschton carries an average of 21,964 vehicles per day in 2026, which is a 22.4% increase compared to 2023. The Braselton-Hoschton Area Mobility Study (BHAM) conducted by GDOT in 2024 indicates that the peak period traffic congestion typically develops along SR 53 northbound, on the segment between East Jefferson Street and I-85. The study also indicates that the existing Level of Service (LOS) at the intersections along SR 53 at East Jefferson Street, at Peachtree Road, and at Twin Lakes Boulevard are LOS E or worse in peak hours (Table 2.1). While the intersections at Peachtree Road and at Twin Lakes Boulevard have been improved with the installation of traffic signals since the 2024 study, SR 53 within the city limits is still projected to decline in operations. With an annual traffic growth of 1.37% through the 2050 horizon year, segments of SR 53 are expected to fail in operation with LOS E or worse (Figure 2.6).

To address these operational deficiencies, SR 53 requires intervention, which may include widening, addition of turn lanes, alternative traffic controls, or the development of an alternative route. State and regional proposals for addressing SR 53 congestion have fluctuated over time, ranging from road widening to the implementation of bypasses or roundabouts. The City of Hoschton intends to take a proactive leadership role, in partnership with the Town of Braselton and GDOT, to champion a locally supported solution. This ensures that final design outcomes reflect community needs rather than solely dictated by regional or state agencies.

Table 2.1 – Year 2024 Level of Service (LOS) of Study Intersections on SR 53 (Source: GDOT BHAM)

Study Area Intersection	AM	PM
SR 53 at New Cut Road*	LOS F	LOS F
SR 53 at Braselton Parkway (Signal)	LOS A	LOS B
SR 53 at Chardonnay Trace (Signal)	LOS B	LOS B
SR 53 at Pilot Driveway*	LOS C	LOS C
SR 53 at I-85 Southbound Ramps (Signal)	LOS C	LOS B
SR 53 at I-85 Northbound Ramps (Signal)	LOS F	LOS C
SR 53 at Cherry Drive*	LOS C	LOS D
SR 53 at SR 124 (Signal)	LOS D	LOS D
SR 53 at Davis Street (Signal)	LOS A	LOS B
SR 53 at Jackson Road*	LOS D	LOS C
SR 53 at East Jefferson Street*	LOS E	LOS F
SR 53 at East Broad Street*	LOS D	LOS D
SR 53 at Pendergrass Road*	LOS C	LOS C
SR 53 at Towne Center Parkway*	LOS D	LOS C
SR 53 at Industrial Boulevard*	LOS C	LOS C
SR 53 at Peachtree Road*	LOS F	LOS E
SR 53 at Twin Lakes Boulevard*	LOS D	LOS E
SR 53 at Jackson Trail Road*	LOS B	LOS C
SR 332 at SR 124 (Signal)	LOS D	LOS D

Notes: *The highest minor road approach delays are shown for the unsignalized intersections. Results are not shown for Zion Church Road because the highway capacity model is unable to produce results for the intersection's existing sign configuration.

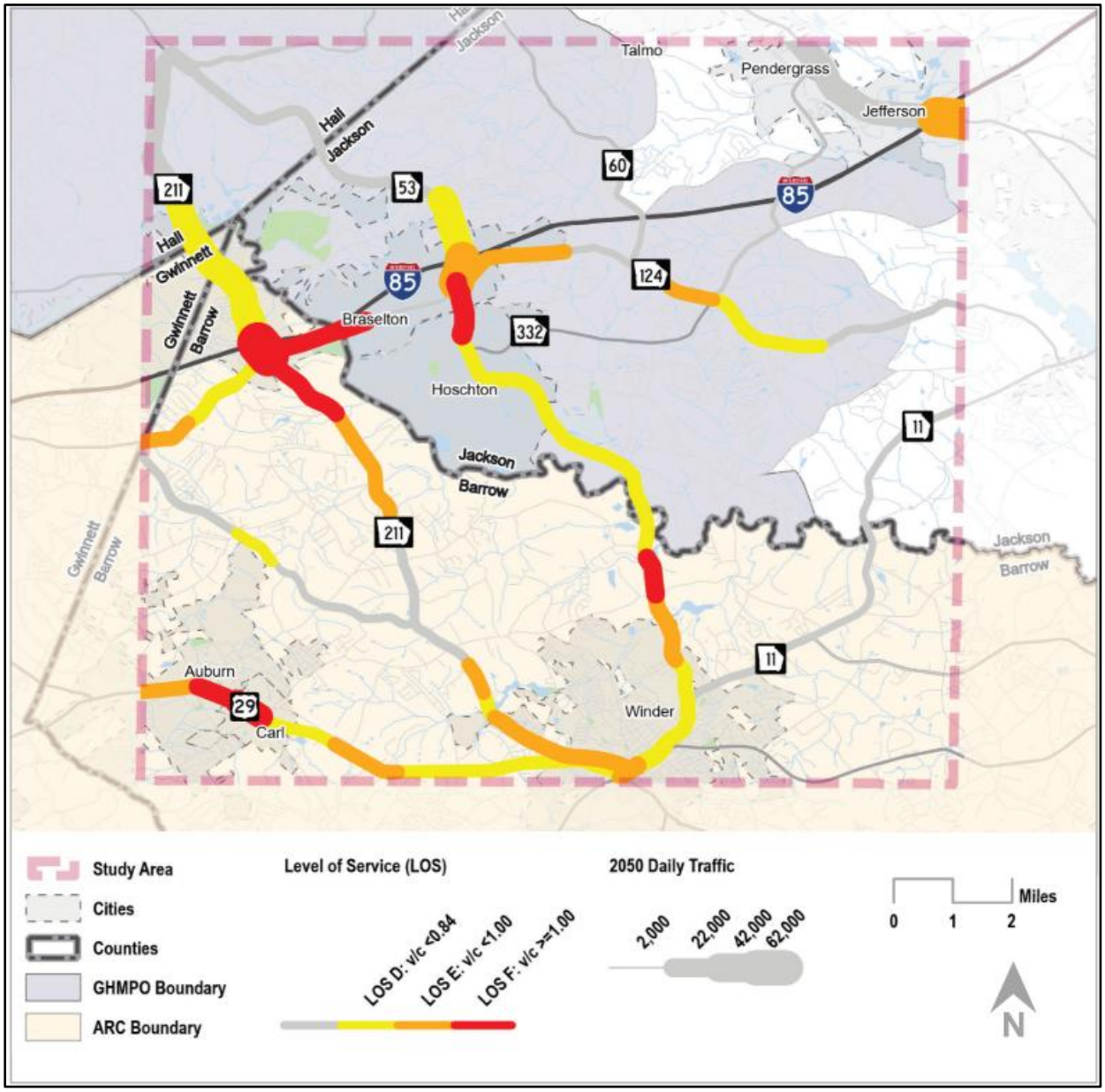


Figure 2.6 – Map of Year 2050 Baseline Conditions Level of Service (Source: GDOT BHAM)

Active Transportation Facilities and Alternative Modes

Figure 2.7 on Page 15 shows the existing sidewalk and multi-use path inventory map developed through the desktop screening and supplemented by field observations. While the majority of existing sidewalks are located within subdivisions, they lack connectivity between major destinations. Furthermore, most non-signalized intersections within the City lack crosswalks and ADA-compliant ramps. To support a transition toward a multimodal transportation system, the City should prioritize developing a comprehensive network of sidewalks, crosswalks, and off-road pedestrian paths where appropriate. With the development of numerous subdivisions within the City, a significant opportunity exists to create an interconnected system of off-road trails and multi-use paths by weaving together community open spaces within these subdivisions. Through cooperative agreements with homeowner's associations, the City can develop a network that offers both recreational and transportation benefits. Furthermore, the City supports implementation of golf-cart paths by utilizing community open spaces as a way to evolve such a system.

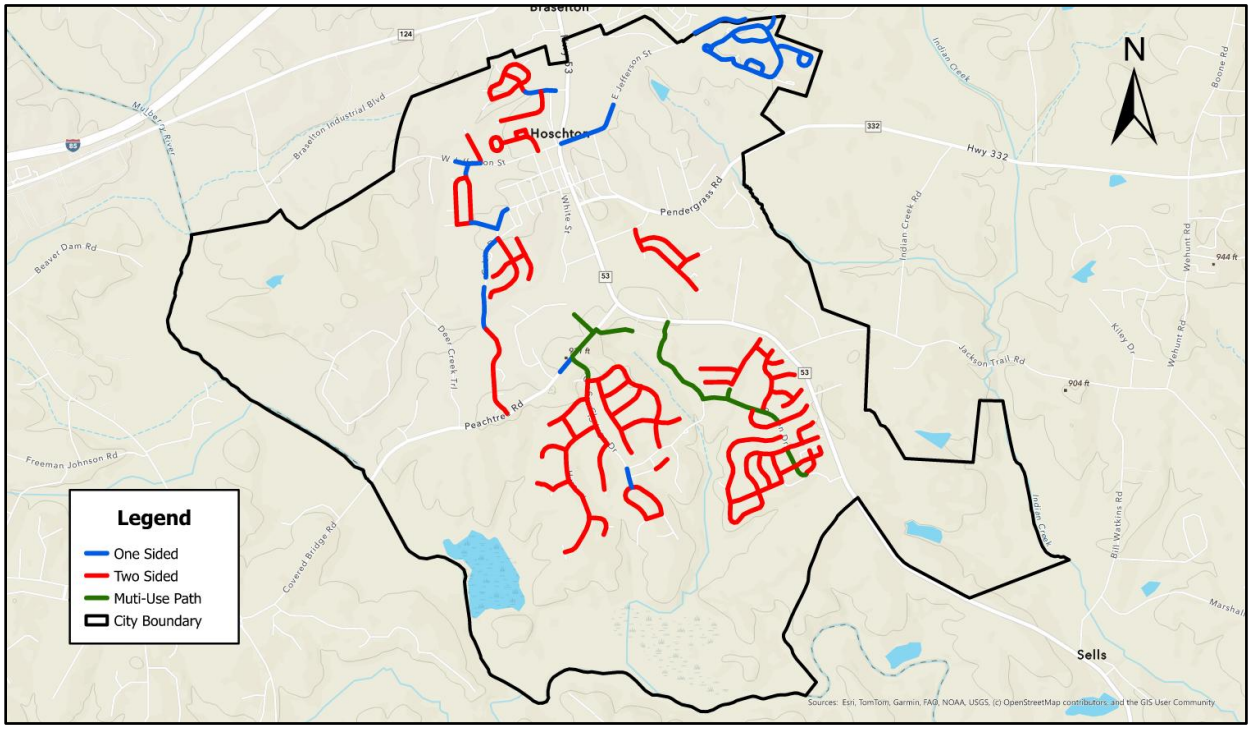


Figure 2.7 – Existing Sidewalk and Multiuse Path Inventory

Figure 2.8 – Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure (Left: Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon in front of the City Hall; Right: ADA ramps at SR 53 and Peachtree Road intersection without sidewalk connection)

Personal Transportation Vehicle (PTV) is a common alternative transportation mode in the City of Hoschton. Per City Ordinance No.25-01[4] adopted in February 13, 2025, a PTV is defined as any motor vehicle that meets the following criteria:

- With a minimum of four wheels;
- Capable of a maximum level ground speed of less than 20 miles per hour;
- With a maximum gross vehicle unladen or empty weight of 1,375 pounds, and;
- Capable of transporting not more than eight persons.

[4] City of Hoschton, Ordinance No. 25-01, Adopted February 13, 2025.

Authorized streets for PTV usage are defined as follows:

- Any municipal street or roadway in the City and all such residential roadways that have a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less, are not part of state highway system, and which have not otherwise been specifically excluded from use by PTV.
- Improved paths designed for multiple users and shall be at least eight (8) feet wide and shall be located outside any state highway right of way.
- PTVs are prohibited on sidewalks.

While PTVs are permitted to cross the municipal or Jackson County road systems, they must use designated PTV crossings at any intersection where an authorized street crosses a state route. The localized utility of PTVs is currently hindered by the fragmented nature of multi-use path network, limited connectivity between low-speed roadways, and a lack of designated crossing locations across major barriers.

Figure 2.9 – Existing Multi-Use Path and PTV Crossing on Peachtree Road

The City of Hoschton is served by the Jackson County Transit service, which provides rural, on-demand public transportation services for county residents. Operating as a shared-ride service, it offers rides within Jackson County and the immediate surrounding counties using a fixed-fare structure ($4 for one way in county, $8 for round trip in county, $9 for one way out of county, $18 for round trip out of county). Despite the availability of this service, the majority of Hoschton residents are unaware of its existence. According to the public transit survey conducted between January 20 and February 10, 2026, only 8% of respondents were aware of the Jackson County Transit service, and only a single respondent reported having ever utilized the service.

Safety Analysis

There were 165 total crashes reported within the city limit of Hoschton in the period between 2020 and 2024, with no fatalities and three (3) serious injury crashes. As shown in Figure 2.10, a number of crashes trended downwards between 2020 and 2023, but the number increased in 2024. The proportion of injury crashes also increased in 2024 compared to the previous year. One (1) pedestrian crash involving a serious injury was reported in 2020 on SR 53 north of Towne Center Parkway. The crash involved an employee of a sanitation company entering the path of a vehicle on SR 53 from the blind spot behind the trash truck.

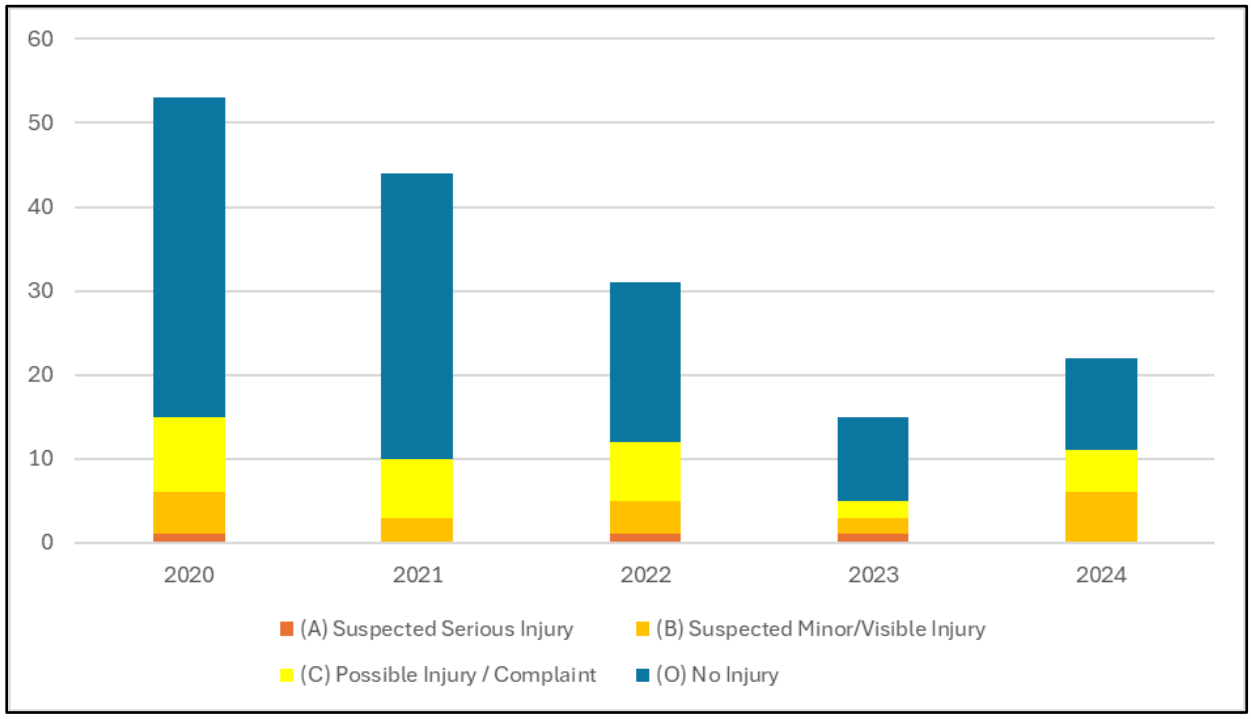


Figure 2.10 – Number of Crashes by Severity between 2020 – 2024 (Source: Numetric AASHTOWare Safety)

While the majority of reported crashes in Hoschton occurred on SR 53, two of three serious injury crashes occurred on Peachtree Road between Deer Creek Trail and White Trillium Drive (Figure 2.11). Rear ends were the most predominant crash type (35%), followed by not a collision with motor vehicle (25%) and angle crashes (19%). The most common contributing factor of crashes was "following too closely" (30%), followed by "failure to yield" (12%) and "lost control of a vehicle" (9%). On the other hand, the crashes that occurred on local roads (39 of 165 total crashes) were found to be predominantly single vehicle crashes (44%), contributed by drivers lost control of vehicles, struck deer, and failed to negotiate curves.

Table 2.2 – Crash Data by Manner of Collision and Year (Source: Numetric AASHTOWare Safety)

Manner of Collision	Year					Total
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Rear End	17	20	13	4	3	**57**
Not a Collision with Motor Vehicle	16	9	8	3	6	**42**
Angle Crash	8	7	5	4	7	**31**
Sideswipe-Opposite Direction	5	3	2	0	3	**13**
Sideswipe-Same Direction	5	1	2	2	2	**12**
Head On	2	4	1	2	1	**10**
Total	**53**	**44**	**31**	**15**	**22**	**165**

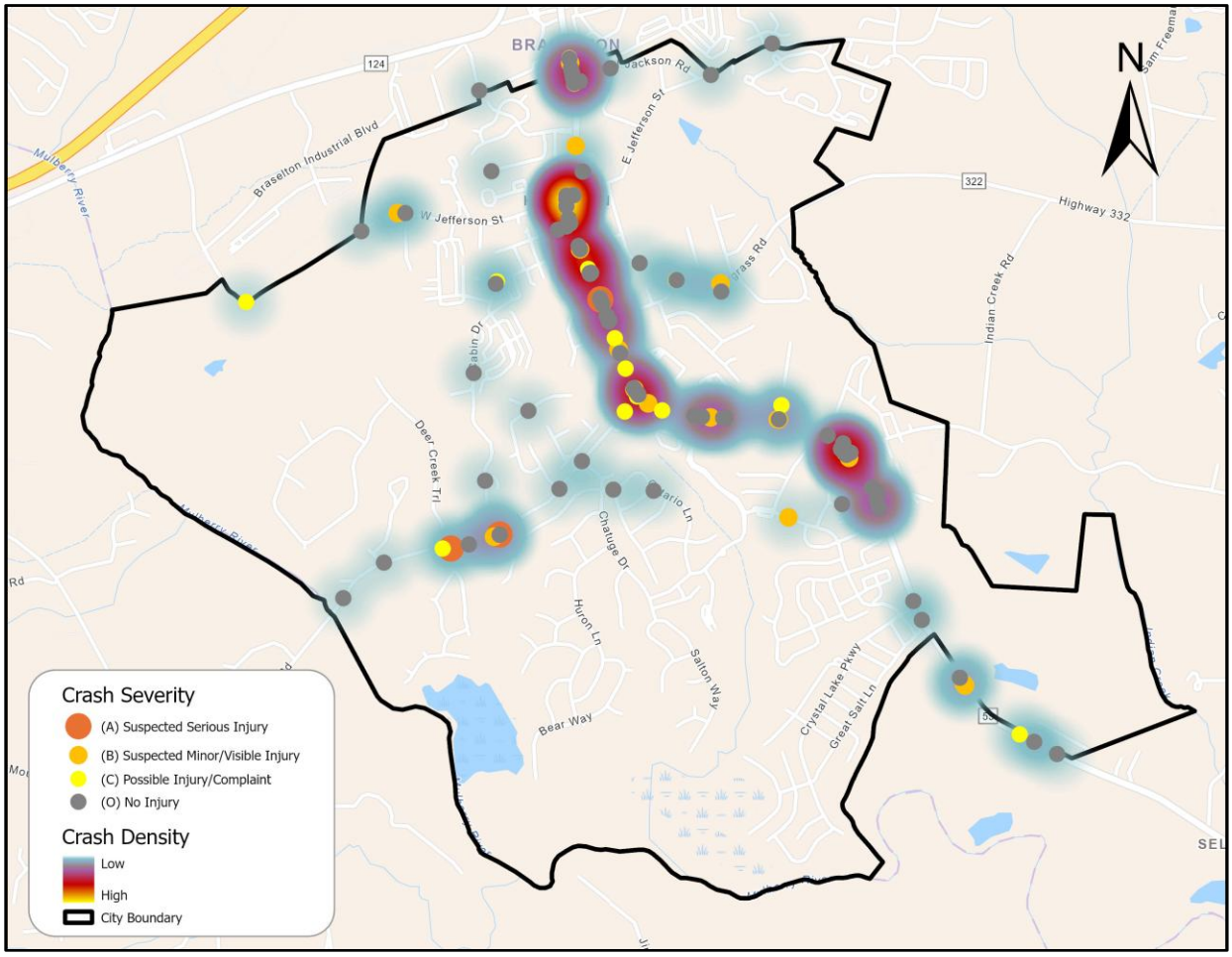


Figure 2.11 – Crash Map by Severity and Density between 2020-2024 (Source: Numetric AASHTOWare Safety)

The following Top-3 emphasis areas from the Georgia Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) were identified as primary contributing factors of crashes in Hoschton.

Table 2.3 – SHSP Emphasis Area of Crashes in the City of Hoschton (2020-2024)

Crash Category	Ranking	SHSP Emphasis Areas
City/County-Maintained Roadway Crash	1	Distracted Driver & Roadway Departure
	2	Intersection Related
	3	Young Driver (Age 20-24) & Older Driver Related (65+)
State-Maintained Roadway Crash	1	Intersection Related
	2	Distracted Driver
	3	Young Driver (Age 20-24)

"Intersection Related", "Distracted Driver" and "Young Driver (Age 20-24)" were the common top contributors across all categories of crashes reported in the City of Hoschton. "Roadway Departure" and "Older Driver Related (65+)" were found as other high-ranking contributors to crashes occurred on the city- or the county-maintained roadways.

2.4. PREVIOUS STUDIES & PLANS

Recently completed studies and plans were reviewed to understand the capital improvements that were planned or considered within the Hoschton city limit. The list of studies and plans reviewed as part of the Master Transportation Plan is shown below:

- GHMPO 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2025)
- GHMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2025)
- City of Hoschton Comprehensive Plan (2025)
- Jackson County Transportation Plan (2025 Update)
- Jackson County Comprehensive Plan 2055 (2025)
- GDOT Braselton-Hoschton Mobility Study (2024)
- Braselton Trail Feasibility Study (2022)
- Rocklyn Homes Development of Regional Impact Final Report (DRI #3960) (2021)
- Braselton Comprehensive Plan (2020)
- GHMPO Sidewalk Inventory Report (2017)

Figure 2.12 – Example Previous Studies and Plans

Figure 2.13 below presents the overview of project types proposed and recommended in the previous studies and plans in proximity to the City of Hoschton. Projects and improvements proposed in these studies and plans will be evaluated to determine they align with goals and vision of the Master Transportation Plan.

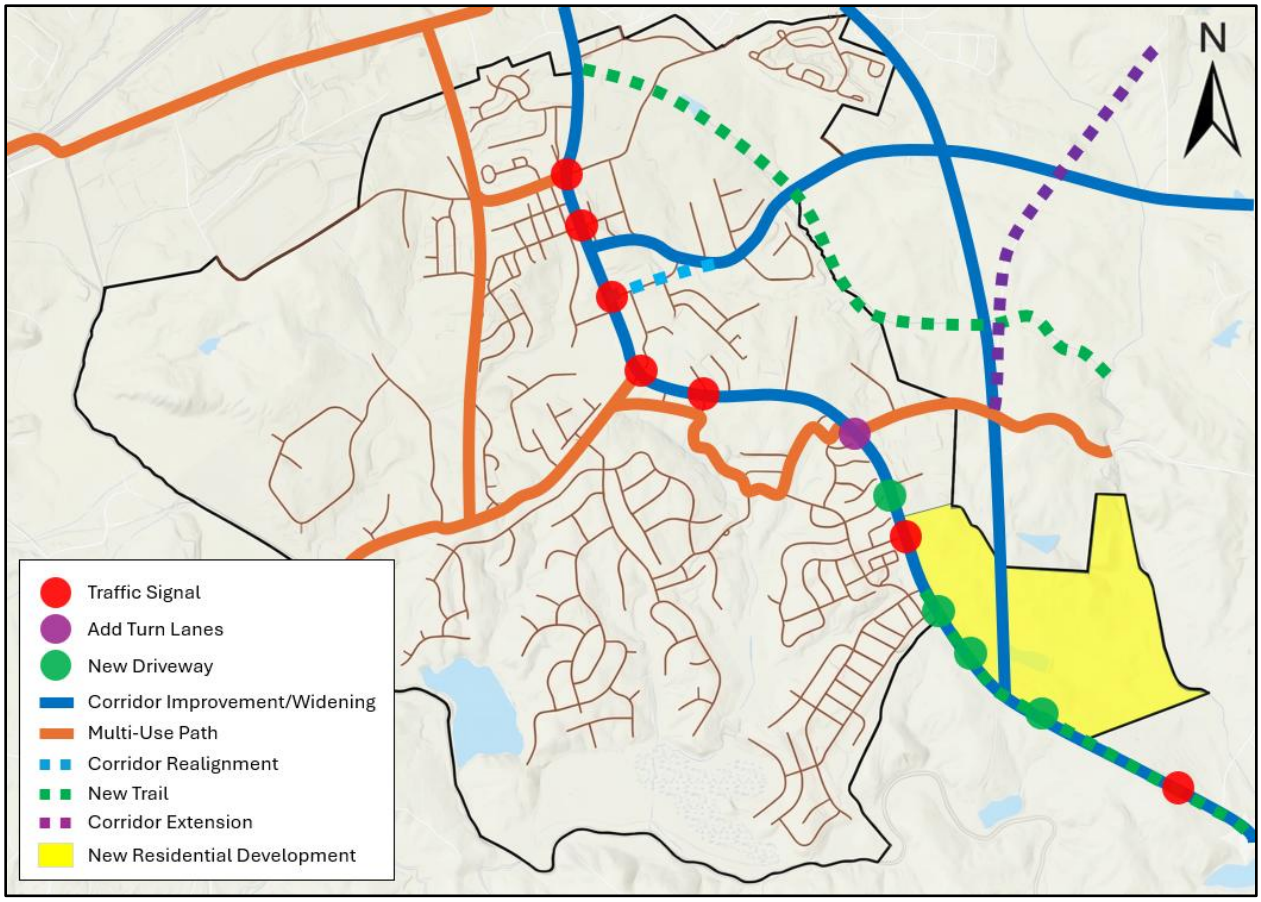
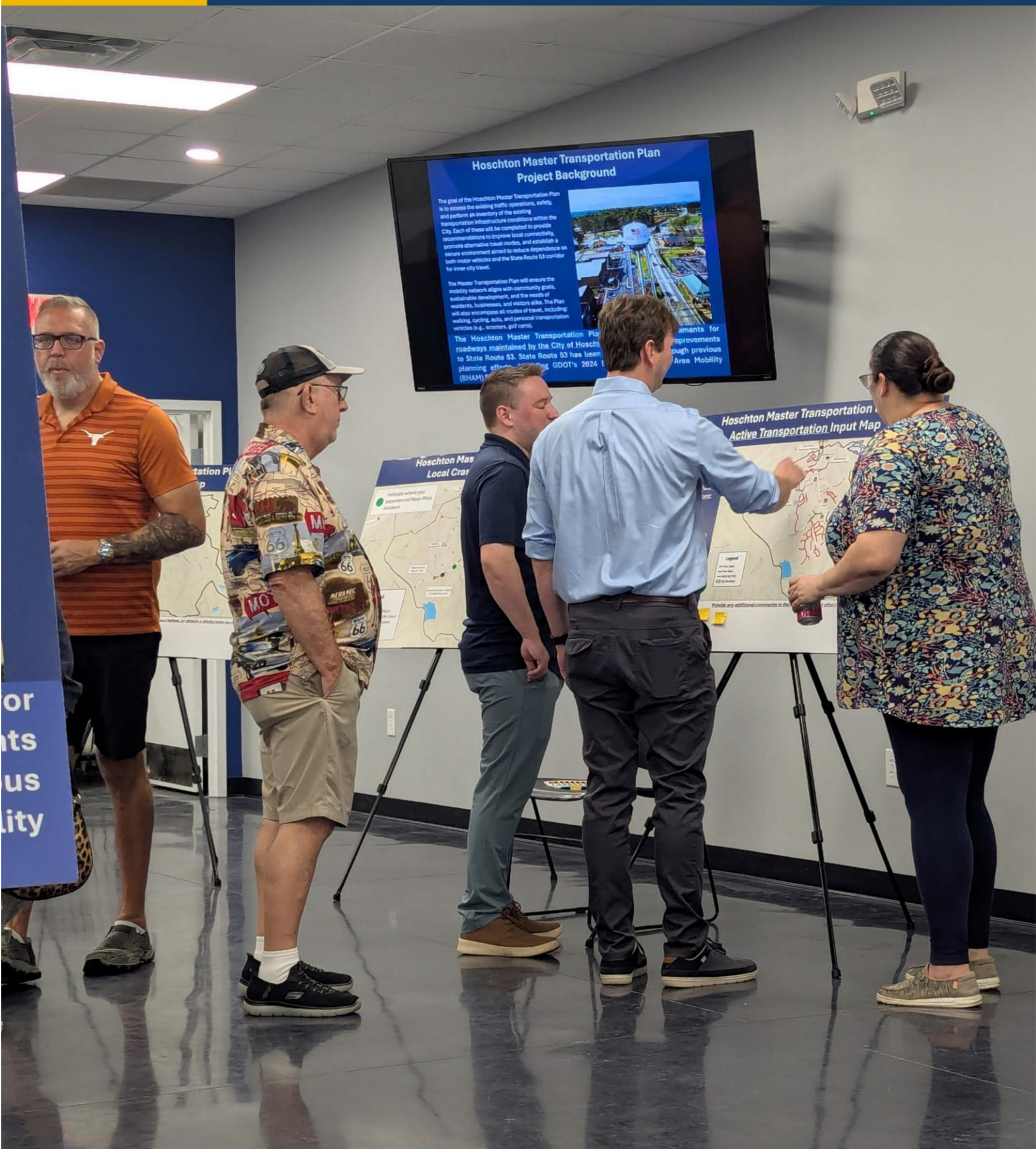


Figure 2.13 – Proposed and Recommended Projects in Previous Studies & Plans

Figure 2.14 – New Traffic Signal at SR 53 and Peachtree Road

3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public and stakeholder engagement was an essential part of the Hoschton Master Transportation Plan, reflecting the high level of public participation in shaping the City's future. To ensure a cohesive process, engagement activities occurred concurrently with other steps of the plan's development. Engagement forums were designed to be consistent, allowing participants in both public open houses and online surveys getting to weigh in on the same questions. These outreach efforts aimed to capture the lived experiences of residents, insights often missed by data analysis alone, while providing a platform for direct engagement across Hoschton's long-term growth.

Table 3.1 – Public and Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Public and Stakeholder Engagement
Eight (8) Stakeholder Committee Meetings
Two (2) Public Open Houses
Two (2) Online Surveys

3.1. STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee for the Hoschton MTP was composed of a diverse group of stakeholders and jurisdictional representatives with a significant interest in the Plan's outcome. The stakeholders involved in this process ranged from the City Mayor and staffs, GHMPO, and Jackson County staffs to first responders. Stakeholder meetings were held on a monthly basis to provide updates on the project progress, analysis findings, coordinate upcoming milestones, and gather feedback to guide the plan's development. The stakeholder selected as the steering committee are listed below:

Table 3.2 – Stakeholder Committee of Hoschton Master Transportation Plan

Stakeholder Committee
City of Hoschton Mayor
City of Hoschton City Manager
City of Hoschton Police Department
West Jackson County Fire Department
City of Hoschton Planner
Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization
Public Works Department of Hoschton
Jackson County Manager
Jackson County Public Development
Jackson County Parks & Recreation
Jackson County Area of Chamber of Commerce
Jackson County Schools
Georgia Department of Transportation – District 1
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

3.2. PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

Two public open house sessions were hosted at the Hoschton City Hall on September 16, 2025 to gather community input for the Master Transportation Plan. These sessions were strategically scheduled for the morning (10AM to 12PM) and the evening (6PM to 8PM) periods to ensure accessibility for a diverse range of residents, including seniors and parents available in the morning, as well as commuters joining in the evening.

The meeting provided an overview of the project's goals and vision, background, existing transportation conditions, and findings from previous studies and plans. Attendees participated in interactive stations where they shared specific concerns and comments across four key categories around Hoschton's Transportation System:

1. ***Near-Miss Crashes:*** Identifying locations where resident have experienced dangerous "close-call" incidents within the city.
2. ***Traffic Safety:*** Addressing concerns related to intersection design, speeding, sight distance, and the safety of active transportation users.
3. ***Traffic Operations:*** Highlighting issues regarding road capacity, road maintenance, traffic control, and parking availability.
4. ***Active Transportation:*** Pinpointing desired locations for new sidewalk connectivity and multi-use path expansions.

Figure 3.1 – Public Open House set up on 9/16/2025

Figure 3.2 – Public Open House on 9/16/2025 at the Hoschton Community Center

Figure 3.3 – Public Open House on 9/16/2025 at the Hoschton Community Center

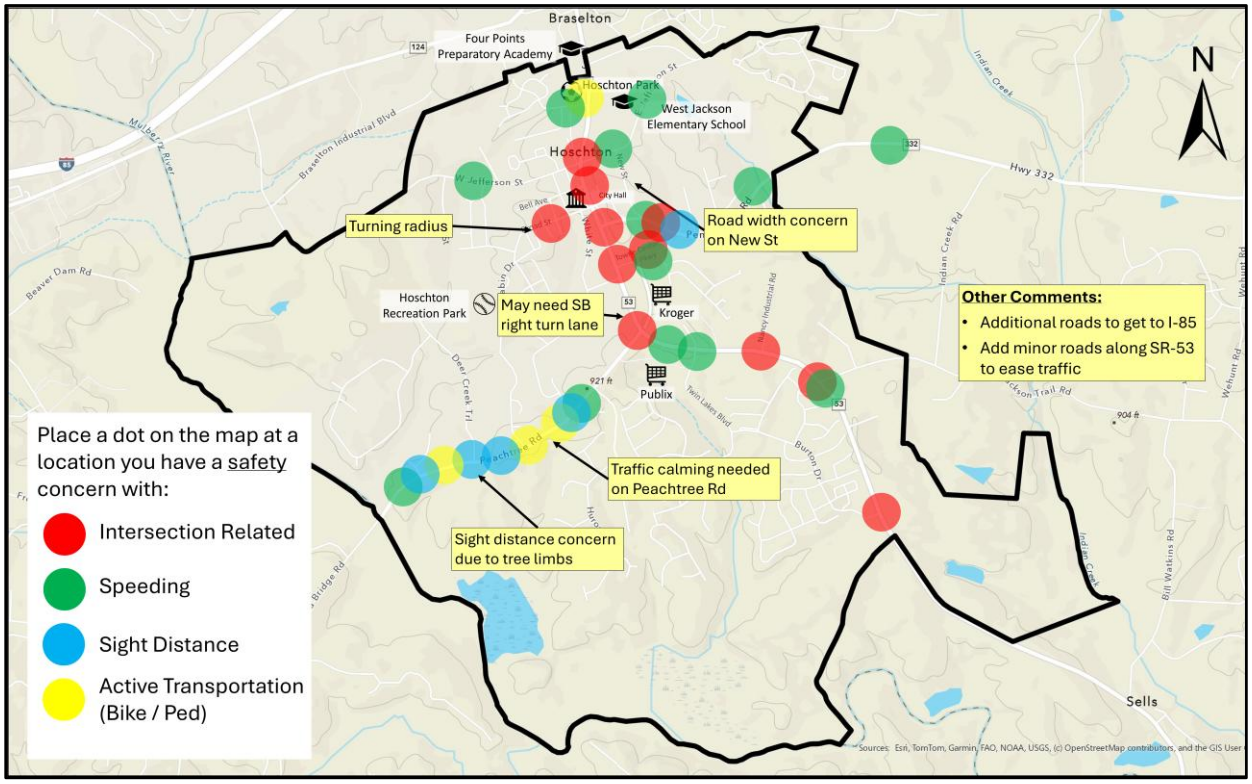


Figure 3.4 – Sample Feedback on Safety Concerns from the Public Open House

The full feedback summary collected from the public open houses are presented in **Appendix A**. The feedback from these forums were integrated into development of a draft plan.

3.3. ONLINE SURVEY

In addition to public open houses, two online surveys were conducted during the plan development process to provide broader groups of participants the opportunity to contribute their thoughts, concerns and ideas regarding the City's existing transportation network and desired improvements to local connectivity.

The first online survey was conducted from September 8 to October 7, 2025, running concurrently with the public open house sessions. Respondents were asked to evaluate the existing transportation network's operations and safety and to identify hotspots for future improvements. This survey generated a robust response with 303 total participants. It was found from this survey that the majority of respondents (69%) are unsatisfied with the City's existing transportation network, largely due to heavy traffic congestion and lack of well-maintained infrastructure. The full summary of the first online survey is presented in **Appendix B**.

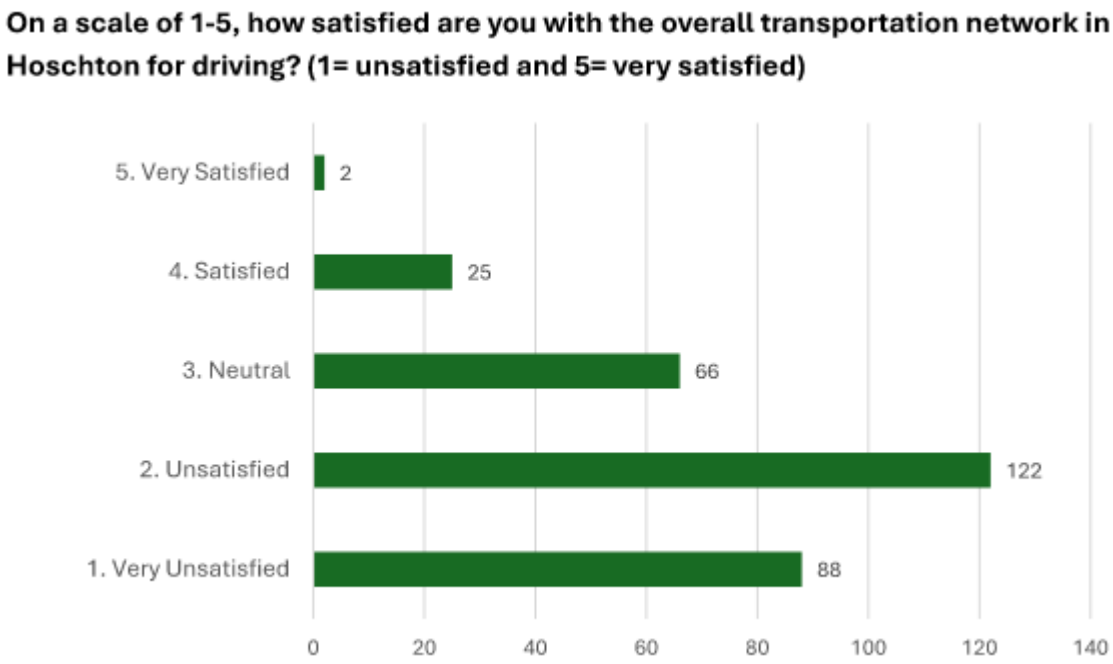


Figure 3.5 – Survey Responses on Satisfaction Level of the City's Transportation Network

What factors contribute to your unsatisfaction of driving in the City?

Theme	Mentions	Key Issues
Traffic & Congestion	151	Gridlock, long waits, poor flow
Infrastructure	111	Sidewalks, lanes, design, maintenance
Safety	51	Speeding, accidents, crosswalks
Public Transport	42	Limited buses, no alternatives
Overdevelopment	34	Growth without infrastructure

Figure 3.6 – Survey Responses on Factors Contributing to Unsatisfaction of Driving in the City

66% of respondents also expressed dissatisfaction with the City's active transportation network (walking and biking), primarily driven by lack of dedicated pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety concerns stemming from lack of physical separation between non-motorized users and high-speed vehicular traffic.

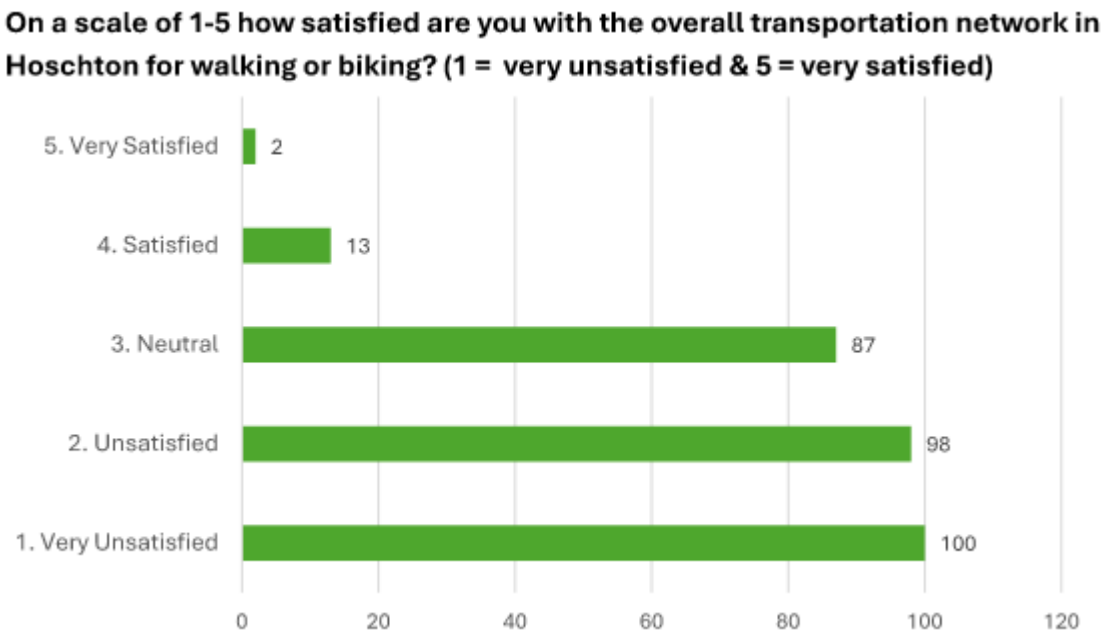


Figure 3.7 - Survey Responses on Satisfaction Level of the City's Active Transportation Network

What factors contribute to your unsatisfaction of walking or biking in the City?

Theme	Mentions	Key Issues
Infrastructure	163	Gridlock, long waits, poor flow
Biking Conditions	43	Sidewalks, lanes, design, maintenance
Safety	27	Accidents, lighting, crosswalks
Traffic	22	Vehicle dominance, congestion
Accessibility	4	ADA compliance, ramps
Public Amenities	3	Shade, benches, rest stops

Figure 3.8 – Survey Responses on Factors Contributing to Unsatisfaction of Walking or Biking in the City

When asked which aspects of transportation hold the most value, a majority of respondents indicated that all listed issues are important to them, including expanded walking and biking choices, increased golf cart connectivity, the provision of public transit options, sustained economic growth, and the preservation of community character. Furthermore, the survey respondents identified the following as Top-3 improvements required to address the City's transportation needs: 1) Increasing sidewalk connectivity; 2) Providing more greenways or off-road paths for PTVs; and 3) Installing more turn lanes.

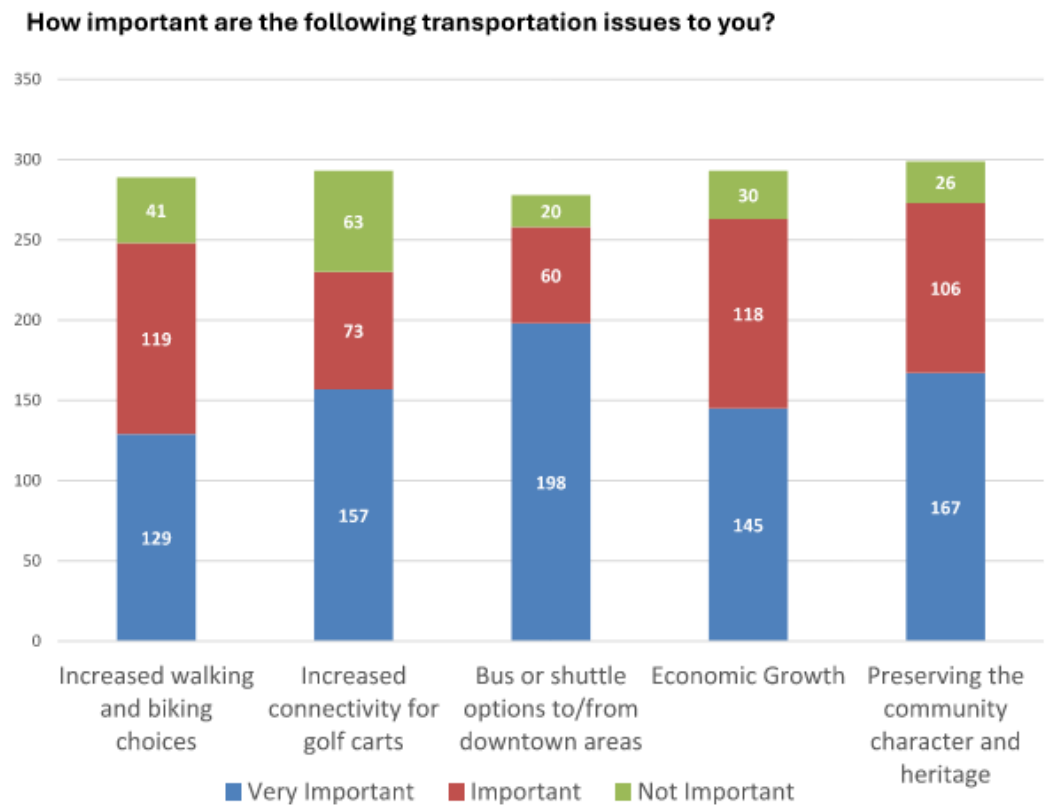


Figure 3.9 – Survey Responses on the Importance of Public Transit to and from Downtown Areas

What do you think would be the best way to address the transportation needs of the City?

Please rank from most important (1) to least important (7)

Rank	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Avg Score
1	Inc sidewalks &/ improve existing sidewalks	29%	22%	19.5%	13%	6.5%	4.5%	5.5%	5.18
		84	64	57	38	19	13	16	
2	Greenways, off-road paths to accom PTVs	28%	16%	11%	10%	10%	10%	13%	4.57
		82	47	33	30	30	30	39	
3	More turn lanes	14%	20%	18%	17%	12%	14%	5%	4.44
		40	59	52	49	35	42	14	
4	Build new roads	22%	11%	12%	14%	11%	10%	20%	4.11
		65	32	34	41	33	30	56	
5	Improve pavement	3.5%	9%	17%	16.5%	21%	18%	15%	3.44
		10	27	49	48	61	53	43	
6	Improve signs & markings	1%	11%	10%	16%	25%	21%	16%	3.20
		2	33	30	46	72	62	46	
7	Add bike lanes	3%	10%	12%	13%	14%	21%	27%	3.05
		8	29	36	39	41	61	77	

Figure 3.10 - Survey Responses on Best Ways to Address the City's Transportation Needs

The figure below shows all responses in the interactive map indicating locations and categories of transportation-related concerns and unsatisfaction the respondents see within the City of Hoschton.

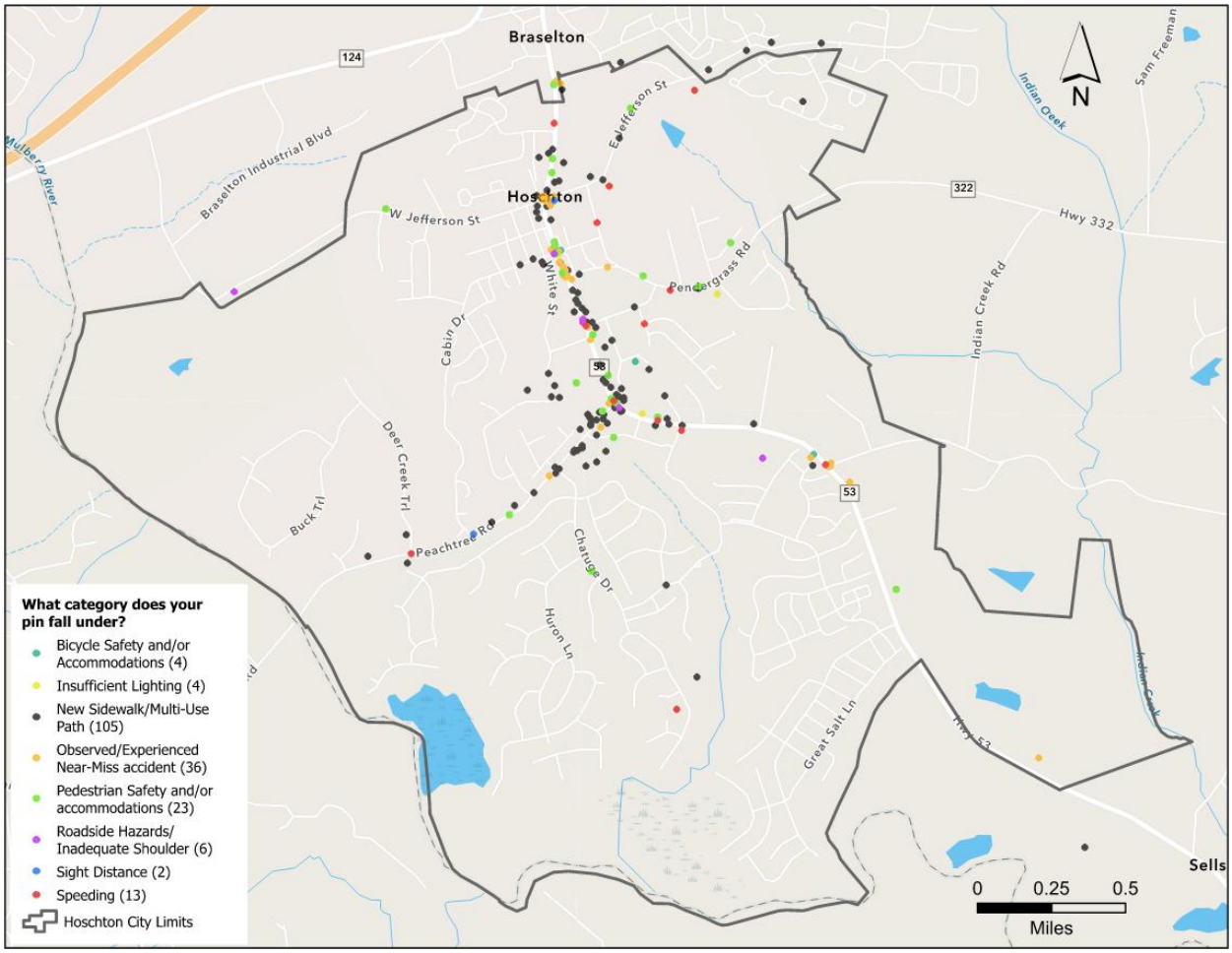


Figure 3.11 – Locations of Transportation-Related Concerns in the City of Hoschton

Building on the strong community interest identified in the initial survey, a second survey was conducted to refine the City's understanding of public transit needs. A comprehensive summary of this follow-up effort is available in **Appendix C**. Out of 278 respondents who addressed the importance of bus or shuttle options to and from downtown Hoschton, 258 (92.8%) rated these services as either "Very Important" or "Important" (Figure 3.9). To explore this high level of interest, a follow-up survey was conducted between January 20 and February 10, 2026, focusing on residents' awareness and perception of the existing Jackson County Transit service. The 308 responses received revealed a significant shift in sentiment and identified a critical awareness gap:

- Roughly 72% of respondents indicated they do not see a need for public transit service in Hoschton.
- This negative sentiment likely stems from a misunderstanding of bringing the new transit service rather than better utilizing the existing service provided by the County. 92% of respondents indicated that they are not aware of the existing Jackson County Transit.
- Despite initial skepticism, nearly half of respondents (44%) stated they would consider using public transit at least occasionally (once every few months), if service were provided in the City.
- Respondents expressed a preference for service availability throughout the entire week with primary destinations to entertainment/recreation, grocery/shopping, and medical-related.

Do you see the need or desire to have public transit or shuttle service in the City of Hoschton?

Category	Count	Percentage
No	221	71.75%
Yes	87	28.25%

Figure 3.12 – Survey Responses on Desire for Public Transit in the City

Are you aware of Jackson County Transit offering on-demand, door-to-door public transportation within Jackson County & Athens-Clarke County?

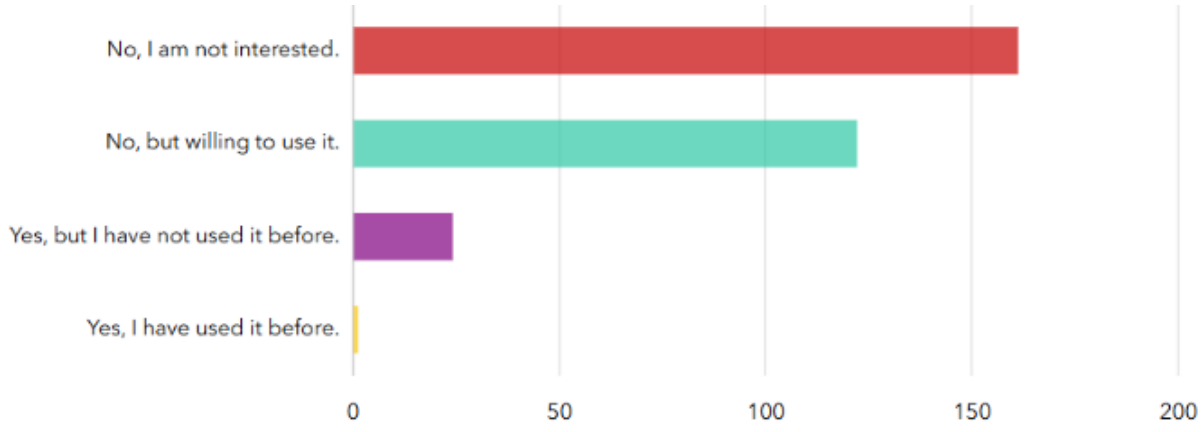
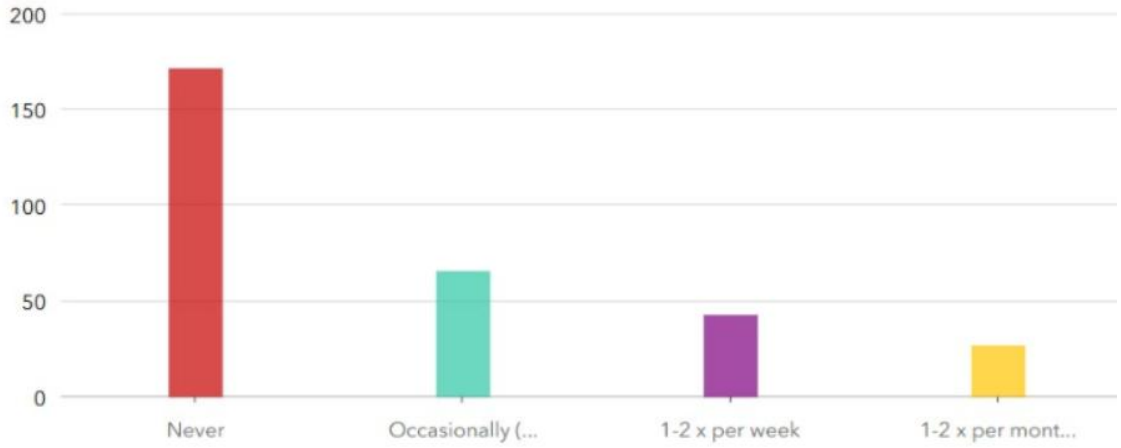


Figure 3.13 – Survey Responses on Awareness of the Existing Jackson County Transit Service

If a public transit or shuttle service was offered for the city residents of Hoschton, how often would you utilize the service?



Category	Count	Percentage
Never	172	55.84%
Occasionally (once every few months)	66	21.43%
1-2 X per month	43	13.96%
1-2X per week	27	8.77%

Figure 3.14 – Survey Responses on the Interest of using Public Transit Service, if it is provided

If public transit or shuttle service is to be provided, what is your preference on the transit service period?

Category	Count	Percentage
Both, weekday & Weekend	148	48.05%
Weekend Only	114	37.01%
Weekday Only	46	14.94%

Figure 3.15 – Survey Responses on Preference of Service Period, if Transit Service is provided

If you have used or willing to use Jackson County Transit, what would be your primary destinations? Multiple Selections allowable

Category	Count	Percentage
Commuting	34	11.04%
Medical (e.g. doctor's visit, dentist visit)	85	27.60%
Grocery & Shopping	92	29.87%
Entertainment & Recreation (restaurants, theaters, parks)	179	58.12%
Other-specified below	56	18.18%

Figure 3.16 – Survey Responses on Primary Destination utilizing Jackson County Transit

Other-specifid Responses:

A toal of 56 specified other, but only 42 responses were given. Of the received response 35 emphasized transit would not be needed or used. The remaining comments stated a few additional options and destinations to consider:

#	Response
1	Special events
2	Senior Center
3	not interested if it spends government money unless riders pay 100% of cost
4	Hospital
5	Helping older people pick up groceries and things, especially during the winter.

Figure 3.17 – Other Specific Responses on the Transit Survey

4. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION & PRIORITIZATION


ONE WAY

4. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION & PRIORITIZATION

Projects to address the safety and infrastructure concerns of Hoschton's transportation system were identified and prioritized through a comprehensive evaluation of previous studies, existing condition assessments, needs assessments, and public engagement, as described in the previous sections. As established in the Introduction, the primary goal of the Master Transportation Plan is to outline projects that prioritizes improvements to city-maintained roadways, with special focus on the local connectivity for alternative travel modes, including active transportation and PTVs. The project categories identified and recommended in this MTP are defined as follows:

1. ***Active Transportation & Alternative Modes Connectivity:*** Projects designed to enhance the network of sidewalks, trails, and multi-use paths for pedestrians, cyclists, and PTV users.
2. ***Operational Improvements:*** Initiatives focused on optimizing traffic flow, managing capacity, and improving overall efficiency of the roadway network.
3. ***Safety Improvements:*** Targeted interventions aimed at reducing crashes, managing speeds, and protecting vulnerable road users at high-risk locations.

To prioritize the City's list of projects, the project team developed a project evaluation methodology that was used to score and rank each project. The rest of this section explains how projects were identified, categorized, and prioritized.

4.1. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

The synthesis of the existing condition assessment, reviews of previous studies and plans, and feedback from public meetings and online surveys revealed the citywide deficiencies that the MTP should address. To guide the project identification process, three primary focus areas were established: Active Transportation & Alternative Modes Connectivity, Operational Improvements, and Safety Improvements. High-level cost estimates were developed for each identified project based on standard planning-level assumptions and GDOT item mean summary averaged for 2024 to 2026 values. Actual project cost will be significantly influenced by the final scale of project area, as well as the extent of required right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation.

Active Transportation & Alternative Modes Connectivity

To reduce reliance on the already congested SR 53 and encourage more people to utilize alternative modes and active transportation is a vital component of Hoschton's transportation network. Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1 present the list of projects identified to improve active transportation and alternative mode connectivity in the City of Hoschton. Footnotes were added for the improvements that were also recommended in other previous studies.

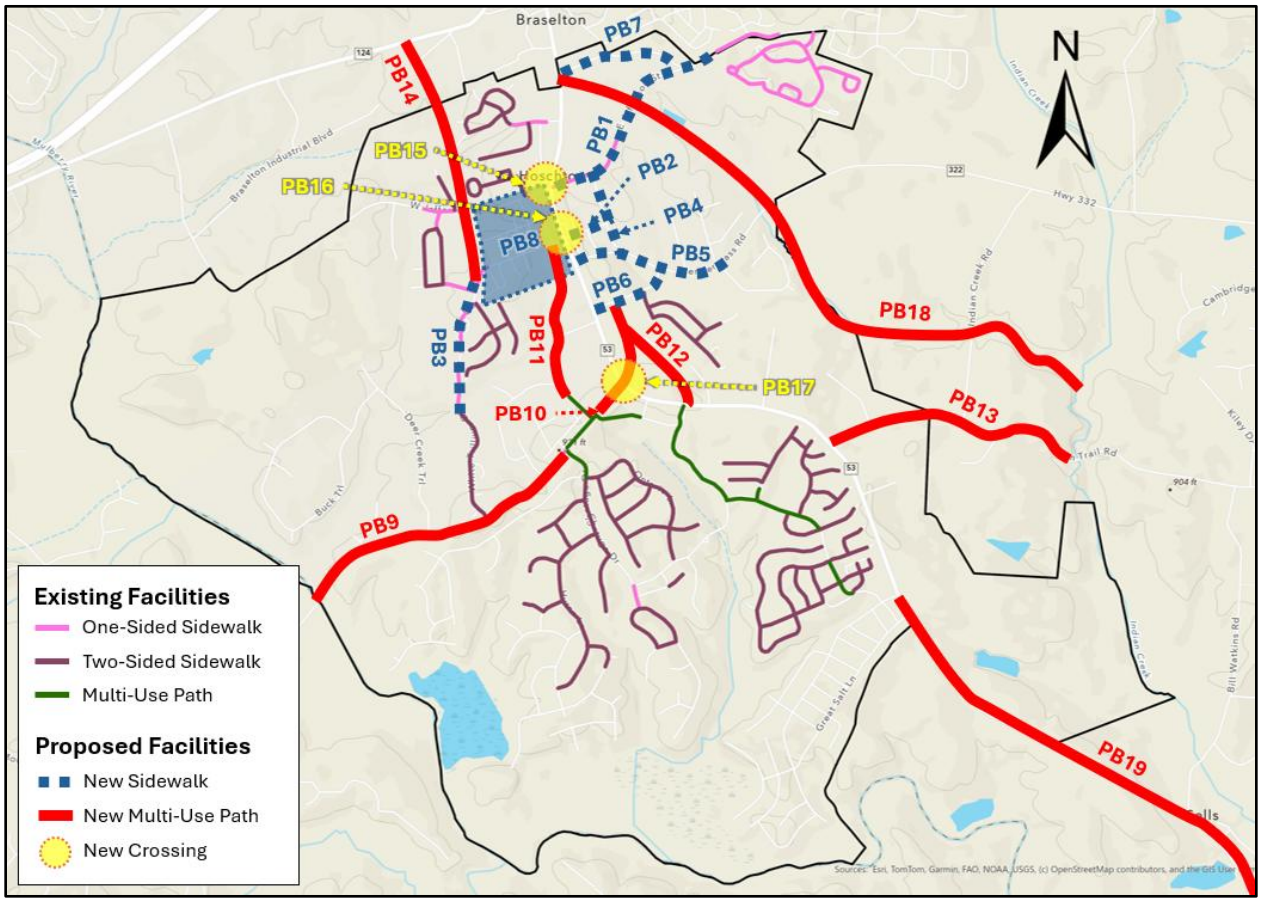


Figure 4.1 - Active Transportation & Alternative Modes Projects

Table 4.1 – Active Transportation & Alternative Modes Project List

Project ID	Project Name	Location	Estimated Cost
PB1	New Sidewalk on Jefferson Street	Jefferson Street between Jefferson Avenue and Hickory Grove Lane	$ 333k
PB2	New Sidewalk on Broad Street	Broad Street between Muscogee Dr and New Street	$ 128k
PB3	Sidewalk Improvement on Cabin Drive	Cabin Drive from Broad Street to south of Hoschton Recreation Park	$ 103k
PB4	New Sidewalk on New Street	New Street between E Jefferson Street and SR 332/Pendergrass Road	$ 77k
PB5	New Sidewalk on SR 332/Pendergrass Road	SR 332/Pendergrass Road between SR 53 and Joshua Way/Legacy Drive	$ 103k
PB6	New Sidewalk on Towne Center Parkway	Towne Center Parkway between SR 53 and SR 332/Pendergrass Road	$ 77k
PB7	New Sidewalk on W Jackson Road	W Jackson Road between SR 53 and E Jefferson Street	$ 103k
PB8	New Sidewalks in Downtown Hoschton	Downtown Hoschton west of SR 53	$ 384k
PB9[1,2]	New Multi-use path on Peachtree Road	Peachtree Road between SR 53 and Deer Creek Trail	$ 1.4M
PB10	New Multi-use path on Peachtree Road to Kroger	Peachtree Road between Gateway Crossing Parkway to Kroger	$ 183k
PB11[3]	New Multi-use path on White Street	White Street between Peachtree Road and W Broad Street	$ 846k
PB12	New Multi-use path on Jopena Boulevard to Kroger	Jopena Boulevard between Twin Lakes Boulevard and Kroger	$ 183k
PB13[1]	New Multi-use path on Jackson Trail Road (AKA. Sell's Mill Connector Trail)	Jackson Trail Road between SR 53 and Sell's Mill Park	$ 1.3M
PB14[1,2,4]	New Multi-use path to SR 124 (Hoschton Life Path Alt#2)	New ped/bike connection between SR 124 and Cabin Drive	$ 1.4M
PB15	New Ped, Bike, PTV Crossing Improvement on SR 53 at Jefferson Street	SR 53 at Jefferson Street	$ 30k
PB16	New Ped, Bike, PTV Crossing Improvement on SR 53 at Broad Street	SR 53 at Broad Street	$ 30k
PB17	New Ped, Bike, PTV Crossing Improvement on SR 53 at Peachtree Road	SR 53 at Peachtree Road	$ 4.5k
PB18[1,4]	New Multi-use path east of SR 53 (Hoschton Life Path Alt#1)	From Hoschton Park to Indian Creek	$2.8M
PB19[4]	Jackson County Connector Trail on SR 53	SR 53 between Crystal Lake Parkway and Tapp Wood Road	$2.8M
PB20	Citywide Pedestrian-Level Lighting	Citywide	$ 1.3M
PB21	Citywide Sidewalk Repavement and ADA Ramp Upgrades	Citywide	$ 18k

[1] GHMPO, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2025 Update, May 2025
[2] GHMPO, 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, May 2025
[3] City of Hoschton, Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045 Five-Year Update, Adopted October 16, 2025
[4] NEGRC, Jackson County Comprehensive Plan 2055, Adopted October 20, 2025

Operational Improvements

Operational deficiencies were among the most frequently cited concerns by the public. Oversaturated roadways and intersections, a lack of sufficient parking, and a pressing need for road maintenance were highlighted in surveys and public open houses.

Figure 4.2 and Table 4.2 presents the list of projects identified to improve traffic operations in the City of Hoschton. Footnotes were added for the improvements that were also recommended in other previous studies.

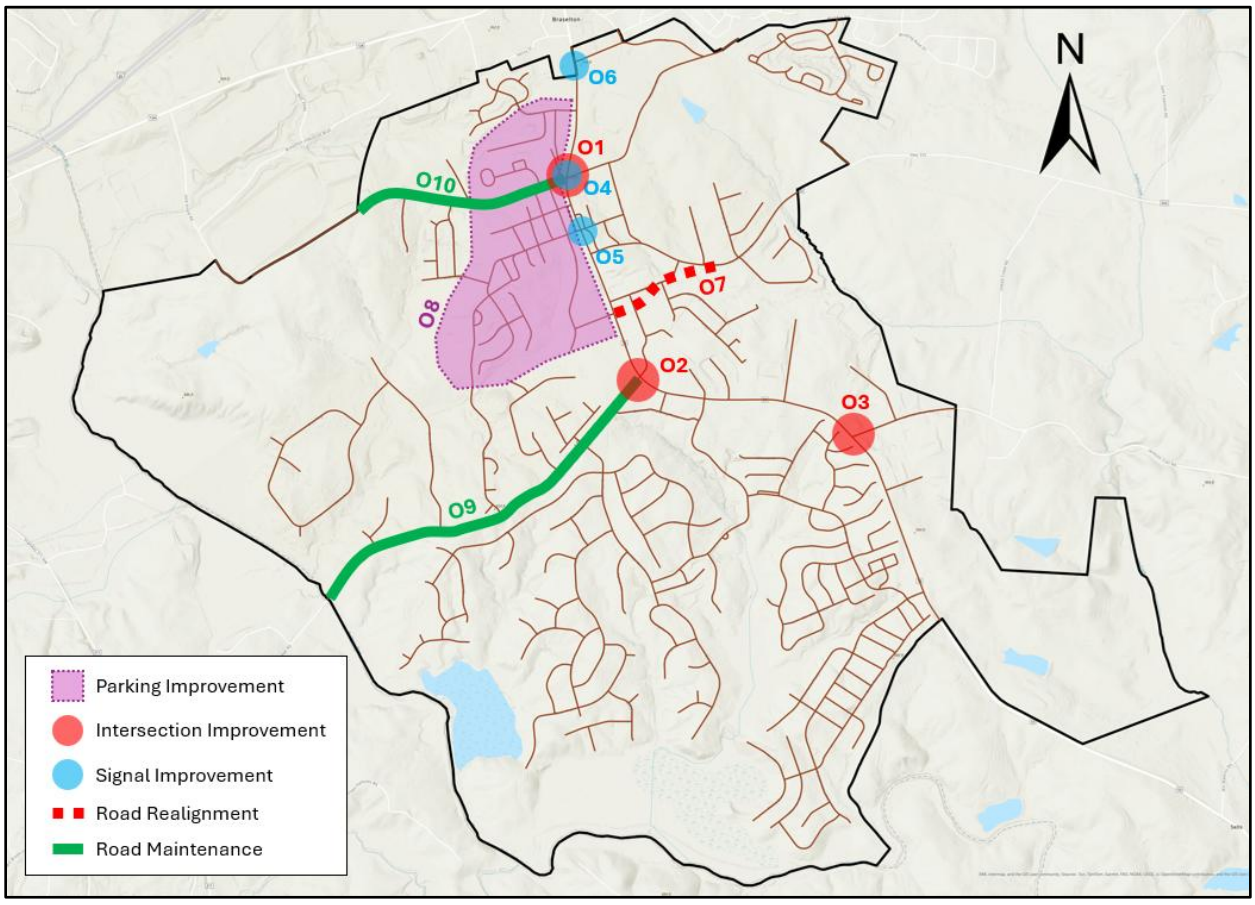


Figure 4.2 – Operational Improvement Projects

Table 4.2 – Operational Improvement Project List

Project ID	Project Name	Location	Estimated Cost
O1[1]	SR 53 at Jefferson Street Intersection Improvement[3]	SR 53 at Jefferson Street	$ 135k
O2[1,2]	SR 53 at Peachtree Road Intersection Improvement[3]	SR 53 at Peachtree Road	$ 270k
O3[1,2]	SR 53 at Jackson Trail Road Intersection Improvement[3]	SR 53 at Jackson Trail Road	$ 135k
O4[1]	SR 53 at Jefferson Street Signal Warrant Analysis	SR 53 at Jefferson Street	$ 12k
O5[1]	SR 53 at Broad Street Signal Warrant Analysis	SR 53 at Broad Street Signal	$ 12k
O6	SR 53 at W Jackson Road Signal Warrant Analysis	SR 53 at W Jackson Road	$ 12k
O7[1,2]	SR 332/Pendergrass Road Realignment	SR 332/Pendergrass Road realigned through Towne Center Parkway and Industrial Boulevard	$ 6.7M
O8	Downtown Hoschton Parking Improvement	Downtown Hoschton west of SR 53	$ 185k
O9	Peachtree Road Maintenance and Repavement	Peachtree Road	$ 488k
O10	W Jefferson Street Maintenance and Repavement	W Jefferson Street	$ 260k

[1] GDOT, Braselton-Hoschton Area Mobility Study, May 2024
[2] Jackson County & GHMPO, Jackson County Transportation Plan, June 2025
[3] Potential intersection improvements include additional turn lanes and alternative traffic control

Figure 4.3 – SR 53 at Peachtree Road Intersection

Safety Improvements

Historical crash data analyses and public feedback revealed critical safety concerns throughout the City of Hoschton's roadway network. To mitigate crash frequency and severity while supporting active transportation and alternative modes, several targeted safety improvement projects were identified. These projects are illustrated in the figure and table below.

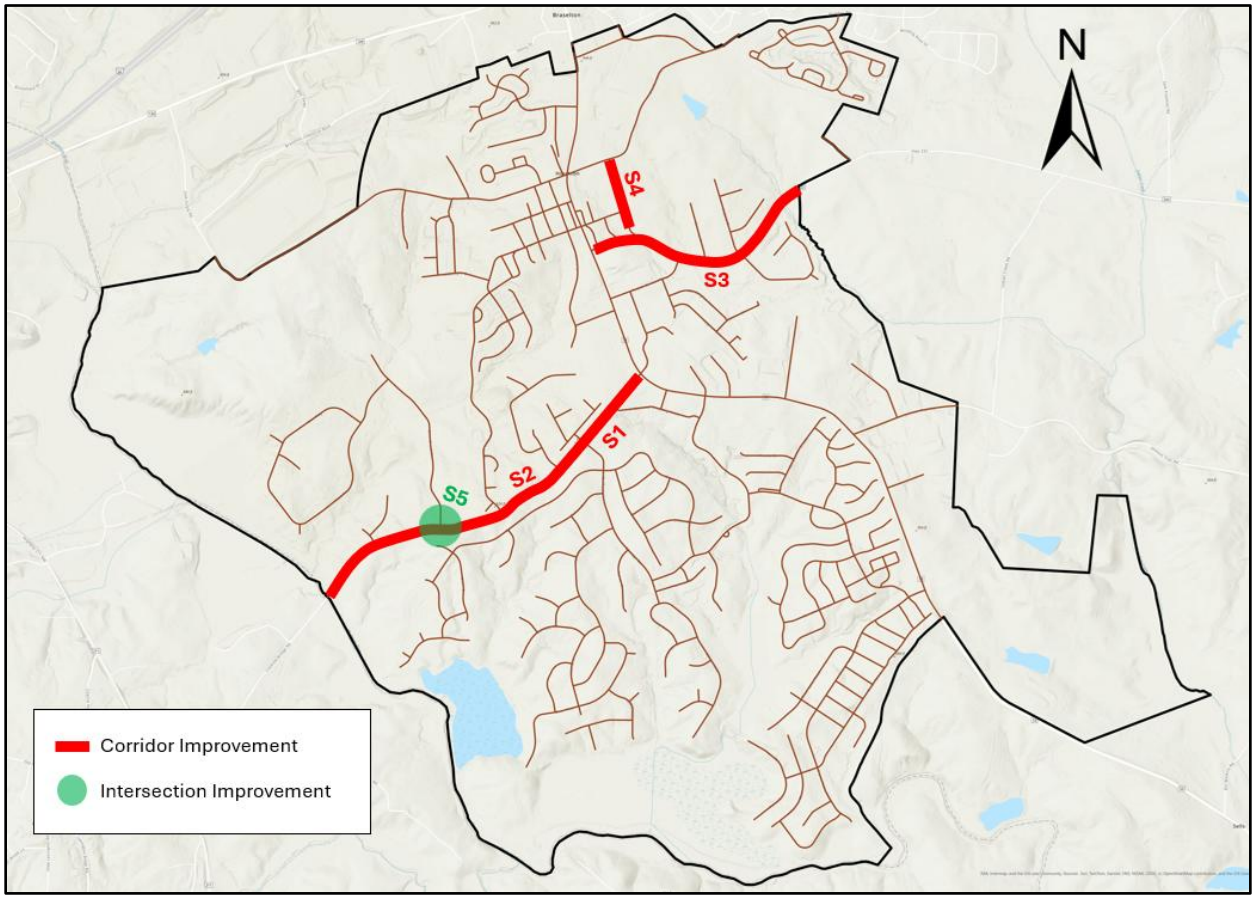


Figure 4.4 – Safety Improvement Projects

Table 4.3 – Safety Improvement Project List

Project ID	Project Name	Location	Estimated Cost
S1	Peachtree Road Traffic Calming[1]	Peachtree Road between SR 53 and Deer Creek Trail	$ 86k
S2	Peachtree Road Lighting & Drainage Improvements	Peachtree Road between SR 53 and Deer Creek Trail	$ 225k
S3	SR 332/Pendergrass Road Traffic Calming[1]	SR 332/Pendergrass Road between SR 53 and High Point Drive	$ 54k
S4	New Street Signing & Marking Improvements	New Street between SR 332/Pendergrass Road and E Jefferson Street	$8.1k
S5	Peachtree Road at Deer Creek Trail Intersection Sight Distance Improvement	Peachtree Road at Deer Creek Trail	$ 45k

[1] Potential traffic calming measures include lane width reduction, raised median, rumble strips, optical speed bars, and more

4.2. PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

Due to project delivery challenges and fiscal constraints, it is not feasible to implement all recommended projects simultaneously. To address this challenge, the evaluation criteria were developed to prioritize the projects identified during the planning process. This methodology provides a transparent, traceable framework for programming the proposed projects in a practical and phased manner.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria were selected and organized into the following seven categories, with project scored based on these associated measures:

- ***Mode Choices*** – Favors projects that promote alternative modes of transportation other than motor vehicle usage and reduce reliance on the state routes.
- ***Traffic Operations*** – Prioritizes improvements to traffic flow and capacity, including enhanced connectivity of pedestrians, bicycles and Personal Transportation Vehicles (PTVs).
- ***Traffic Safety*** – Favors projects that reduce crash frequency and severity, with a specific focus on protecting vulnerable roadway users.
- ***Economic Vitality*** – Favors projects that stimulate local economic development by improving access to major destinations and activity centers.
- ***Financial Stewardship*** – Incentivizes "quick-fix" projects that are cost effective, require minimal design and construction time, and can be locally funded.
- ***Community Livability & Atmosphere*** – Favors projects that preserve the City's unique characteristics, history and small-town atmosphere.
- ***Public Input*** – Favors projects that address concerns commented during stakeholder meetings, public open houses, and online surveys.

Each evaluation criterion is scored on a scale of 0 to 3, where 0 represents the least favorable and 3 the most favorable project. The criteria are weighted differently to prioritize improvements that better support local connectivity and demonstrate high implementation feasibility. To ensure results are easily comparable, the final score for each project is calculated as the sum of all weighted category scores, then scaled by a factor of 10 for better scalability. Based on these cumulative scores, projects are categorized into the following three tiers:

- ***Tier 1 (Short-Term High Priority):*** Projects scoring 21 points or higher are classified as short-term, high-priority initiatives.
- ***Tier 2 (Medium-Term, Medium Priority):*** Projects scoring between 17 and 20 points are classified as medium-term, medium-priority initiatives.
- ***Tier 3 (Aspirational, Low Priority):*** Projects scoring 16 points or lower are classified as aspirational and low-priority initiatives.

Table 4.4 below presents scoring criteria of each evaluation category. Figure 4.5 through Figure 4.7 display the projects categorized into these tiers based on the prioritization. The complete project scoring and prioritization can be found in **Appendix D**.

Table 4.4 – Project Prioritization Scoring

Evaluation Category	Weight	Scoring
Mode Choices	20%	0: Project does not promote alternative transportation mode choices
		1: Project provides minimal support for alternative mode choices
		2: Project provides moderate support for alternative mode choices
		3: Project provides significant support for alternative mode choices
Traffic Operations	5%	0: Project does not improve the existing traffic operations
		1: Project provides minimal improvement to existing traffic operations
		2: Project provides moderate improvement to existing traffic operations
		3: Project provides significant improvement to existing traffic operations
Traffic Safety	20%	0: Project does not improve the existing traffic safety conditions
		1: Project provides minimal improvement existing traffic safety
		2: Project provides moderate improvement existing traffic safety
		3: Project provides significant improvement existing traffic safety
Economic Vitality	5%	0: Project does not stimulate local economic development
		1: Project has minimal impact on local economic development
		2: Project has moderate impact on local economic development
		3: Project has significant impact on local economic development
Financial Stewardship	25%	0: Estimated project cost is greater than $1 million
		1: Estimated project cost is between $300,000 and $1 million
		2: Estimated project cost is between $50,000 and $300,000
		3: Estimated project cost is less than $50,000
Community Livability & Atmosphere	10%	0: Project significantly disturbs the City's established character
		1: Project moderately disturbs the City's established character
		2: Project minimally impacts the City's established character
		3: Project preserves the City's established character
Public Input	15%	0: Project shows no alignment with concerns from the public engagement
		1: Project addresses concerns mentioned once by the public
		2: Project addresses concerns mentioned at least twice by the public
		3: Project addresses concerns mentioned +5 times by the public

Figure 4.5 – Tier 1 Projects

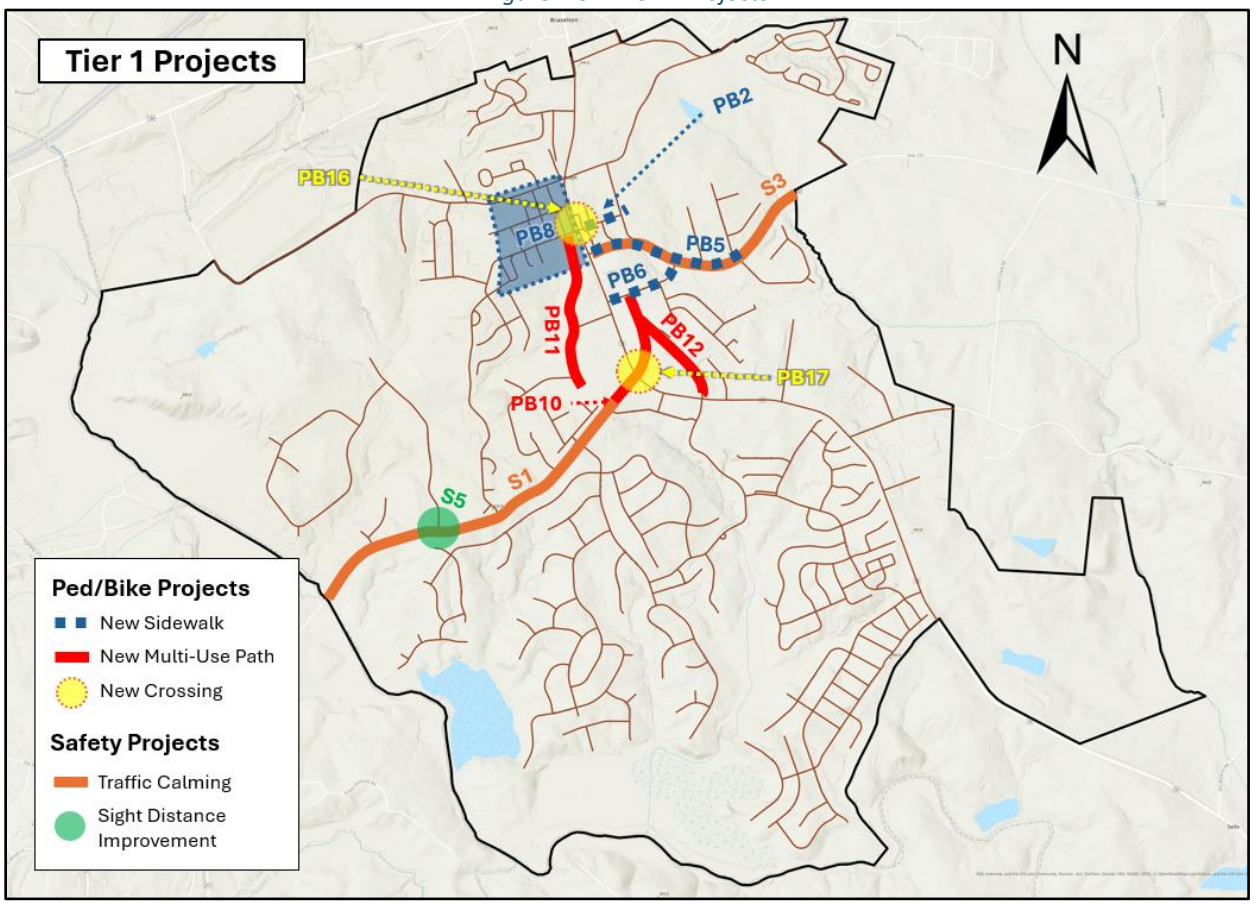


Table 4.5 – Tier 1 Project List

Tier	Score	Project ID	Project Type*	Project Name/Description
Tier 1 Short-Term, High Priority	25	PB10	Alt Mode	New Multi-Use Path on Peachtree Road to Kroger
	24	S1	Safety	Peachtree Road Traffic Calming
	23	PB8	Alt Mode	New Sidewalk in Downtown Hoschton
	23	PB11	Alt Mode	New Multi-Use Path on White Street
	23	PB12	Alt Mode	New Multi-Use Path on Jopena Blvd to Kroger
	23	PB17	Alt Mode	New Ped, Bike, PTV Crossing Improvement on SR 53 at Peachtree Road
	22	S3	Safety	SR 332/Pendergrass Road Traffic Calming
	21	PB2	Alt Mode	New Sidewalk on Broad Street
	21	PB5	Alt Mode	New Sidewalk on SR 332/Pendergrass Road
	21	PB6	Alt Mode	New Sidewalk on Towne Center Parkway
	21	PB16	Alt Mode	New Ped, Bike, PTV Crossing Improvement on SR 53 at Broad Street
	21	S5	Safety	Peachtree Road at Deer Creek Trail Intersection Sight Distance Improvement

* "Alt Mode" refers to projects improving Alternative Mode of Transportation

Figure 4.6 – Tier 2 Projects

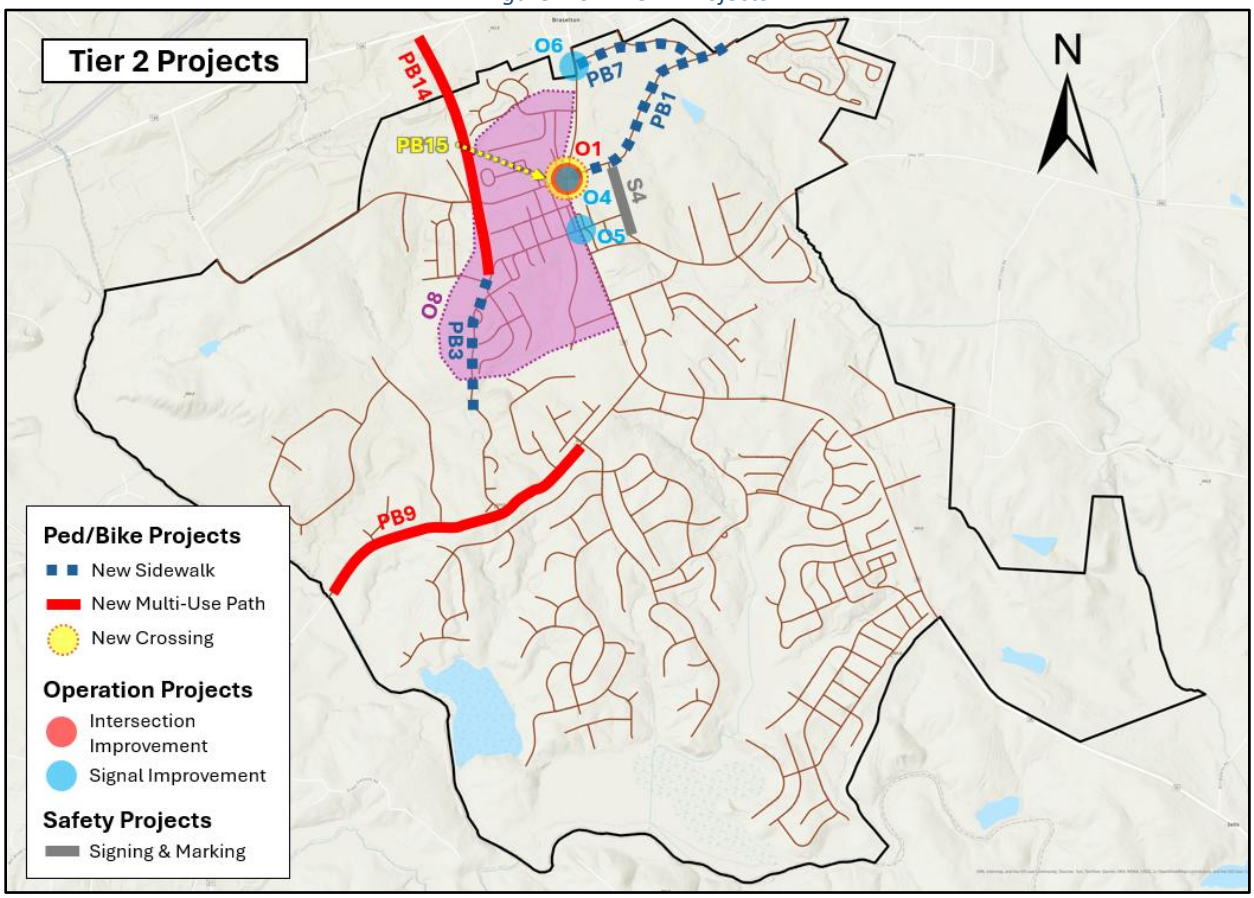


Table 4.6 – Tier 2 Project List

Tier	Score	Project ID	Project Type*	Project Name/Description
Tier 2 Long-Term, Medium Priority	20	PB1	Alt Mode	New Sidewalk on Jefferson Street
	20	PB9	Alt Mode	New Multi-Use Path on Peachtree Road
	20	PB15	Alt Mode	New Ped, Bike, PTV Crossing Improvement on SR 53 at Jefferson Street
	20	PB21	Alt Mode	Citywide Sidewalk Repavement and ADA Ramp Upgrades
	20	O4	Operations	SR 53 at Jefferson Street Signal Warrant Analysis
	20	O5	Operations	SR 53 at Broad Street Signal Warrant Analysis
	20	O6	Operations	SR 53 at W Jackson Road Signal Warrant Analysis
	19	PB7	Alt Mode	New Sidewalk on W Jackson Road
	18	S4	Safety	New Street Signing & Marking Improvement
	17	PB3	Alt Mode	Sidewalk Improvement on Cabin Drive
	17	PB14	Alt Mode	New Multi-Use Path to SR 124 (Hoschton Life Path)
	17	O1	Operations	SR 53 at Jefferson Street Intersection Improvement
	17	O8	Operations	Downtown Hoschton Parking Improvement

* "Alt Mode" refers to projects improving Alternative Mode of Transportation

Figure 4.7 – Tier 3 Projects

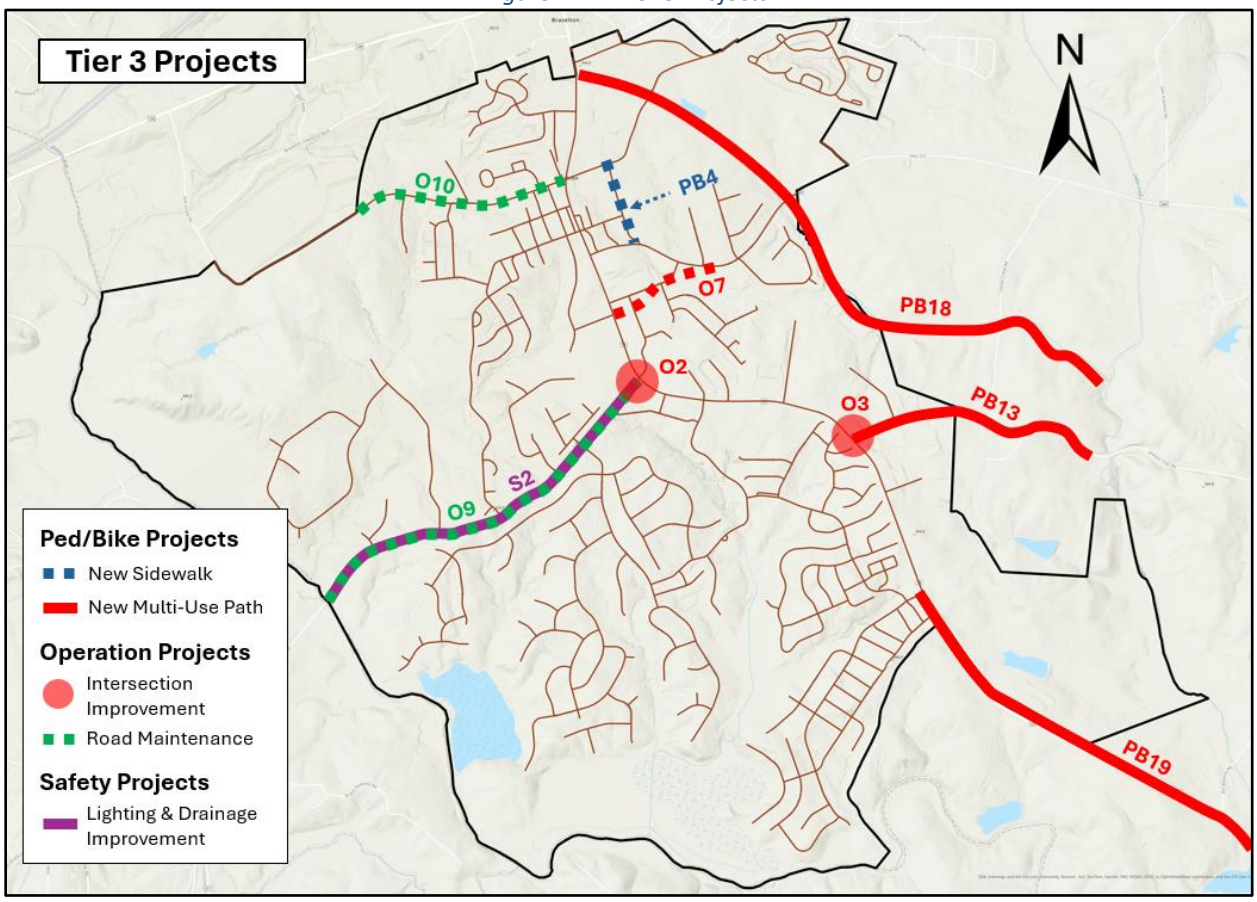


Table 4.7 – Tier 3 Project List

Tier	Score	Project ID	Project Type*	Project Name/Description
Tier 3 Aspirational, Low Priority	16	O2	Operations	SR 53 at Peachtree Road Intersection Improvement
	16	O3	Operations	SR 53 at Jackson Trail Road Intersection Improvement
	16	S2	Safety	Peachtree Road Lighting & Drainage Improvements
	15	PB4	Alt Mode	New Sidewalk on New Street
	15	PB13	Alt Mode	New Multi-Use Path on Jackson Trail Road (Sell's Mill Connector Trail)
	15	PB18	Alt Mode	New Multi-use path east of SR 53 (Hoschton Life Path Alt#1)
	15	PB19	Alt Mode	Jackson County Connector Trail on SR 53
	14	PB20	Alt Mode	Citywide Pedestrian-Level Lighting
	12	O10	Operations	W Jefferson Street Maintenance and Repavement
	10	O9	Operations	Peachtree Road Maintenance and Repavement
	10	O7	Operations	SR 332/Pendergrass Road Realignment

* "Alt Mode" refers to projects improving Alternative Mode of Transportation

4.3. POLICY AND GUIDANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to infrastructure improvements identified in the previous section, updates and development of city-level policies and guidance are recommended to assist with the future city planning.

Unified Development Code (UDC)

Section 618 (Sidewalks and Paths) of the City's Unified Development Code (UDC), last amended in November 2024, mandates new residential and commercial subdivisions to install a minimum of five (5) feet sidewalks along both sides of streets. The UDC also states that "the city may require additional width for the installation of multi-use or golf-cart paths when called for in the comprehensive plan or city improvement plans." While developers currently adhere to UDC requirements, these facilities often terminate at the subdivision's property line, resulting in fragmented segments that fail to connect to major trip generators. To address these connectivity gaps, it is recommended that the City coordinate with developers to ensure new sidewalks or multi-use paths extend to the nearest pedestrian and bicycle facilities proposed in the MTP. This approach ensures that developer-led infrastructure contributes to a cohesive, citywide multimodal network rather than isolated segments.

As the City expands its active transportation network, as outlined in the MTP, especially in Downtown Hoschton and near major trip generators such as grocery stores, parks, and schools, it is recommended that the UDC be amended to include additional access management standards. Excessive or closely spaced driveways and curb cuts create frequent conflict points that degrade the safety and continuity of sidewalks and multi-use paths. To protect these facilities, the UDC should outline specific requirements for driveway locations and encroachment control, including: minimum spacing requirements, driveway consolidation, standardized design.

Figure 4.8 – Multi-Use Path by Alma Farms Subdivision

Personal Transportation Vehicle & Golf Cart Policy

The City of Hoschton's PTV policy (Ordinance No. 25-01), adopted in February 2025, regulates the use of PTVs and golf carts within the City. As the MTP identified and proposes projects to expand multi-use path connectivity and implement traffic calming on major local corridors, the PTV policy, coupled with thorough education campaigns, will ensure the right-of-way is shared safely. Effective education and implementation will be key to preventing conflicts and protecting pedestrians, bicyclists, and other VRUs.

Speed Study

Excessive vehicle speeds were identified as a primary safety concern along several city corridors, creating a significant barrier to the adoption of alternative transportation modes. According to the citation data from the Hoschton Policy Department recorded between October 2024 and June 2025, 34% of the 257 recorded infractions occurred on Peachtree Road and SR 332/Pendergrass Road. These two corridors, alongside SR 53, represent the areas with the highest frequency of speeding-related safety issues.

While the MTP proposes specific traffic calming improvements for these corridors, the following supplemental actions are recommended:

- ***Corridor Speed Study:*** Formal engineering speed studies should be conducted to establish current usage speeds and assist in identifying the most effective mitigation measures.
- ***Functional Reclassification:*** It is recommended that the City evaluate SR 332/Pendergrass Road for functional reclassification. Transitioning this corridor's classification would better reflect its local utilization, supporting a potential speed limit reduction and the implementation of traffic calming measures that prioritize community character over regional throughput. Coordination with GDOT Office of Transportation Data will be needed if the City decides to consider reclassifying SR 332/Pendergrass Road.

Demand-Response Transit Service

Results from the recent public transit survey indicate that a significant deficiency in brand awareness regarding the existing Jackson County Transit service among city residents. However, the data also reveals that substantial latent demand, with approximately 48% of respondents reporting that they have either previously utilized the service or inclined to do so in the future. To capitalize on this interest and encourage a modal shift from personal vehicles to public transportation, it is recommended that the City to consider implementing the following strategies:

- Launch a sustained promotional campaign across the City's official website and social media platforms to educate the public on service availability and the benefits of on-demand transit. The Mayor of Hoschton hosted a Q&A session on March 26, 2026 to share information regarding Jackson County Transit and address any questions and concerns about the existing services.
- Coordinate with Jackson County to integrate transit services into City-sponsored events, providing a practical "first-use" opportunity for residents.
- Initiate formal discussion regarding the implementation of weekend service hours once a consistent threshold of demand has been identified and verified. Jackson County Comprehensive Plan 2055 recommends conducting a six-month pilot program of Saturday service for a 9-hour span.

Figure 4.9 – Jackson County Transit Major's Q&A Session hosted on March 26, 2026 (Source: Braselton News Today)


HOSCHTON
Farmers
MARKET
SATURDAY
10am-1pm

5. FUNDING SOURCES

5. FUNDING SOURCES

Local governments in the State of Georgia have access to diverse range of transportation funding mechanisms. The following sections detail the federal, state, and local revenue streams available to support the priority projects identified in this Master Transportation Plan.

5.1. FEDERAL FUNDING

Federal fundings are typically administered through the Metropolitan Planning process and via partnership with GDOT. While federal funds involve more stringent regulatory requirements, including environmental reviews and specific procurement standards, they are essential for high-impact regional projects. The recent federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) continues to offer grant opportunities directly to local governments. Potential grants that the City of Hoschton can target from IIJA are as follows:

- ***Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)***
    - The grant funds the development of a comprehensive Safety Action Plan (SAP) to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The fund supports planning, design, and development activities in support of SAP, and can also be used to carry out projects and strategies identified in SAP.
    - The grant is categorized into two types: Action Plan Grants and Implementation Grants. Implementation grants can be used towards implementation activities, such as low-cost roadway safety treatments, identifying and correcting common risks, transforming a roadway corridor, and installing pedestrian safety enhancement and closing network gaps.
- ***Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods***
    - The grant supports pilot programs for planning and capital investments to restore community connectivity by mitigating or removing barriers to community connectivity, mobility, access, or economic development.
    - Eligible projects include high-quality public transportation, infrastructure removal, pedestrian walkways and overpasses, capping and lids, linear parks and trails, roadway redesigns and complete streets conversions, and main street revitalization.
- ***Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)***
    - Flexible funding that may be used for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects. The STBG program funding is made available through the State transportation agencies.
- ***Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)***
    - Provides funds for projects designed to reduce transportation emissions on on-road highway sources.
    - Eligible projects include, but not limited to public transportation project, transportation alternative (e.g., non-motorized transportation facilities), congestion management technologies, projects to replace street lighting and traffic control devices with energy-efficient alternatives, and efforts to reduce the environmental and community impacts of freight movement.

5.2. STATE FUNDING

State-level support in Georgia is primarily driven by the Transportation Funding Act of 2015 (House Bill 170), which supports transportation projects through gas taxes. The Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) program, established by GDOT in 2010, remains one of the most reliable state funding sources. These funds can support projects such as, resurfacing, intersection safety improvements, culvert/bridge improvements. The fund is distributed to local governments based on a formula including key stats of population and road mileage. The program requires a local match, which the City must incorporate into its annual budget.

New for the 2026 cycle, Local Road Administration (LRA) Assistance Funds administered and distributed using GDOT's LMIG Application System. Eligible activities and projects for LRA funds are the same as those in the LMIG program and LRA funds do not require local match. Example projects eligible for this fund include, preliminary engineering, construction supervision and inspection, patching, leveling and resurfacing a paved road, replacing storm drain pipe or culverts, intersection improvements, turn lanes, and sidewalk adjacent to a public roadway or street. According to GDOT, the FY 2026 LRA Formula amount of the City of Hoschton is $79,512.81.

Other state funding sources available from GDOT include:

- ***Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Safety Equipment Purchase Program (SEPP)***
    - Opportunity for safety equipment (Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon, speed feedback signs, advanced warning signs, supplemental signal heads, Flashing Yellow Arrow, etc.) using federal funds and installed using local maintenance forces.
- ***Off System Safety (OS) Program***
    - Funds from federal safety program dispersed by Local Grants Office using data driven approach based off crash data in each GDOT District. Eligible projects include, low-cost countermeasures, striping/sign installation or replacement, installation of raised pavement markers/rumble strips
- ***Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)***
    - Opportunity for non-traditional transportation-related activities including pedestrian and bicycle facilities and streetscape projects.
- ***Transportation Enhancement (TE)***
    - Federal Aid Reimbursement Program for project such as provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicycles, scenic or historic highway programs, landscaping and other scenic beautification, historic preservation.
- ***Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank (GTIB)***
    - A grant and low-interest loan program administered by the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA). It provides loans and grants to highly competitive transportation projects that enhance mobility and driven economic development in local communities.
    - In 2025, $26.5 million was approved to fund 13 transportation infrastructure projects across the state, including the Mount Vernon Roadway Connectivity project, Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID) for the Cumberland Sweep, and SR 53 at Mulberry Road roundabout in Barrow County.

5.3. LOCAL FUNDING

Local funding provides the City with the greatest flexibility in project selecting and timing. The Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) has been available in Georgia for several decades as a one-percent sales tax for capital improvements, including transportation, parks, public safety, libraries, public utilities, government buildings and other facilities. While some local jurisdictions can allocate a large portion of SPLOST funds to transportation, others must spread those dollars to many competing capital needs.

To address this problem, the Georgia Legislature passed Senate Bill 369 in 2016, authorizing SPLOST funds dedicated to transportation purposes (TSPLOST). This allows counties and municipalities to dedicate funding specifically to their most pressing transportation needs. On November 4, 2025, Jackson County voters approved a TSPLOST that expected to generate $200 million for transportation improvement projects. From this, Hoschton is projected to receive 2.3% ($4.6 million) to support its identified transportation improvements.

In addition, the City can utilize General Obligation (GO) bonds to fund a variety of transportation improvement projects identified in The plan. The issuance of GO bonds must be authorized by the voters through approval of a bond referendum.

The City should also consider grant programs that do not focus exclusively on transportation, but tie into livability and community development. One such example is the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Community Challenge grant program. This grant program is part of the nationwide AARP Livable Communities initiative, which helps communities to make immediate improvements and long-term progress for residents of all ages. Since its debut in 2017, the AARP Community Challenge has invested $24.3 million in 2,100 livability projects, focusing on the needs of adults age 50 or older. The grant is available to non-profit organizations and local government entities for projects that support permanent physical improvements, temporary demonstrations that lead to long-term change, and new, innovative programming pilots of services.

6. CONCLUSION

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While the City of Hoschton has experienced tremendous population growth over the past several decades, its transportation infrastructure has struggled to keep pace to support the growth. This gap has resulted in significant operational and safety deficiencies throughout the City. To mitigate high reliance on SR 53 and personal motor vehicles, the City has identified improving local connectivity and providing alternative transportation modes as its primary strategic goals.

To address these concerns, the Hoschton Master Transportation Plan serves as both a direct reflection of the community's aspirations and a technical roadmap for the City's future. By synthesizing data from existing conditions, previous regional studies, and robust public input, the plan identified 34 priority projects across three key categories: Active Transportation and Alternative Modes, Safety, and Operational improvements. These projects are designed to transform Hoschton's infrastructure into a cohesive, multimodal system. Each project was scored and prioritized based on the criteria aligning with the vision and goals of the MTP, including:

- Mode Choices & Accessibility;
- Traffic Operations & Safety;
- Economic Vitality;
- Financial Stewardship;
- Community Livability and Small-Town Atmosphere; and
- Public Input

Beyond infrastructure improvement projects, the MTP provides essential policy and guidance recommendations, including updates to the Unified Development Code, the successful implementation and public education of the Personal Transportation Vehicle Ordinance, potential corridor speed studies, and the promotion of Jackson County Transit to support broader public transportation usage.

The successful implementation of this plan will require seamless coordination between the City, regional partners like the GHMPO, state agencies such as GDOT, and the residents of Hoschton. As state and federal funding becomes increasingly competitive to support transportation improvements, the City leadership must remain strategic and selective in prioritizing projects of funding considerations. By leveraging various funding sources, the City can transition from fragmented local segments to a fully connected network.

Ultimately, the MTP provides the "shovel-ready" framework necessary to enhance safety for all road users, stimulate economic vitality in the downtown core, and preserve Hoschton's unique character for decades to come. As a living document, this Plan will be updated periodically to reflect new data, evolving guidance, and the shifting policy needs of the City.

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Policy Committee

Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 10:00 AM
Commission Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Hall County Government Center
2875 Browns Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30504

AGENDA

1. **Welcome – Chairman David Gibbs, Chair**

2. **Approval of the February 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

3. **Updates from the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**

4. **Approval of Amendment #7 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) / Amendment #1 to the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**

5. **Approval of the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Road**

6. **Approval of the Hoschton Transportation Plan**

7. **Other**

8. **Jurisdiction and Agency Reports**
   - City of Flowery Branch
   - City of Gainesville
   - City of Oakwood
   - City of Buford
   - City of Lula
   - City of Hoschton

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- Town of Braselton
- Federal Highway Administration
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
- Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
- Hall Area Transit
- Hall County
- Jackson County

9. Public Comment

10. Upcoming Meeting Date: August 11, 2026

11. Adjourn

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