

BELLS FERRY
LCI PLAN UPDATE

Final Plan & Report

LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE PLAN UPDATE | MAY 2026

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**Special thanks to Rose Creek Library and staff for supporting the planning and engagement processes.*

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01

Introduction

A Corridor in Transition

The Bells Ferry Road corridor represents one of Cherokee County's most rapidly changing landscapes. Representatives from the County gathered in 2025 for the groundbreaking of the Bells Ferry Road widening north of the LCI Plan study area. An update to the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Plan for the corridor is more important now than ever.



Cherokee County broke ground on the Bells Ferry Road widening in 2025.

Introduction

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) is a grant program administered by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), focused on creating compact, walkable communities that promote a mix of uses, reduce vehicle trips, and support sustainable mobility options. Since its launch in 2000, the program has emphasized community-driven planning to enhance accessibility to jobs and services, encourage safe and healthy lifestyles, and improve overall quality of life in the metro Atlanta region.

Plan Purpose

This report serves as an update to the 2006 Bells Ferry Corridor LCI Plan and is locally funded by Cherokee County, reflecting the County's strategic commitment to proactively managing growth along the Bells Ferry Road corridor – in the spirit of the LCI program. The study seeks to analyze demographic, economic, land use, transportation, and multimodal conditions to guide future development in a manner that aligns with community priorities and regional strategies – as well as the LCI Program's overall vision and goals.

Study Area Overview & Context

The Bells Ferry LCI study area covers approximately a three-mile segment along Bells Ferry Road, from Kellogg Creek Road in the north to south of Highway 92, towards the Cherokee-Cobb County line (see **Figure 1**). This area includes a variety of commercial, residential, and institutional land uses. The study area is characterized by diverse demographics, moderate population density, and evolving land use patterns that present both challenges and opportunities for creating a more connected, vibrant, and transit-ready corridor.

Since the last (2006) plan, the Bells Ferry Road has experienced demographic shifts, undergoing growth of racially and ethnically diverse populations with significant numbers of families and young adults. The area's housing stock tends to be older, with elevated renter occupancy compared to the rest of the County, and notable affordability challenges. Retail and commercial centers such as those around the intersection of Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92 remain key activity hubs, representing a substantial share of the County's retail inventory and underscoring the corridor's importance for local and regional economic vitality.

Purpose

To update the 2006 Bells Ferry LCI Plan, as part of a larger effort to proactively manage growth along and within the Bells Ferry Road corridor.

Goals

To analyze demographic, economic, land use, transportation, and multimodal conditions along the corridor to guide future development in a community-driven way.



An art installation in Patriots Park near the Bells Ferry Road corridor.

In transportation terms, the corridor faces congestion and multimodal connectivity gaps, with multiple capital projects underway or planned, such as a road widening, a bridge replacement across Lake Allatoona, and the development of multi-use trails to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access. Additionally, a microtransit feasibility study aligns transit service recommendations with projected growth and community needs to support mobility improvements within the corridor.

This update integrates previous study findings with current market conditions, transit feasibility, and future development scenario analyses to inform a comprehensive corridor vision and action plan.

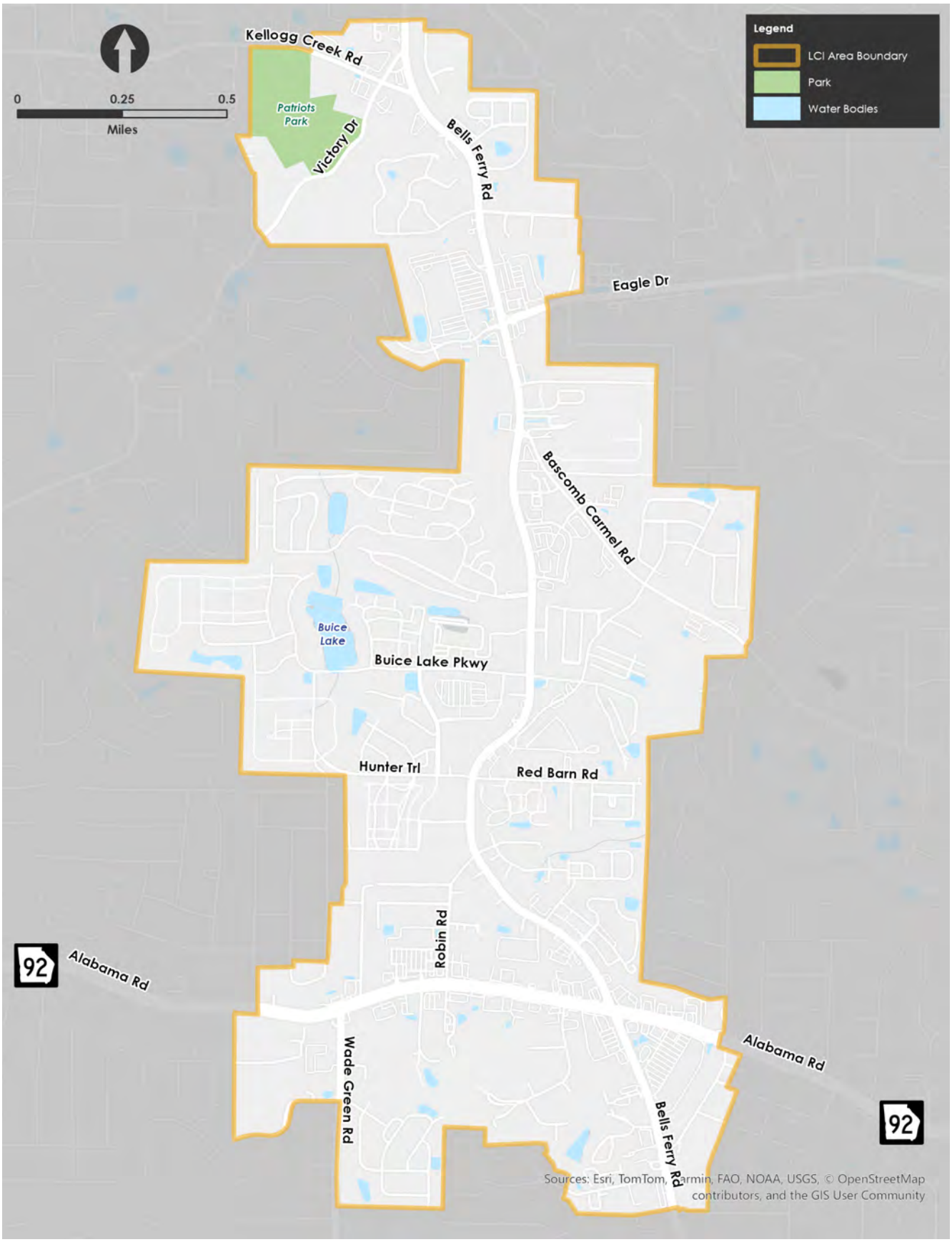


Figure 1 Bells Ferry LCI Study Area

02

Existing Conditions

Driving Diversity

Despite some suburban characteristics, the Bells Ferry LCI study area is one of the most diverse locations within Cherokee County. Numerous Hispanic-owned small businesses can be found throughout the corridor - including “El Don”, a regular food truck parked at the gas station near the Eagle Drive intersection.



El Don is a regular food truck parked at the intersection of Eagle Drive and Bells Ferry Road.

Existing Conditions

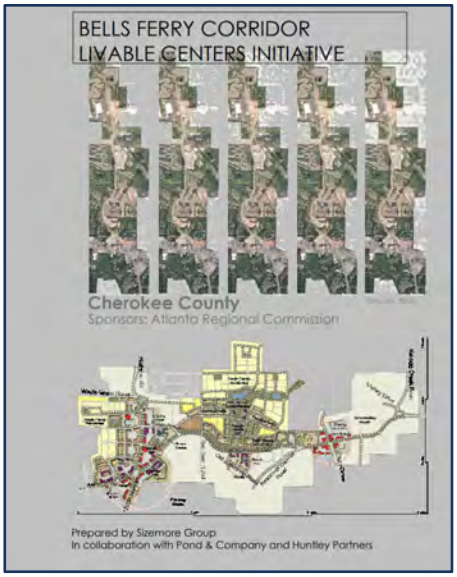
This section highlights key takeaways from the project's previously completed Existing Conditions Report (a copy of which can be found in this document's appendices). This section of the report details the corridor's existing economic, transportation and demographic conditions, as a means of laying the groundwork for potential future projects and policies.

Plan, Study, & Project Review

Transportation improvements and development within the LCI area are situated within the context of existing plans and studies, which are summarized in the following sections. Relevant plans and studies include the previous Bells Ferry Corridor LCI studies and reports of accomplishments, City of Woodstock plans, countywide plans, and regional plans.



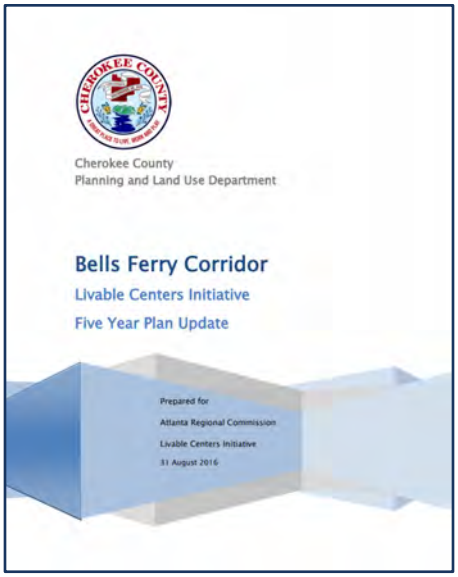
Community Stakeholders conducted walking tours of the study corridor.



Bells Ferry Corridor LCI Study (2006)

Adopted in 2006, the Bells Ferry Corridor LCI Study identified opportunities for redevelopment and revitalization. The study identifies challenges such as disinvestment in the area; underutilized and declining commercial developments (greyfields); and isolated, sprawling development patterns that strain infrastructure and limit accessibility.

Goals of the study include creating a unique and vibrant community character; enhancing mobility and connectivity (particularly for alternative modes of travel); encouraging appropriate land uses and development patterns; and facilitating access to jobs and housing. The study culminates in a concept plan for the study area; along with recommendations related to land use and zoning, transportation, and urban design; which culminate with an action plan.

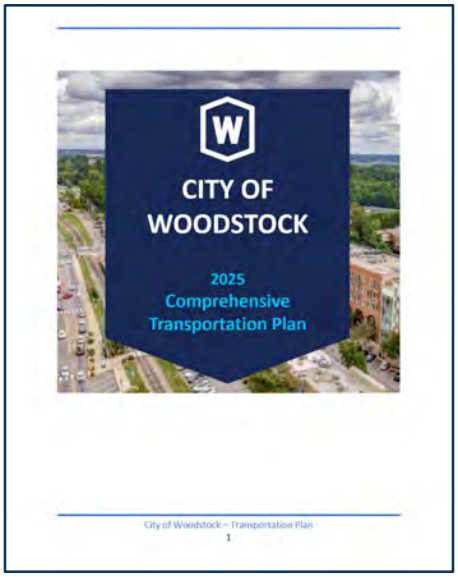


Bells Ferry Corridor LCI Plan Update (2016)

To assess progress, Cherokee County prepared an update to the 2006 Bells Ferry Corridor LCI Study in 2016. This update took stock of changes in the area since the initial study and adjusted strategies and objectives accordingly. The update guided additional implementation of the LCI area's recommendations and strategies based on priorities in 2016.

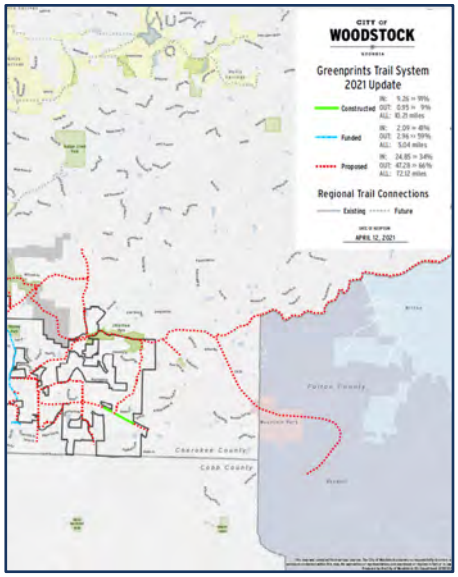
Since 2006, significant transportation improvements were completed, a new fire station was approved for construction within the LCI area, and construction on Patriots Park started in 2015.

The update found that the economic development initiatives did not progress due to unsuccessful ballot initiatives and funding limitations. Planning and zoning initiatives relating to land use, zoning regulations, and design guidelines were completed.



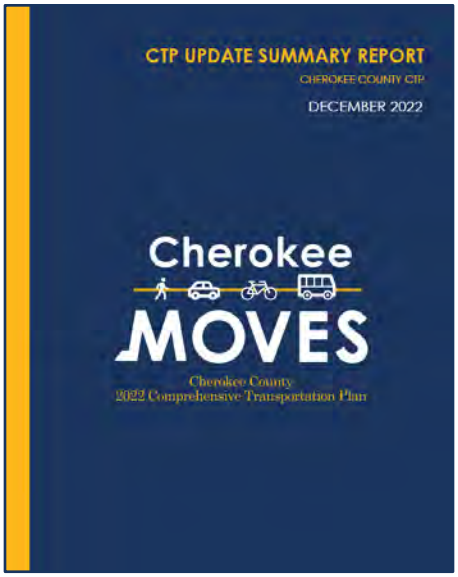
Woodstock Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2025)

The City of Woodstock's 2025 CTP is intended to plan and forecast future transportation improvement projects, such as roadway, sidewalk, and parking improvements. The CTP notes that traffic conditions on Bells Ferry Road are primarily influenced by its proximity to Interstate 575. Bells Ferry Road is identified as a secondary periphery corridor, reflecting its strong impact on city flows despite its location outside city limits. While north-south flow is supported by I-575, east-west travelers have limited options. The plan identifies a strain on east-west corridors in the area, particularly the Eagle Drive/Towne Lake Parkway/Arnold Mill Road corridor. Hwy 92 is identified as the primary east-west corridor.



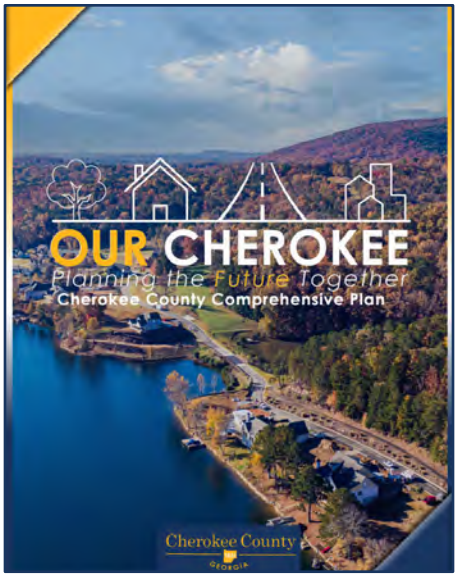
Woodstock Greenprints Trail System Update (2021)

In 2021, the City of Woodstock updated its vision for an ambitious, regionally connected network of trails throughout the city. The Greenprints Trail System Update proposed a trail branching off from the Towne Lake Pass Trail just west of Woodstock Middle School, winding through primarily residential areas east of the Bells Ferry Road corridor. The trail reaches Highway 92 approximately one mile east of the Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92 intersection and continues east along the Highway 92 corridor. The plan also proposed the Towne Lake Extension Trail along Towne Lake Parkway, starting from an existing path on Eagle Drive and continuing to Hobgood Park on Bells Ferry Road (just north of the LCI study area). The Towne Lake Extension Trail, when completed, will connect the ongoing Bells Ferry Road multi-use path into the City of Woodstock's Greenprints Trail System.



Cherokee Moves (2022)

Cherokee Moves, the County's most recent iteration of their Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), builds on the 2016 CTP to establish a clear transportation vision through 2050 in collaboration with municipalities and the ARC. Short-term recommendations for the Bells Ferry LCI study area include pedestrian and cyclist detection at Highway 92 and Bells Ferry Road as well as operational improvements on Highway 92 between Bells Ferry Road and I-575. Studying freight capacity on Highway 92 from Woodstock Road to Bells Ferry Road and safety on Kellogg Creek Road from Old Alabama Road to Bells Ferry Road are long-term recommendations.



Our Cherokee (2023)

Adopted in 2023, the County's Comprehensive Plan designates 13 areas as Character Areas on its countywide future development map. Each area consists of places that have existing or intended common characteristics, such as a common form of development; land use pattern; design elements; or sense of place. Character Area guidance complements the future development map by identifying a vision and goals and providing additional development guidance for unique areas, including the Bells Ferry LCI Character Area. The Community Work Plan (CWP) includes identification, funding, and implementation of Bells Ferry LCI projects and updating the Bells Ferry LCI Plan.



Cherokee County Safety Action Plan (2025)

Cherokee County adopted a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan in March 2025 that examines roadway safety trends across all roads within the County. Stemming from this plan is a target of achieving zero traffic deaths by 2040 which requires a 6.5% annual reduction in fatalities. The plan includes a series of recommended intersection and corridor projects within the LCI area, including adding bicycle facilities and addressing access management along Bells Ferry Road.



Cherokee County Greenways & Trails Master Plan (2025)

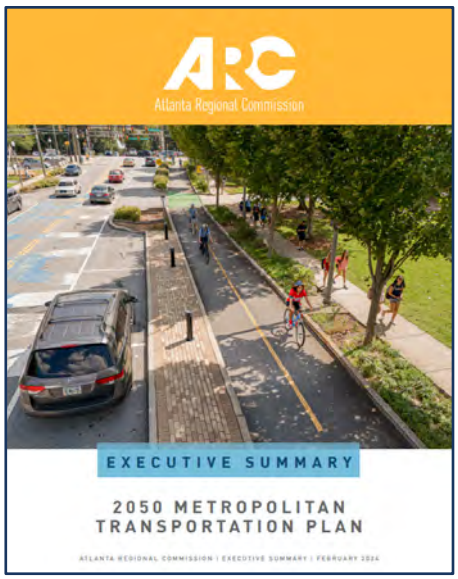
The inaugural Cherokee County Greenways and Trails Master Plan weaves together various local visions for trail and greenway networks throughout the County into an encompassing countywide vision for Cherokee's network of greenways and trails. Supporting ARC's Regional Trail Vision, the master plan seeks to fill gaps in the existing network and provide access to activity centers and recreational destinations. The plan identifies several priority projects in the Bells Ferry Road LCI area. In the short-term, the plan recommends implementation of a sidepath along Bells Ferry Road and sidewalks along Old Bascomb Road and Old Bascomb Court for implementation in the next ten years. The plan identifies sidewalks on Bascomb Carmel Road for implementation in the next ten to twenty years. In the long-term, a sidepath connecting Bells Ferry Road to the Noonday Creek Trail (currently under construction) is envisioned along Highway 92.



Walk, Bike, Thrive!

ARC's bike-pedestrian plan, titled Walk, Bike, Thrive!, provides guidance for increasing walking and bicycling opportunities within metro Atlanta, through establishing a regional vision to support local initiatives and decision-making. This plan focuses on actively supporting cities and counties striving for increased active transportation, offering an active transportation toolkit with guidance for implementing high-quality active transportation systems.

The plan provides a vision for a Regional Trail Network, including a connection to Cherokee County via Noonday Creek Trail. The plan distills opportunities to connect the Bells Ferry LCI study area to other networks by expanding existing trails to fill gaps.



2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

ARC's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) outlines the long-term vision for transportation investments across the 21-county planning area through the year 2050. The MTP identifies Cherokee County as one of the fastest-growing parts of the region, expected to see significant increases in both population and employment by 2050. The plan identifies Bells Ferry Road as a key arterial with increasing demand and multimodal potential.

A major project highlighted in the plan for Cherokee County is the widening and multimodal upgrade of Bells Ferry Road (from Victory Drive to Port Victoria Way), which is currently underway.

The MTP also proposes several upgrades to the I-575 corridor in the county. While this corridor lies outside of the LCI area, operational improvements are expected to impact Bells Ferry Road. Improved regional mobility from these investments will also support economic development by providing better access to employment hubs.



On-Going Projects

Ongoing projects include those that are partially or fully funded, including projects currently under construction. These projects were identified using GDOT's project search portal, ARC's TIP project list, and the county's T-SPLOST interactive map.

Ongoing projects in the LCI area are shown in Table 1. Projects in the pre-construction phase have funding allocated for one or more phases. These projects advance toward construction based on economic and transportation demand forecasts, potential funding, policies and resources, and coordination with counties and cities.

Table 1 Ongoing Projects

NAME	PROJECT ID	SOURCE	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Bells Ferry Rd Multi-Use Path (Phase I)	PI No. 0019205, SPLOST ID: 83125 ARC ID: CH-350	GDOT; T-SPLOST; ARC TIP	Add a 10-ft wide multi-use path and crosswalks along Bells Ferry Rd	Bells Ferry Rd from Robin Rd to Eagle Dr	**PROGRAMMED (CST: 2028)**
Bells Ferry Rd Multi-Use Path (Phase II)	PI No. 0021532	GDOT	Add a 10-ft wide multi-use path and crosswalks along Bells Ferry Rd	Bells Ferry Rd from Cobb County line to Robin Rd	**PROGRAMMED (CST: 2031)**
Bells Ferry Rd Multi-Use Path (Phase III)	PI No. 0021533	GDOT	Add a 10-ft wide multi-use path and crosswalks along Bells Ferry Rd	Bells Ferry Rd from Eagle Dr to Victory Dr	**PROGRAMMED (CST: 2031)**
Robin Rd Reconstruction	SPLOST ID: T-038	T-SPLOST	Reconstruct the length of Robin Rd	Robin Rd from Bells Ferry Rd to Hwy 92	**PROGRAMMED (CST: TBD)**
Bells Ferry Rd Widening	PI NO. 0013526 ARC ID: CH-010A2	GDOT; T-SPLOST	Widening a portion of Bells Ferry Rd to four lanes and constructing a multi-use path	Bells Ferry Rd from Southfork Way to Port Victoria Way	**UNDER CONSTRUCTION (OPEN: 2028)**
Hwy 92 at Wade Green Rd Intersection Improvements	PI No. 0019702, SPLOST ID: T-044	GDOT; T-SPLOST	Capacity and operational improvements at Hwy 92 at Wade Green Rd; additional eastbound and westbound through lanes along Hwy 92 between Wade Green Rd and Bells Ferry Rd	Hwy 92 and Wade Green Rd	**PROGRAMMED (CST: TBD)**
Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Implementation	SPLOST ID: T-039	T-SPLOST	Safety and operational improvements at key intersections along Hwy 92	Hwy 92 from Northpoint Pkwy to Wiley Bridge Rd at various intersections	**PROGRAMMED (CST: TBD)**
Towne Lake Pkwy/ Eagle Dr First Responder Signal Prioritization	SPLOST ID: T-062	T-SPLOST	This project will upgrade traffic signals along the Towne Lake Parkway/ Eagle Drive corridor to provide signal preemption to first responders and mast arms where appropriate.	Main St/Arnold Mill Rd to Bells Ferry Rd	**PROGRAMMED (CST: TBD)**

Economic Market Conditions

Household Characteristics

The Bells Ferry LCI Study Area is home to approximately 6,200 residents across around 2,244 households, comprising roughly 8% of the broader Primary Market Area (PMA) population of about 74,000. The average household size is approximately 2.7 persons, slightly smaller than Cherokee County's average. The community exhibits notable demographic diversity, with 16% identifying as Hispanic or Latino, 15% as Black or African American, alongside a majority White population. The age distribution is skewed toward younger adults aged 20-35 years, approximately 21.7% of residents, higher than countywide shares, and families with children constitute a sizable segment, with children present in about 37% of households in the PMA.



The Knox multi-family development under construction near Bells Ferry Road.

shares, and families with children constitute a sizable segment, with children present in about 37% of households in the PMA.

Income distribution within the PMA reflects a strong middle-income presence, with average household income just under $99,000 (see Table 2: Household Income). This is slightly below the Cherokee County median of $105,442, attributed mainly to fewer high-income households earning $200,000 or more (10% in the PMA vs. 16% in the county). Nevertheless, incomes in the PMA remain well above the Atlanta Metro median of $86,338, indicating relative economic strength. Despite this, housing affordability challenges persist, particularly among renters—59% of renters in the LCI Study Area and 51% in the PMA are cost burdened, spending at least 30% of income on housing, with 19% and 26% respectively severely burdened (over 50% expenditure on housing costs). These figures signal the need for targeted affordable housing strategies and diversified housing stock to serve a range of incomes.

Housing Inventory

The housing market within the Bells Ferry Road corridor is diverse but leans toward older housing stock and greater renter occupancy compared to the county average. There are approximately 2,375 housing units in the LCI Study Area, with a higher renter occupancy rate of 39%, compared with 23% countywide, consistent with the area's more urbanized multifamily and attached residential neighborhoods. Multifamily rental vacancy rates stand around 7%, indicative of a relatively tight rental market supporting stable rent growth.

Single-family homes dominate Cherokee County's residential composition, though values and sales prices in the LCI Study Area and PMA tend to be lower than county averages, contributing to relative affordability that has attracted younger households and families. The median single-family home sale price in Cherokee County reached $528,000 in June 2025, marking a 1.5% increase over the previous year and nearly a 60% rise since 2020 (see Table 3: Home Values). Historic home value appreciation in the PMA has been significant—values increased approximately 86% from 2013 to 2023, whereas the countywide rate was higher than 100%, highlighting a lag in the corridor but also opportunity for growth with strategic reinvestment and redevelopment.

Employment Characteristics

The PMA encompasses roughly 19,100 jobs, accounting for about 28% of Cherokee County's total employment base of nearly 68,000 positions (see Table 4: Projected Employment). Employment is primarily concentrated in retail trade, accommodation and food services, healthcare, and administrative support sectors. These sectors often correspond to medium- and lower-wage jobs relative to county averages, underscoring a workforce and economic profile that blends service-oriented employment with regional commuting patterns.

While not one of the county's primary employment centers, the Bells Ferry corridor presents opportunities for job growth, including the potential to retain and attract more local employment aligned with residential growth. Employment projections forecast steady increases through 2050, paralleling population growth and building towards a more balanced live-work environment.

Commercial Property Inventory

Retail space within the Bells Ferry LCI Area constitutes about 9% of Cherokee County's total retail inventory, concentrated primarily in large commercial hubs such as Bells Ferry Landing and Cherokee Corners. The retail inventory is characterized mostly by 3-star rated buildings (54%), with a significant quarter rated 2-star, indicating aging properties and redevelopment potential. More than half of the retail inventory was constructed since 2000. Retail vacancy rates remain low in both the LCI Area and County overall, reflecting strong demand, while retail construction projects have not recovered following the COVID-19 pandemic, contributing to rising rents and constrained availability.

Consumer spending within the PMA is forecasted to increase across multiple retail sectors over the next five years, with particularly strong growth anticipated in Apparel & Services, Entertainment & Recreation, and Food (both at home and away from home). This projected growth supports opportunities for expanded retail offerings and revitalization within corridor nodes.

The office market in Cherokee County is relatively small and aging. The LCI Study Area has about 148,000 square feet of office space, mostly Class C buildings dating from the 1980s, with no Class A office currently present. Countywide office vacancy is low at around 3%, but rental rates are below county averages reflecting building quality. Office construction has increased somewhat post-pandemic, with over 150,000 square feet underway in 2024 and 2025 countywide, though none within the LCI area to-date. This suggests latent demand for new office space that could support economic diversification and complement residential and retail development.





Diamond Status

Cherokee County continues to invest in the Bells Ferry corridor's diverse social groups and communities. Patriots Park officially opened on March 21, 2017 - another one of the key County-led projects to come online since the last Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update in 2016. Patriots Park is home to one of the region's premier recreation facilities designed specifically to accommodate varying abilities and needs. It features an inclusive playground, specifically crafted to accommodate children with special needs, ensuring that every family can partake in the joy of outdoor play. It's also the home of the North Metro Miracle League - an adaptive baseball league serving the special needs community of the northwest Atlanta metropolitan area.

Table 2 Household Income

INCOME BRACKET	PRIMARY MARKET AREA (%)	CHEROKEE COUNTY (%)	ATLANTA METRO (%)
Less than $10,000	4.0%	3.0%	4.0%
$10,000 - $24,999	6.0%	6.0%	8.0%
$25,000 - $34,999	5.0%	5.0%	6.0%
$35,000 - $49,999	7.0%	7.0%	10.0%
$50,000 - $74,999	15.0%	14.0%	15.0%
$75,000 - $99,999	16.0%	13.0%	13.0%
$100,000 - $149,999	21.0%	23.0%	18.0%
$150,000 - $199,999	15.0%	15.0%	10.0%
$200,000+	10.0%	16.0%	14.0%
Median Household Income	$98,998	$105,442	$86,338

Table 3 Home Values

YEAR	CHEROKEE CO MEDIAN SINGLE-FAMILY HOME VALUE	PERCENT CHANGE
2013	$190,040	-
2018	$234,300	+23.06%
2023	$389,800	+66.37%

Table 4 Projected Employment

YEAR	PRIMARY MARKET AREA	CHEROKEE COUNTY	ATLANTA METRO AREA
2020	70,854	253,780	5,947,008
2030	81,325	309,317	6,680,611
2040	87,288	350,815	7,240,022
2050	93,008	389,148	7,735,063



Building on Success

In the summer of 2025, Cherokee County officials gathered to break ground on the Bells Ferry Rd bridge replacement over the LIttle River



Recent townhome development along Bells Ferry Road.

Land Use & Development Patterns





Existing Land Use & Zoning

The Bells Ferry LCI study area encompasses approximately 1,750 acres. Existing land use is shown in Figure 2 and zoning in Figure 3. The study area is primarily characterized by varying densities of residential development. Pockets of commercial development along the Bells Ferry Road corridor are centered on its intersections with Highway 92, Eagle Drive, Bascomb Carmel Road, and Kellogg Creek Road. Patriots Park offers a public space for outdoor recreation within the study area.

Existing land use patterns reflect a predominantly suburban, automobile-oriented development form, with limited integration between different use types – though that character is beginning to change. Architectural styles are fragmented and predominantly generic.









Vehicle-oriented developments are common within the corridor - including RV storage, car washes, and more.





There are several places throughout the corridor where developments have stalled or ceased to make progress.

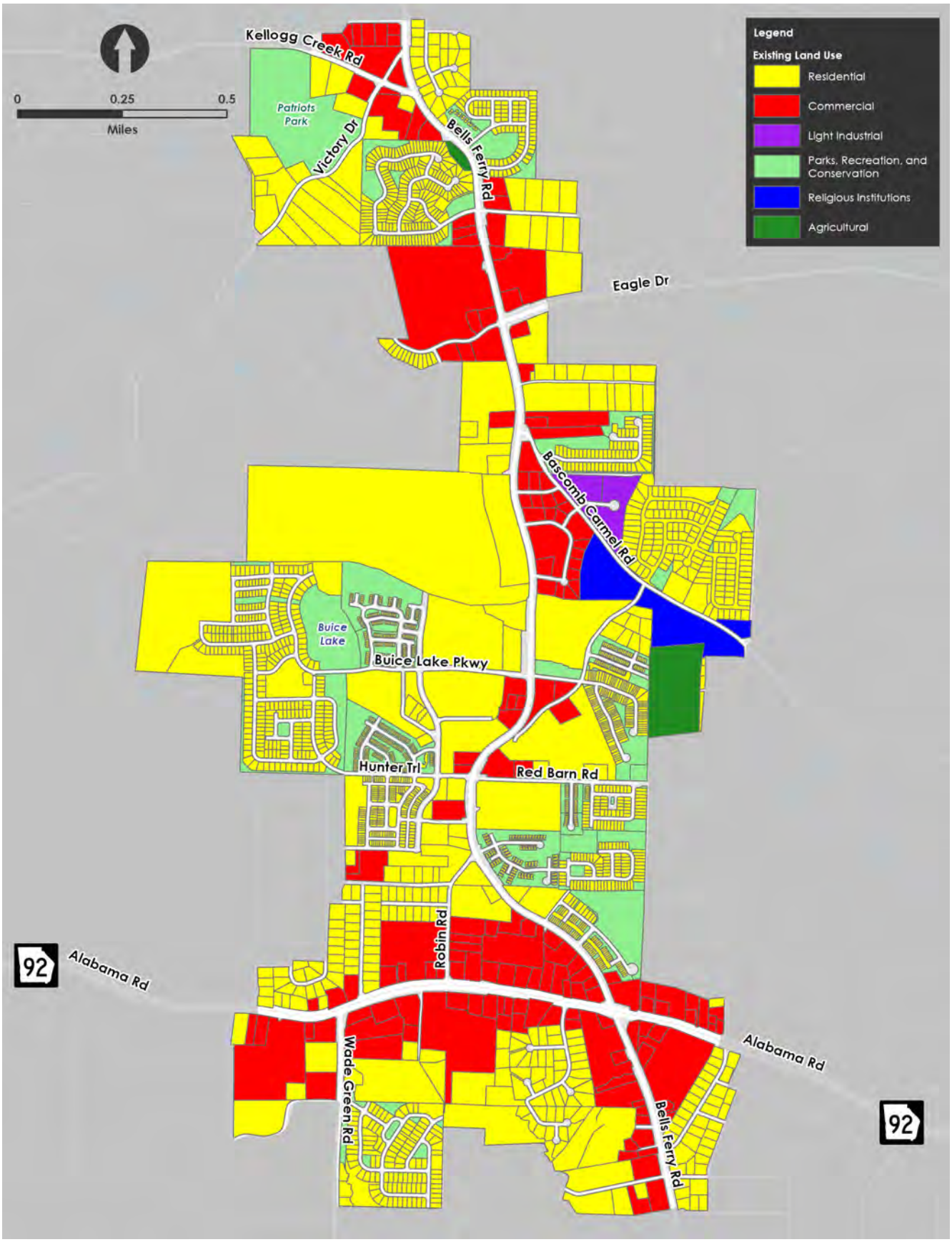


Figure 2 Existing Land Use

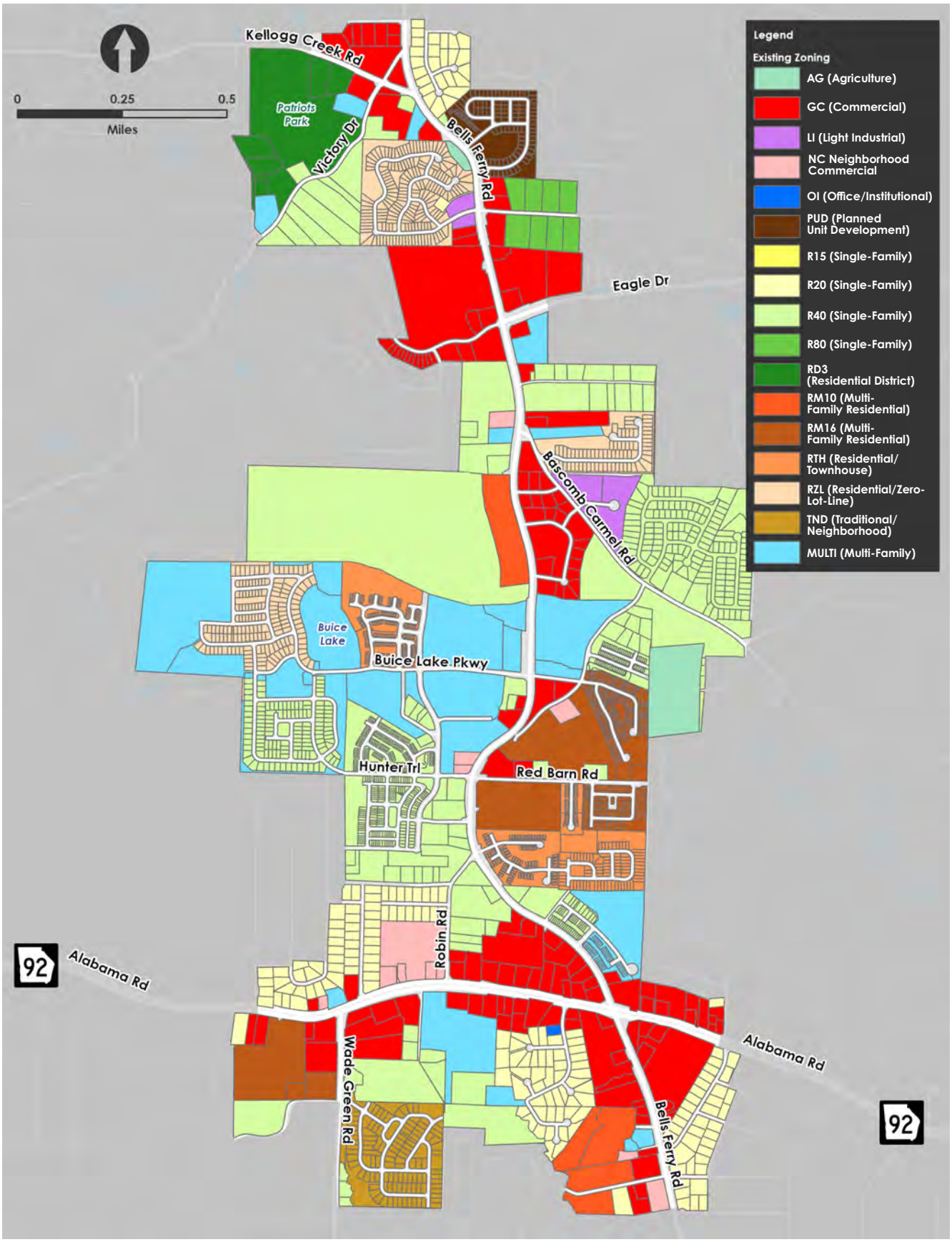


Figure 3 Existing Zoning



Engagement activities at the Friendsgiving celebration.

Bells Ferry Community Design District

Cherokee County has established an overlay zoning district spanning the LCI area in Article 16.2 of their Code of Ordinances. The Bells Ferry Community Design District supplements existing zoning regulations to implement the community vision born out of previous LCI studies, with the goal of promoting high-grade development and quality of life. The overlay is enhanced by the Bells Ferry LCI Community Design Guidelines, developed in 2006.

Future Land Use

Bells Ferry Character Area

The Cherokee County 2023 Comprehensive Plan assigns the Bells Ferry LCI area its own future land use designation, reflecting an intent to foster a cohesive form and sense of place in the study area. The Bells Ferry LCI Character Area is conceptualized as a gateway into the County with a vibrant array of compact and connected development and greenspace.

The strategies outlined for the Bells Ferry LCI Character Area include promoting active transportation options; encouraging appropriate development densities for a vibrant character; and providing diverse housing opportunities for residents of different ages and incomes. Recognizing infrastructure needs like urban street design and water and sewer to support the vision, the plan recommends future development types, including civic spaces (like pocket parks), medium-density housing, mixed-use buildings, and single-use commercial development in the area.

City of Woodstock Growth Boundary

Cherokee County and the City of Woodstock have formally established a growth boundary agreement. While the growth area does not overlap with the Bells Ferry LCI study area (as shown in Figure 4), the growth boundary touches the eastern LCI area boundary along Highway 92 and Eagle Drive. Regardless of proximity, Woodstock's growth boundary location outside of the Bells Ferry LCI study area means that the corridor should not experience any municipal annexations unless the agreement is amended or revised. The agreement is scheduled to expire in June 2028, unless extended or renewed by mutual consent.

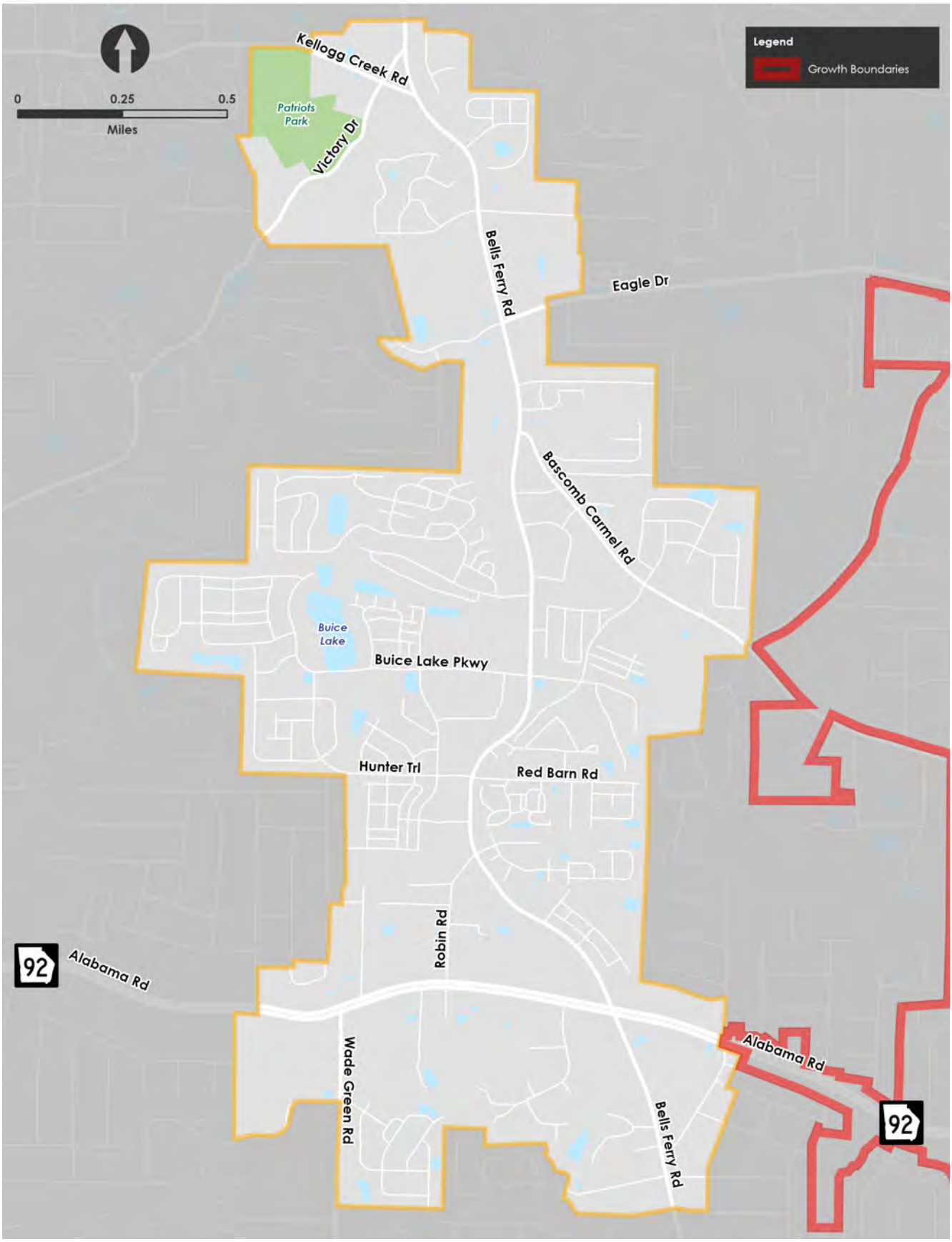


Figure 4 City of Woodstock Growth Boundary



Developing an Eye for Growth

Development activity has slowed in recent years from the frenetic pace it took just before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Cherokee County Office of Economic Development actively markets a number of sites near the Bells Ferry corridor for future development - similar to the project pictured here near Canton.

Development Activity

Residential

What was once a primarily lower-density (and lower-income) corridor is now rapidly transforming into a high-growth area with diverse housing options. Within the last ten years, this area has experienced significant redevelopment of low-density mobile homes and other single-family homes into medium- and high-density residences: townhomes, condominiums, and apartment complexes. A full summary of development activity in the area can be found in Table 5 and Figure 6.

Commercial

The Bells Ferry LCI study area has also gained new commercial developments and tenants that enhance shopping opportunities along and near the Bells Ferry Road corridor. Auto-oriented and storage businesses tend to cluster in the LCI area, with recent developments including Dirty Dog's Car Wash, Caliber Collision, and Kellogg Creek Boat & RV Storage. These developments are oriented towards commuters traveling to nearby destinations like Woodstock or Lake Allatoona, rather than serving community members who reside in the immediately surrounding area. Lidl, a newer grocery store in the area, represents enhanced access to essential goods and a quality-of-life improvement in the area.

Points of Interest

Greenspace

Covering 33 acres on Kellogg Creek Road, Patriots Park represents the LCI area's public greenspace. The park has a variety of amenities, with a highlight being its adaptive use baseball/softball diamond, designed for the inclusive use of athletes of all abilities. However, the park lacks accessibility from an active transportation standpoint, with no existing sidewalk or trail connections to walking paths within the park.

Hobgood Park is situated on 60 acres near the intersection of Bells Ferry Road and Towne Lake Parkway. The park lies approximately 0.5 mile north of the LCI area. The park is not accessible to walk or roll from the Bells Ferry LCI study area, but planned and ongoing projects would provide access to the park's entrance from the study area via a multi-use path along Bells Ferry Road.

Placemaking

Placemaking, or creating quality public spaces that meet community needs, contributes to improved quality of life. The most significant placemaking effort within the LCI area in recent years was the opening of Patriots Park in 2017. While placemaking is traditionally focused on public spaces, frontages along Bells Ferry Road are primarily dominated by underutilized parking spaces associated with retail and other commercial buildings. Given this context, opportunities for placemaking in the Bells Ferry LCI study area include activating and repurposing these spaces for community events and uses, in collaboration with the property owners. Public spaces that present opportunities for placemaking in the area include Patriots Park, sidewalks, multi-use paths (once built), and Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services Station 1.

Table 5 Development Activity

ID	Development	Address	Type	# of Units
1	Patriots Park	1485 Kellogg Creek Rd	Park/Greenspace	N/A
2	Kellogg Creek Boat & RV Storage	1450 Kellogg Creek Rd	Commercial	N/A
3	Franklin Crossing	1809 Eagle Dr	Residential	57
4	Unnamed Residential Development	1654-1674 Eagle Dr	Multi-Family Residential	12
5	Lidl	6421 Bells Ferry Rd	Commercial	N/A
6	Maple Grove at Towne Lake	202 Strawberry Ln	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	70
7	Heritage at Towne Lake	101 Sheridan Dr	Residential	85
8	Madison at Buice Lake	425 Madison Lakeview Dr	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	277
9	Lennar at Buice Lake	1408 Hunter Trl	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	125
10	Covey Homes Hunter Trail	1150 Hunter Trl	Single-Family Residential (Attached)	147
11	Summerwell Bells Ferry	1151 Hunter Trl	Single-Family Residential (Attached and Detached)	153
12	The Knox Apartments	1000 Etowah Ferry Dr	Multi-Family Residential	373
13	The Quincy Apartments	900 Buice Lake Pkwy	Multi-Family Residential	339
14	Tyson Woods (Completed)	1000 Water Oak Trce	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	20
15	Unknown	5753 Bells Ferry Rd	Commercial	TBD
16	The Timberley	330 Tranquil Gardens Dr	Assisted Living Facility	60
17	Tranquil Gardens by Stella Homes	1031 Tranquil Gardens Pl	Single-Family Residential (Attached)	73
18	The Parker	5944 GA-92 (Hwy 92)	Multi-Family Residential	330
19	Prescott	115 Acklin Ln	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	104
20	Dirty Dog's Car Wash	5718 Bells Ferry Rd	Commercial	N/A
21	Pending Development (For Sale)	5464 Wade Green Rd	Commercial	TBD
22	Caliber Collision	6192 GA-92 (Hwy 92)	Commercial	N/A

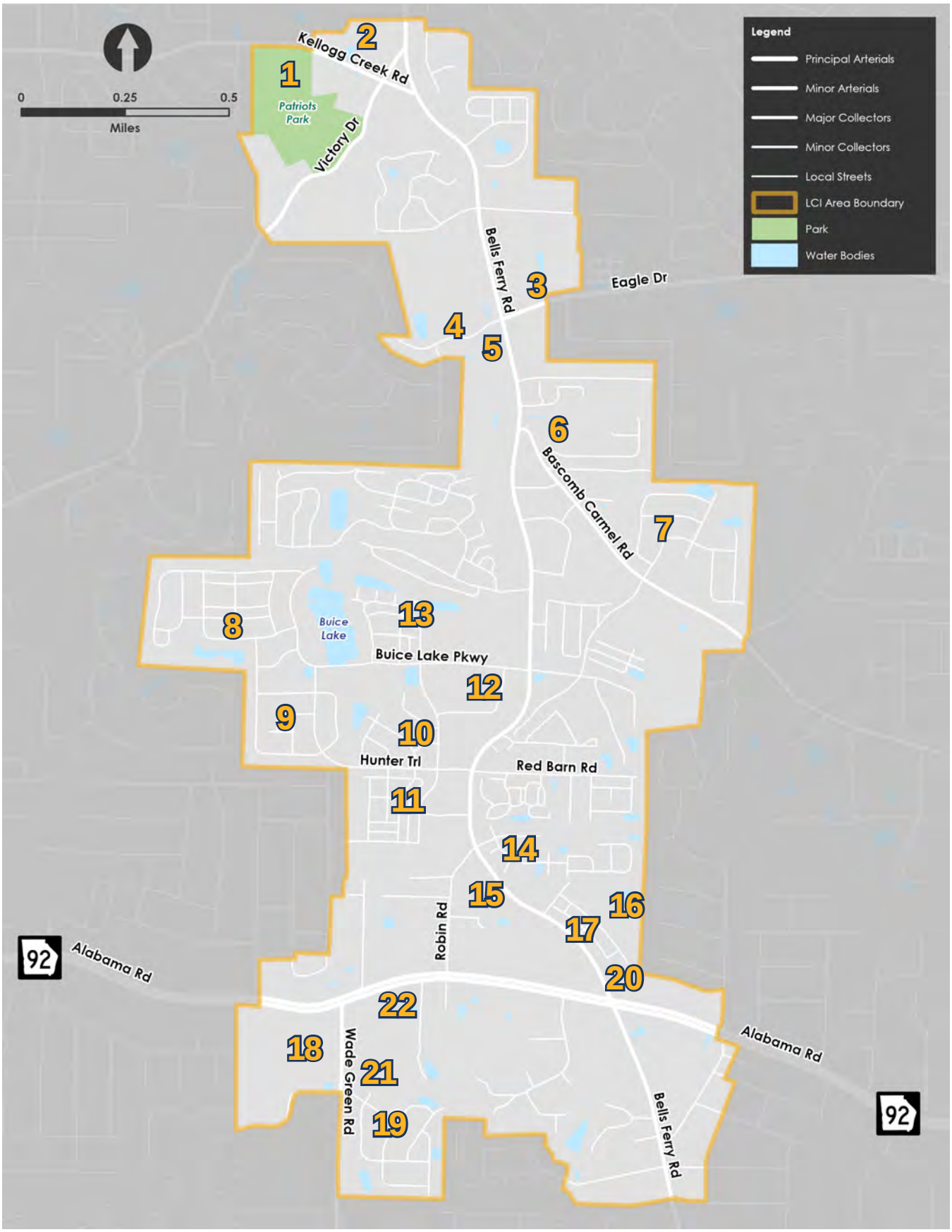


Figure 5 Development Activity



County officials break ground on a project to widen Bells Ferry Road immediately north of the LCI Study Area.

Transportation Infrastructure & Facilities

Roadways

Bells Ferry Road is classified as a major collector within the study area. Primarily a 4-lane facility with two travel lanes in each direction, it is separated by a central raised median. Within this length, there are seven signalized intersections and numerous unsignalized intersecting roads and driveways. The posted speed limit is 45 miles per hour (MPH).

Active Transportation

Bells Ferry Road has sidewalk coverage along both sides of the corridor throughout most of the study area, with the northern terminus of the sidewalk on the west side of the corridor at Kellogg Creek Road. Most segments of sidewalk are approximately five feet wide.

Underutilized parcels, deep setbacks, and street-facing parking lots contribute to an auto-dominated streetscape. The presence of commercial driveways and potential for high vehicular speeds poses safety and comfort concerns on some segments of the sidewalk network, particularly around the commercial node at the corridor's intersection with Hwy 92.

Crosswalks are present on most legs of signalized intersections along the study corridor, except across the northern legs of the intersections with Kellogg Creek Road and Eagle Drive. There are no existing bike lanes or cycle paths in the LCI area, except paved trails within Patriots Park. The ongoing and planned multi-use path projects along Bells Ferry Road will provide enhanced opportunities for walking and cycling as a means of recreation and transportation.

Public Transportation

The Bells Ferry LCI area is currently served by Cherokee County's demand response service, Cherokee Area Transit Service (CATS). CATS provides countywide transportation services to popular destinations, such as medical facilities, shopping destinations, and employment sites. CATS operates on weekdays from 8 AM to 4 PM with no weekend service. Reservations must be made in advance, and



payment options are limited. The County also has a micro-transit service, but it is limited to the Canton area and does not serve the Bells Ferry LCI area. As part of this LCI plan, the project team is conducting a Transit Feasibility Study for the Bells Ferry LCI area. Atlanta-region Transit Link Authority (ATL) discontinued Xpress bus service to Cherokee County when a reduced service plan was adopted in June 2025. The feasibility study culminates in recommendations for transit service in the area .

Transportation Technology

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) are emerging as an increasingly significant transportation network asset. Effective transportation system management and operations (TSMO) practices are critical to ensuring the successful implementation and operation of ITS technology.

All traffic signals within the LCI area are integrated into GDOT's network, enabling remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities through their central transportation management systems. All signals are also equipped with closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras, enabling video surveillance capabilities. Signalized intersections along Highway 92 (at Bells Ferry Road, Robin Road, and Wade Green Road) are outfitted with roadside units, devices with the capability to link roadway assets together and with roadway users.

An ongoing local project (TSPLOST ID: T-062) will upgrade traffic signals along Towne Lake Parkway/Eagle Drive from Main Street to Bells Ferry Road with technology to enable signal preemption to first responders.

As part of this LCI plan, the project team is conducting a Transit Feasibility Study for the Bells Ferry LCI area. Atlanta-region Transit Link Authority (ATL) discontinued Xpress bus service to Cherokee County when a reduced service plan was adopted in June 2025. The feasibility study culminates in recommendations for transit service in the area.



Traffic & Safety Considerations

Traffic Volumes

The project team analyzed base year (2020) and projected horizon year (2050) traffic volumes within the LCI study area. Comparing the 2020 and 2050 average daily volumes for each corridor in the study area, a trend of increasing activity and travel becomes clear. All roadways within the study area are expected to experience significant increases in activity by 2050, particularly west of the Bells Ferry corridor on Victory Drive and Kellogg Creek Road. This growth pattern reflects the transitional nature of the LCI area as the City of Woodstock and the metro area as a whole continue to grow and sprawl.

Congestion & Observed Speeds

According to the Highway Capacity Manual, there are six levels of service (LOS) by which traffic congestion on a roadway segment may be described. These levels of service range between LOS A, which indicates a relatively free-flowing condition, and LOS F, which indicates operational breakdown.

The most congested areas along the Bells Ferry Road corridor are near the Highway 92, Eagle Drive, and Kellogg Creek Road intersections. Based on the maps shown in Figure X and Figure X, respectively, congestion during afternoon peak hours is expected to worsen in the study area by 2050. Congestion may be mitigated through operational improvements and transportation demand management strategies that reduce vehicle trips.

Crash Summary

The project team conducted a safety review of the LCI area to understand crash trends along major corridors and intersections from January 2019 to December 2024. There were a total of 2,228 reported vehicular crashes within the Bells Ferry LCI area during the time period studied. Using crash data obtained through AASHTOWare, the project team was able to pinpoint locations with safety concerns, informing prioritization of safety-focused projects.

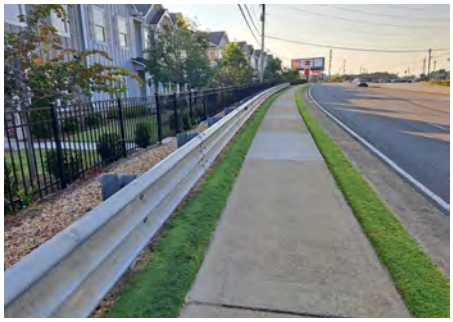


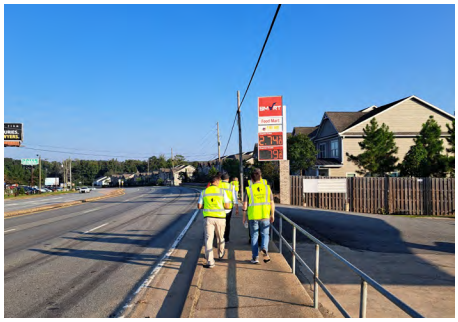






The intersection of Hwy 92 and Bells Ferry Rd represents a particularly dangerous one for vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists).





There are pre-existing barriers separating sidewalks from the communities they connect in several locations along the corridor.

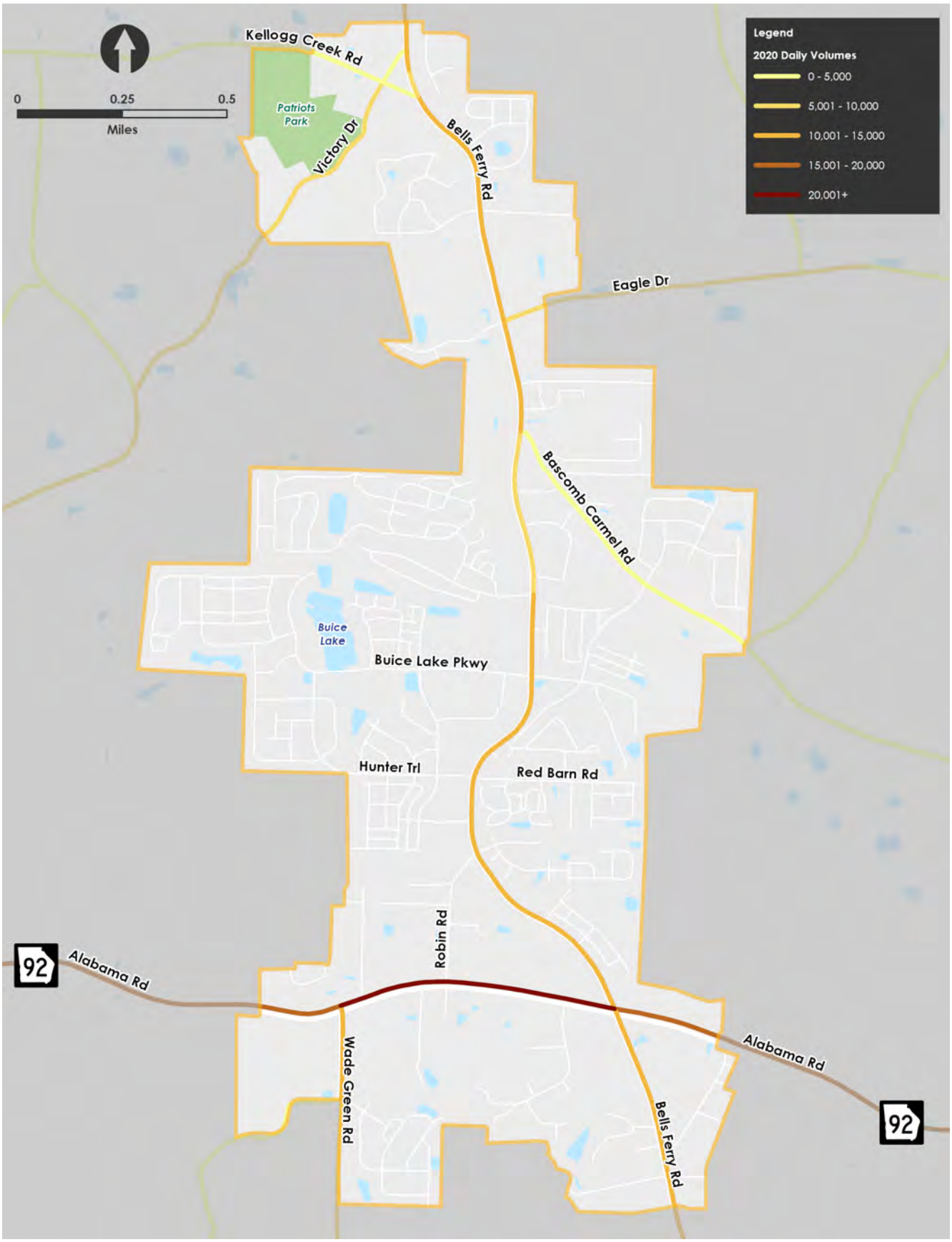


Figure 6 Corridor Level of Service (Existing)

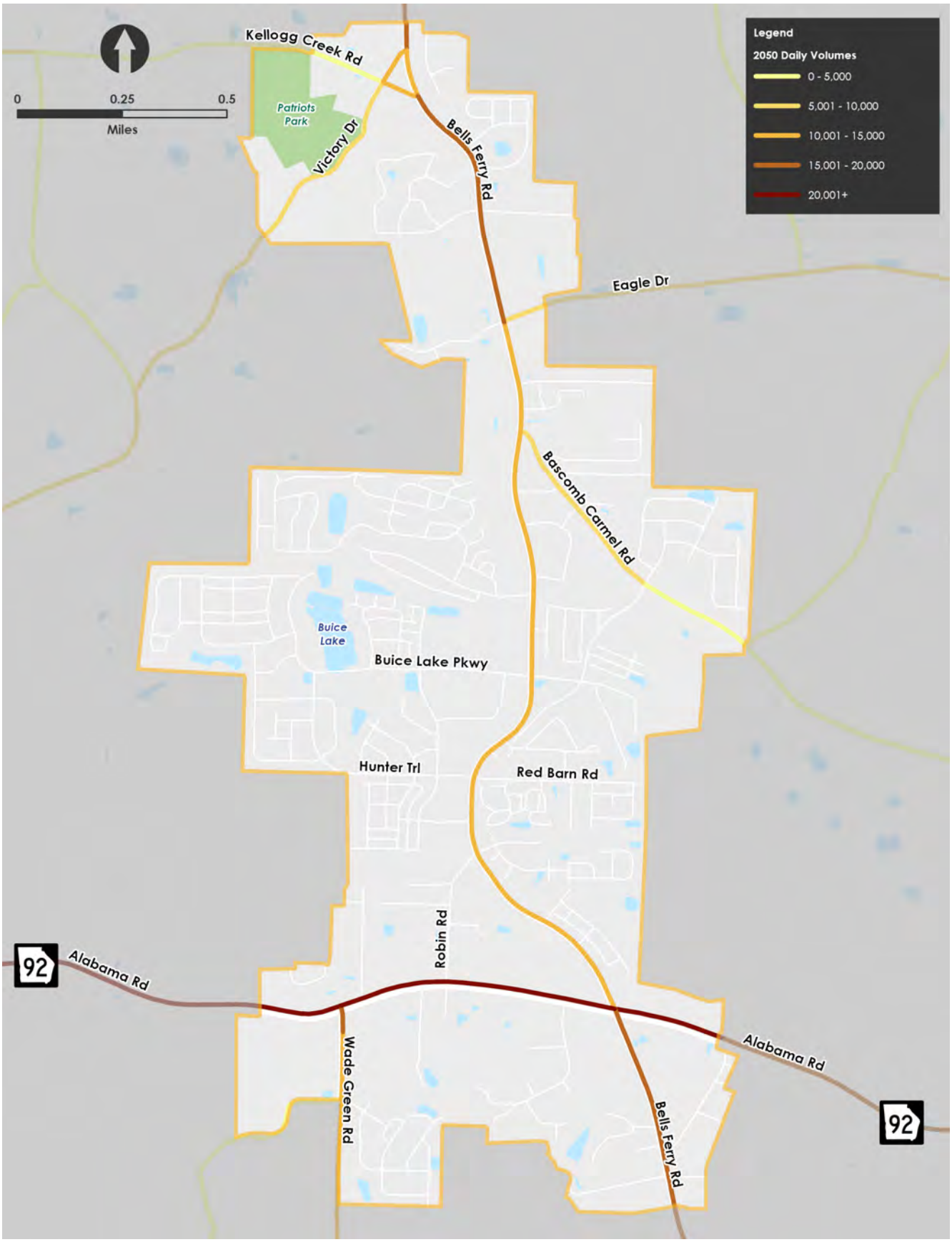
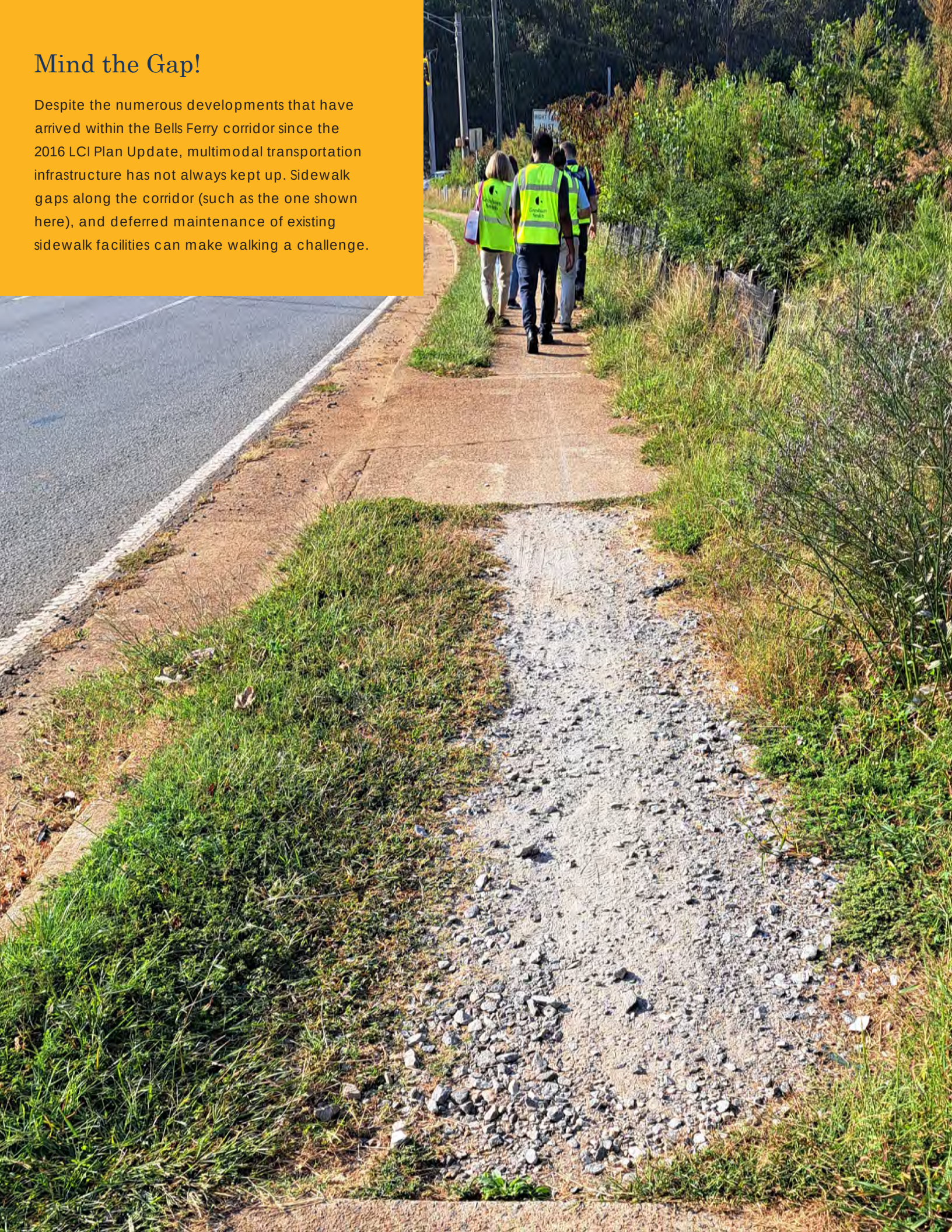


Figure 7 Corridor Level of Service (Future)

Mind the Gap!

Despite the numerous developments that have arrived within the Bells Ferry corridor since the 2016 LCI Plan Update, multimodal transportation infrastructure has not always kept up. Sidewalk gaps along the corridor (such as the one shown here), and deferred maintenance of existing sidewalk facilities can make walking a challenge.



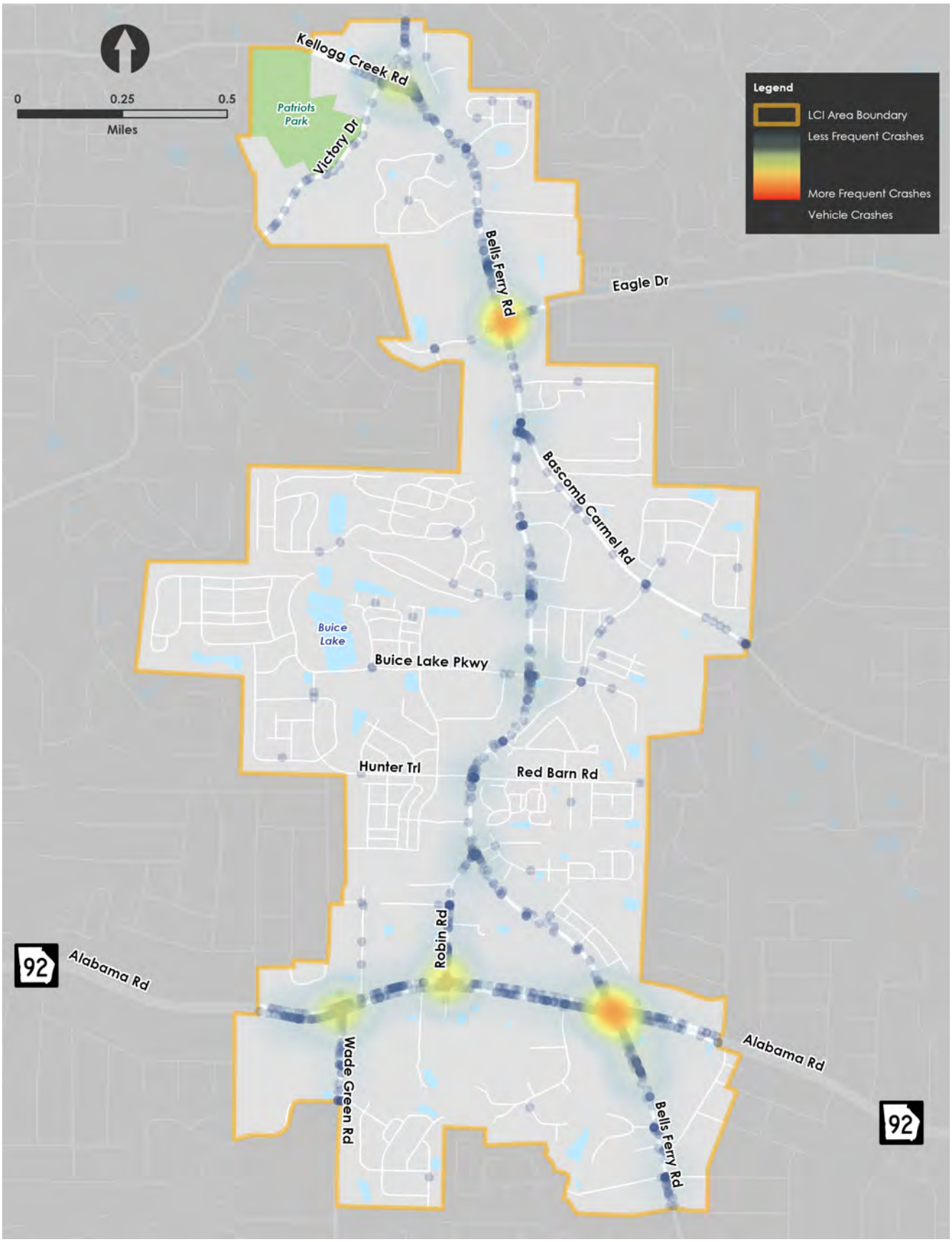


Figure 8 Corridor Crash Heat Map

03

Community Engagement

Phase 1: Existing Conditions & Community Visioning

The initial engagement phase commenced with a **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** kickoff meeting held virtually on August 13, 2025. This meeting brought together a broad range of stakeholders including Cherokee County staff, community members, business representatives, and partner agencies to introduce the project, discuss prior plans, and set expectations for the update process. Early in the phase, targeted **focus groups** were conducted in September 2025 to gather nuanced input from small business owners and landowners. The first **focus group** was held virtually in English, while a second **focus group** was conducted in-person with Spanish-speaking participants to ensure inclusivity and capture perspectives reflective of the corridor's diverse population.

Complementing these sessions, the project team hosted **community pop-up events**, including an outreach effort at Hobgood Park, where around 50 residents shared their concerns and desires for the corridor. Additionally, a **walking tour** was organized along the southern end of Bells Ferry Road on September 19, 2025, allowing both the project team and community members to observe firsthand challenges related to pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, and neighborhood character. Participants used wearable devices and a mobile app to record physiological responses, adding an innovative data layer to qualitative observations. An **interactive project website** launched concurrently, offering tools for mapping input and surveys, broadening access for community members unable to attend in-person events.

Collectively, these activities laid a foundation for capturing comprehensive feedback from multiple perspectives, leaning on both traditional and innovative engagement methods. The dual-language approach was particularly notable, as it ensured voices from the significant Hispanic community along the corridor were integrated early. These initial efforts emphasized the need for a balanced conversation that marries infrastructure and safety improvements with a vision for walkable, economically vibrant neighborhoods that also safeguard affordability and neighborhood stability.

Synthesis & Key Takeaways

Analysis of Phase 1 engagement revealed a strong community consensus around safety and walkability concerns - particularly on the **project website**. Participants consistently highlighted the lack of continuous sidewalks, limited bicycle infrastructure, and hazardous pedestrian crossings as barriers to equitable and active mobility in the corridor. Many noted that traffic congestion, especially at key intersections such as Hwy 92 and Bells Ferry Road, exacerbates safety risks for vulnerable users, including seniors and students. This feedback was reinforced by physiological data collected during the **walking tour**, which underscored stress points linked to crossing times and exposure to vehicular noise and speeds.

Economic development emerged as a second critical theme, with a clear desire to foster vibrancy while respecting the area's existing cultural diversity. English-speaking business stakeholders emphasized the need for clearer, more accessible land use regulations and improvements to overlay district provisions to better support local enterprise and commercial revitalization. Conversely, Spanish-speaking participants placed greater emphasis on the importance of affordable housing and anti-displacement strategies, noting how rising rents are pushing longtime Hispanic families out of the area and destabilizing local businesses that serve these communities. The need for public spaces that encourage community gathering, cultural events, and family recreation was a recurrent topic across all groups.

Importantly, Phase 1 engagement revealed a community debate between preserving neighborhood character and embracing growth. Residents expressed hope for a distinct corridor identity enhanced by placemaking elements such as public art, pedestrian amenity nodes, and micromobility accommodations. At the same time, there was caution about unchecked development changing the social fabric. This tension highlighted the essential role that targeted public investments, community-informed design guidelines, and equitable policy frameworks will play moving forward.











Phase 1 Events

During the first phase of engagement, the project team attended pop-up events at local parks, as well as events at the Rose Creek Library. The project team also conducted focus groups with local small business owners, and updated the project website regularly - so that those unable to attend events in person could still access relevant project materials. The team also conducted a walking tour with key stakeholders.

Phase 2: Plan Development & Future Scenarios

During Phase 2, engagement deepened through continued **Technical Advisory Committee** meetings held in October 2025 and January 2026, where the team presented emerging draft concepts, transportation recommendations, and preliminary development scenarios. The highlight of this phase was the Friendsgiving **pop-up event** on November 23, 2025, held at Greater Church, which attracted approximately 250 families from neighborhoods near the corridor. This event featured interactive engagement boards where participants could vote using push pins on their preferred types of development (e.g., community crossroads, gathering spaces, modern bedroom communities, preservation and activation) distributed across five strategic nodes along Bells Ferry Road.

Complementing Friendsgiving were additional **focus groups**, including follow-up sessions with business leaders and Spanish-speaking residents, which continued to refine and validate planning directions. The Friendsgiving engagement boards were displayed at the Rose Creek Library for several weeks, resulting in feedback left on the **project website**. Tactical engagement activities such as **pop-up events and workshops** helped sustain community momentum and allowed the project team to clarify complex planning concepts in accessible ways. The ongoing **TAC meetings** facilitated coordination and transparent dialogue between community representatives, county officials, and technical experts, ensuring that feedback was integrated iteratively into the plan framework.

These Phase 2 activities refined the collective vision for the corridor by marrying community aspirations with technical feasibility. The diverse engagement methods ensured that broad segments of the population could weigh in meaningfully, thereby fostering greater ownership over proposed scenarios and policies. Participants were invited to explore trade-offs between intensity of development, transportation investments, and preservation efforts, fostering nuanced dialogue about the corridor's future form and function.

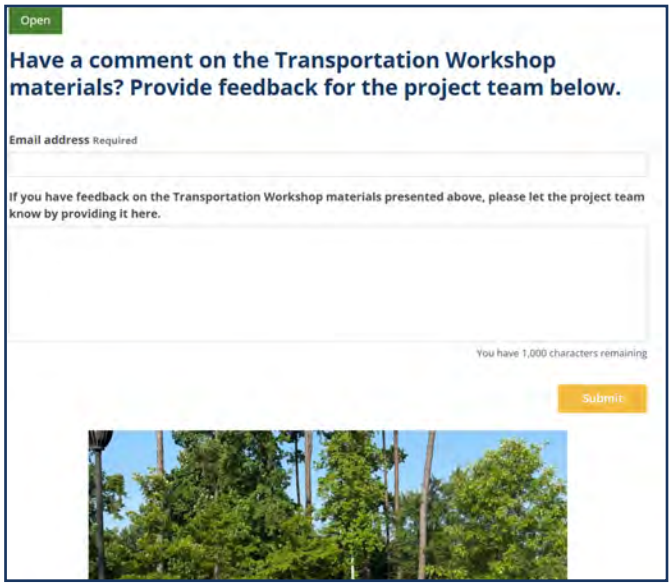
Synthesis & Key Takeaways

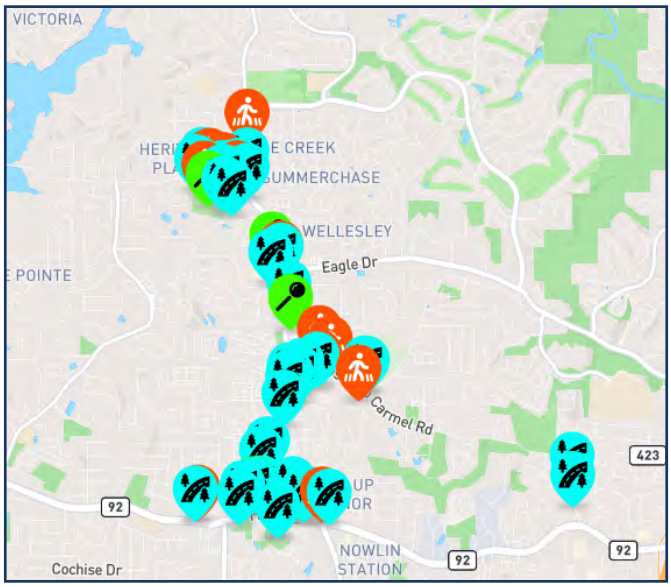
Feedback from Phase 2 events reinforced community enthusiasm for development approaches that prioritize walkability, neighborhood gathering spaces, and preservation of culturally significant places. The voting results from the Friendsgiving community **pop-up event** displayed significant support for development types that promote social interaction—particularly community crossroads and gathering spaces—while also acknowledging a role for modern housing typologies in select nodes. Participants generally favored investments in pedestrian infrastructure, multimodal connectivity, and placemaking as foundational to creating vibrant, livable places.

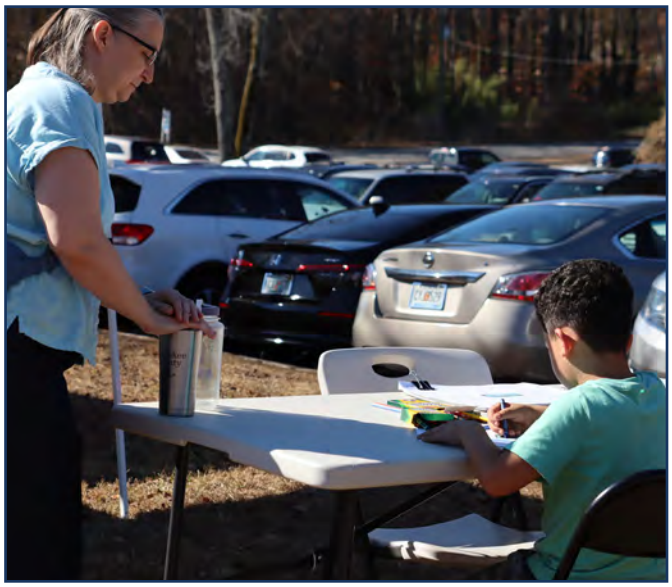
Conversations during **focus groups** and **TAC meetings** highlighted the importance of economic opportunity balanced with affordable housing. The community advocated for policies that support small business resilience and reduce displacement risks amid growth. Concerns about traffic congestion remained salient, with residents and stakeholders calling for targeted intersection upgrades, access management improvements, and microtransit services to diversify mobility options. The tension between enhancing mobility capacity and maintaining safe, attractive pedestrian environments underscored the complexity of transportation planning in the corridor.

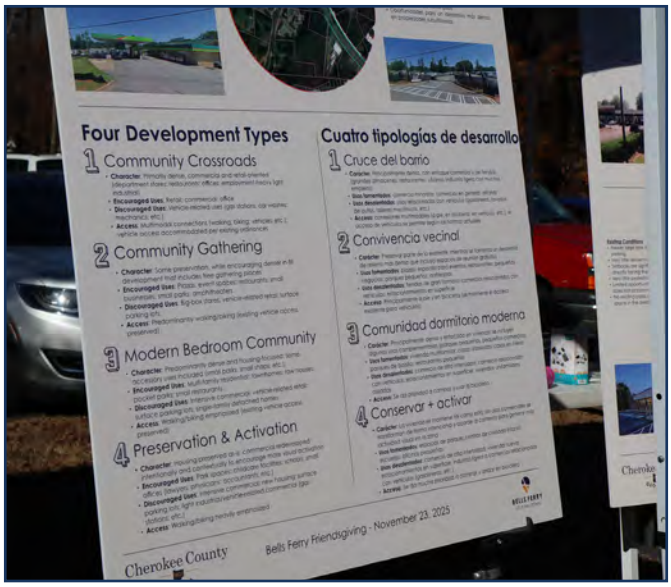
Phase 2 engagement further clarified the need for a comprehensive and actionable plan that integrates land use, transportation, economic, and placemaking strategies. Participants recognized that incremental, coordinated investments—backed by policy reforms and community stewardship—would be critical to realizing the corridor's full potential. The collaborative nature of this phase fostered a shared understanding that the corridor's future depends on balancing growth management, infrastructure upgrades, and preservation goals.











Phase 2 Events

The various engagement activities included in the second phase of community involvement included more intentional feedback on areas the community wished to see additional redevelopment. The project team also continued engaging intentionallly with the project stakeholder committee - presenting them with the project's draft recommendations during a meeting at the Rose Creek Library.

Phase 3: Recommendations & Final Plan

The third phase of engagement began with a **transportation workshop**, that centered on educating the general public on how transportation improvement projects happen in Cherokee County. More broadly, this phase of engagement focused on the refinement and presentation of draft recommendations, coupled with continued community input to ensure alignment with public priorities. In addition to the transportation workshop, the project team conducted a **community open house** on Thursday, March 26, 2026 at Greater Church (5744 Bells Ferry Road, Acworth, Georgia). The purpose of this open house was primarily to solicit feedback on land use policies, transportation improvements, placemaking strategies, and policy recommendations being put forward as part of the Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update. This **open house** was designed to engage a broad audience, including residents, businesses, and partner organizations, with materials available in both English and Spanish to encourage inclusive participation.

In addition to the **community open house**, the **Technical Advisory Committee** (TAC) remained active in its role, continuing to assist with community outreach and advising on project and policy approaches. The project team also held a specialized workshop focusing on transportation issues to deepen understanding and foster collaborative problem-solving. During this workshop, attendees spoke on the importance of shade trees for ensuring true walkability, and also discussed a general desire for increased operational efficiency at several key intersections (Hwy 92 and Wade Green Rd.; Hwy 92 and Bells Ferry Rd; etc.) Both the **community open house** and the **TAC** materials were also posted on the project's **interactive engagement website** for review and comment by the public. Each of these engagement methods, an open house, the TAC and the project website - served as important touchpoints to communicate progress to the general public, county leadership, and regional partners, ensuring transparency and consensus-building as the plan moved toward adoption.

The engagement emphasis in Phase 3 underscores a commitment to transparent, iterative planning that responds dynamically to community feedback. By combining **public workshops**, advisory coordination, and targeted **technical discussions**, this phase sought to finalize a balanced, realistic, and community-supported plan that advances Cherokee County's long-term vision for the Bells Ferry corridor.

Synthesis & Key Takeaways

Common themes emerged during the third phase of engagement that highlighted a continued desire for balanced growth that honors the area's existing character while accommodating thoughtful development and improved transportation infrastructure. Other feedback expressed appreciation for the enhancements proposed around pedestrian and multimodal safety, with particular emphasis on the need for safer crossings, continuous sidewalks, and shade elements that support walkability.

Housing affordability also remained a big concern. Feedback received underscored the importance of reinforcing small businesses through clearer land use provisions and targeted support while preventing displacement of long-standing businesses. The community showed enthusiasm for placemaking investments that provide gathering areas and recreational opportunities, while strengthening neighborhood identity. Other feedback included community suggestions for integrating underground utilities where feasible, increasing tree canopy and green infrastructure, and incorporating more diverse housing options like missing middle housing to foster inclusive growth. The input further highlighted community interest in maintaining strong communication and transparency from county leadership as projects advance.

The collective input from Phase III solidified a shared vision for a walkable, economically vibrant, and culturally inclusive corridor. This vision is grounded in practical transportation and land use strategies that prioritize safety, connectivity, and quality of life for all residents.











Phase 3 Events

The third phase of engagement events culminated in a Public Open House - where community memebrs were able to read about the Plan Update's proposed projects and policies. Other touchpoints included two focus group meetings (one with area faith-based organizations, and the other with the Buice Lake community).

04

Plan Developement

Playing to Win

Cherokee County has spent the ten years since the last update to the Bells Ferry LCI Plan investing in the area's future. Recreational, transportation, commercial and residential improvements have all been contributed to the corridor since 2016 - helping secure the corridor's spot as one of Cherokee County's most dynamic places to live, work or play.

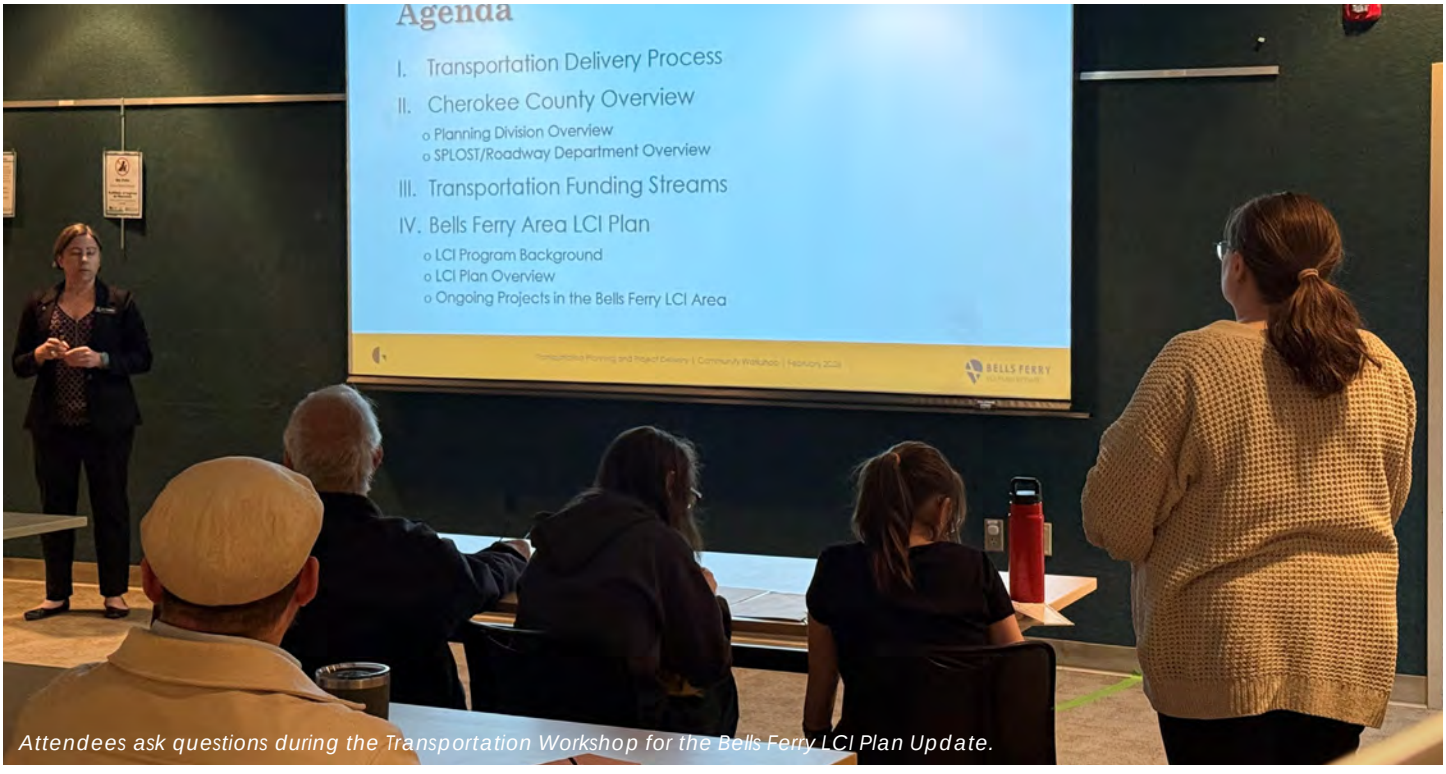


The North Metro Miracle League practices at one of the few baseball diamonds equipped to handle special needs players in Georgia.

Plan Development Summary

Transportation Improvements

The transportation recommendations for the Bells Ferry corridor were developed through a comprehensive process that included detailed assessments of existing conditions, extensive stakeholder engagement, and ongoing coordination with Cherokee County. Key considerations included addressing current and projected traffic congestion, improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and enhancing safety and mobility options for all users. The study incorporated data on traffic volumes, crash patterns, intersection performance, and multimodal connectivity gaps to inform a balanced approach that supports vehicular capacity while prioritizing active transportation and equitable access. Integration of emerging technologies such as intelligent transportation systems (ITS) for signal optimization and emergency vehicle preemption was considered to improve corridor efficiency without extensive roadway widening.



Attendees ask questions during the Transportation Workshop for the Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update.

Safety & Connectivity

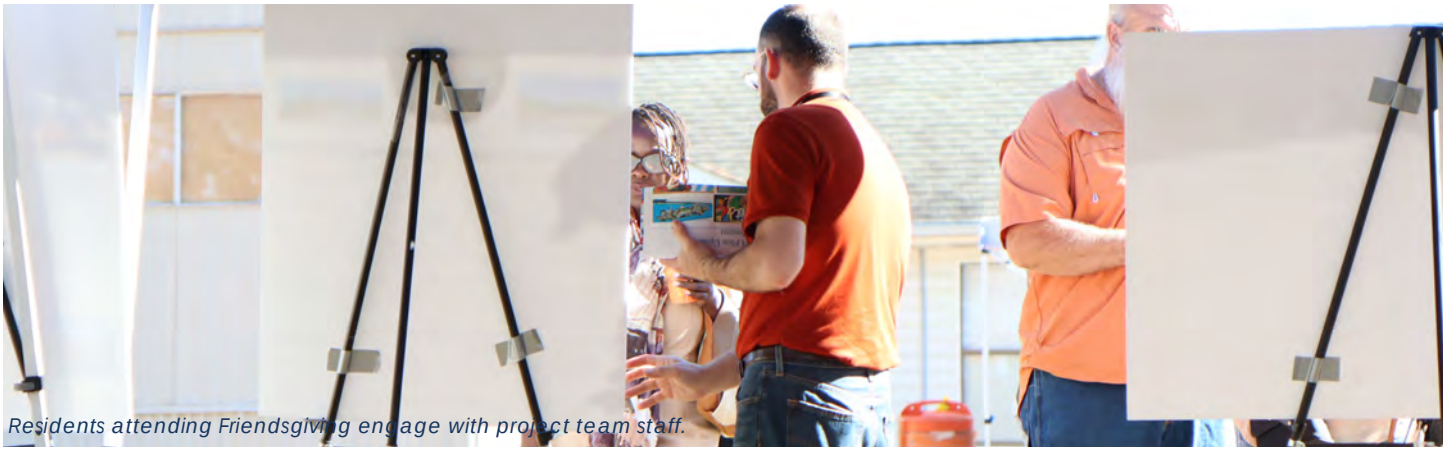
Safety is a critical concern along Bells Ferry Road, with fatal and serious injury crashes notably concentrated at intersections such as Highway 92 at Bells Ferry Road, and Bells Ferry Road at Eagle Drive and Kellogg Creek Road. Pedestrian and bicycle networks exhibit significant disconnects, including inconsistent sidewalks, lack of ADA-compliant crossings, and minimal dedicated bike lanes—particularly within Nodes #2 and #3 of the study area. Projections of traffic growth between 25% and 40% by 2050 indicate worsening congestion that could further degrade safety if unaddressed. The transportation plan emphasizes pedestrian refuge islands, safer crossing infrastructure, buffered sidewalks, and dedicated multi-use trails to improve connectivity. Addressing these safety and mobility needs is essential to creating a more walkable, accessible corridor balanced with necessary traffic flow improvements.

Planned & Programmed Projects

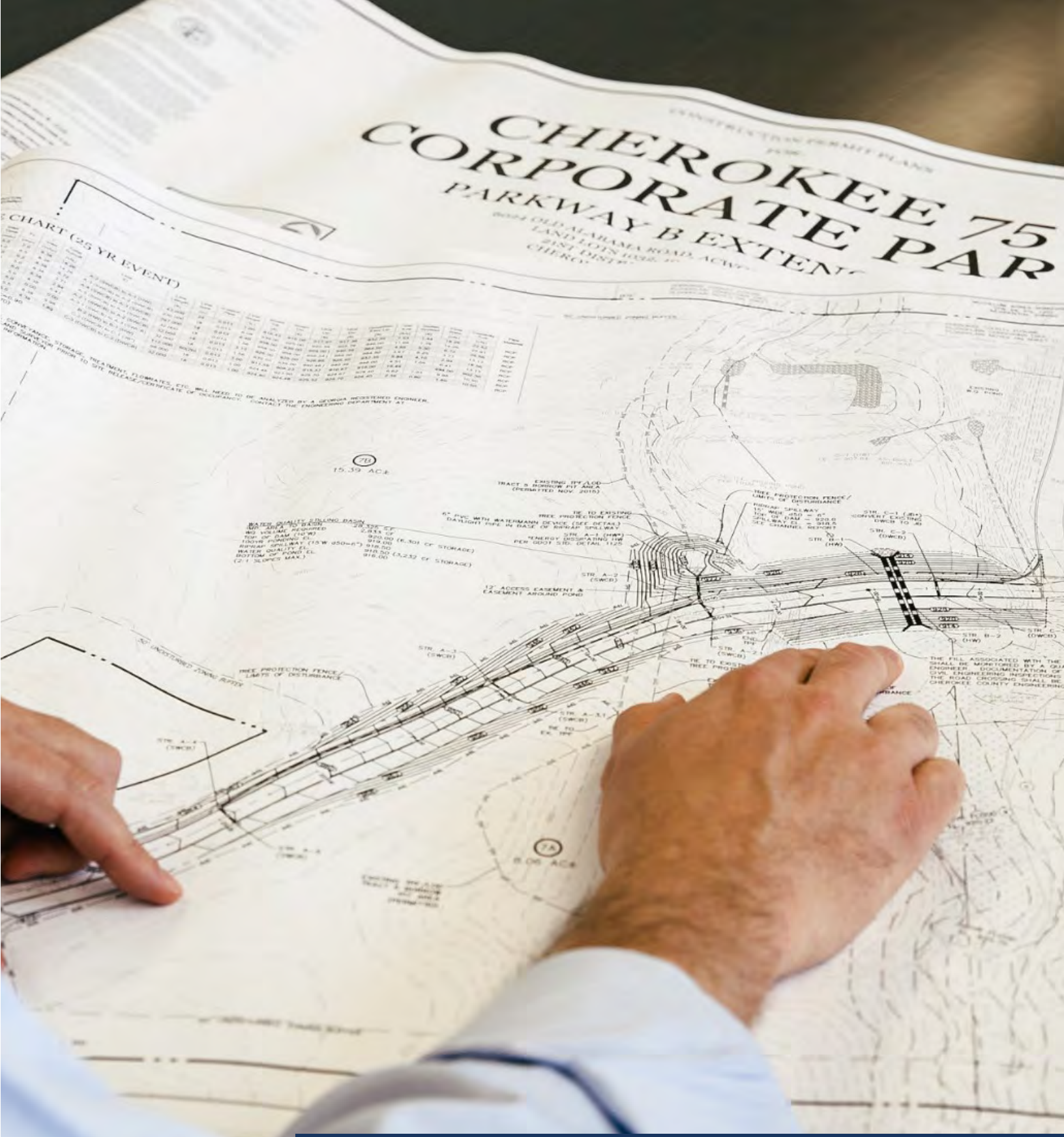
Several key projects have been identified to address these needs, many of which are programmed or funded through local and regional efforts. Intersection improvements at Highway 92 and Bells Ferry Road include added channelized turn lanes, removal of slip lanes, pedestrian refuge islands, and enhanced signal operations, supported by SPLOST funds and a federal Safe Streets for All grant. Similar upgrades are planned for the Robin Road and Bascomb-Carmel Road intersections. Corridor-wide improvements prioritize continuous sidewalks with planting buffers, pedestrian amenity nodes with seating and wayfinding, and greenway trail expansions like the Owl Creek Greenway and connections to Patriots Park. Complementary strategies include a piloting microtransit service in the Bells Ferry area to expand flexible transit options fitting the suburban context. These projects collectively aim to alleviate congestion and improve multimodal transportation safety and accessibility.

TAC Collaboration

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings and ongoing collaboration with Cherokee County agencies have been integral to refining transportation recommendations. The TAC, composed of county planners, transportation officials, community stakeholders, and technical experts, provided consistent feedback to align projects with community priorities and technical feasibility during the plan's development. Cherokee County staff from Planning & Zoning, Transit and Roadway/SPLOST departments, as well as the Cherokee County Office of Economic Development, participated to coordinate policies, projects, and strategies. The TAC encouraged access improvements, reflecting community concerns regarding pedestrian safety and connectivity, especially for vulnerable populations. This collaborative environment ensured that transportation strategies are holistic, integrated with land use planning, and responsive to local conditions.



Residents attending Friendsgiving engage with project team staff.



Failure to Plan Means Planning to Fail

The history of strategic local investments within the Bells Ferry LCI Plan study area (such as targeted transportation improvements) is a positive sign of things to come, and shows that Cherokee County is intent on proactively planning for the future.



Future Development Scenarios Process

The concept plan and development scenarios were crafted based on a robust synthesis of baseline conditions, market assessments, infrastructure capacity, and community engagement. Utilizing a 15-year planning horizon targeting buildout in 2041, the update aligns with regional growth forecasts and capital improvement plans. Two primary scenarios were analyzed:

1. A **Proactive Development Scenario** that assumes coordinated infrastructure investments, zoning reforms, and placemaking initiatives to foster compact, mixed-use, walkable nodes; and
2. A **Passive Development Scenario** reflecting growth under current zoning and programmed projects without significant policy change.

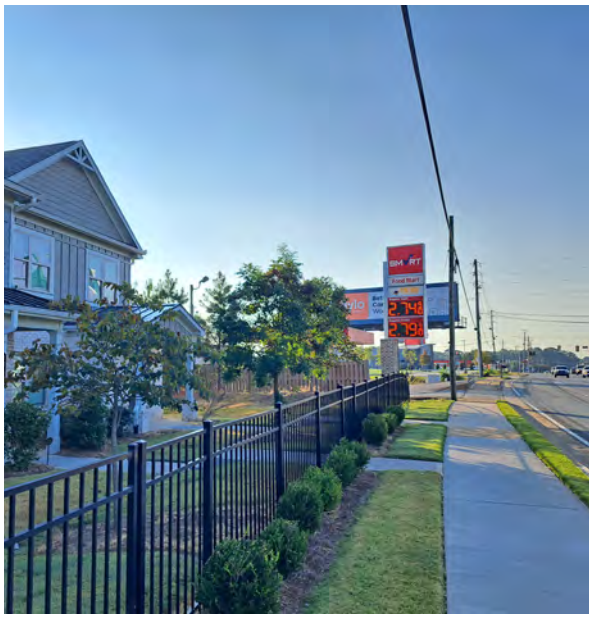
This dual approach allows examination of the impacts of strategic planning versus status quo conditions, evaluating differences in transportation efficiency, housing diversity, economic vitality, and neighborhood character.

TAC Collaboration

The development and refinement of concept plans and scenarios were highly collaborative with the TAC and Cherokee County staff. TAC meetings provided forums to review draft concepts, adjust assumptions, and synchronize recommendations with technical constraints and county policies. Cherokee County officials contributed insights on water and sewer capacities, economic development objectives, and regulatory frameworks to ensure recommendations are feasible and supportive of broader county goals. Feedback from the TAC shaped zoning proposals to enable "missing middle" housing types, foster affordable housing affordability through incentives, and integrate transportation and placemaking into cohesive redevelopment strategies. This ongoing collaboration led to scenarios that are grounded in realistic opportunities while reflecting community priorities.

Future Development Scenarios

Key nodes along the corridor—Highway 92, the segment between Robin Road and Eastgate Mobile Home Community, and Bascomb-Carmel Road—serve as focal areas for redevelopment and growth under the scenarios. The Proactive Development Scenario envisions these nodes evolving with substantial intersection upgrades, expanded pedestrian amenities, greenway and trail connections, and implementation of microtransit services. Land use reforms in this scenario promote greater residential density, mixed uses, and the preservation of affordable housing, fostering walkable, vital neighborhoods with improved safety and connectivity. Conversely, the Passive Development Scenario maintains current zoning and infrastructure trends, projecting continued congestion, limited active transportation options, and deferred redevelopment potential, emphasizing the costs of inaction.





Market Demand

Market analysis underscores the need for diverse, affordable housing and enhanced commercial opportunities. The Primary Market Area displays a racially and ethnically diverse population, including a large share of young adults and families, with income levels moderately below county averages but above the broader Atlanta Metro. The corridor's housing stock is older with a high proportion of renter-occupied units experiencing cost burdens, indicating a pressing demand for affordable multifamily options and housing variety. Employment data show predominance in service sectors with forecasted growth supporting retail and economic development activity. Consumer spending trends projecting increased demand for apparel, food, and entertainment bolster opportunities for revitalized retail and mixed-use development. These market realities informed scenario assumptions, ensuring alignment with community needs and economic viability.



Newer multi-family developments complements older facilities (such as the Everlee) that provide corridor's affordable options.



Several commercial properties throughout the corridor are suffering from disinvestment. Such properties could benefit from wider knowledge about the County's pre-existing economic development programs.



While there has been much new development throughout the corridor, there are types of land uses (agricultural) that were previously more common (as demonstrated by the historic barn located near the intersection of Bells Ferry Rd and Eagle Dr).

05

Corridor Vision and Recommendations

Multimodality or Bust!

The incredible amount of growth and development within the Cherokee County corridor over the last five to ten years has created a demand for more travel options. Pedestrian and cycling facilities can help residents get out of their vehicles and begin to view their community in a different light.



A lack of shade trees along preferred walking routes can limit utilization.

Recommendations

The recommendations presented in the 2026 Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update mark a decisive step toward realizing the long-held community vision for the Bells Ferry Road corridor as a safer, more connected, and economically vibrant place. This comprehensive framework addresses the multifaceted challenges identified through rigorous analysis — from congestion and safety deficiencies to limited multimodal options and evolving land use needs. The suite of recommendations spans corridor-wide infrastructure improvements, targeted intersection upgrades, enhanced pedestrian and cyclist networks, placemaking and activation initiatives, and forward-looking land use policies designed to foster compact, diverse, and walkable neighborhoods. These actions not only respond to existing issues but lay the foundation for sustainable growth coherent with Cherokee County's long-term planning aspirations.

Central to this effort is striking a balance between managing traffic flow and creating an inviting pedestrian environment. Intersection improvements, such as channelized turn lanes and pedestrian refuge islands at key nodes, will reduce conflict points and enhance safety for all users. Corridor-wide investments in buffered sidewalks, continuous multi-use trails, and wayfinding amplify pedestrian comfort and accessibility, while placemaking features like public art, pedestrian amenity nodes, and micromobility guidelines enrich community identity and activation. Complementing these are strategic policy reforms—allowing missing middle housing, reducing parking minimums, incentivizing affordable housing, and supporting small businesses—to guide quality redevelopment and preserve affordability amid growth.

Taken as a whole, the recommended package unites transportation, urban design, and land use in a coordinated approach, positioning the Bells Ferry corridor to meet both immediate needs and future aspirations. It reflects the voices of the community, technical expertise, and market realities, ensuring that implementation will yield meaningful improvements in mobility, safety, economic vitality, and quality of life.



Underutilized roadside property provides the corridor with ample opportunity for pedestrian amenity nodes.



Vision & Summary

The goals of this plan stem from the original 2006 Bells Ferry LCI Plan. Based on input from the project's Technical Advisory Committee and the public during Phase 1 of the engagement process, those goals were prioritized and carried forward to continue driving the vision of the 2026 Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update.

1. Support diversity of people - ages, incomes, social, and cultural backgrounds.
2. Increase job opportunities for area residents.
3. Provide diverse choices in shopping, housing, entertainment, and recreation.
4. Change the image of the community to one of a thriving and vibrant area.
5. Provide multiple transportation alternatives.
6. Create a regional "gateway" to Cherokee County.

This vision is illuminated by the proactive development scenario, which capitalizes on coordinated capital improvements and policy reforms to foster vibrant mixed-use centers linked by enhanced pedestrian and transit networks. In doing so, it directly addresses critical safety concerns, historic infrastructure gaps, and the need to diversify housing options to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population. The plan acknowledges the importance of supporting existing residents and businesses through strategies that promote affordability and equitable access. Consequently, this LCI Plan Update not only charts a path for physical improvements but also embeds a framework for resilient, people-focused growth that ties together economic competitiveness with livability and community pride.

Development Node Concept Plans

Highway 92 (Bells Ferry Road to Wade Green Road)

This regional commercial hub anchors the corridor, hosting significant retail centers that collectively represent a substantial portion of Cherokee County's retail inventory. The proposed proactive scenario articulates a future where access management and mobility improvements reduce congestion and enhance safety at major intersections. Concurrently, aging commercial properties and expansive surface parking areas are thoughtfully retrofitted for higher-density mixed-use development, introducing residential units and flexible office spaces that complement retail



Many intersections within the study area are predominantly car-oriented, and potentially hazardous for pedestrians and cyclists.

Corridor Level Improvements

These improvements focus on creating a consistent, accessible multimodal environment through enhanced sidewalks with buffering, multi-use trails linking key recreational and residential areas, and deployment of intelligent traffic management technologies. These investments aim to knit together neighborhood nodes and improve overall corridor connectivity.

Placemaking & Activation Improvements

One of the more significant project types developed as part of the planning effort are those designed to emphasize initiatives ranging from public art installations that celebrate local culture to beautification of medians and public spaces, micromobility management guidelines, and activation of underutilized parcels into community gathering places. These efforts amplify the corridor's sense of place and community engagement.

Pedestrian/Cyclist Improvements

As part of the plan's formal recommendations, there are several projects that emphasize filling infrastructure gaps through the construction of continuous buffered sidewalks, creation of pedestrian amenity nodes with seating, shade, lighting, and wayfinding, and extension of greenway trails such as Owl Creek Greenway and Patriots Park spurs. These improvements enhance multimodal safety and encourage active transportation modes.

Intersection Level Improvements

The projects and policies tackle congestion and safety at strategic bottlenecks by implementing channelized turn lanes, slip lane removals, pedestrian refuge islands, and improved signal operations. Upgrades at Highway 92 and Bells Ferry Road, Robin Road, and Bascomb-Carmel Road exemplify this targeted approach.

functions. Pedestrian-oriented streetscape upgrades, including buffered sidewalks and amenity nodes, create a welcoming environment that encourages walking and strengthens local identity. Enhanced greenway connections expand active transportation options, further integrating the node into the broader community fabric.

Bells Ferry Road at Robin Road

Predominantly residential with existing multifamily and townhome communities, this node offers ripe opportunities for infill development to increase housing diversity and neighborhood retail. The proactive scenario envisions enhanced pedestrian infrastructure, including continuous sidewalks with buffers, improved crossings, and community gathering spaces that promote safety and social interaction. Land use reforms facilitate missing middle housing typologies by right, increasing density while preserving neighborhood character. Transit enhancements such as microtransit services improve connectivity and reduce vehicle reliance. These coordinated actions collectively support a more livable and accessible neighborhood that accommodates growth without sacrificing quality of life.

Bells Ferry Road at Bascomb Carmel Road

Serving as a transitional area between commercial, industrial, and residential zones, this node's future emphasizes selective redevelopment focused on beautification, pedestrian safety, and improved connections to Patriots Park and nearby neighborhoods. Proposed improvements include sidewalk enhancements, pedestrian amenity nodes, and corridor-wide placemaking initiatives such as public art installations at key locations. Land use strategies balance protection of existing industrial uses with opportunities for flexible commercial and office development that complement adjacent residential areas, reinforcing a cohesive corridor identity. The targeted approach here supports vitality while respecting existing land uses and community assets.

A detailed list of proposed projects and policies that would be implemented as part of the "proactive scenario" can be found in Table 6. Conceptual site plans of each node under the proactive development scenario can be found in Figures 10-12.

Sewer/Stormwater Requirements

The Bells Ferry corridor faces infrastructure challenges related to sewer, water, and stormwater management that directly impact its capacity to support ongoing and future development. Certain portions of the corridor lack adequate sewer and water service infrastructure necessary for higher-density or redevelopment projects, creating potential constraints on growth. The Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority (CCWSA) is the responsible agency overseeing the provision and management of these utilities, and any proposed development must coordinate closely with CCWSA to ensure availability of sufficient service capacity before proceeding.

Given the growth pressures and increased impervious surfaces expected from redevelopment and infill projects, stormwater management will also be a critical consideration. Large-scale developments will likely require stormwater detention facilities to effectively manage runoff and mitigate flood risks. Incorporating green infrastructure solutions such as bioswales, permeable pavements, and vegetated buffers into streetscapes, parking areas, and new developments is strongly recommended. These measures not only reduce stormwater volume and pollutant loads entering the drainage system but can also improve aesthetic and ecological qualities along the corridor.

By proactively addressing sewer and stormwater infrastructure needs through partnership with CCWSA and implementation of green infrastructure, the Bells Ferry corridor can better accommodate future growth while minimizing environmental impacts and enhancing community health and livability. This approach is essential to ensuring that infrastructure capacity does not become a barrier to the corridor's transformation into a more vibrant, walkable, and resilient place. However, for the purposes of this report, the future development scenarios assume that the developer assumes all costs for required stormwater and sewer upgrades.

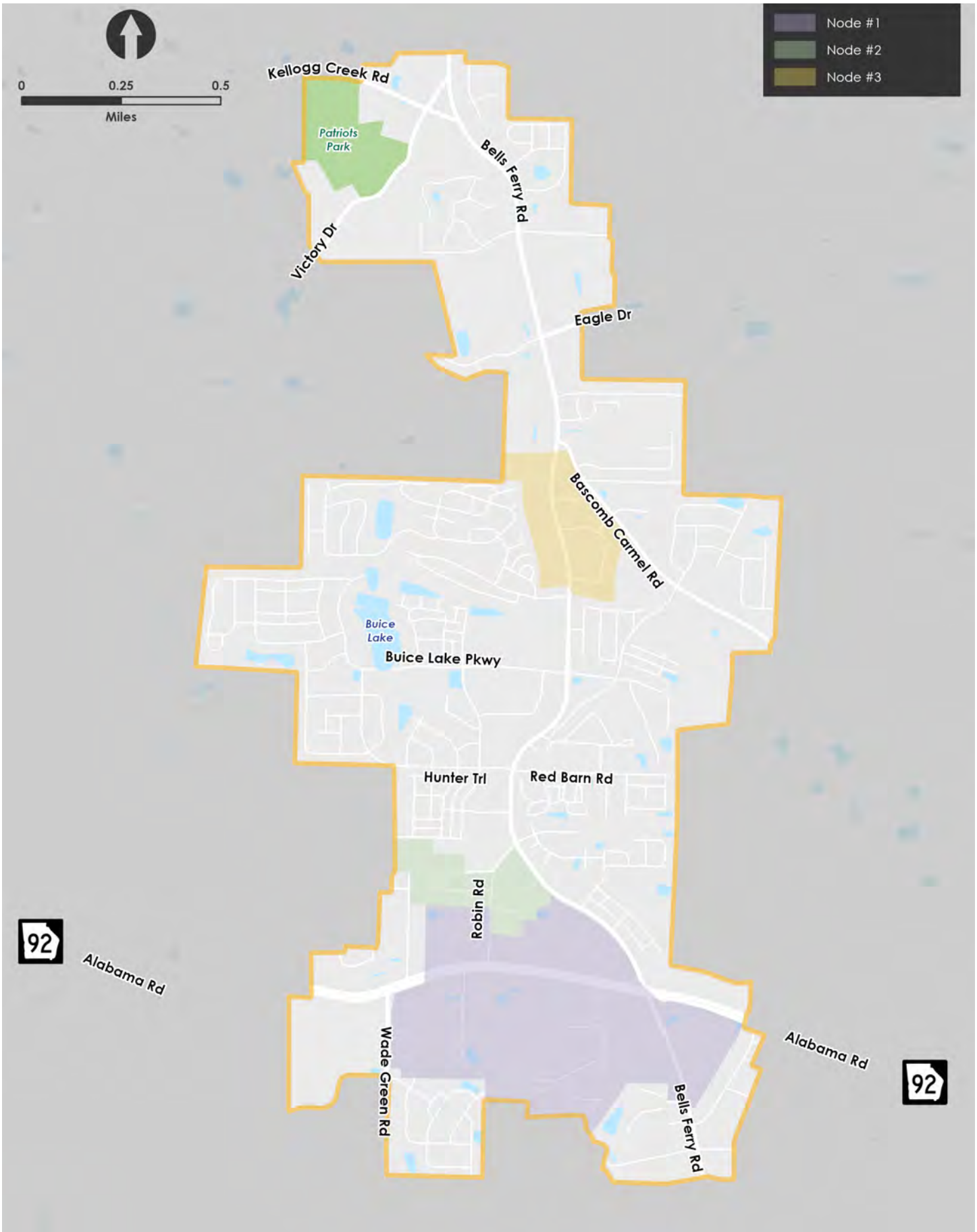


Figure 9 Development Scenario Node Locations

Table 6 Proposed Projects & Policies

Project ID	Category	Project Name	Description
BP-01	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Pedestrian Amenity Nodes**	Coordinate with planned and ongoing projects to provide pedes nodes at all signalized intersections along Bells Ferry Rd and Hwy 9 be accessible, paved areas with pedestrian amenities weaved in pedestrian network. Amenities may include: seating, solar-powere ports, wayfinding signage, lighting, water stations, shade structure
BP-02	Corridor Improvements	**Enhanced Sidewalks along Hwy 92**	As sidewalks are replaced, increase sidewalk width to six feet with a s zone/planting strip, per Bells Ferry LCI Community Design Guidelines. pedestrian amenity nodes.
BP-03	Corridor Improvements	**Enhanced Sidewalks along Bells Ferry Rd**	As sidewalks are replaced, increase sidewalk width to six feet with a s planting strip, per Bells Ferry LCI Community Design Guidelines.
BP-04	Transportation Improvement (Other)	**Owl Creek Greenway**	Study feasibility of implementing a greenway trail along Owl Cree at Hunter Trail/Red Barn Rd to Patriot's Park. Include ecological no (bat houses, educational signage showcasing local species, etc.) amenities (seating, wayfinding signage, etc.) along the trail and c
BP-05	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements**	Improve key pedestrian crossing locations within the study area. E include pedestrian-scale lighting, pedestrian-related warning and signage, centerline/median hardening (bollards or rubber curbs t drivers from cutting across intersections at a diagonal), and crossw enhancements.
BP-06	Corridor Improvements	**Multi-Use Path Along Bascomb Carmel Rd**	Provide a multi-use path (minimum width of ten feet) between Bells F Elementary School. The side path should have 3.5 feet of streetscapin to the roadway and pedestrian amenities. Gather input from commu representatives of Carmel Elementary School to determine path desi alignment.
BP-07	Corridor Improvements	**Multi-Use Spur to Patriots Park**	Provide a multi-use path (minimum width of ten feet) between the Ke Victory Dr intersection to the Patriots Park entrance. All side paths sho five feet of streetscaping to serve as a buffer to the roadway and ad facilities. This path will provide access to Patriots Park from the planne Bells Ferry Rd.
BP-08	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon Crossings Feasibility Study**	Conduct feasability studies to determine feasible locations for pedes (PHB) or signalized pedestrian crossings along Bells Ferry Road on the segments: from Bells Ferry Landing to Cherokee Corners shopping ce Carmel Rd to Shadowood Dr; from Britley Park Ln to Mirramont Lake D areas with land uses that generate foot traffic and on segments with between crossings.
PL-01	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Edge of Parking Transformation**	At shopping centers, engage property owners/developers to tran underutilized parking lots into small greenspaces that serve as co spaces and an extension of the proposed multi-use trail, which ca screen between the parking lot and the roadway.

	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Planning Level Cost Estimate	Timeframe	Potential Funding Mechanisms
strian amenity 92. Nodes should nto the fabric of the ed device charging es, plantings, etc.	Cherokee County	GDOT	Cost Varies	Short (0-5 Years)	• GDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) • GDOT Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program • GA DNR Outdoor Stewardship Program (OSP)
seven-foot buffer Coordinate with	GDOT		$730,000 (Per Linear Mile)	Medium (6-10 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT CMAQ • Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program
six-foot buffer zone/	Cherokee County	-	$730,000 (Per Linear Mile)	Medium (6-10 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT CMAQ • SRTS
ek from Bells Ferry Rd odes and elements) along the trail and at trailheads.	Cherokee County	GDOT	$350,000 (Study Only)	Short (0-5 Years)	• National Park Service (NPS) Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program • GA DNR Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) • GDOT TAP • GA DNR Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
Enhancements d regulatory hat prevent walk art or visibility	Cherokee County	GDOT	$125,000-$150,000 (Per Intersection)	Short (0-5 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) • Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Implementation Grants
erry Rd and Carmel ng to serve as a buffer unity members and gn, amenities, and	Cherokee County	GDOT	$2,630,000	Long (10+ Years)	• GDOT TAP • USDOT SRTS • GA DNR RTP
ellogg Creek Rd and ould have three to equate pedestrian ed multi-use path on	Cherokee County	GDOT	$800,000	Long (10+ Years)	• GDOT TAP • SRTS • GA DNR RTP
trian hybrid beacon following roadway nter; from Bascomb Dr. particularly in more than a half-mile	Cherokee County	GDOT	$200,000 (Study Only, Multiple Locations)	Medium (6-10 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
nsform edges of mmunity gathering an also serve as a	Cherokee County	-	Temporary: $50,000 - $150,000 Permanent: $350,000 - $1,000,000	Short (0-5 Years)	• Cherokee County Community Development Grants • Cherokee County Economic Development Facade Improvement Grants

Table 6 Proposed Projects & Policies (Continued)

Project ID	Category	Project Name	Description
PL-02	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Underutilized Parking Area Activation**	Engage property owners, business leaders, and community organ underutilized parking areas for community and cultural events (e. markets, farmers markets, etc.).
PL-03	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Plaza & Playground**	Create a public plaza/seating and playground area just north of Fire interactive elements, such as a message board where community m notes for the firefighters. Develop in conjuction with project TR-01, wh street parking near the site.
PL-04	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Fire Station Pollinator Garden**	Create a pollinator garden with native plantings and a winding p south of Fire Station 1. Include educational signage about conser species and amenities (seating, shade structures, trees, etc.). Bea frontage.
PL-05	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Substation Placemaking & Beautification**	Partner with Cherokee Arts Collective or another community arts implement educational and artistic elements and landscaping or frontage and beautify frontages of nearby parcels. Potential impr dynamic educational elements displaying live power in/output fr substation; educational signage illustrating how power is distribute power and electricity; and appropriate landscaping. Include safe
PO-03	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Art in Public Places Resolution & Plan**	Create a permanent funding stream for public art. Enact a count requiring that a percentage of the cost of acquisition, renovation Cherokee County buildings or facilities must be set aside for publi by a "Public Art Master Plan" (to be adopted every five years), th commission artists to create works for county facilities such as libra centers, and court buildings.
TR-01	Corridor Improvements	**Old Bascomb Road Complete Street Improvements**	Redesign Old Bascomb Road as a complete street with a flush medi parking, sidewalks, and a bike lane. This will provide increased capac visitors to the programmed multi-use path along Bells Ferry Road and and Playground project (PL-03).
TR-02	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Signal Priority & Emergency Preemption Technology**	Apply vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) technology at intersections throu signal priority for vehicles carrying large quantities of people or good buses and freight trucks) and preemption for emergency vehicles (su ambulances). Engage representatives from Carmel Elementary Scho address needs for school buses and emergency vehicles.
TR-03	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Hwy 92 & Bells Ferry Rd Intersection Improvements**	Channelize left turn lanes with bollards or rubber curbs on eastbound (Hwy 92) intersection approaches. Move forward SS4A Safety Action improvements (Project I-1) .
TR-04	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Bells Ferry Rd & Robin Rd Intersection Improvements**	Harden southbound right-turn lane (bollards or rubber curbs); remove right-turn lane and reduce curb radii or re-build as urban smart channel on the eastbound (Robin Rd) approach; reduc northeast and southeast intersection corners (Tyson Woods Road); re lane on east side of Bells Ferry Road just north of intersection; harden bollards on westbound (Tyson Woods Road) approach; harden and create pedestrian refuge islands on the northbound and aouthboun approaches.

	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Planning Level Cost Estimate	Timeframe	Potential Funding Mechanisms
nizations to activate g., food trucks, art	Cherokee County	-	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	• Cherokee County Community Development Grants • Cherokee County Economic Development Facade Improvement Grants
Station 1. Include embers can leave ich would provide on-	Cherokee County	-	$750,000 - $1,500,000	Medium (6-10 Years)	• Local business or charity partnerships
ath through it just vation and local utify fire station	Cherokee County	-	$50,000	Short (0-5 Years)	• Local business or charity partnerships
organization to n the substation rovements include om electricity ed; art representing ety/warning signage.	Cherokee County	Cobb County EMC	Staff Time (Plus Artist/Supply Costs)	Short (0-5 Years)	• Local business or charity partnerships
tywide ordinance , or construction of c artwork. Guided e program would aries, parks, senior	Cherokee County	-	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	• Impact from Private Development Projects • Local business or charity partnerships
an (TWLTL), on-street city and parking for the Fire Station Plaza	Cherokee County	-	$1,000,000	Medium (6-10 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
ghout the LCI area: s (such as school uch as fire trucks and ol and Fire Station 1 to	Cherokee County	GDOT	$20,000 per Intersection (Field Installation Only)	Medium (6-10 Years)	• USDOT Smart City Challenge Grants • FHWA Advanced Transportation & Congestion Management Technology Deployment (ATCMTD) • GDOT Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program
and westbound Plan recommended	GDOT	Cherokee County	$650,000	Medium (6-10 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
e existing channelized e curb radii on move acceleration refuge island with extend medians to d (Bells Ferry Road)	Cherokee County	GDOT	$200,000	Long (10+ Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants

Table 6 Proposed Projects & Policies (Continued)

Project ID	Category	Project Name	Description
TR-05	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Bells Ferry Rd & Red Barn Rd/Hunter Trl Intersection Improvements**	Reduce curb radii on all intersection corners; channelize northbound turn lanes on Bells Ferry Road with bollards or rubber curbs; harden a to create pedestrian refuge islands on the northbound and southbou approaches.
TR-06	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Bells Ferry Rd & Bascomb Carmel Rd Intersection Improvements**	Remove right-turn slip lanes and reduce curb radii/realign curbs on th (Bells Ferry Rd) and westbound (Bascomb Carmel Rd) approaches. S signalizing the intersection or implementing a roundabout.
TR-07	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Bells Ferry Rd & Eagle Dr Intersection Improvements**	Upgrade signal heads with retroreflective backplates on westbound signal timing (consider adaptive/responsive timing); conduct capaci project in conjunction with Project I-8 in SS4A Safety Action Plan.
TR-08	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Bells Ferry Rd & Walmart North Entrance Intersection Improvements**	Remove existing channelized right-turn lanes and reduce curb radii c urban smart channels. Use truck aprons as needed to accommodat movements.
TR-09	Intersection/Spot Improvements	**Bells Ferry Rd & Kellogg Creek Rd Intersection Improvements**	Determine feasability of consolidating three intersections (Bells Ferry F Rd, Bells Ferry Rd and Victory Dr; and Kellogg Creek Rd and Victory D or, alternatively, realigning the intersection of Kellog Creek Road and reduce the skew angle.
TR-10	Corridor Improvements	**Hwy 92 Median Enhancements**	Enhance landscaping in the depressed medians (implement cables edges of median to protect against collisions with trees); widen and medians near Bells Ferry Road.
TR-11	Corridor Improvements	**LCI Area Street Lighting**	Implement street lighting along Bells Ferry Road, SR 92, and Robin Roa area.
TR-12	Corridor Improvements	**Robin Road Corridor Improvements**	Incorporate the following recommendations into the Robin Rd Re T-SPLOST project (T-038). Restripe edgelines and center lines; insta signage (e.g., advisory speed signage, chevrons) and/or paveme of the horizontal curve near Robin Lane; determine an appropriat install consistent signage; trim any vegetation obstructing roadwa infrastructure; modify roadway configuration on the portion near 92) to remove the right-turn lane and implement a two-way cent
PO-04	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Reduce Parking Minimums**	Reduce parking minimums or encourage shared parking agreem redevelopment proposals within the LCI area.
PO-05	Land Use & Redevelopment	**Fill-in Housing Gaps**	Allow development of duplex, triplex, and quadplex houses by right i areas. Reduce or eliminate lot size and square footage minimums.
PO-07	Land Use & Redevelopment	**Allow Accessory Dwelling Units**	Allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by right in all single-family zone in targeted growth areas.
PO-08	Land Use & Redevelopment	**Utilize Land Bank for Strategic Acquisitions**	Consider creating (or partnering with, if existing) land bank to strateg properties for targeted preservation and redevelopment.
PO-09	Other	**Explore a Tax Allocation District**	Assess the feasibility of potentially implementing a Tax Allocation Distr targeted towards infrastructure improvements to support strategic co redevelopment and affordable/workforce housing development).

	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Planning Level Cost Estimate	Timeframe	Potential Funding Mechanisms
and southbound nd extend medians und (Bells Ferry Road)	Cherokee County	GDOT	$150,000	Long (10+ Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
ne northbound tudy feasability of	Cherokee County	GDOT	$400,000	Long (10+ Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
approach; optimize ty analysis. Develop	Cherokee County	GDOT	$600,000	Medium (6-10 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
r re-build as e freight	Cherokee County	GDOT	$200,000	Long (10+ Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
Rd and Kellogg Creek Dr) into a roundabout d Bells Ferry Road to	Cherokee County	GDOT	$200,000 (Study Only)	Long (10+ Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
or guardrail along landscape raised	GDOT	Cherokee County	$100,000 (Per Linear Mile)	Medium (6-10 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
ad throughout the LCI	Cherokee County	Cobb County EMC	$170,000 (Per Linear Mile)	Medium (6-10 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • Georgia Power Community Lighting Grants
construction ll curve warning ent markings ahead te speed limit and ay signage or other Kroger (north of Hwy er left-turn lane.	Cherokee County	GDOT	$1,560,000	Short (0-5 Years)	• GDOT TAP • GDOT HSIP • SS4A Implementation Grants
ents for	Cherokee County	Private Developers	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	-
n targeted growth	Cherokee County	Private Developers	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	-
d residential areas, or	Cherokee County	-	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	-
cally acquire	Cherokee County	-	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	• Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) Affordable Housing Program • US EPA Brownfields Program • US Dept of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs)
rict (with funds ommercial	Cherokee County	Local Business Community	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	• Cherokee County Property Tax Revenues

Table 6 Proposed Projects & Policies (Continued)

Project ID	Category	Project Name	Description
PO-10	Transportation Improvement (Other)	**Microtransit Pilot Program**	Create and execute a plan to pilot microtransit service in the Bells Fe recommended by the Bells Ferry LCI Plan Transit Feasibility Study.
PO-11	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Bells Ferry LCI Study Area Branding**	Develop a branding package for the Bells Ferry LCI Area. Apply bran area (e.g., logos on wayfinding signage) and apply to digital materi flyers).
PO-12	Land Use & Redevelopment	**Explore a Transfer of Development Rights Program**	Explore creation of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. development rights on one property to be transferred to another pro location, facilitating growth while preserving less intensive land uses v may strongly desire them.
PO-13	Other	**Small Business Policy Incentives**	Work with the County's Office of Economic Development to increase and access to existing small businesses programs, including small bus Cherokee Career Expo, and Cherokee Workforce Collaboratives.
PO-14	Placemaking, Activation & Design	**Community Design District Updates**	Update Bells Ferry LCI Community Design Guidelines to incentivize mi development. Updates may include: 1) providing additional resident for developers that also provide on-site commercial uses; 2) reducing encouraging shared parking agreements for redevelopment propos 3) including considerations regarding micromobility and pedestrian a the Community Design Guidelines [providing dedicated "last-mile" v parking spaces for mopeds, golf carts, bikes, etc.), designating picku curb management techniques to accomodate microtransit vehicles in parking lots and along roadways, as needed]; 4) revising out-of-da necessary.
PO-15	Land Use & Redevelopment	**Preserve in Place**	Incentivize residents to preserve existing housing density (this would st voluntary behavior - but the Land Bank could evolve into a future tra rights program).

	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Planning Level Cost Estimate	Timeframe	Potential Funding Mechanisms
rry LCI area, as	CATS Transit	Cherokee County	$1,020,000 (Plus Operating & Maintenance Costs)	Short (0-5 Years)	• Useage Fees/Fares • Federal Transit Admin (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & the Disabled Funds • USDOT Mobility on Demand (MoD) Sandbox Program
nding within the LCI als (e.g., outreach	Cherokee County	-	$50,000	Short (0-5 Years)	-
TDR policies enable perty in a different where the community	Cherokee County	Private Developers	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	-
e awareness of iness roundtables,	Cherokee County	Cherokee Office of Economic Development	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	-
xed-use, walkable ial density bonuses g parking minimums or als within the LCI area; access and mobility in ehicle parking (e.g. p/dropoff zones, and and pedestrians te references as	Cherokee County	-	Staff Time	Short (0-5 Years)	-
tart as incentivizing nsfer of development	Cherokee County	-	Staff Time	Medium (6-10 Years)	-

Figure 10 Node #1 Future Development Scenario




LEGEND
Multi-use Trail
Edge of Parking Activation
Underutilized Parking Area Activation
Pedestrian Safety Improvements
Streetscape Improvements
Proposed New Connection
Painted Water Tower
Pedestrian Amenity Node
Closed Driveway
(Traffic Redirected to Robin Rd)
Bells Ferry Rd
Edge of Parking Area Activation
Art/Farmers Market Food Trucks
Existing Residential Units
Edge of Parking Area Activation
Gresham Smith

Figure 11 Node #2 Future Development Scenario




Bells Ferry Rd
LEGEND
Proposed New Connection
Multi-use Trail
Streetscape Improvements
Pedestrian Amenity Node
Commercial (Retail)
Robin Rd
Commercial (Office/Institutional)
Existing Residential Units
Preserve in Place
50,000 SF Office
Gresham Smith

Figure 12 Node #3 Future Development Scenario




LEGEND
Multi-use Trail
Streetscape Improvements
Commercial (Redevelopment)
Commercial (Adaptive Reuse)
Bascomb Carmel Rd
Gresham Smith

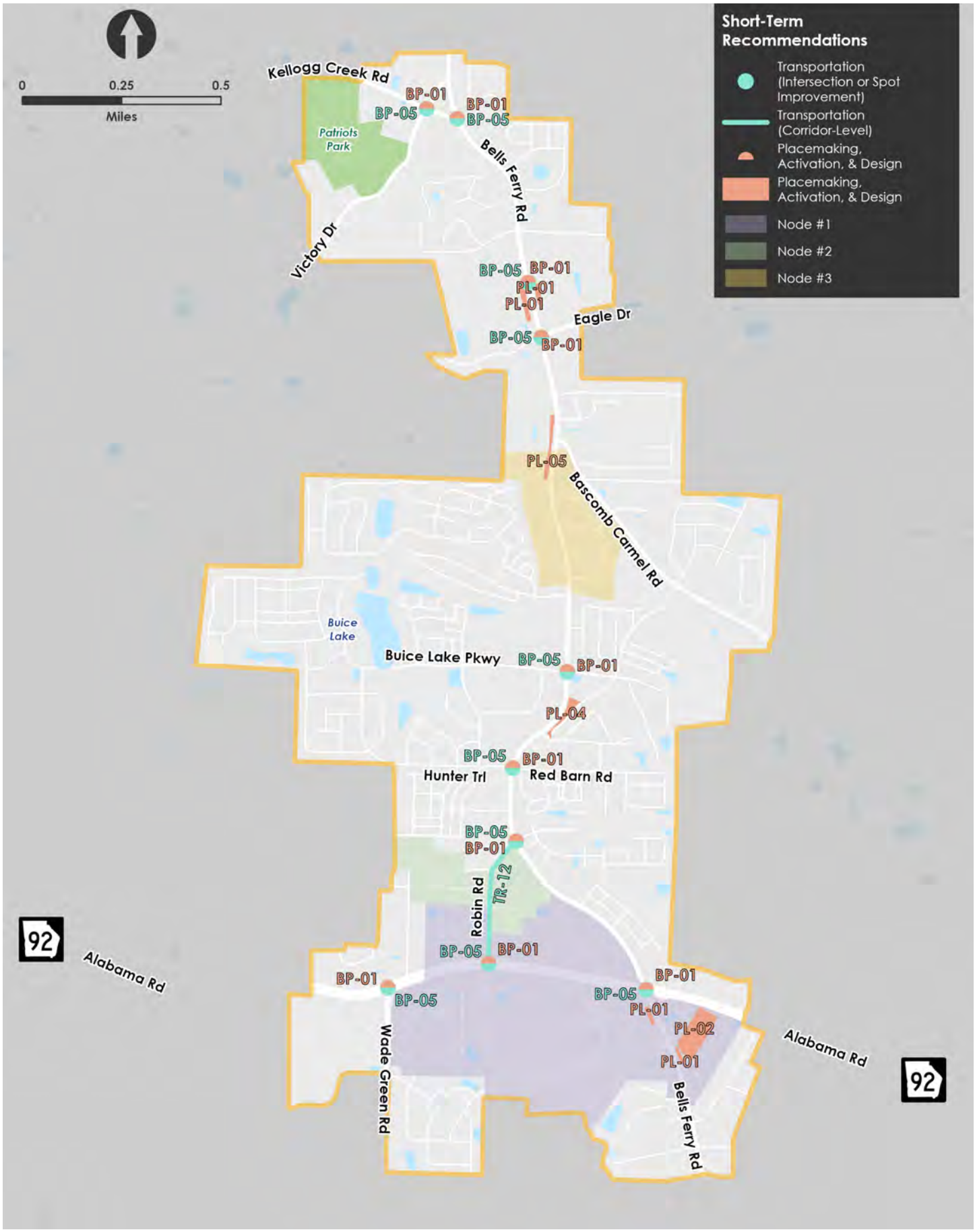


Figure 13 Proposed Projects (Short-Term)

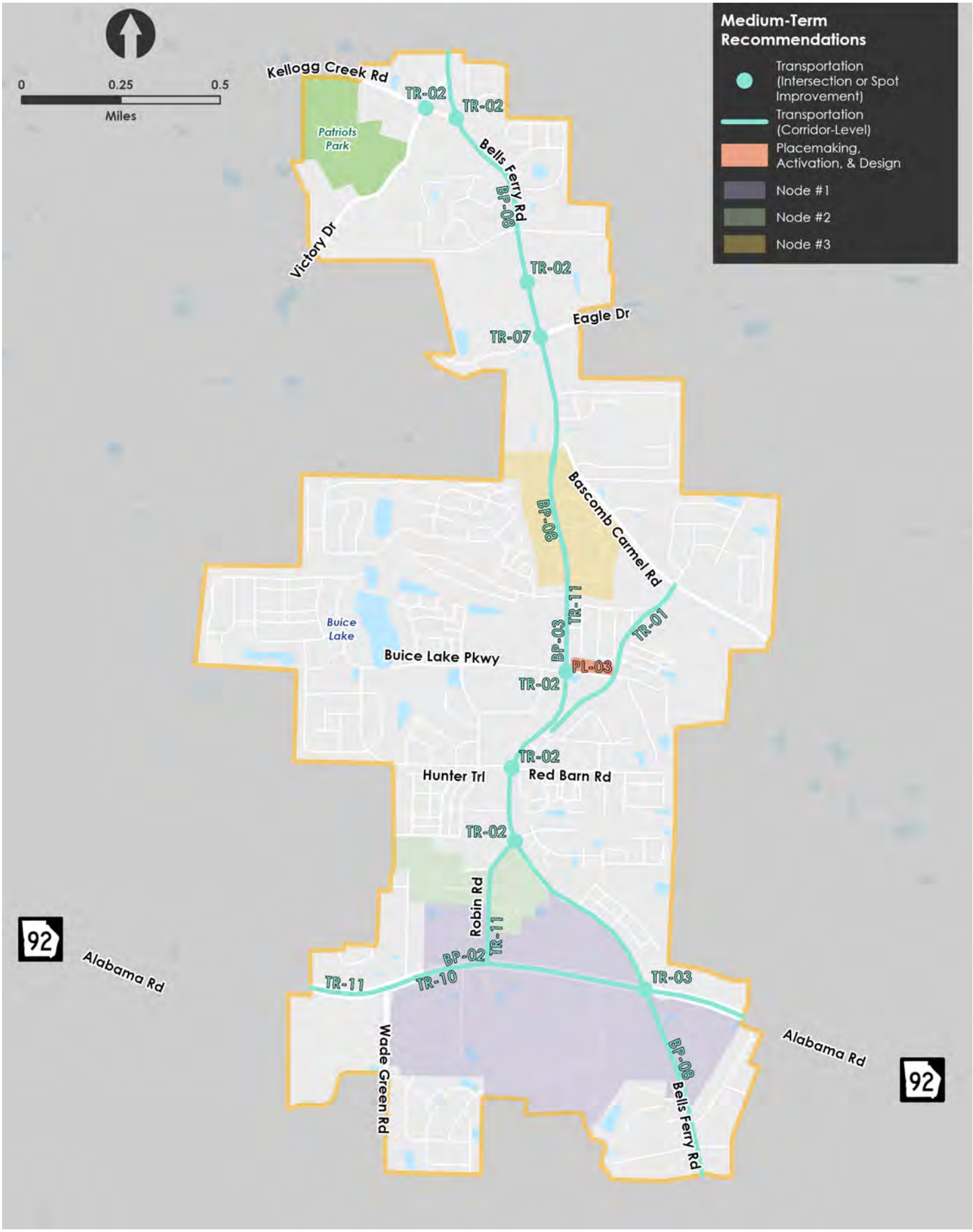


Figure 14 Proposed Projects (Medium-Term)

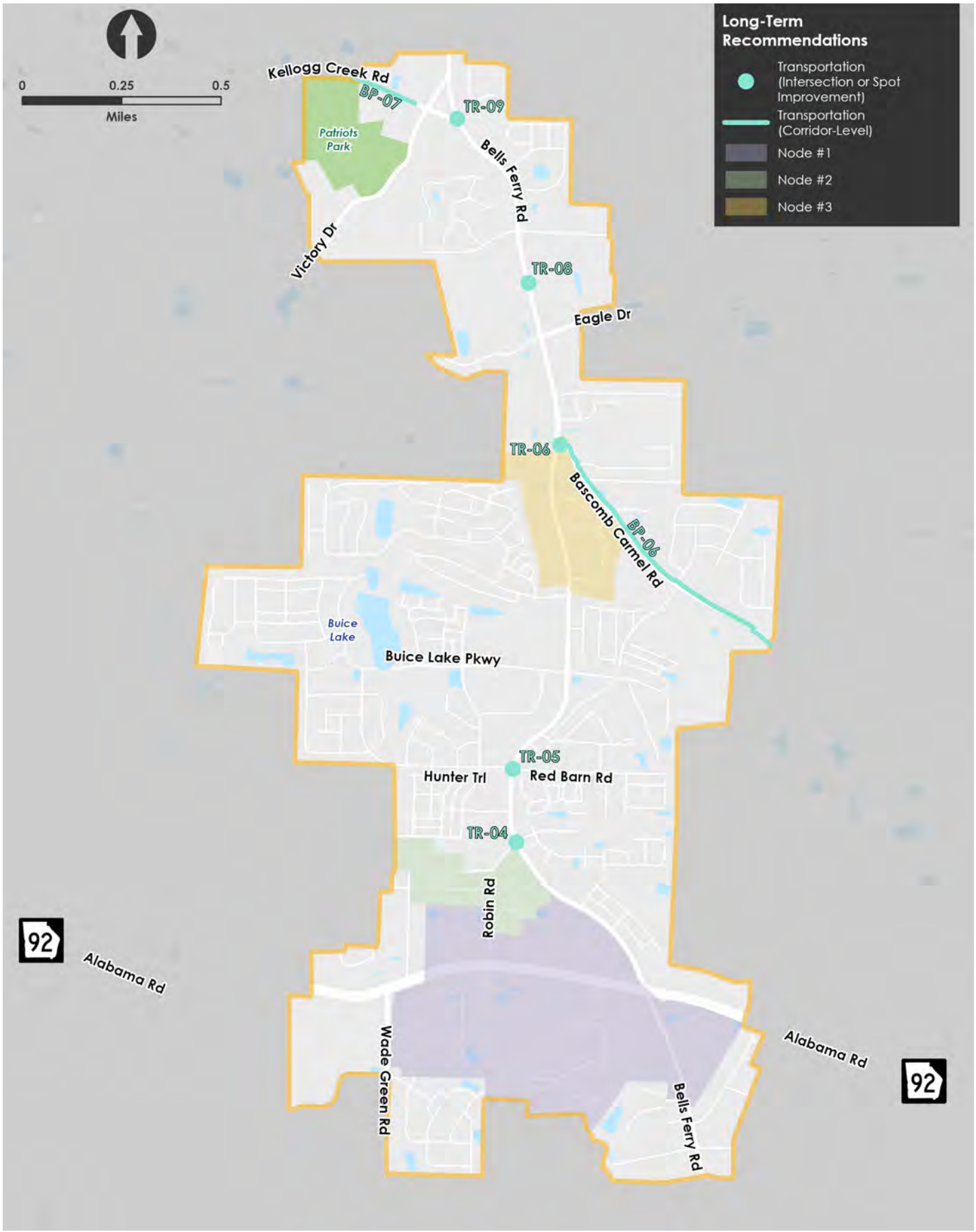


Figure 15 Proposed Projects (Long-Term)

Implementation Strategy

The 2026 Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update proposes ambitious policies and projects to accommodate future growth and development. These recommendations are organized into three chronological categories: short-range (within the next five years), medium-range (between six and ten years from the report's completion), and long-range (more than ten years after the report's completion). Though the recommendations may be ambitious, they are not so much so as to be unobtainable. This section of the report outlines how the County can work with partner agencies such as the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), and others to advance the Plan's recommendations.

100-Day Action Plan

The immediate focus centers on low-cost, high-impact actions. Early wins will build momentum and demonstrate tangible progress aligning with community priorities.

1) Launch Public Outreach & Education

- On the County's website, promote the Plan and the study area as a distinct community, helping to inform the public about the Plan's vision, goals, and project/policy proposals.
- Develop bilingual (English and Spanish) educational materials explaining microtransit service usage, pedestrian safety improvements, and future corridor projects. Distribute via social media, printed flyers, instructional videos, and community events to ensure broad accessibility.

2) Advance MicroTransit Pilot Program Setup

- Finalize and map the Bells Ferry microtransit zone boundaries in coordination with Cherokee Area Transportation Service (CATS).
- Procure necessary microtransit vehicles and configure dispatch and scheduling within existing platforms to ensure consistency with current county services.
- Train operators, dispatchers, and customer service staff on new zone-specific details and update marketing plans to increase awareness among riders.

4) Identify a Transportation Project and Pursue Transportation Imporvement Program (TIP) Funding

- Identify a transportation-related project with wide public and local government support that currently lacks funding for final design and construction.
- Submit a TIP application to pursue funding for that project.

5) Host Targeted Community Workshops and Focus Groups

- Organize educational workshops focused on transportation improvements, land use policies (missing middle housing, parking minimums), and placemaking strategies to ensure community input and transparency.
- Conduct focus groups, including Spanish-speaking and business owner groups, to refine design guidelines and project priorities.

6) Deploy Interim Wayfinding and Branding Elements

- Develop and install wayfinding signage and corridor branding materials at key gateways and pedestrian nodes to create a stronger sense of place and community identity.
- Use temporary or low-cost installations such as murals, banners, or signage at critical locations to visually communicate corridor improvements and future vision.

7) Initiate Property Owner Engagement for Land Banking and Redevelopment Incentives

- Begin outreach to major property owners and development stakeholders to educate them on potential land banking programs and incentives designed to support infill and mixed-use development.
- Explore the feasibility of a Tax Allocation District or other financing mechanisms to support catalytic redevelopment projects.

Potential Funding Sources

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The GDOT's TAP is a federally funded initiative designed to support community-based projects that enhance transportation options and promote safe, accessible, and sustainable travel. TAP allocates funding for a variety of non-motorized transportation projects. The program aims to improve connectivity, encourage active transportation modes, and enhance community livability and safety across Georgia.

Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program

The CMAQ Program is a federally funded initiative aimed at reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality in areas that do not meet national air quality standards. CMAQ funds support projects that promote alternative transportation options, reduce vehicle emissions, and enhance the overall efficiency of the transportation system. Typical projects include transit enhancements, carpool and vanpool programs, traffic flow improvements, and the development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Outdoor Stewardship Program (OSP)

The Georgia Department of Natural Resource's (GA DNR's) OSP is a state-funded initiative that provides grants to local governments and conservation organizations for the acquisition, development, and renovation of parks, green spaces, and recreational facilities. The program aims to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, protect natural and cultural resources, and improve quality of life for Georgia residents. Funding through OSP supports projects such as land acquisition for public use, trail development, playground construction, and habitat restoration.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT's) SRTS Program is a federally supported initiative designed to make it safer and easier for children to walk and bike to school. The program provides funding and resources for infrastructure improvements, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes, as well as educational activities that promote active transportation. SRTS aims to reduce traffic congestion near schools, improve safety, increase physical activity, and foster healthier communities.

Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program

The National Park Service's (NPS's) RTCA Program is a community assistance initiative that supports local efforts to conserve rivers, develop trails, and protect open spaces. The program provides technical expertise, planning, and facilitation to help communities, nonprofits, and governments realize their conservation and recreation goals. RTCA does not typically provide direct funding but acts as a catalyst by partnering with stakeholders to advance projects that enhance outdoor recreation, protect natural and cultural resources, and promote sustainable land use.

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Georgia DNR's LWCF Program is a federally funded grant program that provides financial assistance to state and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The program's goal is to preserve natural lands, protect water resources, and expand recreational opportunities for the public. Funding supports projects such as park land purchases, trail development, sports fields, picnic areas, and playgrounds, enhancing access to quality outdoor spaces throughout Georgia.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Georgia DNR's RTP is a federally funded initiative that provides grants to develop and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized use. The program supports projects such as trail construction, restoration, safety and educational signage, and trailhead facilities, aiming to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities and connect people with nature. RTP encourages sustainable trail development that balances environmental conservation with public access and enjoyment.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

Georgia DOT's HSIP is a federally funded program focused on reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries on public roads. HSIP provides funding for safety projects that address identified hazardous locations and systemic safety issues through data-driven solutions. Typical initiatives include roadway improvements, installation of safety features like guardrails and better signage, intersection upgrades, and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle safety measures.

Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Implementation Grants

The U.S. DOT's SS4A Implementation Grants program is a federal initiative designed to fund local, regional, and tribal efforts to eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The program provides substantial financial support to implement bold, evidence-based safety projects that improve pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic safety infrastructure. SS4A encourages comprehensive safety plans and collaborative approaches to create safer streets, enhance equity, and promote safe, accessible transportation options for all users.

Advanced Transportation & Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD)

The FHWA's ATCMTD program is a competitive grant initiative that funds projects deploying cutting-edge technologies to improve transportation system performance and reduce congestion. The program supports innovative solutions such as real-time traffic management, connected vehicle technologies, advanced traveler information systems, and intelligent transportation infrastructure. By promoting the integration of technology and data-driven approaches, ATCMTD aims to enhance mobility, safety, and reliability on highways and urban streets. Successful projects demonstrate scalable and replicable strategies that can be leveraged by other communities to address congestion and transportation challenges.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program

Georgia DOT's ITS Program focuses on the planning, deployment, and operation of advanced technologies to enhance the safety, efficiency, and reliability of Georgia's transportation network. The program implements technologies such as traffic cameras, dynamic message signs, traffic signal coordination, real-time traveler information systems, and incident management tools. By integrating data-driven solutions and communication systems, the ITS Program aims to reduce congestion, improve traffic flow, provide timely information to motorists, and respond effectively to incidents and emergencies.

Georgia Power Community Lighting Grants

Georgia Power's Community Lighting Grants program provides financial assistance to local governments, nonprofits, and community organizations to enhance public spaces through improved lighting. The program supports projects that increase safety, accessibility, and aesthetic appeal in parks, streetscapes, trails, and other communal areas by funding energy-efficient and visually impactful lighting installations.

Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) Affordable Housing Program

The FHLB's AHP initiative provides funding to financial institutions that are members of the Federal Home Loan Bank system to support the development and preservation of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. The program offers competitive and community-focused grants or subsidized loans to projects that increase affordable homeownership and rental opportunities. AHP funds are often used for activities such as new construction, rehabilitation, homebuyer assistance, and community land trusts.

Mobility on Demand (MoD) Sandbox Program

The Federal Transit Administration's MoD Sandbox Program is a grant initiative designed to support innovative and flexible transportation solutions that improve access and mobility for all users. The program encourages transit agencies and partners to test and implement emerging technologies and service models—such as shared rides, microtransit, integrated payment systems, and real-time information platforms—that enhance the convenience, efficiency, and connectivity of public transportation. The MoD Sandbox fosters collaboration between public and private sectors to address first-mile/last-mile challenges, increase transit ridership, and provide equitable mobility options.

Conclusion

The Bells Ferry corridor stands at a critical juncture, where deliberate, coordinated action can transform it from a predominantly car-oriented thoroughfare to a vibrant, walkable, and economically dynamic community asset. This Plan Update synthesizes two decades of growth, community aspirations, and technical analysis into a strategic road map that embraces multimodal transportation, land use innovation, and thoughtful placemaking. The Proactive Future Scenario showcases a corridor poised for sustainable, inclusive growth, balancing enhanced mobility, improved safety, and enriched quality of life. By contrast, the Passive Scenario highlights the risks and limitations of inaction.

Cherokee County's commitment, combined with engaged community input and cross-sector collaboration, positions the corridor to realize this vision. The recommended projects and policies provide a clear, actionable path forward to foster a resilient, connected corridor - one that honors its diverse population, supports economic vitality and exemplifies a modern suburban corridor designed for all ages and abilities. Through purposeful implementation and sustained partnership, the Bells Ferry corridor will emerge as a model for vibrant suburban reinvention in the Atlanta metropolitan region.

Where Do We Go from Here?

The Bells Ferry Corridor is one of the most economically, culturally and socially dynamic parts of Cherokee County. Its diversity of people and priorities provide it with unmatched potential for sustainable growth and development. With the help of the 2026 Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update, that future is one step closer.





Cherokee County
1831
GEORGIA

BELLS FERRY

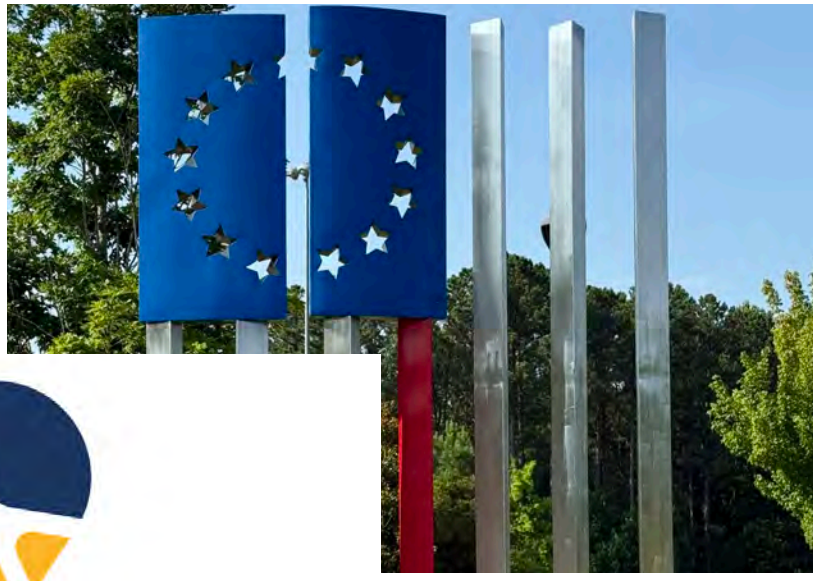
LCI PLAN UPDATE

APPENDICES

Existing Conditions Report

Cherokee County
1831
GEORGIA





BELLS FERRY
LCI PLAN UPDATE





EXISTING CONDITIONS TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

OCTOBER 2025

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Data Sources

The project team obtained data from a variety of sources for this report. Sources included Cherokee County, GDOT, U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), National Bridge Inventory (NBI), AASHTOWare/Numetric, and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). ARC's Travel Demand Model was used to project traffic volumes and levels of service on roadway segments in the study area.



NON-CONTINUOUS SIDEWALK ALONG KELLOGG CREEK ROAD EAST OF PATRIOTS PARK ENTRANCE

Chapter 1: Introduction

Plan Purpose

Planning for the Bells Ferry Road LCI area, which is anchored by a three-mile stretch of Bells Ferry Road between Highway 92 and Kellogg Creek Road in southwestern Cherokee County as shown in **Figure 1**, began roughly 20 years ago in 2005. The 2008 recession stalled progress in the first several years following completion of the plan; however, over the past ten years, significant progress has been made in building out planned residential development. With rapid growth in Cherokee County—up nearly 30 percent in 2022 compared to 2010—there are still important opportunities to continue advancing commercial and mixed-use development. Furthermore, travel patterns have changed substantially in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic.

In light of these changes, the 2025 Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update, which is locally funded by Cherokee County, serves as an update to capture and reflect the changes along Bells Ferry Road since 2005 and identify new ways to continue the momentum toward the community's vision for creating a more vibrant corridor.



View of Bells Ferry Road from Buice Lake Parkway

LCI Program Overview

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) is a program led by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) that empowers communities across the metro Atlanta region to reimagine how they grow. Established in 2000, the LCI program uses federal funding to encourage local jurisdictions to conduct such reimagining through planning efforts that seek to promote walkability, enable mixed-use developments, and establish a more interconnected and multimodal transportation network.

The LCI program is aimed at increasing mobility options, reducing the number of trips people make driving alone, and improving access to jobs and services, thereby encouraging healthier lifestyles. The program also seeks to encourage a mix of land uses and integrated development types that can be accessible by people of all ages, abilities, and income levels.

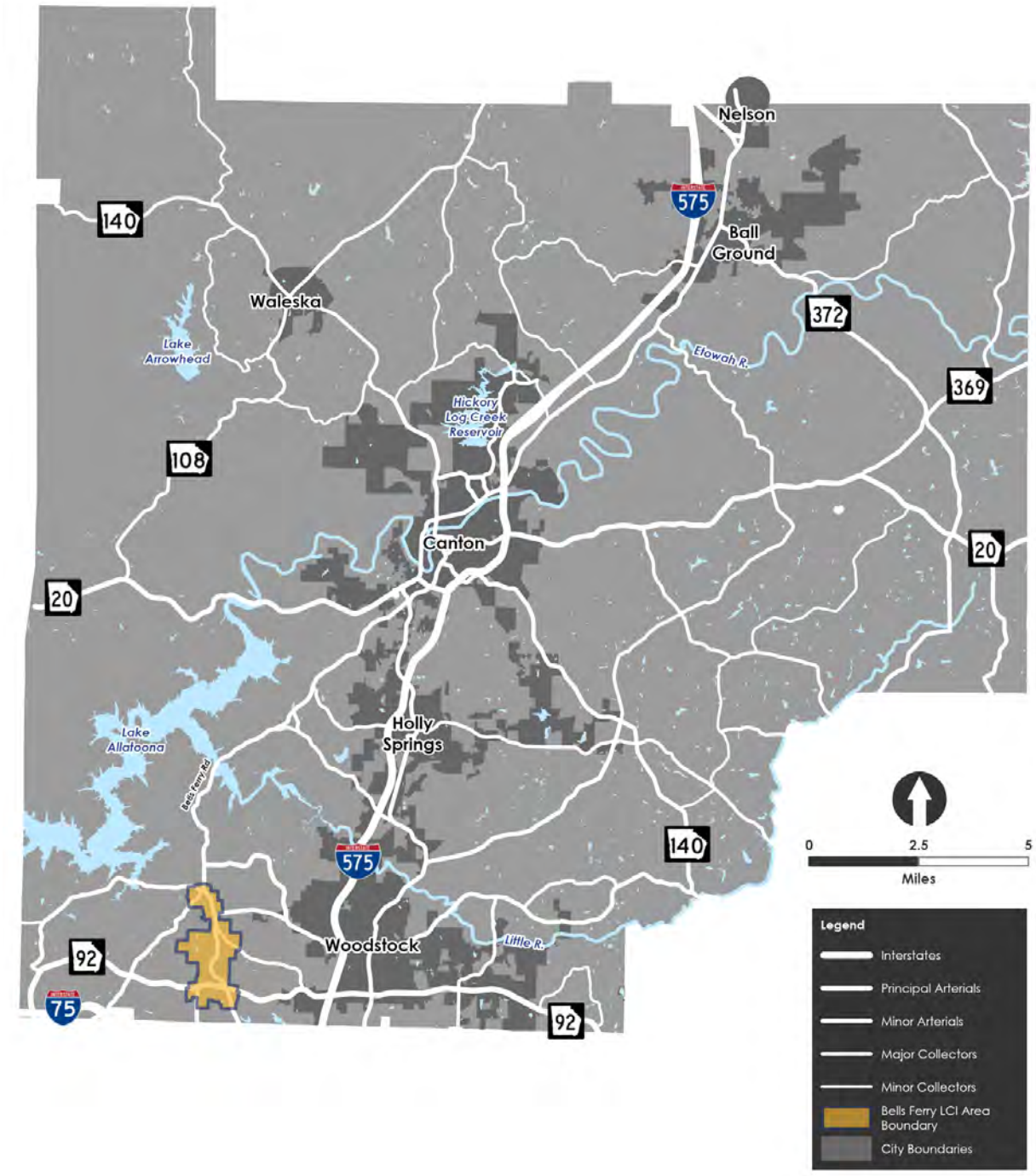


Figure 1. Location of Bells Ferry LCI Study Area Within Cherokee County

Building on the foundation set by the original 2005 LCI Plan and the Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan, this Update presents an important opportunity to take a fresh look at transportation, market demand, and the overall approach to development along Bells Ferry Road.

Study Area Overview and Context

The Bells Ferry LCI study area shown in **Figure 2** represents an opportunity to apply the principles of the LCI program within a rapidly growing small area and important corridor in southwestern Cherokee County.

Encompassing a three-mile stretch of Bells Ferry Road, the study area serves as a vital link between residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and regional destinations. Through the LCI program, Cherokee County is working to develop a shared vision for the corridor that enhances connectivity, supports diverse housing and economic development, and improves overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Existing Conditions Technical Memorandum Overview

The 2025 Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update Existing Conditions Report is the first of a series of technical memoranda that will guide the update to this plan. The Existing Conditions Report is organized around six general sections:

1. Review of previous plans/studies;
2. Land use/development patterns;
3. Multimodal infrastructure;
4. Traffic analysis;
5. Review of safety/vehicle crash data; and
6. Any additional observations made during field work/measurements.



Looking West Along Kellogg Creek Road from Bells Ferry Road

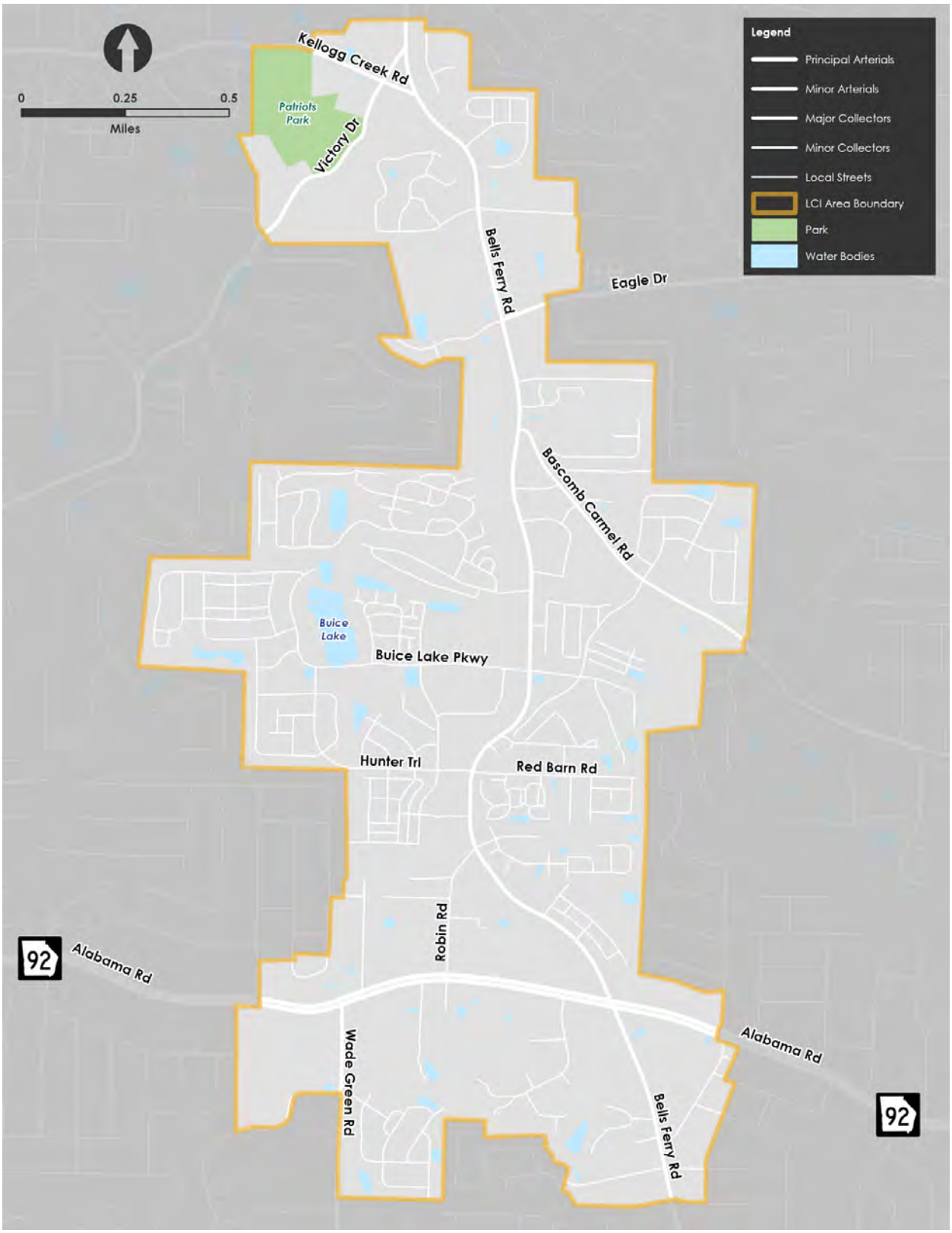


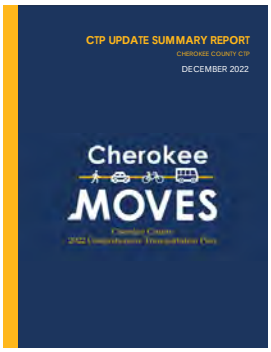
Figure 2. Bells Ferry LCI Study Area

Chapter 2: Plan, Study & Project Review

Review of Previous Plans and Studies

The planning process began with an analysis to understand and articulate the underlying conditions in the Bells Ferry LCI study area that will influence the 2025 update of the Bells Ferry LCI Plan. This analysis is reflected in two overall analyses: (1) a review and compilation of the findings and recommendations from legacy plans and (2) an analysis identifying foundational community features.

Countywide Plans



Cherokee Moves - Cherokee County 2022 Comprehensive Transportation Plan

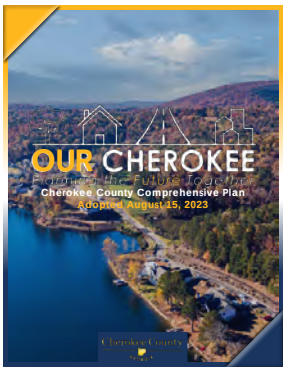
Cherokee Moves, the County's most recent iteration of their Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), builds on the 2016 CTP to establish a clear transportation vision through 2050 in collaboration with municipalities and the ARC. This plan integrates all modes of transportation (vehicular, freight, transit, walking, biking, etc.) and also includes a trails element. Goals for the CTP include improving connectivity and mobility, maintaining community and environmental health, aligning transportation and land planning, preserving existing infrastructure, and encouraging a variety of transportation modes. The CTP recommends prioritized transportation projects as well as transportation programs and policies to help integrate different transportation modes across the County. CTP projects relevant to the Bells Ferry LCI area are listed in **Table 1** on the next page.



Recent Improvements Along Victory Drive Near Kellogg Creek Road

Table 1. Cherokee Moves CTP Projects Within the Bells Ferry LCI Area

Priority	Project Name	Project ID	Description	Limits	Status
Programmed/ Underway	Bells Ferry LCI Trail	CTP-1	Shared-use path along Bells Ferry Rd within some of the current available ROW.	From Cobb County Line to Kellogg Creek Rd	Programmed
	Bells Ferry Rd @ Kellogg Creek Rd; Bells Ferry Rd @ Victory Dr; & Victory Dr @ Kellogg Creek Rd Intersection Improvements	CTP-372	Kellogg Creek Rd @ Victory Dr improved and signalized. Sidewalks installed in the vicinity of the intersection.	N/A	Completed
Short-Term Projects	Hwy 92 @ Bells Ferry Rd Pedestrian Crossing	CTP-201	Bike signal detection and crossing alert detection. Coordinate project with CTP-1.	N/A	
	Hwy 92 Operational Improvements	CTP-237	Operational improvements at intersections, signal upgrades, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements.	From Bells Ferry Rd to I-575	
Long-Term Projects	Hwy 92 Freight Capacity	CTP-96	Needs further study.	From Woodstock Rd to Bells Ferry Rd	
	Kellogg Creek Rd Safety Improvements	CTP-270	Safety improvements for this corridor could include: conducting a study to determine appropriate safety improvements, including access management.	From Old Alabama Rd to Bells Ferry Rd	



Our Cherokee - Cherokee County 2023 Comprehensive Plan

Adopted in 2023, the County's Comprehensive Plan identifies and establishes a community vision, guiding principles, and core values for guiding growth and development throughout Cherokee County. The Comprehensive Plan outlines growth strategies intended to preserve and enhance the unique local character of the County, provide a variety of housing opportunities, and facilitate sustainable economic development.

Among the character areas specified in the Comprehensive Plan, there is a Bells Ferry character area. The strategies for the area include promoting alternative transportation options (especially bike and pedestrian paths) to connect neighborhoods, encouraging appropriate densities to create a vibrant character, and providing an array of housing opportunities for residents of different ages and incomes. Potential future land uses are identified as small lot single-family homes, attached single-family duplexes and townhouses, mixed-use buildings, public and institutional uses, senior housing, and commercial development. Several zoning districts are also suggested for the area.

Ultimately, the Comprehensive Plan provides an implementation process, review of accomplishments, and a Community Work Plan (CWP). The CWP includes identification, funding, and implementation of Bells Ferry LCI projects and updating the Bells Ferry LCI Plan.



Newer Residential Developments Along Buice Lake Parkway Near Bells Ferry Road



Cherokee County Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (2025)

Cherokee County adopted a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan in March 2025 that examines roadway safety trends across all roads within the County, including within the Bells Ferry LCI area. The Safety Action Plan is designed to support ARC's Regional Safety Strategy for reducing, and ultimately eliminating, fatalities and serious injuries within the Atlanta region.

Stemming from this plan is a target of achieving zero traffic deaths by 2040 which requires a 6.5 percent annual reduction in fatalities. The Cherokee County Board of Commissioners, along with the Ball Ground, Canton, Holly Springs, Woodstock, and Waleska City Councils, have formally adopted this goal of achieving zero traffic deaths.

This Plan evaluates crash data trends and policies and regulations that impact roadway and pedestrian safety. This informed the development of corridor and intersection safety improvement projects intended to help achieve the County's goal of zero traffic deaths. There are a series of intersection and corridor projects within the LCI area which are listed in **Table 2**. Among others, these include adding bicycle facilities and access management along Bells Ferry Road.

Table 2. Cherokee County Safety Action Plan Projects Within the LCI Area

ID	Location	Project Tier	Limits	Improvement Type(s)
C-3	Hwy 92	Short-Term & Mid-Term	Bells Ferry Rd to Lovejoy Ln	Intersection Improvement, Access Management, Signage and Pavement Markings, Intersection Geometry, Intersection Lighting & Intersection Operations
C-9	Hwy 92	Short-Term & Mid-Term	Woodstock Rd to Wade Green Rd	Intersection Improvements, Access Management, Signage and Pavement Markings
C-11	Bells Ferry Rd	Short-Term, Mid-Term & Long-Term	Hwy 92 to Bascomb Carmel Rd	General, Intersection Improvement, Road Diet, Bicycle Facilities, Access Management, Lighting & Intersection Operations
I-1	Hwy 92 @ Bells Ferry Rd	Short-Term & Mid-Term	N/A	Intersection Geometry, Intersection Lighting & Intersection Operations
I-5	Hwy 92 @ Wade Green Rd	Short-Term & Mid-Term	N/A	Signage and Pavement Markings, Intersection Geometry & Intersection Operations
I-6	Bells Ferry Rd @ Kellogg Creek Rd	Short-Term & Mid-Term	N/A	Signage and Pavement Markings, Intersection Geometry, Intersection Lighting & Intersection Operations
I-8	Bells Ferry Rd @ Eagle Dr	Short-Term & Mid-Term	N/A	Signage and Pavement Markings, Intersection Geometry & Intersection Lighting
I-12	Kellogg Creek Rd @ Victory Dr	Ongoing	N/A	Monitor intersection safety performance following completion of recent intersection reconfiguration

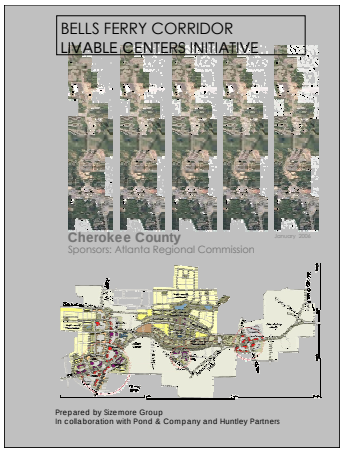


Greenways & Trails Master Plan (2025)

The inaugural Cherokee County Greenways and Trails Master Plan weaves together various local visions for trail and greenway networks throughout the County into an encompassing countywide vision for Cherokee's network of greenways and trails. This plan serves as a framework for developing an overall trail and greenway network that fosters economic development, recreation, and transportation. Supporting ARC's Regional Trail Vision, the master plan seeks to fill gaps in the existing network and provide access to activity centers and recreational destinations. The plan recommends trail design criteria and guidelines; proposes future trail connections and extensions; provides guidance on partnerships, funding, operations, and maintenance; and identifies priority corridors and projects, including several in the Bells Ferry Road LCI area that are listed in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Greenways and Trails Master Plan Projects Within the LCI Area

ID	Project Name	Base Option Tier	Enhanced Option Tier	Type	Limits
GW-45	Woodstock Rd to Bells Ferry Rd Connector	Aspirational	Aspirational	Greenway	Woodstock Rd to Bells Ferry Rd
SP-37	Kellogg Creek - Red Top Mountain Connector Segment 4	Aspirational	Aspirational	Sidepath	Heritage Pl to Bells Ferry Rd
SP-48	Victory Dr Sidepath - Segment 2	Aspirational	Aspirational	Sidepath	David Lee St to Bells Ferry Rd
SP-51	Hwy 92 Sidepath - Segment 3	Aspirational	Aspirational	Sidepath	Woodstock Rd to Bells Ferry Rd
SP-52	Hwy 92 Sidepath - Segment 4	Long-Term (20-30 Yrs)	Mid-Term (10-20 Yrs)	Sidepath	Bells Ferry Rd to Posey Branch Trl (Project GW-26)
SP-54	Robin Rd Sidepath	Aspirational	Aspirational	Sidepath	Hwy 92 to Bells Ferry Rd
SP-55	Bells Ferry Rd Sidepath - Segment 1	Short-Term (0-10 Yrs)	Short-Term (0-10 Yrs)	Sidepath	Cobb County Line to Victory Dr
SP-62	Eagle Dr Sidepath	Aspirational	Aspirational	Sidepath	Bells Ferry Rd to Towne Lake Pkwy
SW-2	Bascomb Carmel Rd Sidewalks	Mid-Term (10-20 Yrs)	Mid-Term (10-20 Yrs)	Sidewalks	Bells Ferry Rd to Putnam Ford Rd
SW-3	Old Bascomb Rd Sidewalks	Short-Term (0-10 Yrs)	Short-Term (0-10 Yrs)	Sidewalks	Old Bascomb Ct to Bascomb Carmel Rd
SW-4	Old Bascomb Ct Sidewalks	Short-Term (0-10 Yrs)	Short-Term (0-10 Yrs)	Sidewalks	From Bells Ferry Rd to Old Bascomb Rd



Previous Bells Ferry Corridor Efforts

Bells Ferry Corridor Livable Centers Initiative (2006)

Cherokee County, in partnership with ARC, commissioned the Bells Ferry Corridor LCI Study to kickstart creative, holistic solutions along the Bells Ferry Road corridor from just north of the Cherokee/Cobb County line to Kellogg Creek Road and Highway 92 (Hwy 92) from Santa Fe Trail to Woodland Drive.

The study identifies challenges such as disinvestment in the area; underutilized and declining commercial developments (greyfields); and isolated, sprawling development patterns that strain infrastructure and limit accessibility. Specific goals include creating a unique and vibrant community character; enhancing mobility and connectivity (particularly for alternative modes of travel); encouraging appropriate land uses and development patterns; and facilitating access to jobs and housing.

The study culminates in a concept plan for the study area (see **Figure 3**); recommendations related to land use and zoning, transportation, and urban design; and an action plan.

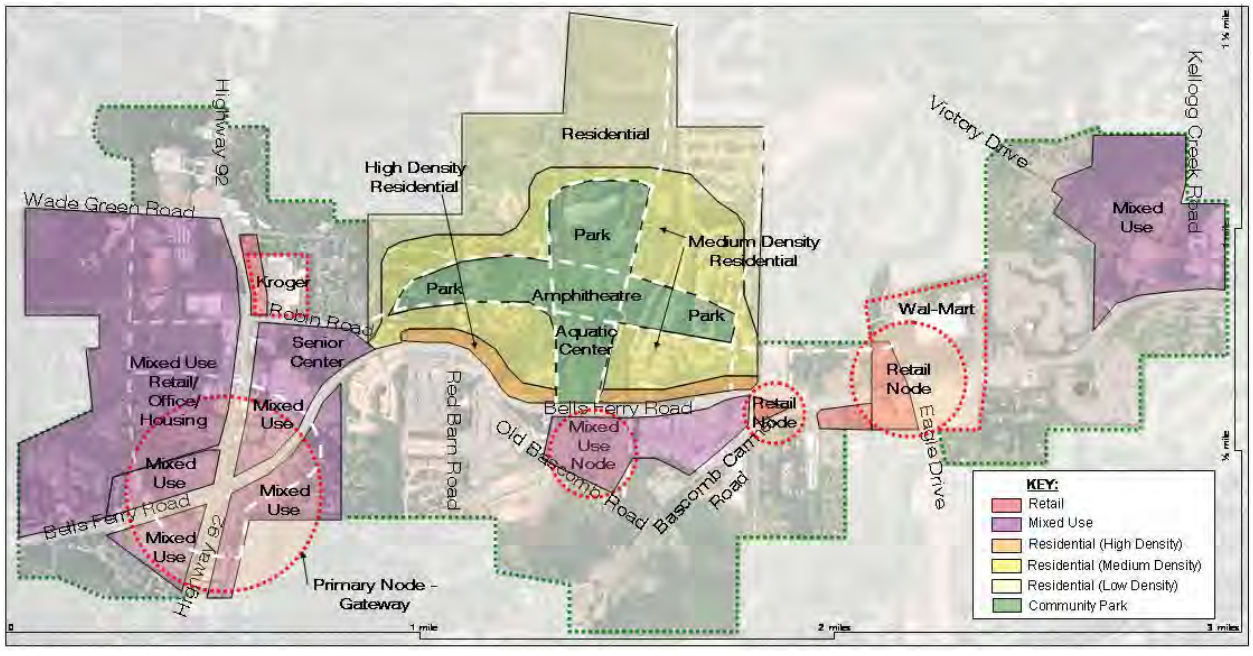


Figure 3. Bells Ferry LCI Original Concept Plan (2006)

Source: Bells Ferry 2006 LCI Plan, p. 4-5.

Recommendations

Land Use and Zoning

- Land use concept plan
  - A central park area to serve the entire community, complete with aquatic center and amphitheater surrounded by varying densities of residential housing
  - High concentration of park space in the Bells Ferry Parkway enclave
- Modification of existing zoning districts to allow for greater flexibility and encourage compatible new development
- Adoption of new zoning categories that enable mixed-uses and sharing of infrastructure, including several sub-areas
- Zoning incentives to encourage compatible new developments
- Parking regulations
- Requirement for all uses to incorporate parks and open spaces

Transportation Recommendations

A series of corridor improvements along Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92 are listed below and geographically depicted in **Figure 4**:

- Bells Ferry Corridor Improvements
  - Bells Ferry Trail (Shared Use Path) - 1.5-mile shared use path along the west side of the corridor and located within a linear park which will vary from 50 to 150 feet
  - Signalization of existing intersections concurrent with redevelopment demand, landscaping, and streetscaping
- Highway 92 Corridor Improvements
  - Widening of Highway 92 to two 12-foot through lanes in each direction; implementation of a landscaped raised median; signalization of intersections, implementation of accessory lanes, and implementation of curb cuts
  - Sidewalks, planting strip (pedestrian buffer), landscaping, signalized crosswalks, and median refuges
- The original LCI also proposes a series of new roadway facilities including:
  - Bells Ferry corridor parallel access road
  - Bells Ferry Road perpendicular access roads
  - Highway 92 parallel access road
  - Highway 92 perpendicular access roads
  - New local streets

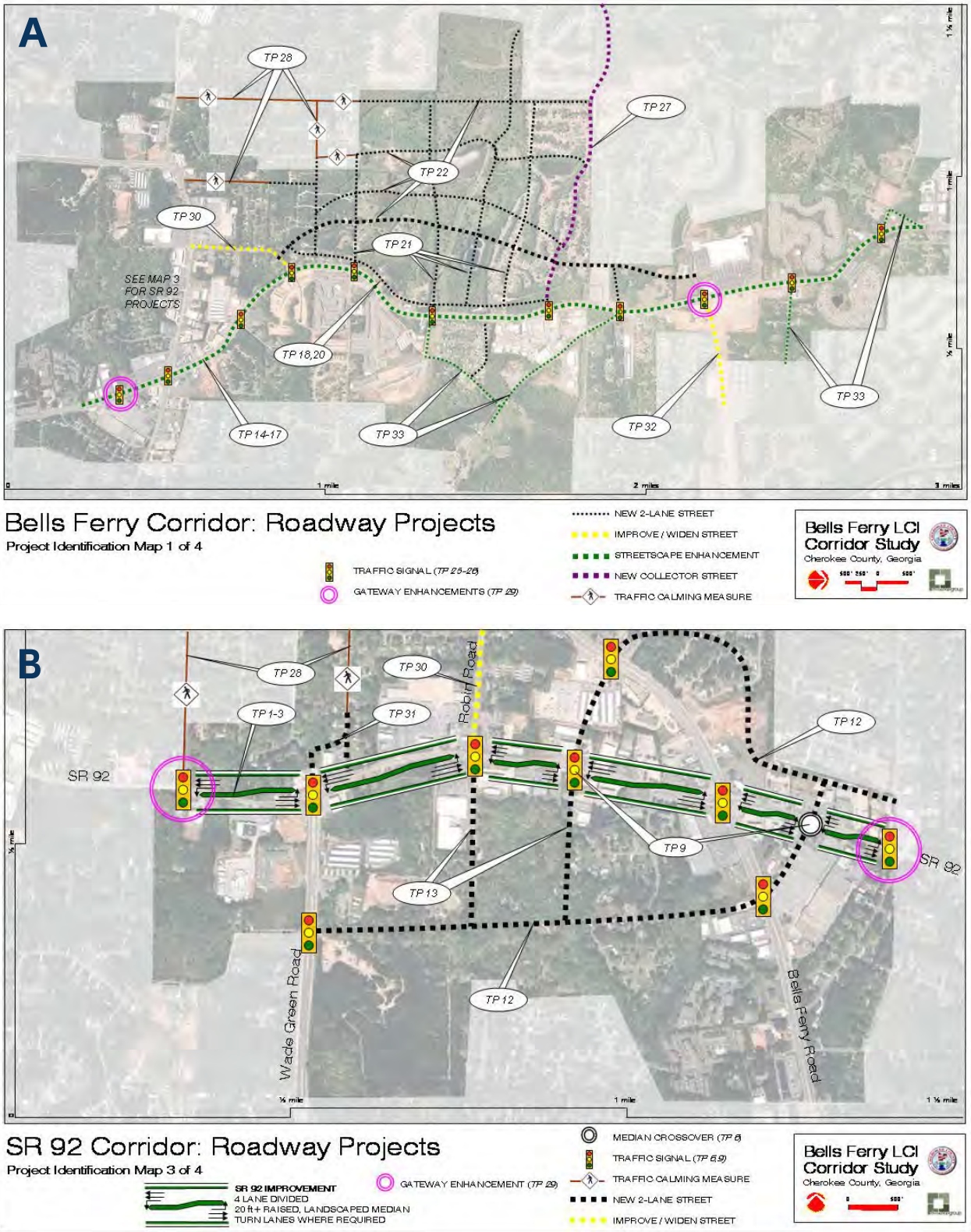


Figure 4. 2006 Bells Ferry LCI - Roadway Projects

A) Bells Ferry Road Corridor Projects
B) Highway 92 Corridor Projects

Source: Bells Ferry 2006 LCI Plan, p. 4-24 & 4-26.

Additional 2006 LCI Recommendations and Strategies

- Access Management
  - Incorporating access management strategies into the Highway 92 widening
  - Specific regulatory actions which may be taken by Cherokee County to support effective access management include:
  - Incorporate access management in legislation
  - Restrict the number and spacing of driveways
  - Regulate intersection spacing
  - Regulate the location, spacing, and design of driveways
  - Coordinate with state and national efforts

Design Principles and recommendations consist of a master plan for parks, fields, and greenways (see **Figure 5**) as well as gateways and catalyst development sites within the LCI area. Lastly, the original LCI plan recommends the commission of a study to develop detailed design guidelines.

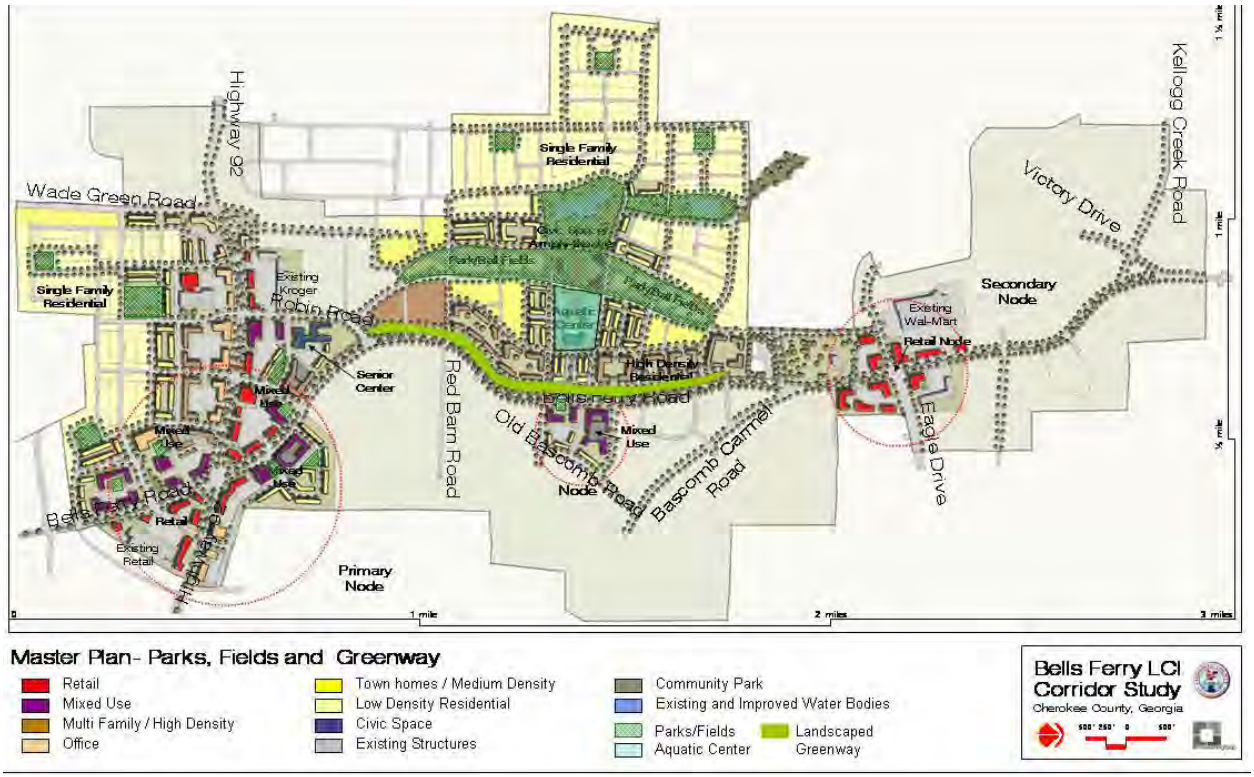


Figure 5. 2006 Bells Ferry LCI Urban Design Recommendations

Source: Bells Ferry 2006 LCI Plan, p. 4-37.



Bells Ferry LCI 2016 Update

To assess progress, Cherokee County prepared an update to the 2006 Bells Ferry Corridor LCI plan in 2016. This update adjusted strategies and objectives and guided additional implementation of the LCI area's recommendations and strategies based on priorities in 2016.

The plan includes a report of accomplishments for transportation, transportation planning, housing, economic development, and planning and zoning initiatives from the 2006 LCI plan. Regarding transportation projects, the Highway 92 widening project and several associated design modifications were completed. Access management plans for Highway 92 and Wade Green Road were ongoing. Roadway safety improvements and pedestrian facilities were implemented on Robin Road, and Eagle Drive was widened. In terms of housing initiatives, mixed-use developments on Wade Green Road and Bells Ferry Road and a single-family residential development on Bascomb Carmel Road were in various stages of planning and development (see **Figure 6**).

Aside from transportation projects, a new fire station was approved for construction within the LCI area, and construction on Patriots Park started in 2015. The economic development initiatives did not progress due to unsuccessful ballot initiatives and funding limitations. Planning and zoning initiatives relating to land use, zoning regulations, and design guidelines were completed.

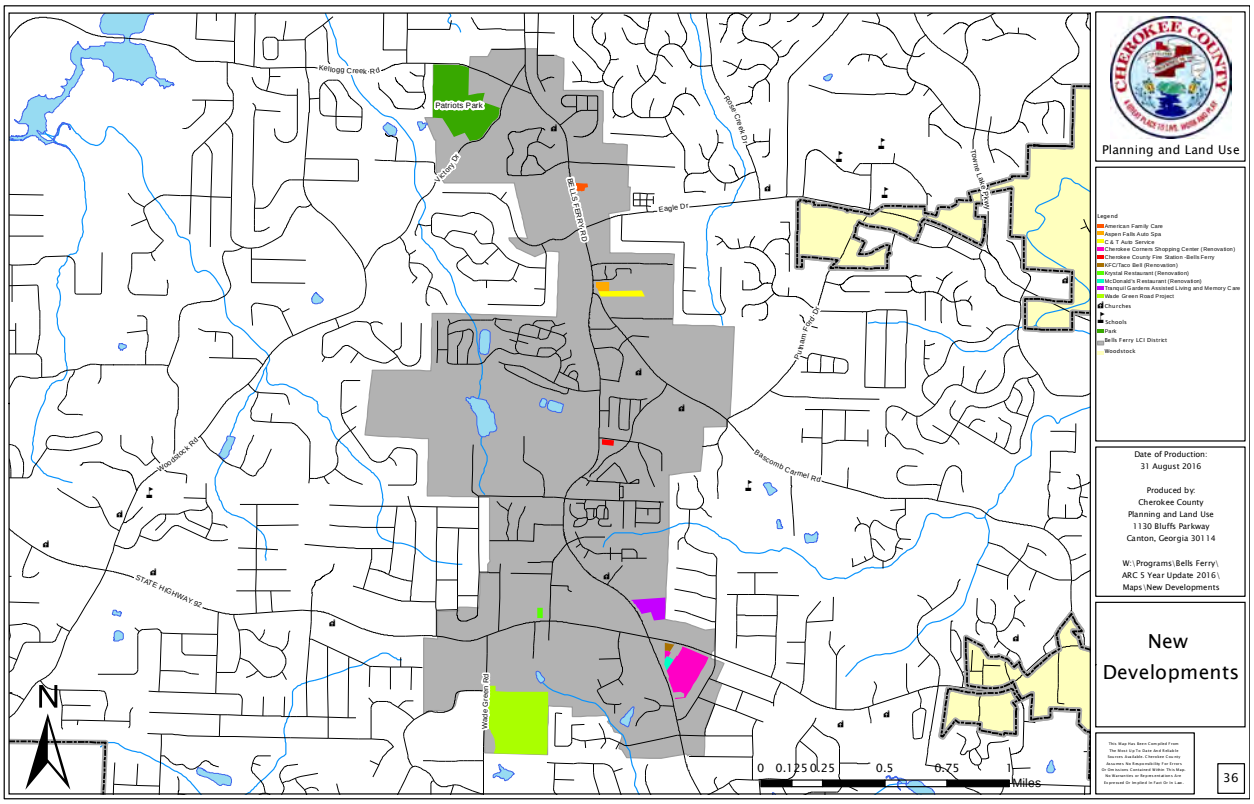
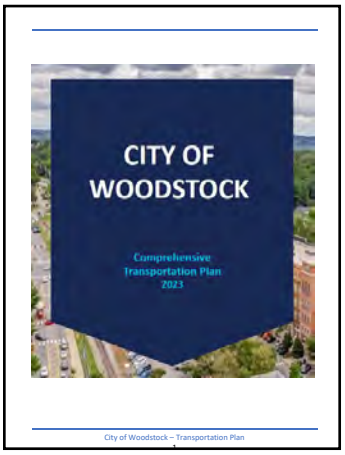


Figure 6. 2016 Bells Ferry LCI Update - New Developments Map

Source: Bells Ferry LCI 2016 Update, p. 36.

City of Woodstock Plans

Given the LCI area's proximity to Woodstock, the project team evaluated plans and studies sponsored by the City of Woodstock to determine if any projects, recommendations, or strategies may have bearing on the Bells Ferry LCI area's future with respect to connectivity, transportation options, forecasted growth, and changes in land use patterns that accompany this growth.



Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2023)

The City of Woodstock's 2023 CTP is intended to plan and forecast future transportation improvement projects, such as roadway, sidewalk, and parking improvements. The CTP aims to further the City's goals of improving vehicular and pedestrian mobility and connectivity in order to facilitate quality of life improvements and economic development. Considering the City's explosive growth, the CTP aims to identify obstacles and opportunities in order to facilitate the decision-making process of the City Council, City Administration, and civic leaders. The plan outlines a strategy of using innovative techniques – smart cities, grid street networks, roundabouts, signal coordination, and more – to enhance traffic flow without undercutting the City's pedestrian-friendly environment.

Regarding the study corridor and surrounding areas, the plan notes that traffic conditions on Bells Ferry Road corridor are primarily influenced by its proximity to Interstate 575. Bells Ferry Road and Eagle Drive (from Towne Lake Parkway to Bells Ferry Road) are identified as secondary periphery corridors, meaning that the majority of these corridors fall outside city limits, but strongly impact City flows. Highway 92 is considered the primary east-west corridor of commuter traffic, handling significant through and destination traffic. The CTP identifies Towne Lake Parkway / Eagle Drive (from Woodstock Parkway to Bells Ferry Road) as a secondary local corridor, meaning that the corridor is a key access point to residential neighborhoods, and is also used by cut-through traffic.

More generally, the plan notes a strain on east-west corridors in the area, particularly the Eagle Drive/Towne Lake Parkway/Arnold Mill Road corridor. While north-south flow is supported by I-575, east-west travelers (e.g., commuters who live on the Bells Ferry Road corridor and travel to Alpharetta, Roswell, or other locations east of Woodstock for work) have limited options.

Greenprints Trail System Update (2021)

As part of the Comprehensive Town Plan 2030 developed in 2008, the City of Woodstock developed a Greenprints Trail System, envisioning an ambitious, regionally-connected network over 60 miles of trails throughout the City as shown in **Figure 7**. The City provided an update in 2021 on the status of the trails, mapping 10 miles of constructed trails, five miles of funded trails, and 72 miles of proposed trails. The trails provide connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists across major corridors like I-575 and Highway 92 and connect destinations like Lake Allatoona, downtown Woodstock, and the parks and greenspace along the Little River.

Honing in on the area around the study corridor, the Greenprints Trail System includes a proposed trail branching off from the Towne Lake Pass Trail just west of Woodstock Middle School, winding through the primarily residential east of the Bells Ferry corridor. The trail reaches Highway 92 approximately one mile east of the Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92 intersection and continues east along the Highway 92 corridor.

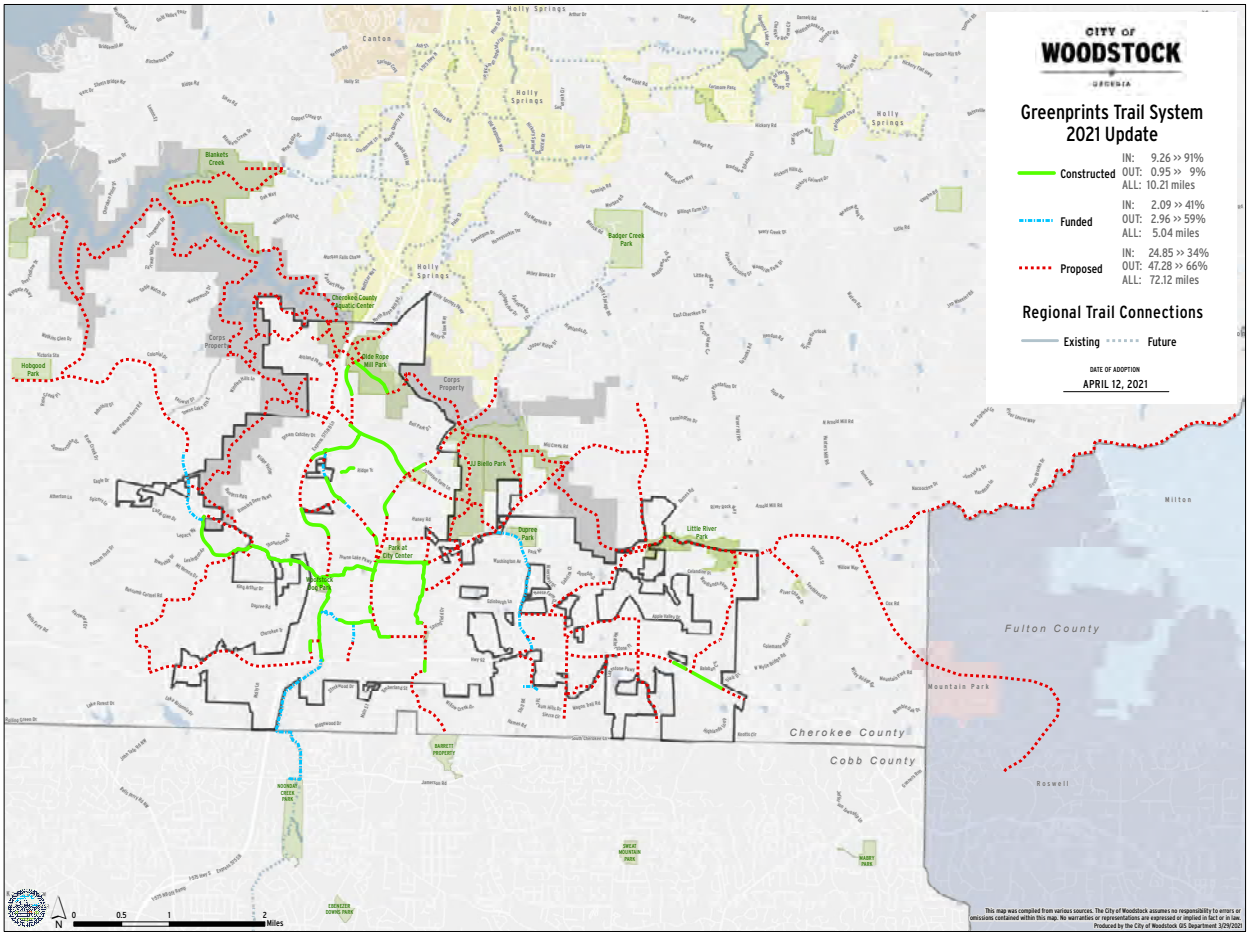
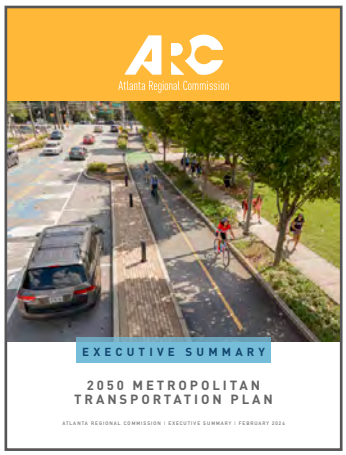


Figure 7. Woodstock Greenprints Trail System - 2021 Update

Source: Woodstock Greenprints.



Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) Plans

2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

ARC's *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* (MTP) outlines the long-term vision for transportation investments across the 21-county planning area through the year 2050. The plan accommodates expected population growth, evolving travel behaviors, and local government priorities. With a focus on sustainability and connectivity, the plan encompasses a wide range of strategies including road improvements, transit expansions, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and emerging mobility technologies. For the purposes of this planning effort, how the plan addresses the needs of Cherokee County and, more narrowly, the Bells Ferry Road corridor is of the utmost interest.

The MTP identifies Cherokee County as one of the fastest-growing parts of the region, expected to see significant increases in both population and employment by 2050. This growth necessitates a coordinated response to congestion, accessibility, and infrastructure upgrades. The MTP includes investments that improve regional access to and from Cherokee County, particularly through enhancements to highway corridors, freight mobility, and regional transit options. It identifies Bells Ferry Road as a key arterial with increasing demand and multimodal potential.

A major project highlighted in the plan for Cherokee County is the widening and multimodal upgrade of Bells Ferry Road (from Victory Drive to Port Victoria Way), which aims to address existing congestion and safety concerns while enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access along the corridor. The plan recognizes Bells Ferry Road as a strategic connector between residential areas, retail centers, and regional transportation networks.

The MTP also proposes upgrades to the I-575 corridor, which runs parallel and slightly east of Bells Ferry Road. These upgrades include interchange improvements [Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) PI No. 0019631 I-575 at Towne Lake Parkway Interchange Improvements, and GDOT PI No. 0016017 City of Woodstock I-575 Interchange Improvements, which are discussed further in the projects section of Chapter 2] and technology enhancements for incident management. While these are not located directly on Bells Ferry Road, they are expected to relieve traffic pressure along adjacent arterials, including Bells Ferry Road. Improved regional mobility from these investments will also support economic development by providing better access to employment hubs.

Several additional local projects are called out within Cherokee County, such as safety upgrades at major intersections, bridge replacements, and greenway connections. In proximity to Bells Ferry Road, the plan includes projects that enhance east-west connectivity and improve access to nearby commercial and recreational destinations. One such improvement includes bicycle-pedestrian connections to the Noonday Creek Trail, which runs near the southern end of the Bells Ferry Road corridor. This reflects the plan's broader commitment to active transportation investment.



Walk, Bike, Thrive!

The ARC *Walk. Bike. Thrive!* plan provides guidance for increasing walking and bicycling within metro Atlanta, through establishing a regional vision to support local initiatives and decision-making. This plan also takes into account the *Atlanta Region's Plan* goals and objectives, which focuses on world-class infrastructure, healthy livable communities, and a competitive economy. Equity and accessibility for all communities is an important component of the plan, with a focus on ensuring all populations have access to safe and comfortable multimodal facilities and infrastructure.

This plan focuses on pedestrian- and bicyclist-focused goals to achieve increased connectivity and safety within the region, and efforts by ARC for actively supporting cities and counties striving for increased active transportation. These include:

- Create walking and bicycling options for everyone in every community
- Ensure safer and more accessible bicycling and walking in the region
- Tie walking and biking improvements to quality of life, economic competitiveness, and health
- Establish a vision for a Regional Trail Network
- Build a strategy based on compounding growth and relentless incrementalism
- Use the region's pivoting growth and fresh momentum, so that in five years, Atlanta can market itself as one of the most walk-friendly and bike-friendly regions in the nation

ARC provides an active transportation toolkit that offers guidance, recommendations, and an overview for implementing high-quality walking and bicycling systems, elements, and programs. The broader elements for a high-quality walking and biking system include broader factors, such as "places and public spaces" and "universal access," to more specific elements, including "support [for] infrastructure for walking and biking" and a "local trail network."

The Regional Trail Network Strategy is discussed in the context of the regional framework, with two primary objectives guiding the overall strategy: closing identified network gaps in the trails of regional significance and expanding the network of regionally significant trails. Trails of Regional Significance are those which may cross jurisdictional boundaries and have the potential to be a key link within the regional trail network. Opportunities exist within Cherokee County, including along Bells Ferry Road and within the LCI study area, to expand existing trails outward and to fill in existing gaps.



LCI 25-Year Impact Report

Since its inception in 1999, the LCI program has invested over $380 million in more than 120 communities across the Atlanta region. Funded by federal transportation dollars, LCI grants help pay for catalytic studies, tactical studies, and transportation projects that help communities implement their LCI visions in alignment with LCI program goals listed in **Figure 8**. To date, the ARC Board has committed $1 billion of federal transportation funds to the LCI program through the year 2050.

The LCI program is commemorated its 25th anniversary in 2024, and as part of this milestone, ARC sponsored a 25-Year Impact Report to comprehensively evaluate the impacts the LCI program has had on the built environment around the Atlanta region. It expounds upon the resurgence of town centers, new bicycle and pedestrian facilities, redevelopment, and reimagined place – as well as a "look forward" at opportunities for improvement and ways to support local jurisdictions in implementing their LCI visions.

Among the communities that have completed catalytic master plans and routinely updated them are the Bells Ferry LCI. The 25-Year Impact Report evaluates impacts of the LCI program at the county level, and within Cherokee County alone, LCI areas within the County (including not just Bells Ferry, but also Woodstock, Holly Springs, Canton, and Ball Ground), have gained more than 2,290 new multifamily units, 377 affordable housing units, 1.2 million square feet of new retail, over 470,000 square feet of new office space, and 240 new hotel rooms between 2000 and 2023.



Figure 8. ARC LCI Program Goals

Source: ARC 25-Year LCI Impact Report, Executive Summary.

Programmed Project Status

To coordinate with ongoing and programmed projects along Bells Ferry Road and within the LCI study area, the project team reviewed the status of projects sponsored by Cherokee County's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST), ARC's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and other projects sponsored by GDOT slated to be implemented in a longer timeframe. This summary of projects is based on information available to the project team at the time of analysis and is subject to change.

Cherokee County SPLOST

Cherokee County's Roadway/SPLOST Roadway Program oversees the design and construction of SPLOST projects across the County, and there are several SPLOST projects within the LCI study area that are listed in **Table 4**. Both projects listed are minor drainage projects aimed at mitigating erosion.

Table 4. Relevant Cherokee County SPLOST Projects

ID	Project Name	Project Limits	Description	Status
SPLOST Project #: 74008	Bells Ferry Rd at Bascomb Commercial Pkwy	N/A	Drainage improvements to repair erosion control at a drop structure	Final Design
SPLOST Project #: 84008	Victory Dr at Owl Creek Drainage	N/A	Storm drain project	Construction Bids Approved in June 2025

Bells Ferry Road at Bascomb Commercial Parkway (SPLOST# 74008)

A drainage improvement project at the intersection of Bells Ferry Road and Bascomb Commercial Parkway is in the final design phase. The project consists of drainage improvements to improve erosion control at a drop structure.

Victory Drive at Owl Creek Drainage Improvements (SPLOST# 84008)

A drainage improvement project at Victory Drive and Owl Creek is part of a bundle of storm drain projects that was out for bid in May 2025 and slated to be approved by Cherokee County in June 2025.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is administered by ARC and allocates federal funds for short-range projects listed in ARC's MTP, including those within the Bells Ferry LCI study area which are listed in **Table 5**. This current TIP directs significant funding to roadway expansions, transit enhancements, pedestrian and bike infrastructure, and operational improvements.

Table 5. Relevant Projects in ARC's Transportation Improvement Program

ID	Project Name	Project Limits	Description	Proposed Let Year	Project Status
GDOT PI #: 0013525	Bells Ferry Rd Widening and Little River Bridge Replacement	Along Bells Ferry Rd from N Victoria Rd to Marina Ct	Replace existing bridge over Little River/Lake Allatoona and reconstruct approaches with improvements	2024	Under construction (expected completion 2027)
ARC ID: CH-010A2 **GDOT PI #: 0013526**	Bells Ferry Rd Widening	Along Bells Ferry Rd from north of Victory Dr to south of Port Victoria Way	Widening Bells Ferry Rd from 2 to 4 lanes and realignment. Construction of 10-foot multi-use trail.	2025	Under construction (expected completion 2028)
ARC ID: CH-350 **GDOT PI #: 0019205**	Bells Ferry Rd Multi-Use Trail	Along Bells Ferry Rd from Victory Dr to south of Summer Dr	From Victory Dr to Summer Dr	2029	Preliminary Design (ROW)

Bells Ferry Road Bridge Replacement (GDOT PI No. 0013525)

This project is a bridge replacement at Bells Ferry Road over Lake Allatoona (near Little River). The bridge will be upgraded to align with the four-lane widening configuration being completed on the corridor south of this bridge.

Bells Ferry Road Widening (GDOT PI No. 0013526)

A capital improvement project to reconstruct and widen a two-mile section of the Bells Ferry Road corridor immediately north of the study area from two to four lanes is ongoing. The southern limit of the project coincides with the northern LCI boundary about 350 feet north the Victory Drive intersection and the northern limit is approximately 900 feet south of the Port Victoria Way intersection. Goals for the project are to alleviate present and future congestion by increasing the capacity of the roadway and to reduce crash frequency. Construction is expected to be complete in 2028.

The design of the widened corridor includes features that promote mobility and safety for all roadway users, including pedestrian and bicycle amenities, with a buffered ten-foot-wide multi-use trail, sidewalks, and crosswalks. Additional design highlights include raised medians, signal rebuilds, and alignment modifications along the corridor.

Bells Ferry Road Multi-Use Trail (GDOT PI No. 0019205)

A proposed ten-foot-wide multi-use trail along Bells Ferry Road is currently in the right-of-way acquisition phase with construction programmed for 2029. The 3.5-mile trail segment would tie into the multi-use trail immediately north of the LCI area that is currently under construction (PI 0013526) at its northern limit, with the southern limit at the Cherokee-Cobb County Line. Based on a revised concept report completed in September 2024, this project is prioritizing the segment between Robin Lane and Eagle Drive.

Additional Projects

There are several additional GDOT-sponsored projects outside of the TIP which seek to improve operational efficiency or capacity in and around the Bells Ferry LCI study area. These projects are discussed below and listed in **Table 6**.

Table 6. Relevant Long-Range Projects

ID	Project Name	Project Limits	Description	Status
GDOT PI #: 0019702	Hwy 92 & Wade Green Rd Lane Reconfigurations	Along Hwy 92 from Wade Green Rd to Bells Ferry Rd	Additional through lanes along Hwy 92 between Wade Green Rd and Bells Ferry Rd and additional turn lanes on Wade Green Rd at the Hwy 92 intersection.	Pre-construction
GDOT PI #: 642260-	Bells Ferry Rd Widening	North of Little River to Sixes Rd	Widening from 2 to 4 lanes.	Long-Range
GDOT PI #: 0006039	Bells Ferry Rd Widening	Sixes Rd to Knox Bridge Hwy (SR 20)	Widening from 2 to 4 lanes.	Long-Range

Highway 92 at Wade Green Road Lane Reconfigurations (GDOT PI No. 0019702)

The proposed improvements include constructing additional eastbound and westbound through lanes along Highway 92 between Wade Green Road and Bells Ferry Road. This will be achieved through lane restriping and median widening with minimal impacts to utilities and right-of-way. Improvements will also include northbound dual left and dual right turn lanes on Wade Green Road at its intersection with Highway 92.

Long-Range Bells Ferry Road Widening North of Lake Allatoona (GDOT PI Nos. 642260- & 006039)

There are several long-range GDOT projects to widen Bells Ferry Road from two lanes to four lanes between the Cobb County line and Knox Bridge Highway (SR 20) in Canton. In addition to the segment programmed in the TIP (see previous section), there are two sections of Bells Ferry Road slated to be widened in the long-term, [between the Little River/Lake Allatoona and Sixes Road (PI No. 642260-) and between Sixes Road and Knox Bridge Highway (SR 20) (PI No. 0006039)]. These projects will help to create a more intentional multimodal Bells Ferry Road corridor within the LCI area.

Chapter 3: Land Use & Development Patterns

Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses recent trends with respect to land use and development patterns within the LCI area. Within the last 10 years since the previous update in 2016, this area has experienced redevelopment of several mobile home complexes into single-family residential townhomes and condominiums and there have been some new commercial developments and tenants that enhance shopping opportunities along and near the Bells Ferry Road corridor.

Land Use Trends

Existing Land Use

The Bells Ferry LCI study area encompasses approximately 1,750 acres. Existing land use is shown in **Figure 9** and zoning in **Figure 10**. Most land is devoted to single-family residential uses with undeveloped land becoming increasingly rare. Mixed-use development is also becoming increasingly common.

Existing land use patterns reflect a predominately suburban, automobile-oriented development form, with limited integration between different use types – though that narrative is beginning to change. Architectural character is fragmented and predominantly generic. Many commercial buildings follow standardized corporate design templates, with limited variation in materials, massing, or façade articulation. Developments tend to prioritize vehicular access and parking over pedestrian-oriented frontage.

The Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92 corridors serve as focal points for much of the existing commercial activity, including large-format retail establishments, such as Walmart and Lidl, as well as strip commercial centers and pad-site developments. Along these corridors, development generally follows an auto-centric model characterized by high setbacks, expansive parking lots, and minimal pedestrian amenities. This pattern limits the ability to create cohesive, walkable nodes of activity and reinforces reliance on the automobile as the dominant travel mode.

Residential properties consist of a mix of some smaller, older mobile home communities, and large amounts of newer single-family subdivisions (with some medium-density multi-family housing, as well). Historically, public and civic spaces are notably scarce in this area.

While some undeveloped parcels and stormwater retention ponds provided green cover, there were few dedicated parks, plazas, playgrounds, or civic gathering areas that were intentionally designed and accessible to the public – however, this changed after the construction of Patriots Park. The addition of this resource adds a major potential destination for pedestrian and cycling trips within the study area, and provides a significant amount of recreational land use where there previously had been none.

Definitions of zoning districts found within the Bells Ferry LCI can be found in **Table 7**.

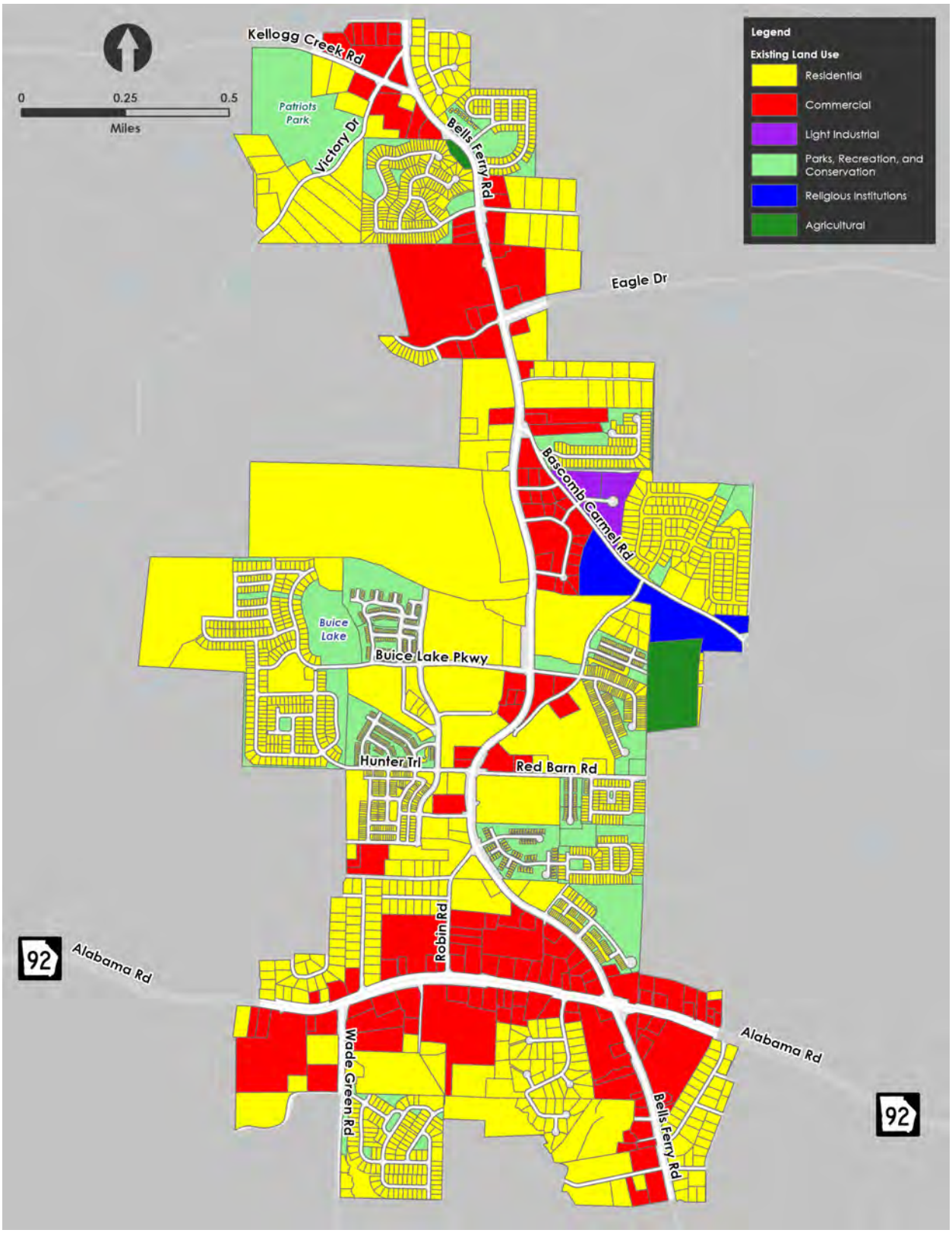


Figure 9. Existing Land Use

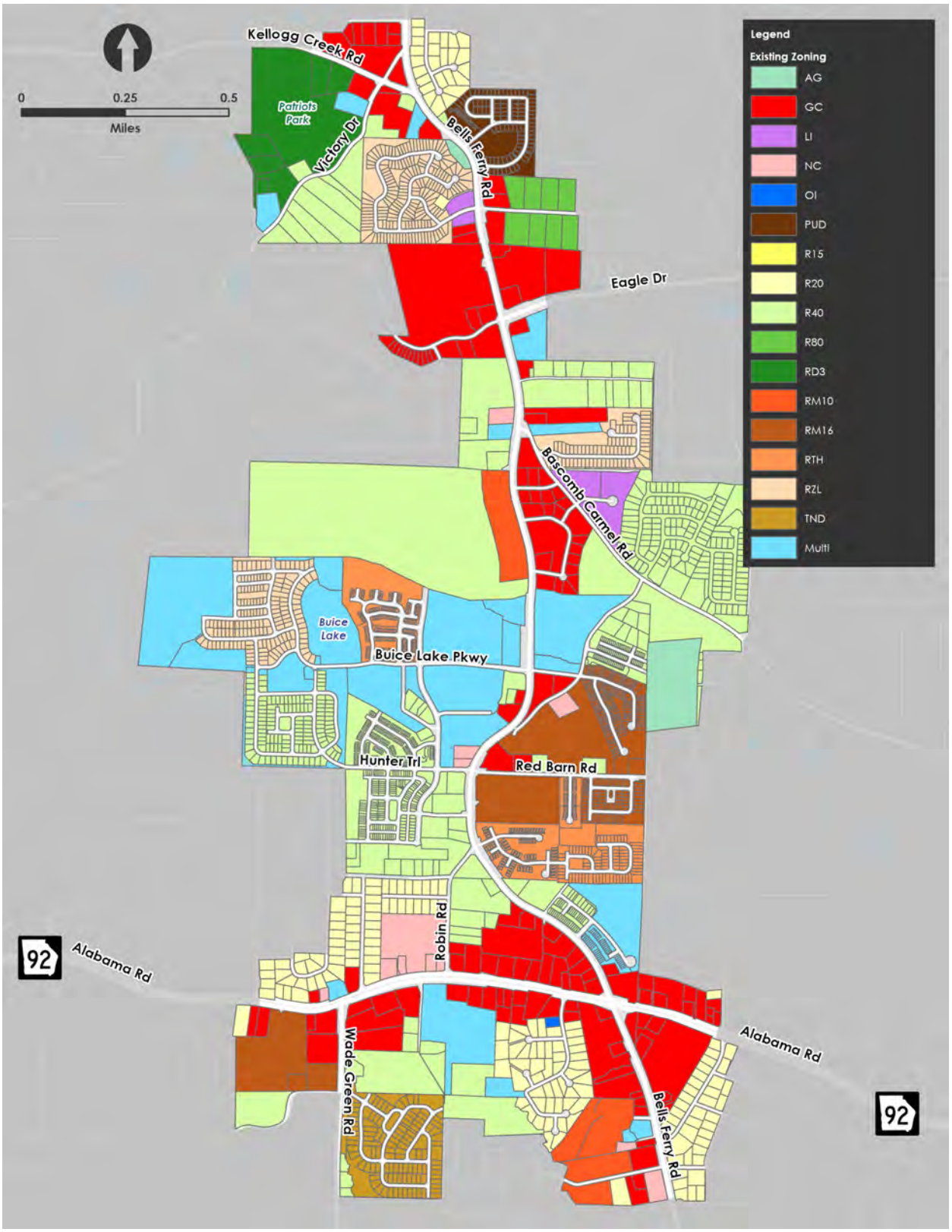


Figure 10. Existing Zoning

Table 7. Study Area Zoning Classifications

Zoning	Zoning Code	Definition
AG	Agricultural District	Encourages agricultural activities and limits "suburban" development.
GC	General Commercial District	Provides space for a range of commercial and service activities; generally along major roadways.
LI	Light Industrial	Encourages industrial development while limiting intensity due to proximity to residential activity.
NC	Neighborhood Commercial District	Permits a variety of neighborhood-serving commercial activities and small-scale businesses.
OI	Office/Institutional	Provides locations for office, institutional, and educational developments.
PUD	Planned Unit Development	Allows for additional flexibility; includes various uses and densities.
R15	Single-Family Detached Residential District	Permits single family uses; requires a minimum lot size of 15,000ft^2.
R20	Single-Family Detached Residential District	Allows for single family uses; requires a minimum lot size of 20,000ft^2.
R40	Single-Family Detached Residential District	Allows for single family uses; requires a minimum lot size of 40,000ft^2.
R80	Estate Residential District	Allows for single family uses (and some agricultural uses); purpose is to maintain low density development.
RD3	Single-Family Detached Residential District	Allows for high density single family residential development.
RM10	Multi-Family Residential District	Designates areas for multi-family residential development.
RM16	Multi-Family Residential District	Designates areas for high-density multi-family residential development.
RTH	Single-Family Attached Residential District	Intended to promote townhouse-style residential development.
RZL	Single-Family Detached Residential District	Permits residential development on reduced lot sizes and setbacks (zero lot lines).
TND	Traditional Neighborhood District	Encourages mixed-uses and walkable communities with a variety of housing types and amenities; encourages flexible site planning.

Bells Ferry Community Design Overlay District

Cherokee County has established an overlay zoning district spanning the LCI area in Article 16.2 of their Code of Ordinances.

The Bells Ferry Community Design District supplements existing zoning regulations to implement the community vision borne out of previous LCI studies, with the ultimate goal of promoting high quality development and quality of life. The overlay is enhanced by the Bells Ferry LCI Community Design Guidelines, developed in 2006.

Future Land Use

The Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan (discussed in further detail in Chapter 2) designates Character Areas within the County in order to holistically guide future development and rezoning decisions in these areas. Each Character Area has an associated vision for the area; relevant strategies; and guidelines for future development intensity, land uses, infrastructure, and greenspace.

The future development map delineates the Bells Ferry LCI area, which is its own Character Area that is surrounded by Suburban Living and Southwest Cherokee Character Areas.

Bells Ferry Character Area

The Bells Ferry LCI area is characterized as a gateway into the County from Cobb County, connecting the Woodstock area with the southwest portion of the County. The area has commercial nodes as well as a variety of housing types, including single-family detached, townhouses, and multi-family developments. The description states that the area is home to outdated commercial parcels and underutilized properties that call for redevelopment.

This siloed pattern creates inefficiencies in land use and limits the creation of vibrant, multimodal activity centers. Moving forward the study corridor might benefit from adhering more closely to design guidelines first set forth in 2006 (and reinforced as recently as the 2023 Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan Update).

The Plan identifies the Bells Ferry LCI area as a key growth corridor, with future land use patterns aimed at fostering a more connected, mixed-use community. The plan calls for concentrating new development within the Bells Ferry LCI boundaries in order to leverage existing infrastructure and reduce the need for costly extensions of utilities and roadways. This approach supports the LCI's long-term vision of creating a vibrant, walkable environment where residents can access shops, services, employment, and recreation without relying solely on automobiles. This pattern is intended to reinforce the corridor's role as both a residential hub and a commercial destination.

Adjacent Character Areas

The Suburban Living areas are distinguished by established suburban neighborhoods (single-family detached houses), complimentary development, and regional parks. The Southwest Cherokee area centers around the Highway 92 corridor just west of the Bells Ferry LCI area. The Southwest Cherokee area is significant as the County's only connection to I-75 and has experienced significant residential, commercial, and industrial growth over the past decade.

In summary, the Bells Ferry LCI study area is defined by auto-oriented commercial corridors, low-connectivity residential neighborhoods, a shortage of civic spaces, and limited pedestrian infrastructure. The existing land use pattern reflects a conventional suburban model that prioritizes vehicle travel over multimodal accessibility and lacks the cohesive design character necessary to foster a strong sense of place. However, these trends are beginning to change – as the most recent developments within the corridor depart significantly from this previously established development pattern (with some mixed-use development, and notably denser residential development). These trends present clear opportunities for continued transformation through additional targeted redevelopment, increased land use integration, and public realm enhancements.

Growth Boundaries

Cherokee County and the City of Woodstock have formally established a growth boundary agreement, with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) approved by the Woodstock City Council on April 11, 2022, and subsequently by the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners on April 19, 2022. While non-binding, the agreement provides a framework for coordinated growth management by limiting the City's annexations to within the designated boundary and establishing that the County will typically not oppose annexations occurring within this area.

The primary objectives of the growth boundary agreement are to guide compatible development, align future growth with respective Comprehensive Plans, and support eligibility for state grants through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The defined growth boundary encompasses Woodstock's current city limits and extends outward to key geographic and jurisdictional limits: south and east to the Cobb and Fulton County lines (just south of Highway 92 and the Little River), west to Putnam Ford Drive and approximately one-third of a mile from Bells Ferry Road, and north toward Holly Springs following the Little River and Arnold Mill Road to the intersection near Trickum Road. The agreement is scheduled to expire in June 2028, unless extended or renewed by mutual consent.

While the growth boundary itself does not explicitly overlap with the Bells Ferry LCI study area (as shown in **Figure 11**), it does touch the eastern boundary along Highway 92 and Eagle Drive. Regardless of proximity, Woodstock's growth boundary location outside of the Bells Ferry LCI area means that the corridor should not experience any municipal annexations unless the agreement is amended or revised.

Points of Destination

Greenspace Access

While development trends continue to result in additional greenspace (notably Patriots Park), there are still few pedestrian or bicyclist connections to these recreational areas. There are no existing sidewalks along Kellogg Creek Road that provide access to Patriots Park – though there is a notable trail network within the park itself.

As discussed in Chapter 2, future trail and sidewalk projects along Bells Ferry Road propose to address this challenge. However, until Cherokee County is able to fund recommendations in the Greenways and Trails Master Plan (2025), non-motorists still need to walk in mixed traffic to reach destinations in the LCI area, including Patriots Park.

Placemaking

Despite a lack of undeveloped parcels, there are several areas within the LCI area that represent opportunities for more intense development or placemaking.

Most notably, these areas include previously developed regional commercial destinations such as at the intersections of Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92 along with Bells Ferry Road and Eagle Drive. These intersections represent the opportunity for future catalytic developments that will align with LCI program goals. In particular, the significant levels of underutilized surface parking represent future opportunities for additional density (as well as interim activations that might allow for placemaking initiatives to come before any future development projects). These activations could include farmers markets, artists markets, parklets, or other innovative activations of formerly underutilized or dormant spaces.

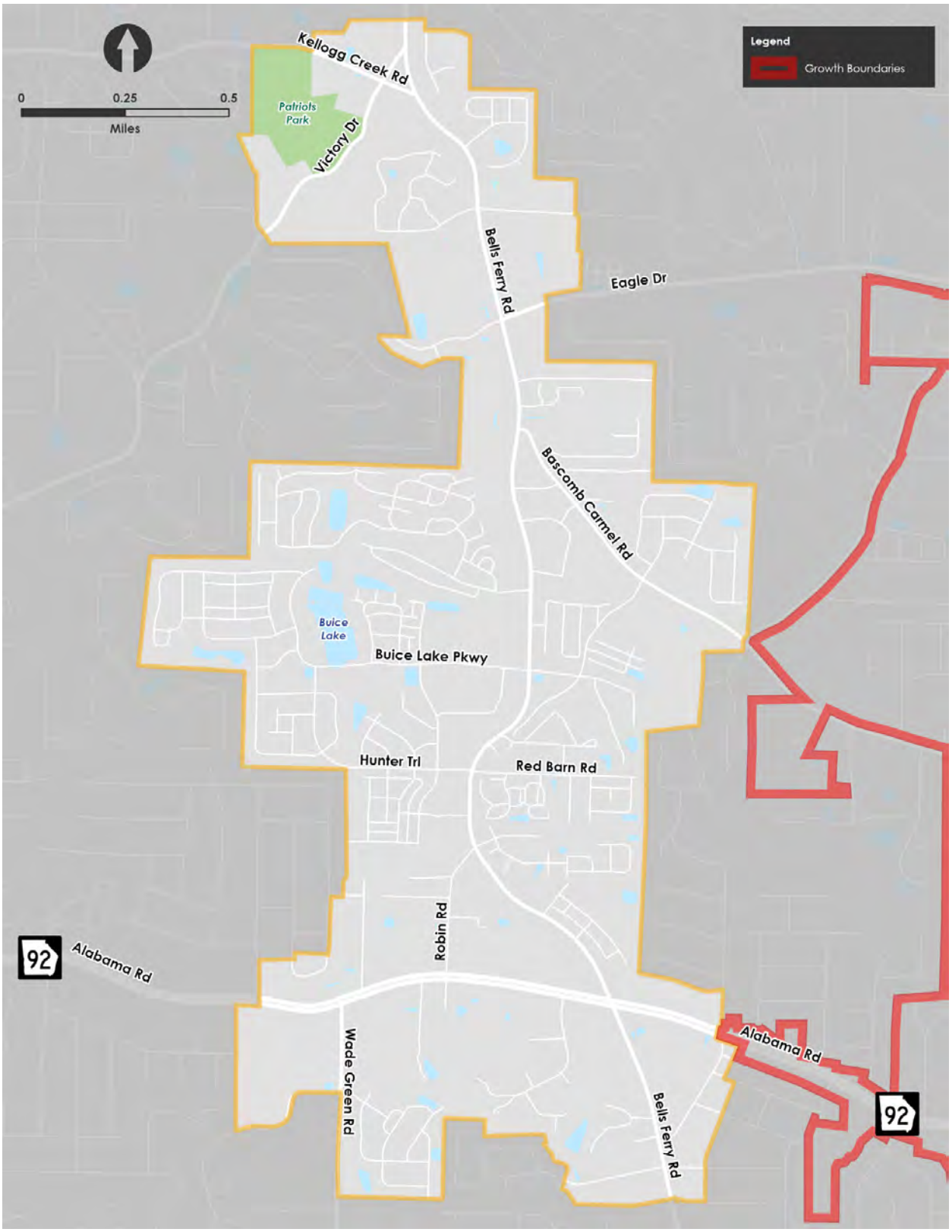


Figure 11. Growth Boundary

Development Activity

Notable new developments within the corridor since the last LCI update are listed in **Table 8** and mapped in **Figure 12**. What was once a primarily lower-density (and lower-income) corridor is now rapidly transforming into a high-growth area with diverse housing options. Among the most impactful additions are large-scale multifamily projects. Altogether, an estimated 2,200 housing units have been added along the Bells Ferry Road corridor in Cherokee County since 2016. This increase in housing reflects the area's rising popularity and the County's efforts to accommodate continued population growth.

Residential Developments

The Quincy Apartments, The Knox Apartments, and the Parker collectively added more than 1,000 housing units serving a mix of working professionals, families, and retirees. These developments introduced higher-density housing near existing retail and transportation networks, improving accessibility and the area's walkability. As demand for rental housing continues to rise, communities like these are helping to meet that need while setting a precedent for higher-density development.

The Bells Ferry corridor has experienced growth in single-family and townhome development. Madison at Buice Lake and Lennar at Buice Lake together contributed over 400 housing units, positioning the Buice Lake area as a major residential cluster. These communities include amenities such as green space, clubhouses, and inter-neighborhood trail access, which enhance quality of life and support a balanced mix of housing. Covey Homes Hunter Trail is another notable single-family community, offering newer home styles catering to families and empty nesters, alike.

Several smaller developments have also contributed to the additional housing stock. Developments like Tyson Woods, Maple Grove at Towne Lake, and Tranquil Gardens added dozens of units each, typically designed with more walkable neighborhood formats in mind.

Commercial Developments

Commercial development has also grown to serve the expanding population. New retail establishments like the Lidl grocery store on Bells Ferry Road provide essential services that help anchor residential neighborhoods and reduce the need to drive long distances for basic goods. Other businesses such as Dirty Dog's Car Wash and Caliber Collision have added convenience and services to the corridor, supporting day-to-day needs for local households. The Kellogg Creek Boat and RV Storage facility speaks to the recreational lifestyle of many area residents, given the proximity to Lake Allatoona. While these developments do not contribute directly to housing, they improve the area's functionality and enhance amenities for nearby residents.

Pending Developments

A handful of parcels along the corridor, such as those at 5753 Bells Ferry Road and 5464 Wade Green Road, are currently in active development and will eventually add an unknown number of housing units to the corridor. Their inclusion in this review underscores the corridor's dynamic nature and the ongoing opportunity for additional infill or mixed-use growth. Monitoring these parcels will be important for future planning efforts as demand for land along the corridor increases.

Table 8. Notable Developments

ID	Development	Address	Type	# of Units
1	Patriots Park	1485 Kellogg Creek Rd	Park/Greenspace	N/A
2	Kellogg Creek Boat & RV Storage	1450 Kellogg Creek Rd	Commercial	N/A
3	Franklin Crossing	1809 Eagle Dr	Residential	57
4	Unnamed Residential Development	1654-1674 Eagle Dr	Multi-Family Residential	12
5	Lidl	6421 Bells Ferry Rd	Commercial	N/A
6	Maple Grove at Towne Lake	202 Strawberry Ln	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	70
7	Heritage at Towne Lake	101 Sheridan Dr	Residential	85
8	Madison at Buice Lake	425 Madison Lakeview Dr	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	277
9	Lennar at Buice Lake	1408 Hunter Trl	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	125
10	Covey Homes Hunter Trail	1150 Hunter Trl	Single-Family Residential (Attached)	147
11	Summerwell Bells Ferry	1151 Hunter Trl	Single-Family Residential (Attached and Detached)	153
12	The Knox Apartments	1000 Etowah Ferry Dr	Multi-Family Residential	373
13	The Quincy Apartments	900 Buice Lake Pkwy	Multi-Family Residential	339
14	Tyson Woods (Completed)	1000 Water Oak Trce	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	20
15	Unknown	5753 Bells Ferry Rd	Commercial	TBD
16	The Timberley	330 Tranquil Gardens Dr	Assisted Living Facility	60
17	Tranquil Gardens by Stella Homes	1031 Tranquil Gardens Pl	Single-Family Residential (Attached)	73
18	The Parker	5944 GA-92 (Hwy 92)	Multi-Family Residential	330
19	Prescott	115 Acklin Ln	Single-Family Residential (Detached)	104
20	Dirty Dog's Car Wash	5718 Bells Ferry Rd	Commercial	N/A
21	Pending Development (For Sale)	5464 Wade Green Rd	Commercial	TBD
22	Caliber Collision	6192 GA-92 (Hwy 92)	Commercial	N/A

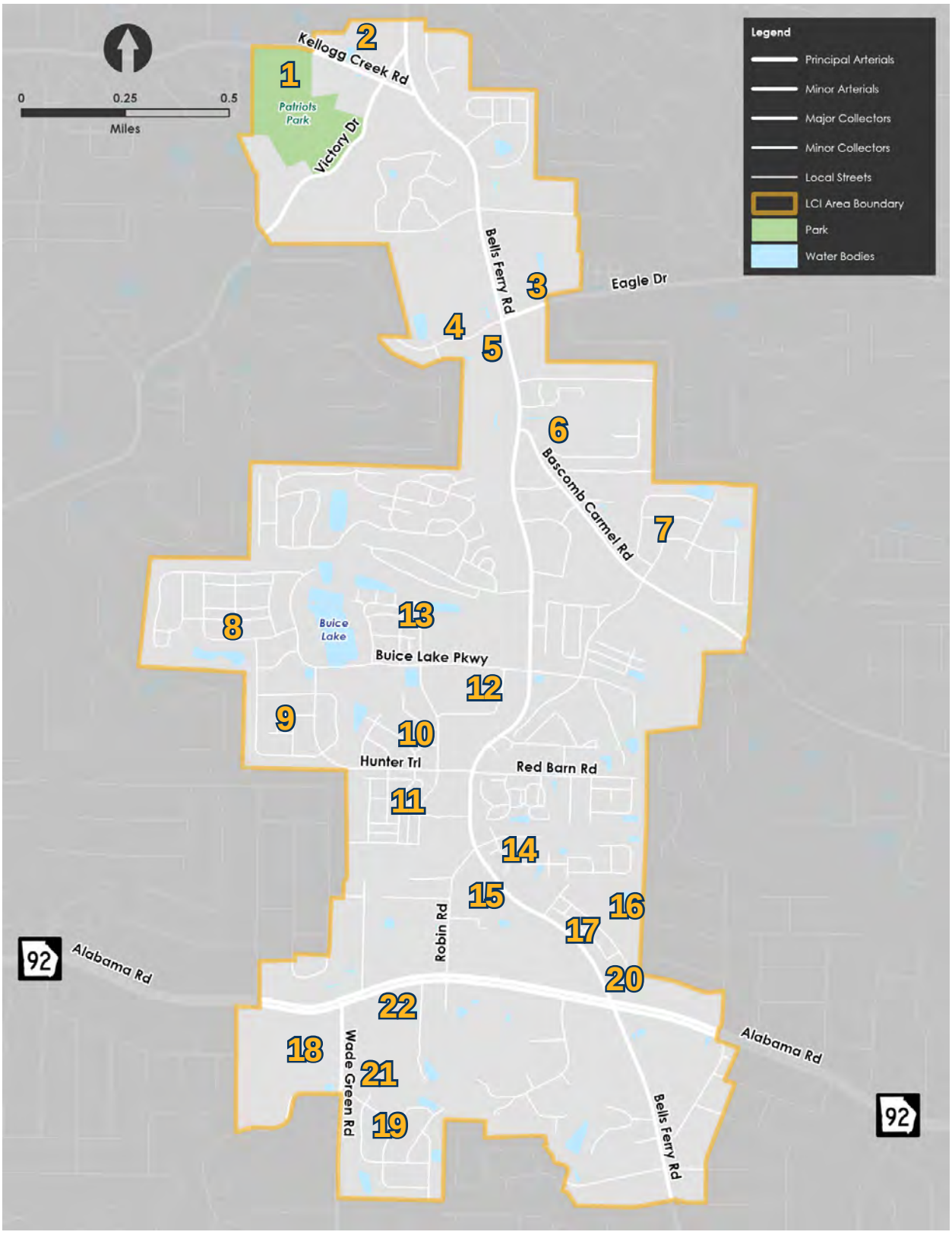


Figure 12. Notable Developments

Chapter 4: Transportation Infrastructure & Facilities

Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the transportation facilities which serve the Bells Ferry LCI study area, including roadway characteristics, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other route designations. This chapter also touches upon signal technology and provides a high level overview of transit service in the study area.

Road Characteristics

Functional Classification

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) categorizes public streets with a functional classification system. The relevant functional classifications and surface streets corresponding to each category are described in **Table 9**.

Roadways in this area are classified as urban, per GDOT standards, although the land area has a more suburban/ transitioning character.

Figure 13 depicts the designated roadway functional classification of streets within the study area. Of the surface streets intersecting Bells Ferry Road within the study area, Eagle Drive and Highway 92 are of particular significance, as these roads connect the study corridor to nearby I-575 ramps and major activity centers in the City of Woodstock and the City of Alpharetta. Bascomb Carmel Road, Kellogg Creek Road, and Victory Drive serve as pathways between Bells Ferry Road and different points along Highway 92 and the primarily residential areas between the two corridors. Wade Green Road connects Highway 92 to I-75 near Kennesaw State University.

Table 9. Functional Classification Descriptions and Relevant Roadways

Functional Classification	Description	Roadways in the LCI Area
Principal Arterials	Serve major activity centers, highest volume corridors, and longest trip demands. Accommodate trips through urban areas and between urban and rural areas.	None
Minor Arterials	Facilitate trips of moderate length, providing connectivity to the higher arterial system and between communities. May carry local bus routes.	Hwy 92
Major Collectors	Serve both land access and traffic circulation in higher-density areas. Distribute and channel trips between local roads and arterials.	Bells Ferry Rd Kellogg Creek Rd Victory Dr Eagle Dr Wade Green Rd
Minor Collectors	Similar to major collectors, with key differences including service to lower-density areas, with lowers speeds and fewer signalized intersections.	Bascomb Carmel Rd
Local Streets	Provide direct access to adjacent land and higher traffic systems. Carry no through-traffic movement.	All other roadways in the study area

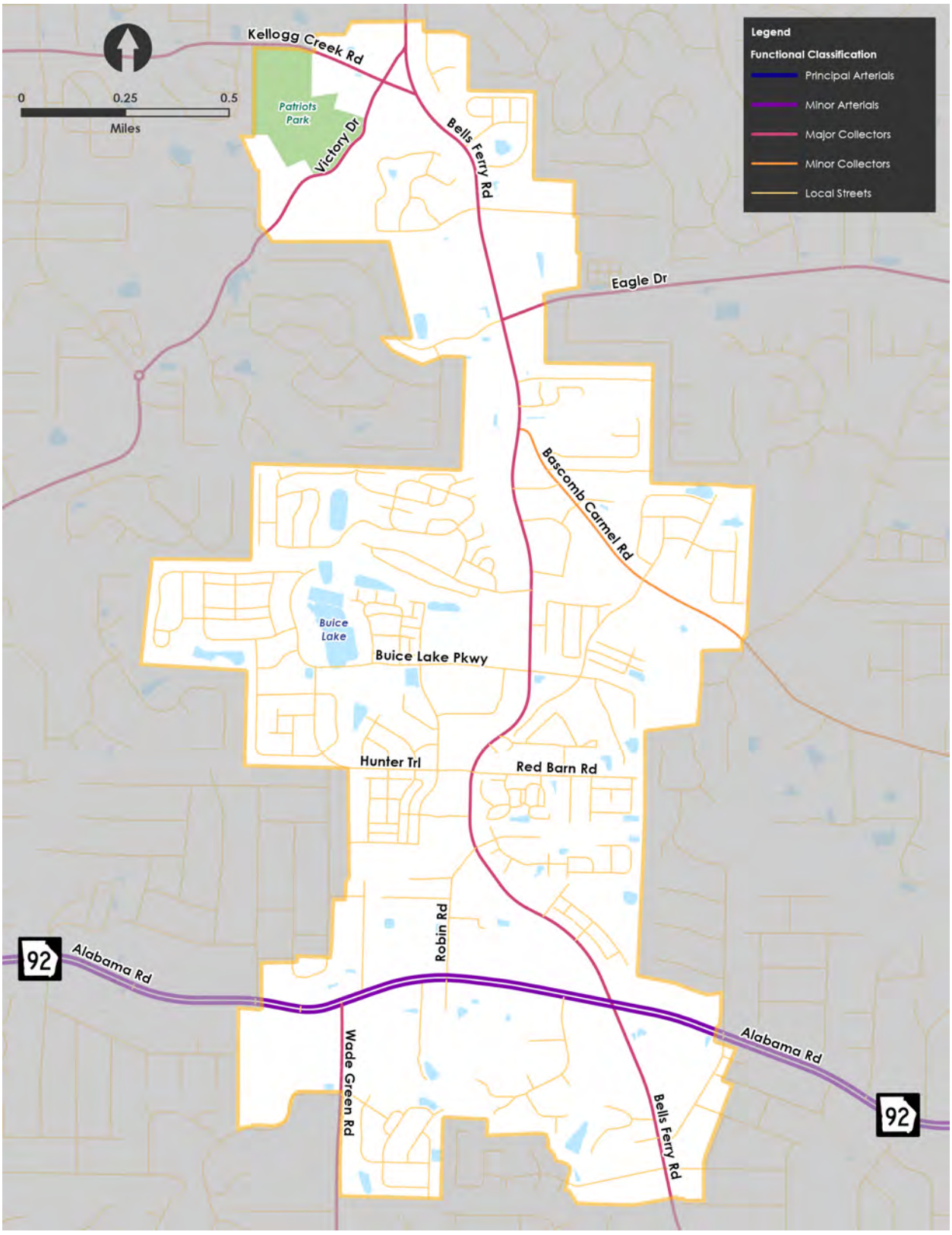


Figure 13. Roadway Functional Classification

Speed Limits

Assessing posted speed limits and laneage provides valuable insights into the operational and safety characteristics of the LCI area. The project team examined speed limits based on Cherokee County data and spot checked against Iteris ClearGuide and publicly available map data. Roadways in the study area with higher functional classes generally have more lanes and vehicles traveling at higher speeds, carrying a mix of through and destination traffic.

Based on the map shown in **Figure 14**, the speed limits are relatively low in the study area, with top speed limits of 45 miles per hour (MPH) on Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92. Vehicles traveling on Bells Ferry Road tend to travel below the speed limit; refer to Chapter 5 for further discussion on this observation. Eagle Drive, Robin Road, and Wade Green Rd accommodate vehicles traveling at 40 MPH. Vehicles are restricted to 35 MPH or less on the remaining roadways in the study area.

Laneage

The project team reviewed GDOT roadway data to denote laneage for each street within the study area shown in **Figure 15**.

Roadways in the study area are limited to a maximum of four through lanes, with the exception being a short stretch (about a quarter mile) of Bells Ferry Road directly north of Highway 92 that widens to five through lanes. Bells Ferry Road is a four-lane road (not including turn lanes) with a raised median for most of its length through the study area, narrowing to three lanes at Victory Drive for a stretch of approximately 500 feet before tapering down to a two-lane road at the northern LCI area boundary.

Highway 92, Eagle Drive, and Wade Green Road each have four through lanes. The remaining public roadways in the LCI area have two lanes.



Bells Ferry Road Ranges from Four to Six Lanes Within the LCI Area

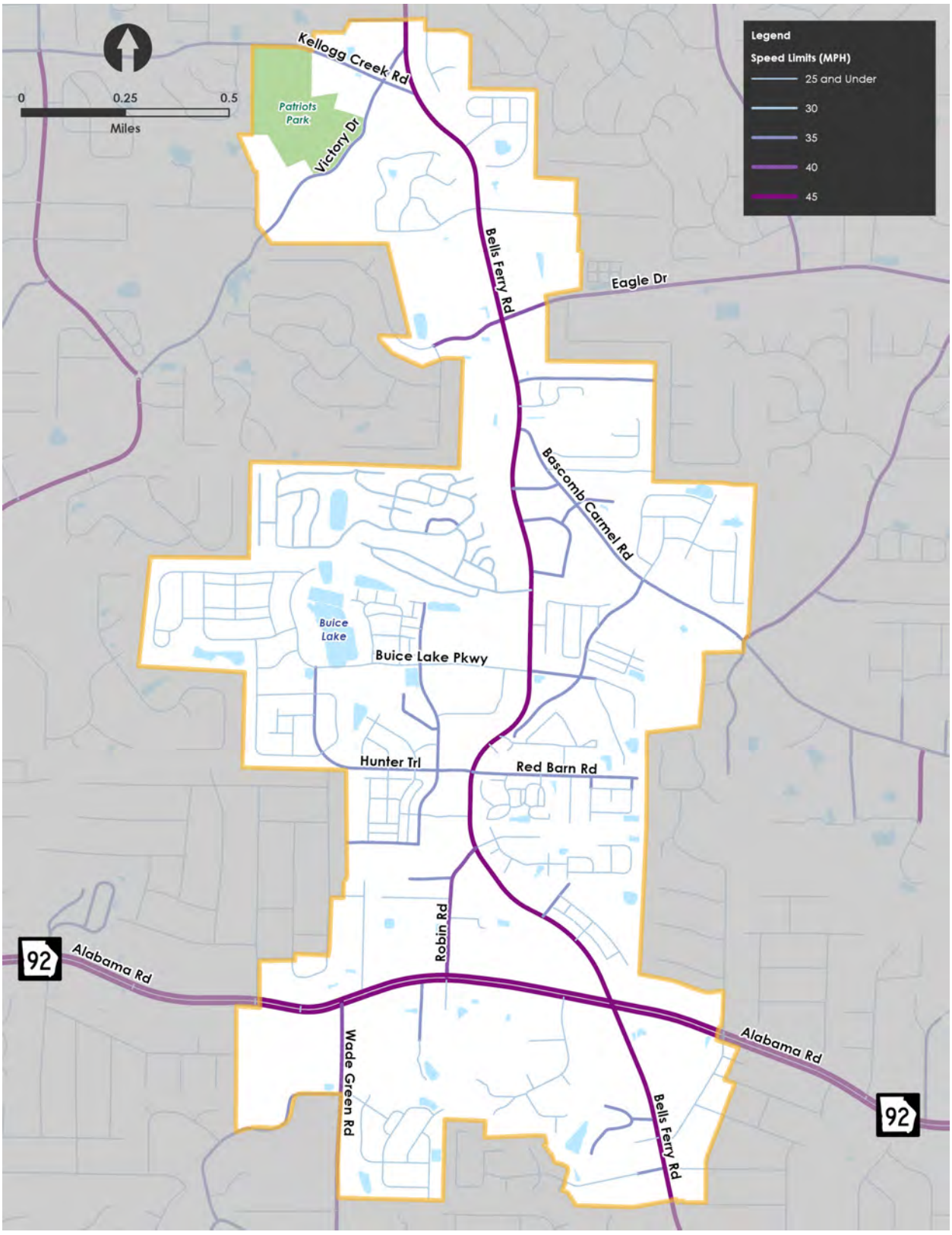


Figure 14. Posted Speed Limits

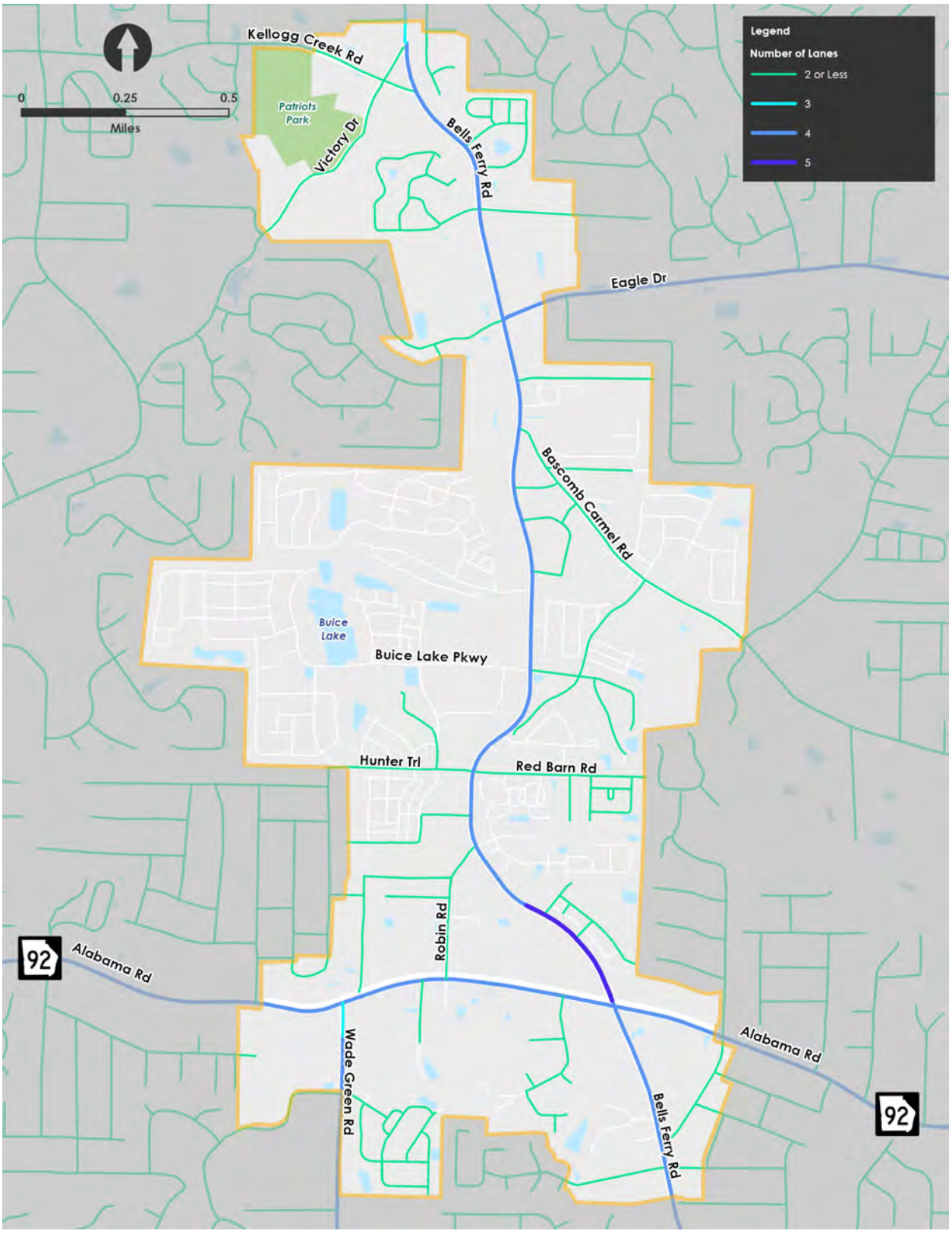


Figure 15. Roadway Laneage

Multimodal Environment

The street network is largely suburban in form, consisting of dead-end streets and large blocks that funnel nearly all trips onto Bells Ferry Road or Highway 92. This lack of street connectivity potentially reduces travel options for pedestrians and cyclists.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities

The Bells Ferry Road corridor currently has sidewalks along both sides of the road. The sidewalks are mostly in good condition. There are also sidewalks along both sides of Wade Green Road, Highway 92, and Eagle Drive. Bascomb Carmel Road has short, isolated sidewalk segments along the northern side associated with residential developments on Sheridan Drive and Strawberry Lane. Kellogg Creek Road and Victory Drive have sidewalks in the vicinity of the Kellogg Creek Road and Victory Drive intersection due to a recent intersection improvement/signalization project but lack coverage in other areas. Various local and private roads in the area have built out sidewalk networks, as well.

The majority of side streets and driveways intersecting Bells Ferry Road facilitate pedestrian mobility with crosswalks and curb ramps, but the condition of crosswalk markings in the area is varied.

Marked pedestrian crossings along the corridor are limited to signalized intersections, with seven pedestrian crossing points in total on Bells Ferry Road within the study area. The longest stretch of Bells Ferry Road with no crossing points is an approximately 0.8-mile stretch between Eagle Drive and Buice Lake Parkway. Most major pedestrian-generating land uses along the corridor are located near intersections with crosswalks.

Table 10 has further detail about existing crosswalks and curb ramps along Bells Ferry Road within the study area; while **Figure 16** shows existing sidewalks in the area.

The study area does not include any existing facilities designated for bicyclists, such as multi-use paths or bike lanes. With vehicles traveling at speeds of 35 MPH and above on the main roadways in the study area, all but the most confident cyclists are relegated to residential subdivisions for recreational cycling.



Existing Greenway Trail Within Patriots Park

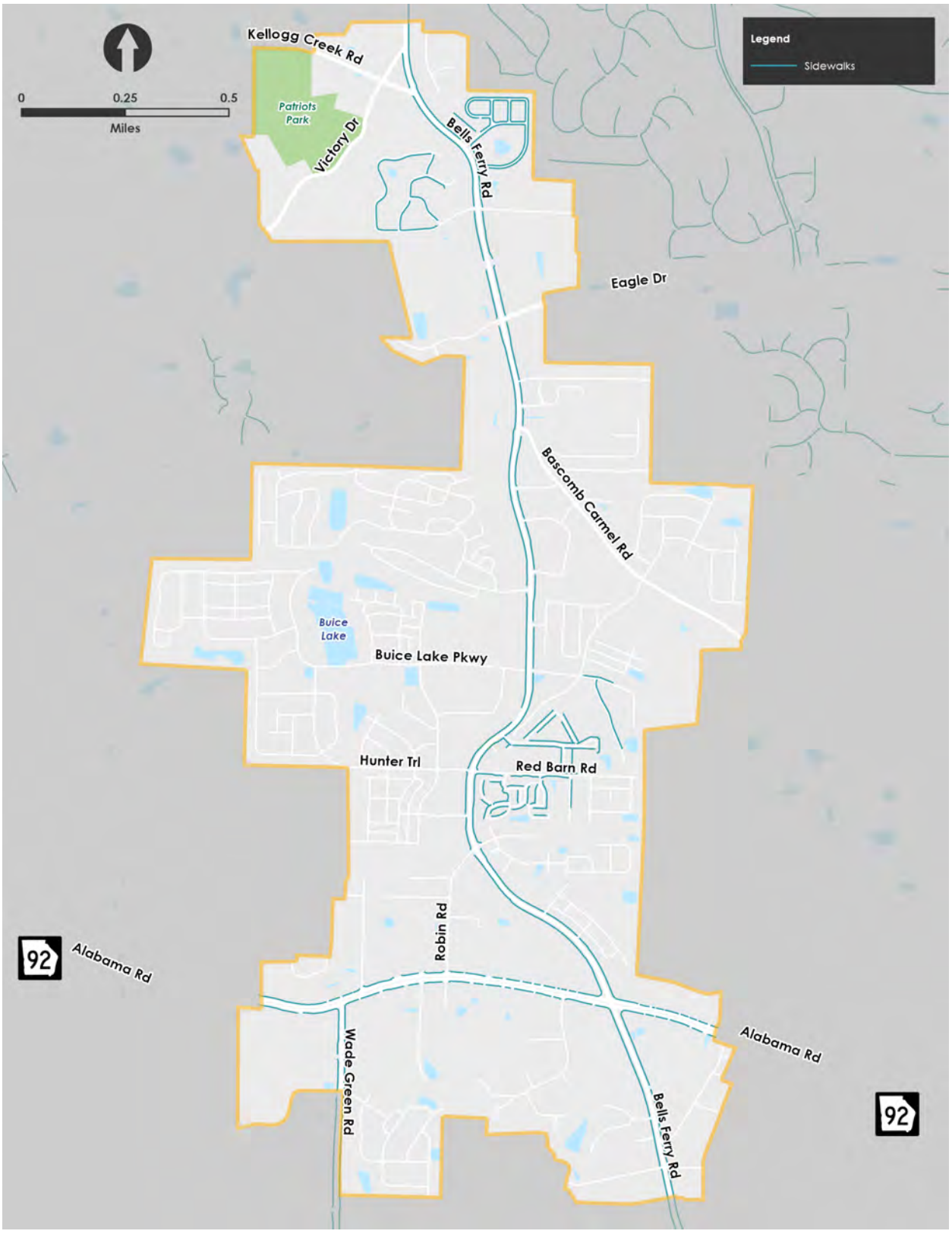


Figure 16. Pedestrian Facilities*

** Map is based off of data provided by Cherokee County as of July 2024 and may not include all sidewalks in the area*

Table 10. Crosswalk and Curb Ramp Inventory Along Bells Ferry Road

Road Name	North[1]	East	South	West	Crosswalk Condition	Ramps
Commerce Pkwy*	No	N/A	No	No	N/A	No
Victory Dr	No	N/A	No	No	N/A	Yes, on SW corner
Kellogg Creek Rd	No	N/A	Yes	Yes	Good	Yes, on western side
Mirramont Lake Dr	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	Yes, on SE corner
Britley Park Ln/Glenell Dr	No	Yes	No	Yes	Fair	Yes
Walmart entrance*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good	Yes
Eagle Dr	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good	Yes
Florence Rd	No	Yes	No	N/A	Worn	Yes, on eastern side
Bascomb Carmel Rd	No	Yes	No	Yes	Worn	Yes
Sharp St	No	Yes	No	N/A	Worn	Yes, on eastern side
Bascomb Commercial Pkwy (north)	No	Yes	No	N/A	Worn	Yes, on eastern side
Bascomb Commercial Pkwy (south)	No	Yes	No	N/A	Good	Yes, on eastern side
Shadowood Dr	No	N/A	No	Yes	Worn	Yes, on western side
Eastgate Mobile Home Community/The Quincy Apartments*	No	Yes	No	Yes	Fair	Yes
Buice Lake Pkwy/Old Bascomb Ct	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good	Yes
Old Bascomb Rd	No	Yes	No	N/A	Good	Yes, on eastern side
Hunter Trl/Red Barn Rd	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fair	Yes
Buice Ave	No	N/A	No	Yes	Fair	Yes, on western side
Robin Rd/Tyson Woods Rd	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fair	Yes
Merritt Ln/Compass Self Storage entrance*	No	Yes	No	No	Good	Yes, on eastern side
Tranquil Gardens Dr	No	Yes	No	N/A	Good	Yes, on eastern side
GA 92	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good	Yes
Waldan Ln	No	N/A	No	Yes	Worn	Yes, on western side
Santa Fe Trail	No	Yes	No	N/A	Worn	Yes, on eastern side
Gregory Ln/Whistle Stop Dr	No	Yes	No	Yes	Fair	Yes

** Indicates private road or driveway*

[1]Refers to presence/absence of crosswalks in different legs of each intersection

Public Transportation

Cherokee County is served by several transit agencies with different focuses on serving and transporting residents, though these are limited across the County and within the study area. This section serves as an overview of transit, but a forthcoming technical memorandum will thoroughly evaluate transit service within the Bells Ferry LCI area.

Xpress Bus Service

The Xpress bus network is operated by the Atlanta-region Transit Link Authority (ATL). The County was previously served by State Roadway and Toll Authority (SRTA) Xpress Routes 480 and 483, which connected commuters from the Acworth and Woodstock Park and Rides, respectively, in Cherokee County to other areas of Metro Atlanta. With Xpress ridership remaining at 30 percent of pre-pandemic levels, ATL adopted a reduced service plan, effective June 16, 2025, as an effort to operate more efficiently. As part of this effort to streamline service, Routes 480 and 483 were discontinued and the nearby Acworth and Woodstock Park and Rides were recently closed.

Cherokee Area Transit Service (CATS)

The County's demand response service, Cherokee Area Transit Service (CATS), provides Countywide transportation services to popular destinations, such as medical facilities, shopping destinations, and employment sites. CATS operates on weekdays from 8 AM to 4 PM but with no weekend service. Reservations must be made in advance, and payment options are limited. The County also has a micro-transit service, but it is limited to the Canton area and does not serve the Bells Ferry LCI area.

Freight

Freight traffic is necessary for the delivery of goods that people and businesses need to thrive but brings additional challenges relating to roadway safety and operations as well as community and environmental health. Adequate infrastructure that can comfortably accommodate freight traffic alongside personal vehicles and alternative travel modes (e.g., trips by bus or bike) is essential to facilitate livable communities.

ARC developed the Atlanta Strategic Truck Route Master Plan (ASTRoMaP) in 2010 to designated regionally significant corridors for freight movement and mobility. Highway 92, an ASTRoMaP regional truck route, passes through the study area, intersecting the Bells Ferry Road corridor at the center of the LCI area.

While there are no railroads within the Bells Ferry LCI area, the Georgia Northeastern Railroad (GNRR) short line passes through downtown Woodstock about three miles east of the LCI area, on a route which extends between Marietta and Blue Ridge. The railroad is rated for 286,000 pounds, and its primary commodities are timber, grain, poultry, and marble products. Neither of the rail lines in the area offer passenger service.

ITS & Technology

The study area has a total of 10 traffic signals, which are shown in **Figure 17**. There are seven signals located along the Bells Ferry corridor. Aside from the signal at its intersection with Bells Ferry Road, Highway 92 has traffic signals at Wade Green Road and Robin Road. The intersection of Kellogg Creek Road and Victory Drive was signalized in 2023.

An inventory of relevant traffic signal information is included in **Table 11**. The signal timing and phasing column includes whether each signal operates with permissive, permissive-protected, or protected-only phasing; it also states whether the signal timing is coordinated with nearby signals to streamline traffic flow or isolated, operating independently from nearby signals. **Table 11** also describes the intelligent transportation system (ITS) capabilities at each signal and outlines which FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures are currently implemented at each signal.

Overview of Proven Safety Countermeasures

Proven safety countermeasures, if applied properly, are treatments which can reduce crashes in four areas - roadway departure, intersection, bicycle and pedestrian, and speed management. There are also four countermeasures which are crosscutting and can improve safety across different modes of transportation.

Roadway Departure



Median Barriers | Wider Edge Lines | Safety Edge

Roadside Design Improvements at Curves | Enhanced Delineation at Horizontal Curves | Longitudinal Rumble Strips and Stripes

Bicycle & Pedestrian



Bicycle Lanes | Walkways | Road Diets

Leading Ped. Interval | Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) | Medians & Refuge Islands

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) | Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements

Intersections



Roundabouts | Corridor Access Management | Backplates with Retroreflective Borders | Yellow Change Intervals

Reduced Left-Turn Conflict Intersections | Dedicated Left- and Right-Turn Lanes | Systemic Application of Multiple Low-Cost Countermeasures at Stop-Controlled Intersections

Speed Management



Appropriate Speed Limits for All Users | Speed Safety Cameras | Variable Speed Limits

Cross Cutting



Lighting | Local Road Safety Plans | Road Safety Audit | Pavement Friction Management

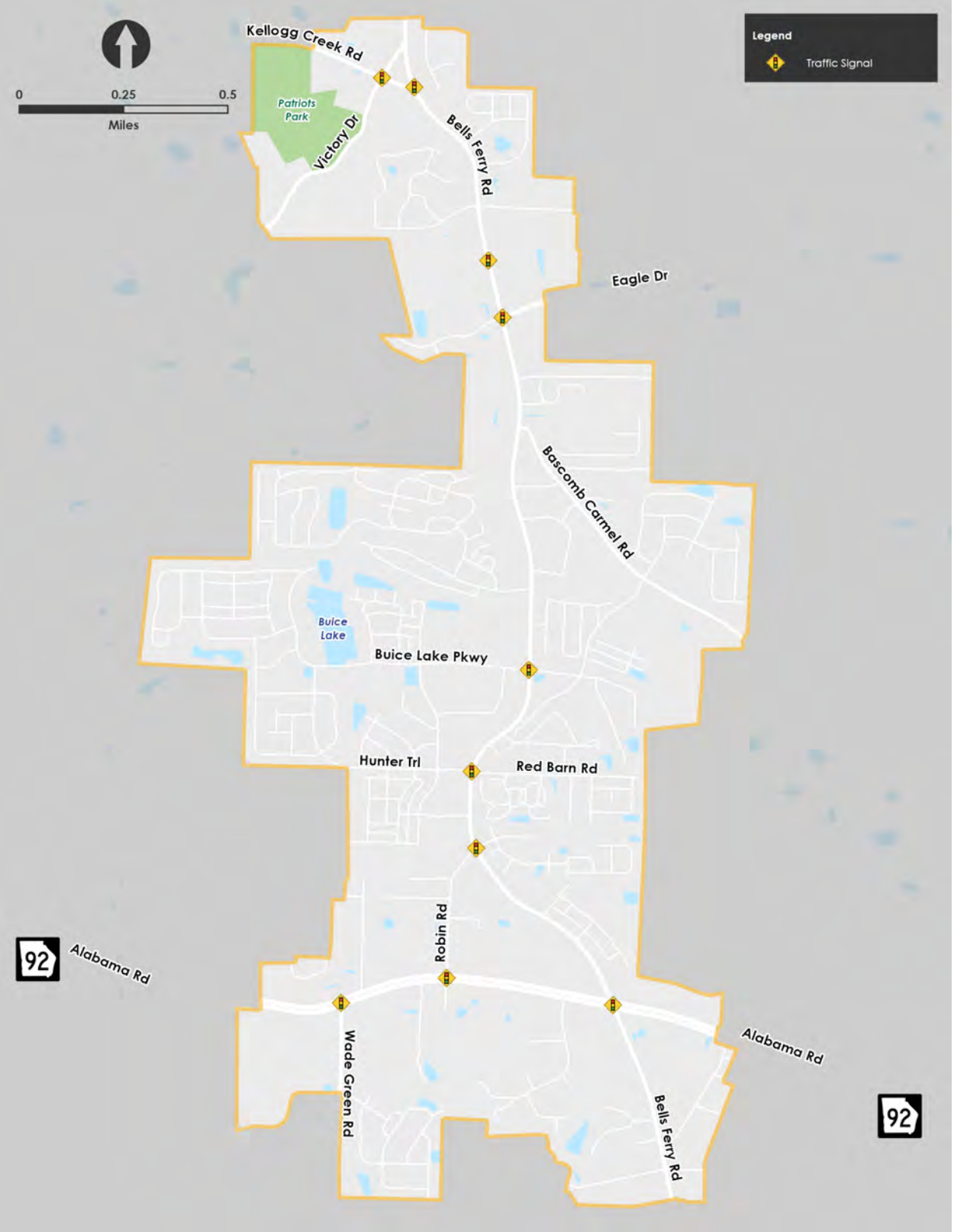


Figure 17. Traffic Signals

Table 11. Traffic Signal Inventory

Signal Location	Signal Timing and Phasing	ITS Capabilities	Existing Proven Safety Countermeasures
Hwy 92 @ Wade Green Rd	• Protected-only left-turn phasing on Hwy 92 and split-phasing (side streets) • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by GDOT • GDOT network integration (fiber optic) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • Roadside unit • CCTV (GDOT Network) • Radar	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Raised median • Dedicated turn lanes • Lighting
Hwy 92 @ Robin Rd	• Protected-permissive left-turn phasing (FYA) • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by GDOT • GDOT network integration (fiber optic) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • Roadside unit • CCTV (GDOT Network)	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Dedicated turn lanes • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Raised medians • Dedicated turn lanes
Hwy 92 @ Bells Ferry Rd	• Protected-only left-turn phasing • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by GDOT • GDOT network integration (fiber optic) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • Roadside unit • CCTV (GDOT Network)	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Dedicated turn lanes • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Raised medians • Dedicated turn lanes
Bells Ferry Rd @ Robin Rd / Tyson Woods Rd	• Protected-permissive left-turn phasing (FYA, Bells Ferry) and permissive-only phasing (side streets) • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by Cherokee County • GDOT network integration (fiber optic) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • CCTV (GDOT Network) • Cherokee Gridsmart Camera	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Pedestrian refuge island • Walkways • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Raised medians • Dedicated turn lanes
Bells Ferry Rd @ Hunter Trl / Red Barn Rd	• Protected-permissive left-turn phasing (FYA, Bells Ferry) and permissive-only phasing (side • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by Cherokee County • GDOT network integration (fiber optic) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • CCTV (GDOT Network) • Cherokee Gridsmart Camera	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Raised medians • Dedicated turn lanes

Table 11 (continued). Traffic Signal Inventory

Signal Location	Signal Timing and Phasing	ITS Capabilities	Existing Proven Safety Countermeasures
Bells Ferry Rd @ Old Bascomb Ct	• Protected-permissive left-turn phasing (FYA) on Bells Ferry and Eagle Dr (WB) and permissive-only phasing on Eagle Dr (EB) • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by Cherokee County • GDOT and Cherokee Co. network integration (4G) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • CCTV (Cherokee Co. Network)	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Raised medians • Dedicated turn lanes
Bells Ferry Rd @ Eagle Dr	• Protected-permissive left-turn phasing (FYA) on Bells Ferry and permissive-only phasing on side streets • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by Cherokee County • GDOT and Cherokee Co. network integration (4G) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • CCTV (Cherokee Co. Network)	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Raised medians • Dedicated turn lanes
Bells Ferry Rd @ Walmart Entrance	• Protected-permissive left-turn phasing on Bells Ferry and split-phasing on side streets • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by Cherokee County • GDOT and Cherokee Co. network integration (4G) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • CCTV (Cherokee Co. Network)	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Raised medians • Dedicated turn lanes
Bells Ferry Rd @ Kellogg Creek Rd	• Protected-permissive left-turn phasing on Bells Ferry (NB), permissive-only U-turn on Bells Ferry (SB), and split-phasing on side streets • Coordinated (progression-focused)	• Maintained by Cherokee County • GDOT and Cherokee Co. network integration (4G) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • CCTV (Cherokee Co. Network)	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Raised medians • Dedicated turn lanes
Kellogg Creek Rd @ Victory Dr	• Protected-permissive left-turn phasing • Isolated	• Maintained by Cherokee County • GDOT and Cherokee Co. network integration (4G) • Remote monitoring and adjustment capabilities (MAXVIEW) • CCTV (Cherokee Co. Network)	• Appropriate speed limits for all roadway users • Crosswalk visibility enhancements • Walkways • Backplates with retroreflective borders • Dedicated turn lanes

Chapter 5: Traffic Analysis

Chapter Overview

This chapter of the Existing Conditions Technical Memorandum discusses traffic volumes on key corridors within the Bells Ferry LCI area including Bells Ferry Road, Highway 92, and Eagle Drive, among others. The project team utilized several available data resources through GDOT to conduct this analysis to evaluate both existing traffic conditions as well as forecasted conditions through 2050.

Historical Growth Analysis

To assess the history of growth in the area, the project team obtained historical traffic counts from four GDOT short-term count stations through GDOT's Traffic Analysis and Data Application (TADA) within and in proximity to the study area to determine the recent rate of traffic growth. As shown in **Table 12**, the average annual historical growth rate for major corridors in the study area was 1.47 percent. The highest growth rate was along Highway 92 just west of Bells Ferry Road.

Table 12. Historical Traffic Growth Rates

Count Station	Location	Growth Rate
057-0117	Bells Ferry Rd south of Eagle Dr	0.42%
057-0273	Bells Ferry Rd south of Hwy 92	0.83%
057-0076	Hwy 92 west of Bells Ferry Rd	3.36%
057-0207	Wade Green Rd south of Acklin Ln	1.26%
Average Growth Rate	-	**1.47%**

ARCs Activity-Based Travel Demand Model

ARC has developed an activity-based travel demand model to support regional transportation planning, enabling evaluation of existing and projected future traffic conditions. The travel demand model is a complex analysis based upon data and projections related to demographics, household and workforce characteristics, assumptions about mode share, and other key attributes. Thus, the outcomes are typically best considered at a broad scale, highlighting patterns and trends with regard to traffic volume and LOS.

For the purposes of the assessment, the latest ARC travel demand model was used to evaluate base year (2020) and projected future (2050) volumes and LOS on key corridors in the study area. The future year reflects the 2050 build scenario in the ARC MTP and incorporates the latest TIP amendment (Amendment #3) available at the time the project team conducted the analysis. The following analysis highlights the worst congestion experienced in either direction along corridors.

Traffic Volumes

Base Year (2020)

Based on the base year model outputs shown in **Figure 18**, Highway 92 carries the highest volume of daily traffic relative to other roadway segments in the study area. Highway 92 between Wade Green Road and Bells Ferry Road serves more than 20,000 vehicles daily, and adjoining portions of Highway 92 carry between 15,000 and 20,000 vehicles per day.

The Bells Ferry Road corridor serves between 10,000 and 15,000 vehicles per day over its entire length through the study area, except for two segments (from Bascomb Carmel Road to Shadowood Drive and between Kellogg Creek Road and Victory Drive) that carry between 5,000 and 10,000 vehicles per day. Victory Drive, Eagle Drive, and parts of Kellogg Creek Road and Victory Drive also serve between 5,000 and 10,000 vehicles per day. Bascomb Carmel Road and parts of Kellogg Creek Road and Victory Drive serve less than 5,000 vehicles per day.

Horizon Year (2050)

Based on the map shown in **Figure 19**, each roadway within the study area is likely to see significant increases in daily volumes by 2050. Notably, the highest daily volumes on Bells Ferry Road are expected north of Eagle Drive and south of Highway 92, serving over 15,000 vehicles per day on these segments of the corridor.

Forecasted Changes Over Time

Table 13 includes a ranking the arterials and collectors in the study area by percentage increase in daily traffic volumes from 2020 to 2050.

Comparing the 2020 and 2050 average daily volumes for each corridor in the study area, a trend of increasing activity and travel west of the Bells Ferry corridor becomes clear. Victory Drive and Kellogg Creek Road, roadways that begin at Bells Ferry Road and continue west/southwest, respectively rank first and second for the fastest growth over the three-year period analyzed by the model.

In addition to the dramatic increase in activity west of the Bells Ferry corridor, each roadway within the study area is expected to experience significant increases in activity – ranging from 31 to 71 percent – by 2050. This overall growth in travel demand reflects the transitional nature of the area, transforming from a rural corridor to an increasingly urbanized hub of activity.

Table 13. Percent Change in ARC ABM Daily Volumes (2020 to 2050)

Rank	Roadway	2020 Average Daily Volume	2050 Average Daily Volume	Daily Volume Percent Change
1	Victory Dr	5,311	9,069	71%
2	Kellogg Creek Rd	4,462	7,099	59%
3	Eagle Dr	5,918	8,424	42%
4	Wade Green Rd	10,955	15,359	40%
5	Hwy 92	19,603*	26,003	33%
6	Bascomb Carmel Rd	3,762	5,027	34%
7	Bells Ferry Road	11,071	14,511	31%

Source: ARC Activity-Based Travel Demand Model

**Directional volume, as Highway 92 is a divided highway*

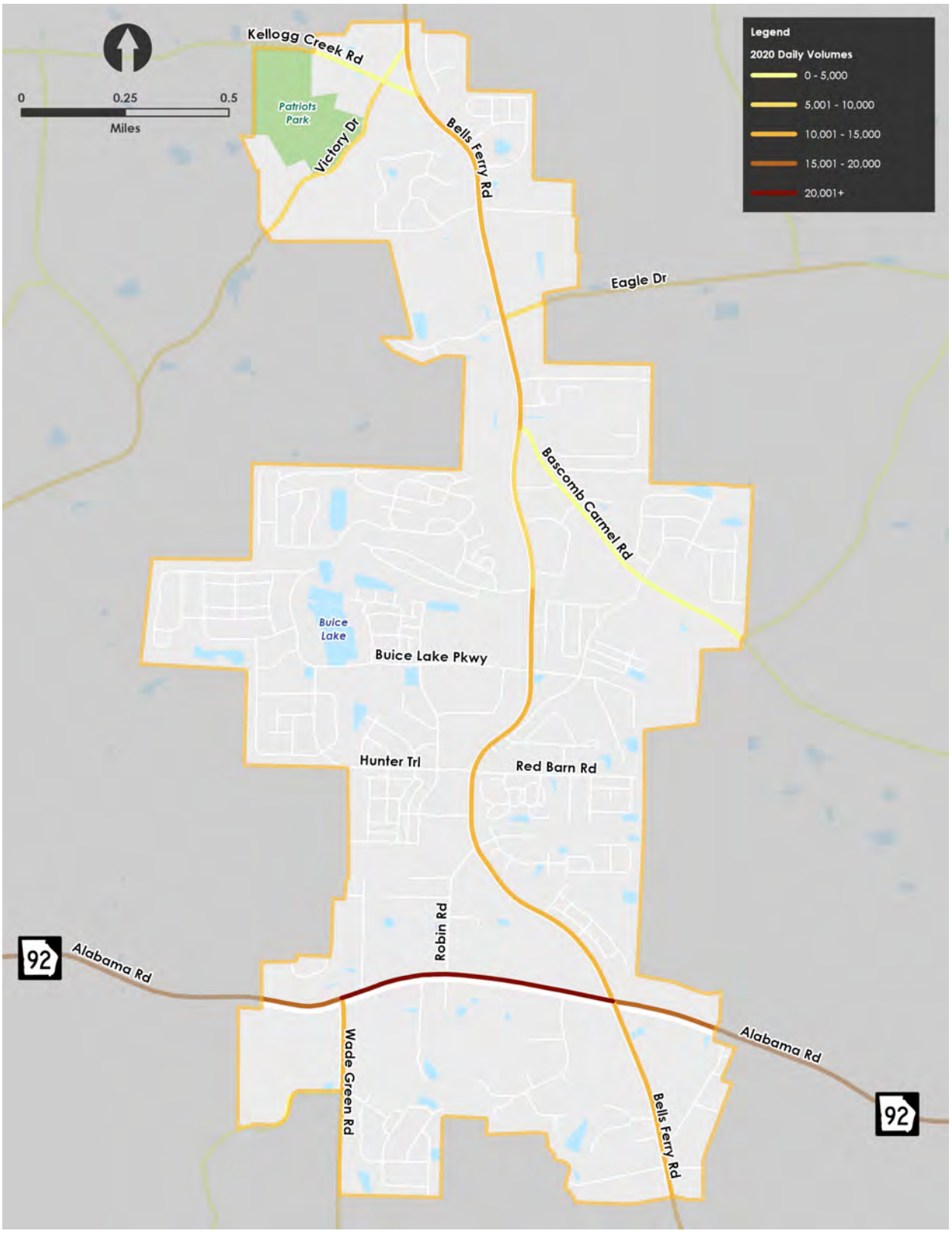


Figure 18. Base Year (2020) Traffic Volumes

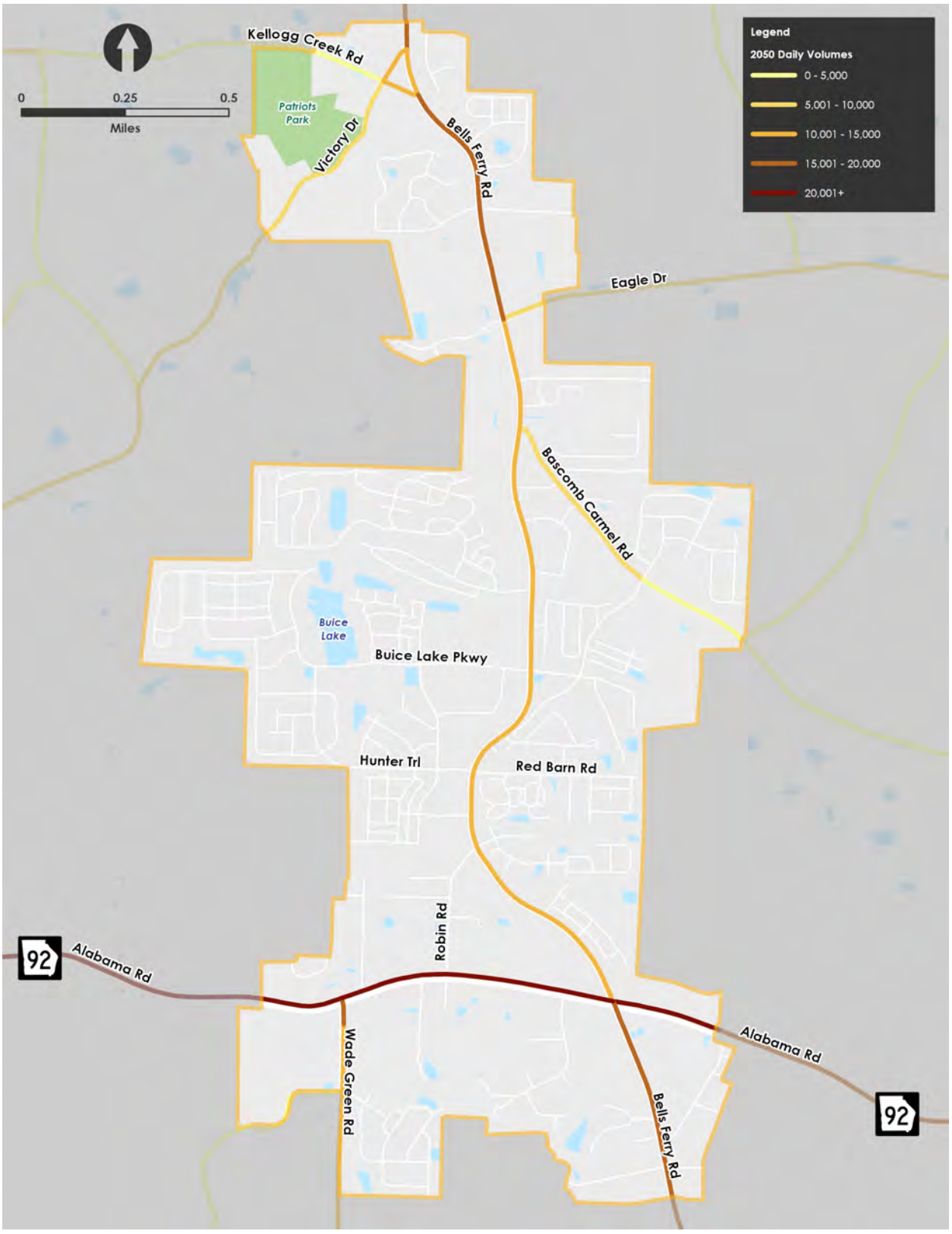


Figure 19. Horizon Year (2050) Traffic Volumes

Level of Service

The project team utilized the latest ARC travel demand model to evaluate base year (2020) and projected future year (2050) LOS for both the AM and PM peak periods (6 AM to 10 AM for AM peak period and 3 PM to 7 PM for the PM peak period).

2020 Peak Travel Periods

Based on the maps shown in **Figure 20** and **Figure 21**, respectively, LOS in the study area is slightly lower during peak afternoon traffic in the base year (2020), particularly on Highway 92 when compared to morning traffic.

Most of the roadway network within the study area is operating at LOS A, B, or C during the AM peak period; however, some segments along Highway 92, a segment of Kellogg Creek Road between Victory Drive and Bells Ferry Road, and the portion of Bells Ferry Road between the Cobb County line and Highway 92 operate at LOS D during the PM peak period. There are no roadways operating at LOS E or F.

2050 Peak Travel Periods

Based on the maps shown in **Figure 22** and **Figure 23**, respectively, LOS is expected to worsen by 2050, especially on Bells Ferry Road. The majority of the Bells Ferry Rd and Highway 92 corridors is forecasted to operate at LOS D or E. The portion of Wade Green Road within the study area is also projected to be at LOS E. Several segments are projected to perform at LOS F including Highway 92 west of Wade Green Road, a portion of Bells Ferry Road between Victory Drive and Kellogg Creek Road, and Victory Drive between Kellogg Greek Road and Bells Ferry Road.

About Level of Service

According to the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM), traffic congestion is measured as a ratio of volume to available capacity on the roadway network. Traffic congestion can occur when the demand for vehicle trips exceeds the available capacity of the roadway.

Traffic congestion is measured according to the concept of LOS, using a lettered scale of A through F. Generally, LOS A, B, and C indicate free-flow conditions. At LOS D, speed and freedom to maneuver in traffic become more restrictive. LOS E indicates that a road is nearing its capacity to serve traffic and flow is unstable, driver comfort and convenience are poor, and "stop and go" conditions are present. When a roadway has LOS F, there is severe traffic congestion.

LOS A-B



LOS C-D



LOS E **LOS F**



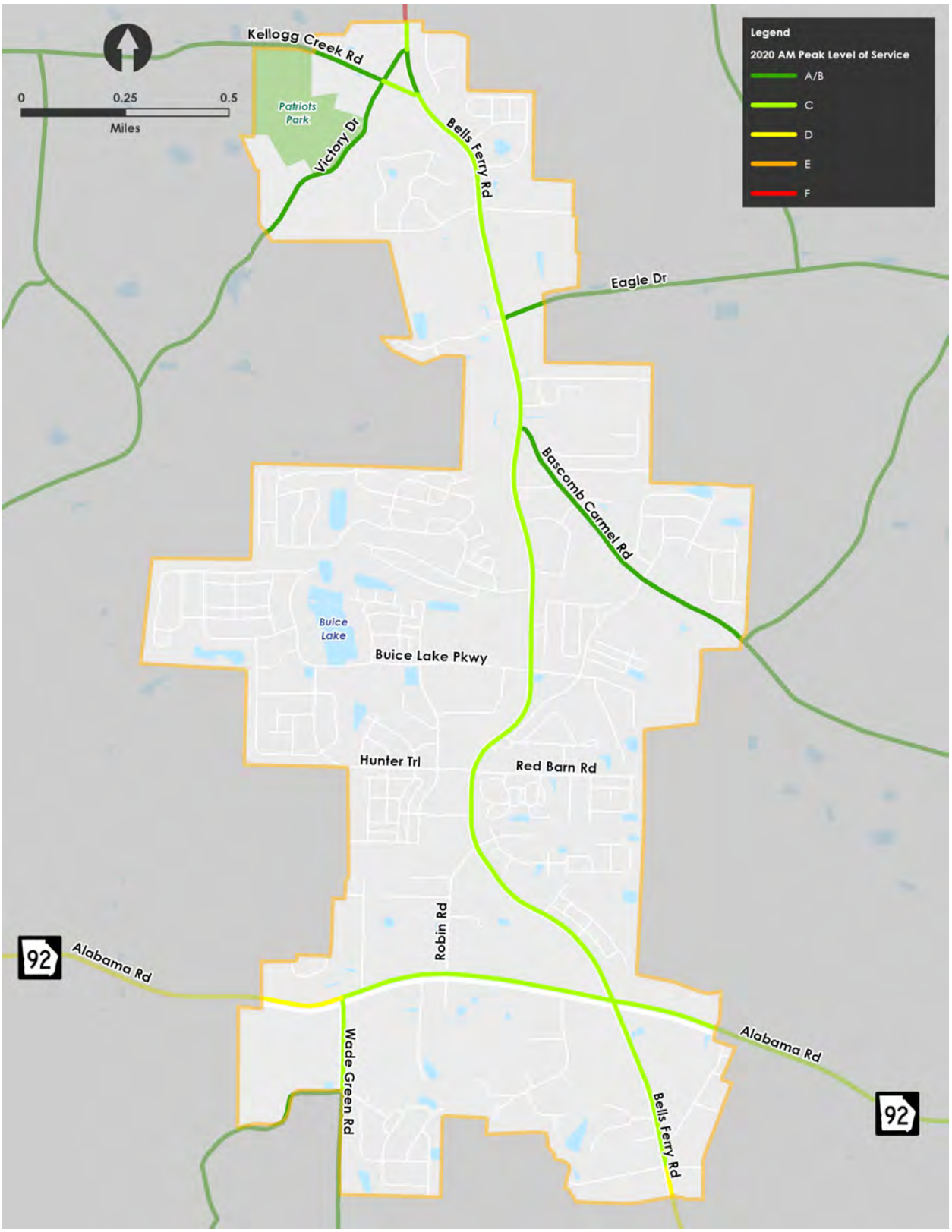


Figure 20. Base Year (2020) Level of Service - AM Peak Period

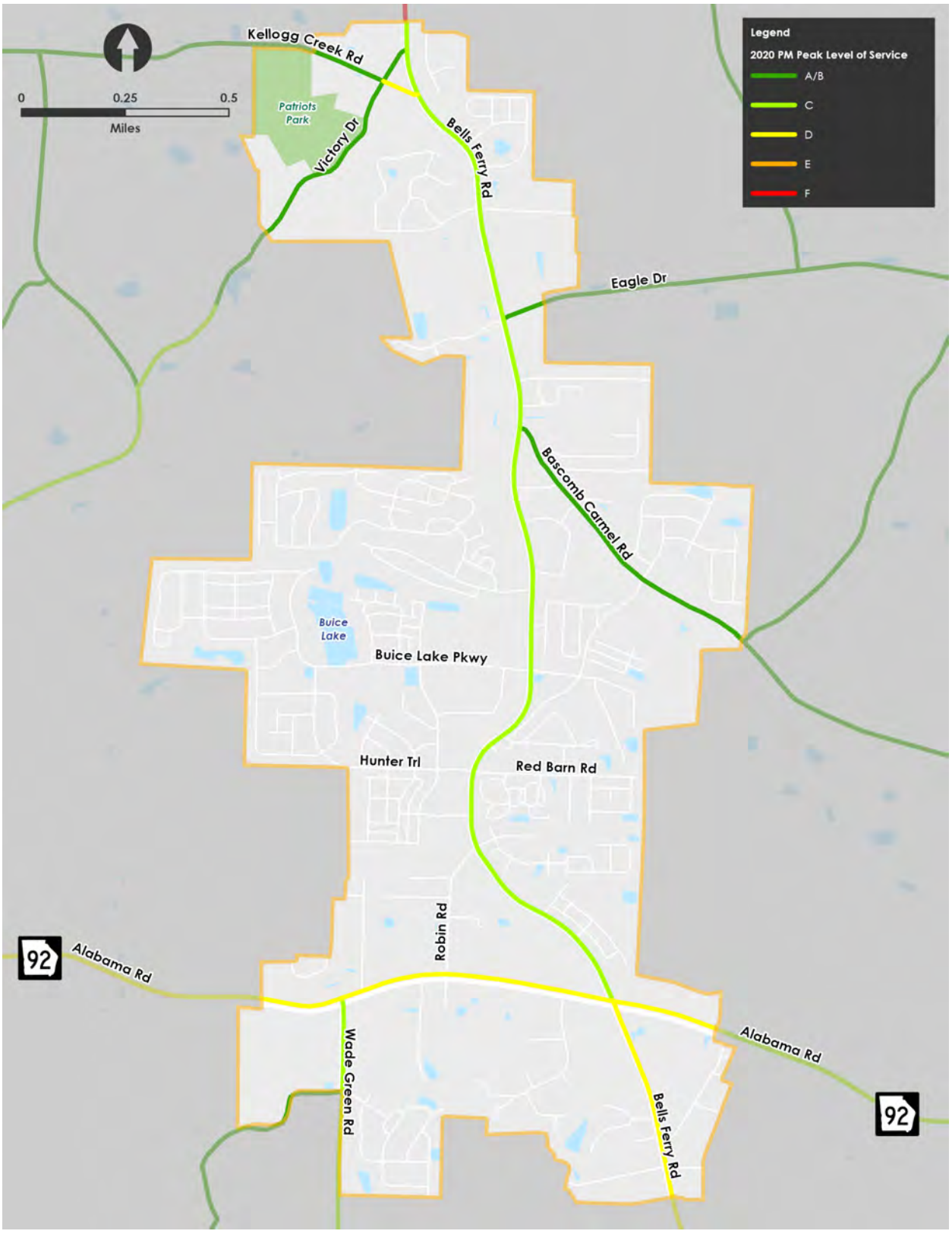


Figure 21. Base Year (2020) Level of Service - PM Peak Period

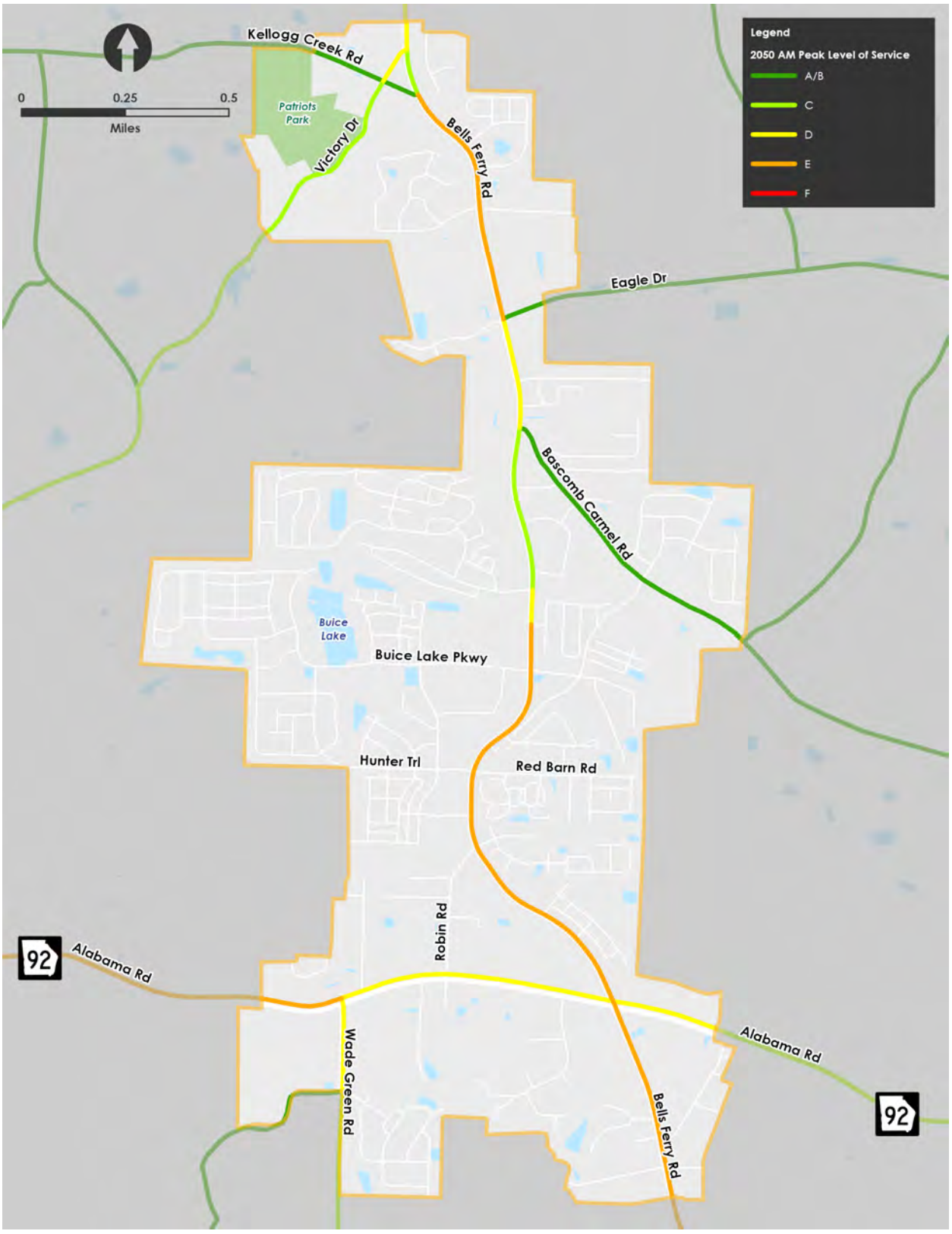


Figure 22. Horizon Year (2050) Level of Service - AM Peak Period

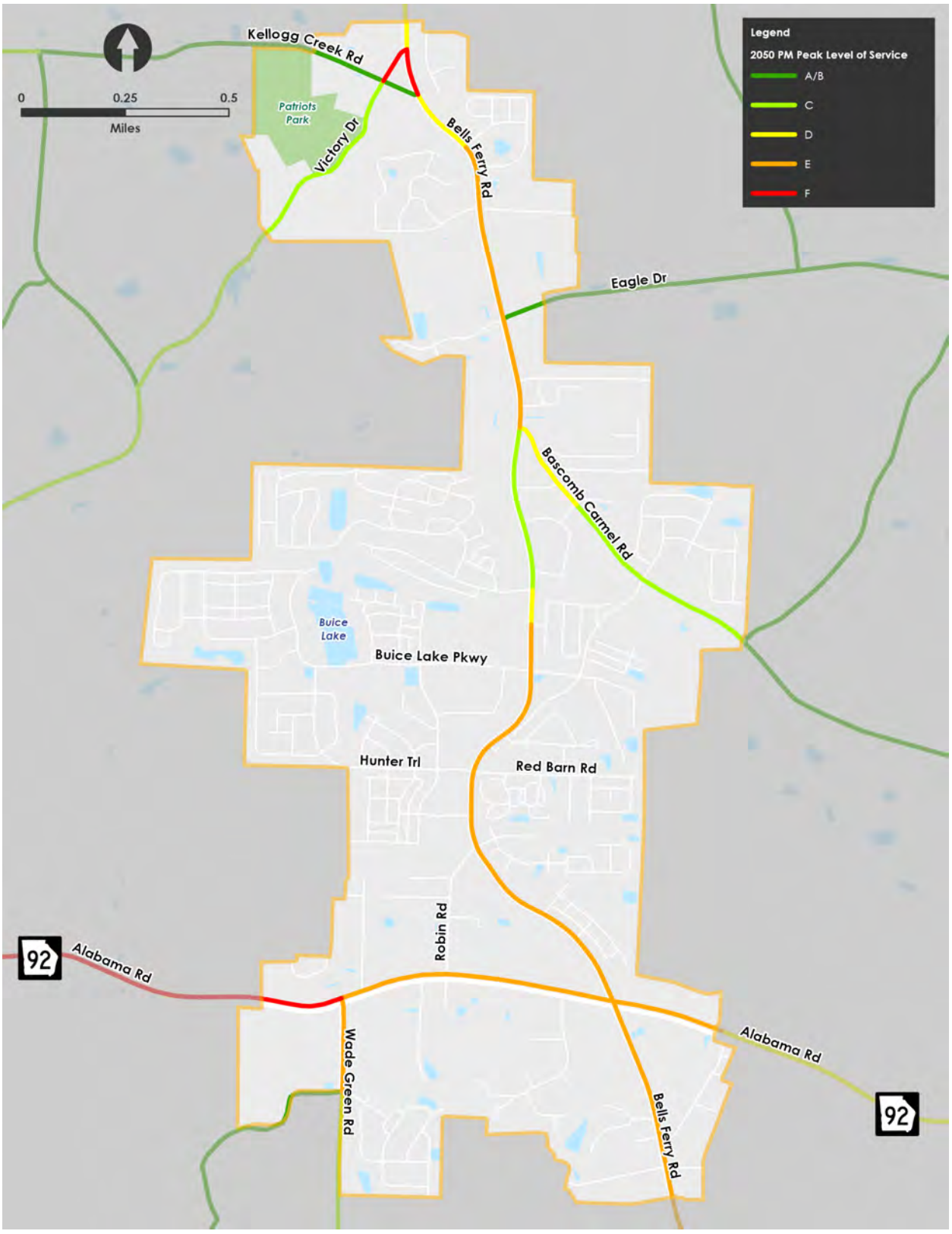


Figure 23. Horizon Year (2050) Level of Service - PM Peak Period

Congestion and Observed Speeds

The project team used the Corridor Speed Bins tool of the Regionally Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) Probe Data Analytics Suite to understand congestion locations. The team included Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92 and selected hourly intervals for the period of July 2024 through June 2025, using HERE Topological Segment (TS) data. Comparative speeds are measured speeds as a percentage of the historical average speed for a given time of day and day of week. AM and PM peak hour congestion locations are shown in **Figure 24** and **Figure 25**, respectively.

Bells Ferry Road

AM Peak Traffic (6 AM to 10 AM)

Southbound travelers on Bells Ferry Road typically experience lower comparative speeds than northbound travelers during morning peak hours, indicating higher travel demand in that direction.

During morning peak hours, southbound traffic on Bells Ferry Road tends to slow down upstream of Kellogg Creek Drive, Eagle Drive, and Highway 92. The most frequent slowdowns occur upstream of Eagle Drive. This data is consistent with a tendency for commuters from residential areas near Bells Ferry Road to use Eagle Drive to travel eastbound to reach I-575 or their places of work in areas such as Woodstock and Alpharetta.

Midday Peak Traffic (12 PM to 4 PM)

During the early afternoon, southbound and northbound travelers on the corridor are most likely to slow down north of Eagle Drive, consistent with increasing activity in the area related to the retail developments, including Walmart Supercenter, Lidl, and Streetside at Towne Lake (strip mall).

Evening Peak Traffic (4 PM to 7 PM)

During the evening, northbound travelers experience more significant slowdowns in the northbound direction, relative to other times of day. The most significant slowdowns occur upstream of Kellogg Creek Drive, the north Walmart entrance, and Highway 92.

Highway 92

AM Peak Traffic (6 AM to 10 AM)

Eastbound travelers on Highway 92 are more likely to experience slightly lower comparative speeds than westbound travelers. This data is consistent with a tendency for commuters to use Highway 92 to travel eastbound to reach I-575 or their places of work in more urbanized areas like Woodstock and Alpharetta.

Midday Peak Traffic (12 PM to 4 PM)

During the midday peak hours, comparative speeds tend to decrease for westbound travelers, indicating higher travel demand. The most significant slowdowns for westbound travelers tend to occur upstream of the Robin Road and Bells Ferry Road intersections.

Evening Peak Traffic (4 PM to 7 PM)

During the evening hours, westbound travelers experience the most significant slowdowns, relative to other times of day. Slowdowns are particularly notable upstream of the Bells Ferry Road intersection. Eastbound travelers tend to experience fairly consistent comparative speeds throughout the day.

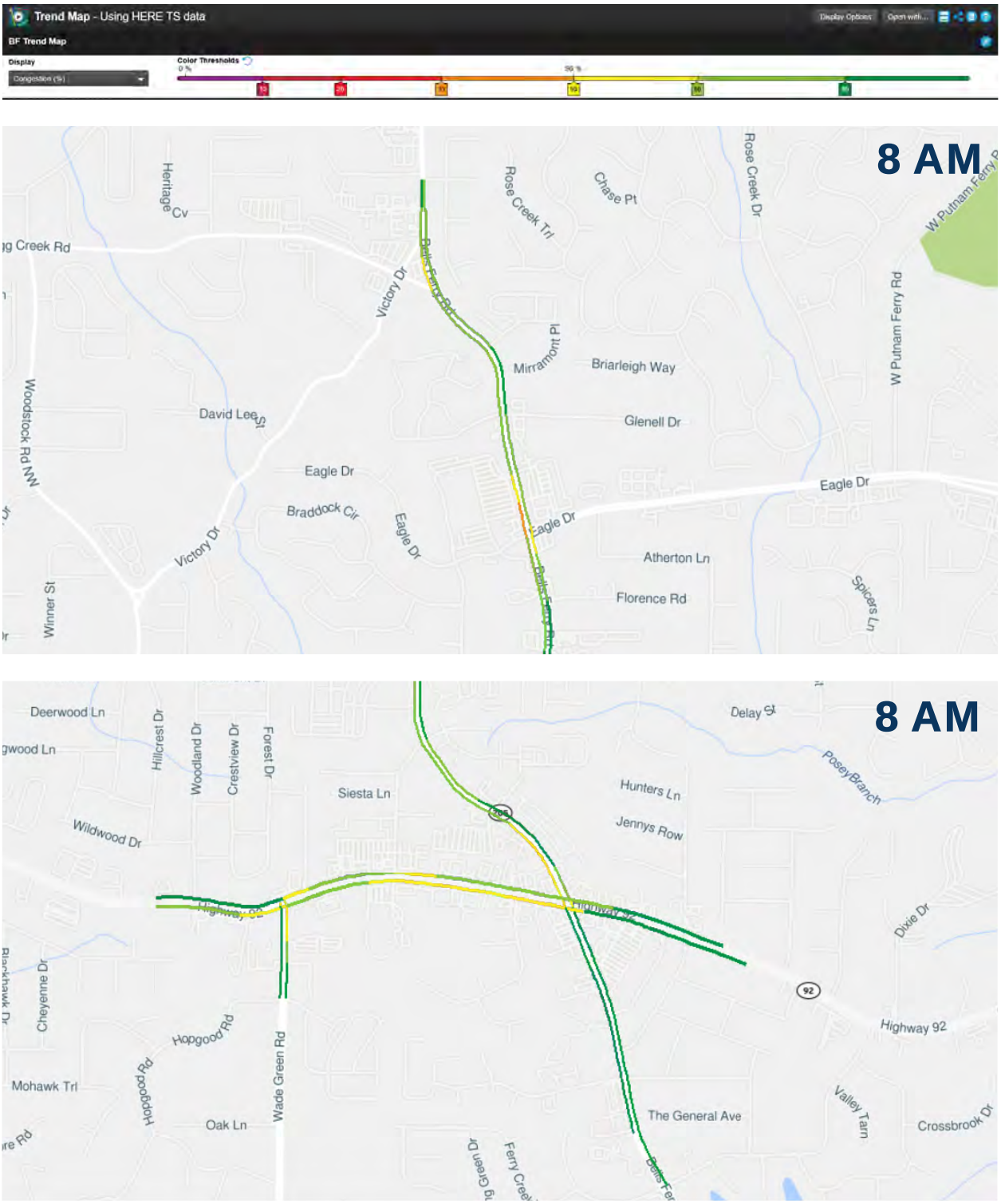


Figure 24. Morning Peak Period Congestion Locations (July 2024 - June 2025)

Source: RITIS Probe Data Analytics Suite

Note: Colors depicted range from dark red (more congestion) to dark green (less congestion)

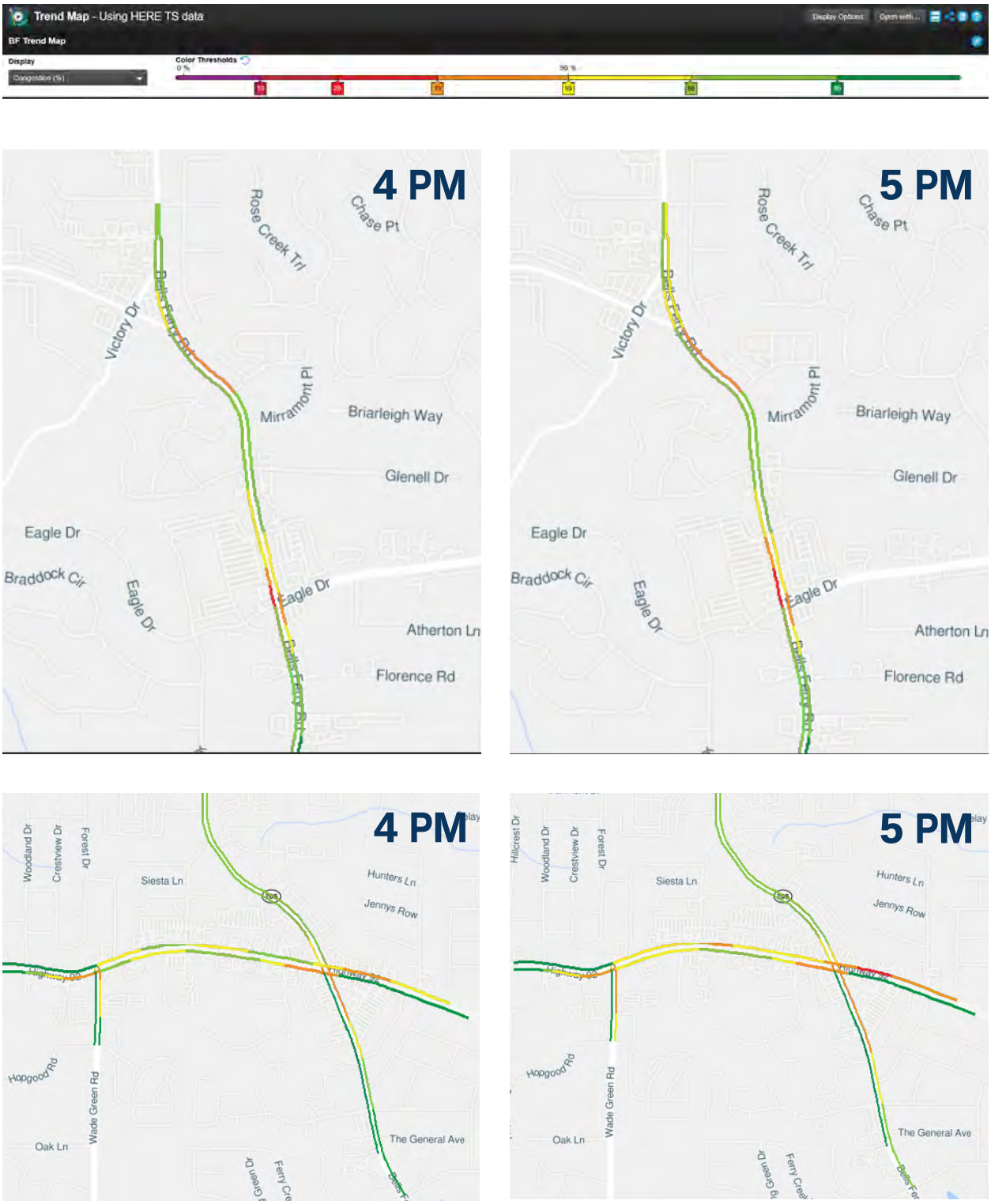


Figure 25. Afternoon Peak Period Congestion Locations (July 2024 - June 2025)

Source: RITIS Probe Data Analytics Suite

Chapter 6: Safety Review

Chapter Overview

The ability of the traveling public to reach their destination safely is an important cornerstone for the LCI program, and the project team conducted a safety review of the LCI area to understand crash and safety trends along major corridors and intersections.

Using crash data obtained through AASHTOWare, the project team was able to pinpoint where crashes have occurred. This information will be used to develop and prioritize projects at locations with safety concerns. This chapter presents overall crash findings and focuses on fatal and serious injury crashes as well as crashes involving a bicyclist or a pedestrian.

Crash Severity Overview

The KABCO vehicle accident reporting classification system is used across the nation, including within Cherokee County and around Georgia, to categorize injury or health impacts that result from roadway crashes. Within Georgia, crashes are categorized into five severity categories:

Fatal Injury (K) - A fatal injury is any injury that results in death within 30 days after the motor vehicle crash in which the injury occurred. If the person did not die at the scene but died within 30 days of the motor vehicle crash, the injury classification should be changed from the attribute previously assigned to the attribute "Fatal Injury." NOTE: The fatality must result from injuries sustained in a crash. Deaths resulting from heart attacks, self-harm, strokes, etc. while operating a motor vehicle that crashes are not motor vehicle fatalities.

Suspected Serious Injury (A) - A suspected serious injury is any injury other than fatal which results in one or more of the following: severe laceration; broken or distorted extremity (i.e. arm or leg); crush injuries; skull, chest, or abdominal injury; significant burns; unconsciousness; or paralysis.

Suspected Minor or Visible Injury (B) - A minor injury is any injury that is evident at the scene of the crash, other than fatal or serious injuries. Examples include a lump on the head, abrasions, bruises, or minor lacerations.

Possible Injury/Complaint of Injury (C) - A possible injury is any injury reported or claimed which is not a fatal, suspected serious or suspected minor injury.

Non-Injury/Property Damage Only (O) - A crash which does not result in an apparent injury and only results in vehicular and/or real property damage.

Source: GDOT

Overall Crashes

Crash Density

Between 2019 and 2024, there was a total of 2,228 reported vehicular crashes were reported within the Bells Ferry LCI area. The density and locations of these crashes are shown in **Figure 26**.

Geographically, vehicle collisions are concentrated around several high-volume intersections within the study area. These intersections include:

- Kellogg Creek Road at Bells Ferry Road
- Bells Ferry Road at Eagle Drive
- Highway 92 at Bells Ferry Road
- Highway 92 at Robin Road
- Highway 92 at Wade Green Road

In addition, the collisions resulting in the most severe outcomes (fatal injuries), all occurred along Highway 92 – potentially highlighting the need for the implementation of FHWA proven safety countermeasures along that corridor.

Crashes by Severity

Based on data shown in **Table 14**, the majority of these crashes, nearly 80 percent, resulted in property damage only (PDO), categorized under the "O" severity level on the KABCO scale. Crashes involving injuries (A, B, and C) accounted for roughly 20 percent of all crashes, with possible injury (C) being the most common at 13 percent. Fatal crashes (K) comprised 0.27 percent of total crashes from 2019 to 2024. Reported fatal and serious injury crashes in the LCI area are shown in **Figure 27**.

Crashes per year ranged from 314 in 2020 to 420 in 2022. Although 2020 saw a decrease in total crashes, likely due to reduced traffic volumes during the COVID-19 pandemic, the numbers rebounded and remained above 390 annually from 2022 onward. Notably, 2023 had the highest number of fatal crashes (four), while no fatal crashes were reported in 2019, 2021, or 2024. Injury crash trends remained relatively consistent with only minor fluctuations across the different severity levels.

Overall, the crash data indicates that while most incidents are non-injury-related, there is a persistent presence of injury and occasional fatal crashes along the Bells Ferry Road corridor.

Table 14. Crashes by Severity

	Fatal	Injury			PDO		
Year	K	A	B	C	O	Unknown	Total Crashes
2019	0	5	17	50	274	0	346
2020	1	4	22	38	248	1	314
2021	0	5	27	45	260	2	339
2022	1	5	23	54	336	1	420
2023	4	6	12	49	346	0	417
2024	0	5	19	56	312	0	392
Total	**6**	**30**	**120**	**292**	**1,776**	**4**	**2,228**
	0.27%	**1.35%**	**5.38%**	**13.11%**	**79.71%**	**0.18%**	

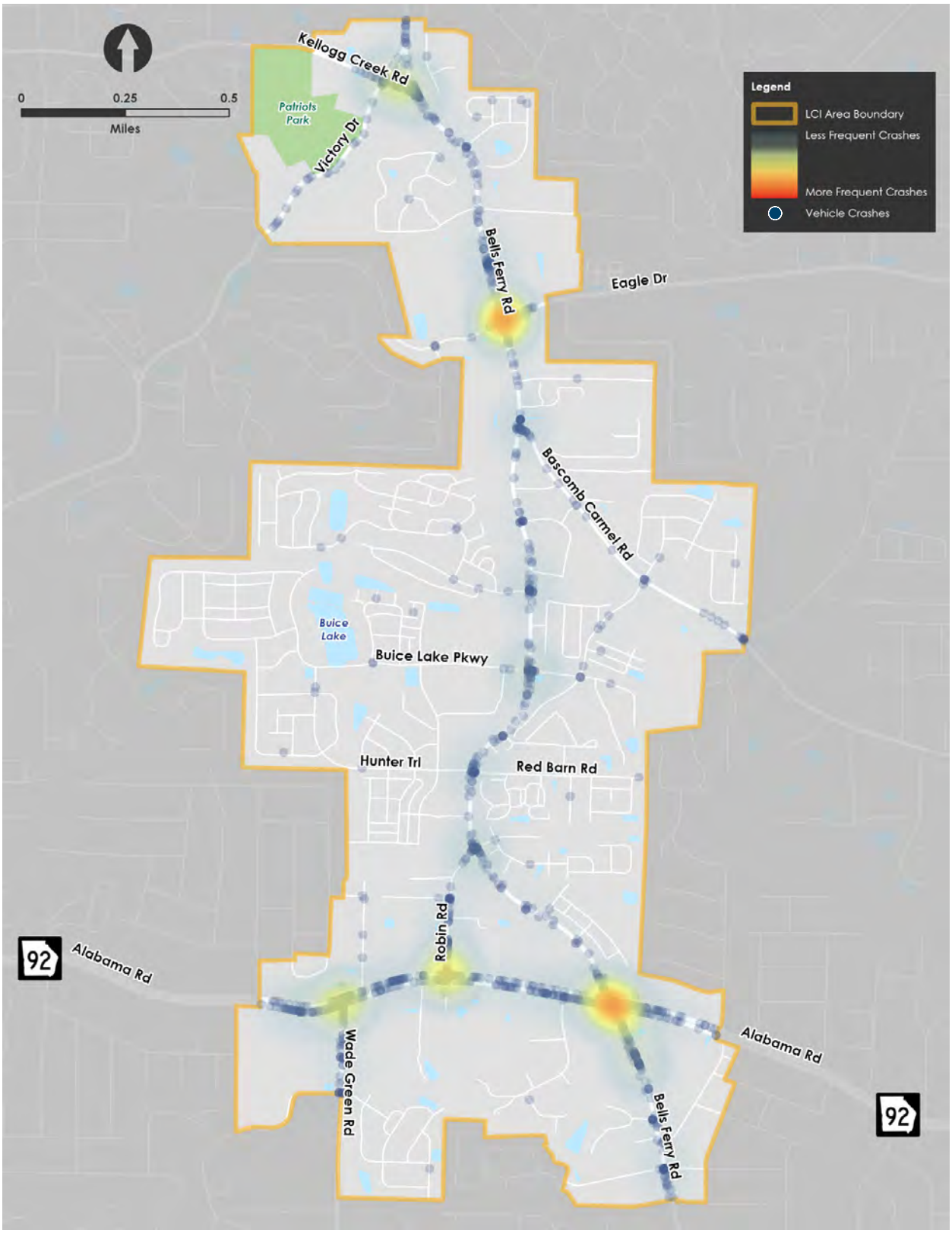


Figure 26. Crash Density

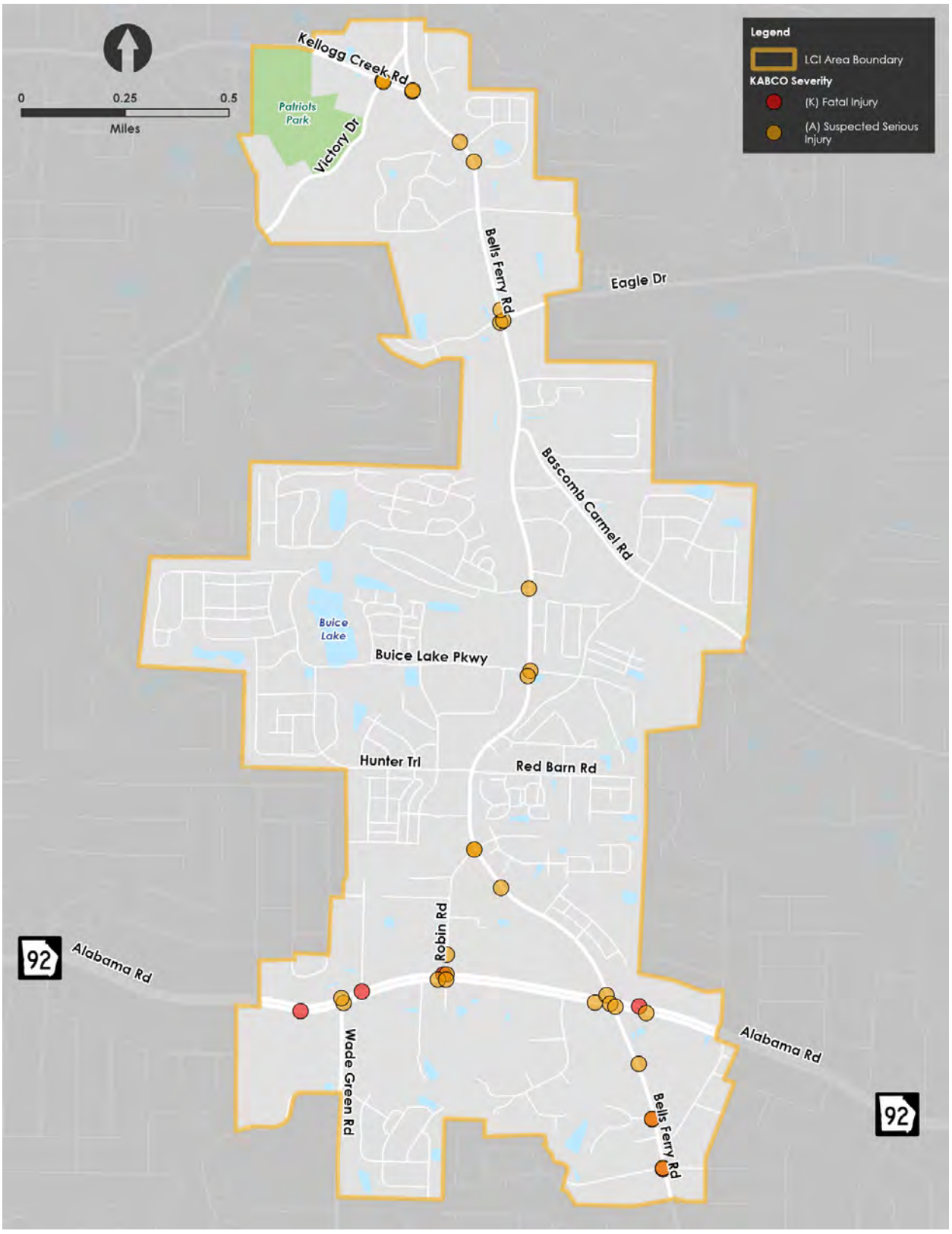


Figure 27. Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes

The relatively high volume of possible injury (C-level) and property damage crashes may suggest ongoing issues with traffic flow, roadway design, or driver behavior that warrant further analysis. The consistency of injury-related crashes, even as overall totals vary, highlights the importance of considering safety improvements throughout the corridor.

Crashes by Manner of Collision

Table 15 shows crashes by manner of collision. Of the 2,228 total crashes occurring within the Bells Ferry LCI study area from 2019 to 2024, rear-end collisions comprised the largest share (47.58 percent), followed by angle collisions (34.47 percent) and sideswipe-same direction crashes (9.38 percent). Other manners of collision, including sideswipes in the opposite direction (0.27 percent) and crashes not involving another motor vehicle (7.41 percent), made up a smaller proportion. This distribution of collision types suggests patterns typical of corridors with a mix of signalized intersections, moderate congestion, and frequent turning movements.

The high percentage of rear-end crashes may suggest issues with traffic flow consistency, signal timing, and driver attention. According to FHWA resources, rear-end collisions are often associated with stop-and-go conditions, poor signal coordination, or closely spaced driveways and intersections. The corridor experienced its highest number of rear-end crashes in 2022 (204) and 2024 (203), indicating a potential rise in congestion or changes in travel behavior during those years – largely tracking with the increased development and associated increases in traffic volumes seen within the study area. This trend may underscore the need for improvements such as adaptive signal systems, better access management, and enhanced signage to reduce abrupt braking and improve driver awareness.

Angle crashes, which account for over one-third of all collisions (768 total), are frequently tied to intersection-related conflicts, particularly left-turn and crossing maneuvers. These crashes are often more severe than rear-end or sideswipe incidents. Their consistent presence across all six years, with peaks in 2023 (144) and 2022 (138), may suggest a need to evaluate intersection design and signal phasing along the corridor.

Table 15. Crashes by Manner of Collision

Year	Angle	Head On	Rear End	Sideswipe-Same Direction	Sideswipe-Opposite Direction	Not a Collision With Motor Vehicle	Not Specified	Total Crashes
2019	123	4	175	24	3	17	0	346
2020	107	1	151	31	1	23	0	314
2021	132	4	137	44	1	21	0	339
2022	138	4	204	33	0	41	0	420
2023	144	2	190	45	0	36	0	417
2024	124	5	203	32	1	27	0	392
Total	**768**	**20**	**1,060**	**209**	**6**	**165**	**0**	**2,228**
	34.47%	**0.90%**	**47.58%**	**9.38%**	**0.26%**	**7.41%**	**0.00%**	

To help address increases in angle crashes, FHWA recommends certain safety countermeasures such as protected turn phases, improved sight distance, and geometric redesigns (e.g., roundabouts or offset T-intersections) to reduce such risks.

Sideswipe collisions in the same direction (209 total) were also prevalent along the corridor. According to FHWA resources, sideswipe collisions in the same direction can often be the result of lane changing in congested or multi-lane segments. Although a smaller share overall, these crashes increased in 2021 and 2023, pointing to possible merging or weaving conflicts associated with increased traffic volumes in the area (possibly associated with increased and denser development along the corridor). FHWA guidance suggests that clear lane markings, designated turn lanes, and corridor access control can help reduce such incidents. Additionally, non-motor vehicle collisions (165 total) may point to vulnerable road user conflicts or fixed object crashes, further emphasizing the need for complete streets elements, including pedestrian crossings, lighting, and median design.

Crashes Involving Vulnerable Roadway Users

A breakdown of crashes involving vulnerable roadway users (VRUs) is shown in **Table 16**. A map showing the geographic locations of crashes involving VRUs can be found in **Figure 28**. Most VRU-related crashes occurring within the Bells Ferry LCI from January 2019 to December 2024 took place along Highway 92, with a few exceptions along Bells Ferry Road and Wade Green Road on their approaches to the Highway 92 corridor. This may reflect the need for additional pedestrian or cyclist related infrastructure along the Highway 92 corridor, with safety improvements having the most return on investment in this area.

Table 16. Crashes Involving Vulnerable Roadway Users (VRUs)

	Bicycle	Pedestrian	Motorcycle	Scooter	Total Crashes
2019	2	1	6	0	346
2020	0	1	7	0	314
2021	0	2	7	0	339
2022	1	3	8	0	420
2023	4	3	5	3	417
2024	0	2	4	0	392
Total	**7**	**12**	**37**	**3**	**2,228**
	0.31%	**0.54%**	**1.66%**	**0.13%**	

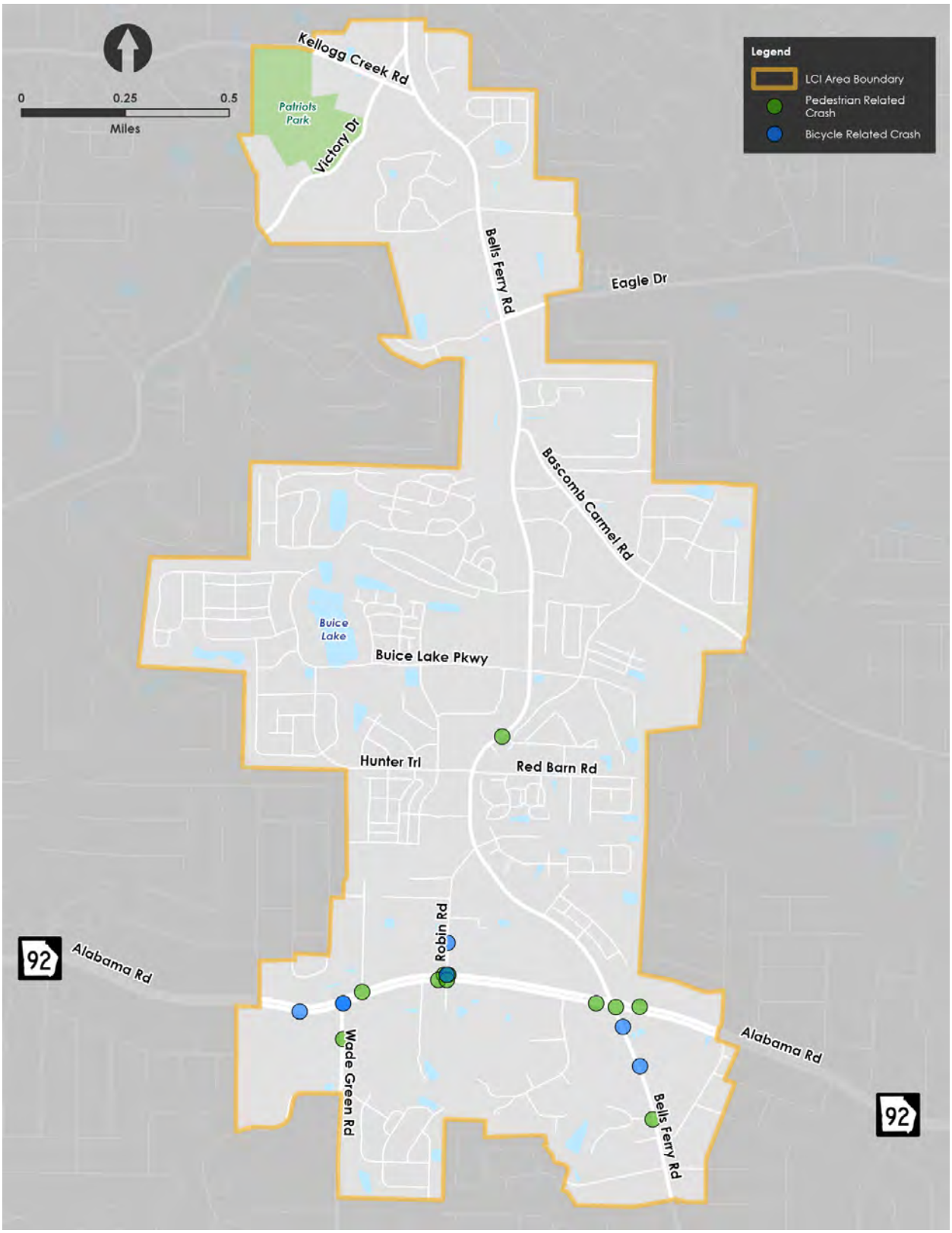


Figure 28. Bicycle & Pedestrian Crashes

Crash Rates

An analysis of vehicle crash trends was conducted for all roadway intersections within the Bells Ferry LCI study area. A breakdown of the intersections with the most vehicle crashes within 300 feet can be found in **Table 17**: Intersections with Most Vehicle Crashes.

One method for determining how dangerous a roadway may be is by calculating crash rates for a given corridor or intersection. The FHWA provides standardized methodologies for calculating crash rates to enable meaningful comparisons across different transportation facilities. For intersections, FHWA recommends a calculation that considers the total entering volume (AADT) from all approaches, using the formula:

Crash Rate = [Total Crashes × 1,000,000] / [(Total Entering AADT) × (365) × (Years)]

This produces a rate expressed as crashes per million entering vehicles (MEV), which normalizes crash frequency relative to traffic exposure. By standardizing results in this way, agencies can more accurately identify intersections where crash occurrences are disproportionately high, regardless of intersection size or traffic demand.

For roadway segments or corridors, FHWA recommends an adjusted formula to account for both the length of the facility and its traffic volume:

Crash Rate = [Total Crashes × 1,000,000]/ [AADT × Segment Length × 365 × Years]

This calculation expresses crash rates in terms of crashes per million vehicle-miles traveled (MVMT), ensuring that longer segments or those carrying higher volumes are evaluated on a consistent basis. By incorporating both distance and traffic demand into the analysis, this methodology allows practitioners to compare crash risk across corridors of varying sizes and operational conditions, highlighting segments where safety performance is notably below expectations.

The GDOT's TADA program provides AADT for select roadways within the Bells Ferry LCI study area (namely: Highway 92 and Bells Ferry Rd). Using these volumes, the project team was able to determine crash rates for four discrete portions of roadways within the study area: 1) Bells Ferry Rd North to Eagle Drive; 2) Bells Ferry Rd Central to Highway 92; 3) Bells Ferry Rd to Southern Terminus; 4) Highway 92. Below, please find the crash rates for these sections of roadway in **Table 18**: Corridor Crash Rates.

The AADT figures provided by GDOT's TADA program also allowed the project team to calculate crash rates for major intersections within the Bells Ferry LCI study area. Below, please find the crash rates for those intersections with the most vehicle crashes for which AADT was available in **Table 19**: Intersection Crash Rates.

These crash rates are generally higher than those found on similarly classified roadways, and may reflect the need for increased safety investments at the locations examined.

Table 17. Intersection Crashes by Severity

Intersection	Vehicle Crashes			
	K	A	BCO	Total
Bells Ferry Rd at Highway 92	0	4	304	308
Bells Ferry Rd at Eagle Dr	0	3	289	292
Highway 92 at Robin Rd	2	3	289	292
Highway 92 at Wade Green Rd	0	2	190	192
Highway 92 at Tyson Dr	1	2	146	149
Kellogg Creek Rd at Victory Dr	0	3	108	111
Bells Ferry Rd at Kellogg Creek Rd	0	2	108	110
Bells Ferry Rd at Buice Lake Pkwy	0	2	81	83
Bells Ferry Rd at Robin Dr	0	2	62	64

Table 18. Corridor Crash Rates

Roadway Segment	Segment Length	Number of Crashes	AADT	Crash Rate
Bells Ferry Rd to Eagle Dr	0.73 mile	496	25,400	**12.22**
Bells Ferry Rd to Highway 92	1.85 mile	951	25,400	**9.24**
Bells Ferry Rd to South Terminus	0.51 mile	481	23,100	**18.64**
Highway 92	1.15 mile	941	44,600	**8.38**

Table 19. Intersection Crash Rates

Intersection	AADT	Crashes	Crash Rate
Bells Ferry Rd at Highway 92	70,000	308	**2.01**
Bells Ferry Rd at Eagle Dr	68,300	292	**1.95**
Highway 92 at Wade Green Rd	60,900	192	**1.44**

Chapter 7: Next Steps & Key Takeaways

The existing conditions assessment for the Bells Ferry LCI Update reveals that the corridor faces both pressing challenges and significant opportunities for improvement. The analysis underscores the area's role as a critical north-south connector, balancing regional through-traffic with local access needs. Current conditions show a predominance of auto-oriented infrastructure, limited pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and development patterns that do not fully support multimodal connectivity or a vibrant mixed-use environment. These findings highlight the need for strategic interventions to enhance safety, mobility, and land use compatibility while preserving the corridor's function as a key transportation route.

Traffic and safety data indicate that while the corridor operates with generally adequate vehicular capacity, crash patterns — particularly rear-end and angle collisions — point to safety deficiencies that can be mitigated through design and operational changes. Signalized intersections and access management emerge as critical focus areas to reduce conflicts and improve flow. In addition, the likely continued increases in population (given Cherokee County's rapid growth) means that level-of-service is likely to continue to degrade over time. The report concludes that targeted roadway improvements, coupled with access control and intersection enhancements, will be essential in addressing these issues.

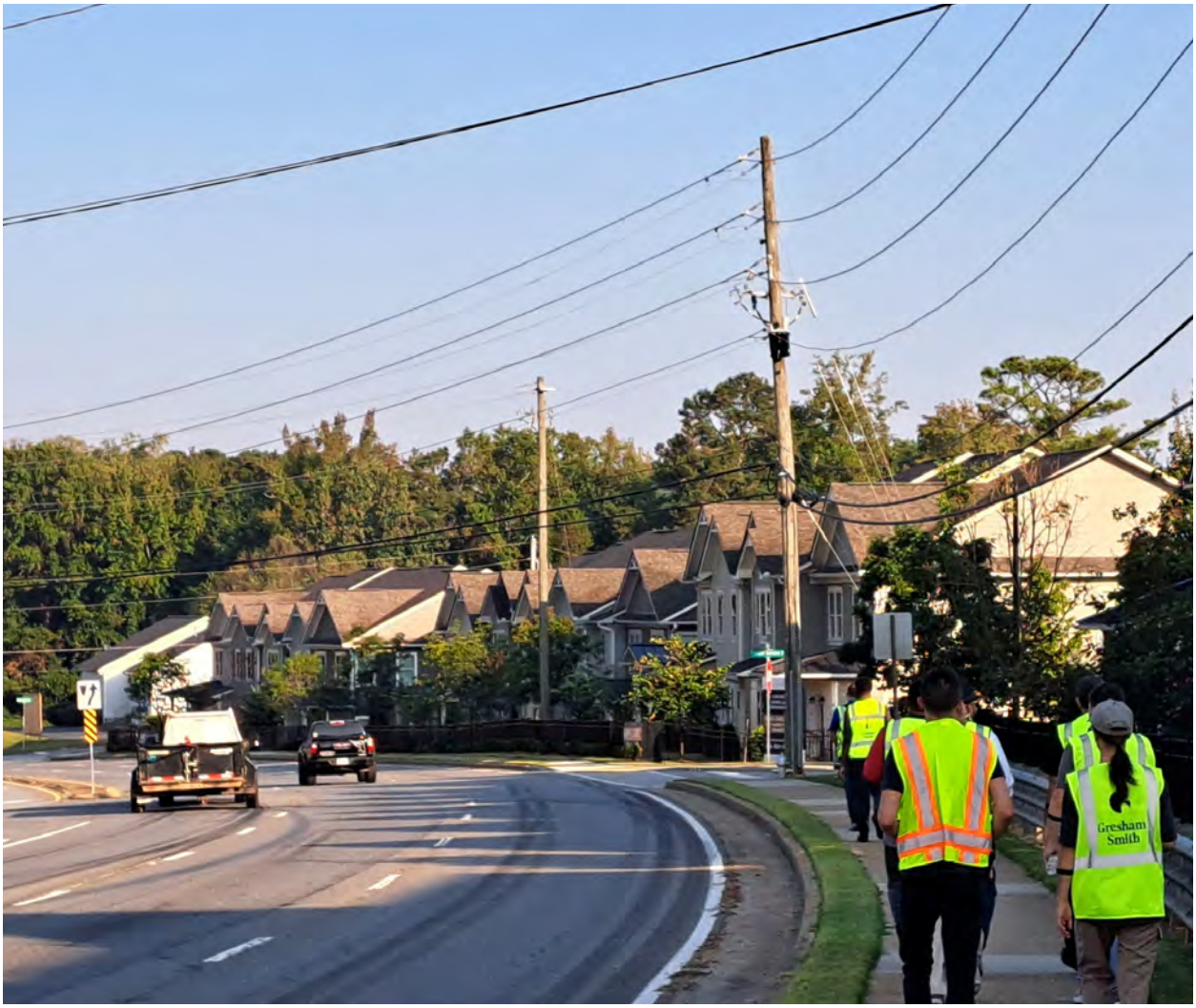
Multimodal gaps remain a substantial barrier to creating a more connected, livable corridor. Sidewalk coverage is inconsistent, bicycle facilities are absent or minimal, and pedestrian crossings are limited in number and design quality. These deficiencies hinder non-motorized travel, limit equitable mobility options, and reduce the corridor's appeal as a walkable community destination. Improving pedestrian and bicycle networks — with a focus on safety, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility, and continuity — is identified as a foundational step toward achieving LCI goals and fostering active transportation.

Bells Ferry LCI Update Upcoming Steps

The project team will now utilize the information gleaned from the existing conditions report to begin developing potential proposed projects and policies that could be implemented to further the goals of the LCI Program within the Bells Ferry Corridor. Once those proposed projects and policies are developed, they will be brought before the community using an intentional engagement effort to ensure that all members of the traveling public have an equal say in what projects and policies are carried forward for implementation.

Land use patterns along Bells Ferry Road reveal a predominance of low-intensity commercial and residential uses, with limited vertical mixed-use development or higher-density housing. Underutilized parcels and deep setbacks contribute to an auto-dominated streetscape. The report emphasizes that land use policies and zoning adjustments should encourage more compact, mixed-use development to create activity nodes, promote housing diversity, and support future transit viability. Strategic redevelopment and infill projects, particularly in proximity to key intersections, could catalyze economic activity and help establish a more distinct corridor identity.

In conclusion, the existing conditions analysis sets the stage for a coordinated strategy to transform Bells Ferry Road into a safer, more connected, and more vibrant corridor. This will require an integrated approach that balances mobility improvements, multimodal investments, and land use reforms. The findings make clear that achieving the LCI vision will depend on aligning transportation upgrades with development policies that support density, diversity, and design excellence. By addressing current deficiencies while leveraging the corridor's strategic location, stakeholders can position Bells Ferry Road as a model for sustainable suburban retrofit and a stronger economic and community asset for Cherokee County.



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BELLS FERRY
LCI PLAN UPDATE

Cherokee County
1831
GEORGIA

EXISTING CONDITIONS TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

OCTOBER 2025

Prepared By:

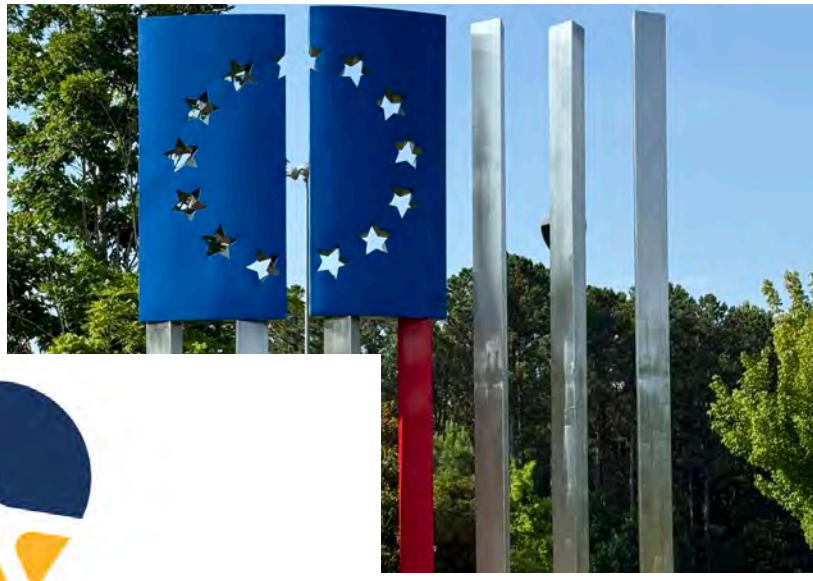
Gresham Smith

In Association with Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, SpanishLink & Patenaude Consulting

Area Market Study

Cherokee County
1831
GEORGIA





BELLS FERRY
LCI PLAN UPDATE





Market Study

OCTOBER 2025

BELLS FERRY
LCI PLAN UPDATE

Market Study

Sara Patenaude, Patenaude Consulting LLC
September 2025

With Support from Gresham Smith

Cherokee County
GEORGIA 1831

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall
The Bells Ferry LCI Study Area is home to a racially and ethnically diverse population, including a significant proportion of young adults aged 20-35 and families with children. Though there is a higher proportion of renters in the LCI Study Area than in the county overall, this is in line with other areas of the county with higher population density.

The LCI Study Area includes a mix of residential and commercial uses. The area includes a substantial share of the County's existing multifamily residential uses, and additional developments are in the permitting and construction pipeline. Even so, there is likely unmet market opportunity for smaller unit sizes (1-bedroom) in the LCI Study Area. The area's retail and office offerings show strong occupancy and would likely benefit from new or redeveloped offerings which could command higher rents than the existing aging products.

Population
The LCI Study Area is home to about 6,200 residents across 2,250 households, representing 2.3% of Cherokee County. The Primary Market Area (PMA) is home to a racially and ethnically diverse population. The PMA is home to a higher proportion of young adults aged 20-35 than the county overall, and households are more likely to include children.

Households
Household growth in PMA is projected at slower rates than County overall, but the LCI Study Area can expect to add ~720 new households by 2050. Household income in the PMA is slightly lower than County overall, but significantly higher than the Atlanta Metro median.

Housing Stock
LCI Study Area has higher proportion of renters (39%) than in Cherokee overall, and a majority (59%) of renters are cost burdened. The housing stock is older than in Cherokee County overall, though significant new construction is documented in the Commercial Markets section. More than half (59%) of housing units have 2-3 bedrooms; 36% have 4 or more bedrooms.

Employment
Employment growth is projected within the PMA by 2050. Jobs in the PMA are typically lower-paying than in overall Cherokee County, with a predominance of PMA jobs in service industries including retail and food services.

Commuting
A substantial majority (80%) of residents in the PMA commute to work by vehicle, with most commuting into the Atlanta metro core. The PMA has more residents who commute out for work than employees who live elsewhere and commute into the area.

Multifamily Rental
Despite having only 2.3% of the overall housing units in Cherokee County, the LCI Study Area encompasses 13% of the County's apartments and 13% of the County's Build to Rent Single Family units. The LCI Study Area also contains nearly one-third of the County's rental townhome inventory.

The multifamily rental inventory in both the LCI Study Area and Cherokee County in general has seen significant increases in recent years. Despite somewhat elevated vacancy rates, stable rents show sustained market interest in the variety of rental housing types available in the LCI Study Area.

Single Family For-Sale
The single family for-sale home market is strong in Cherokee County, with prices increasing significantly in recent years. Median home sale prices and values tend to be lower in the LCI Study Area and the Primary Market Area than in the county overall. This may be contributing to the larger number of young adults and households with children who are taking advantage of slightly more affordable home prices.

Retail
Retail inventory in the LCI Study Area is generally equivalent to retail offerings throughout Cherokee County, with strong occupancy and rents slightly below the county average. Consumer spending is forecasted to increase in the PMA, suggesting opportunity for additional retail offerings within the LCI Study Area.

Office
Office inventory in the LCI Study Area is limited and aging. Combined with steady rents and low vacancy throughout the Cherokee County office market, this suggests the opportunity to deliver new, quality office offerings within the LCI Study Area.

LCI STUDY AREA AND PRIMARY MARKET AREA

This report references several geographic areas. The first is the LCI Study Area as defined by Cherokee County, corresponding to a roughly 3-mile corridor along Bells Ferry Road between Commerce Parkway, just north of Kellogg Creek Road, to the north and The General Avenue, situated to the south of Highway 92. The study area also encompasses the Highway 92 corridor roughly between Woodland Drive to the west and Hartwood Drive to the east.

This report also references a Primary Market Area (PMA), which represents the area within a 3-mile radius of the intersection of Bells Ferry Road and Highway 92. This industry-standard Trade Area Ring Analysis generally corresponds to a 5-minute driveshed from the LCI Study Area and provides insight into those local surroundings that can be expected to significantly influence and/or benefit from development within the LCI Study Area. Due to the location of the LCI Study Area, a portion of the PMA extends into neighboring Cobb County.

Whenever possible and appropriate, this report includes both LCI Study Area and PMA information; however, this is not always possible due to data limitations. The U.S. Census Bureau publishes certain data metrics, particularly population-specific metrics, only at larger geographies which cannot be meaningfully extrapolated down to the LCI Study Area size.

For comparison and contextualization of LCI Study Area and PMA data, this report further refers to data from Cherokee County and the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area.

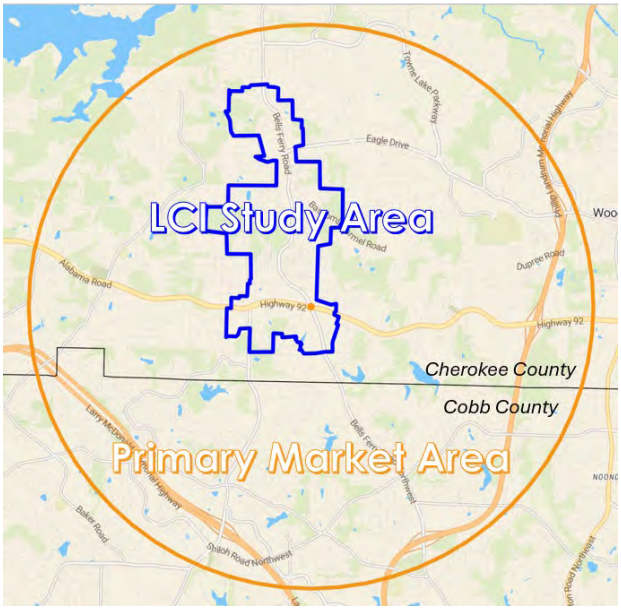


Figure 1: Map of LCI Study Area and Primary Market Area

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

The LCI Study Area is home to about 6,200 residents, representing about 8% of the PMA and about 2.3% of Cherokee County's population. Comparatively, the LCI Study Area represents about 8% of the PMA's land area and about 0.5% of Cherokee County's land area, suggesting that while the PMA is more densely populated than Cherokee County overall, the Study Area has a population density comparable to the surrounding area. The PMA is projected to experience significant growth by 2050, though at slightly lower rates than overall Cherokee County.

Residents within the PMA tend to be younger than Cherokee County overall, with a higher proportion over young adults aged 20-35. The PMA is home to a racially and ethnically diverse population, with a higher proportion of Latino, Black, and Asian residents than Cherokee County as a whole. Household incomes are slightly lower than in the overall county, likely in part due to the slightly larger proportion of residents employed in service occupations. PMA households are more likely to include children and less likely to include seniors than Cherokee County overall.

Table 1: Population

	LCI Study Area	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County
Total Population	6,184	74,174	274,539
LCI Study Area % of Total Pop.	-	8%	2.3%
Land Area (sq mi)	2.36	28.3	434
LCI Study Area % of Total Land Area	-	8.3%	0.54%

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

The residential population of Cherokee County is not distributed evenly across the county. Instead, Cherokee's density, or areas of population concentration, are along the southern border with Cobb County and along the I-575 corridor from Woodstock to Canton. The LCI Study Area and the Primary Market Area are both in the southernmost, denser areas of the County.

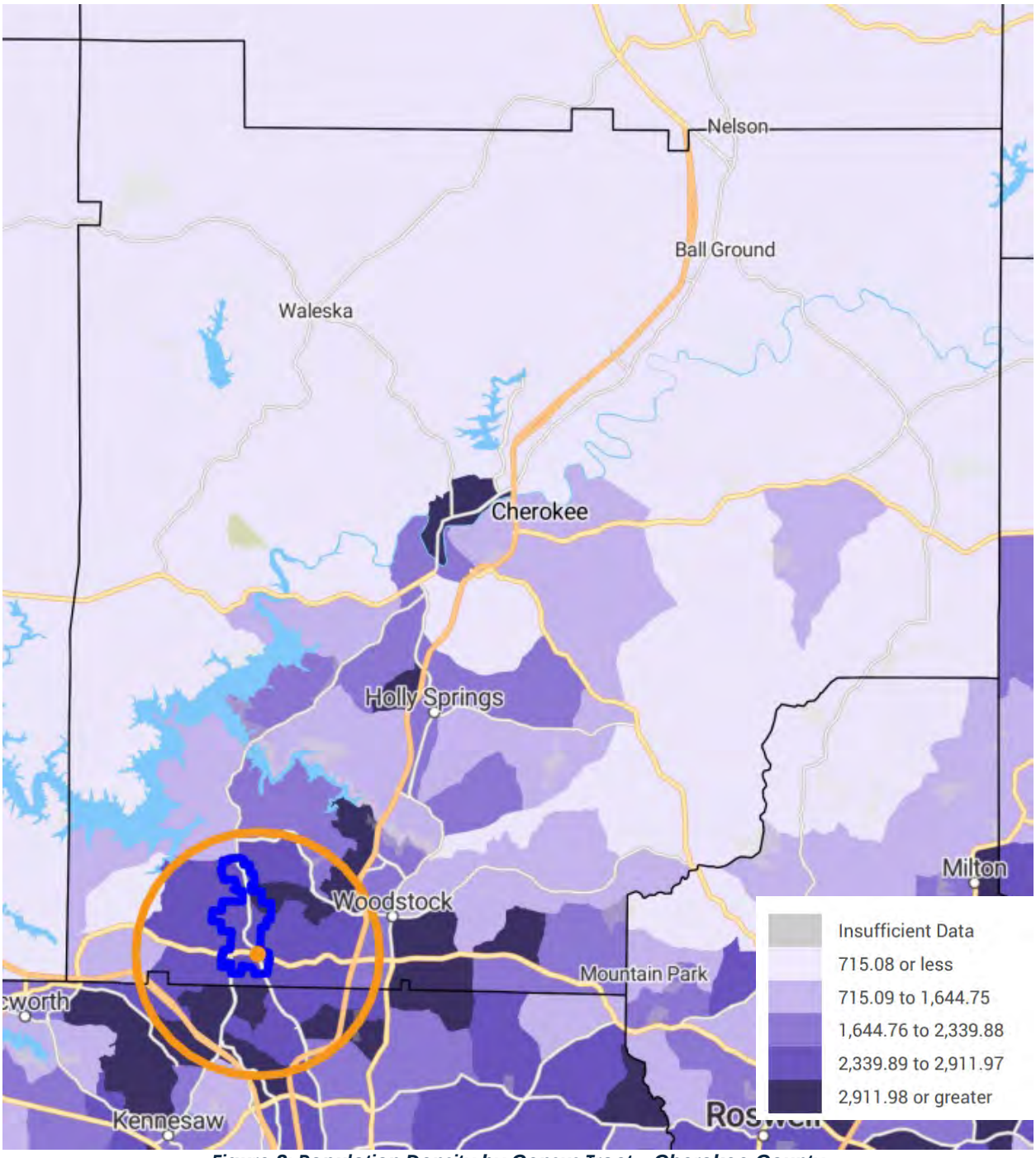


Figure 2: Population Density by Census Tract – Cherokee County

Estimated number of people per square mile.
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

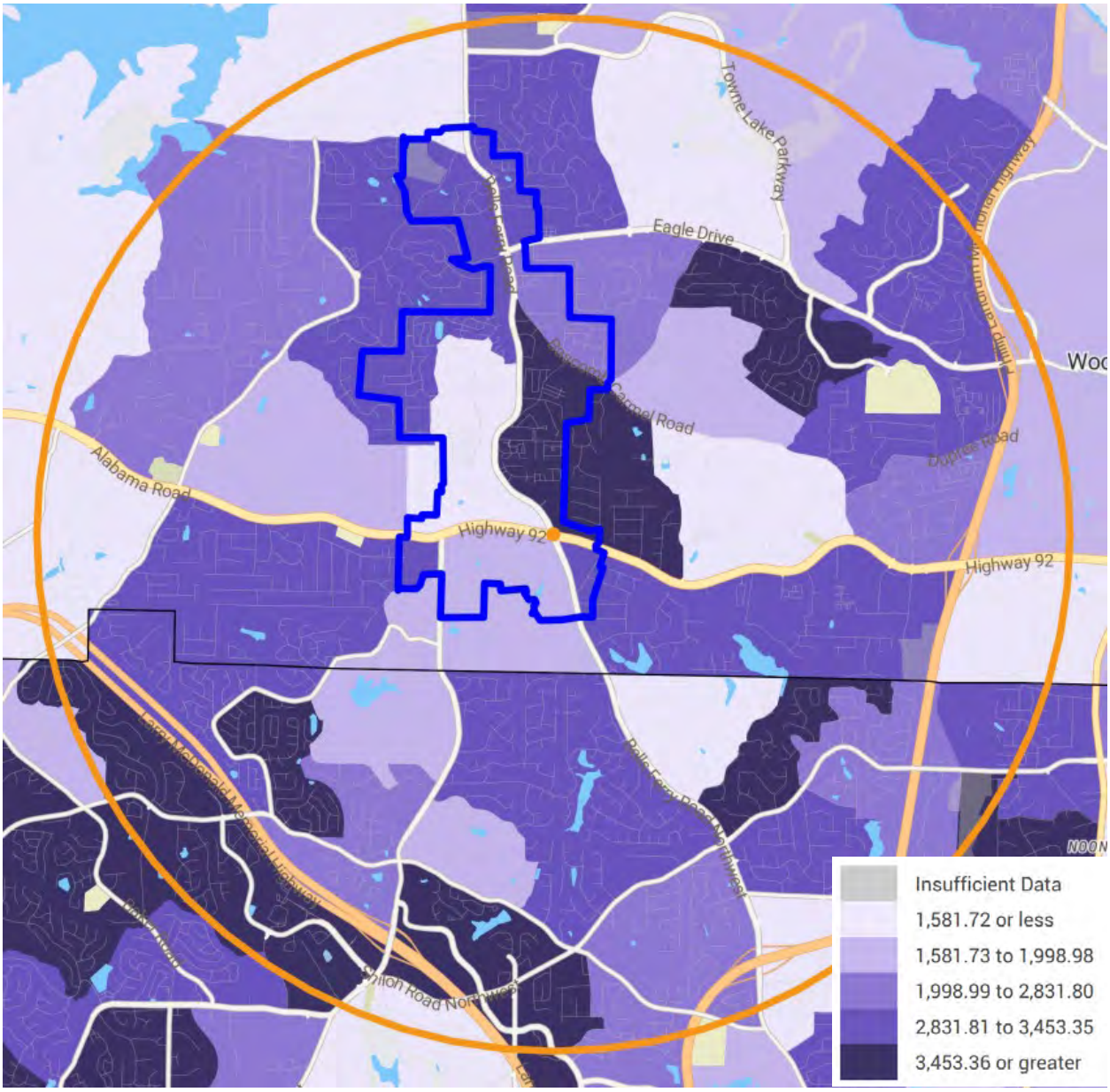


Figure 3: Population Density by Block Group – LCI Study Area and Primary Market Area

Estimated number of people per square mile.
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Population Growth and Projections

The PMA population is projected to grow at slower rates than Cherokee County overall. Even so, the PMA can expect to add over 23,000 new residents by 2050, a nearly 30% increase. The LCI Study Area and its immediate surroundings can expect to absorb a proportionate share of these new residents in the coming years. Moreover, as an important commercial corridor within the PMA, the LCI Study Area should be prepared to provide the goods and services these new PMA residents will need.

Table 2: Historic and Projected Population

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
2000	34,901	141,903	4,112,198
2010	63,635	206,283	5,125,113
2020	70,854	253,780	5,947,008
2030 (projected)	81,325	309,317	6,680,611
2040 (projected)	87,288	350,815	7,240,022
2050 (projected)	93,008	389,148	7,735,063

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023; Atlanta Regional Commission S17 Population Projections

The PMA is projected to grow more slowly than Cherokee County as a whole, at a pace tracking closely with the overall Atlanta Metro.

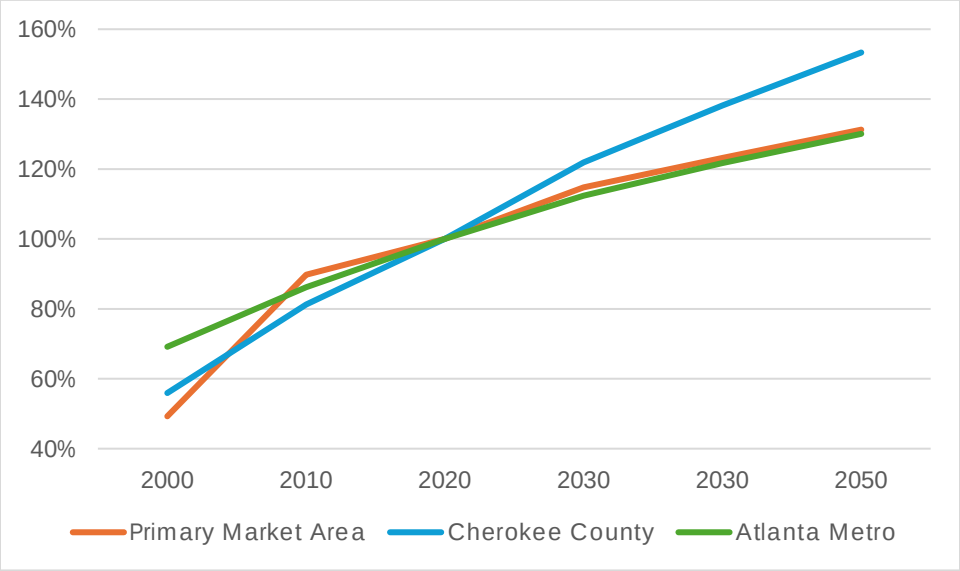


Figure 4: Historic and Projected Population Growth, Normalized to 2020

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023; Atlanta Regional Commission S17 Population Projections

Age of Population

Residents within the PMA tend to be somewhat younger than Cherokee County overall. The PMA is home to a higher proportion of young adults (ages 20-35) than Cherokee County as a whole. The age group accounts for one out of five PMA residents. In addition, more than a quarter of residents in the PMA are under 20 years old.

At the other end of the age spectrum, the PMA has a lower proportion of seniors (ages 65+) than Cherokee County as a whole, or the Atlanta metro. In the PMA, this age group represents just over 12% of the population.

Development activities within the LCI Study Area would likely benefit from targeting the young adults and families residing within the PMA.

Table 3: Population by Age

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Under 10 years	10.9%	11.6%	12.3%
10-20 years	14.7%	14.1%	14.2%
20-35 years	21.7%	17.7%	20.6%
35-65 years	40.4%	41.2%	39.9%
65+	12.3%	15.4%	13.1%
Median age (years)	37.7	40.0	37.0

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Race of Population

The PMA is home to a racially and ethnically diverse population. The PMA has a higher proportion of Latino residents than Cherokee County, representing 16% of the population. The PMA also has a higher proportion of Black residents (15%) and Asian residents (3%) than the County as a whole.

Table 4: Population by Race/Ethnicity

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	16%	12%	12%
White	66%	78%	46%
Black or African American	15%	7%	34%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.4%	1%	0.4%
Asian	3%	2%	6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0.1%
Some Other Race	6%	4%	5%
Two or More Races	9%	8%	8%

Racial categories include respondents of any ethnicity.
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

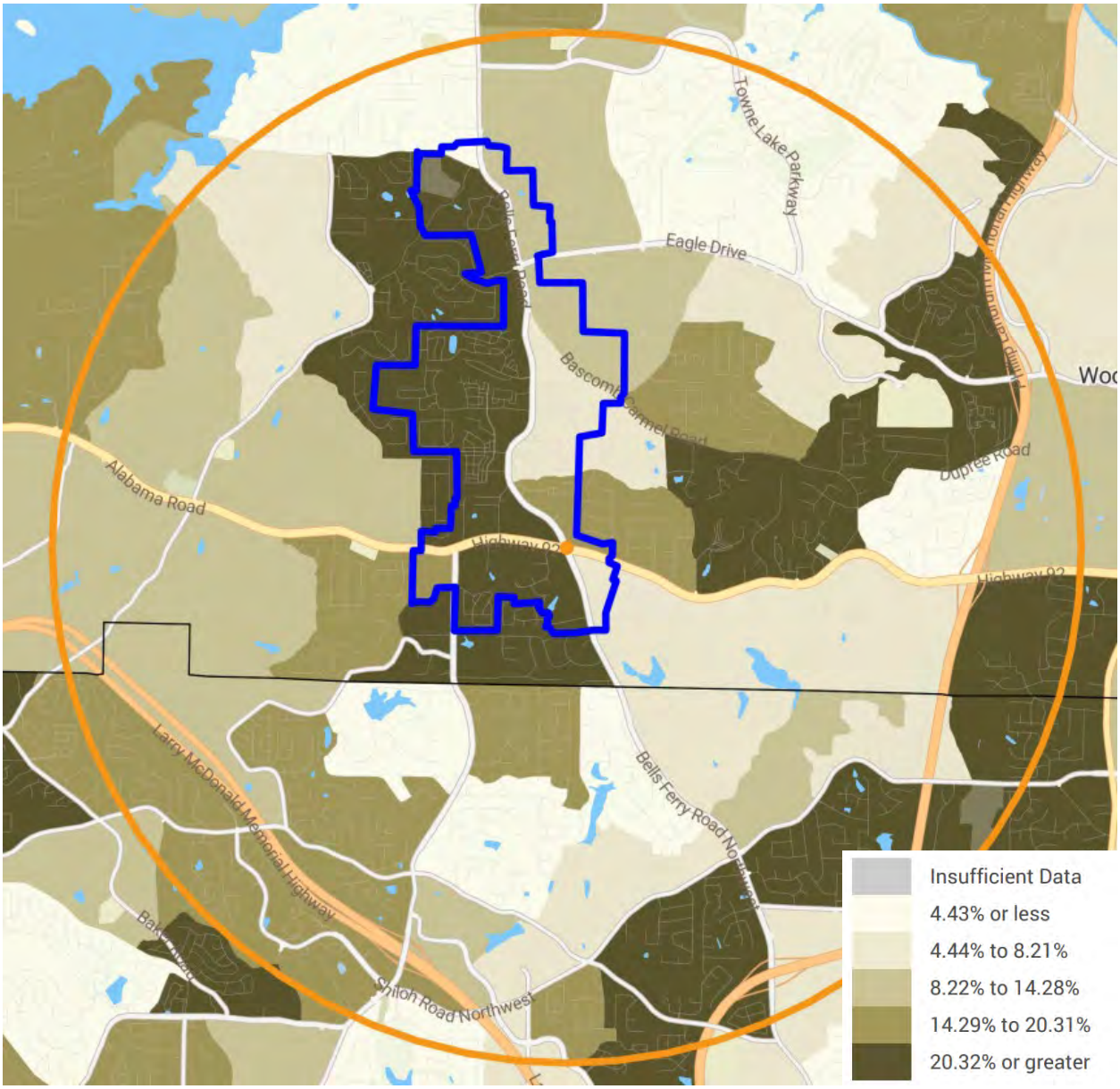


Figure 5: Percentage of Population who are Hispanic or Latino

Includes Hispanic/Latino population of all races.
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

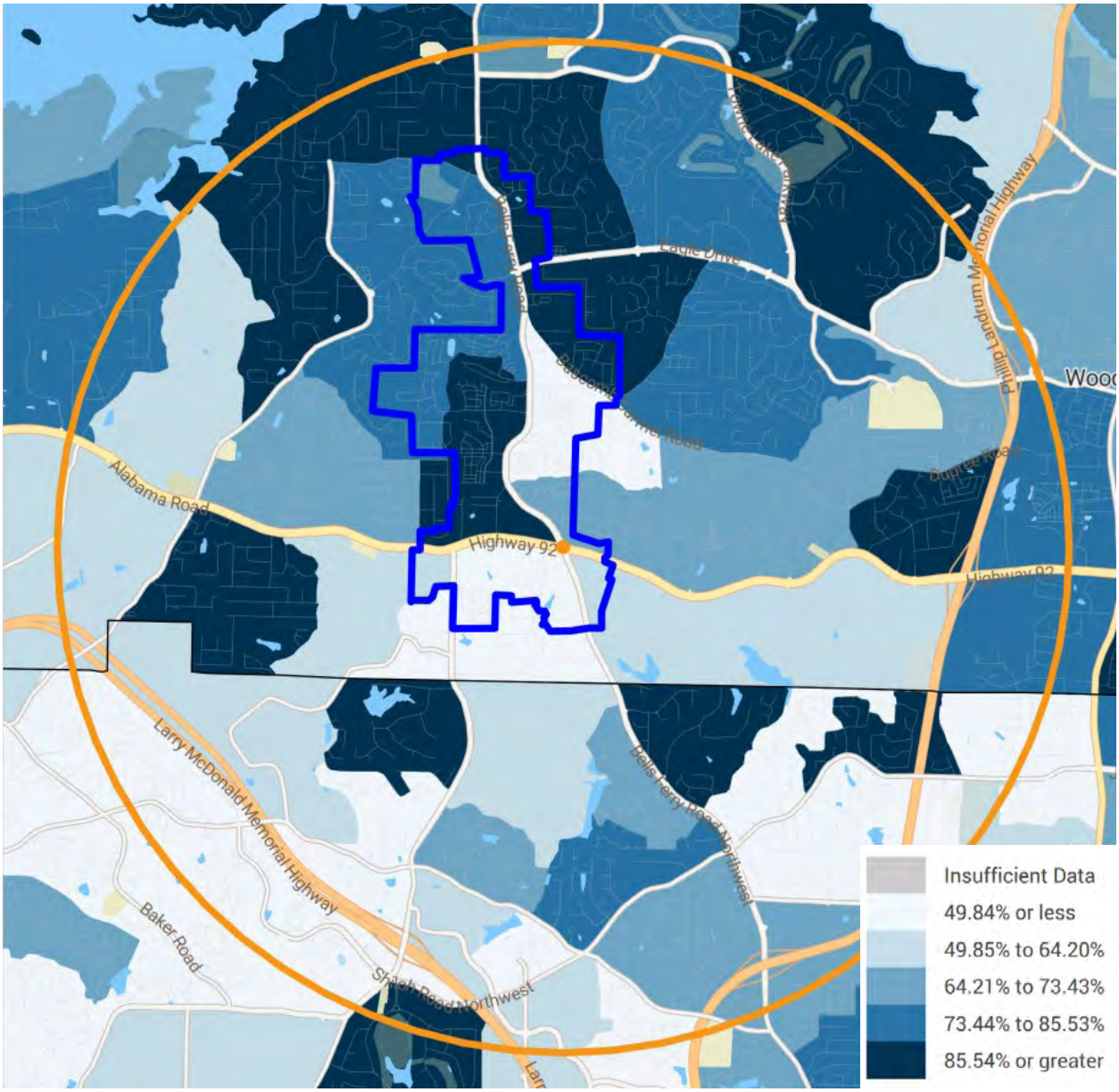


Figure 6: Percentage of Population who are White

Includes White population of all ethnicities.
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

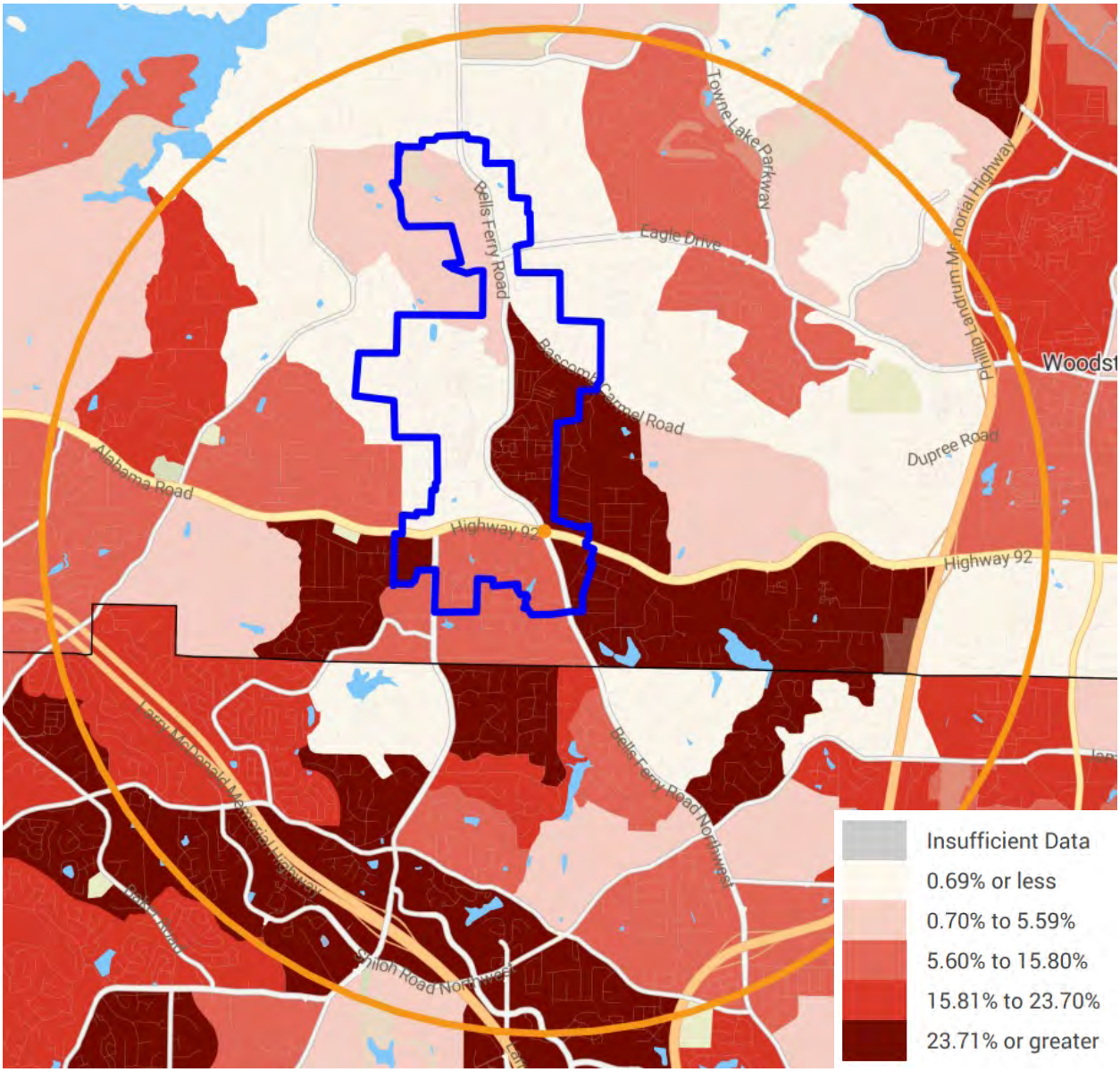


Figure 7: Percentage of Population who are Black/African American

Includes Black/African American population of all ethnicities.
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

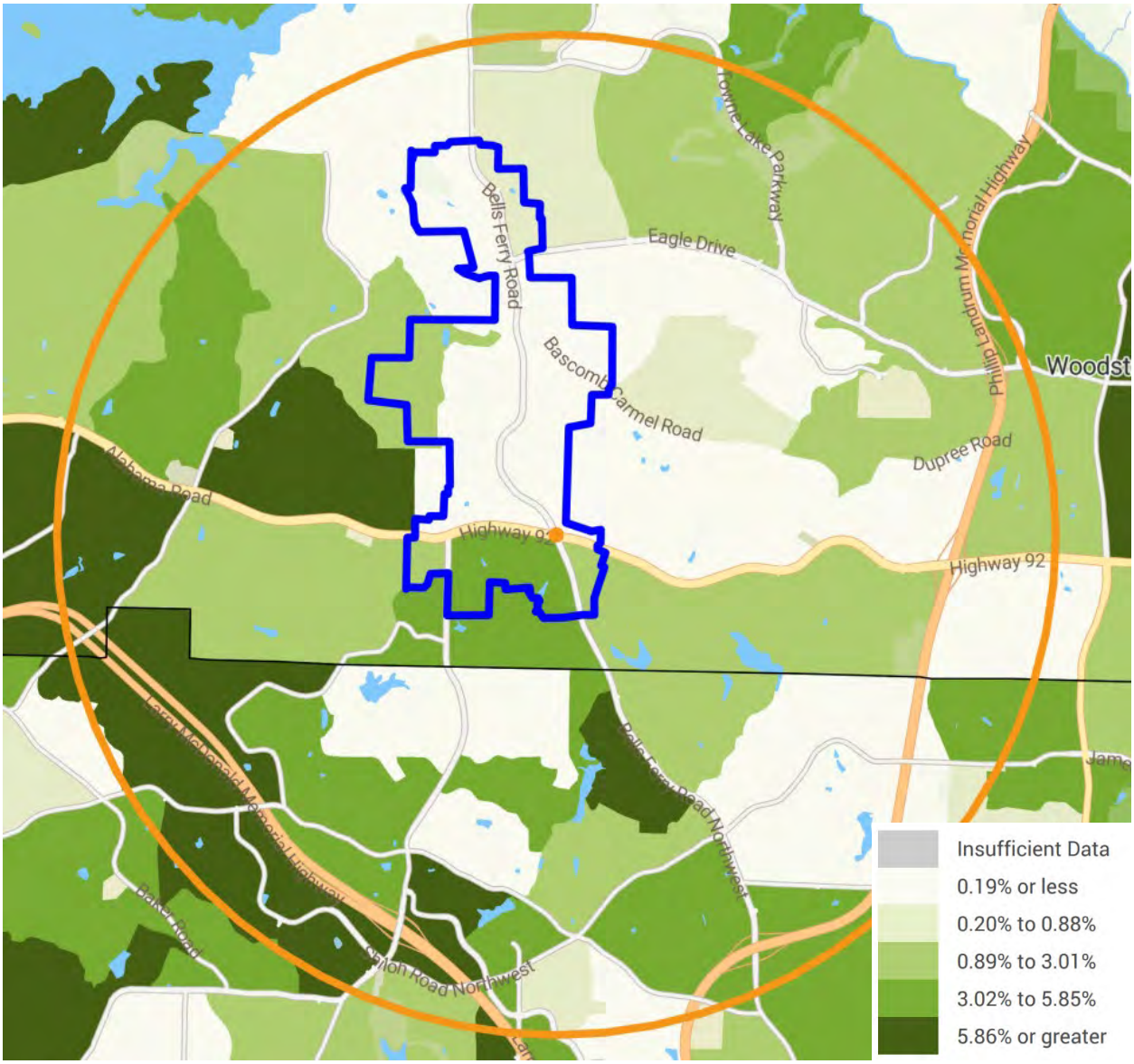


Figure 8: Percentage of Population who are Asian

Includes Asian population of all ethnicities.
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Educational Attainment of Population

Educational attainment in the PMA is substantially similar to Cherokee County overall. More than two-thirds of PMA residents attended at least some college, with 39% having at least a bachelor's degree. This well-educated population typically translates to higher incomes and more discretionary spending that can be captured by businesses within the LCI Study Area.

Table 5: Population by Educational Attainment

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Less than High School	7.4%	7.9%	9.2%
High School	23.3%	23.0%	23.0%
Some College	22.0%	21.6%	18.4%
Associate's degree	8.4%	8.1%	7.9%
Bachelor's degree	27.0%	27.4%	25.4%
Master's, Doctorate, or Professional Degree	12.0%	12.1%	16.0%

Percentage of population 25 years of age and older
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Employment of Residents

Unemployment is slightly higher in the PMA (4%) than Cherokee County overall (3%), but still lower than the overall Atlanta metro. A majority of adults over age 16 who live in PMA (71%) participate in the labor force – a higher proportion than in the overall County or Metro. Those not participating in the labor force may include students, retirees, and caregivers.

Table 6: Resident Employment Rates

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Total No. of Employed Residents	40,696	144,741	3,123,977
Employed	96%	97%	95%
Unemployed	4%	3%	5%
Not in Labor Force	29%	31%	33%

Total employed residents includes Civilian Labor Force and Armed Forces
Percentage of population 16 years of age and older
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

A plurality of residents in the PMA are employed in Management, Business, Science, and Arts occupations. These include roles in education, healthcare, computer systems, legal services, and administrative support.

Residents in the PMA are more likely to be employed in service occupations (17%) than overall in Cherokee County. This most often includes people employed in the restaurant and food services industry, but also includes people who work in home health care, retail, child care, and landscaping, among others.

Table 7: Resident Employment by Occupation

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	42%	45%	45%
Service occupations	17%	14%	14%
Sales and office occupations	23%	23%	21%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	8%	9%	7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	10%	10%	13%

Civilian employed population 16 years of age and older
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Households

The LCI Study Area is home to approximately 2,250 households. This represents 8% of the PMA's households and 2.3% of Cherokee County's households, the same as the share of population.

The average household size in the PMA is slightly smaller than in overall Cherokee County, at 2.7 people per household. Even so, the PMA has more households with children (37%) than in the County overall. The PMA also has fewer households with seniors (24%) than the overall County.

Table 8: Household Characteristics

	LCI Study Area	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Total Households	2,244	27,108	99,132	2,341,283
Average HH size	-	2.7	2.8	2.7
HH with children	-	36.9%	35.5%	32.8%
HH with seniors 65+	-	24.3%	29.4%	25.6%

Data on average household size and percentage of households with children/seniors not available at the LCI Study Area geography.
Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Household Growth Projections

PMA household growth is projected at slower rates than Cherokee County overall, tracking closely to the overall Atlanta Metro growth projections. Even so, the PMA can expect to add over 9,000 new households by 2050. If the LCI Study Area captures an equivalent proportion of these new households to existing patterns, the LCI Study Area can expect to add 720 new households by 2050.

Table 9: Historic and Projected Household Growth

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
2000	12,068	49,495	1,261,894
2010	22,119	74,339	1,874,002
2020	25,245	90,372	2,152,319
2030 (projected)	28,787	111,147	2,468,791
2040 (projected)	31,356	128,366	2,713,519
2050 (projected)	33,753	144,108	2,919,718

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023; Atlanta Regional Commission S17 Household Projections

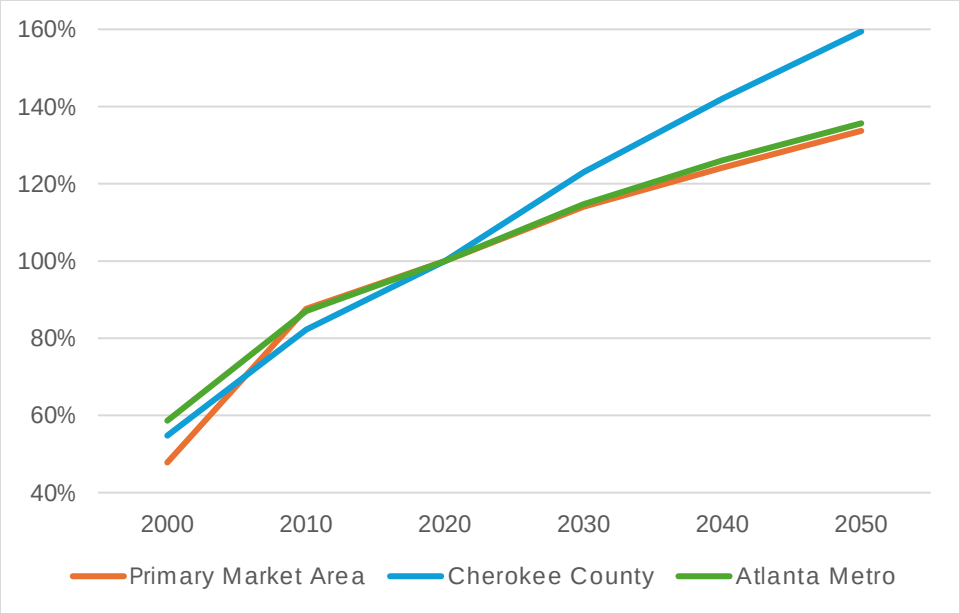


Figure 9: Historic and Projected Household Growth, Normalized to 2020

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023; Atlanta Regional Commission S17 Household Projections

Household Income

At just under $99,000, household income in the PMA is slightly lower than in Cherokee County overall. This is primarily due to the smaller percentage of PMA households earning $200,000+ per year. Even so, PMA households earn significantly above the Atlanta Metro median.

Table 10: Household Income

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Less than $10,000	4%	3%	4%
$10,000 to $24,999	6%	6%	8%
$25,000 to $34,999	5%	5%	6%
$35,000 to $49,999	7%	7%	10%
$50,000 to $74,999	15%	14%	15%
$75,000 to $99,999	16%	13%	13%
$100,000 to $149,999	21%	23%	18%
$150,000 to $199,999	15%	15%	10%
$200,000 or more	10%	16%	14%
Median household income (dollars)	$98,998	$105,442	$86,338

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

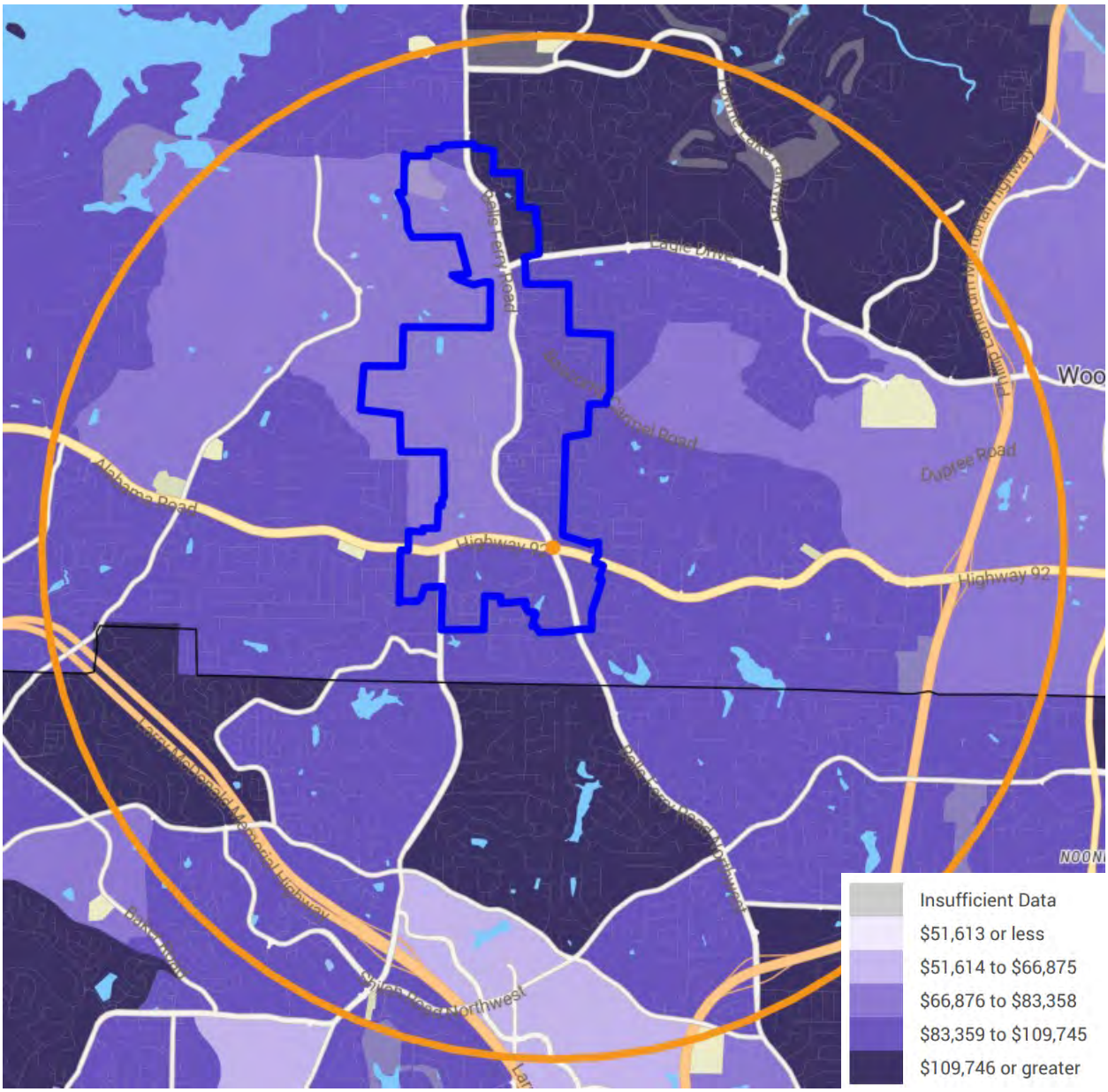


Figure 10: Median Household Income by Census Tract

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

HOUSING STOCK

Housing Units

The LCI Study Area includes approximately 2,375 housing units, representing approximately 8.5% of the PMA, a slightly higher proportion than of households or population.

Homes in the LCI Study Area are more likely to be occupied by renters than Cherokee County overall, with 39% of LCI Study Area homes occupied by renters. Rental rates in the PMA are also higher than in overall Cherokee County, with 31% of homes occupied by renters. This is in line with other areas of the county that have higher population density.

Table 11: Housing Unit Characteristics

	LCI Study Area	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County
Total No. of Housing Units	2,375	28,259	103,923
% Occupied	95%	96%	95%
% Vacant	6%	4%	5%
% Owner Occupied	61%	69%	77%
% Renter Occupied	39%	31%	23%

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

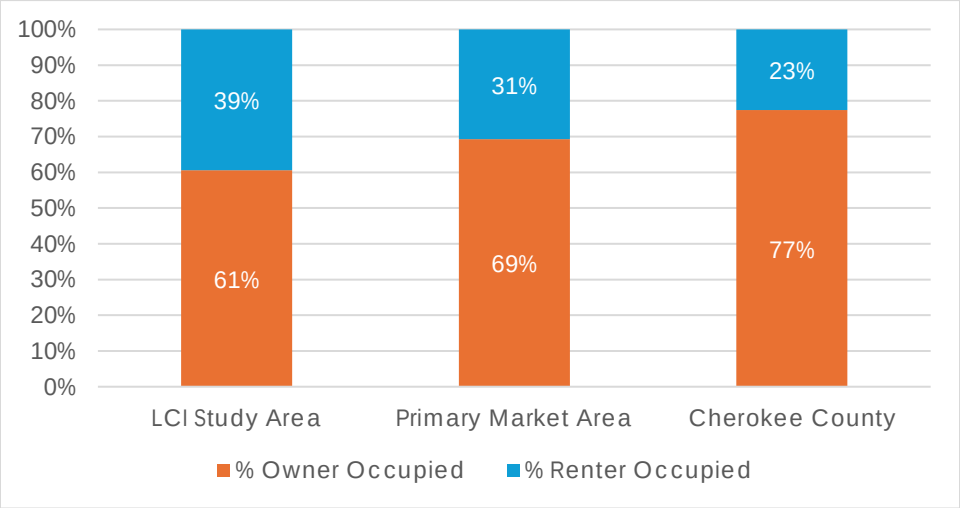


Figure 11: Housing Tenure

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

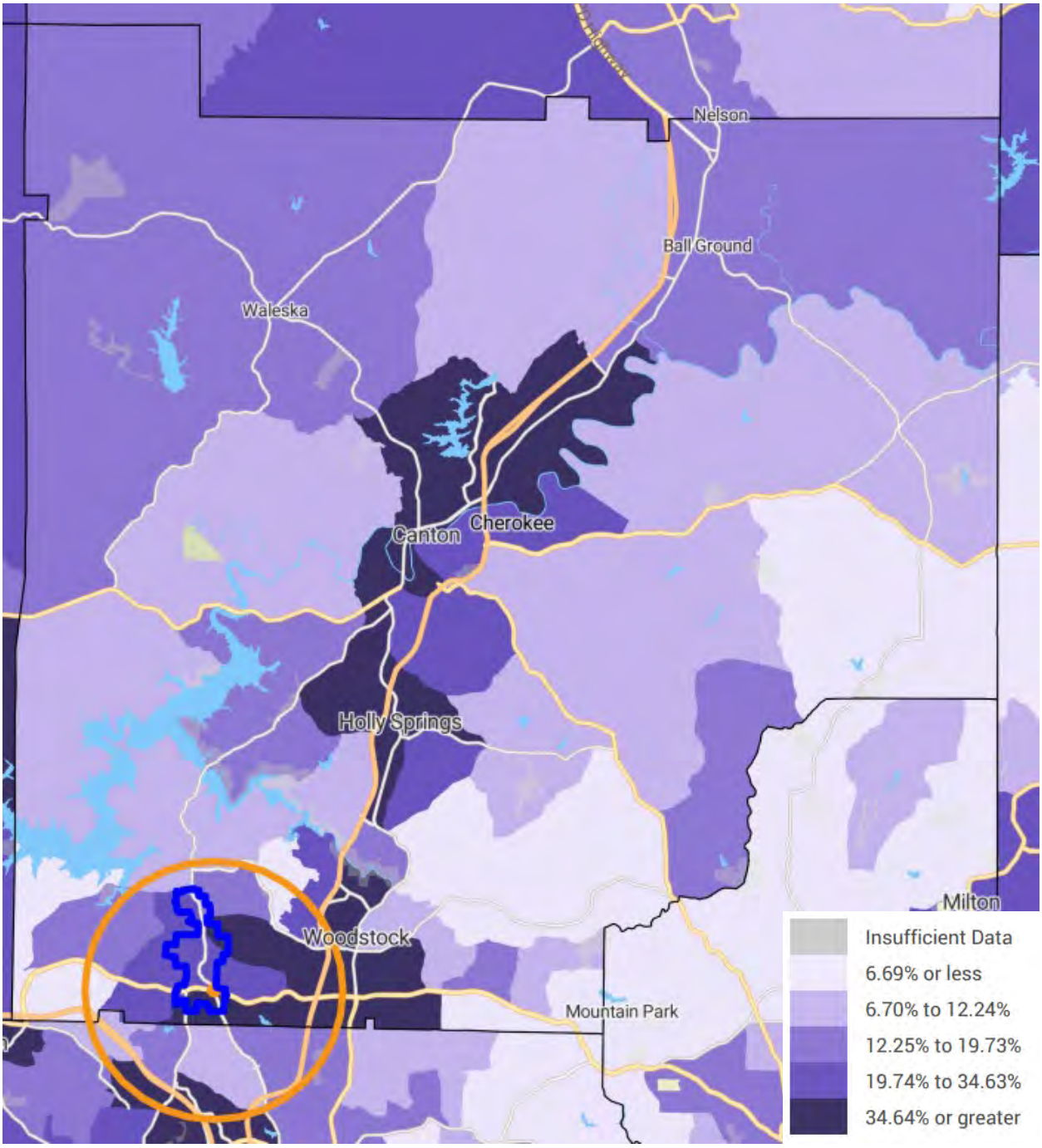


Figure 12: Percentage of Renters by Census Tract

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Age of Housing

More than half of the PMA's housing stock was built between 1980 and 1999. This is in large part due to housing construction lagging in the PMA compared to elsewhere in Cherokee County – only 39% of the PMA's housing stock was built in the past 25 years, compared to 50% in the overall County.

The age of housing units in the LCI Study Area is discussed in detail in the Commercial Markets sections for Multifamily Rental and Residential For Sale homes.

Table 12: Housing Stock by Year Built

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
2020 or later	2%	2%	2%
2010 to 2019	9%	18%	12%
2000 to 2009	17%	30%	24%
1980 to 1999	58%	37%	36%
1960 to 1979	12%	9%	18%
1940 to 1959	1%	1%	6%
1939 or earlier	0%	1%	3%

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Number of Bedrooms

Despite an average household size of 2.72 people, more than a third of the PMA's housing stock has four or more bedrooms. The PMA also has a higher percentage of housing stock with 2 or 3 bedrooms (59%) compared to Cherokee County overall. Only 4% of the PMA's housing stock is in one-bedroom units. This is similar to Cherokee County overall, but less than half the proportion of one-bedroom units in overall metro Atlanta. This indicates likely unmet market opportunity for additional smaller unit sizes in the LCI Study Area.

Table 13: Housing Stock by Number of Bedrooms

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Efficiency	0%	1%	2%
1 bedroom	4%	4%	9%
2 or 3 bedrooms	59%	53%	55%
4 or more bedrooms	36%	43%	35%
Avg. Household Size	2.72	2.75	2.67

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Household Cost Burden

An important indicator of housing costs is "cost burden" – meaning households that spend more than 30% of the household's income on housing costs. These measures are significant as a representation of household financial stress; spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs results in lower residual income available for all other needs, including food, transportation, healthcare, childcare, and more. More than half (59%) of renter-occupied households in the LCI Study Area and 51% of renters in the PMA are cost burdened. In fact, 19% of LCI Study Area renter households and 26% of PMA renter households are "significantly cost burdened," spending more than 50% of household income on housing costs. This is lower than the proportion of severely cost burdened renter households in Cherokee County as a whole, but still indicates that housing in the area is not affordable compared to household income for some renters.

Owner households in the area also experience cost burden, but at much lower rates. Five percent (5%) of LCI Study Area owner-occupied households and 8% of PMA owner households are cost burdened, spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs.

Taken together, this suggests that renter households in the LCI Study Area and PMA are much more likely to be experiencing the financial pressures caused by increased rental prices since the COVID-19 pandemic, while homeowners are someone insulated. This is likely due to homeowners who bought their homes prior to the pandemic taking advantage of historically low mortgage interest rates, and those newer homeowners who have bought homes since the pandemic having higher incomes to afford increased home prices.

Table 14: Household Cost Burden

	LCI Study Area	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County
Renters			
Cost Burdened (>30%)	59%	51%	50%
Severely Cost Burdened (>50%)	19%	26%	24%
Owners			
Cost Burdened (>30%)	5%	8%	8%
Severely Cost Burdened (>50%)	4%	5%	6%

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

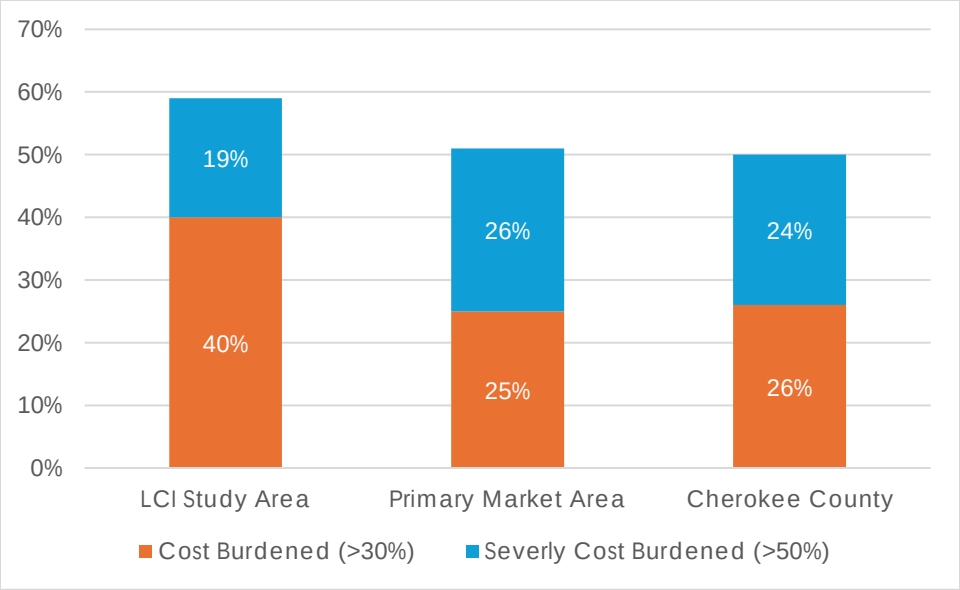


Figure 13: Renter Cost Burden

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

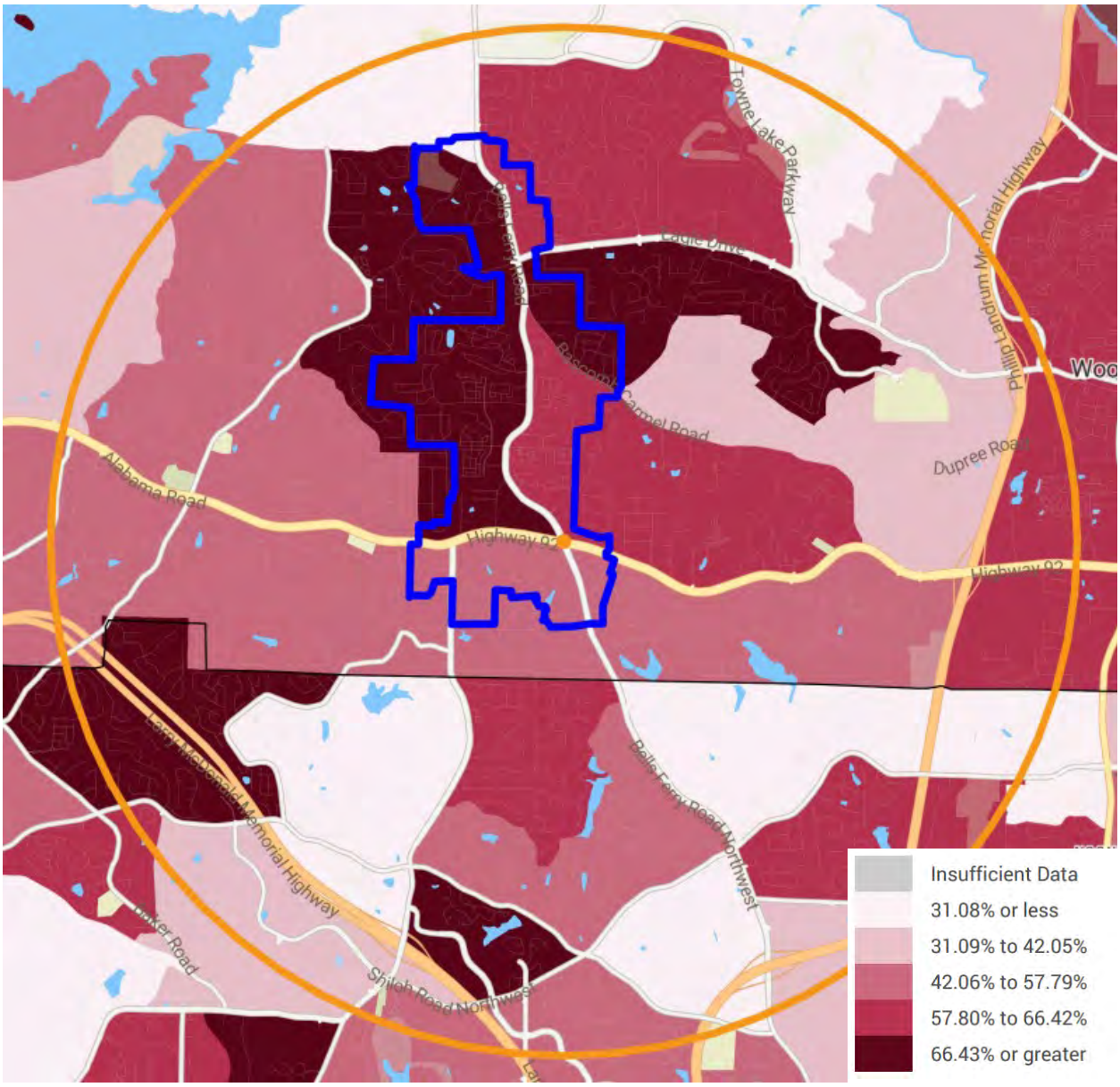


Figure 14: Renter Cost Burden by Census Tract

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

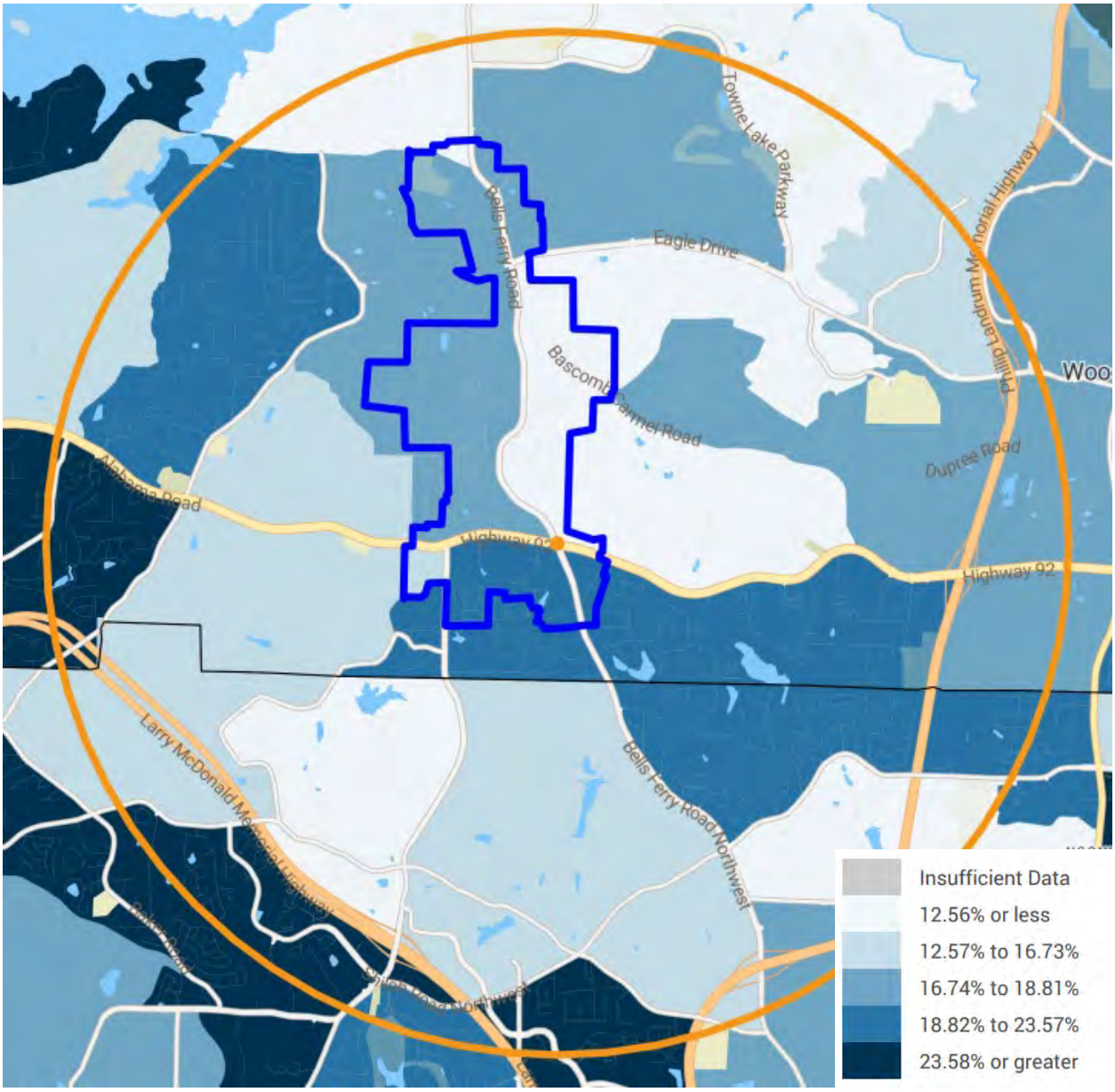


Figure 15: Owner Cost Burden by Census Tract

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

EMPLOYMENT

Employment Projections

Though not a primary job center in Cherokee County, the Primary Market Area encompasses just over 19,000 jobs, equivalent to just over 28% of all jobs in Cherokee County. This is in line with the relative proportions of households, employed residents, and total population in the PMA compared to Cherokee County as a whole.

Table 15: Total Employment

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Total Jobs	19,100	67,933	2,725,231

All Primary Jobs
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap application and LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

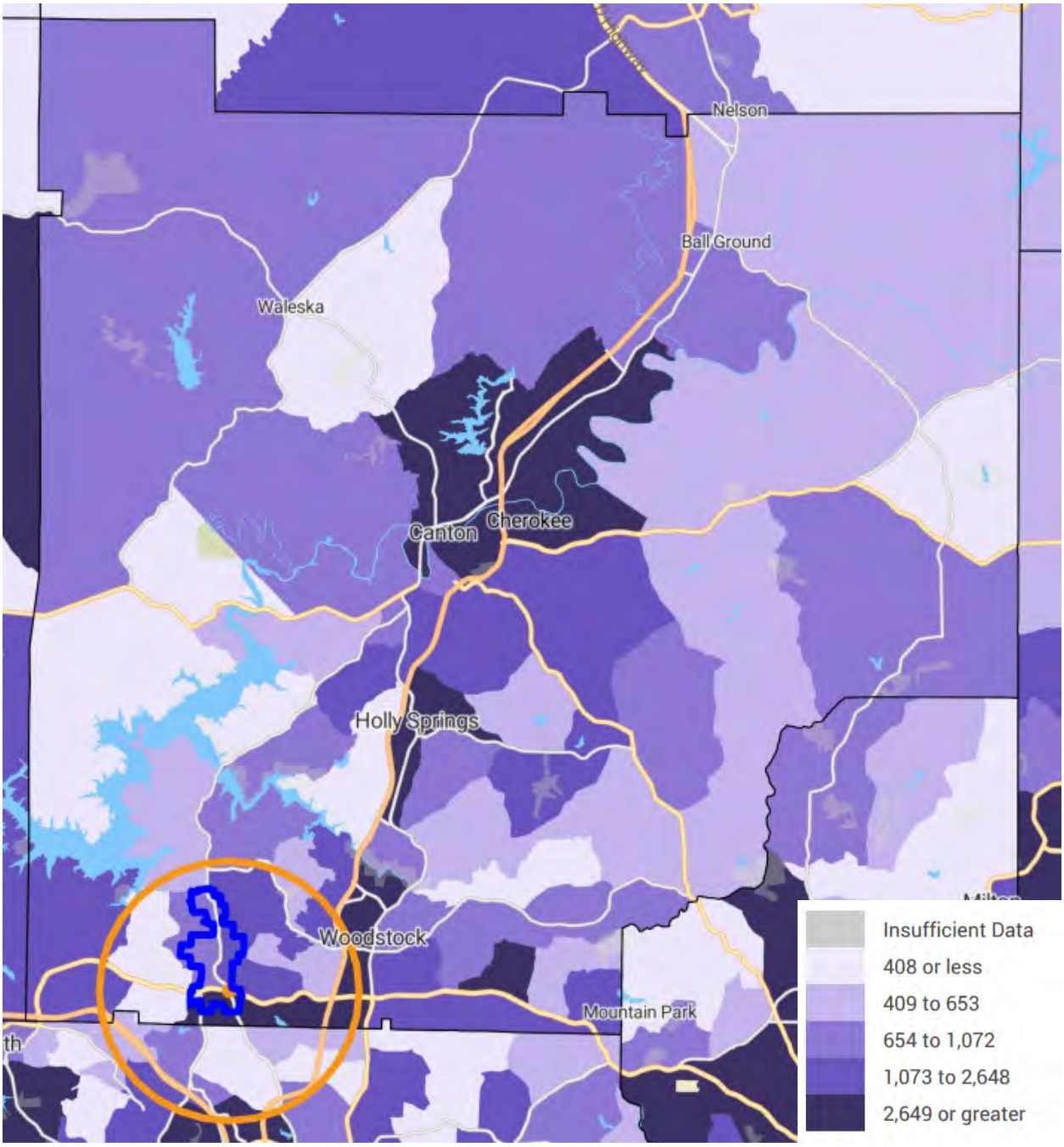


Figure 16: Number of Jobs by Census Tract, Cherokee County

Source: LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

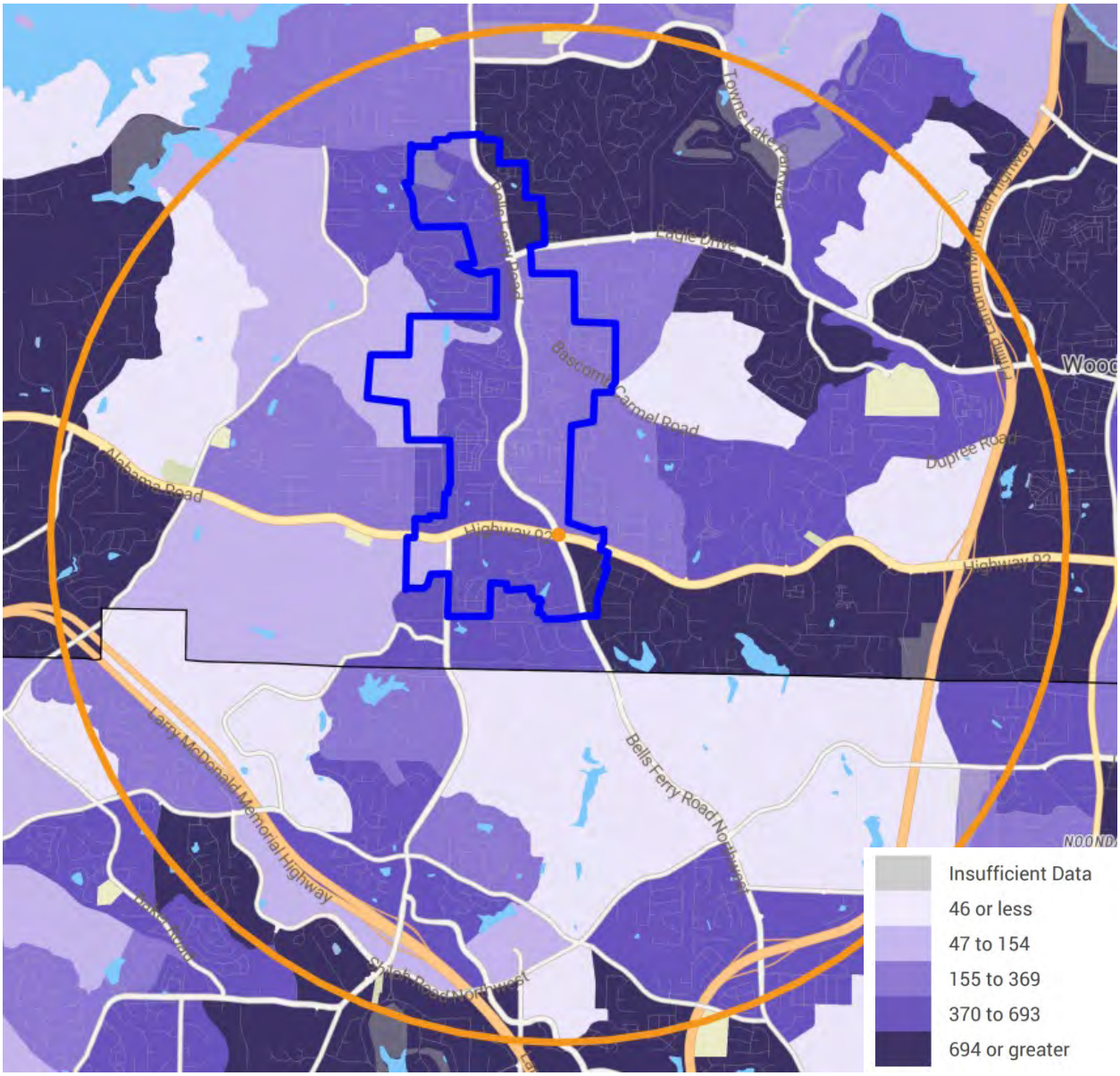


Figure 17: Number of Jobs by Block Group

Source: LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

Job growth in the PMA is projected to closely mirror job growth in Cherokee County overall. Employment growth in both the PMA and Cherokee County are expected to significantly outpace the overall Atlanta metro.

Table 16: Employment Projections

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
2020	21,987	72,882	3,024,751
2030	25,438	86,535	3,417,046
2040	26,853	91,008	3,549,056
2050	28,790	96,133	3,679,672

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission S17 Employment Projections

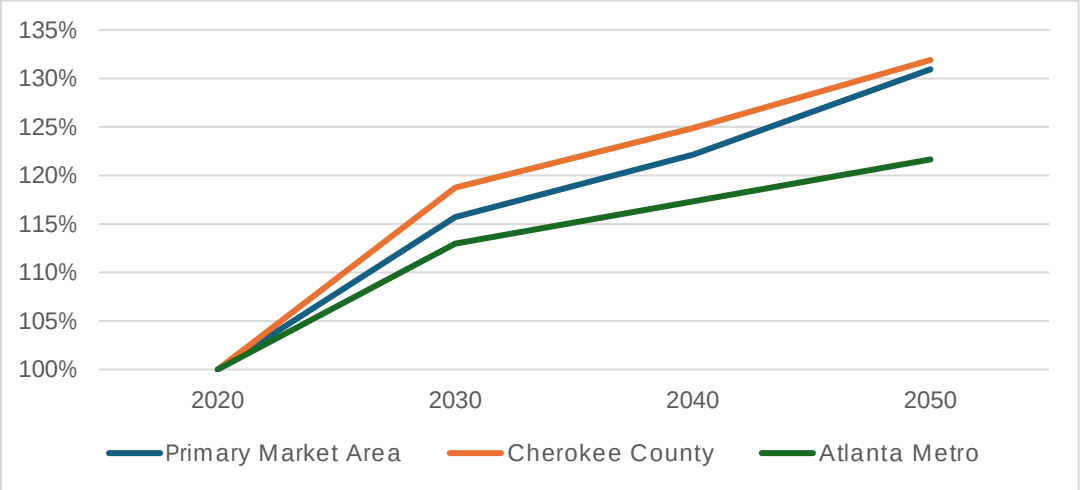


Figure 18: Projected Employment Growth

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission S17 Employment Projections

Employment by Industry

More than one in five jobs in the PMA are in Retail Trade. The Accommodation and Food Services industry has the second-highest employment in the PMA, making up about 14% of jobs in the area. Administration & Support and the Health Care & Social Assistance industries round out the top employers in the PMA, each representing about 11% of PMA jobs.

Table 17: Employment by NAICS Industry

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Construction	7.6%	9.1%	4.9%
Manufacturing	1.8%	9.0%	6.3%
Wholesale Trade	4.6%	4.0%	5.7%
Retail Trade	22.4%	16.3%	10.6%
Transportation and Warehousing	1.1%	1.4%	6.9%
Information	1.2%	1.0%	4.3%
Finance and Insurance	4.7%	2.7%	4.8%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2.2%	1.4%	2.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	6.6%	5.5%	9.5%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0.1%	0.1%	3.0%
Administration & Support	11.7%	11.5%	8.4%
Educational Services	6.7%	9.0%	7.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11.1%	8.2%	10.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1.6%	1.9%	1.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	13.9%	11.8%	7.9%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	2.7%	3.2%	2.4%
Public Administration	0.0%	3.5%	3.3%

Includes All Primary Jobs for NAICS industries with at least 1% of employment across any of the three geographies.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap application and LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

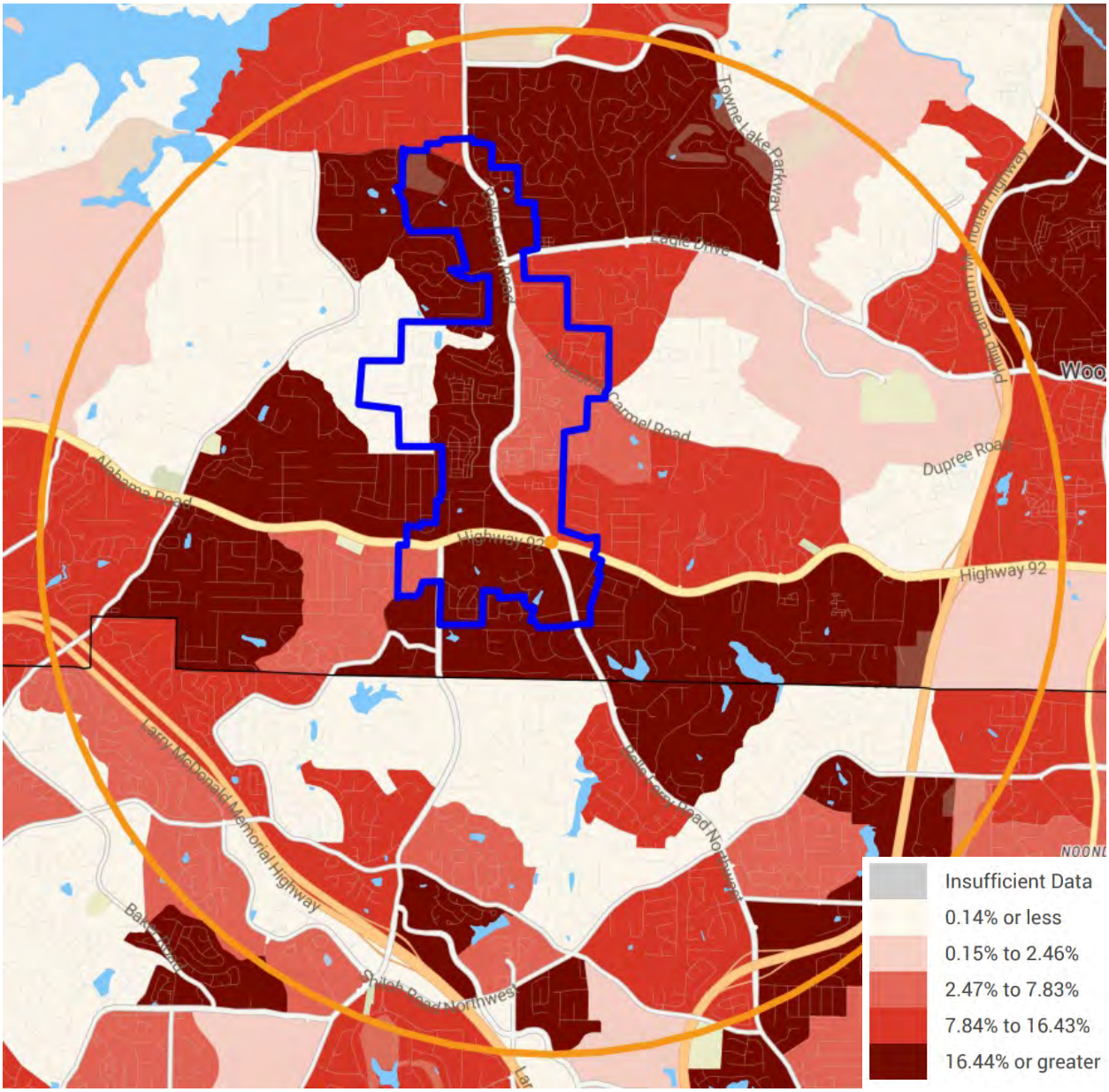


Figure 19: Percent of Non-Federal Jobs in Retail Trade

Source: LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

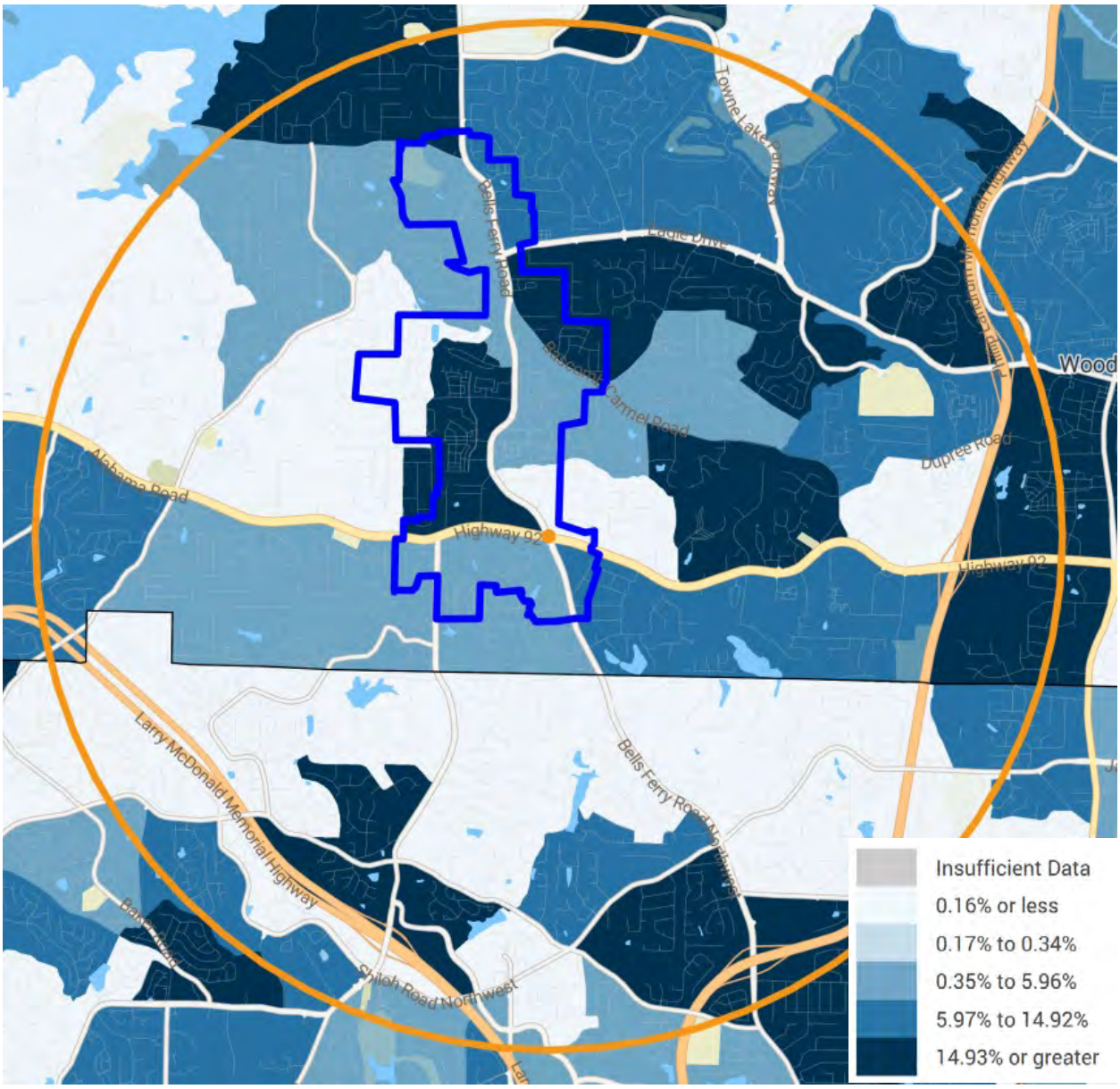


Figure 20: Percent of Non-Federal Jobs in Accommodation and Food Services

Source: LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

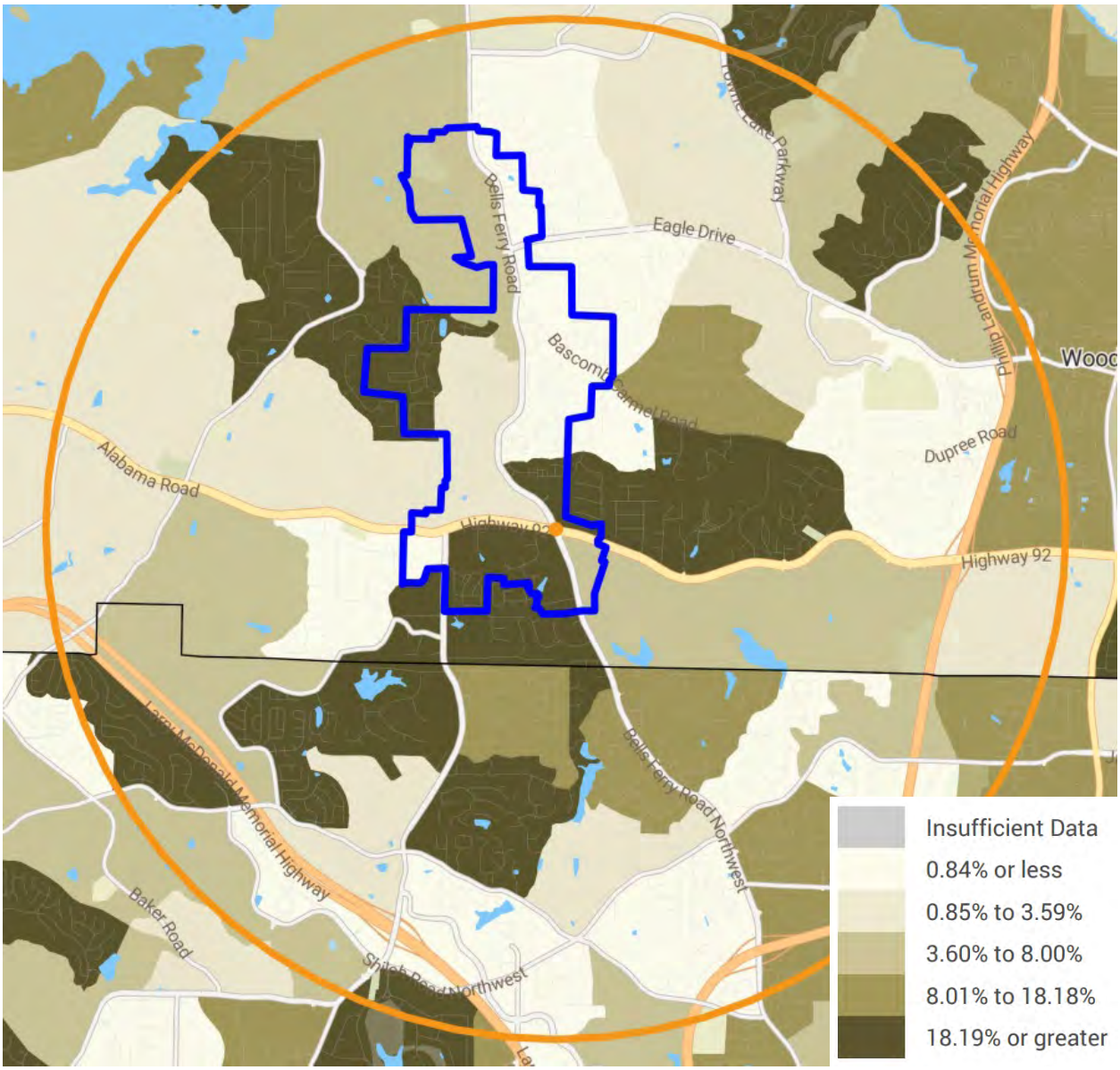


Figure 21: Percent of Non-Federal Jobs in Administrative and Support

Source: LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

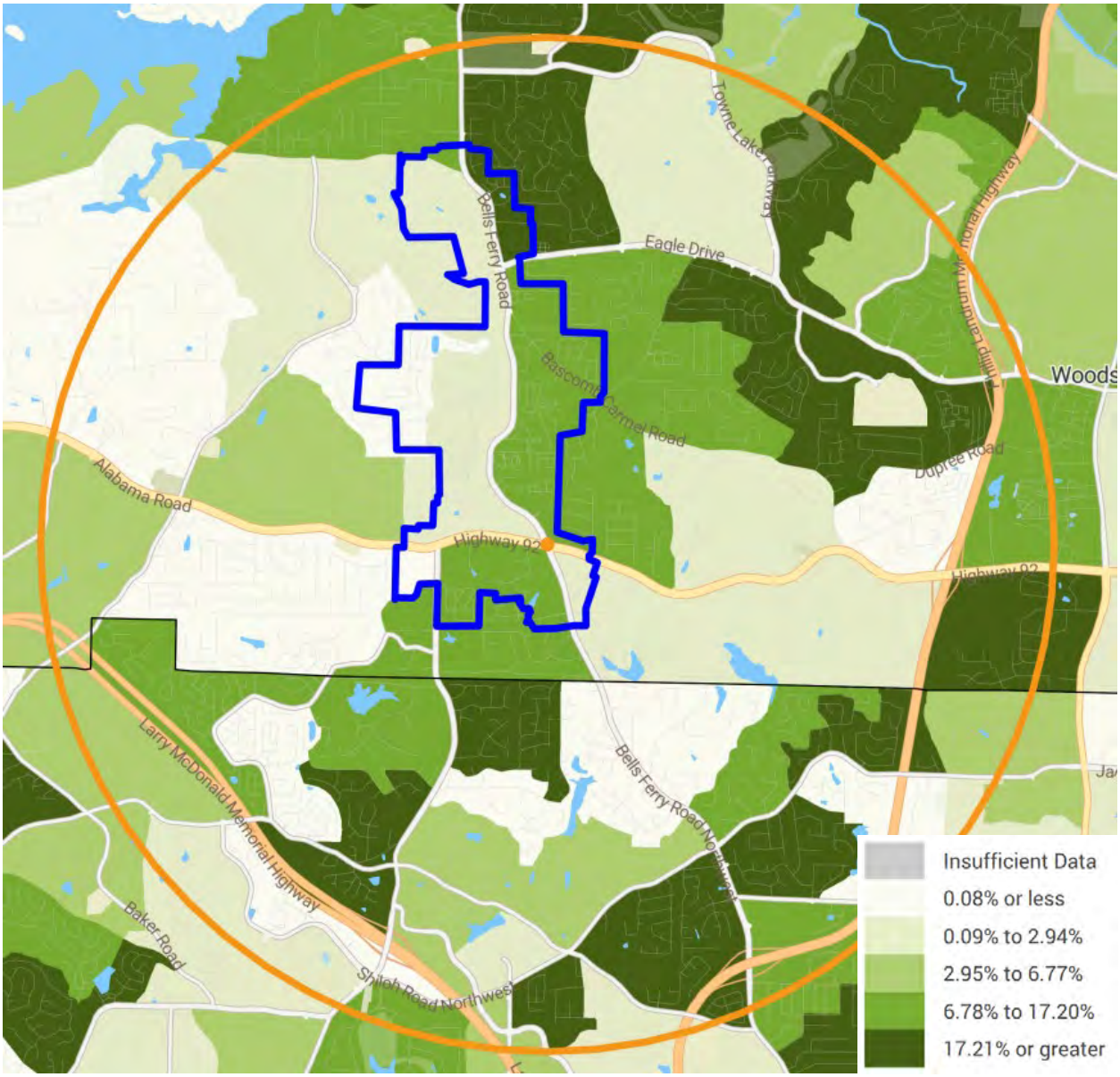


Figure 22: Percent of Non-Federal Jobs in Health Care and Social Assistance

Source: LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

Employment by Earnings

Jobs in the PMA are typically lower-paying than in Cherokee County as a whole or Atlanta metro, with almost a quarter of PMA jobs paying less than $15,000 per year. The PMA also has a lower proportion of jobs paying $40,000 or more per year, at only 43% of PMA jobs, compared with 50% of Cherokee County jobs and 59% of jobs across the Atlanta metro. This is a likely reflection of the types of jobs available in the PMA, which tend towards retail and food services.

Table 18: Employment by Annual Earnings

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Less than $15,000	23%	19%	14%
$15,000 to $39,999	35%	31%	26%
$40,000 or above	43%	50%	59%

All Primary Jobs
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap application and LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

COMMUTING

More than three-quarters (80%) of residents in the PMA commute to work by vehicle, with 72% driving alone. These workers have an average travel time to work of approximately 30 minutes.

Fewer PMA residents work from home compared to elsewhere in Cherokee County, though both areas have experienced significant increases in the proportion of residents working from home since 2010. This may be in part, due to the types of jobs in the PMA, which lean toward food service and retail – jobs that are difficult to perform remotely. This data does not capture recent shifts in the trend towards "Return to Office" requirements since the beginning of 2025.

Table 19: Resident Means of Travel to Work

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
Car, Truck, or Van	80%	78%	77%
Drove Alone	72%	70%	68%
Carpooled	9%	8%	9%
Public Transportation	0.3%	0.1%	2%
Walked	1%	1%	1%
Other Means	1%	1%	2%
Worked from Home	17%	20%	18%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	30	32	31

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Commuting patterns for residents within the PMA, as in Cherokee County and the Atlanta metro overall, have changed significantly since 2010. The proportion of residents commuting via vehicle, whether driving alone or carpooling, declined by nearly 10% in the PMA between 2010 and 2023. The majority of these declines in driving were balanced by increases in working from home.

Table 20: Resident Means of Travel to Work - Change since 2010

	Primary Market Area		Cherokee County		Atlanta Metro	
	2023	Change since 2010	2023	Change since 2010	2023	Change since 2010
Car, Truck, or Van	81%	-9%	78%	-11%	77%	-12%
Drove Alone	72%	-8%	70%	-8%	68%	-10%
Carpooled	9%	-1%	8%	-3%	9%	-2%
Public Transportation	0%	-1%	0%	-1%	2%	-2%
Walked	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Other Means	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%
Worked from Home	17%	10%	20%	11%	18%	13%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	30	-2	32	-2	31	1

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023, 2010

The majority of PMA residents (79%) commute to the East, Southeast, and South, representing that residents are predominantly employed closer to the Atlanta metro core.

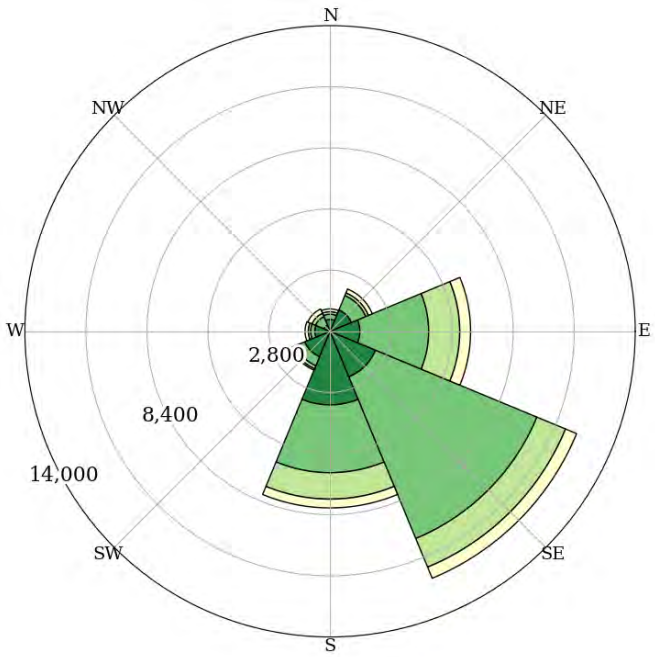


Figure 23: Distance and Direction of Commute for PMA Residents

All Primary Jobs
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap application and LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

Approximately one-third of PMA residents commute less than 10 miles to work. Nearly half of residents commute 10-24 miles for their jobs.

Table 21: Resident Commute Distance

	Primary Market Area
Less than 10 miles	31.9%
10 to 24 miles	47.8%
25 to 50 miles	13.9%
Greater than 50 miles	6.4%

All Primary Jobs
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap application and LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

Commuting Inflow/Outflow

The PMA is a net exporter of workers, with nearly twice as many residents commuting out of the area for work as there are workers commuting into the area. Only 6% of residents are employed and living within the PMA.

Table 22: PMA Employment by Residency

	Primary Market Area
PMA Residents	
Living and Employed in the PMA	6%
Live in the PMA but Employed Elsewhere	94%
PMA Employees	
Living and Employed in the PMA	11%
Employed in the PMA but Live Elsewhere	89%

All Primary Jobs
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap application and LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

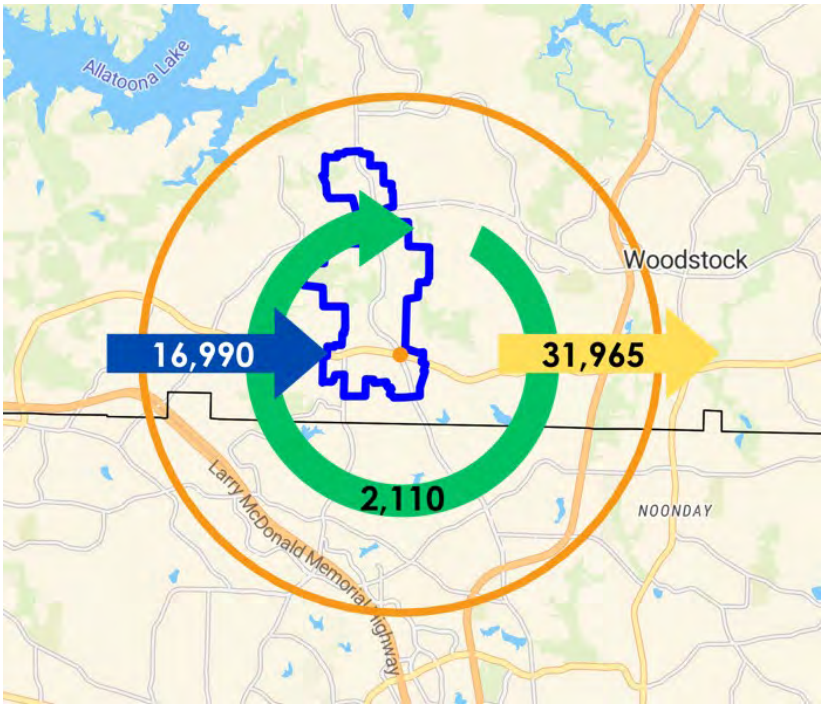


Figure 24: PMA Employment Inflow/Outflow, 2022

All Primary Jobs
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap application and LEHD Origination-Destination Employment Statistics 2022

COMMERCIAL MARKETS

Residential Multifamily Rental

The multifamily inventory in both the LCI Study Area and Cherokee County in general has seen significant increases in recent years. Despite somewhat elevated vacancy rates, stable rents show sustained market interest in the variety of rental housing types available in the area.

The Cherokee County multifamily rental market includes three distinct types:

- Apartments, including garden, low-rise, and mid-rise developments
- Attached townhomes, including duplexes
- Build-to-rent single family communities, which function as a multifamily development despite each home being detached

All three types are available within the LCI Study Area. Despite having only 2.3% of the overall housing units in Cherokee County, the LCI Study Area encompasses 13% of the County's apartments and 13% of the County's Build-to-Rent Single Family units. The LCI Study Area also contains nearly one-third of the County's rental townhome inventory.

Table 23: Existing Multifamily Rental Inventory by Type

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County	LCI % of County
Apartment	1,845	13,692	13%
Townhome	300	949	32%
Build-to-Rent Single Family	73	564	13%

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Both the LCI Study Area and Cherokee County as a whole have seen significant multifamily development since 2020. Nearly all of the LCI Study Area's apartment inventory has been constructed since 2000, and more than half constructed within the past five years. There are also significant numbers of multifamily units currently in the County's permitting approval processes as of July 2025.

Table 24: Multifamily Rental Inventory by Year Built

	Apartment		Townhome		Build to Rent Single Family	
Year Built	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Before 1980	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1980-1989	7%	4%	0%	10%	0%	0%
1990-1999	6%	15%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2000-2009	28%	23%	0%	7%	0%	0%
2010-2019	0%	25%	0%	0%	0%	9%
2020 to present	59%	33%	100%	83%	100%	91%
# Units Under Construction		647				63
# Units Proposed				260		

Source: Cherokee County Planning & Zoning Current Projects, Development Map, and Multifamily Permitting provided July 2025; CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Multifamily rents across Cherokee County increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and have since remained relatively stable, though still elevated. The LCI Study Area enjoys a modest rent premium over Cherokee County, particularly in the Townhome and Build-to-Rent Single Family housing types.

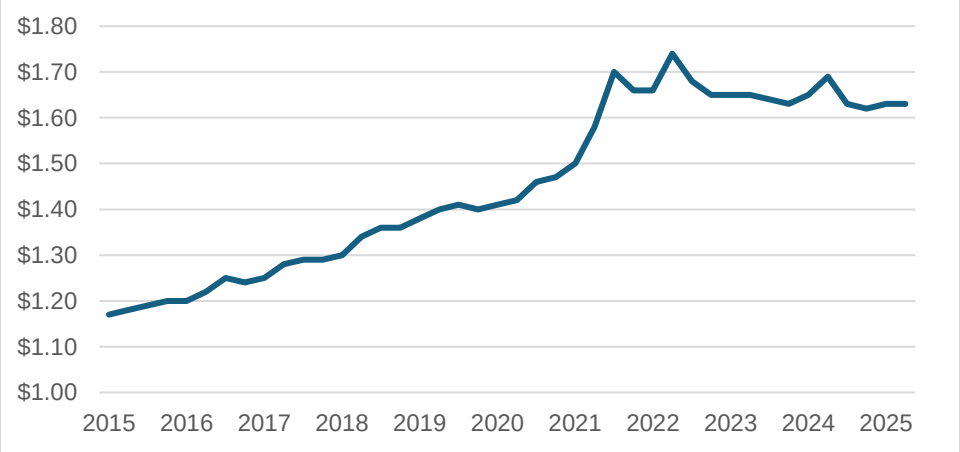


Figure 25: Cherokee County Multifamily Effective Rent ($/sq ft)

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Table 25: Multifamily Effective Rent ($/sq ft)

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Apartment	$1.65	$1.63
Townhome	$1.69	$1.43
Build To Rent Single Family	$1.35	$1.21

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Multifamily vacancy dropped to extreme lows in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, vacancy in the Cherokee County multifamily market has remained somewhat elevated over historic norms, around 7%, for the past year. A healthy vacancy rate is generally between 5 and 8%. This shows successful absorption of the large numbers of new rental products coming into the market and suggests continued market demand.

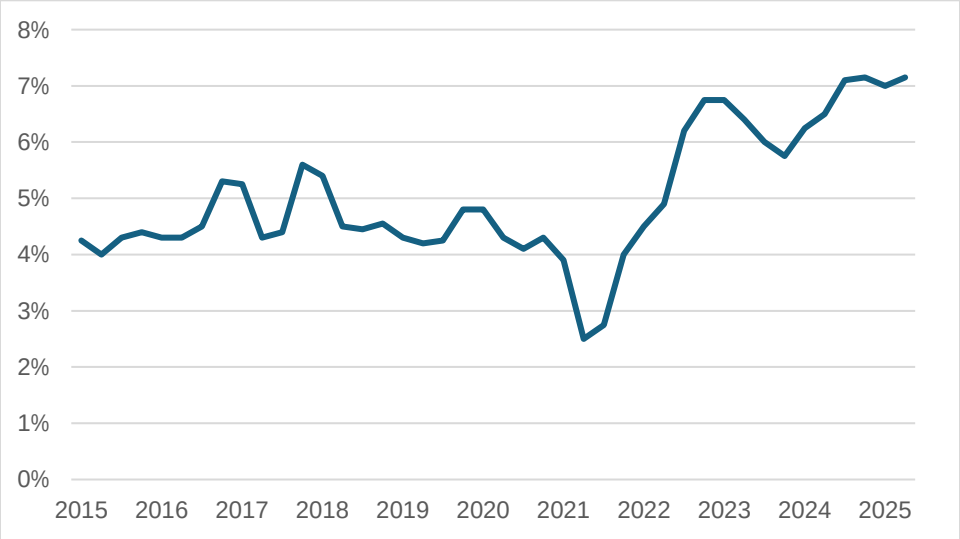


Figure 26: Cherokee County Multifamily Rental Vacancy (%)

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Multifamily vacancy within the LCI Study Area generally mirrors Cherokee County's patterns. In 2025, Q2 apartment vacancy rates in the LCI Study Area are slightly below overall Cherokee County, while townhome vacancy rates are higher due to the ongoing lease-up of a large townhome development, Summerwell Bells Ferry.

Table 26: Multifamily Vacancy

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Apartment	6.9%	7.4%
Townhome	24.9%	13.8%
Build-to-Rent Single Family	6.8%	6.7%

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Residential For Sale

The single-family home market is strong in Cherokee County, with prices increasing significantly in recent years. Median home sale prices and values tend to be lower in the LCI Study Area and the Primary Market Area than in the county overall. This may be contributing to the larger number of young adults and households with children who are taking advantage of slightly more affordable home prices.

The median single family home sale price in Cherokee County in June 2025 was $528,000, up 1.5% from the previous year and nearly 60% higher than in June 2020. The single-family home market is strong in Cherokee County, with the average home selling after 40 days on the market as of August 2025.

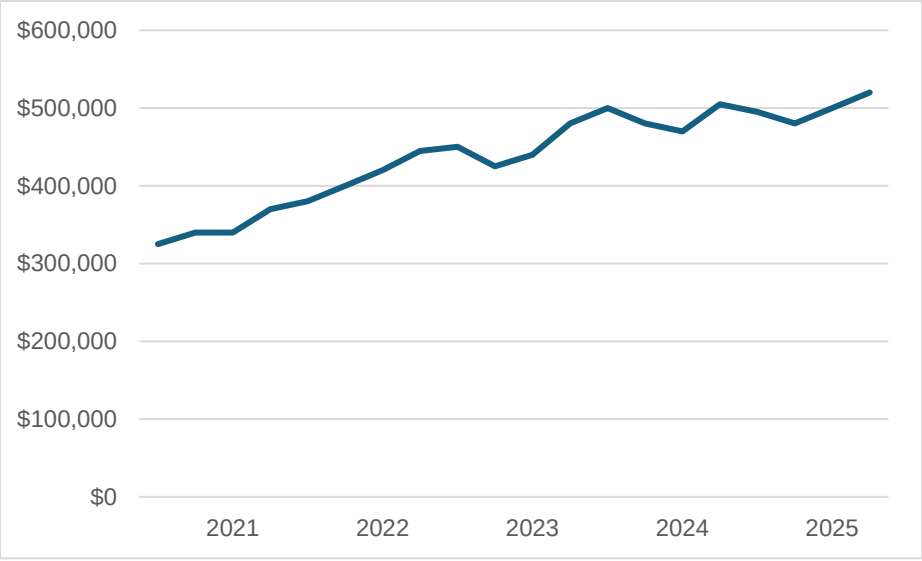


Figure 27: Cherokee County Median Single Family Sale Price

Source: Redfin

Within the PMA and LCI Study Area, median home sale prices tend to be lower than the central areas of Cherokee County.

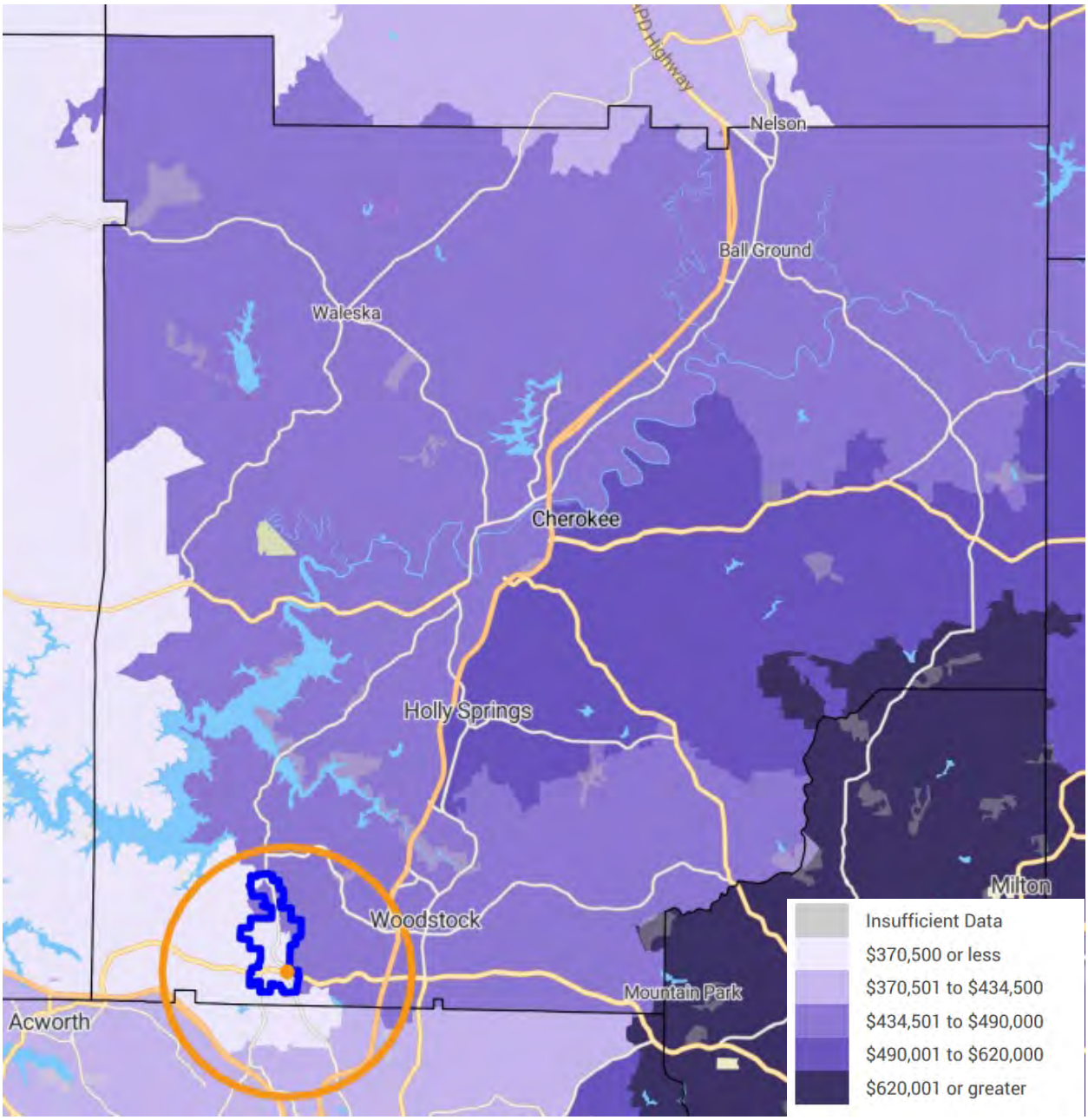


Figure 28: Median dollar amount of single-family home sales in 2025 Q1 by Zipcode

Source: Black Knight

Median home values are also lower within the LCI Study Area and the PMA than in Cherokee County overall. In 2023, median home values within the PMA were 82% of the value of homes in overall Cherokee County.

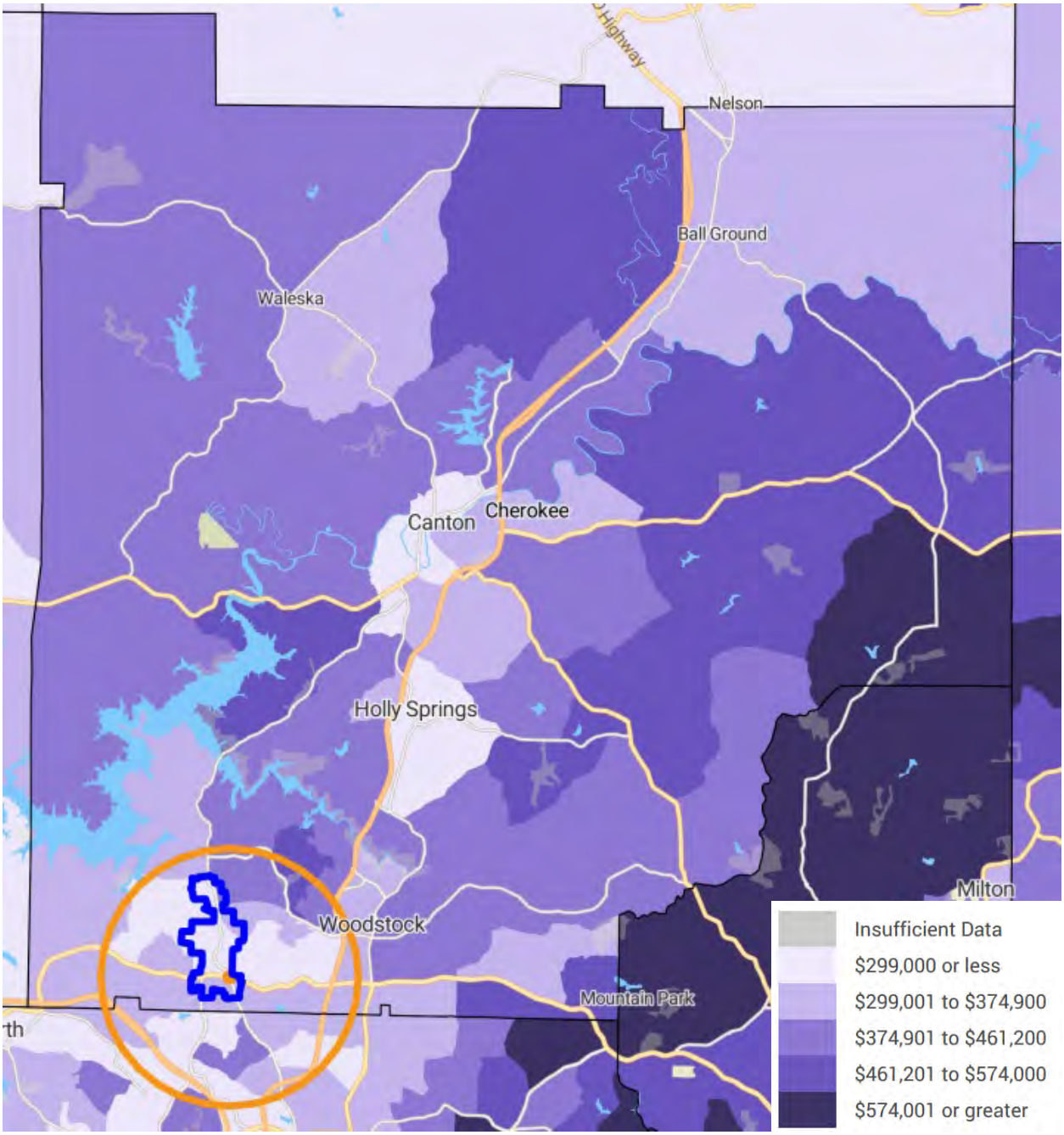


Figure 29: Median Home Values by Census Tract, 2023

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Single-family home values throughout the Atlanta metro have increased significantly over the past 25 years, with much of the growth coming since the COVID-19 pandemic. While the PMA has also seen significant increases in home values over the past ten years, with home values increasing 86% from 2013-2023, the area has lagged slightly behind overall Cherokee County's values, which more than doubled over the same period.

Table 27: Median Home Values

	Primary Market Area	Cherokee County	Atlanta Metro
2013	$ 171,585	$ 190,400	$ 170,400
2018	$ 202,384	$ 234,300	$ 199,200
2023	$ 319,067	$ 389,800	$ 335,100
% change since 2013	86%	105%	97%

Source: American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2023

Retail

Retail inventory in the LCI Study Area is generally equivalent to retail offerings throughout Cherokee County, with strong occupancy and rents slightly below the county average. Consumer spending is forecasted to increase in the PMA, suggesting opportunity for additional retail offerings within the LCI Study Area.

The LCI Study Area includes approximately 9% of Cherokee County's retail inventory. The majority of the LCI Study Area's retail offerings are rated 3 Star[1]. A quarter of the area's retail inventory is rated 2 Star – a higher proportion than in Cherokee County overall, representing opportunities for redevelopment.

[1] For more on CoStar's star rating system, see https://www.costar.com/sites/costar.com.na/files/2023-09/costar_buildingratingsystem-definition.pdf

More than half of the LCI Study Area's retail inventory was constructed since 2000. Retail vacancy is currently very low in both the LCI Study Area and Cherokee County overall, representing potential unmet demand for retail inventory.

Table 28: Existing Retail Inventory

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Total Sq Ft	1,312,477	14,932,688
1 Star	1%	1%
2 Star	25%	18%
3 Star	54%	64%
4 Star	21%	17%
5 Star	0%	0%
Year Built		
Before 1980	9%	9%
1980-1989	18%	11%
1990-1999	17%	22%
2000-2009	40%	39%
2010-2019	14%	17%
2020-present	3%	3%
Avg. year built	1998	1999
% Leased	98.6%	98.5%

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Retail vacancy has decreased significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic, trending around 1.5% vacancy in recent years.

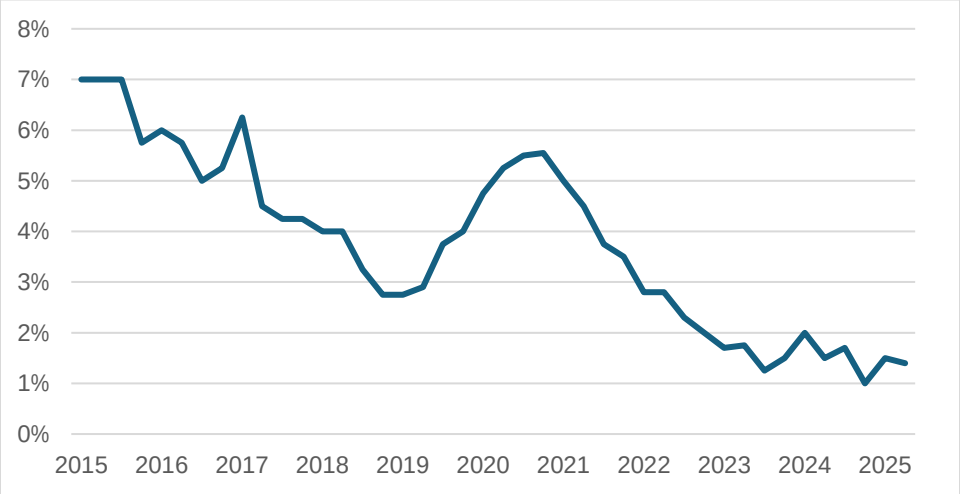


Figure 30: Cherokee County Retail Vacancy (%)

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Table 29: Retail Vacancy (%)

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Retail	1.4%	1.5%

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Despite some variation, retail asking rents in Cherokee County have increased in recent years. Current asking rent for available offerings in the LCI Study Area is slightly lower than the County overall, averaging $19.42/sq ft. This, too, may indicate a potential for redevelopment or tapping into new retail opportunities.

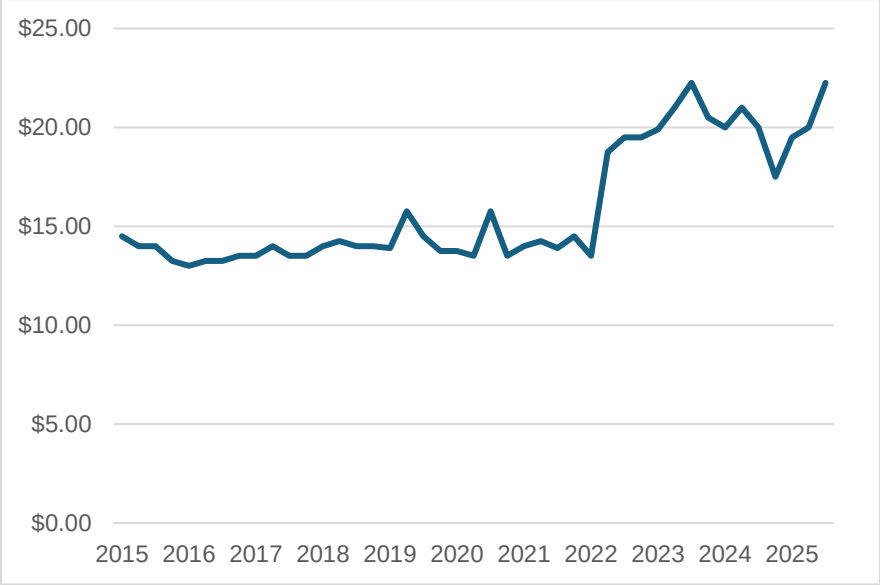


Figure 31: Cherokee County Retail Rent Asking Price ($/sq ft)

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Table 30: Retail Rent Asking Price ($/sq ft)

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Retail	$19.42	$22.46

Source: CoStar available inventory as of August 2025

Retail construction in Cherokee County has not recovered since the COVID-19 pandemic. Limited construction is a likely cause of increasing rents and decreased vacancy throughout the County. These trends are similar within the LCI Study Area as well, where only 3% of existing inventory was constructed since 2020.

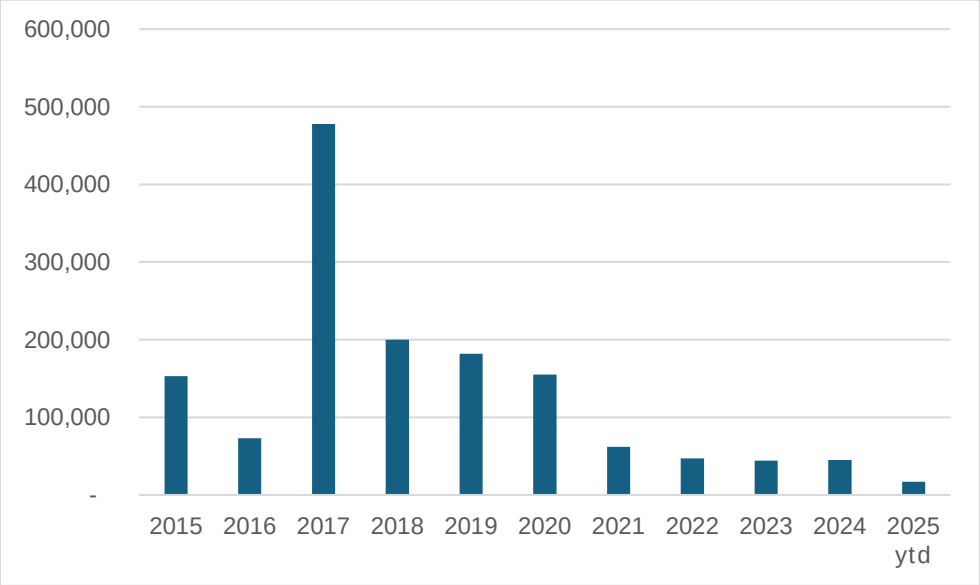


Figure 32: Cherokee County Retail Construction Starts (sq ft)

Source: CoStar as of August 2025

Consumer spending within the PMA is forecasted to grow over the next five years. Retail sectors with the highest projected spending growth include Apparel & Services, Entertainment & Recreation, and Food (both at home and away from home). The LCI Study Area can benefit from new inventory offerings that cater to these retail sectors.

Table 31: PMA Consumer Spending Forecast

	2025 Consumer Spending	2030 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth
Apparel and Services	$72,552,632	$85,043,687	$12,491,055
Computer	$7,976,350	$9,341,488	$1,365,138
Education	$5,529,781	$6,474,295	$944,514
Entertainment & Recreation	$118,951,722	$139,449,078	$20,497,356
Food at Home	$213,311,226	$249,951,902	$36,640,676
Food Away from Home	$121,270,028	$142,181,190	$20,911,162
Alcoholic Beverages	$19,548,192	$22,888,414	$3,340,222
Health	$52,544,801	$61,552,427	$9,007,626
Household Furnishings and Equipment	$91,953,659	$107,795,188	$9,397,338
Household Operations	$40,838,006	$47,855,418	$7,017,412
Housekeeping Supplies	$24,969,217	$29,266,701	$4,297,484
Transportation	$237,350,898	$278,422,897	$41,071,999

Source: ESRI

Office

Office inventory in the LCI Study Area is limited and aging. Combined with steady rents and low vacancy throughout the Cherokee County office market, this suggests the opportunity to deliver new, quality office offerings within the LCI Study Area.

The LCI Study Area includes approximately 148,000 sq ft of office space, making up 2.7% of the Cherokee County office market. The area has no Class A office offerings. More than three-quarters (77%) of the LCI Study Area's office inventory is categorized as Class C. Office inventory in the LCI Study Area is also significantly older than elsewhere in Cherokee County, with over half of the existing office stock built from 1980-1989. This suggests significant opportunity for redevelopment within the LCI Study Area.

Table 32: Existing Office Inventory

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Total Sq Ft	147,686	5,429,922
Class A	0%	8%
Class B	23%	56%
Class C	77%	36%
Year Built		
Before 1980	7%	13%
1980-1989	52%	11%
1990-1999	9%	18%
2000-2009	29%	40%
2010-2019	3%	13%
2020-present	0%	5%
Avg. year built	1990	1994

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Office asking rents in Cherokee County have trended steadily upward despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Office rents within the LCI Study Area are lower, with current asking rent averaging $18.57/sq ft. This lower price reflects the older, lower quality inventory in the LCI Study Area.

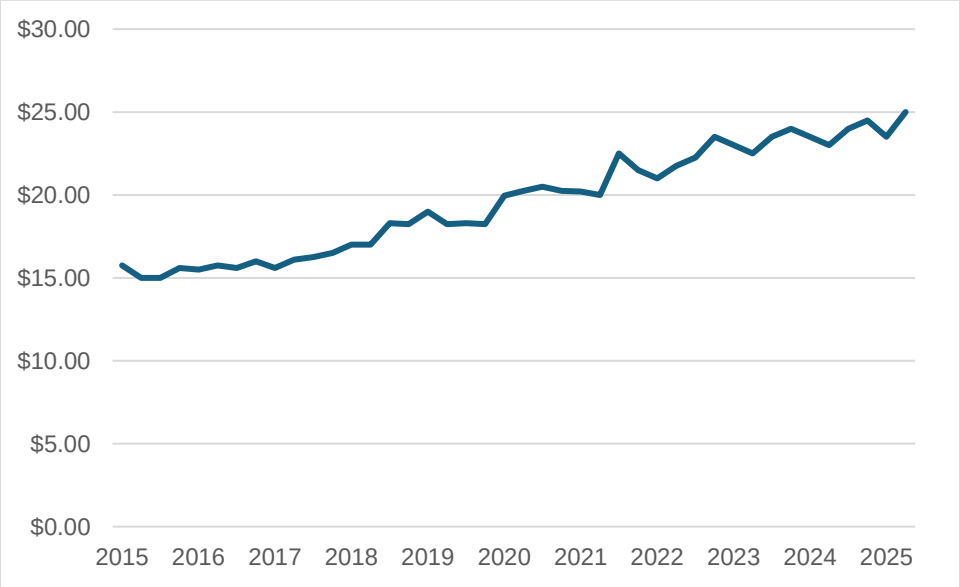


Figure 33: Cherokee County Office Rent Asking Price ($/sq ft)

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Table 33: Office Rent Asking Price ($/sq ft)

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Office	$18.57	$24.97

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Office vacancy in Cherokee County has steadily declined over the past ten years, despite the COVID-19 pandemic increasing work-from-home opportunities for many employment sectors. Vacancy rates have somewhat stabilized since 2023 at around 3%. This suggests unmet demand for quality office offerings which could be captured by LCI Study Area redevelopment.



Figure 34: Cherokee County Office Vacancy (%)

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Table 34: Office Vacancy (%)

	LCI Study Area	Cherokee County
Office	2.5%	3.2%

Source: CoStar existing inventory as of August 2025

Office construction has increased in Cherokee County since the COVID-19 pandemic, with construction beginning on over 150,000 sq ft of office space in 2024 and 2025. None of this construction has taken place within the LCI Study Area.

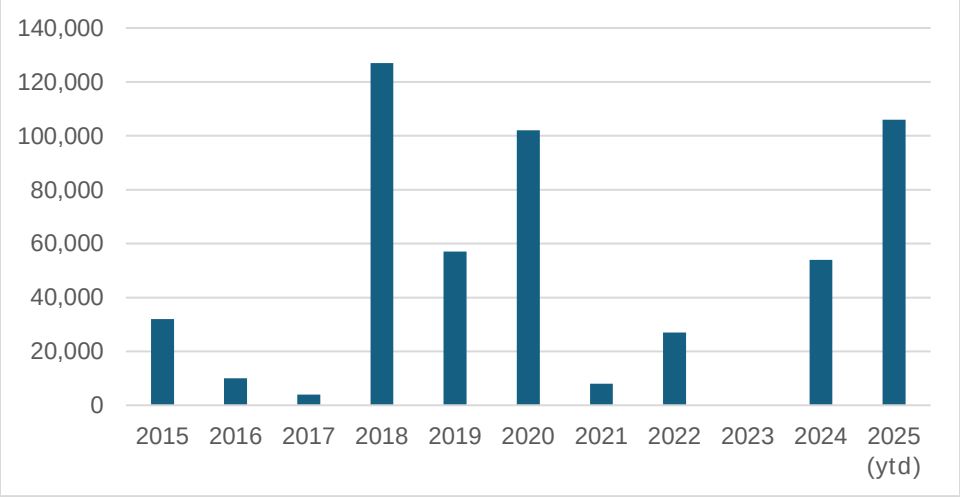


Figure 35: Cherokee County Office Construction Starts (sq ft)

Source: CoStar as of August 2025

Transit Feasibility Study

BELLS FERRY
LCI PLAN UPDATE

Transit Feasibility Study

Nelson\Nygaard
March 2026

With Support from Gresham Smith

Cherokee County
GEORGIA 1831

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Introduction

One of the stated focus areas of the Bells Ferry Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Update is to consider ways to ensure the Bells Ferry LCI area is "transit ready," including studying the feasibility of transit service. Consistent with that focus, the Transit Feasibility Study evaluates the potential role of public transit in supporting mobility, access, and long-term redevelopment goals within the Bells Ferry Road LCI area. It examines existing transit services in and around the LCI study area, assesses current and future travel needs, and identifies gaps in access to key destinations such as employment, shopping, medical services, and community facilities.

Building on demographic trends, land use patterns, and travel behavior, the study considers a range of transit service concepts appropriate for the corridor's suburban context. The analysis focuses on identifying transit solutions that are realistic, scalable, and aligned with Cherokee County's operating environment, with an emphasis on flexible service models that can improve access while remaining cost-effective. The findings and recommendations in this section are intended to inform corridor-level planning decisions and help ensure that future development in the LCI study area is supported by viable and adaptable transit options.

Livable Centers Initiative

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) is a grant program administered by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the metropolitan planning organization for Atlanta and the 11 surrounding counties. Launched in 2000, the program's overarching themes have remained focused on creating compact, walkable centers with a diversity of uses, reducing driving trips, and fostering community support through broad and inclusive outreach. The program provides critical funding to local jurisdictions to envision their communities as vibrant, walkable places that offer sustainable mobility options, encourage safe, healthy lifestyles, and provide improved access to jobs and services.

Background

This LCI study focuses on the Bells Ferry Road corridor in southern Cherokee County. The study area includes a three-mile segment of Bells Ferry Road bounded roughly by the intersection with Kellog Creek Road in the north to areas south of Highway 92 towards the boundary with Cobb County. The study area width varies between one-quarter of a mile and one mile and was designed to cover dense development and trip generating areas straddling the corridor. This resulted in a study area of roughly 2.4 square miles.

In addition to the LCI study area, this transit feasibility study also analyzed areas beyond the Bells Ferry Road corridor in order to develop comprehensive and contextual transit recommendations that consider the wider travel market in southern Cherokee County. These areas include the Highway 92 corridor crossing the southern portion of the study

area and the Eagle Drive/Towne Lake Parkway corridor extending east from the northern portion of the study area to Woodstock.

Previous Studies

Countywide planning efforts provide important context for the Bells Ferry Transit Feasibility Study. The 2022 Cherokee County Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the 2023 Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan establish long-range transportation and land use goals, identify existing mobility challenges, and highlight locations where transit needs may warrant further evaluation. Together, they inform the analysis and recommendations presented in this study while reflecting the evolving policy and operating environment in Cherokee County.

2022 Cherokee County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Cherokee Moves: Cherokee County 2022 Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is a countywide, multimodal transportation planning effort completed in December 2022. The plan established a long-range transportation vision through 2050 and evaluated roadway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, and emerging transportation needs across Cherokee County. The CTP included extensive public and stakeholder engagement and resulted in a prioritized list of transportation projects, programs, and policy recommendations intended to guide near-, mid-, and long-term investment decisions.

A key component of the 2022 CTP was the *Transit Services Assessment*, which evaluated existing transit services, identified service gaps, and explored opportunities to expand or modify transit provision in Cherokee County. At the time of the study, the assessment examined fixed-route bus service, countywide demand-response service, complementary ADA paratransit, commuter vanpool programs, and regional commuter services. The assessment included an analysis of population and employment density, transit-reliant populations, and regional connectivity, and it identified corridors (including portions of southern and southwestern Cherokee County) where higher concentrations of residents and jobs were not well served by existing transit. The Transit Services Assessment also evaluated the potential role of microtransit as a flexible service model better suited to lower-density suburban environments.

While the Transit Services Assessment provides important background and analytical context, some of its findings are now dated. Most notably, Cherokee Area Transit Service (CATS) no longer operates fixed-route bus service, which was a central assumption of the 2022 analysis. As a result, prior recommendations related to fixed-route expansion and route restructuring are no longer directly applicable. However, the assessment's identification of transit service gaps, concentrations of transit-reliant populations, and corridors with unmet mobility needs (such as Bells Ferry Road) remains relevant. These findings help inform the Bells Ferry Transit Feasibility Study by reinforcing the need to evaluate alternative service models, including on-demand and flexible

transit options, that better reflect current operating conditions and future mobility needs in Cherokee County.

2023 Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan

The *2023 Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan*, adopted in August 2023, establishes a long-range vision for growth, land use, transportation, and quality of life across the county. The plan provides a comprehensive assessment of existing demographic, economic, housing, and transportation conditions and outlines policies to guide future development in a way that balances growth with community character. A key organizing framework of the plan is the use of Character Areas, which define desired development patterns, infrastructure investments, and transportation strategies appropriate to different parts of the county.

From a transportation perspective, the Comprehensive Plan recognizes that Cherokee County is largely auto oriented, and that limited transit availability constrains mobility options for residents, workers, and visitors. The plan identifies increasing congestion in major corridors and acknowledges the need for alternative transportation strategies as population and employment continue to grow. It supports exploration of flexible and demand-responsive transit solutions, such as microtransit, particularly in areas where traditional fixed-route transit may be difficult to sustain. These policies provide an important countywide policy basis for evaluating expanded transit options and improving access to destinations without increasing reliance on single-occupancy vehicles.

The Comprehensive Plan envisions the Bells Ferry LCI Character Area as a corridor that supports more compact, mixed-use development and improved multimodal connectivity. Within this Character Area, the plan emphasizes enhancing access to jobs, services, and activity centers while reducing dependence on driving alone. The Bells Ferry LCI study builds on this vision by focusing on transportation strategies that support redevelopment, improve local circulation, and provide additional mobility options. Transit and on-demand services evaluated as part of the Bells Ferry LCI study are therefore consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's land use and transportation goals for the corridor and play a supporting role in achieving its long-term vision.

Transit Service Assessment

This section provides an overview of the transit service in and around the Bells Ferry Road corridor. This includes a summary of Cherokee County's existing service and its recent performance, as well as a brief description of nearby transit options provided by other agencies.

Existing Transit Service

Cherokee County provides public transportation through the Cherokee Area Transit Service (CATS). This service currently consists of one microtransit zone and a countywide demand response service. Previously, CATS operated a fixed-route service in Canton, which was replaced by microtransit service in January 2024. Additionally, CATS partners with Cherokee County Senior Services and Empower Cherokee to provide Department of Human Services (DHS) transportation services for seniors and residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Microtransit

CATS began operating a microtransit service in January 2024 to serve Canton, establishing a defined service zone of approximately 14.2 square miles within which all trips must begin and end. Although trips are geographically restricted to this zone, the service provides riders with significant flexibility. Trips may be scheduled several days in advance (similar to traditional demand response) or requested as little as 30 minutes prior to pickup, subject to vehicle availability. Rides can be arranged either by phone or through the CATS mobile app. The microtransit service operates on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is open to the general public. Service characteristics are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Microtransit Service Characteristics

Service Type	Service Span	Service Area	One-way Fare	Added Fees
Microtransit	Weekdays 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.	14.2 square miles	$2 General $1 Discount	$1 over 5 miles

The microtransit service is supported by Ecolane, which provides the scheduling, dispatching, and trip-matching technology platform, including the rider-facing smartphone application. The platform dynamically groups trips traveling in similar directions to improve operational efficiency while maintaining rider convenience.

Fares are $2 per one-way trip, with an additional $1 charge for trips exceeding five miles. Payment is due at boarding. Drivers accept exact fare in cash or check, and riders may also pay by debit or credit card over the phone prior to the ride. Currently, fares cannot be paid directly within the CATS mobile app; however, CATS is actively working with Ecolane to implement in-app fare payment functionality in the future. Residents age 60 and older and other eligible groups[1] receive discounted fares but are still subject to the additional charge for trips exceeding five miles. All vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts to ensure accessibility.

[1] Other eligible groups include veterans, recipients of Medicaid Children age 16 and older. Children 15 and under are free.

Microtransit performance from the 2024 calendar year is summarized in Table 2**.** Overall, the service transported over 12,000 riders in its first year, averaging slightly more than 50 riders per weekday. The service is also productive for a microtransit service, with an average of nearly four riders transported per hour of revenue service, indicating strong demand.

Table 2 Microtransit Service Performance, 2024

Service Type	Annual Riders	Daily Riders	Riders per Hour	Riders per Mile
Microtransit	12,258	51.3	3.7	0.2

Average daily ridership for each month (shown in Figure 1) has steadily increased, nearly doubling from 32 riders per day in January to 62 riders per day in December. In March, the service began operating three vehicles during peak times to meet increased demand.

Figure 1 Microtransit Service, Daily Ridership by Month, 2024

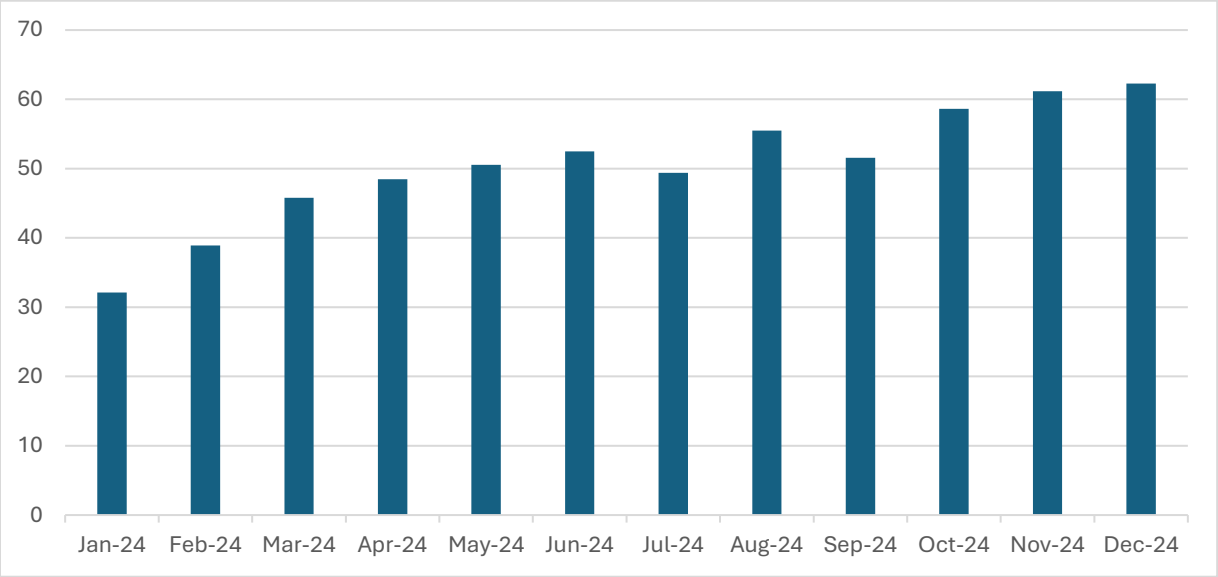
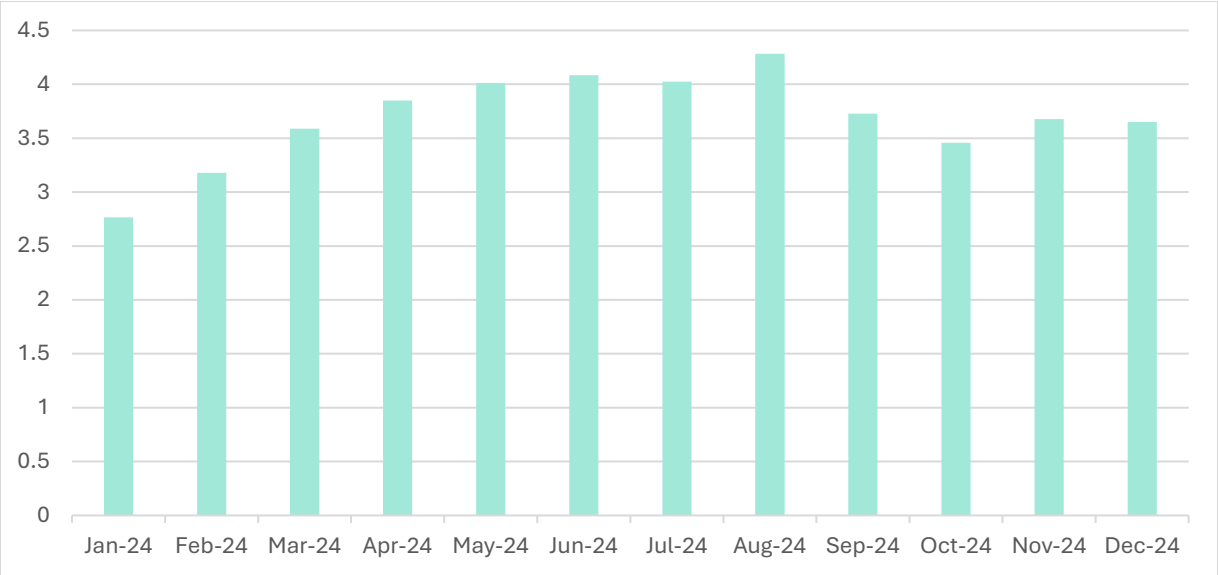


Figure 2 shows the monthly productivity of the service in 2024, which consistently remained above three riders per revenue hour in all months, except the start of service in January. Four months (May through August) exceeded four boardings per revenue hour, indicating sustained high levels of productivity and that the expansion to operating three vehicles was warranted.

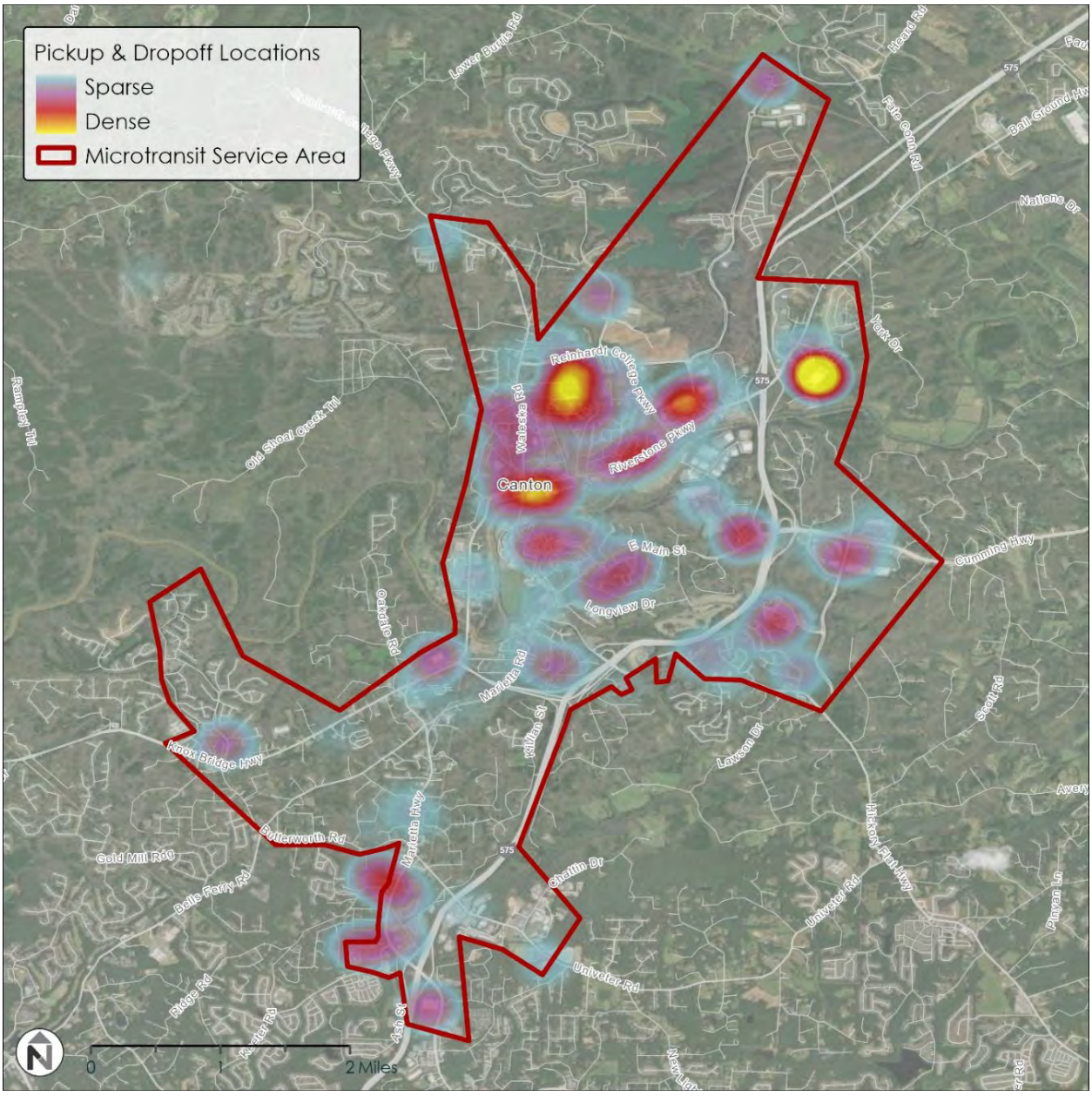
Figure 2 Microtransit Service, Riders per Revenue Hour, 2024



The map in Figure 3 symbolizes 928 microtransit pickup or drop-off locations of completed trips from 2024 in the form of a heat map, which helps visualize the density of trips in the service area.[2] Brighter yellow and reds indicate a greater concentration of trips, while the muted blue and purple hues indicate the presence of fewer and less concentrated trips. The heat map reveals significant trip activity in four locations, all of which are on or north of Riverstone Parkway and are detailed in Table 3.

[2] For all heat maps, trip activity shows all trips (not unique trips). As a result, some locations, particularly places of high intensity are the result of one or several riders who regularly travel to a location for employment or other purposes.

Figure 3 Microtransit Trip Origins and Destinations



Source: CATS 2024 Ridership Dataset (1/18/24 – 12/31/24)

Table 3 Microtransit High Activity Areas

Location	Destinations	Trips	Unique Riders
Riverstone Parkway / Waleska Street	YMCA, Riverplace Shopping Center	73	28
Multi-Family Complexes (North of Riverstone Parkway)	Canton Housing Authority, Lancaster Ridge, Lakeview, River Ridge	136	48
Riverstone Parkway / Reinhardt College Parkway	Riverstone Plaza	69	29
Riverstone Parkway / I-575	Walmart Supercenter	78	38

Demand Response

CATS also operates a countywide demand response service that transports riders between any two locations in the county. Similar to microtransit service, demand response service operates on weekdays only, is open to the general public, and operates an identical fare structure, shown in Table 4. Demand response service provides greater geographic access by serving a larger area than the microtransit service. However, rides must be planned and reserved in advance by telephone. Fares are $2 per one-way trip with an additional $1 charge for all trips exceeding five miles. Residents 60 years and older and other groups are eligible for fare discounts, and all buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts.

Table 4 Demand Response Service Characteristics

Service Type	Service Span	Service Area	One-way Fare	Added Fees
Demand Response	Weekdays 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.	434 Square Miles	$2 General $1 Discount	$1 over 5 miles

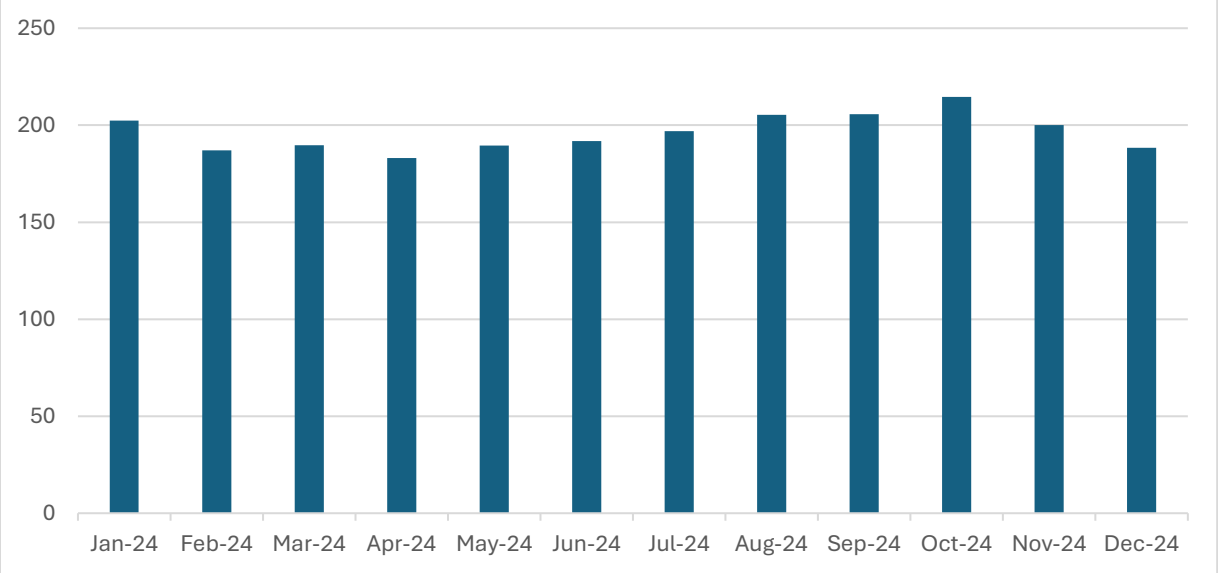
Demand response service transported over 47,000 riders and averaged nearly 200 daily trips, with each trip averaging roughly 13 miles and 38 minutes in duration, as shown in Table 5. Trip lengths and duration are a result of the large service area (Cherokee County) of 434 square miles. The higher ridership figures are partly due to the larger service area and population served, but also the higher number of vehicles dedicated to the service as compared to the microtransit service.

Table 5 Demand Response Performance, 2024

Service Type	Annual Riders	Daily Trips	Mean Trip Distance	Mean Trip Duration
Demand Response	47,377	196	12.7 Miles	38.3 Min

Demand response average daily ridership by month is shown in Figure 4. As an established service, demand response ridership is relatively consistent throughout the year, ranging between 183 and 215 daily riders. Ridership increased month over month between April and peaked in October before declining to 188 daily riders by December.

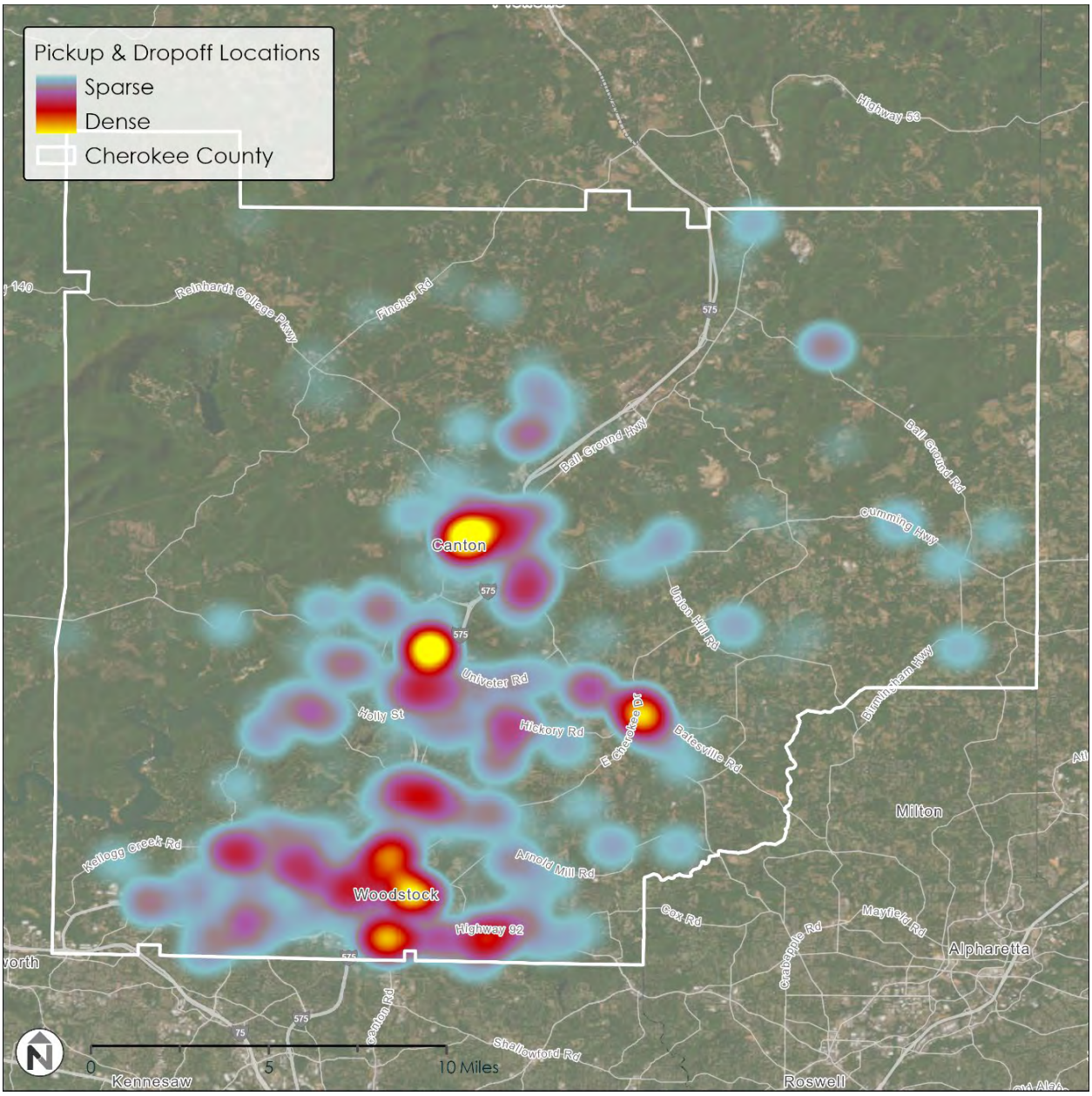
Figure 4 Demand Response Service, Daily Ridership by Month, 2024



Source: CATS 2024 Ridership Dataset (1/1/24 – 12/31/24)

Figure 5 symbolizes over 30,000 demand response pickup or drop-off locations of completed trips from 2024 in the form of a heat map. Trip activity is concentrated in roughly half of the county, with lower activity north of Canton and widespread and denser activity southwards along the I-575 corridor. This generally follows the development pattern as land use becomes denser closer to Cobb and Fulton counties. Activity in the northwest and northeast parts of the county is minimal. There are four clear concentrations of activity that mostly follow the I-575 corridor and are detailed in Table 6.

Figure 5 Demand Response Trip Origins and Destinations



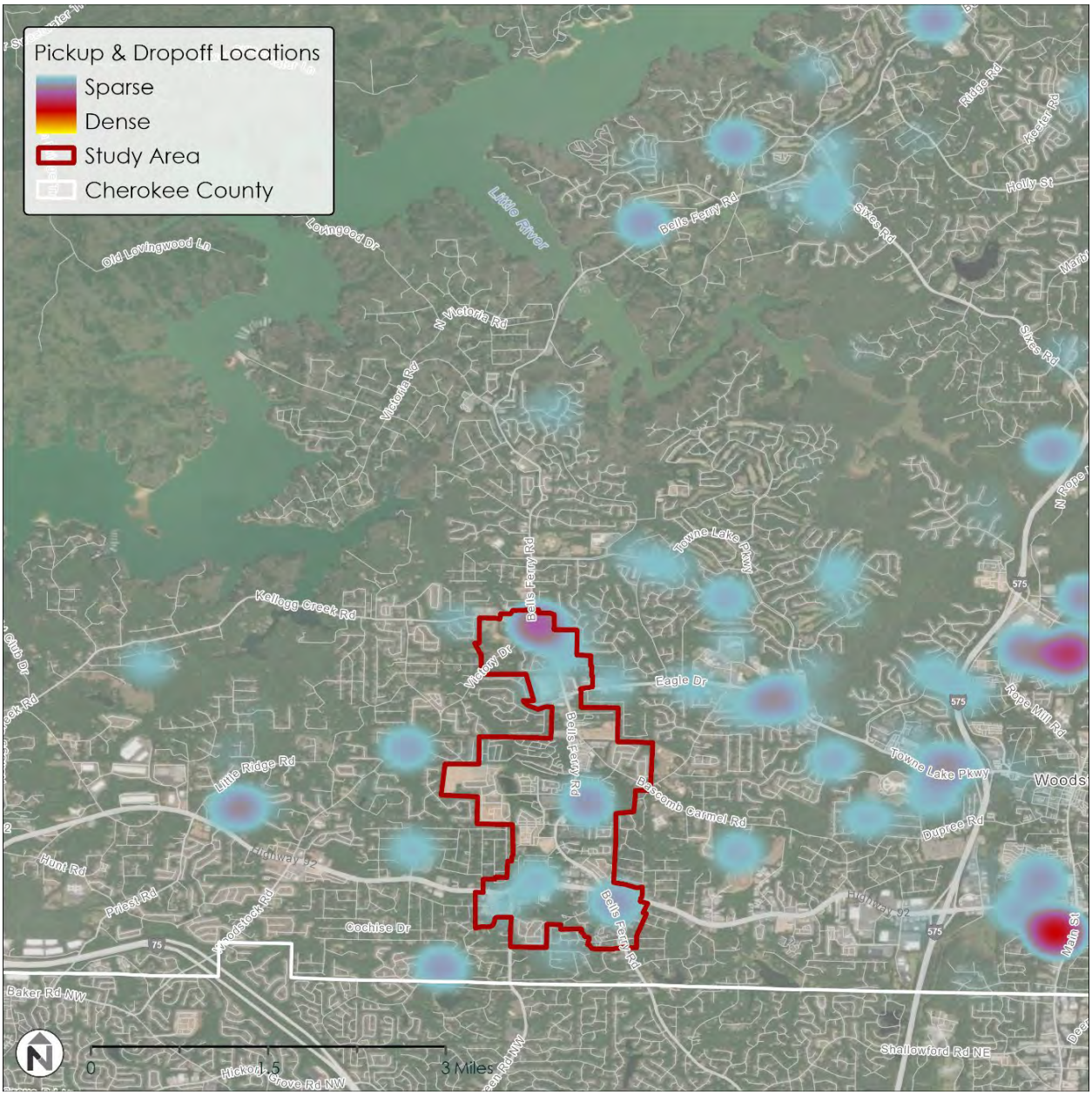
Source: CATS 2024 Ridership Dataset (1/18/24 – 12/31/24)

Table 6 Demand Response High Activity Areas

Location	Destinations	Trips	Unique Riders
Canton (North of Riverstone Parkway)	Riverplace Shopping Center, Multi-family complexes	1,501	77
Marietta Highway / Univeter Road	Empower Cherokee (Social Services Org.)	1,451	8
Hickory Flat Highway / East Cherokee Drive	Commercial Retail	1,580	44
Woodstock	William Long Senior Center, Chattahoochee Technical College, Northside Hospital	1,556	48

Figure 6 shows the concentration of demand response trip activity along the Bells Ferry Road corridor. Trip activity is diverse but also dispersed, without significant concentrations along the corridor, as most of the trip activity is closer to the I-575 corridor and east towards Woodstock with the nearest cluster located on Eagle Drive/Towne Lake Parkway (654 trips by 56 unique riders). Only 4% of demand response trips in 2024 occurred within the study area, taken by 40 different riders. The highest concentration of trips within the Bells Ferry Road corridor occurs at the northern end of the study area, with origins and destinations in some of the residential developments from Eagle Drive to Kellogg Creek Road. Some of the high activity point locations are included in Table 7.

Figure 6 Demand Response Trip Origins and Destinations, Bells Ferry Road corridor



Source: CATS 2024 Ridership Dataset (1/18/24 – 12/31/24)

Table 7 Demand Response (Bells Ferry Road corridor) High Activity Locations

Location	Destinations	Trips	Unique Riders
The Market Shopping Center	Food Depot	230	4
Highway 92 / Robin Road	Kroger	139	4
Bells Ferry Road / Eagle Drive	Walmart	87	15

Fleet

CATS operates a fleet of 26 vehicles, 18 of which serve the demand response service and three of which are applied to the microtransit service in Canton.[3] The vehicles vary in make and model but are primarily cutaway vehicles with wheelchair lifts and a capacity of up to 16 riders and two wheelchairs, depending on the model. There is also one sport utility vehicle. The are currently no electric or hybrid vehicles in the fleet.

Other Transit Providers

Cherokee County is not served by any of the nearby major transit providers in the region (MARTA, CobbLinc, and Xpress). The closest MARTA rail service to the study area is the North Springs rail station in northern Fulton County, whereas the closest MARTA bus service is in Alpharetta, roughly 20 miles to the east. CobbLinc is the transit provider of Cobb County and offers local bus service. The closest CobbLinc service is available at Kennesaw State University (Routes R10, 40, and 45) located within five miles of the study area. Xpress Route 484 provides peak-direction commuter bus service along the I-75 corridor to Atlanta and serves northern Cobb County; the closest stop is Hickory Grove followed by Town Center/Big Shanty Park-and-Ride, both of which are located within five miles of the study area. Xpress commuter service served Cherokee County for many years, at one time operating between two Cherokee County park-and-ride lots in Canton and Woodstock and Midtown and Downtown Atlanta. However, Cherokee County's Xpress service was recently discontinued due to low ridership demand post-pandemic.

Transit Needs Assessment

This section reviews the three different analyses that help inform the Transit Recommendations section: Transit Propensity, Composite Demand, and Travel Demand. These analyses used demographic, employment, commuter behavior, and travel data to create an understanding of the existing conditions and assess the viability of implementing future transit service in the study area.

The Transit Propensity analysis determines if there is a need for transit service in the area based on demographic characteristics. The Composite Demand analysis builds upon the Transit Propensity analysis by adding population density and employment location data, which reveals where riders are coming from (population data) and where they may want to travel (employment data). The combined intensity of Transit Propensity and Composite Demand in a block group helps determine the type and amount of transit service that could be supported. Lastly, the Travel Activity analysis reveals local and regional travel behavior of people traveling to, from, and within the study area, which adds further context to the findings from the Transit Propensity and Composite Demand analyses and helps inform the recommendations for transit service.

[3] November 2024 had four vehicles serving the Microtransit service area, but three is the standard.

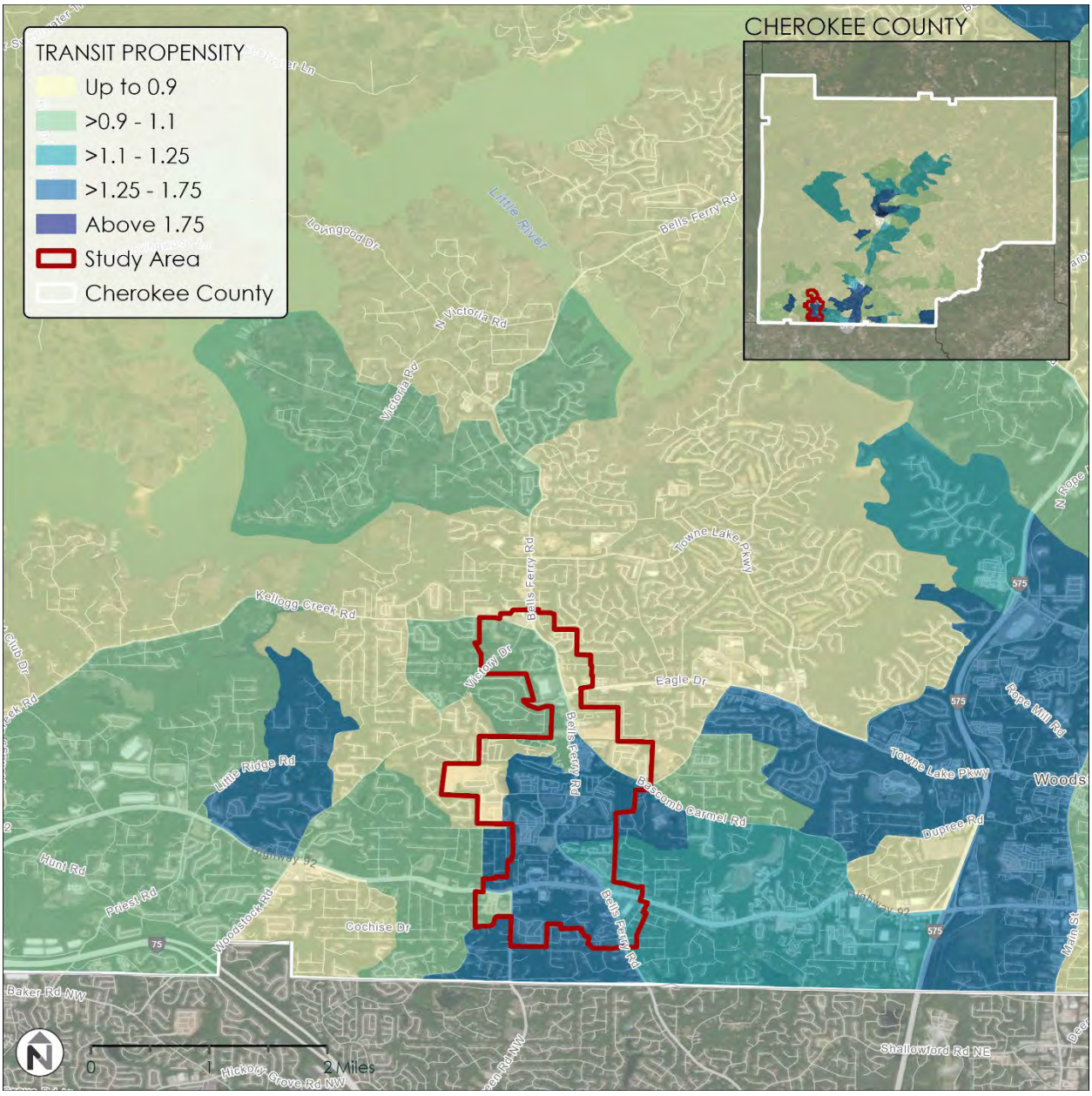
Transit Propensity

This analysis estimated the potential for transit usage among the resident population, the results of which are shown in Figure 7. This potential was derived by analyzing the commuting mode choice of several demographic characteristics from the U.S. Census (2023 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates). These characteristics were selected for analysis due to their correlation with transit usage and included race, foreign-born status, average household size, household income, and household automobile ownership. For example, populations with lower rates of automobile ownership typically have higher transit usage. By evaluating the commute mode choices for each demographic group compared to the transit mode share of the entire population in the study area overall, a Transit Index Factor (TIF) was created.

The geography of analysis was the block group level, which contains between 600 to 3,000 people and varies in geographic size depending on the population density of the area (e.g., rural areas tend to have larger block groups). The disparate TIF scores for each demographic characteristic in a block group were summed into a single transit propensity score. A higher score means that residents of that block group have a higher likelihood of using transit. A TIF value greater than 1.0 indicates the residents are more likely to use transit compared to the overall population.

Much of the study area along the Bells Ferry Road corridor has a transit propensity value of 1.25 or greater, particularly in areas south of Bascomb Carmel Road. The high transit propensity is likely due in part to the presence of a significant number of multi-family housing complexes. Outside of the study area, the areas adjacent to the I-575 and Highway 92 corridors also exhibit stronger transit propensity. Overall, the transit propensity analysis shows a need for additional transit service in the Bells Ferry Road corridor and surrounding area.

Figure 7 Transit Propensity Map



Composite Demand

The transit propensity analysis demonstrated that there are populations within the Bells Ferry Road corridor with a higher likelihood of needing and using transit; the next step in the analysis is to evaluate the level and distribution of demand in order to determine which transit service model is most appropriate for the corridor. The composite demand analysis combines the transit propensity outputs with employment location data from the U.S. Census, 2023 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD). The results of

the composite demand analysis are shown in Figure 8. While the transit propensity analysis identifies where residents with a higher likelihood of using transit are located, the composite demand analysis further illustrates where these populations are concentrated and where travel demand is likely to occur, recognizing that employment is a primary trip generator for most adults.

The composite demand scores are used to identify areas where transit service may be most effective and to inform the appropriate type and intensity of service, as illustrated in Figure 9. Higher composite demand scores indicate areas with greater concentrations of transit-supportive populations and employment and therefore a higher likelihood of supporting more frequent or higher-capacity service. Lower scores suggest demand levels more consistent with flexible, on-demand service models.

Across the study area, most block groups score between 2 and 10, indicating demand levels that are generally supportive of microtransit or other flexible, on-demand services rather than traditional fixed-route transit. Although a small number of block groups, primarily in the southeastern portion of the study area, score between 10 and 15, these higher-demand areas are limited in size and not contiguous. As a result, they are unlikely to independently support fixed-route service and are more appropriately served through flexible service models.

Figure 8 Composite Demand Map

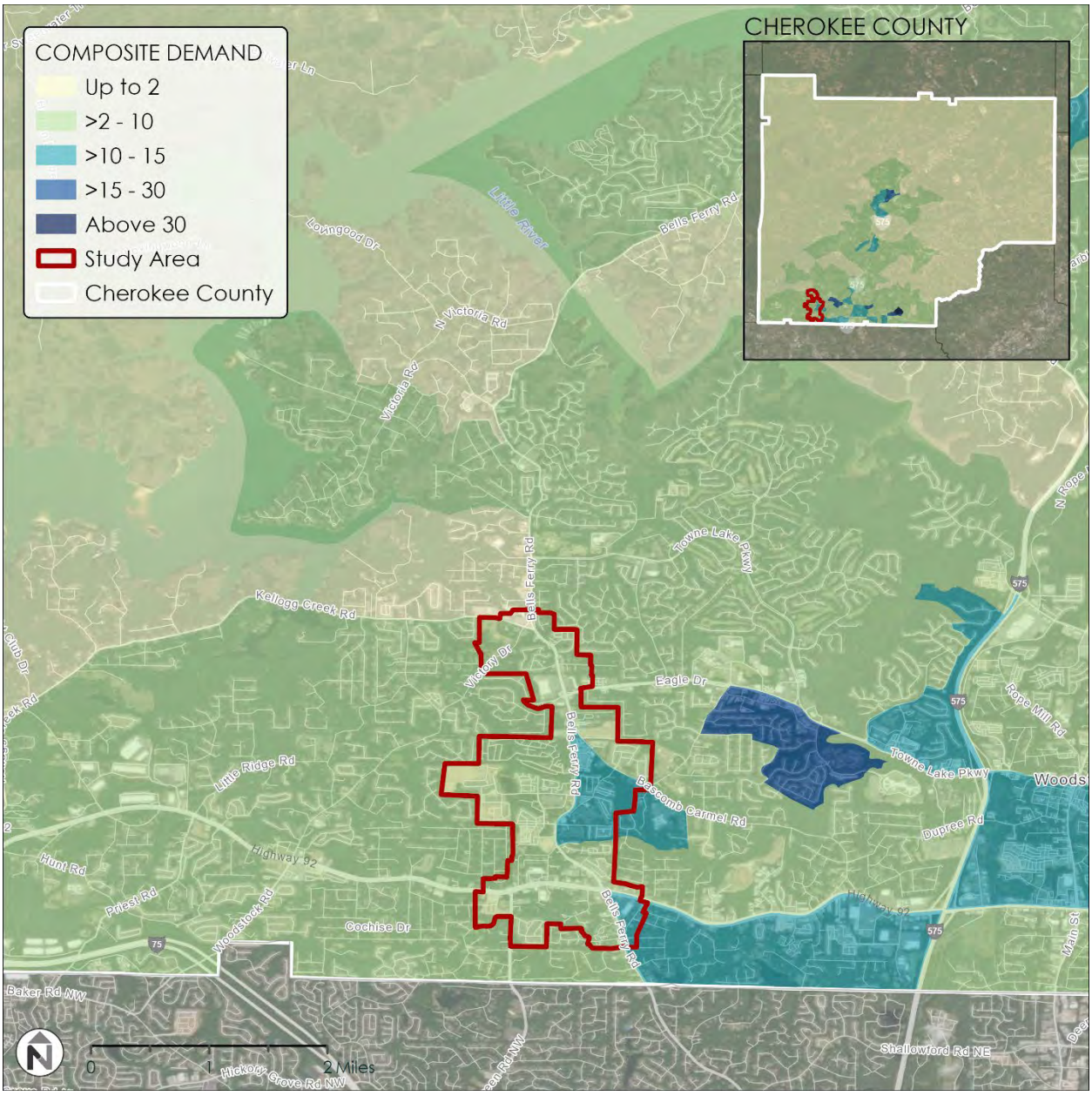
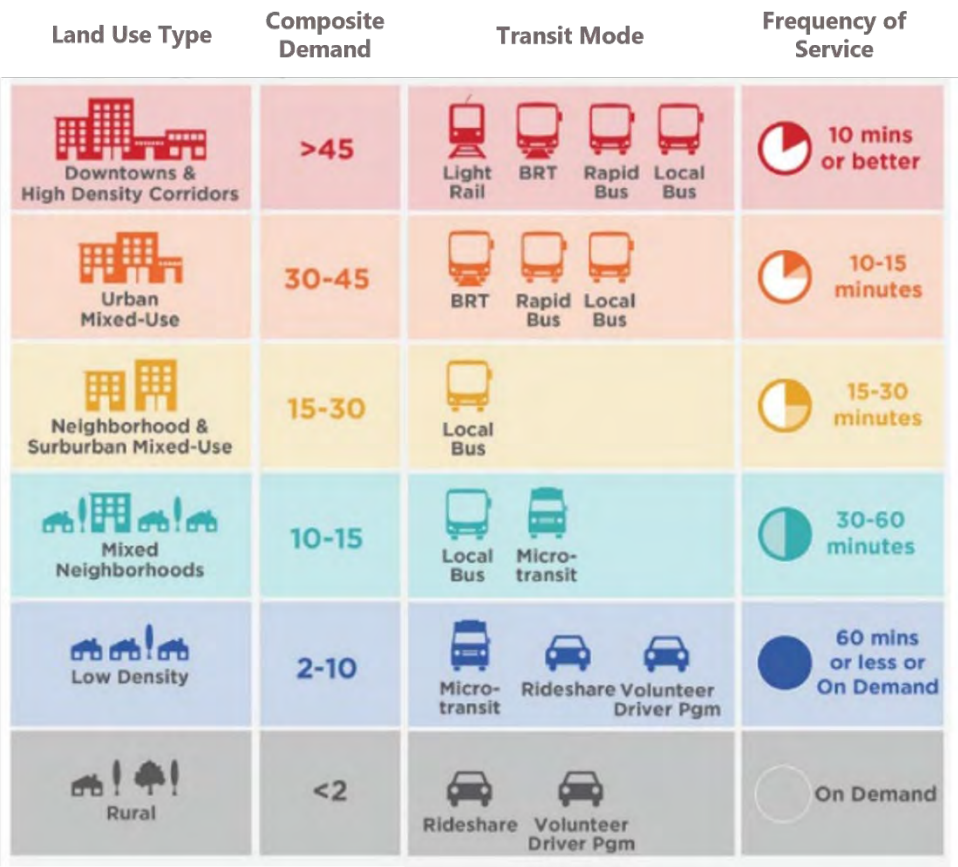


Figure 9 Composite Demand Densities and Associated Transit Mode

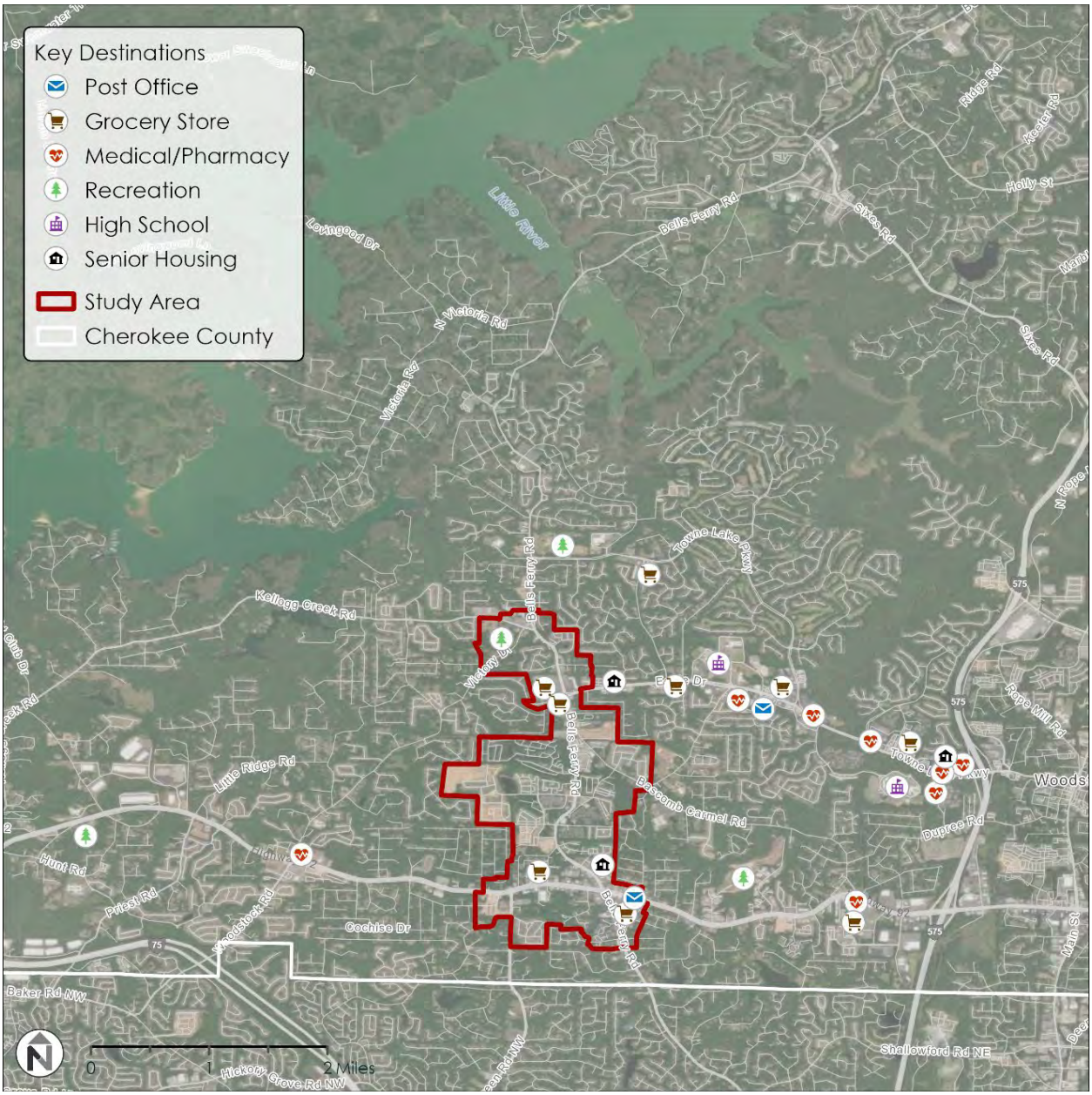


Key Destinations

Although employment locations are the largest driver of trips, other key destinations reveal non-work-related trip generators, as residents travel for other reasons (e.g., shopping) and some large groups (e.g., retirees) are out of the workforce altogether. Key destinations along and in the vicinity of the Bells Ferry Road corridor, shown in Figure 10, also help-inform future transit recommendations.

The study area has four major grocery stores, in addition to numerous smaller grocers that cater to the Latino population (e.g., Supermercado La Villa). There are also parks, a U.S. Post Office, and senior housing complexes. Outside of the study area, particularly along Eagle Drive and Towne Lake Parkway, there are numerous medical facilities, pharmacies, grocery stores, high schools, and several other major retailers.

Figure 10 Key Destination Locations



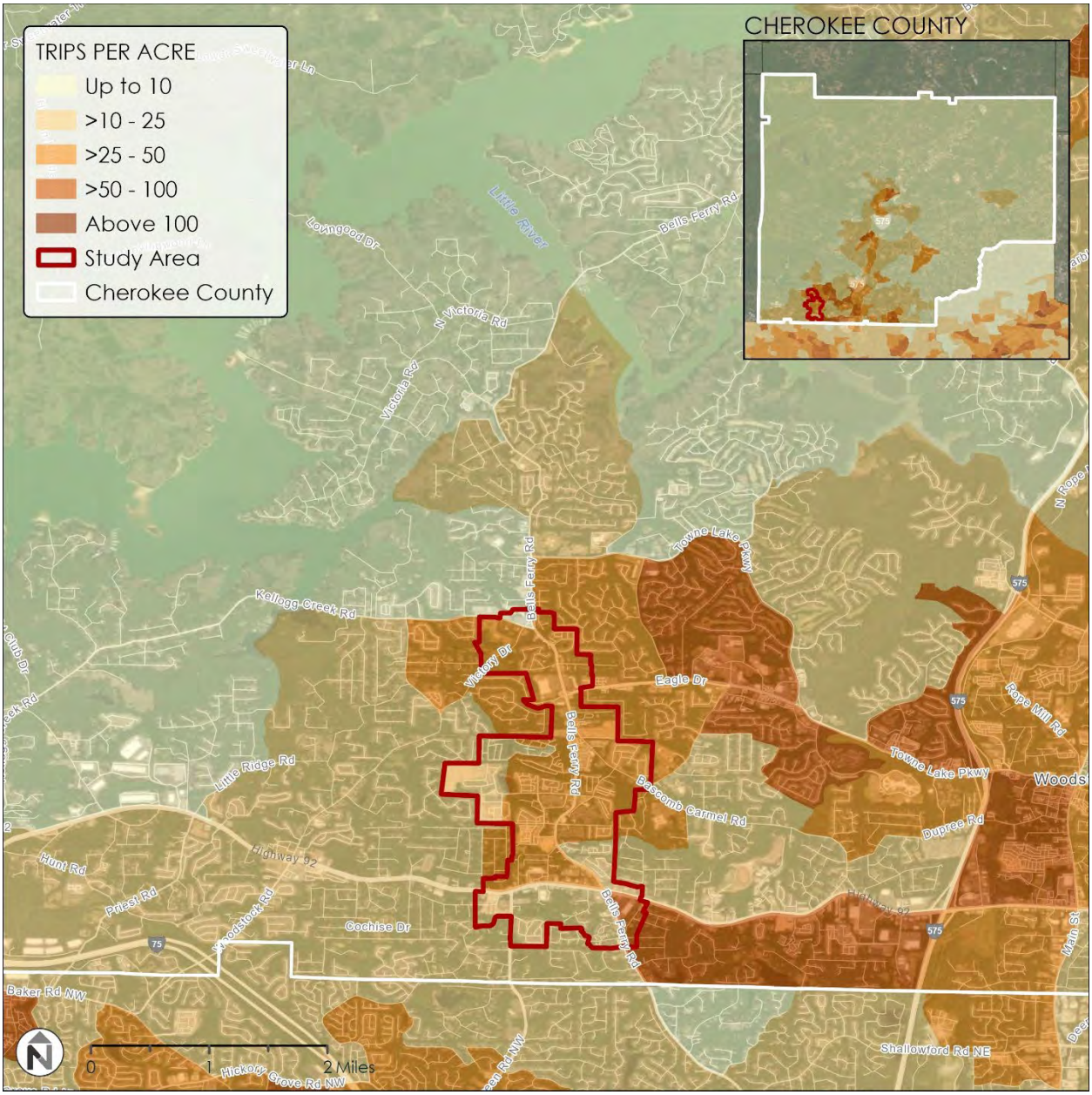
Travel Activity

The travel activity analysis examines how people move within the Bells Ferry Road corridor and surrounding areas to inform transit feasibility and service design. By analyzing both the spatial distribution of trips and variations by time of day, it highlights travel intensity and timing beyond what demographic or ridership data alone can show. The analysis uses Replica's activity-based model, which integrates demographic, land use, economic, and anonymized mobility data to represent daily travel patterns.

Travel Activity Density

Travel activity density analysis focuses on where trips originate and end, providing a spatial perspective on demand across the study area. As shown in Figure 11, the Bells Ferry Road corridor exhibits moderate travel intensity. Travel activity generally decreases west of the corridor toward the western boundary of Cherokee County and increases east of the corridor toward I-575.

Figure 11 Average Weekday Daily Trip Intensity Map



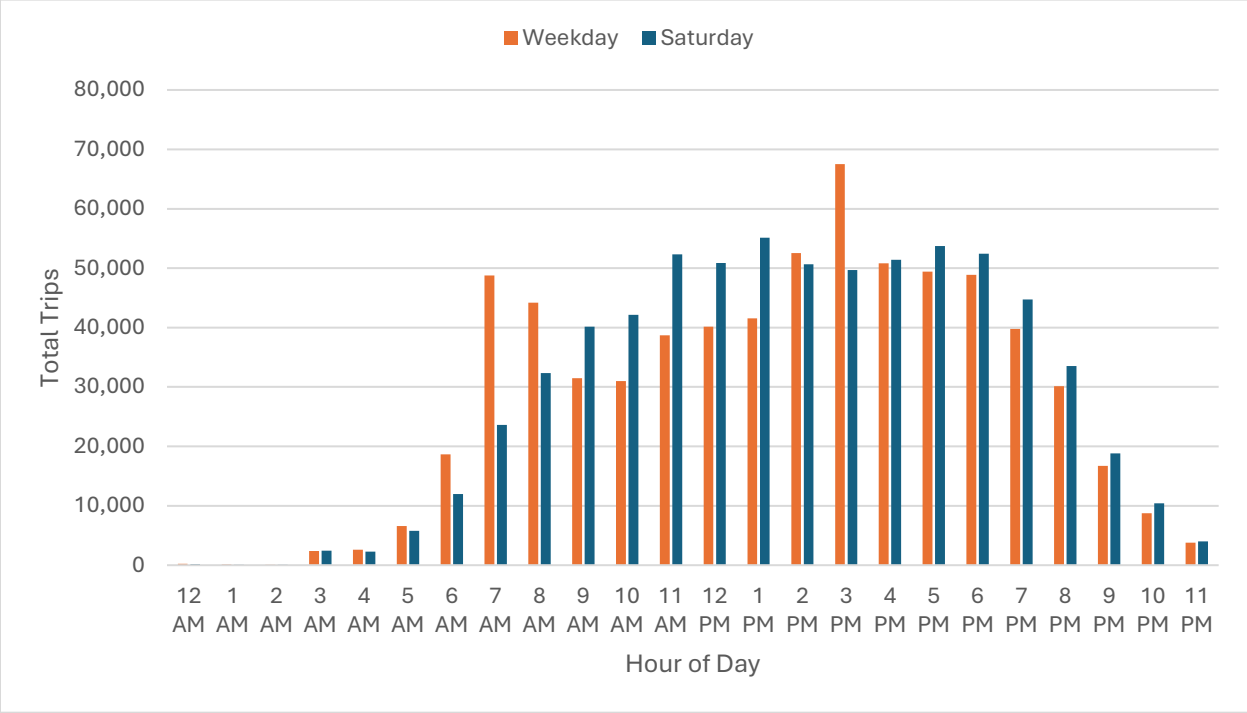
Source: Spring 2025 Replica Travel Dataset

Travel Activity by Hour of Day

Analyzing travel activity by hour of day provides insight into when travel demand occurs and whether trips are concentrated during traditional peak periods or spread more evenly throughout the day. Figure 12 shows the hourly trip patterns for an average weekday and Saturday to better understand daily travel distribution throughout the day.
The results indicate that travel activity in Cherokee County follows different patterns on weekdays and Saturdays. Weekday travel shows evidence of morning and afternoon peaking, with trips increasing during the early morning hours and again in the mid-to-late afternoon. However, travel activity remains relatively strong through the midday period, reflecting a wide range of trip purposes beyond traditional commuting. In contrast, Saturday travel activity builds more gradually in the morning and remains relatively consistent through the late morning, afternoon, and early evening hours.

CATS currently operates transit service from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekdays only, which aligns with a portion of weekday travel activity. Travel occurring outside of these hours and on weekends represents an opportunity to consider whether adjustments to service span or days of operation could better align transit availability with observed travel patterns over time. This information helps inform discussions about potential future expansion or refinement of service as resources, demand, and community priorities evolve.

Figure 12 Total Cherokee County Travel Activity by Hour



Source: Spring 2025 Replica Travel Dataset

Transit Recommendations

The following transit recommendations build on the findings of the transit service assessment and needs analysis and are intended to address identified gaps in access and mobility along the Bells Ferry Road corridor. The recommendations focus on service concepts that are appropriate for the corridor's land use pattern, travel demand, and operating context, with an emphasis on flexibility, scalability, and cost effectiveness. Together, these recommendations provide a framework for improving access to key destinations, supporting corridor redevelopment, and positioning the Bells Ferry LCI area to accommodate future transit investments as travel demand evolves.

Service Delivery Models

This section describes the primary transit service delivery models relevant to Cherokee County and evaluates how each one functions within different geographic, demographic, and operational contexts. No single transit mode is appropriate for all areas or trip types; instead, effective transit systems rely on a mix of service models that are tailored to local travel demand, land use patterns, and rider needs. Table 8 summarizes the service delivery models most relevant to Cherokee County, followed by more detailed descriptions of each model. This section concludes with a discussion of the recommended service delivery model for the Bells Ferry LCI study area.

Table 8 Service Delivery Model Summary

	How it Works	Best Fit	Role in Cherokee County
Fixed Route	Buses operate on set routes and schedules with designated stops	Areas with higher density and consistent demand	Previously used in Canton; limited ability to provide frequent service led to a transition away from this model
Microtransit	Riders request trips on demand within a defined zone	Smaller areas with moderate demand	Currently used in a designated service zone to provide flexible, same-day trips
Demand Response	Riders schedule trips in advance, typically by phone	Large, low-density areas with dispersed demand	Operated countywide to provide coverage across a large geographic area

Fixed-Route Transit

Fixed-route transit operates on predetermined routes and schedules, with vehicles serving a consistent set of stops throughout the day. This model is most effective in corridors with higher concentrations of population, employment, and activity, where predictable travel patterns and repeat demand can support frequent service. Fixed-

route transit provides clarity and reliability for riders and is the most efficient way to move larger numbers of passengers when demand is sufficiently concentrated.

Cherokee County previously operated fixed-route bus service in the Canton area. However, local travel demand and land use patterns limited the ability to provide frequent service, which constrained ridership and overall performance. In response, the County transitioned to a microtransit model that offers greater flexibility and is better aligned with the local context.

Microtransit

Microtransit is a flexible, on-demand service that operates within a defined service zone using dynamically routed vehicles, typically vans or cutaway buses. Riders request trips in real time—most commonly through a mobile app or call center—and vehicles are dispatched to serve multiple riders traveling in similar directions. Microtransit is well suited for smaller, more focused service areas where demand is present but not concentrated enough to support fixed-route service. By allowing riders to request trips when they need them, microtransit can provide greater convenience and shorter wait times than traditional demand response, while operating more efficiently than fixed-route service in lower-density environments.

Cherokee County currently operates microtransit within a designated zone, reflecting an appropriate application of this service model where trips are clustered within a manageable geographic area and riders benefit from same-day, on-demand flexibility.

Demand Response Transit

Demand response transit provides pre-scheduled, point-to-point transportation, typically requiring riders to request trips in advance, often at least one day ahead. This model offers a high degree of flexibility in routing and trip origins and destinations, making it well suited for large service areas with dispersed demand. Demand response service is commonly used to serve rural and suburban areas, as well as riders with specialized mobility needs.

Cherokee County operates countywide demand response service across a very large geographic area. Given the size of the service area and the dispersed nature of travel demand, this represents an appropriate and effective application of demand response transit. While advance booking limits spontaneity for riders, the model allows trips to be grouped efficiently over long distances and ensures countywide access to transit services.

Service Delivery Model Recommendations

The Bells Ferry LCI study area exhibits characteristics that indicate a need for additional mobility options beyond the existing countywide demand response service, while not meeting the thresholds typically required to support traditional fixed-route transit. The transit propensity analysis demonstrates that there are populations within and near the corridor with a higher likelihood of using transit, indicating an underlying need for service. In addition, the composite demand analysis shows that overall demand levels are best suited to an on-demand service model rather than fixed-route transit.

Microtransit is therefore recommended as the most appropriate service delivery model for the Bells Ferry Road corridor. Compared to countywide demand response, microtransit can provide more convenient, same-day trip requests and shorter travel times within a focused service area, making it better suited to meeting local travel needs. Compared to fixed-route transit, microtransit offers greater flexibility and scalability in a corridor where demand is present but dispersed. In addition, CATS has established operational experience with microtransit, and the existing service has demonstrated positive performance and customer acceptance. Leveraging this experience provides a practical, implementable, and scalable approach to expanding transit access in the Bells Ferry LCI area while remaining aligned with current operating practices.

Microtransit Zone Design

Effective microtransit service begins with thoughtful zone design. The size, location, and configuration of a microtransit zone directly influence service productivity, rider experience, and operational efficiency. This section first summarizes microtransit zone design best practices drawn from peer experience and industry guidance. These best practices then inform the recommended microtransit zone boundary for the Bells Ferry Road corridor.

Zone Design Best Practices

While microtransit service should always be tailored to local conditions, experience from peer agencies shows that successful microtransit zones tend to share common characteristics. The following best practices consistently support strong performance, reliable operations, and positive rider experiences, and provide a framework for evaluating and refining the recommended zone for the Bells Ferry Road corridor.

1. **Mix of trip types:** Microtransit zones should support a diverse mix of trip purposes in order to generate consistent, all-day demand. Zones are most productive when they include both populations likely to use transit and destinations that generate frequent trips.

- Demographics: Zones should include populations that are more likely to rely on or benefit from transit, such as lower-income households, residents without access to a personal vehicle, older adults, and people with disabilities.
- Places to go: Zones should encompass key trip generators, including employment areas, shopping destinations (particularly grocery stores), and other community or activity centers that generate regular travel demand.

2. **Manageable but productive zone size:** Zone size has a direct influence on service reliability, wait times, and cost efficiency. Zones that are too large often result in long trips and poor productivity, while zones that are too small may limit usefulness.
   - Right-sized for demand: Zones should be scaled to balance coverage with the ability to efficiently group trips and maintain reasonable travel times.
   - Responsive to local context: Appropriate zone size will vary based on population and employment density, street network connectivity, and the distribution of trip generators.
   - Vehicle coverage: Zones should be designed to support at least two vehicles during most operating periods. Single-vehicle zones generally do not provide sufficient coverage or reliability, except during very low-demand times.

3. **Easy to understand and approachable:** Microtransit is most successful when riders can quickly understand where the service operates and whether it applies to them.
   - Clear identity: Zones should correspond to an easy-to-remember area or place name that resonates with the community.
   - Logical boundaries: Boundaries should follow well-known roads, landmarks, or geographic features to avoid confusion and make the service area intuitive.
   - Simple communication: Clear and logical zone design reduces the need for extensive education and improves rider confidence in using the service.

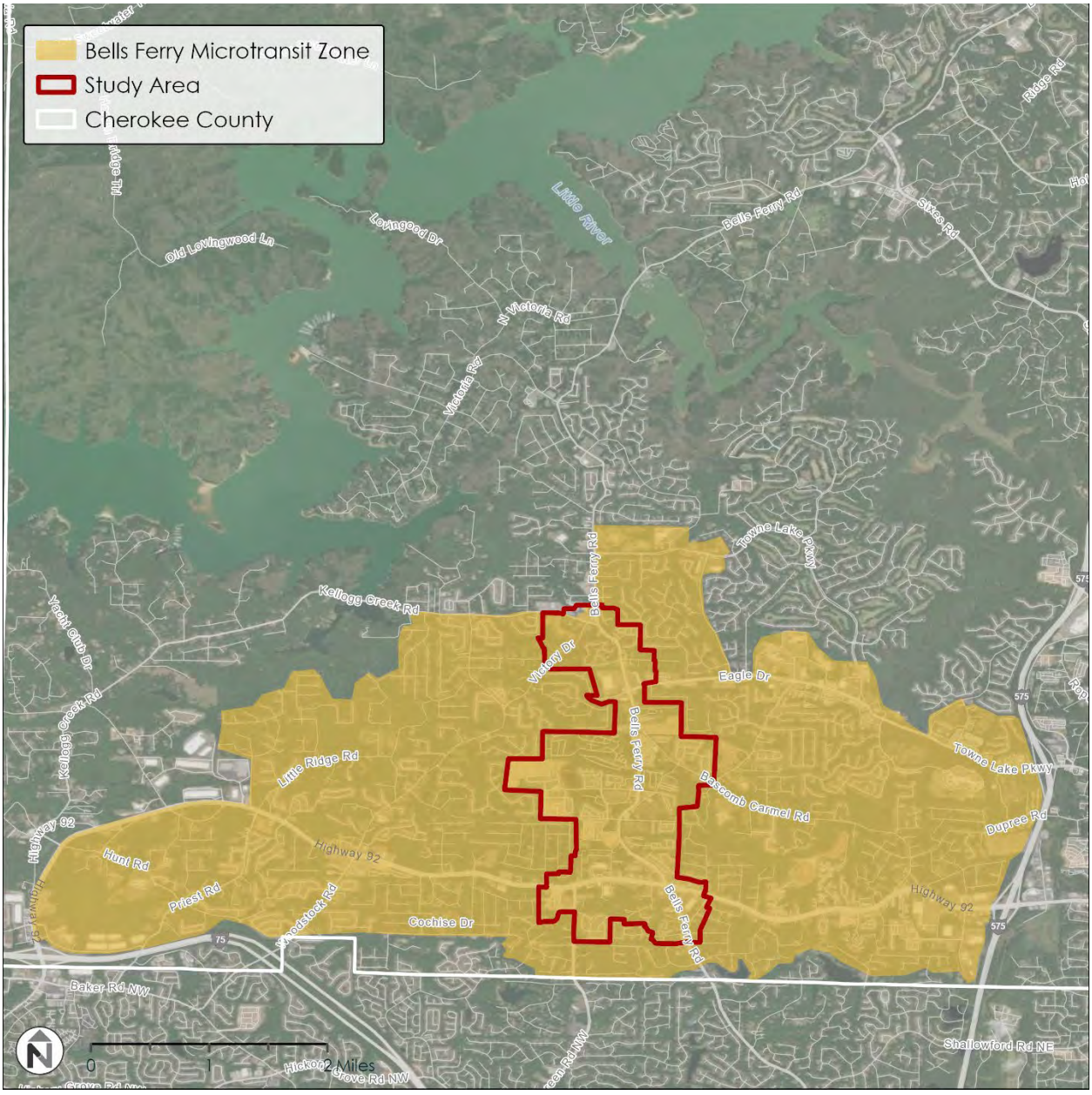
Zone Design Recommendations

Guided by the best practices outlined above, a recommended microtransit zone was developed for the Bells Ferry Road corridor. The proposed zone is centered on the Bells Ferry Road corridor and is designed to capture the primary residential neighborhoods, commercial destinations, and activity centers that generate travel demand in southwestern Cherokee County.

To the east, the zone extends to Interstate 575, which serves as a clear physical boundary. To the south, the zone extends to the Cherokee County boundary with Cobb County, capturing destinations along Highway 92 and adjacent neighborhoods within Cherokee County. On the west, the zone extends to include residential neighborhoods near the Cherokee County and Bartow County line. To the north, the zone includes nearby residential areas while intentionally limiting expansion into lower-density areas to maintain service efficiency.

The total recommended zone area is approximately 16.1 square miles, which is 13% larger than the existing CATS microtransit zone in Canton (approximately 14.2 square miles). This modest increase reflects the nature of activity and destinations in the area, while remaining consistent with current operating experience and microtransit best practices. Figure 13 shows the recommended zone boundary.

Figure 13 Bells Ferry Microtransit Zone



Service Requirements

The recommended microtransit service for the Bells Ferry Road corridor should be implemented using the same days and span of service as existing CATS microtransit and demand response services, operating Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Aligning the initial service with current operations supports a straightforward launch by leveraging established operating practices, staffing patterns, and fleet availability.

While the recommended days and hours of operation are consistent with existing service, the scale of the Bells Ferry zone would require more service hours than the current microtransit zone, as shown in Table 9. The existing zone currently operates with a peak of three vehicles and approximately 3,286 annual revenue hours (rounded to 3,290 revenue hours for estimation purposes). By comparison, the recommended Bells Ferry microtransit zone is estimated to require three to four peak vehicles and approximately 6,240 to 8,320 annual vehicle revenue hours to provide reliable coverage within the proposed service area.

These vehicle and service hour estimates reflect conditions for a mature system operating at steady-state demand. As with most new microtransit services, ridership and resource requirements are expected to ramp up over time as public awareness grows and travel behavior adjusts. During the initial launch period, vehicle deployment and service hours may be phased or adjusted to align with observed demand and operational capacity. Combined at maturity, the two zones would result in a total microtransit program requirement of six to seven peak vehicles and approximately 9,530 to 11,610 annual vehicle revenue hours.

Table 9 Existing and Recommended Microtransit Zone Service Requirements

	Existing Microtransit Zone (2024 Actual)	Bells Ferry Recommended Microtransit Zone (Estimates)	Total
Days of Operation	Monday - Friday	Monday - Friday	Monday - Friday
Span of Service	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm
Peak Vehicles	3	3 - 4	7
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	3,290	6,240 - 8,320	9,530 - 11,610

Travel activity patterns identified in this study support consideration of expanded service hours beyond the initial operating window as a future enhancement to the microtransit program. Weekday travel activity increases sharply beginning around 7:00 a.m. and remains strong into the early evening, indicating that earlier morning and later evening service could better align transit availability with observed demand. As a recommended option for future consideration, weekday service could begin as early as 7:00 a.m. and extend through 8:00 p.m. to capture the most active travel periods.

In addition, Saturday service should be considered as a logical next step in expanding microtransit. Travel activity in Cherokee County on Saturdays is comparable to weekday levels, though demand builds later in the morning, suggesting a service window from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. would capture the majority of demand. Implementation of extended weekday hours and Saturday service should be pursued through a phased approach, with decisions informed by ridership performance, operational capacity, and available funding.

While extended weekday hours and the introduction of Saturday service show promise based on observed travel patterns, any expansion of service must be balanced with CATS' current resource constraints. Staffing availability, vehicle capacity, and facility limitations will play a critical role in determining the pace and feasibility of service enhancements.

Community Benefits

The recommended Bells Ferry microtransit service would expand transit coverage and access in southwestern Cherokee County while building on the success of the existing microtransit program. The proposed zone would add approximately 16.1 square miles of service area, bringing the total microtransit service area to approximately 30.3 square miles. Together, the two zones would serve an estimated 58,000 residents and 20,300 jobs, significantly increasing access to employment, shopping, medical services, and other daily destinations along the Bells Ferry Road corridor and surrounding areas. Zone statistics are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Existing and Recommended Microtransit Zone Service Requirements

	Existing Microtransit Zone (2024 Actual)	Bells Ferry Recommended Microtransit Zone (Estimates)	Total
Zone Size	14.2	16.1	30.3
Annual Passengers	12,258	14,800 - 22,200	27,058 - 34,458
Population Served	19,200	38,800	58,000
Jobs Served	10,100	10,200	20,300

The Bells Ferry zone is projected to generate higher ridership than the existing microtransit zone due in large part to its larger population base and concentration of destinations. While the existing zone serves approximately 19,200 residents and carried 12,258 passengers in 2024, the Bells Ferry zone would serve an estimated 38,800 residents and is projected to carry between 14,800 and 22,200 annual passengers. This projected range reflects uncertainty, as ridership will depend on several factors including fuel prices, rideshare competition, and outreach effectiveness. As with most new services, ridership is expected to ramp up over time as awareness increases and usage patterns

stabilize. Performance during the first year of operation should therefore be evaluated in the context of this expected ramp-up period.

Cost Estimates

This section presents planning-level cost estimates associated with implementing the recommended microtransit service for the Bells Ferry Road corridor. Cost estimates are organized into operating and maintenance costs and capital costs, reflecting both the ongoing resources required to operate the service and the one-time investments needed to support service implementation. The estimates are intended to provide a transparent framework for understanding the scale of financial resources associated with the recommended service and to inform discussions related to funding, phasing, and implementation.

Operating and Maintenance Costs Assumptions

Operating and maintenance (O&M) costs were estimated using data from the 2024 National Transit Database (NTD), based on CATS demand response operating cost per revenue hour of $78.65. Because microtransit and demand response services share similar operating characteristics, this value was used as a proxy for estimating microtransit operating costs. The base cost was escalated using an annual inflation rate of 2.7 percent to reflect expected operating conditions, resulting in an estimated 2026 cost of $82.95 per revenue hour, shown in Table 11.

These estimates reflect fully allocated operating costs, consistent with NTD reporting practices, and assume that costs increase proportionally with additional service. Actual incremental or marginal costs associated with adding service may be lower, as some costs may not increase with additional service hours (e.g. general administration, facilities, and other fixed overhead). As a result, the totals presented represent a conservative, planning-level estimate of operating costs and may overstate the incremental cost of implementing the recommended service.

Table 11 Annual O&M Cost per Revenue Hour

	O&M Cost per Revenue Hour
2024 National Transit Dataset	$78.65
2026 Estimate	$82.95

Operating and Maintenance Cost Estimates

Table 12 summarizes estimated annual vehicle revenue hours and associated (O&M) costs for the existing microtransit zone and the recommended Bells Ferry microtransit zone. The recommended Bells Ferry service would represent a substantial expansion of

CATS' existing microtransit program and is estimated to increase total microtransit O&M costs by approximately $518,000 to $690,000 annually. While significant, this cost increase represents a proportional expansion of service and provides important context for evaluating funding needs, phasing strategies, and opportunities to refine service levels over time.

Table 12 Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs

	Existing Microtransit Zone	Bells Ferry Recommended Microtransit Zone	Total
Revenue Hours	3,290	6,240 - 8,320	9,530 - 11,610
O&M Costs	$273,000	$518,000 - $690,000	$791,000 - $963,000

Capital Costs Estimates

Capital cost estimates were developed to identify the one-time investments associated with implementing the recommended Bells Ferry microtransit service. These estimates focus on vehicle procurement and passenger amenities that support service operations and enhance the rider experience. Actual capital costs may vary based on vehicle specifications, procurement timing, manufacturer availability, and site-specific conditions at proposed stop locations.

To operate the recommended Bells Ferry microtransit zone, CATS is assumed to procure five additional vehicles, including four vehicles needed to meet peak service requirements and one spare vehicle to support maintenance and ensure service reliability. Vehicles are assumed to be 14-passenger cutaway vehicles, consistent with the existing CATS microtransit fleet. Maintaining consistency in vehicle type allows CATS to leverage established maintenance practices, operator training, and fueling infrastructure.

Consistent with the Bells Ferry Road corridor's long-term vision to support increased bicycle travel, vehicle procurement should also consider equipping vehicles with front-mounted bicycle racks. Incorporating bicycle accommodations would support multimodal trips and better integrate microtransit with planned bicycle facilities along the corridor, aligning the service with broader mobility and active transportation goals.

In addition to the vehicles themselves, fleet-related capital costs include onboard equipment necessary to support service operations and safety, such as tablets, tablet mounts and charging equipment, and onboard camera systems. These components support dispatching, communication, and safety monitoring and are assumed to be installed on all new vehicles.

Bus stops and passenger amenities are considered optional elements of the recommended microtransit service and may be implemented selectively based on

funding availability and observed ridership patterns. While microtransit primarily operates as a curb-to-curb service, designated stops can improve service visibility, provide more comfortable waiting environments, and help concentrate demand at high-use locations. Strategic stop placement can also reinforce corridor identity and support broader placemaking goals identified in the Bells Ferry LCI.

Potential locations where bus stops could be considered include major retail and community destinations such as Kroger and ALDI on Eagle Drive, Walmart on Bells Ferry Road, Lidl and Kroger on Highway 92, Food Depot at Highway 92 and Bells Ferry Road, the Target shopping center on Highway 92, and the future Recreation and Senior Center on Alabama Road. Where feasible, stops could be integrated into existing parking lots or publicly accessible spaces to minimize infrastructure costs and streamline implementation.

CATS and Cherokee County may also consider pursuing future funding opportunities, such as a 2027 LCI application, to support development of enhanced transit stop amenities at one or more key locations. Enhanced stops could incorporate shelters, seating, landscaping, and public art or mural elements to create vibrant, recognizable community spaces. If CATS elects to implement stops, it is assumed that approximately eight signed stop locations could be installed, with up to four shelters provided at the highest-ridership locations. The number, design, and level of amenities should ultimately be determined based on funding availability, site conditions, and observed ridership demand. Capital cost estimates are shown in Table 13.

Table 13 Capital Costs

Category	Item	Unit Cost	Count	Total
Fleet	Vehicle (14-passenger cutaway)	$150,000	5	$750,000
	Bicycle rack	$500	5	$2,500
	Tablet	$250	5	$1,250
	Tablet charger and holder	$500	5	$2,500
	Cameras	$2,300	5	$11,500
Bus Stops	Shelter	$15,000	4	$60,000
	Bus stop sign	$1,200	8	$9,600
	Trashcan	$300	8	$2,400
	Bench	$3,000	8	$24,000

Fare Policy

Fare policy plays an important role in shaping ridership, service efficiency, and overall financial sustainability. Fare levels and structures influence who uses transit, how

frequently the service is used, and the types of trips that are taken. For on-demand services in particular, fare policy can be used to balance affordability with the need to manage demand and maintain reliable service. Clear, simple fare structures also improve customer understanding and reduce barriers to use, which is especially important for services that rely on technology-based booking and flexible routing.

For the Bells Ferry Road corridor, it is recommended that fares be consistent with the existing CATS microtransit fare structure. Maintaining a distance-based fare structure supports operational efficiency while providing consistency across the system. Under this approach, one-way trips up to five miles would cost $2, while trips exceeding five miles would cost $3. Aligning fares with the current microtransit zone leverages rider familiarity, simplifies administration, and supports seamless expansion of service without introducing additional complexity or confusion for customers.

As part of this recommended service expansion, CATS should also continue working with Ecolane, the current microtransit software provider, to implement in app fare payment. Introducing a digital payment option would support operational efficiency, reduce onboard fare handling, and improve the customer experience. However, implementation of app-based payment should be structured to maintain equitable access by continuing to support alternative payment options for riders who are unable to use smartphone-based tools.

Accessibility Provisions

The recommended microtransit service for the Bells Ferry Road corridor will be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities and will comply with all applicable requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The service is intended to be available to the general public and will provide equivalent access for riders who use mobility devices or have other accessibility needs, consistent with federal transit accessibility standards.

Vehicles used for the recommended service are assumed to be similar to those currently operated by CATS. The existing CATS fleet consists primarily of cutaway vehicles equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps, securement areas, and other accessibility features, and all vehicles are wheelchair accessible. Utilizing vehicles consistent with the current fleet ensures that accessibility is built into the service from the outset and avoids the need for specialized or segregated service.

The microtransit service is also expected to provide accessible booking options, including the ability to request trips by phone in addition to app-based booking, ensuring that riders without smartphones or with visual or cognitive impairments are able to use the service. Operating policies, driver training, and customer service practices should continue to support ADA compliance, including assistance with boarding and securement, reasonable accommodation of service animals, and equitable service

availability. Where appropriate, coordination between microtransit and existing demand response services can further support accessible mobility across the county.

Implementation Strategies

The recommended microtransit service for the Bells Ferry Road corridor is expected to be implemented using CATS' existing in-house operating model and should build directly on the agency's current microtransit operations. CATS already operates both demand response and microtransit services internally, and the Bells Ferry service can be structured as an extension of the existing microtransit program, rather than as a new standalone service. This approach allows CATS to rely on established operating practices, service policies, staffing structures, and customer service procedures, reducing implementation complexity and risk.

Implementation of the new microtransit zone will require coordination with the current microtransit software provider Ecolane. Rather than developing new service rules, CATS can apply its existing microtransit policies and booking parameters to the Bells Ferry zone, with configuration limited primarily to defining the new zone boundaries, vehicle assignments, and service schedules within the platform. Leveraging the existing system configuration will streamline setup and support consistency for both staff and riders.

The recommended service assumes a peak requirement of up to five vehicles operating within the Bells Ferry microtransit zone. To support this level of service, CATS will need to procure additional vehicles, including spare vehicles to maintain reliability and accommodate maintenance needs. Vehicles are assumed to be similar to those currently used in the CATS microtransit fleet, allowing the agency to take advantage of existing maintenance practices, driver training, and fleet management procedures.

Phased Implementation Approach

To reduce risk and allow for operational refinement, the Bells Ferry microtransit service should be implemented using a phased approach:

- Phase 1: Service Setup and Internal Coordination - Finalize the Bells Ferry zone boundary, procure and assign vehicles, configure the zone within the existing scheduling and dispatch platform, and confirm staffing and training needs using established microtransit procedures.

- Phase 2: Service Launch - Initiate service using the same weekday service hours as the existing microtransit zone. Early operations should be closely monitored to ensure smooth integration with current services and to address any operational or customer service issues.

- Phase 3: Service Refinement and Expansion Evaluation - Use performance data and customer feedback to evaluate potential refinements, including

adjustments to service hours, vehicle allocation, or the introduction of Saturday service, consistent with findings from the travel activity analysis.

Marketing and Rider Education

Marketing and outreach efforts should build on CATS' existing microtransit branding and communication materials. Outreach should focus on raising awareness of the new service. Educational messaging should emphasize the use of the smartphone app for trip booking, which is more efficient than phone-based reservations and supports smoother operations.

Recommended outreach tools include social media, printed brochures and flyers, short instructional videos, and simple step-by-step guides that demonstrate how to request trips using the app. Given the relatively high proportion of Spanish-speaking residents in the Bells Ferry corridor, outreach materials and customer education efforts should be provided in both English and Spanish to ensure broad accessibility and understanding.

Pre-Launch Implementation Checklist

Prior to launching service, the following key steps should be completed:

- Finalize and map the Bells Ferry microtransit zone boundary
- Configure the new zone within the existing Ecolane platform
- Assign vehicles and confirm spare vehicle availability
- Brief operators, dispatchers, and customer service staff on zone-specific details
- Update marketing and educational materials to reflect the new service area
- Test booking and dispatch functionality within the new zone
- Confirm performance monitoring and reporting procedures

Performance Monitoring and Ongoing Adjustment

Following service launch, CATS should monitor performance using the same metrics currently used for the existing microtransit service, including ridership, riders per revenue hour, trip denials, wait times, and customer feedback. Using consistent metrics across zones will allow CATS to compare performance, identify operational issues, and make data-driven decisions about service adjustments. This iterative approach supports continuous improvement while ensuring that the Bells Ferry microtransit service remains aligned with agency goals and rider needs.

Engagement Summary

BELLS FERRY
LCI PLAN UPDATE

Engagement Summary

Cherokee County
1831
GEORGIA

Introduction

The Bells Ferry LCI Plan project team led a variety of community engagement events and activities throughout the life of the project, leaning on both traditional and innovative engagement methods. The engagement efforts consisted of three phases, as follows:

- Phase 1: Existing Conditions and Community Visioning
- Phase 2: Plan Development & Future Scenarios
- Phase 3: Recommendations and Final Plan

During Phase 1, the project team introduced stakeholders and community members to the project, presented preliminary findings, and gathered input. Engagement activities included a TAC kickoff meeting, pop-up outreach at Hobgood Park, interactive activities on the project website, focus groups, and a walking tour.

During the second phase of engagement, the project team focused on presenting emerging draft concepts, transportation recommendations, and preliminary development scenarios. Engagement efforts involved two TAC meetings, pop-up outreach at Greater Church's Friendsgiving event, focus groups, and opportunities for engagement on the project website.

The final phase of engagement focused on the presentation of refined draft recommendations, coupled with continued community input to ensure alignment with public priorities. Engagement opportunities included an educational transportation workshop, a community open house, a TAC meeting, and opportunities for engagement on the project website.

Pop-Ups



During Phase 1, the project team facilitated pop-up community outreach at Little League Opening Day at Hobgood Park on September 6th, 2025. The park is located just north of the study area. The team spoke with approximately 50 community members and gathered insightful initial feedback. The crowd was mostly parents and family members of the young athletes. Throughout the pop-up, the project team engaged the community through discussion and passed out informational flyers directing folks to complete engagement activities on the project website. The key impressions from these conversations indicate strong community sentiment regarding:

- A need to improve traffic flow, with a particular desire to focus on maintenance and congestion improvements
- A clear desire for improved pedestrian and bicycle options
- Requests to limit future development along the corridor, citing its contribution to increased traffic and a desire to preserve the character of the community

During the second phase of engagement, the project team staffed a booth at the Friendsgiving event at Greater Church on November 23, 2025, attended by approximately 250 families from neighborhoods near the corridor. This event featured interactive engagement boards where participants could vote on their preferred types of development distributed across five strategic nodes within the study area. The potential development types were described as follows:

- **Community crossroads:** Primarily dense, commercial and retail-oriented (department stores; restaurants; offices; employment-heavy light Industrial)
- **Community gathering:** Some preservation, while encouraging denser in-fill development that includes free gathering places
- **Modern bedroom community:** Predominantly dense and housing-focused; some accessory uses included (small parks; small shops; etc.)
- **Preservation and activation:** Housing preserved as-is; commercial redeveloped intentionally and contextually to encourage more visual activation

The five strategic nodes within the study area were defined as centering around the following intersections:

- **Node #1:** Highway 92 @ Bells Ferry Road
- **Node #2:** Shadowood Drive @ Robin Road
- **Node #3:** Bells Ferry Road @ Bascomb Carmel Road
- **Node #4:** Bells Ferry Road @ Eagle Drive
- **Node #5:** Bells Ferry Road @ Kellogg Creek Road

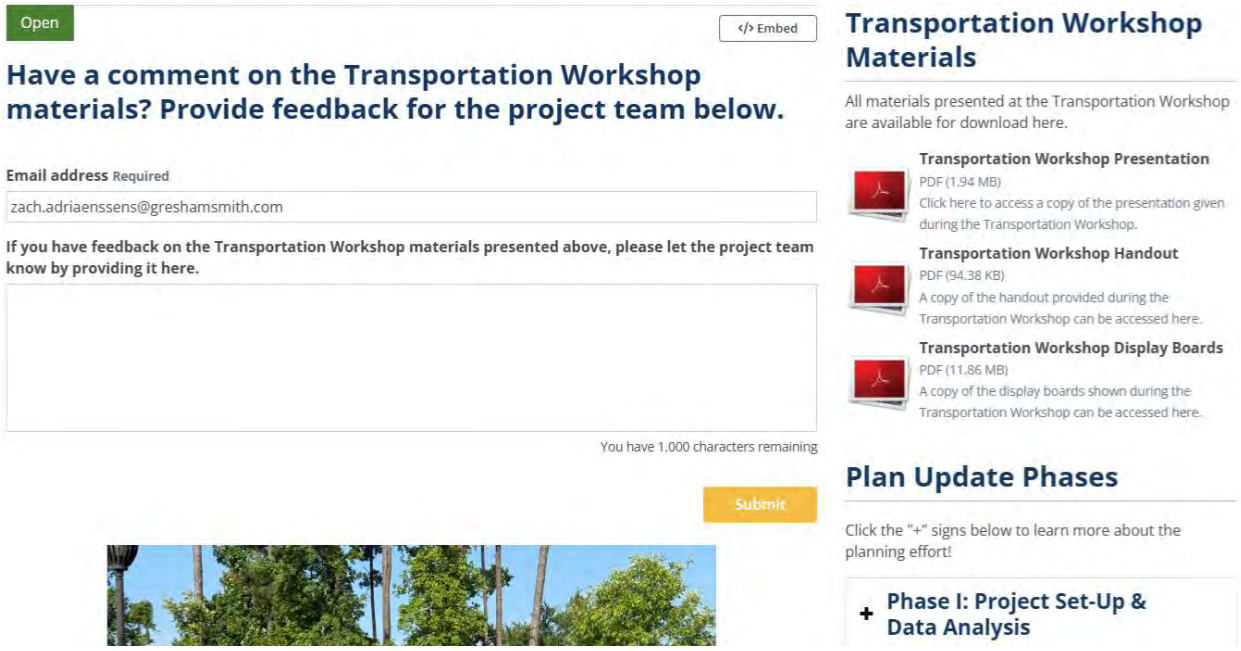
Participants were instructed to vote on what type of development they would like to see in each node by placing a pushpin in the relevant column. The results of the exercise are detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Friendsgiving Engagement Exercise Results

	Community Crossroads Development Type	Community Gathering Development Type	Modern Bedroom Community Development Type	Preservation and Activation Development Type
Node #1	4	8	2	1
Node #2	3	8	1	1
Node #3	1	8	1	0
Node #4	1	8	0	1
Node #5	1	6	8	0
Total	10	38	12	3

The voting results from the Friendsgiving community event displayed overwhelming support for the 'community gathering' type of development across the corridor. Participants also conveyed that shopping-oriented development is appropriate around Node 1 (Hwy 92 and Bells Ferry Road) and more housing stock is desired around Node 5 (Bells Ferry Road and Kellogg Creek Road). Participants generally favored investments in pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, development types that promote social interaction, and the creation of free communal spaces through placemaking as foundational to creating vibrant, livable places.

Website



The project team maintained an interactive project website throughout the life of the project. The website presented project information digitally and offered tools for mapping input and surveys, broadening access for community members unable to attend in-person events. At each in-person touchpoint, the project team invited members of the community to leave feedback on the website and encourage their friends and family to do the same. Website engagement revealed a strong community consensus around safety and walkability concerns.

Focus Groups



During the first phase of engagement, targeted focus groups were conducted to gather nuanced input from small business owners and landowners. The first focus group was held virtually in English, while a second focus group was conducted in-person with Spanish-speaking participants to ensure inclusivity and capture perspectives reflective of the corridor's diverse population.

During Phase 2 engagement, additional focus groups, including follow-up sessions with business leaders and Spanish-speaking residents, continued to refine and validate planning directions. In a focus group with faith-based leaders, participants identified a need for a built environment that felt interwoven, with opportunities to safely walk and bike between different points of interest. Conversations highlighted the importance of economic opportunity balanced with affordability, safety, and fun.

Walking Tour

A walking tour was organized along the southern end of Bells Ferry Road on September 19, 2025, allowing both the project team and community members to observe firsthand challenges related to pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, and neighborhood character.

During the walking tour, key stakeholders recorded their heartrate and location data while observing and discussing the surrounding context and built environment. Participants started near the Highway 92 and Bells Ferry Road intersections and walked northbound along the eastern side of Bells Ferry Road, crossing to the western side and turning back at Red Barn Road.

Figure 1 below visualizes walking tour participants' stress levels, with dark red representing the most stress and dark blue representing the least stress. The bigger circles represent a larger amount of data collected (i.e., more time spent at the location) and correspond to the locations where walking tour participants stopped to discuss their observations.

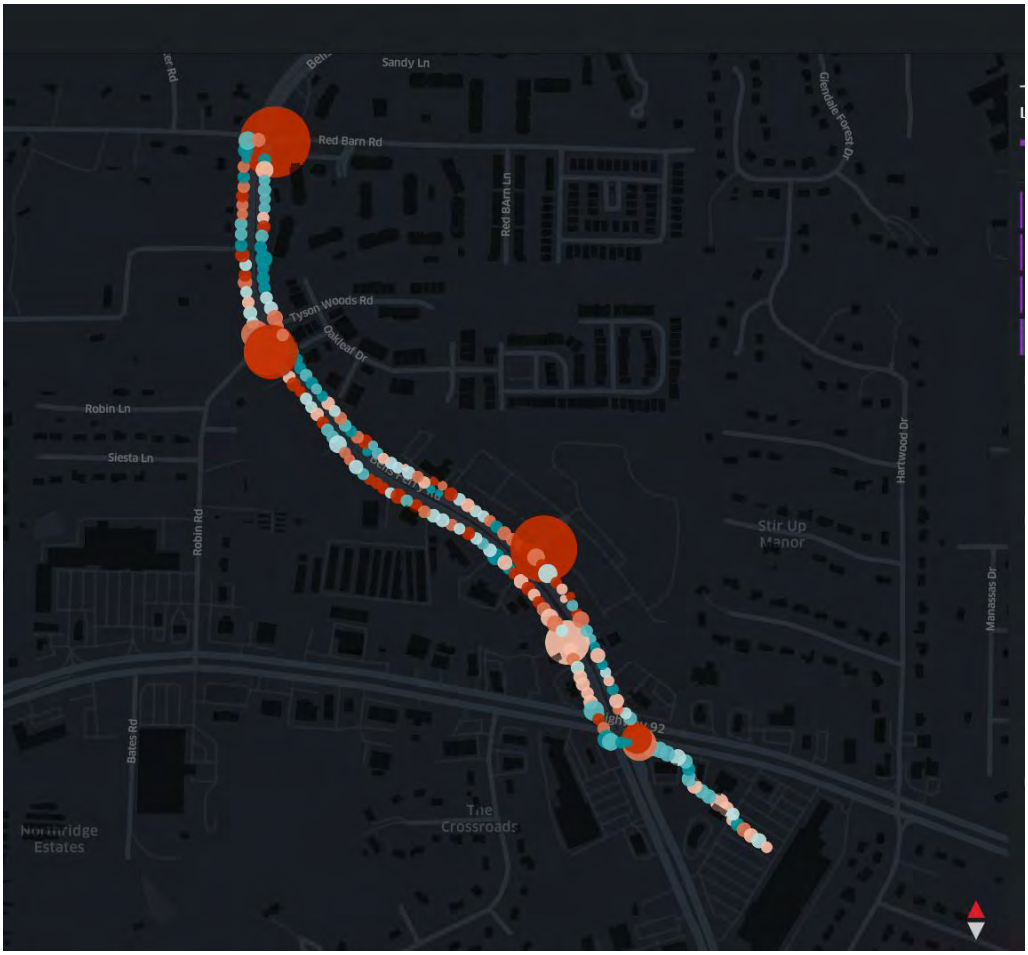


Figure 1: Stress Data Visualization (Circles)

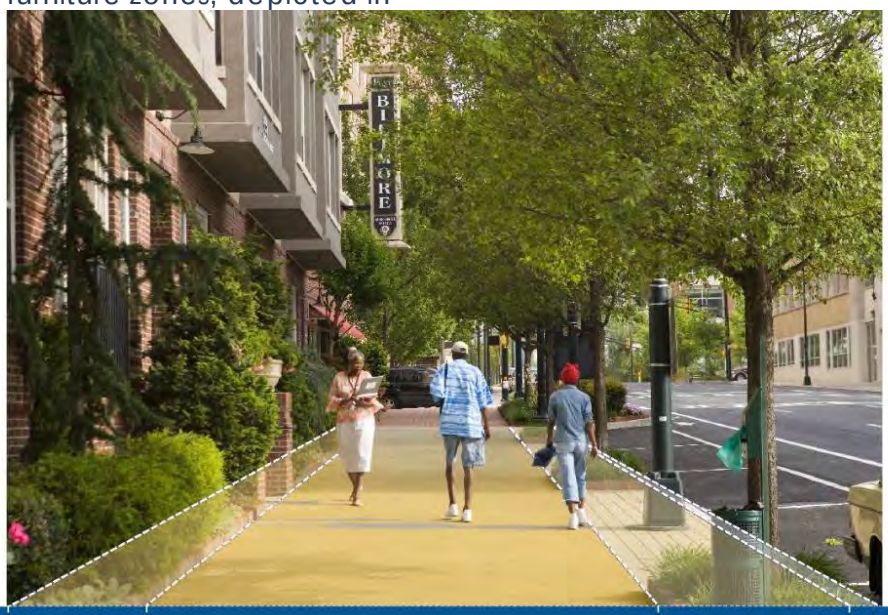
Pedestrians felt calmer traversing areas with fewer busy driveways and roadway crossings, more pedestrian-friendly design elements, and an overall more welcoming feel. The data visualizations indicate that participants felt calm while walking past high-density residential land uses (i.e., townhouse and multi-family developments) along the northeastern quadrant of the walking route. These types of developments, such as The Everlee apartments, tend to offer pedestrian-friendly tree cover and visually pleasant landscaping to pedestrians walking past their frontages.



Higher stress levels corresponded to participants walking near commercial land uses, busy intersections and driveways, unappealing environments like vacant lots and construction sites, and areas with less tree cover.



These findings align with best practices from GDOT's Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide, which states that sidewalk design should go beyond the bare minimum in both width and amenities, particularly on streets with high traffic volumes and speeds where pedestrians may feel less safe and avoid walking. The guide presents the composition of a sidewalk as three zones – with frontage, pedestrian circulation, and greenscape/furniture zones, depicted in

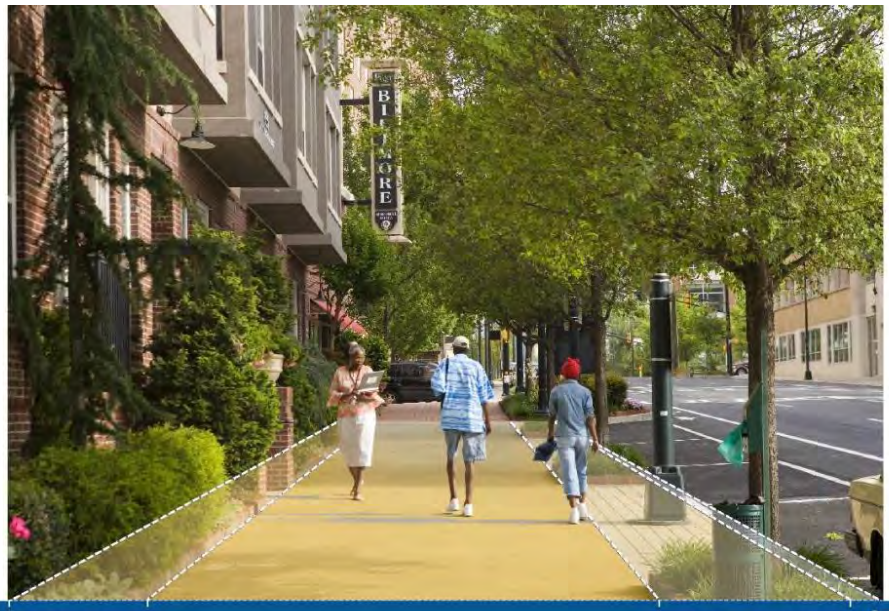


	Frontage Zone	Pedestrian Circulation Zone	Greenscape / Furniture Zone	Curb Zone
Urban Core	0 - 10'	10 - 12' or greater	4 - 6'	6"
Urban	0 - 10'	8 - 10' or greater	4 - 8'	6"
Suburban	0 - 10'	6 - 8'	4 - 10'	6"
Rural Town	0' - 10'	5 - 8'	4 - 6'	6"

Table applies to streets with curb and gutter, or urban shoulders.

This table is intended to provide general guidance only. Specific site conditions must be evaluated on an individual basis related to projects.

Figure *2*.



	Frontage Zone	Pedestrian Circulation Zone	Greenscape / Furniture Zone	Curb Zone
Urban Core	0 - 10'	10 - 12' or greater	4 - 6'	6"
Urban	0 - 10'	8 - 10' or greater	4 - 8'	6"
Suburban	0 - 10'	6 - 8'	4 - 10'	6"
Rural Town	0' - 10'	5 - 8'	4 - 6'	6"

Table applies to streets with curb and gutter, or urban shoulders.

This table is intended to provide general guidance only. Specific site conditions must be evaluated on an individual basis related to projects.

Figure 2: Sidewalk Zones

Several relevant guidelines and considerations pertaining to each sidewalk zone are presented in

Table 2 below:

Table 2: Sidewalk Zone Best Practices

Zone	Best Practices
Frontage Zone	When a sidewalk is adjacent to a parking lot, trees and plants may be planted in the frontage zone to provide shade and a buffer between the expanse of asphalt and the sidewalk.
	The minimum width of the frontage zone to accommodate trees is 4 feet.
Pedestrian Circulation Zone	The pedestrian circulation zone should be clear of obstructions.
	When a sidewalk crosses a commercial driveway, the driveway may be raised to the level of the sidewalk and the sidewalk hardscape material continued across the driveway.
Greenscape Furniture Zone	On streets with speed limits 35 mph or greater, the greenscape/furniture zone should be a minimum of 5 feet wide.

Cherokee County can implement, as appropriate, a variety of streetscaping elements that enhance the pedestrian experience on side paths. Examples include:

- A variety of **hardscaping** materials (e.g., concrete, asphalt, brick, stone pavers) introduce texture and color to the sidewalk or path.
- Adequate and appropriate **bike parking** at common destinations encourages cycling.
- Rigid, semi-rigid, or flexible **bollards** create permeable separation (temporarily or permanently) between streetscape elements or modes of transportation.
- **Pedestrian-scale lighting** illuminates pedestrian and cyclist facilities to reduce crashes and support a sense of safety at night.
- **Seating** is essential for people with mobility impairments and older adults and encourages pedestrians to spend time on and bring life to the street.
- **Trash receptacles** offer convenience and cleanliness.
- **Wayfinding signage** at key decision points, origins, and destinations helps pedestrians orient and navigate.
- **Green stormwater infrastructure**, such as biofiltration planters, grassed swales, and permeable pavement, collect and filter stormwater runoff from surfaces like sidewalks, roadways, roofs, and parking lots, reducing peak flows within downstream sewer systems and removing pollutants.
- Appropriate **trees and plantings** for the micro-climate of a site improve environmental quality, reduce stormwater runoff and soil erosion, and offer shade and cooling to pedestrians.

Pedestrians and businesses thrive where sidewalks have sufficient amenities and are designed at an appropriate scale, and the incorporation of appropriate elements and best practices into future streetscape improvements can reduce stress, boost mobility and accessibility, and foster the economic vitality of the community.

Transportation Workshop



The third phase of engagement began with a transportation workshop, that centered on educating the public on how transportation improvement projects happen in Cherokee County. At this event, the project team gave a presentation to community members, which included the following information:

- An general overview of the transportation project delivery process
- A description of relevant departments in Cherokee County, including the Planning Division and SPLOST/Roadway Department
- A summary of transportation funding streams
- Information about the Bells Ferry LCI Plan, including background information, a plan overview, and updates on ongoing projects in the area

Participants were directed to the project website to provide feedback on this plan.

Technical Advisory Committee



The project team convened a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), a diverse group of stakeholders including Cherokee County staff, community members, business representatives, and partner agencies. The project team hosted four TAC meetings throughout the life of the project, listed below:

- TAC Meeting #1 – August 13, 2025 (Virtual)
- TAC Meeting #2 – October 2, 2025 (Virtual)
- TAC Meeting #3 – January 16, 2026 (Rose Creek Public Library)
- TAC Meeting #4 – May 1, 2026 (Patriots Park)

TAC meetings served as an avenue for the project team to update key stakeholders on plan progress and present ideas and draft recommendations. TAC members assisted the project team with community outreach and advised on project and policy approaches. The ongoing TAC meetings facilitated coordination and transparent dialogue between community representatives, county officials, and technical experts, ensuring that feedback was integrated iteratively into the plan framework.

Community Open House



In addition to the transportation workshop, the project team conducted a community open house on Thursday, March 26, 2026 at Greater Church (5744 Bells Ferry Road, Acworth, Georgia).The purpose of this open house was primarily to solicit feedback on land use policies, transportation improvements, placemaking strategies, and policy recommendations being put forward as part of the Bells Ferry LCI Plan Update. This open house was designed to engage a broad audience, including residents, businesses, and partner organizations, with materials available in both English and Spanish to encourage inclusive participation.

Community members reviewed draft recommendations and indicated support for ideas they supported most with stickers. This exercise informed the project team's prioritization and refinement of draft recommendations. Project recommendations are ranked in Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5 below, based on community feedback at the open house.

Table 3: Transportation Recommendations, Ranked by Community Support

Rank	Project ID	Category	Project Name	# of Participants Who Indicated Support
1	BP-07	Transportation Improvements (Corridor-Level)	Multi Use Spur to Patriots Park	8
2	TR-03	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Hwy 92 and Bells Ferry Road Intersection Improvements	8
3	TR-06	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Bells Ferry Road and Bascomb Carmel Road Intersection Improvements	8
4	BP-04	Transportation Improvements (Other)	Owl Creek Greenway	6
5	BP-05	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Pedestrian Crossings Enhancements	6
6	TR-01	Transportation Improvements (Corridor-Level)	Old Bascomb Road Complete Street Improvements	6
7	TR-04	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Bells Ferry Road and Robin Road Intersection Improvements	5
8	TR-08	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Bells Ferry Road and Walmart North Entrance Intersection Improvements	4
9	TR-12	Transportation Improvements (Corridor-Level)	Robin Road Corridor Improvements	4
10	BP-03	Transportation Improvements (Corridor-Level)	Enhanced Sidewalks Along Bells Ferry Road	3
11	TR-02	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Signal Priority and Emergency Preemption Technology	3

12	TR-05	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Bells Ferry Road and Red Barn Road/Hunter Trail Intersection Improvements	3
13	TR-07	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Bells Ferry Road and Eagle Drive Intersection Improvements	3
14	BP-02	Transportation Improvements (Corridor-Level)	Enhanced Sidewalks Along Hwy 92	2
15	BP-06	Transportation Improvements (Corridor-Level)	Multi-Use Path Along Bascomb Carmel Rd	2
16	TR-09	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Bells Ferry Road and Kellogg Creek Road Intersection Improvements	2
17	TR-11	Transportation Improvements (Corridor-Level)	LCI Area Street Lighting	2
18	PO-10	Transportation Improvements (Other)	Microtransit Pilot	2
19	BP-08	Transportation Improvements (Intersection or Spot Improvement)	Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon Crossings Feasibility Study	1
20	TR-10	Transportation Improvements (Corridor-Level)	Hwy 92 Median Enhancements	1

Table 4: Placemaking Recommendations, Ranked by Community Support

Rank	Project ID	Category	Project Name	# of Participants Who Indicated Support
1	PL-03	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Fire Station Plaza and Playground	7
2	PO-03	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Art in Public Places Resolution and Plan	7
3	PL-04	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Fire Station Pollinator Garden	4
4	PL-05	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Substation Placemaking and Beautification	3
5	BP-01	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Pedestrian Amenity Nodes	2
6	PO-11	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Bells Ferry LCI Area Branding	1
7	PO-14	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Community Design District Updates	1
8	PL-01	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Edge of Parking Transformation	0
9	PL-02	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Underutilized Parking Area Activation	0
10	PO-04	Placemaking, Activation, & Design	Reduce Parking Minimums	0

Table 5: Land Use Policies & Strategies, Ranked by Community Support

Rank	Project ID	Category	Project Name	# of Participants Who Indicated Support
1	PO-13	Other	Small Business Policy Incentives	4
2	PO-07	Land Use and Redevelopment	Allow Accessory Dwelling Units	2
3	PO-05	Land Use and Redevelopment	Fill in Housing Gaps	1
4	PO-08	Land Use and Redevelopment	Utilize Land Bank for Strategic Acquisition	1
5	PO-09	Other	Exxplore a Tax Allocation District	1
6	PO-12	Land Use and Redevelopment	Explore Transfer of Development Rights Program	0
7	PO-15	Land Use and Redevelopment	Preserve in Place	0

Participant's feedback on transportation projects made it clear that pedestrian and cyclist facilities and safe intersections are strongly supported by community members. Their support for a multi-use trail spur to Patriot's Park (BP-07) and Owl Creek Greenway (BP-04) emphasized the desire to walk and bike to parks and recreational areas, and the support for improvements to the Hwy 92 and Bells Ferry Road intersection (TR-03) and Bells Ferry Road and Bascomb Carmel Road intersection (TR-06) provided insight into pain points and concerns.

Support for a plaza and playground at the fire station (PL-03) and art in public places resolution (PO-03) emphasized the community's desire for free public gathering spaces and activated, pedestrian-friendly streets and landscapes.

Of the land use policies and strategies, support for small business policy incentives (PO-13) and accessory dwelling units (PO-07) points to a desire for sustainable, community-centered economic growth and flexible housing options.

Key Takeaways

Critical themes emerging from public engagement include the following:

- Strong community consensus around safety and walkability concerns
  - Lack of continuous sidewalks, limited bicycle infrastructure, and hazardous pedestrian crossings are seen as barriers to equitable and active mobility in the corridor
  - Feedback placed a particular emphasis on the need for safer crossings, continuous sidewalks, and shade elements that support walkability
- A desire for balanced growth
  - The community advocated for policies that support small business resilience and reduce displacement risks and preserve culturally significant spaces amid growth
  - Growth that honors the area's existing character while accommodating thoughtful development and improved transportation infrastructure is important
  - Support for reinforcing small businesses through clearer land use provisions and targeted support while preventing displacement of long-standing businesses
  - Housing affordability was expressed as a key concern
- Concerns about traffic congestion
  - Residents and stakeholders called for targeted intersection upgrades, access management improvements, and microtransit services to diversify mobility options
- A need for free, accessible gathering spaces
  - The need for public spaces that encourage community gathering, cultural events, and family recreation
  - A desire to access points of interest (particularly parks and greenspaces) on foot or bike