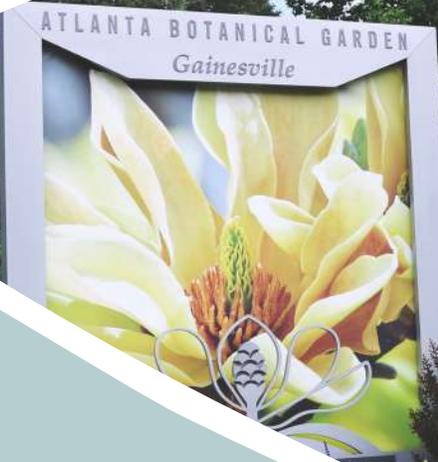


The
INN
BETWEEN
DELTA

**LONGSTREET
CAFE**



The
PARK HILL
Corridor Plan

Bluefin HIBACHI & SUSHI

HOME OF THE RED B
BOBBY GRUHN FIELD

**GREENS
GROCERY**



Carl Vinson
Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



MURRAYVILLE →
DAHLONEGA →

CONN
60

→

SOURLES

NORTHEAST
GEORGIA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
↑



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About the Carl Vinson Institute of Government

For over 90 years, the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia has worked with public officials throughout Georgia and around the world to improve governance and people's lives. From Georgia's early days as a largely agrarian state with a modest population to its modern-day status as a national and international force in business, industry, and politics with a population of more than 10 million, the Institute of Government has helped leaders navigate change and forge strong directions for a better Georgia.

The City of Gainesville is grateful to the hundreds of residents who responded to the surveys about the corridor and to those who were interviewed or participated in a focus group. We hope that you see your input and ideas reflected in this vision.

introduction



NORTH

BUS.
11

RONNIE GREEN
PARKWAY

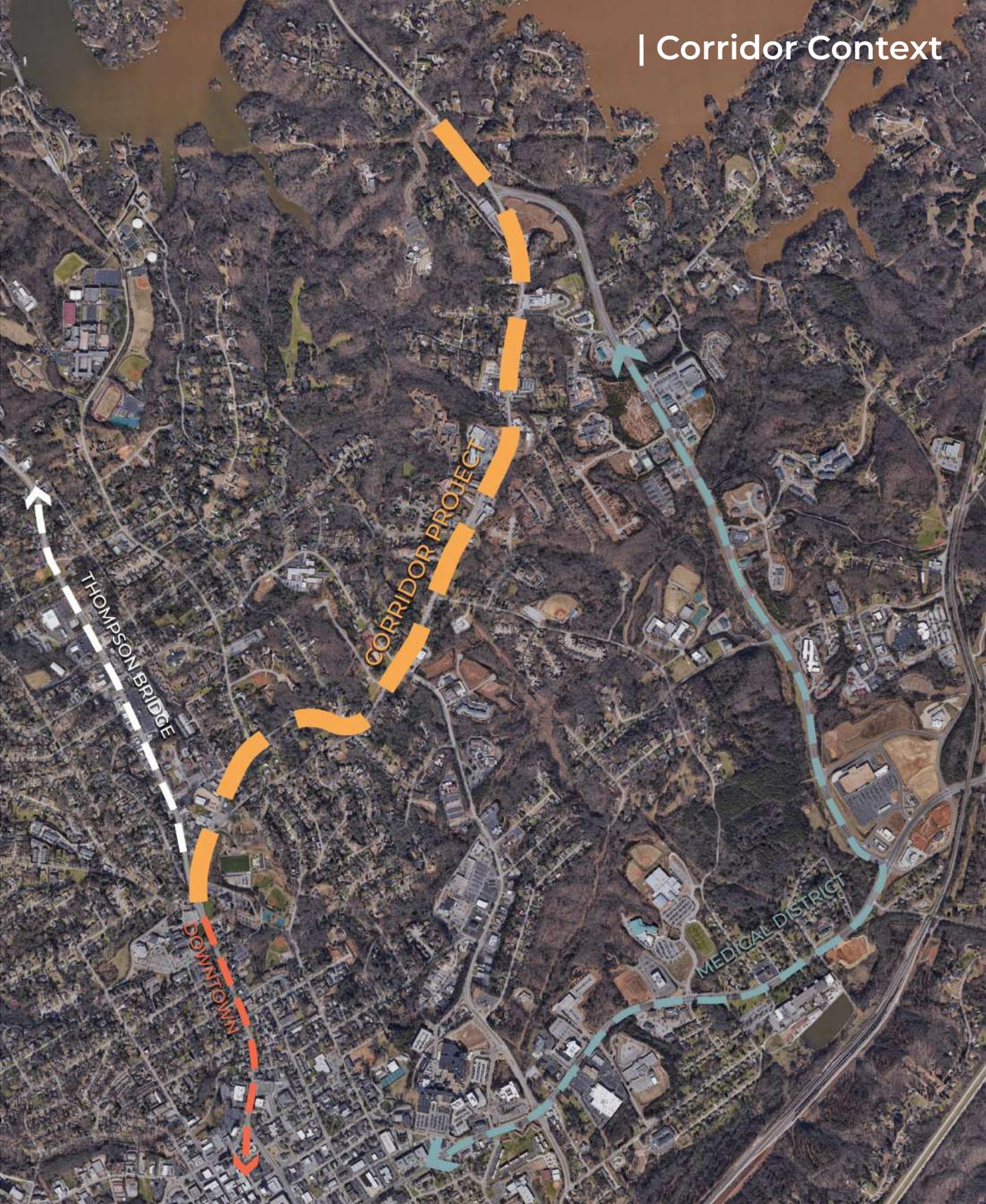
SPEED
LIMIT
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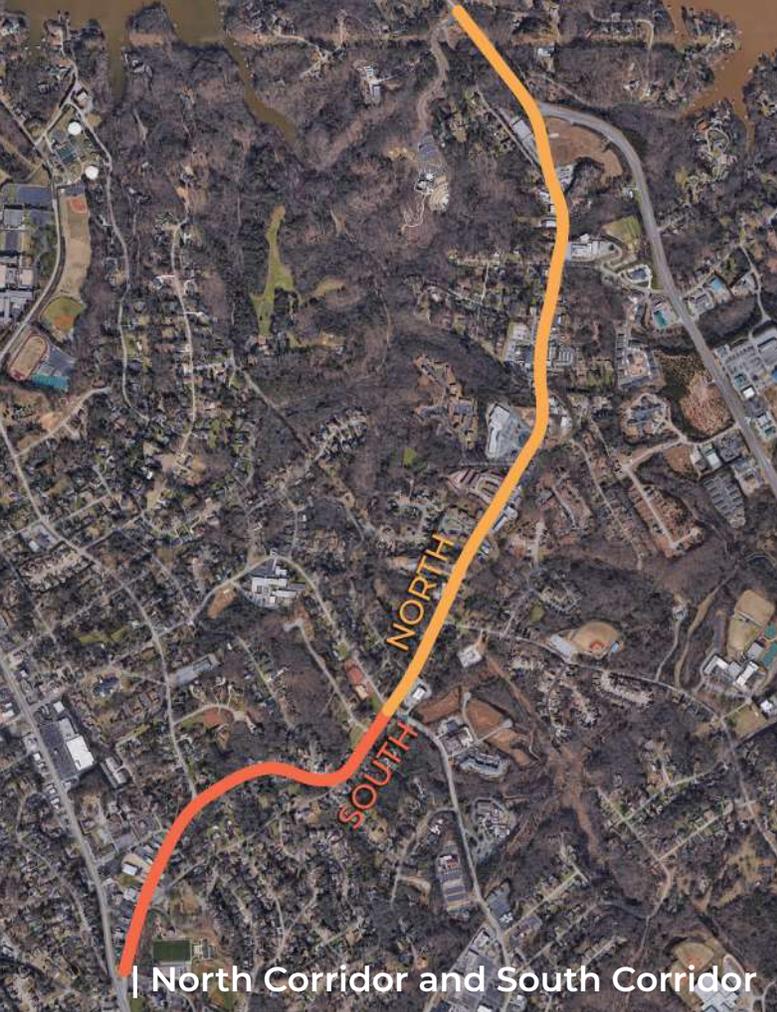
Kinnada
Playwax

Gainesville, Georgia, a growing community of over 40,000, is nestled between Lake Lanier and the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Well known as the “Poultry Capital of the World,” the city has built a strong industrial base and positioned itself as a substantial regional health care hub. Gainesville’s retail, recreation, and arts and cultural offerings draw residents and visitors year-round. Over the past five years, guided by the Downtown Renaissance Strategic Vision and Plan, the city has focused on growing and redeveloping its downtown and midtown cores. During that time, Gainesville has realized significant success with new development and revitalization efforts.

As the work continues in downtown and midtown, Gainesville embarked on a second strategic process to create a vision for the future of another well-established community hub and its heavily traveled corridor. City staff engaged the University of Georgia’s Carl Vinson Institute of Government to focus on current needs and future visions for the area beginning at the Gainesville Civic Center, where Green Street forks and leads into the Riverside–Morningside–Park Hill corridor. Ironically, there are strong historical connections between downtown and Riverside Drive. In the early 1900s, a trolley transported residents and visitors alike down Green Street to Riverside and on to Chattahoochee Park and Lake Warner.

| Corridor Context





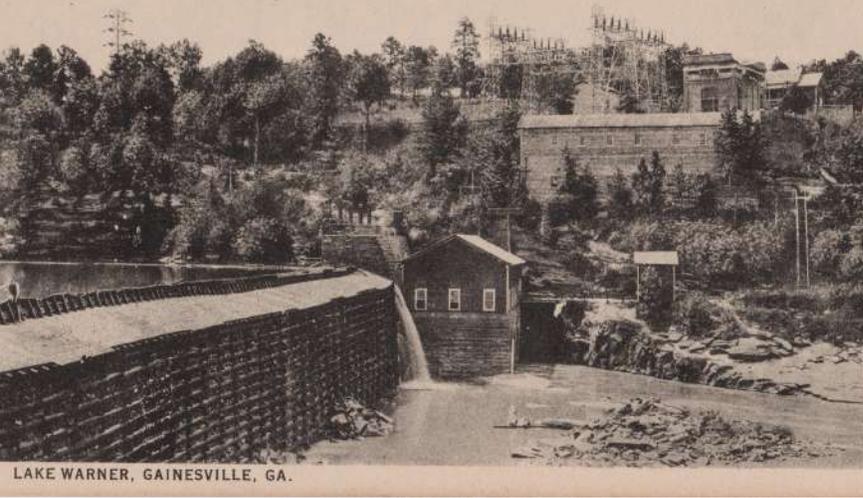
parts of the corridor separately: the areas south of the intersection, referred to in this report as the south corridor, and the areas beyond the intersection, referred to as the north corridor.

There is great potential for both development and redevelopment throughout this corridor as well as critical opportunities to improve pedestrian safety and reduce traffic congestion. Public infrastructure investment can boost private redevelopment, which would greatly enhance this corridor, increasing its “destination” and visual appeal. The recommendations included on the pages that follow range from simple improvements that can be made with a can of paint to those that would be multi-million-dollar public investments, with many design solutions falling somewhere in between. Sources of funding for large and small public projects are also included. Critical to the success of this or any plan is the recognition that not all goals can be achieved at one time. Prioritizing implementation by using a resource roadmap allows community leaders to continually revisit and revise the plan to best suit the needs and priorities of the community.

The design recommendations for the corridor were developed based on input garnered from residents through surveys and interviews as well as through a stakeholder committee convened by the city to both inform and vet the recommendations.

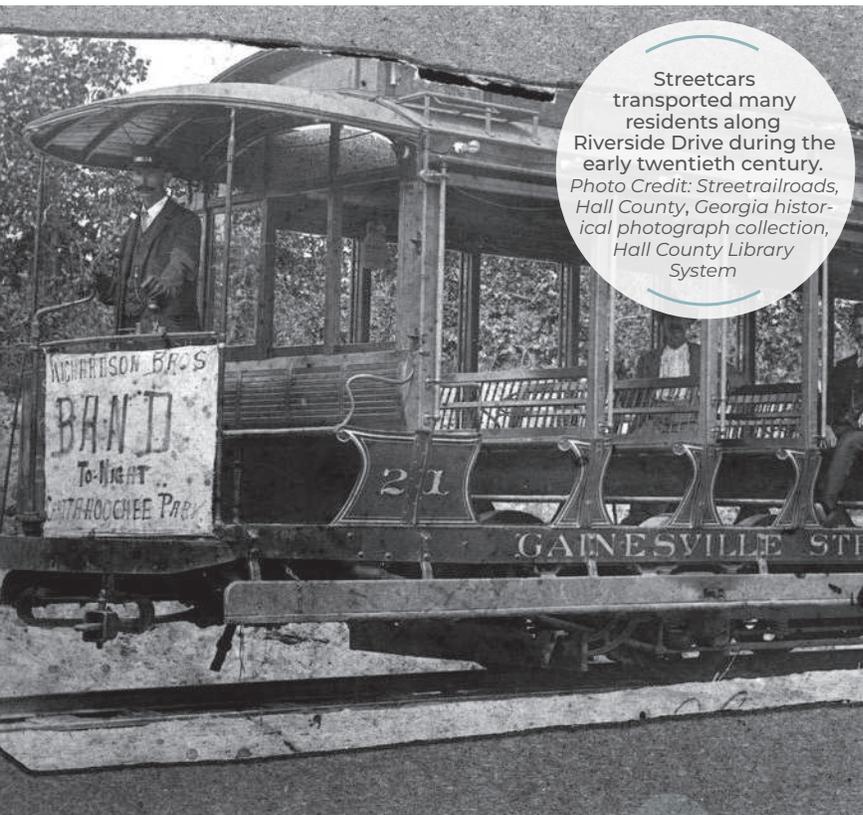
Highly diversified over the approximately 1.5 miles between the Civic Center and Northlake Plaza Shopping Center, the corridor is home to public and private parks and garden space, retail, restaurants, professional office space, and many residences. Another mile past Northlake is the Atlanta Botanical Gardens – Gainesville, an important anchor in the area that more broadly includes Lake Lanier Olympic Park. Both are important destinations for Gainesville residents and visitors. Obvious to the more than 14,000 drivers who pass through the corridor each day, the character and intensity of use changes significantly after crossing the intersection with Enota Avenue. Because of that divide, this strategic vision focused on two

A historic postcard from Lake Warner



history

For more than 100 years, the Riverside–Park Hill corridor has been the core of civic life in Gainesville. Founded in 1821, Gainesville grew outward from its downtown square. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Gainesville residents were reaching beyond the original city limits to establish new neighborhoods, create spaces for recreation, and open businesses. One favorite destination, Chattahoochee Park, was located at the end of Riverside Drive near today’s American Legion Post 7. The park was a popular recreation destination in the early 1900s for Gainesville residents and visitors. The construction of Dunlap Dam in 1903 created Lake Warner and further enhanced Chattahoochee Park. Residents were transported to the park via a streetcar that ran from downtown, along Green Street, and down Riverside Drive. This transportation corridor spurred housing along Riverside Drive, and by the 1920s, Riverside was characterized by modest wooden houses with front porches that lined the street.



Streetcars transported many residents along Riverside Drive during the early twentieth century. Photo Credit: Streetrailroads, Hall County, Georgia historical photograph collection, Hall County Library System



A historic postcard from Chattahoochee Park

Along with time spent at Lake Warner, Gainesville residents took an interest in the increasingly popular American sport of football. Collegiate games were held at Chattahoochee Park as early as 1905. But the true home of Gainesville football is City Park, dating back to at least 1915, when the label “City Park” is found on the historic Sanborn Fire Insurance map. Over 100 years later, City Park continues to host Friday night football, along with soccer and lacrosse. What is known today as Bobby Gruhn Field at City Park has hosted wins, losses, state champions, rivalries, and Gainesville legends.



The 1921 Gainesville High School football team at practice in City Park. Image courtesy of the Georgia Archives' Vanishing Georgia collection, hal061.

Throughout the 20th century, City Park and its surrounding neighborhood continued to embody Gainesville's civic life. In 1931, under President Franklin Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration, the city built Green Street Pool. For 75 years, the pool hosted unforgettable memories for Gainesville's young and old alike.



Grilling chicken at the 1954 Poultry Festival in City Park. Image courtesy of the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Photograph Collection, University Archives, Hargrett Library, University of Georgia.

Today's Civic Center was built in 1947 as an armory and recreation building. In the 1950s, City Park was used for an array of community events, most notable of which was the annual Poultry Festival. Seen in the photo above, the parade concluded with a community-wide Chicken-Que in City Park.

As the City of Gainesville continued to grow, development began along Park Hill Drive. In the 1940s and 1950s, homes began to line the road. By the late 1970s, Park Hill Drive had diversified with restaurants, apartments, and a new shopping center. While modern developments like Limestone Parkway have changed the dynamics of the area, the corridor continues to engage with civic life in Gainesville. Park Hill Drive connected VIP visitors to the 1996 Olympic rowing events held at what is now Lake Lanier Olympic Park, and most recently, in 2015 the Atlanta Botanical Garden opened its satellite location in the corridor.

More than 100 years of memories, community activities, and shared experiences have been made in this corridor. It is still home to Green's Grocery and other locally owned businesses. Houses still dot the landscape, along with small retail and restaurants. New homes are being added, as are new businesses. There are opportunities for both public and private investment to rehabilitate and enhance portions of the corridor. The pages that follow provide a look at the process that influenced the strategic vision and the recommendations moving forward.

A scene looking north down Riverside Drive in the 1950s. Seen on the left of the image is the construction of the building that now houses Green's Grocery. *Image courtesy of the Hall County Library Photo Collection.*



Green's Grocery is still a staple for local residents today.

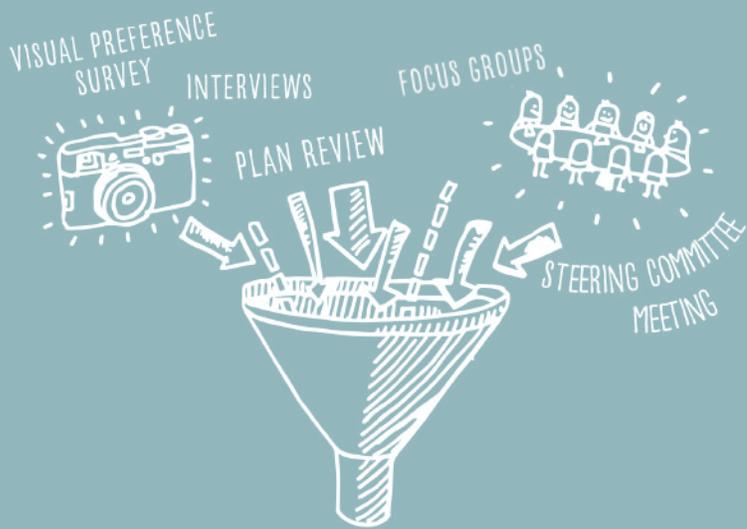


A community plan requires input from community members – those who live, work, and play in Gainesville know best what is most needed. This planning process relies on that community input and puts those words and ideas into designs and visions for the future.

process

No one knows a community better than the people who live there. Consequently, the best solutions to address community concerns most reliably come from the community itself. Strategic visioning helps residents better understand unique community assets and more clearly identify collective priorities. Together, these become the basis for effective community-led planning. Throughout the development of the plan, the community identifies pressing issues, articulates big-picture goals, and develops short-term and long-term strategies to address community concerns.

The strategic visioning and planning process seeks to answer three questions:

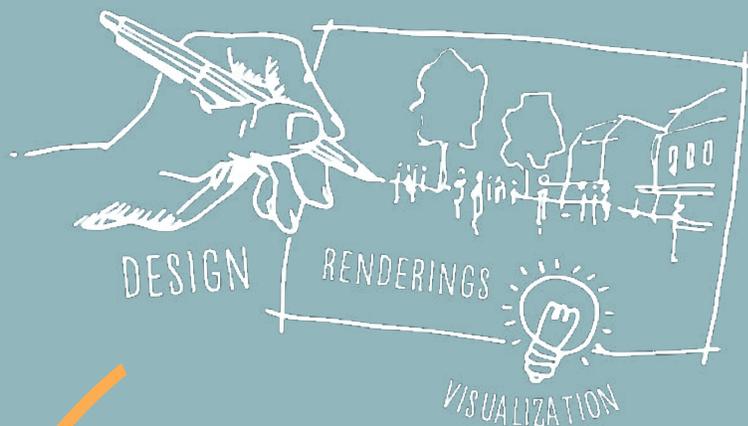


where are we now?

It is essential to understand the current conditions of and uses in the Riverside–Morningside–Park Hill corridor. Thus, the first step in the process is to assess how the area is currently used, review any plans or studies concerning the corridor, and engage the public. Focus groups, one-on-one interviews, community-wide surveys, and visual preference assessments are tools that can reveal the community’s story as well as current issues and opportunities.

where are we going?

In the second phase of the process, the community looks to the future to shape a new vision through illustrations and design recommendations that reflect the priorities of the stakeholders. Illustrations serve to translate the written or verbal ideas and allow all community members to experience the physical translation of their collective vision.



how do we get there?

The final step in the strategic visioning process is to create an implementation plan that moves the community forward in realizing its vision. Community input and effort form the foundation for the implementation plan, but there is work left to be done for the community. Creating a resource roadmap that prioritizes where the community should begin, which public investments are crucial to jumpstarting private revitalization efforts, and where those public funds might be found are critical for successful outcomes.





public input

When creating a vision for a community, it is critical to first hear from the community itself. The Institute of Government research team provided a variety of ways for residents to participate in the process and worked with the city to arrange interviews and focus groups. The Institute team also administered two surveys: one directed at the south corridor and one directed at the residents of the apartments on Park Hill Drive. To gain initial insight into the issues and opportunities of relevance to the community, the project steering committee participated in a visual preference survey in which they identified what they thought was good and not so good in the corridor. Although the process of gathering public input is time consuming, when residents know that their ideas may become a reality and their concerns are heard and may be addressed in a meaningful way, they feel invested in the future vision.

What We Heard

The Riverside–Morningside–Park Hill corridor holds many points of pride for the community: City Park, the old Green Street Pool building (though currently underutilized), Green’s Grocery, and the Inn Between Deli. This cluster of public and commercial spaces form a strong anchor of activity in the south corridor. The well-established neighborhoods of Riverside Drive and Longstreet Hills radiate out from this core, featuring primarily single-family homes on spacious lots. This is an area where people walk, run, and bike. Some families even travel by golf cart to Sliced for pizza, Dairy Queen for an ice cream, or Longstreet Cafe for lunch. While the area is considered safe, it lacks continuous, appropriate pedestrian infrastructure.

In the north corridor, the Atlanta Botanical Gardens provides a regional draw, and Blue Fin and Poor Richards are favorite dining destinations. The City of Gainesville has purchased property to build a new fire station that will replace a long-closed business. Several other recent developments have occurred in the corridor but have been more piecemeal. A number of properties between Enota and Lakeview Drive (on the left as one drives north) have been acquired by a single entity, providing an opportunity for a cohesive development.

There are, however, a number of areas of concern, primarily in the north

corridor. Northlake Plaza Shopping Center, which was built in 1979, is not fully occupied, and features more than 8 acres of underutilized space. Several aging apartment complexes, built between 1970 and 1984, are known as hotspots of crime in the community as are other apartments just off of Park Hill. Concerns were expressed about the single-family homes and other empty structures on Park Hill north of Enota that are not well maintained and considered by many to be blighted properties. Ironically, Green’s Grocery was also identified as a concern because, as was noted by one participant, “it could use a little bit of updating.” Another concern with Green’s is associated with its parking and the challenges of backing out of a tight parking space into the heavily traveled Riverside Drive — almost 14,000 cars per day pass by — with limited visibility and numerous potential points of impact.

Traffic congestion, the lack of public greenspace in the north corridor, the lack of cohesive pedestrian infrastructure, and the general need for upkeep of existing properties were commonly discussed areas of concern in the corridor. There are also real and valid concerns that any net increase in housing units in the corridor, whether single or multifamily, will add to the already over-capacity city school system. This should be considered in future developments.

Community Surveys

Two surveys were conducted to more broadly reach visitors to and residents of the corridor. The first survey required the participant to scan a QR code and take the survey electronically on their own device. Posters were hung in local businesses, primarily in the south corridor. The second survey was a written survey distributed by Green Leaf, the management company, to residents of the three apartment complexes on Park Hill Drive. Both surveys were offered in English and Spanish.

As with other community input, the surveys helped define the issues to be addressed and the opportunities to be built upon. The survey responses complemented and added to the information gleaned from the interviews and focus groups about what was needed in the corridor.

Help us help your neighborhood!

Please complete this short survey about potential improvements along Park Hill Drive/Cleveland Highway. Your feedback is important to us.

1. What is your primary mode of transportation? Please select one.
 - Personal Car
 - Bus
 - Walking
 - Biking
 - Other (please specify): _____
2. Where do you primarily grocery shop? Please select one.
 - Los Tres Compadres
 - Family Dollar
 - Kroger
 - Walmart
 - Dollar General
 - Other (please specify): _____
 - None of the above
3. What type of recreational facilities would you most like to see in your neighborhood? Please select one.
 - Soccer field
 - Volleyball court
 - Basketball court
 - Baseball field
 - Skate park
 - Other (please specify): _____
4. What do you need most in your neighborhood? Choose up to three.
 - Improved transportation
 - Grocery store
 - Retail stores
 - Professional offices
 - Bank/ATM
 - Parks/Outdoor space
 - Community center
 - Restaurants
 - Health center



Ayudanos a Ayudar tu vecindario!

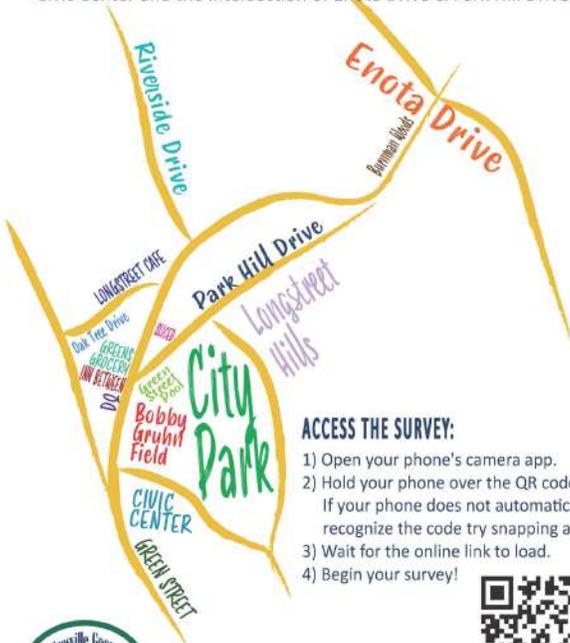
Por favor completa esta corta encuesta acerca de posibles mejoras a lo largo de Park Hill Drive/Cleveland Highway. Tus comentarios son importantes para nosotros.

1. ¿Cual es tu principal modo de transportación? Por favor selecciona una.
 - Carro personal
 - Autobus
 - Caminando
 - Bicicleta
 - Otro (por favor especificar): _____
2. ¿Primordialmente donde haces tu compra de comestibles? Por favor selecciona una.
 - Los Tres Compadres
 - Family Dollar
 - Kroger
 - Walmart
 - Dollar General
 - Otro (por favor especificar): _____
 - Ninguno antes mencionado
3. ¿Que tipo de facilidades recreacionales te gustaria tener en tu vecindario? Por favor selecciona una.
 - Campo de soccer
 - Cancha de volleyball
 - Cancha de baloncesto
 - Campo de pelota
 - Parque de patinaje
 - Otro (por favor especificar): _____
4. ¿Que es lo que más necesitas en tu vecindario? Elige hasta tres.
 - Mejor transportación
 - Supermercados
 - Tiendas por departamento
 - Oficinas profesionales
 - Bancos/Cajeros automaticos
 - Parques/Espacio al aire libre
 - Centros comunitarios
 - Restaurantes
 - Centros medicos



HELP US HELP YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Participate in a short survey about potential improvements between the Civic Center and the intersection of Enota Drive & Park Hill Drive.



ACCESS THE SURVEY:

- 1) Open your phone's camera app.
- 2) Hold your phone over the QR code below. If your phone does not automatically recognize the code try snapping a picture.
- 3) Wait for the online link to load.
- 4) Begin your survey!

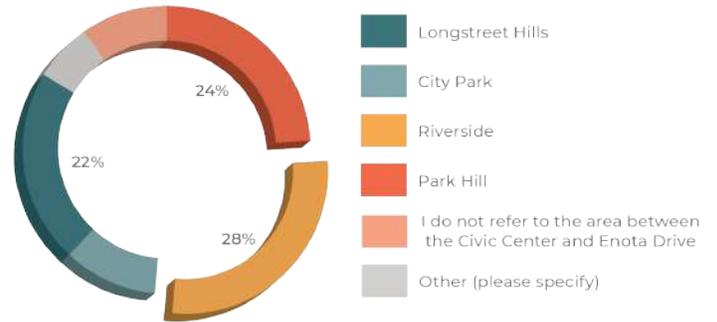


These images are examples of surveys that were distributed in-person and online throughout the community in the Park Hill Corridor.

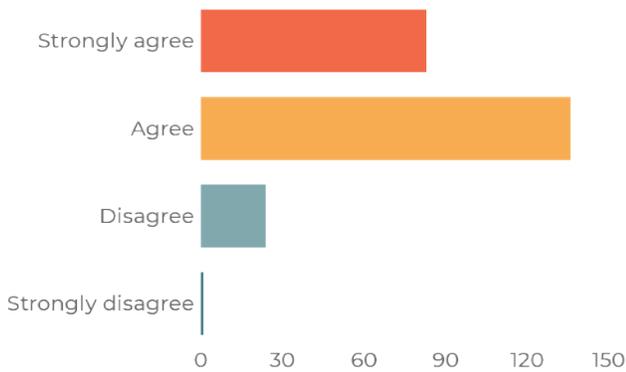
Survey Results

South Corridor

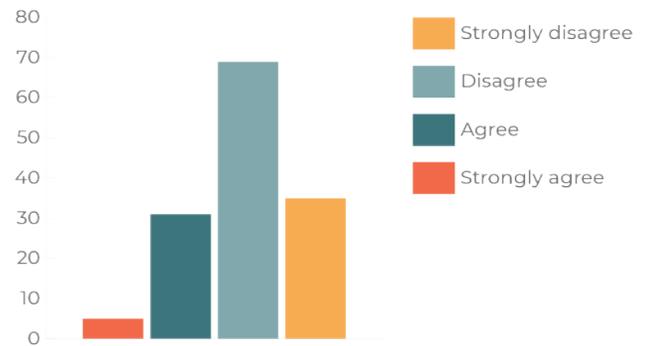
How do you most often refer to the area between the Civic Center and Enota Drive?



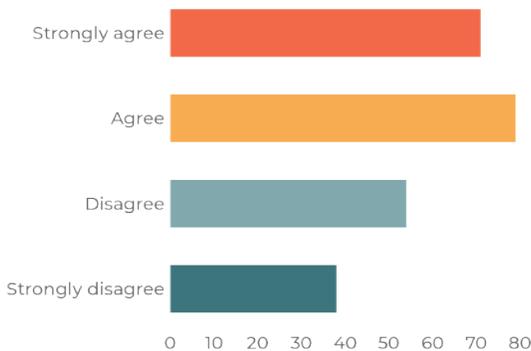
This area needs better streetlighting.



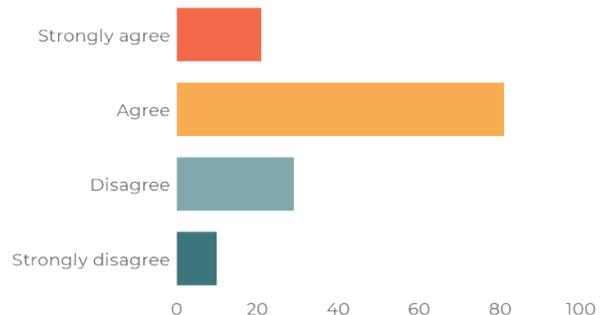
As a pedestrian, I feel safe when I walk, run, or bike between Riverside and City Park.



A traffic circle would improve traffic flow at Riverside Drive and Morningside Drive.



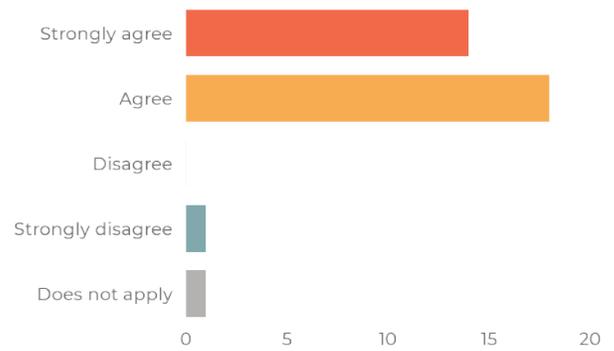
As a pedestrian, I feel safe when I walk, run, or bike along Riverside Drive.



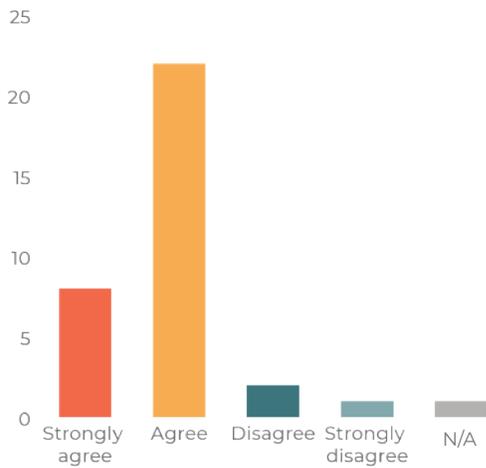
Survey Results

North Corridor

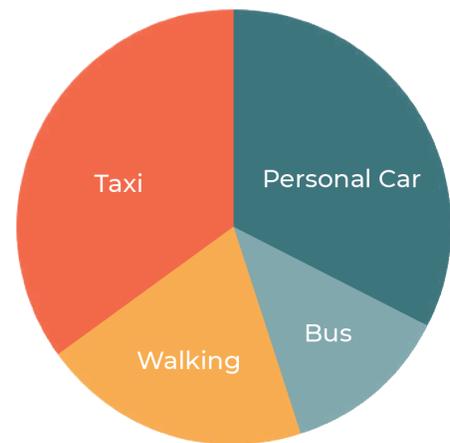
I would like a public park in our neighborhood.



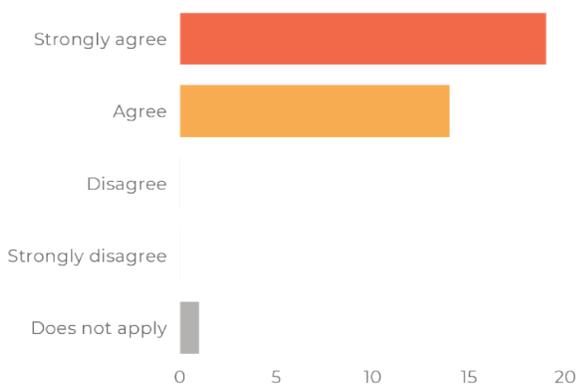
I regularly shop at the businesses on Park Hill Drive/Cleveland Highway.



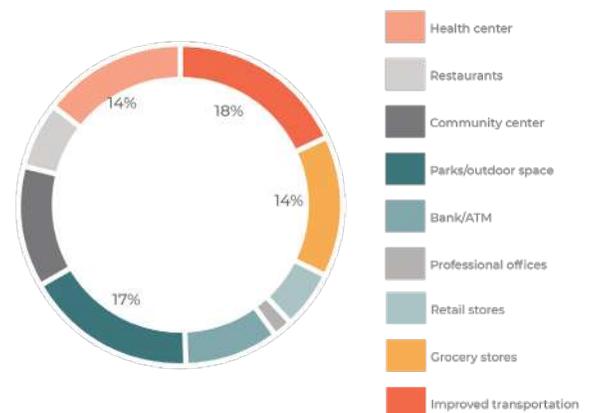
What is your primary mode of transportation?



Northlake shopping center should be improved.



What do you need most in your neighborhood?



recommendations

South Corridor

Pedestrian Infrastructure

- Add crosswalk across Oak Tree Drive
- Add crosswalk with center lane refuge island in front of the Inn Between Deli
- Develop a color-coded Green Street Trail Head to highlight and connect various walk, run, and bike trails
- Connect existing sidewalk to the Riverside pedestrian lane
- Improve lighting in the corridor with pedestrians in mind
- Road diet for Riverside Drive – Green’s Grocery area (*long term*)

Transportation/ Auto-centric Improvements

- Reduce curb cuts along Riverside Drive commercial area
- Work with property owners to reorganize and re-paint parking lines
- Lengthen Oak Tree Drive right-hand turn lane (*long term*)
- Construct a roundabout at the T-intersection of Riverside Drive and Morningside Drive (*long term*)

Branding

- Create a unified identity for the area with a strong descriptive brand
- Install signage and pole banners using brand name

Redevelopment Opportunities

- Incentivize as appropriate development and redevelopment of key properties
- Incentivize as appropriate infill or redevelopment of commercial spaces as mixed-use developments (*long term*)



The South Corridor project areas of emphasis and recommendations are based on input received through public engagement and were further revised based on steering committee feedback.



existing | *above*

The intersection of Riverside Drive and Oak Tree Drive has six foot wide sidewalks on either side, but they are not connected with a crosswalk. This reduces the ability for pedestrians to cross this busy intersection safely.

proposed | *right*

The addition of three crosswalks and two vegetated refuge islands connects the existing sidewalk network along Riverside Drive and greatly improves pedestrian safety. The refuge islands also add an element of beauty to this busy intersection. For additional design specifications, see the *GDOT Pedestrian and Streetscape Design Guide*.



Add Crosswalk at Oak Tree Drive



existing | *below*



On a typical day, walkers, runners, and bikers use the pedestrian lane along Riverside Drive, but when Riverside turns towards City Park, there are no crosswalks to safely reach the City Park side of the road. In fact, of those survey respondents who actively use this corridor, 74% do not feel safe when walking, running, or biking between Riverside Drive and City Park. The lack of a crosswalk anywhere in this node creates concerns for those active users as well as limits safe pedestrian access to local businesses.



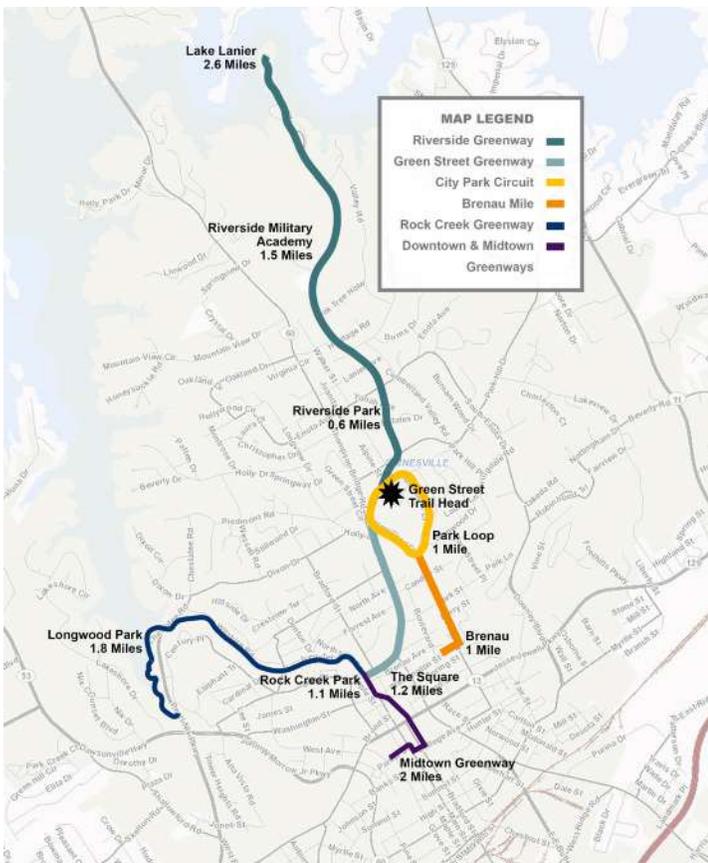
Add a crosswalk with center lane refuge island in front of the Inn Between Deli

proposed | *below*

According to the community survey, almost 40% of respondents believe a crosswalk near the Inn-Between Deli would best meet their needs. This placement does not hinder vehicular traffic, including those turning left into Green's Grocery and the Inn Between. In addition to the crosswalk, a refuge island will further increase pedestrian safety and beautify the roadway. According to the GDOT Pedestrian and Streetscape Design Guide, crosswalks and refuge islands should be a minimum of six feet wide.



Develop a color-coded Green Street Trail Head to highlight and connect various walk, run, and bike trails throughout the community.



With the popular Midtown and Rock Creek greenways, the City of Gainesville has proven that it is a community that values outdoor pedestrian activity. With the existing greenway network in mind, a trail head at Green Street Pool would activate the public space around the building, including the public parking, and provide a central location to access existing trail resources with a newly developed color-coded trail system. The trail head map would also indicate trail distance and highlight connections between various routes. This network would stretch from the American Legion at the end of Riverside Drive to City Park, Brenau University, and through downtown with connections to either the Midtown or Rock Creek greenways.

existing | *right*

Green Street Pool was built under President Franklin Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration and opened on July 4, 1931. It was an active and beloved center of recreation. Since its closure in 2009, the property has been underutilized. Currently, a beach volleyball court behind the building is the only onsite activity.



proposed | *below*

Repurposing Green Street Pool as a neighborhood trail head would create a flexible use of the space and emphasize Gainesville's existing network of sidewalks, pedestrian lanes, and greenways. A kiosk in the front of the building, reflecting the city's new signage style, will provide a detailed map of the trail system. A bike repair station, water bottle refill station, and access to public restrooms in the existing building would enhance usage of the site.

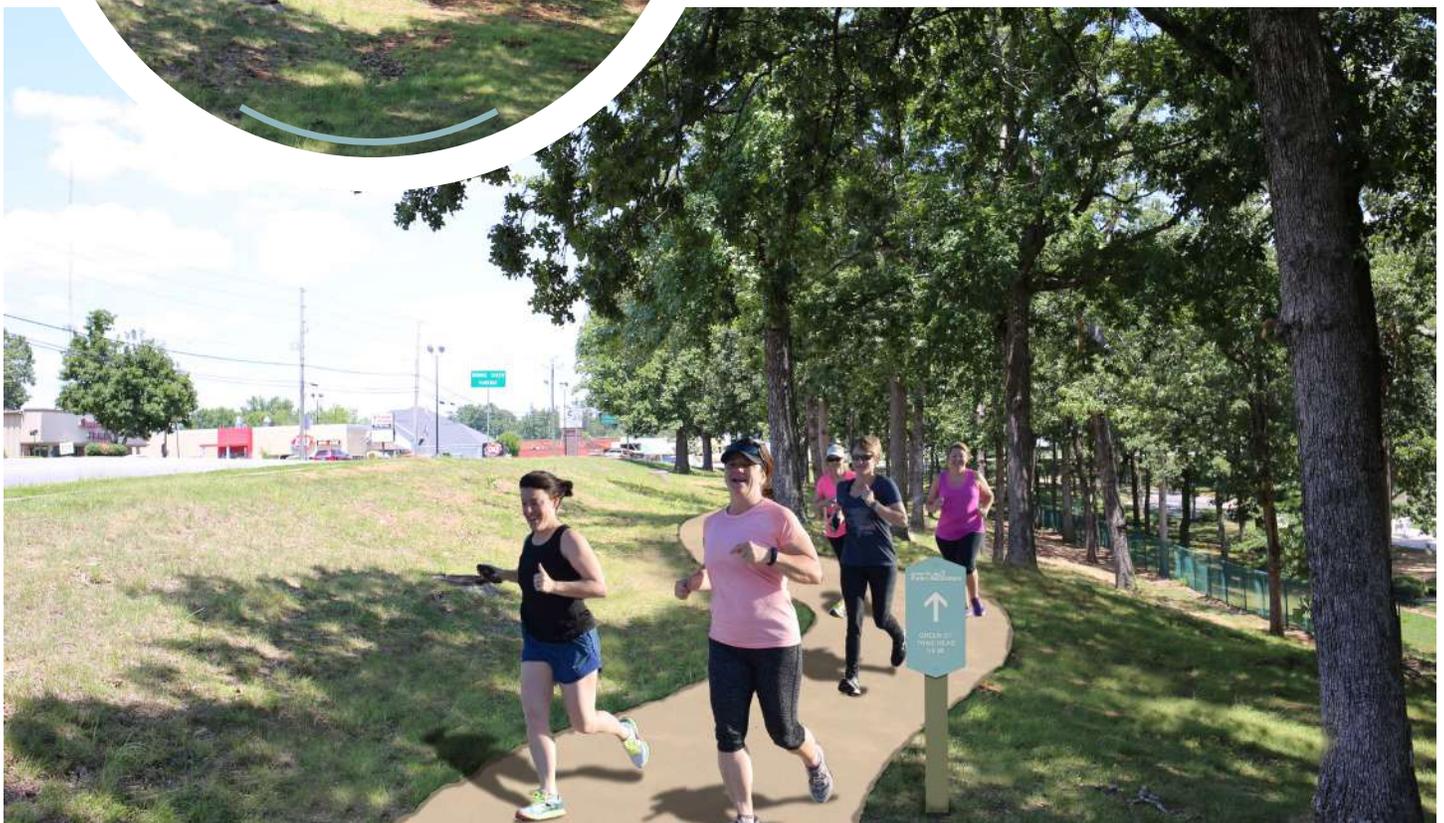


Trail routes can be marked according to their surface. The routes that follow along pavement or sidewalks can be marked with paint using a stencil, a very cost-effective method, and routes where terrain may be more rugged can be marked with color-coded posts. All markers should include the trail-end location and distance to that destination.



existing | *left*

The sidewalk that runs adjacent to the north bound lane of Riverside Drive/Ronnie Green Parkway is narrow and only provides a minimum grass buffer between pedestrians and the heavy flow of traffic.



proposed | *above*

Approximately 20 feet below the road, the natural terrain levels out to provide the ideal spot for a walking and running trail that can be incorporated into a one-mile circuit around City Park or connect users to Green Street sidewalks or up Prior Street to the Brenau mile.

existing | *left*

The northern end of Riverside Drive is one of the most popular spots in the corridor for active users. According to the community survey, over half of respondents use this part of Riverside Drive for walking, running, or biking.



proposed | *above*

By adding painted road markers, Riverside Drive's existing pedestrian lane can be enhanced and incorporated into the larger Green Street trail system.

Connect existing sidewalk to the Riverside pedestrian lane



proposed | *above*

Pedestrian safety is greatly improved by extending the existing sidewalk through the right of way until it joins the existing pedestrian lane. This seamless connection not only improves pedestrian safety but enhances the connection between Riverside Drive’s residential and commercial corridors.



existing | *left*

The existing pedestrian lane on Riverside Drive serves an array of walkers, runners, and bikers. While the existing lane is heavily used, it abruptly ends and fails to connect to the existing sidewalk. This poses a potential area of conflict between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

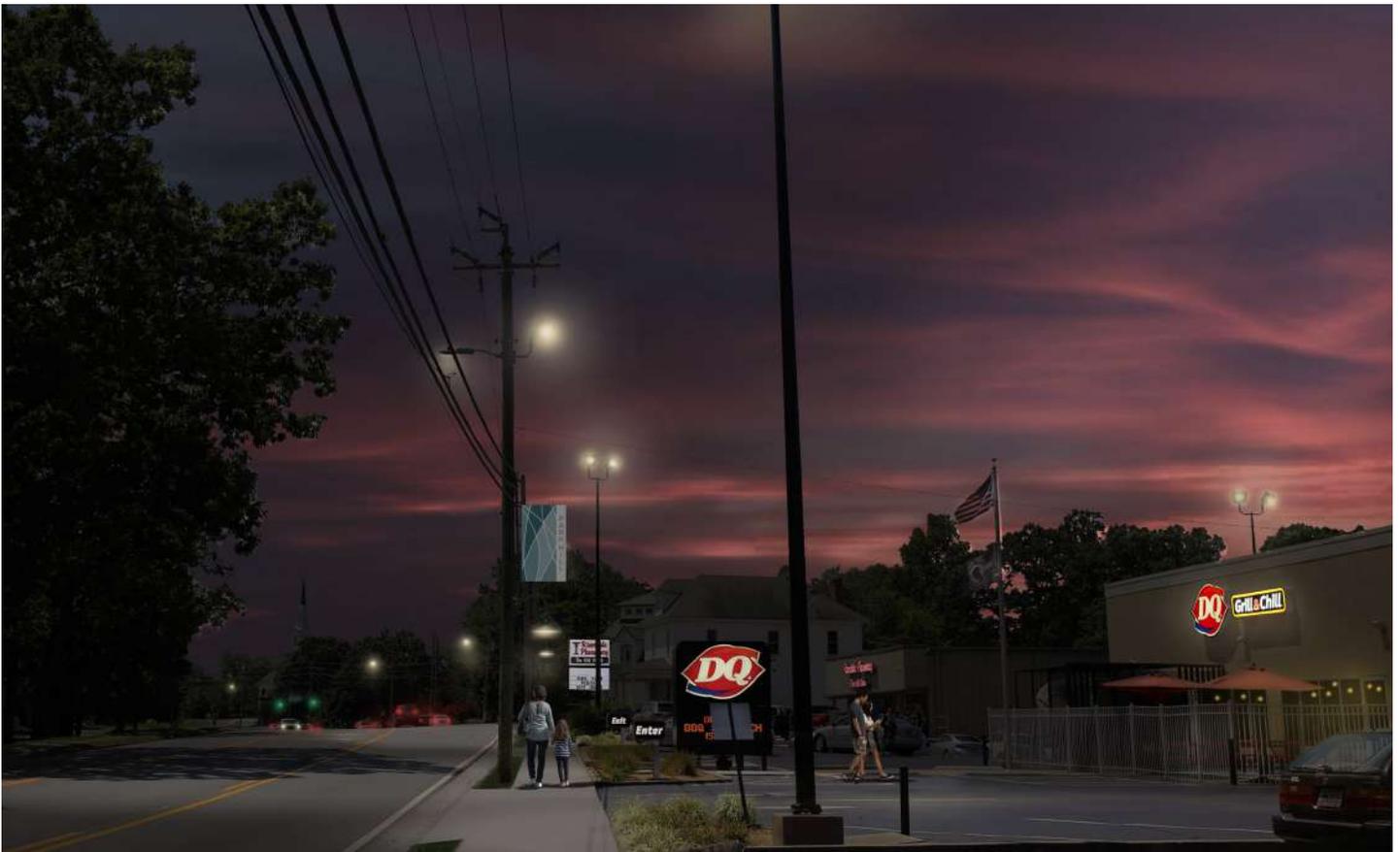


Improve lighting in the corridor with the pedestrian in mind



existing | *left*

The street lights along Riverside Drive/Ronnie Green Parkway are not scaled for pedestrians, and when asked, 82% of community survey respondents agree or strongly agree that the area needs improved lighting.



proposed | *option one*

Sidewalk lighting at an appropriate height can be added to the existing power poles to enhance pedestrian safety. In addition, neighborhood banners can be hung on the poles to announce activities or promote a neighborhood identity.



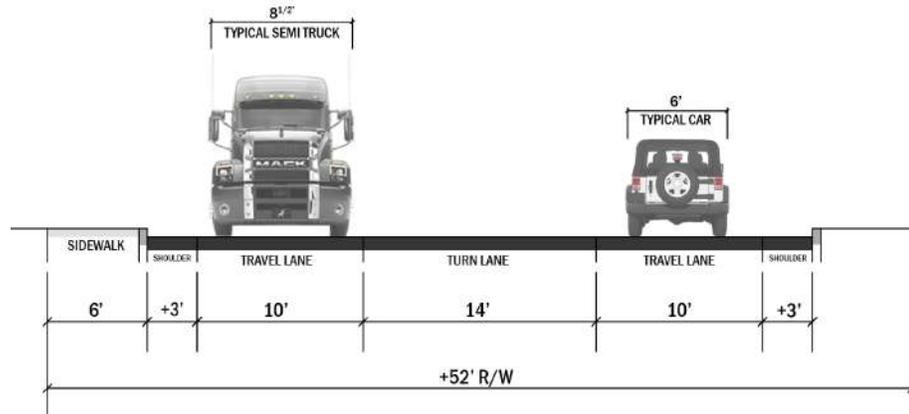
proposed | *option two*

To further emphasize pedestrian activity, the existing utility lines can be buried and the current poles replaced with pedestrian-scale light fixtures and neighborhood banners to build a strong sense of place.

Road diet for Riverside Drive – Green’s Grocery area (*long term*)

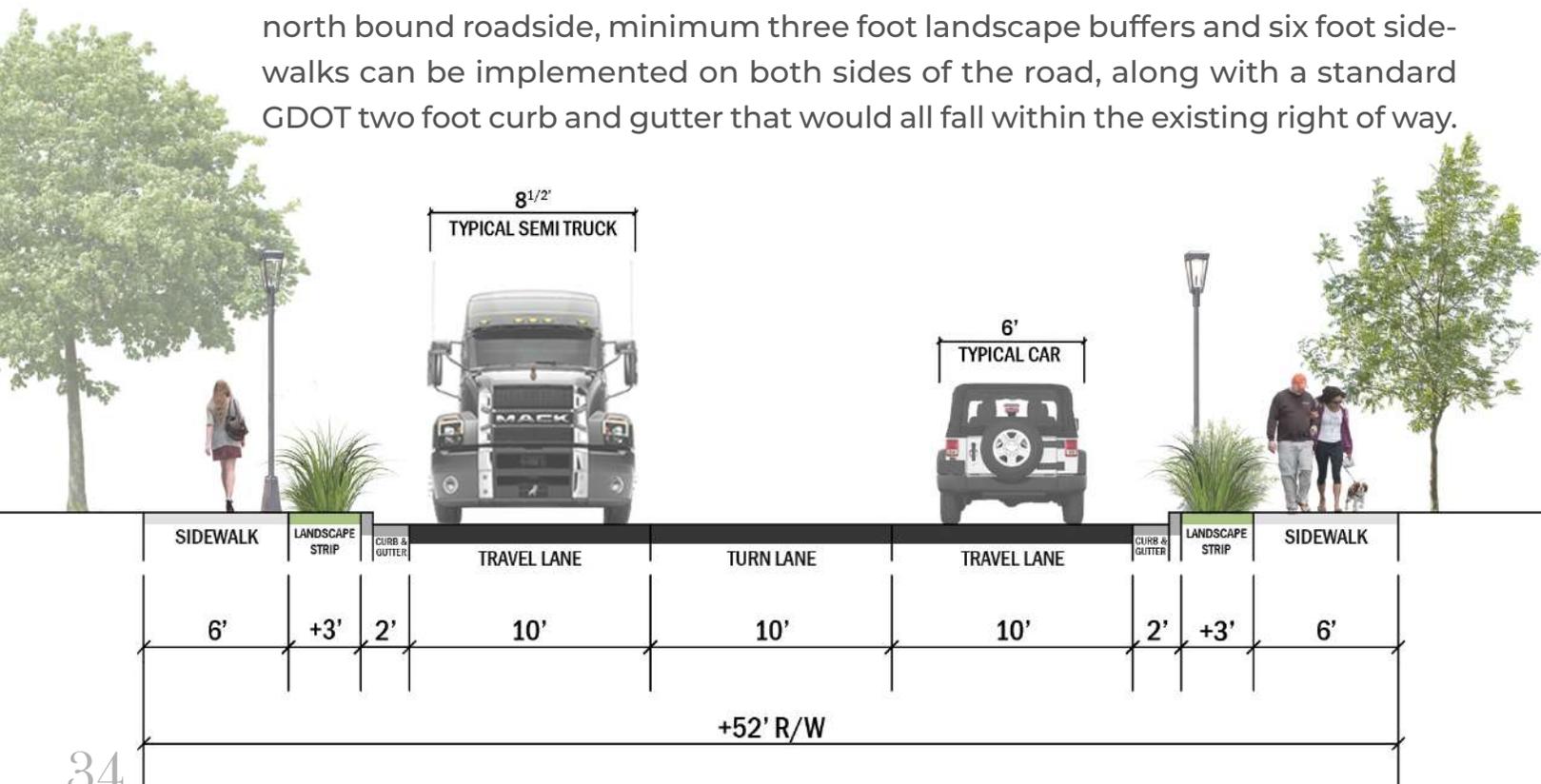
existing | *right*

Riverside Drive/Ronnie Green Parkway between Glenwood Drive and Oak Tree Drive has an average 52 foot right of way. With two 10 foot travel lanes, a 14 foot turn lane, and a six foot sidewalk on the south bound side, there is also a minimum three foot roadway shoulder and undesignated pavement islands.



proposed | *below*

A road diet would prioritize pedestrian spaces and movement and improve the aesthetics of the area. By using excess space from the middle turn lane and north bound roadside, minimum three foot landscape buffers and six foot sidewalks can be implemented on both sides of the road, along with a standard GDOT two foot curb and gutter that would all fall within the existing right of way.



Reduce curb cuts along Riverside Drive commercial area

existing | left



The commercial node along Riverside Drive is characterized by driveway after driveway. For example, the former Zaxby's location contains two curb-cut on Riverside and another on Oak Tree. Curb-cuts increase the volume of traffic flow as well as the number of times a pedestrian must navigate potential conflicts with automobiles.



proposed | above

To improve pedestrian safety, curb-cuts should be minimized along Riverside Drive. The former Zaxby's location, for example, could close one drive and widen the other so that one curb-cut accommodates both entering and exiting vehicles.

Work with property owners to reorganize and re-paint parking lines



existing | *left*

Looking south along Riverside Drive, the viewshed is dominated by sometimes empty parking lots with little distinction or visual interest. This creates undefined space and can contribute to a perception of neglect, which can further influence the functionality of a space.



proposed | *above*

Adding streetscaping, plantings, and more clearly demarcating drive lanes and parking spots can improve public perception and improve the visual appeal of the area. Streetscaping alone provides demonstrated benefits of improved pedestrian safety and decreased traffic speed as it provides a sense of arrival. Re-stripping parking lots will also increase pedestrian and vehicular safety with visual cues of where cars should or shouldn't be.

Lengthen Oak Tree Drive right-hand turn lane (long term)



existing | left

One consistent point of traffic congestion along the corridor is the T-intersection of Riverside Drive and Oak Tree Drive. Drivers on Oak Tree must either turn left or right onto Riverside, and as many drivers wait to turn left, the drivers turning right begin stacking up.



proposed | above

Extending the right-hand turn lane on Oak Tree Drive will help relieve traffic congestion along Oak Tree and improve the intersection overall. The existing right of way is more than sufficient to accommodate an additional 100' for the turn lane.

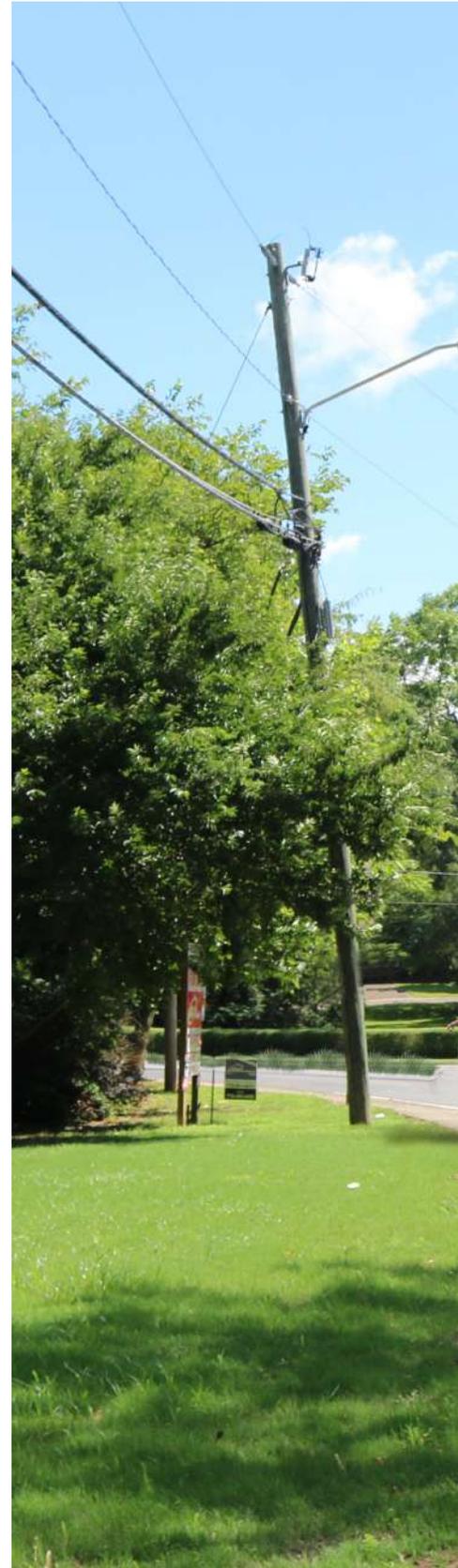


existing | *above*

Riverside Drive meets Morningside Drive at a T-intersection. Turning left onto Morningside can be complicated by both the speed of traffic and the curved road that limits visibility. Turning right means continuing on along Riverside into the commercial node. Turning traffic, particularly those turning left, can back up significantly.

proposed | *right*

A roundabout would improve traffic congestion and vehicular safety as well as beautify the roadway. The current width of the intersection is wide enough to accommodate a single-lane roundabout. According to the community survey, a majority of respondents agree that a roundabout would improve traffic flow at Riverside and Morningside. The rendering illustrates the opportunity for landscaped medians and neighborhood signage to create an identity or brand for the area.



Construct a roundabout at the T-intersection of Riverside and Morningside (long term)



Create a unified identity for the area with a strong descriptive brand



proposed

While the area is clearly important to Gainesville residents, survey respondents had no consistent name for it – Riverside? Longstreet Hills? City Park? There is a real opportunity to create a unified brand to build an identity and enhance redevelopment possibilities for this corridor.

Anchored by City Park, and bound by Riverside and Park Hill Drive, the city should determine what name would best capture the area's sense of place. Emphasizing the brand can be done by adding signage at Glenwood Drive and at the Riverside/Morningside intersection. Signage should incorporate the chosen name and be consistent with the city's new design identity.



Install signage and pole banners with branding



Incentivize, as appropriate, development and redevelopment of key properties.



existing | *above*

The property at the intersection of Riverside Drive and Park Hill Drive is underutilized. It has housed a variety of business over time, and currently, this prominent location is occupied by a shop that's open only a few weeks a year.

proposed | *right*

This property can provide an option that more than 60% of survey respondents would like to see in the area – a restaurant or café. It offers an opportunity for a neighborhood gathering spot. Adding outdoor seating will help break up the amount of pavement found at the intersection and enliven the space.







existing | *above*

Home for many years to Pasquale's, the now empty building at the corner of Oak Tree and Riverside appears dated and is surrounded by a worn parking lot. While it is the entrance into the Riverside commercial node, it provides no visual appeal or announcement of arrival.

proposed | *right*

Filling this vacant building will provide an important anchor for the commercial district of Riverside Drive. Flipping the current property's layout to provide greater visual interest and appeal will draw people into the area by better addressing the road and intersection while maintaining parking. Outdoor seating activates the space, and the new property layout could accommodate a drive-thru at the back of the building to minimize the disruption of pedestrian traffic.





EXISTING LAYOUT



PROPOSED LAYOUT

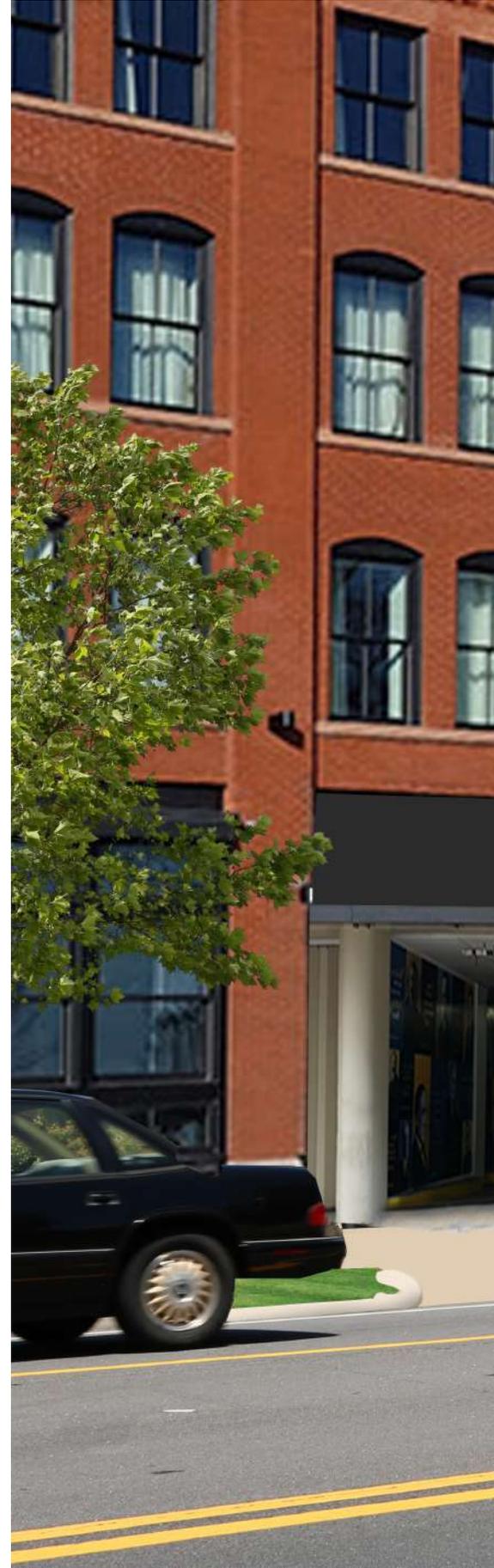


Incentivize as appropriate infill or redevelopment of commercial spaces as mixed-use developments (long term)



existing | *above*

Green's Grocery and the Inn Between Deli anchor the heart of Riverside's commercial node. As the center of pedestrian and vehicular activity, there are myriad opportunities for conflict between cars and between cars and pedestrians. The concern for pedestrian safety, parking, and traffic congestion may drive long-term redevelopment opportunities for this site. Today, the Riverside commercial node consists primarily of one-story buildings that prioritize vehicular movement. The unadorned sidewalks and single use rather than shared parking lots encourages patrons to visit one business and then drive elsewhere. Looking to the future, consideration should be given to a mixed-use development on this site that keeps the beloved businesses, but provides additional opportunities and emphasizes walkability.





Redevelopment of this property could transform the heart of the commercial node and can better address pedestrian circulation with first-floor retail, large sidewalks, and street trees. Two to three additional stories would increase community presence with residential lofts or office space. The use of a red brick façade mimics the aesthetics of downtown Gainesville and reflects the current look of the buildings. The natural sloping terrain of the property allows for an underground parking deck which increases available parking.



T E N E I

The
OPEN INN-BETWEEN
Deli

965

HOURS

↓ PARK ↓

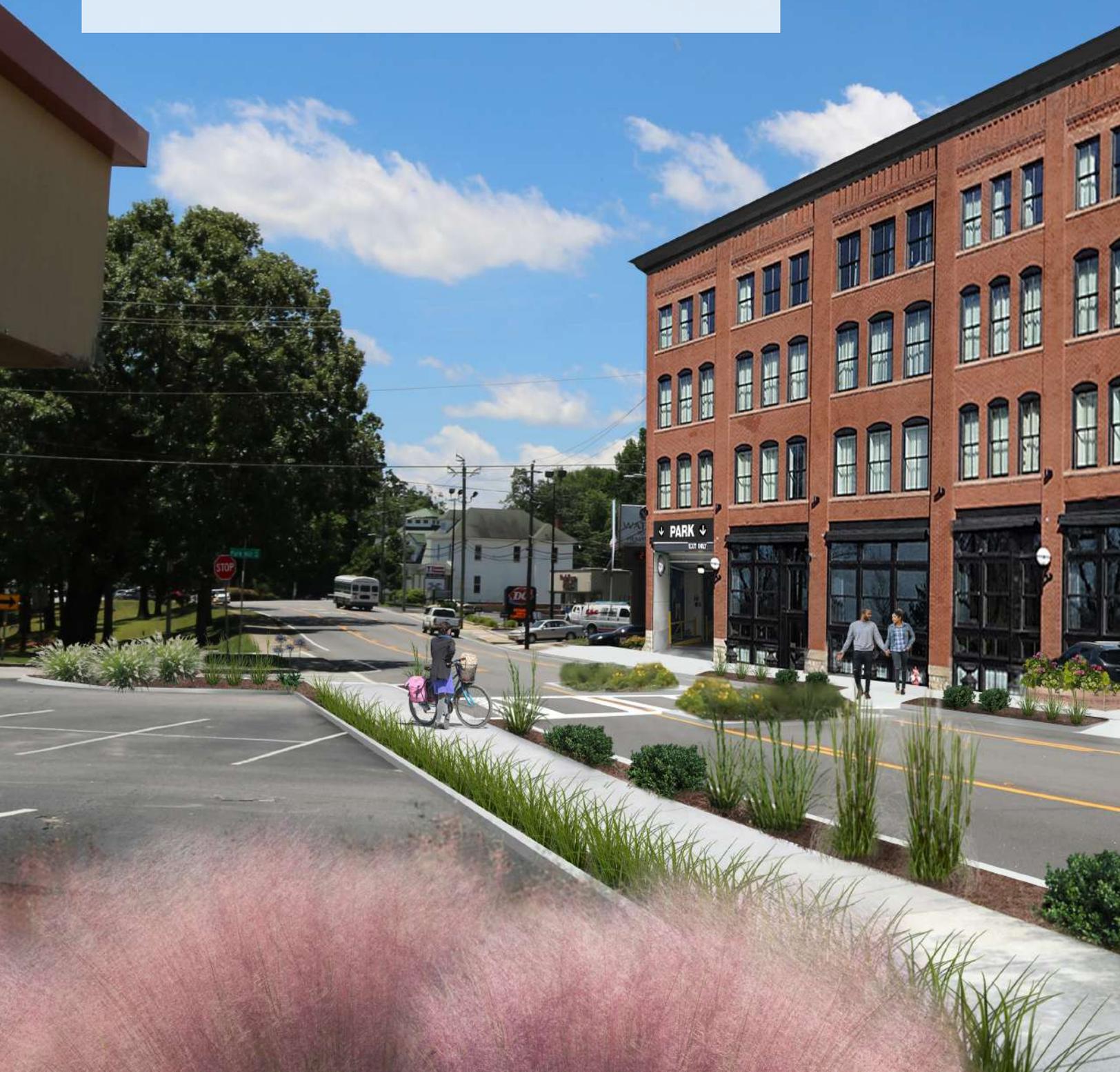
proposed | *option two*

Another redevelopment option maintains the culturally significant structures of the Inn Between Deli and Green's Grocery and applies an adaptive reuse approach which keeps the existing buildings and develops around them. This redevelopment option also provides a rear parking deck that takes advantage of the lot's steep topography. The additional building stories can be office space, housing, or commercial rooftops.



proposed | *option three*

A mixed-use redevelopment of the Green's Grocery and Inn Between Deli lots will prompt a shift in connectivity. Redevelopment would increase density and prioritize pedestrian movement. New streetscaping will beautify the neighborhood, increase pedestrian safety, and improve the pedestrian experience.







existing | *above*

The back portion of the Green's Grocery property is underutilized unless one considers its use as a connector for drivers between Riverside and Thompson Bridge Road. While it houses two successful businesses that front Thompson Bridge, the area as a whole could be enhanced and improved.

proposed | *right*

Redevelopment of the Green's Grocery property can maximize the site and address valuable frontage on Riverside and Thompson Bridge. Similar to the Riverside frontage, this side of the building could include first-floor retail with outdoor seating and parking garage access. Priority would be the inclusion of the existing businesses. Care should be given in any redevelopment to preserving the grand oak tree on the property.





OPEN
JUNE 13

OPEN
JUNE 13

recommendations

North Corridor

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Prioritize pedestrian safety with a crosswalk and refuge island across Park Hill Drive

Enhance pedestrian circulation with a road diet to Park Hill Drive/Cleveland Hwy (long term)

Transportation/ Auto-centric Improvements

Decrease congestion with minimal new curb cuts and enhance neighborhood aesthetics with a vegetated median

Add a bus pull-off within the existing right of way to decrease traffic delays

Promote public transportation with increased seating and shade at bus stops

Increase access to public transportation with additional hours of operation

Redevelopment Opportunities

Improve public perception and promote new business by repaving the parking lot, repainting parking spaces, and adding vegetation to Northlake Plaza Shopping Center

Create recreational opportunities within Northlake Plaza's excess parking lot space

Fill neighborhood needs with the development on vacant land at the corner of Enota and Park Hill Drive (long term)

Redevelop Northlake Plaza with shopping, green space, and housing options in order to better meet the needs of the diverse surrounding community (long term)

Branding

Use Gainesville's brand identity to promote and identify community assets and provide directional signage



The area identified as the North Corridor reaches from the intersection of Park Hill Drive and Enota Avenue to the entrance of the Atlanta Botanical Gardens on Cleveland Highway, a distance of about one and a half miles. This area includes the recently constructed Gainesville Fire Station #2, replacing a small and outdated facility about two miles away. In order to address the issues along the corridor, specific areas of emphasis were identified according to community input. The following design recommendations address those areas of greatest emphasis. To simplify the reference to the area, Park Hill or Park Hill Drive will be used when alluding to the main road which is known as both Park Hill Drive and Cleveland Highway in the corridor study area.

Prioritize pedestrian safety with a crosswalk and refuge island across Park Hill Drive

existing | *right*



Park Hill sees moderate pedestrian movement. According to the community survey, 20% of respondents walk as their primary mode of transportation. Many of these residents cross the street from their apartment to services like the laundromat and convenience store. Despite this pedestrian traffic, there is no crosswalk across Park Hill between Lakeview Drive and Clarks Bridge Road.

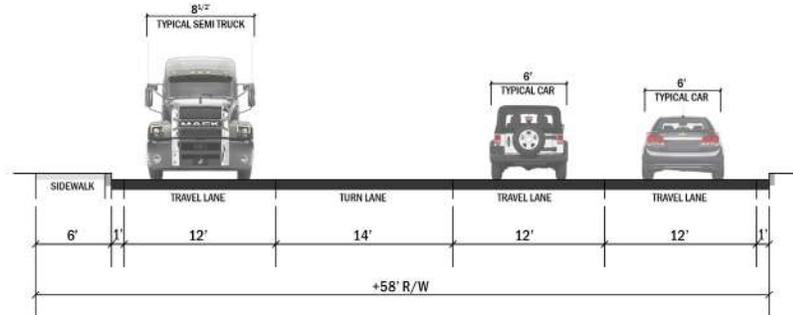


proposed | *above*

A crosswalk and vegetated refuge island across Park Hill would enhance pedestrian safety and prioritize pedestrian connectivity. An almost ideal location for the crosswalk would be between the shopping center that houses Blue Fin and the laundromat property.

Enhance pedestrian circulation with a road diet to Park Hill Drive/ Cleveland Highway (long term)

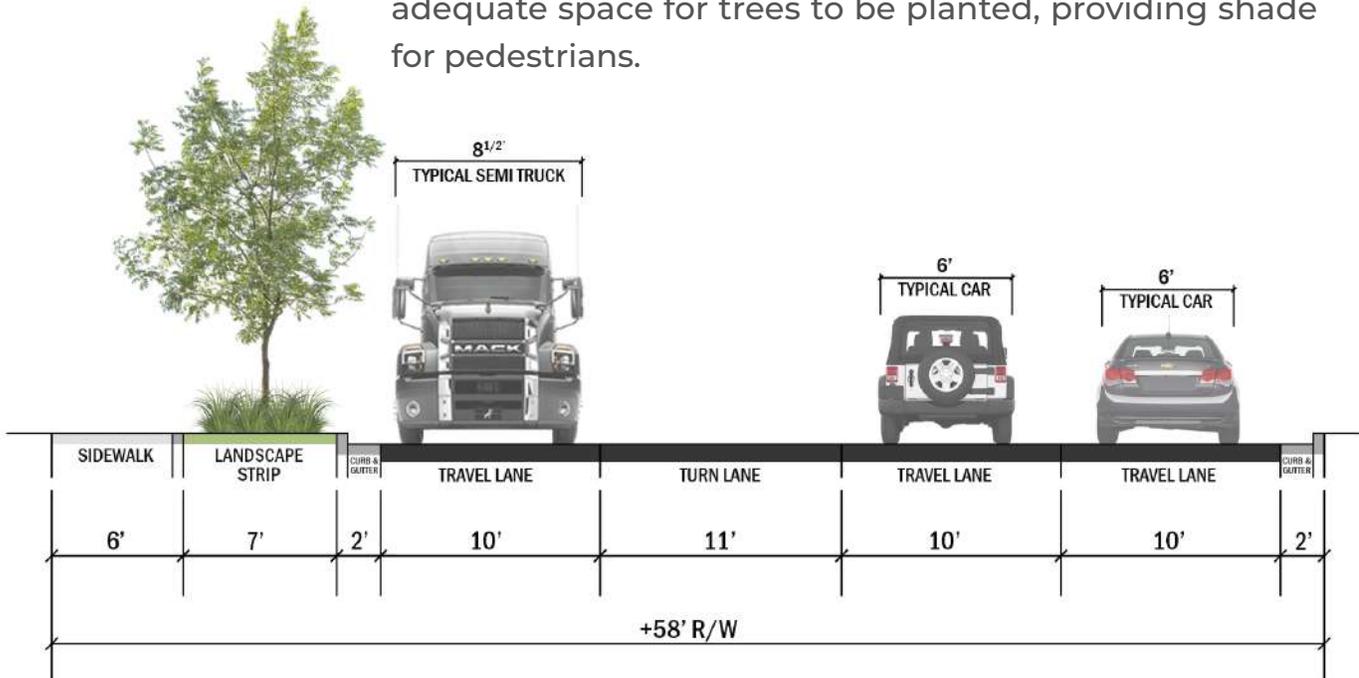
existing | right



Park Hill Drive has an approximate 58 foot right of way which consists of two 12' foot north bound travel lanes, a 14 foot turn lane, and one 12 foot south bound travel lane. The remaining right of way is filled with one foot road shoulders and a six foot sidewalk along the south bound travel lane.

proposed | below

A road diet to Park Hill Drive would redistribute excess space from the travel lanes to a landscape stripe to buffer between the sidewalk and south bound travel lane. The landscape stripe will enhance pedestrian safety as well as improve corridor aesthetics, and at 7' wide, the buffer gives adequate space for trees to be planted, providing shade for pedestrians.



Decrease automotive congestion with minimal new curb cuts and enhance neighborhood aesthetics with a vegetated median



existing | *above*

The Park Hill corridor is characterized by steady traffic, numerous curb cuts, and large swaths of pavement. Each curb cut can contribute to traffic congestion and potential points of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, as turns right or left into and out of the various drives occur.

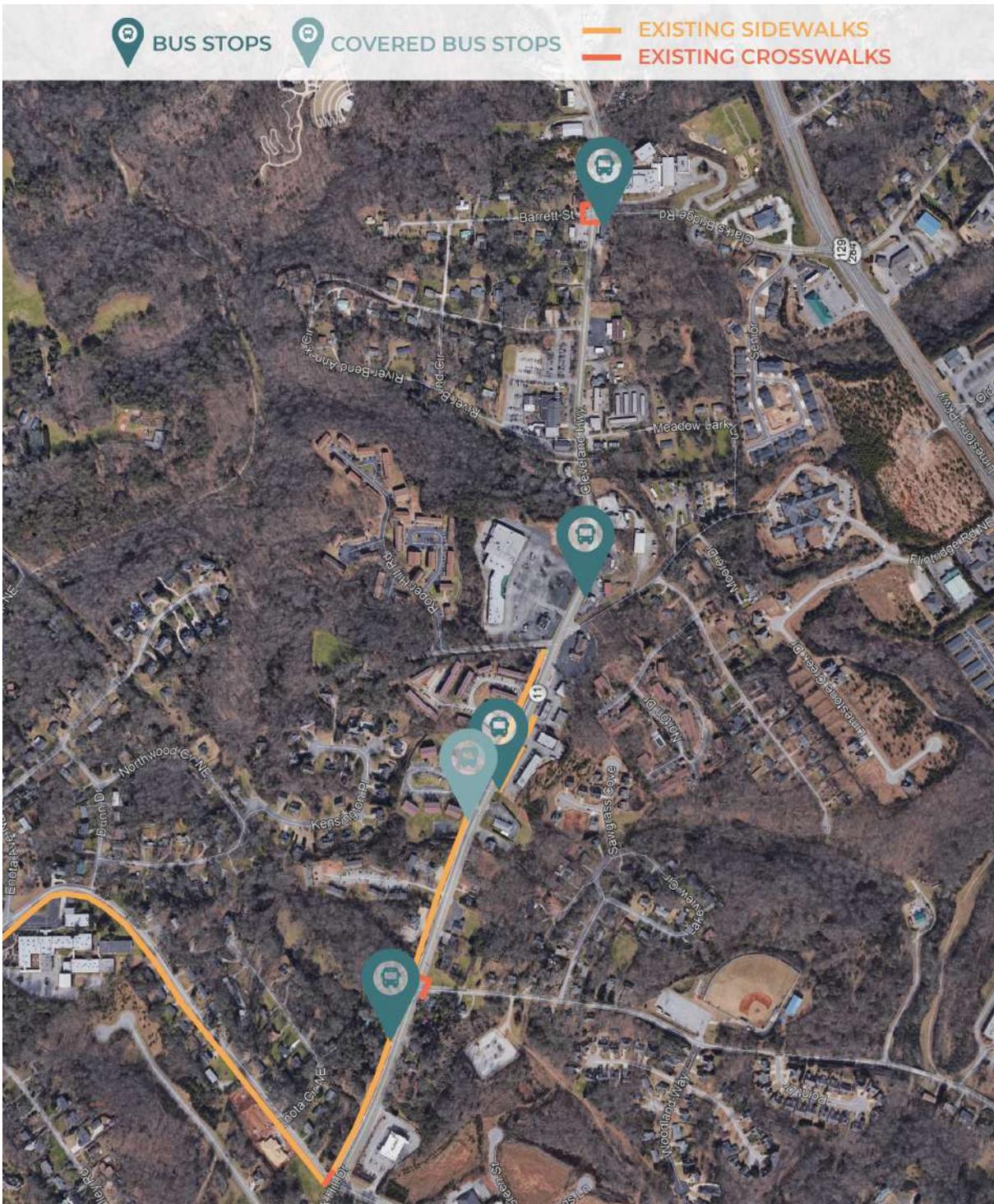


proposed | *above*

Curb cuts can be eliminated along Park Hill Drive through better definition of driveways. Recommended curb cut reductions include four in the area between the Texaco station and the property previously occupied by La Malandrina restaurant and one at Northlake Plaza. Reducing the curb cuts reduces points of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians and vehicles. The area can be further enhanced with vegetated medians.

existing

There are five bus stops along Park Hill between Enota Drive and Clarks Bridge Road. Only one of the stops has a bench and shade structure while the others are marked with just a sign. While this may not in and of itself be a deterrent to using public transportation, it may hinder those with limited capacity to stand while waiting. A lack of protection from the elements – whether sun or rain – and the hours of operation and convenient routes may also deter transit use.



Add a bus pull-off within the existing right of way to decrease traffic delays; Promote public transportation with increased seating and shade at bus stops and additional hours of operation



proposed | *above*

According to the community survey, one of the greatest needs for the north corridor apartment neighborhoods is improved transportation. While only 13% of respondents currently rely primarily on public transportation as their primary mode of transportation, improving bus stops and increasing hours may lead to an increase in ridership. Gainesville Connection should survey users to determine if the current hours and routes meet their needs or if changes would result in increased ridership. In addition, bus pull-off lanes within the existing right of way can improve traffic flow and enhance safety.

Improve public perception and promote new business by repaving the parking lot, repainting parking spaces, and adding vegetation to Northlake Plaza Shopping Center and other underutilized parcels.



existing | above

Empty storefronts and potholes epitomize the current state of Northlake Plaza. In the image above, the spaces between the Durango Mexican restaurant and the clothing boutique to the left of the Family Dollar are currently vacant. Various potholes can be seen across the vast parking lot, and though a few potholes have been “filled” with concrete pavers to prevent damage to vehicles, it is clear to the passerby that the plaza is in need of redevelopment



proposed | *below*

Repaving, re-striping, and adding vegetated islands or buffers in Northlake Plaza's parking lot are visual fixes that will immediately improve public perception of the shopping center. Removing former tenant signage and painting façade details may help attract new businesses to the shopping center.





existing | *left*

Vacant restaurant and retail spaces can negatively influence the feel of a neighborhood. When efforts are made to sell or repurpose a space, a vision for what is possible can be critical.





proposed | *above*

Reimagining the currently vacant restaurant space as an activated space, with lighting, outdoor seating, and bright colors changes the feel of the property, illustrating what is possible to potential buyers

Create recreational opportunities within Northlake Plaza's excess parking lot space

existing | *below*

There is a lot of empty asphalt between the shopping center and the road, and the expanse serves to emphasize its emptiness and lack of use. Repurposing part of the lot to meet community needs would activate and enhance the neighborhood.



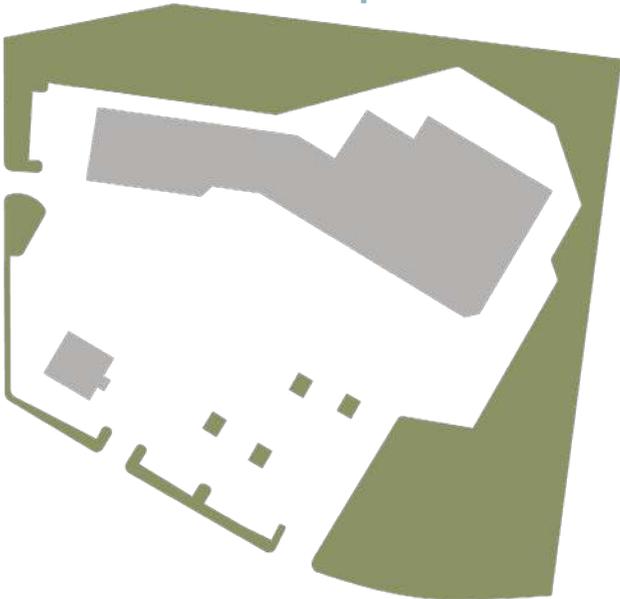
proposed | *below*

According to the community survey, over 90% of respondents agree that the Park Hill area needs public greenspace as parks and outdoor space were identified as one of the top needs for the neighborhood. Converting part of the unused parking lot on the north end of the property into a multi-use recreation field would provide a much needed recreation space. Shade trees around the perimeter will provide a reprieve from the sunny field, and parking can be shared with the shopping center. The flexible multi-use field would both enhance Northlake Plaza and serve the community.

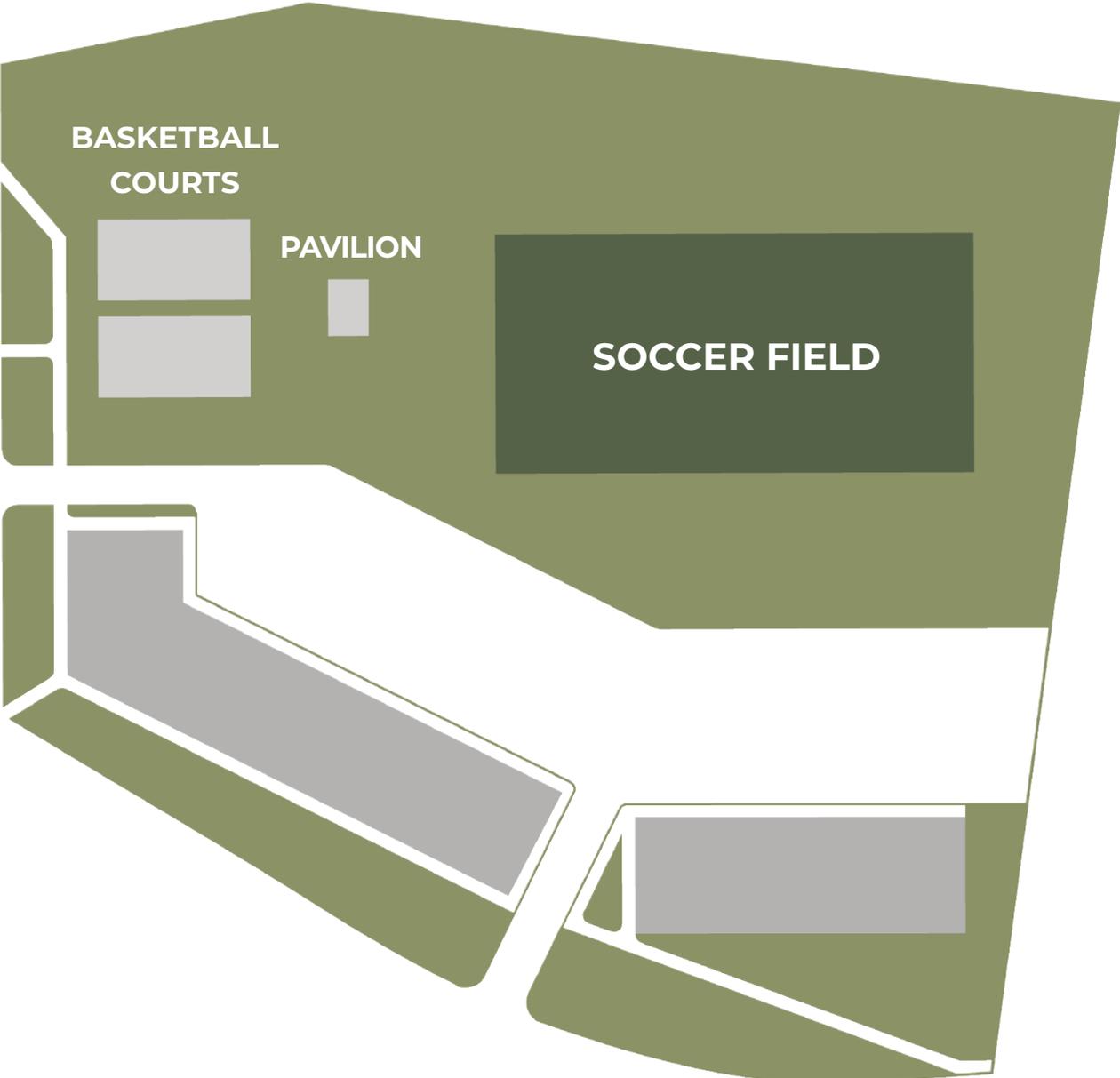


| EXISTING

Redevelop Northlake Plaza with shopping, green space, and housing options in order to better meet the needs of the diverse surrounding community (long term)



| PROPOSED



existing | *below and left*

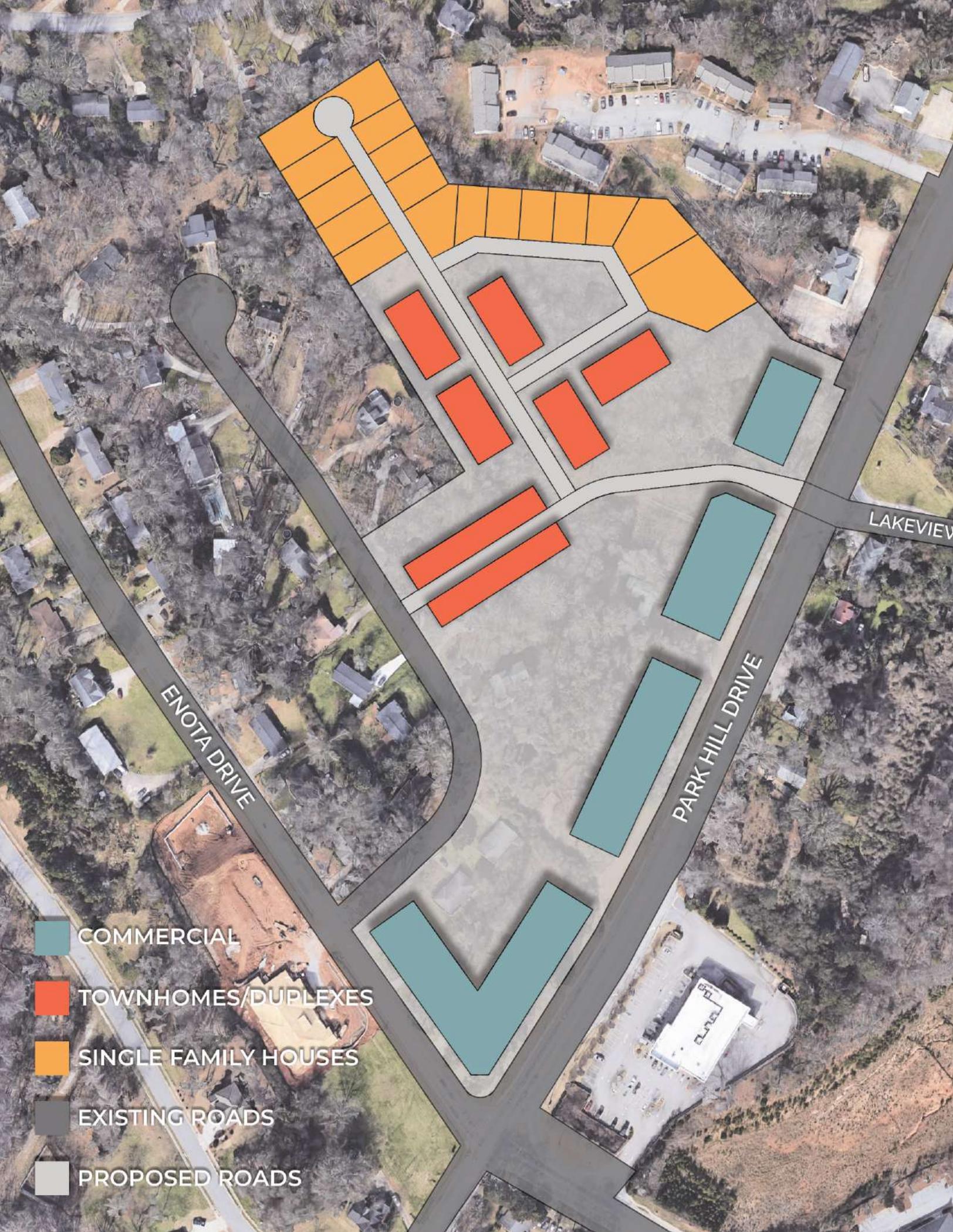


Northlake Plaza is seen as the property that most needs improvements along the Park Hill corridor by those who live in the corridor. The building sits at the back of the property, and fails, with its lack of visual appeal and empty spaces, capture significant vehicular traffic. Overall, the property lacks curb appeal and only minimally meets the needs of the neighborhood.



proposed | *above and left*

Redevelopment of Northlake Plaza would shift the commercial property to address the street, with parking in the rear. The back of the property would contain a community park which would include a soccer field, walking loop, basketball courts, and community pavilion. Redevelopment could go one step further by incorporating a mixed use building with second floor housing or townhomes along an edge of the property. A full redevelopment would capture the potential of Northlake Plaza and address the needs of the surrounding community.



- COMMERCIAL
- TOWNHOMES/DUPLEXES
- SINGLE FAMILY HOUSES
- EXISTING ROADS
- PROPOSED ROADS

ENOTA DRIVE

PARK HILL DRIVE

LAKEVIEW

Meet neighborhood needs with development and redevelopment of vacant properties at the corner of Enota and Park Hill (long term)

proposed | *below*

The vacant property on the corner of Enota and Park Hill has great redevelopment potential. Recommendations for the myriad lots that have been amassed along Park Hill offer a multi-use development with commercial offices fronting Park Hill and addressing the corner of Enota and Park Hill, and a small residential development in the form of townhomes, duplexes, or a small pocket community fronting the proposed minor road and back into the rear of the property that adjoins an existing residential neighborhood. To reduce curb cuts, the development should have a single entrance and exit, located at the existing light at Lakeview Drive and Park Hill. A secondary entrance point at Enota Circle would serve only the residential development with gated access.



< Small townhomes would provide an alternative to apartments in the neighborhood.



Black Apple Pocket Community is an example of a successful development of homes clustered around a common greenspace. >



existing



proposed | *below*

A two-story mixed-use infill development along Park Hill Drive with variation in façade design and rooflines gives a traditional feel with versatile spaces inside, varying from one, two, and three-bay commercial spaces on the ground level and office or loft spaces above. Parking spaces are located in the rear allowing buildings to front Park Hill Drive, along with a planted buffer and comfortable sidewalk.



Use Gainesville's brand identity to promote and identify community assets and provide directional signage

existing | *right*

Opportunities exist throughout the corridor to promote assets of the community. The city should identify key intersections where signage can effectively provide direction for visitors, such as this corner of Cleveland Highway and Clarks Bridge Road.



proposed | *right*

Using this colorful signage throughout Gainesville builds continuity and identity of place and directs visitors to points of interest.



Gainesville
Parks & Recreation

ATLANTA
BOTANICAL
GARDEN



LAKE LANIER
OLYMPIC PARK



implementation

As the old saying goes, you have to spend money to make money, and in this case, public investment in infrastructure, including elements like sidewalks, lighting, and greenspace can spark private investment in development and redevelopment. Gainesville can incentivize private development with tools like a Tax Allocation District (TAD) which has been successfully applied in the downtown and midtown areas. Commercial development or redevelopment increases property values and can spin off higher sales tax revenues allowing a community to further reinvest in itself. Redevelopment of housing can increase property values, and proximity to public greenspace does the same, and those increases in value not only provide property tax revenue to the city but to the school district as well.

Implementing any new project can be a difficult decision. By investing in one area, another opportunity is delayed or deferred. Gainesville has identified this corridor — from the Civic Center to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens — as a priority, and now within the corridor, priorities have to be set. One tool for determining the “what first and then what” is to look at the cost – benefit of various efforts.

For example, Gainesville could add a painted crosswalk across Oak Tree Drive with little to no cost, relying on the existing city workforce and supplies. The city could begin measuring various walking trails. The distance from the American Legion to the intersection of Riverside and Morningside, for instance, and mark that along with incremental distances in the already dedicated pedestrian lane. The city could begin color coding various trails and thinking through how they might connect if funds were available to build additional sidewalks or trails. Starting small and celebrating successful implementation is important. It allows the community to see progress and support future efforts.

For larger projects, whether short or long-term, the city should develop resource roadmaps which will help determine its top revitalization priorities and create a clear and logical path forward to implementation. Once all projects are mapped out, availability of funding, grant application deadlines, or simply the popularity of a project might drive implementation. The important thing is to let the plan, which represents the community vision, guide actions.

Resource Roadmap



Determine Revitalization Projects



Phases for Implementation



Estimated Costs



Sources of Funding

Federal, State, Local, Foundation, Individual Donors



Funding Ranges of Various Sources



Match Requirements



Application Deadlines

Second to knowing what should be done is knowing where funding for particular projects can be found. Many of the public projects in this plan are fundable with federal, state, or private foundation dollars. There are also projects that might be well suited for the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) list. In any case, identifying funding sources as part of the resource roadmap process is critical. Following are examples of grant funds that can be used to implement various public projects. Not all grants are available every fiscal year which makes knowing application deadlines critical.

Federal and State Grant Programs



**US Department of
Transportation**
**BUILD Transportation
Discretionary Grants
Program**

This program supports surface transportation infrastructure and facilities with a significant local or regional impact. Funding can include road and transit projects with funding up to \$25 million for capital projects or \$1 million for planning projects. There is no match requirement for Urbanized Areas with less than 200,000 people. More information at www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants.



**Federal Transit
Administration**
**Buses and
Bus Facilities**

This program will fund up to \$45 million to replace, rehabilitate, purchase or lease buses and related equipment. It will also fund the construction of bus related facilities and that includes technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles. There is a 20% local match requirement. More information can be found at www.transit.dot.gov/bus-program.



**US Department
of Transportation**
**Transportation
Alternative Program
(TAP)**

These are pass through funds to state departments of transportation and support on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation, and enhanced mobility. Grants are available for up to \$400,000 with a 25% match requirement. More information can be found at www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/.

**US Department of
Housing and Urban
Development**

**Choice Neighborhoods
Planning and
Implementation**

These grant funds help communities transform neighborhoods by revitalizing distressed public and/or assisted housing and catalyzing critical improvements in the neighborhoods through comprehensive revitalization. Grants range from \$350,000 for planning to up to \$35 million for implementation. A match of 5% is required. More information can be found at www.hud.gov/cn.

National Park Service

**Land & Water
Conservation Fund**

This is federal funding distributed to states and awarded locally in a competitive process. In Georgia, the funding is part of the grants program administered by the State Parks, Recreation, & Historic Sites within the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. This program supports the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Grants are typically up to \$500,000 with a 50% match requirement. More information can be found at <https://gastateparks.org/LWCF>.

**US Department
of Transportation**

**Federal Highway
Administration
Recreational Trails
Program**

Funds are distributed from the Federal Highway Administration to the State Parks, Recreation, & Historic Sites Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and are distributed through a competitive, multi-phase application process. The Recreational Trails Program supports the development and maintenance of a variety of trail types and trail-related facilities. Funding can be used for trail construction, maintenance, and/or education. Grants average \$200,000 and there is a 20% match requirement. More information can be found at <https://gadnr.org/rtp>.



***National Endowment
for the Arts***

**Grants for Arts
Projects**

Previously known as Art Works, this program supports arts and cultural projects that enhance communities and truly integrate art into community life. Grants for the Arts support a wide variety of project types as well as any phase of the project from planning to implementation. Grants of up to \$100,000 are available with a 50% match requirement. For more information, visit www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/gap/grant-program-description.



***National Endowment
for the Arts***

Our Town

To facilitate community placemaking and help strengthen arts, culture, and design projects in communities that help advance economic, physical, and/or social outcomes, grants of up to \$200,000 are available. A 50% match is required. More information is available at www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/grant-program-description.

Private Foundation Opportunities



***People for Bikes
Community Grant
Programs***

People for Bikes Community Grant Program provides grants of up to \$10,000 to local governments or non-profits to support bike infrastructure like paths, lanes, trails, and bridges. The program also funds “end of trip” facilities like bike racks, bike repair stations, and bike storage. More information and examples of funded projects can be found at <https://peopleforbikes.org/our-work/community-grants/>.



Sports courts help communities address a lack of play opportunities for older youth that no longer play on playgrounds. The KaBoom! Grant program engages the community that will be served by the sport court in the project planning and implementation. More information is available at <https://kaboom.org/grants/multi-sport-courts>.

Grants to Support Public Safety

One of the perceptions of the north corridor is that it is unsafe. While community crime statistics do indicate a high level of crime in the myriad apartment complexes, residents do not indicate that they feel unsafe in their homes. Understanding the community itself, what resources residents need to thrive, what resources the residents feel they lack access to, and how the city may help address those needs should be a first step. Identifying those needs may open up additional opportunities for which to seek funds. Secondarily, there are federal grant opportunities to address crime through funding of additional police officers and funding of body cameras.



To support the approved entry-level salary and benefits necessary to hire and/or rehire full time law enforcement positions that will increase community policing capacity and crime prevention efforts. The grants fund up to \$125,000 per officer, and a match requirement of 25% for the first three years and 100% per officer in the fourth year. For more information, visit <https://cops.usdoj.gov/chp>.



To implement or expand the availability and use of body-worn cameras to promote the safety of officers and citizens, grants of up to \$3 million dollars, based on the number of sworn officers employed by the agency applying, with a 50% match requirement. More information can be found at <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/body-worn-cameras-bwcs/overview>.

Getting Started

This vision for the Riverside - Park Hill corridor reflects the recommendations, ideas, and dreams of those who live, work, and play in the area. The first steps of implementation rest with the City of Gainesville with private development typically following strategic and coordinated public infrastructure investment. Public investment will serve as a catalyst for private investment in this important Gainesville neighborhood and incentivize the shared development and redevelopment vision for the Riverside – Park Hill corridor.

