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Mobility Plan Recommendations

Zephyrhills Mobility Plan

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Mobility Plan Recommendations

Zephyrhills Mobility Plan

Introduction

The Zephyrhills Mobility Plan addresses the City of Zephyrhills incorporated area and the City's Joint Planning Area with Pasco County (study area). The plan identifies mobility strategies, multimodal projects aimed at moving people and goods safely and efficiently throughout these areas over the next 10 years. The objectives of the Zephyrhills Mobility Plan are to:

- Identify current and future-year traffic circulation needs in consideration of economic development (job creation), population growth, neighborhood livability, social equity, and community sustainability
- Enhance safety, comfort, and function for all travel modes within key corridors
- Leverage partnerships with Pasco County, the MPO, FDOT, and TBRPC to identify solutions to accommodate travel demand
- Develop recommendations for implementation projects and policy amendments based on needs assessment, prior planning, and community input

The Mobility Plan recognizes the intricate interplay between transportation infrastructure, land use patterns, and community vitality. By addressing the mobility needs of distinct places in the study area, the Mobility Plan seeks to foster more connected, accessible, and vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods.

Community Engagement

On February 15, 2024, the City of Zephyrhills hosted a Transportation Roundtable, bringing together residents, business owners, government agencies, and other community stakeholders to discuss the current status and potential future prospects of the transportation system in the greater Zephyrhills area. The insights and perspectives shared during the roundtable discussion pointed out the following issues and needs:

- Transportation safety, accessibility, and mobility for all users, with attention to people who do not drive or have reliable access to a car
- Impacts of regional growth on transportation infrastructure and services including roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and public transit
- Mobility enhancements under the direct control of City government such as sidewalks, multi-use trails, local street connectivity and crossings, and turn lanes.
- Intergovernmental coordination and advocacy for transportation projects that are part of regional transportation planning and funding processes
- Land conservation as a tool for growth management and transportation demand management

- Enhanced accessibility to daily needs shopping and services through walk/bike infrastructure, public transit service, and home-delivery options
- Safety enhancements, including street lighting where people frequently walk and bike
- Public support for transportation projects and its influence on state and local funding priorities

A full reporting of the roundtable discussion is available on the GoingPLACES [webpage](#)¹ on the City's website.

The City's planning team will continue to collect community input and feedback for the Zephyrhills Mobility Plan through late spring 2024. Community engagement opportunities will be posted on the GoingPLACES [webpage](#).¹

Mobility Context

Figure 1 illustrates general locations in the study area where walking and biking connectivity could enhance mobility and accessibility to key destinations and public transit service. These locations are described in the following.

Established Neighborhoods

Established Neighborhoods are recognized as areas where multimodal improvements are needed to address deficiencies in older infrastructure. These predominantly residential locations generally include Downtown and in-town neighborhoods and neighborhoods along Eiland Boulevard in the study area. Multimodal connections would provide residents in these areas additional ways to travel to shopping, restaurants, services, and other amenities as well as GoPasco transit service within the city.

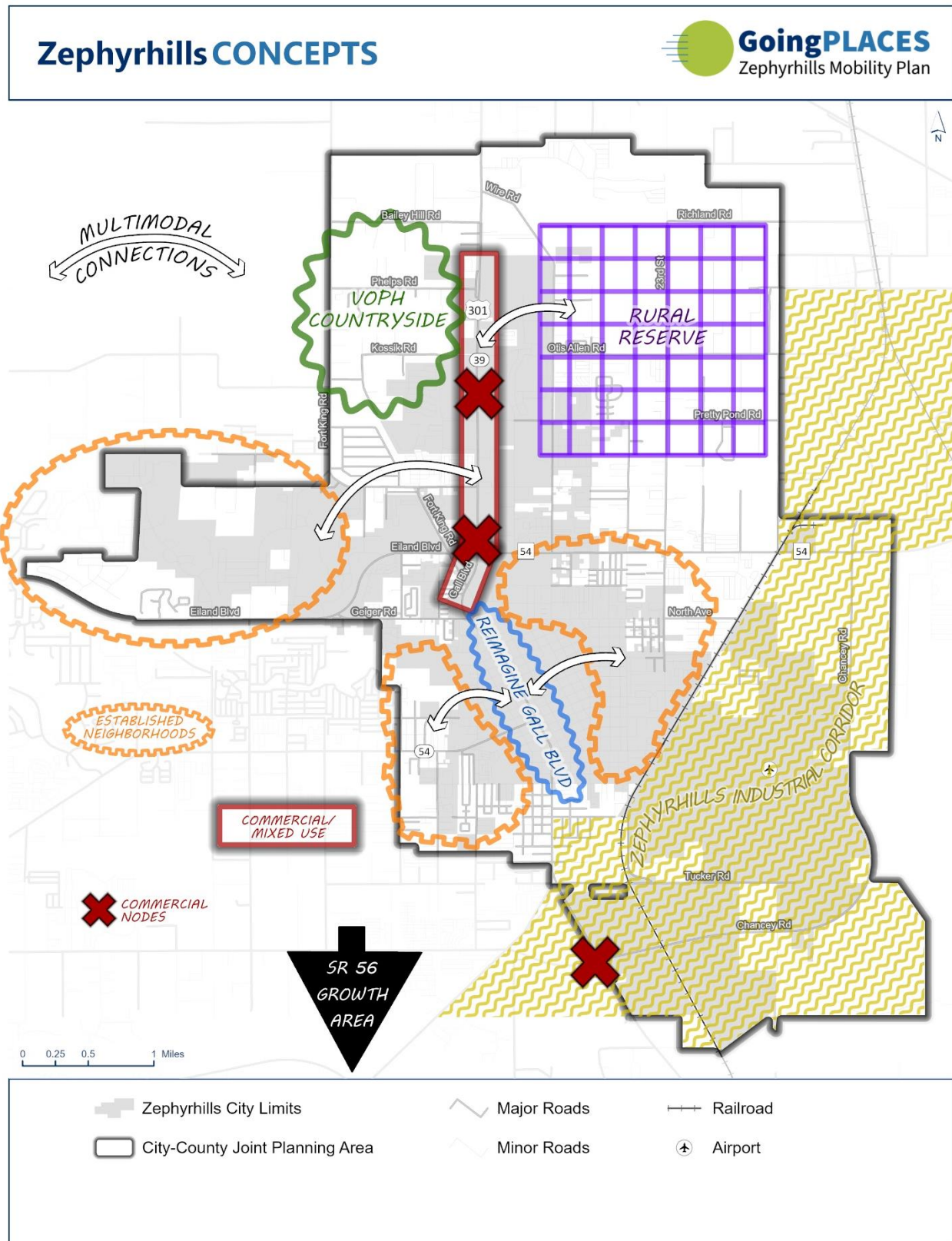
Commercial/Mixed Use

Commercial/Mixed Use areas are located along US 301 north and characterized by a diverse range of building types and uses, including commercial spaces, apartments and townhouses providing housing options for residents within walking distance of commercial amenities, office buildings, and entertainment and leisure activities. The Commercial/Mixed Use areas is served by public transit routes.

Pedestrian and bicycle safety, accessibility, and comfort features such as wide sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, landscaping, street lighting, and street furniture contributing to the overall functionality and livability of these built environment while reducing the need for nearby residents to drive for daily need trips.

¹ <https://www.ci.zephyrhills.fl.us/736/GoingPLACES>

Figure 1: Mobility Plan Context



Community Redevelopment Area

The Community Redevelopment Area encompasses Zephyrhills' historic downtown, the "Reimagine Gall Boulevard" corridor, and residential neighborhoods (also see Established Neighborhoods above). The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) promotes business development and quality of life amenities within the Community Redevelopment Area as a way to attract private development and other investments that serve to revitalize and sustain this important city focal point and economic generator.

Transportation infrastructure that supports walking, biking, and transit use would be complementary to the CRA's ambitions as articulated in the Community Redevelopment Plan (currently being updated). A well-connected multimodal transportation network would enhance accessibility within the area, making it easier for residents, workers, and visitors to access jobs, shopping, services, recreation, and cultural opportunities, and help alleviate traffic congestion and parking demand. Pedestrian-friendly streets adjoining storefronts, public spaces, and urban-scale housing can enhance the area's market appeal and create opportunities for existing and new businesses.

Commercial Nodes

Commercial Nodes typically consist of stores, restaurants, services, and other commercial establishments at intersections of major thoroughfares and public transit hubs to maximize visibility and accessibility. Areas with high pedestrian traffic, such as Downtown Zephyrhills, are also considered to be Commercial Nodes (see Community Redevelopment Area above). These nodes also serve as gathering places and social hubs.

VOPH Countryside

The northern part of the study area consists of urban/suburban pattern development within the US 301 corridor, rural residential development, and undeveloped greenfield parcels. This area is valued for its rolling hills and scenic landscapes.

The study area west of US 301 is predominantly located within the Villages of Pasadena Hills (VOPH) in the area designated as "Countryside" on the VOPH master development plan. Generally, the Countryside designation recognizes legacy zoning districts while aiming to limit or control more intensive land uses and development to preserve the rural character and align with the community's vision for the area.

Rural Reserve

The area referred to as Rural Reserve on Figure 1 is located east of Wire Road and north of Otis Allen Road in the study area. Future urban/suburban expansion into this area is dependent on the availability of adequate public infrastructure and service utilities and alignment with the community's vision for the area as outlined in the US 301 Corridor Land Use Vision and Transportation Strategy.

Zephyrhills Industrial Corridor

The Zephyrhills Industrial Corridor has a significant role in the economic vitality and resiliency of the city. The industrial corridor consists of the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport, industrial businesses, interspersed residential neighborhoods, and a significant amount of industrial designated land available for job-creating/tax generating manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution uses.

Proximity to multimodal transportation infrastructure, including rail, improves operational efficiency and competitiveness for industrial businesses. Infrastructure investments that enhance connectivity and accessibility make it easier to move materials and goods to and from the corridor.

SR 56 Growth Area

Burgeoning growth south of Zephyrhills within the SR 56 corridor in Pasco County, including the Two Rivers development, presents distinct challenges and opportunities for the City's transportation infrastructure and overall growth management and redevelopment goals. The influx of new residents and businesses will generate additional vehicle trips on roads leading to and through the city. Impacts on traffic flows, commuting times, and accessibility to daily-needs destinations could increase the need for costly capacity expansions (e.g., road widenings).

Enhancing public transit service between neighborhoods within the SR 56 corridor and the Zephyrhills Community Redevelopment Area and other destinations can provide residents of these areas with viable alternatives to driving, reducing vehicle trips on US 301 and other roads and preserving quality of people places. Infrastructure for walking and cycling, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails within these areas can reduce car use for short trips.

Mobility Strategies and Actions

The City of Zephyrhills Planning Department has developed a set of preliminary strategies and actions to respond to the issues and needs identified through data analysis and community input to date. The strategies and actions are aimed at addressing the community's short and long-range transportation needs while supporting broader community goals for economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and cultivation of high-quality places and unique community identities.

Strategy 1: Enhance access to safe, reliable, convenient, and affordable transportation options for all community members.

Strategy 2: Advance transportation solutions that reduce environmental impact and support a healthier community.

Strategy 3: Prioritize strategic transportation investments aimed at stimulating economic growth and job creation.

Strategy 4: Use transportation projects as opportunities to enhance the character, identity, and functionality of diverse place types within our city.

Each strategy is supported by a list of recommended City actions. Collectively, these actions will help shape the City's transportation landscape to meet the present needs of our residents, businesses, and institutions while also laying the groundwork for a thriving and sustainable future.

Strategy 1: Enhance access to safe, reliable, convenient, and affordable transportation options for all community members.

RECOMMENDED CITY ACTIONS:

- 1.1. Prioritize transportation projects that improve safety and mobility within and between job centers, such as the Zephyrhills Industrial Corridor and the Zephyrhills Community Redevelopment Area, and other key community destinations.
- 1.2. Improve transportation mode connectivity to make it easier for people to access essential services, employment opportunities, recreational facilities, and other destinations. For example, installing sidewalks providing connectivity to public transit stops.
- 1.3. Enhance accessibility and comfort features at public transit stops to accommodate all public transit riders, including people with disabilities.
- 1.4. Conduct neighborhood needs assessments to identify transportation disadvantaged populations and transportation deserts. Prioritize transportation infrastructure investments in those areas.
- 1.5. Collaborate with communities and transportation partners to develop transportation solutions for historically underserved neighborhoods.
- 1.6. Explore opportunities for micro-mobility and micro-transit technologies. For example, [Freebie](https://ridefreebee.com/).²
- 1.7. Promote and facilitate shared mobility programs to reduce single-occupancy vehicles, lower transportation costs and enhance accessibility to opportunities for participants, improve transportation network efficiency, and encourage sustainable transportation choices. For example, [Ride Roll Stroll](https://riderollstroll.com/).³

² <https://ridefreebee.com/>

³ <https://riderollstroll.com/>

- 1.8. Raise public awareness about mobility options and services through outreach and education campaigns in conjunction with our transportation partners. For example, [Florida's Mobility Week](#).⁴
- 1.9. Explore the feasibility of trolley service between Zephyrhills and Dade City.
- 1.10. Coordinate land use and transportation planning to focus future suburban/urban-scale residential development within walking distance of existing or planned transit service.
- 1.11. Encourage mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, and recreational opportunities within walkable distances to promote shorter trips, reduce vehicle dependency, and create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environments that support local businesses and social interactions.
- 1.12. Encourage mixed use "transit-oriented" and "transit-ready" developments near existing or planned transit service to increase mobility options; improve access to opportunities; reduce household transportation costs, traffic congestion, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions; foster vibrant, walkable neighborhoods; and attract investment.

Strategy 2: Advance transportation solutions that reduce environmental impact and support a healthier community.

RECOMMENDED CITY ACTIONS:

- 2.1. Invest in active transportation infrastructure that supports walking, cycling, and scootering and promotes community and environmental health.
- 2.2. Construct and maintain sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails in strategic locations to facilitate safe walking and cycling for transportation and recreational purposes.
- 2.3. Implement traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossings where needed to improve safety for all street users. For example, mid-block crossings with driver awareness beacons.
- 2.4. Install bike racks in convenient locations at community destinations to encourage cycling.
- 2.5. Explore opportunities for use of transportation rights-of-way and infrastructure for active transportation facilities. For example, "rail with trail" corridors.
- 2.6. Incorporate green infrastructure into transportation projects, such as street trees, rain gardens, bioswales, and other green spaces, to support pedestrian/cyclist comfort, ecological systems, flood resilience, and community aesthetics,

⁴ <https://www.fdot.gov/projects/mobilityweek/mobilityweek2023.shtm>

- 2.7. Explore opportunities to expand the use of low-speed, nonmotorized, and electric vehicles. For example, regulations allowing operation of golf carts and/or neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs) on low-speed streets.
- 2.8. Explore innovative parking strategies to support local businesses and walkable environments, reduce congestion and emissions from circling cars, and minimize parking conflicts in residential neighborhoods. Such strategies may include shared private parking facilities based on varying peak demand times; curbside management to accommodate ridesharing and micromobility options; park-and-shuttle facilities, park-and-ride facilities, and green parking infrastructure (permeable pavements, solar panels, and electric vehicle charging stations).

Strategy 3: Prioritize strategic transportation investments aimed at stimulating economic growth and job creation.

RECOMMENDED CITY ACTIONS:

- 3.1. Upgrade and expand transportation infrastructure, including roads, rail connections, airport facilities, and walk/bike facilities, to provide employers, workers, customers, and existing residents within the Zephyrhills Industrial Corridor reliable and efficient access to resources, markets, and amenities.
- 3.2. Partner with Pasco County, the Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Florida Department of Transportation to plan and establish funding priority for a four-lane bypass loop road and multi-use trail around Zephyrhills to enhance safety and mobility and support efficient freight movement and access to local jobs.
- 3.3. Implement people-focused Complete Streets improvements within the Zephyrhills Community Redevelopment Area.

Strategy 4: Use transportation projects as opportunities to enhance the character, identity, and functionality of diverse place types within our city.

RECOMMENDED CITY ACTIONS:

- 4.1. Develop design guidelines that incorporate placemaking principles into transportation projects, considering factors such as walkability, connectivity, green space, public amenities, aesthetics, and branding. Tailor design approaches to enhance the sense of place and identity within each place type.
- 4.2. Engage with communities to identify priorities and preferences and ensure that transportation project designs reflect the unique character and aspirations of each place type in the city.

- 4.3. Foster partnerships with local governments and transportation agencies to leverage resources, expertise, and support for placemaking initiatives within transportation projects.
- 4.4. Integrate Complete Streets design principles into development standards and related technical manuals to ensure that public and private streets accommodate the needs of all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and public transit users, as appropriate to the place type.
- 4.5. Evaluate right-of-way preservation and access management standards in the City's Land Development Code for opportunities to enhance safety, improve traffic flow, and maximize the use of public space for multi-modal transportation options.
- 4.6. Explore ways to reconnect neighborhoods divided by highways, development, or other barriers.
- 4.7. Require new developments to incorporate interconnected street/circulation networks, including the provision of street stub outs to adjacent properties. This design approach facilitates multiple access points and alternate routes, dispersing traffic more evenly and reducing congestion on main thoroughfares.
- 4.8. Establish connectivity requirements and design standards for new developments to create pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between residential neighborhoods and commercial centers, parks, schools, and other destinations.
- 4.9. Restore the traditional street grid or add new streets to larger blocks or tracts of land when appropriate in conjunction with new development, redevelopment, or capital projects. Where restoring automobile access is no longer feasible or aligned with other City plans, consider restoring the street grid for use by pedestrians and cyclists.
- 4.10. Establish new street grids in conjunction with new development and area-wide planning, when appropriate.
- 4.11. Maintain the City's ownership of streets to preserve the integrity of the network of city streets, collectors, and arterials.
- 4.12. Use feedback and data-driven insights to address emerging mobility challenges, refine infrastructure design standards, and continuously improve the quality of the City's transportation system and environment.

Mobility Concepts and Actions

The mobility concepts discussed in this section encompass pedestrian and bicycle facilities to create an interconnected system of sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails throughout the study area. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities and multimodal connections facilitate access to key destinations in the study and public transit service. The existing pedestrian and bicycle

infrastructure in the study is the product of collaborations and investments by city, county, and state agencies. The City is currently addressing gaps in its sidewalk network through the City's capital budgeting process.

The mobility concepts also depict roadway capacity enhancements including new roads, widened roads, and intersection operational and safety improvements. The transportation planning process is iterative and involves multiple steps by multiple transportation agencies, including identification of transportation needs, development of cost-feasible solutions, alternatives development and evaluation, public involvement, and adoption of local, countywide, and state transportation plans and programs.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Traffic safety is an increasingly important issue in Florida, particularly in urban counties including Pasco County. Florida consistently ranks among the states with the highest rates of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities. According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Florida had the highest pedestrian fatality rate per capita in the United States in recent years. Similarly, the state has also had a high number of bicycle fatalities.

Given these factors, addressing pedestrian and bicycle safety is crucial for protecting vulnerable road users, reducing traffic fatalities and severe injuries, promoting sustainable transportation options, and enhancing the overall community livability and safety.

Figure 2 depicts crash locations involving bicyclists or pedestrians on SR 54 near Court Street. A mobile home park is located to the south of this crash area and a convenience store is located to the north. GoPasco transit stops are located on both sides of SR 54 near the crash area.

Figure 3 illustrates the following countermeasures and standard infrastructure improvements:

- Installing mid-block crossings with special emphasis crosswalk markings and driver awareness beacons (e.g., Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons), where appropriate
- Lowering the posted speed limit from 40 miles per hour (mph) to 35 mph, transitioning to 40 mph west of the intersection
- Enhancing street lighting at crosswalks to improve visibility
- Installing sidewalks that connect to nearby transit stops

Figure 2: Pedestrian and Bicyclist Crashes on SR 54 near Court Street

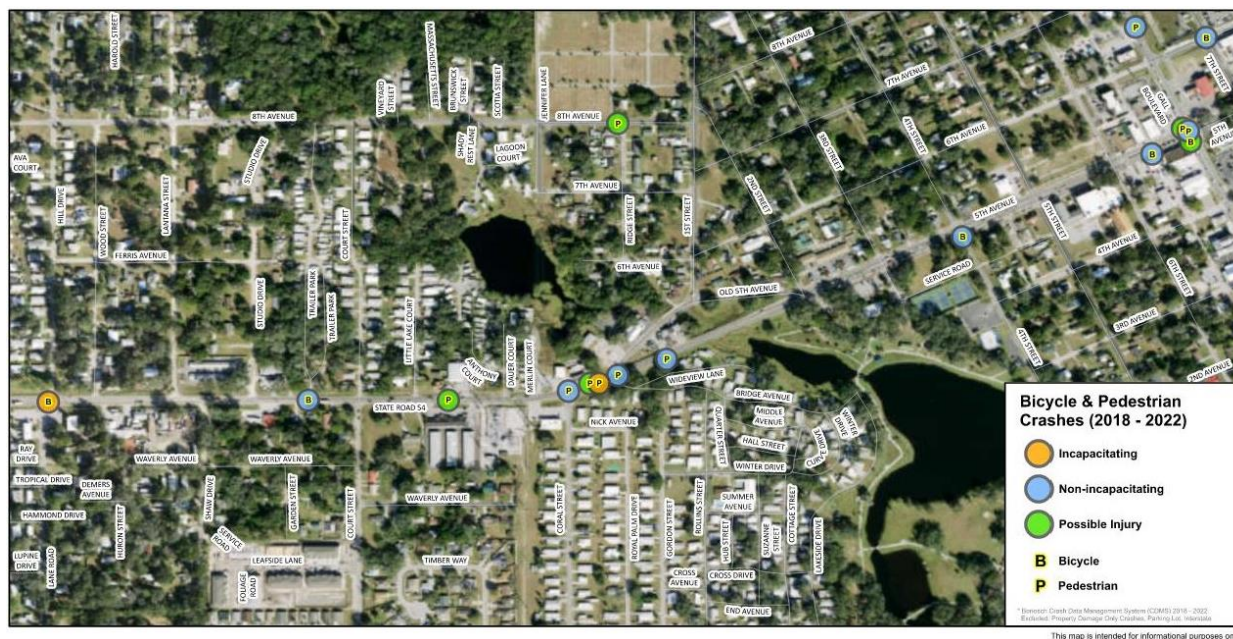
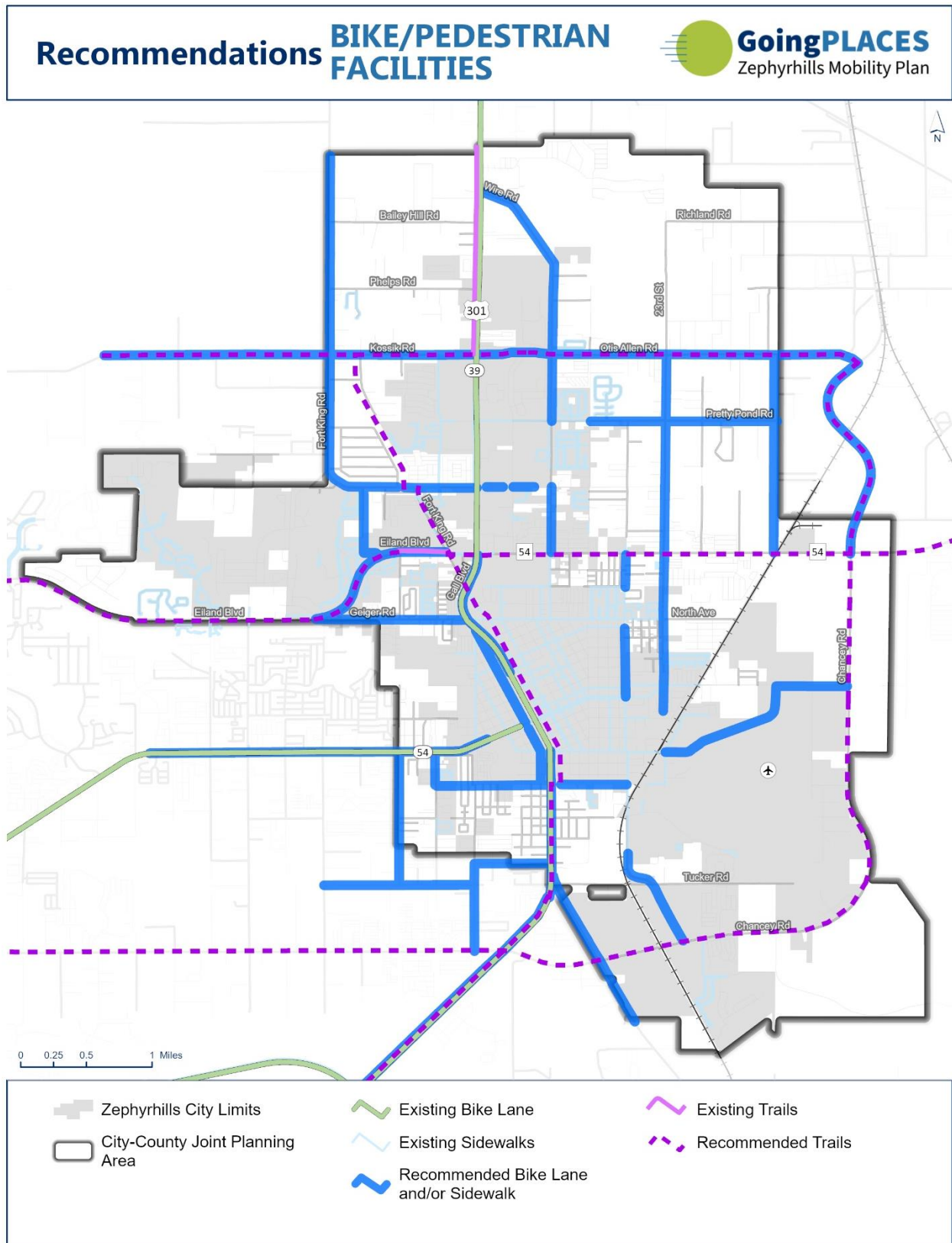


Figure 3: Recommended Safety Countermeasures



Figure 4 shows a complete bicycle and trail network on all major thoroughfares in the study area. The figure also shows the location of existing sidewalk gaps where sidewalks are needed for greater walk/bike connectivity.

Figure 4: Bike and Pedestrian Facilities



Roadway Facilities

Figure 6 illustrates infrastructure and operational enhancements needed to establish efficient and safe roadways. These enhancements may include changes to infrastructure or traffic control adjustments, providing improved routes for vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.

Consideration of freight is also a key aspect of the Mobility Plan in providing direct access to the Zephyrhills Industrial Corridor while providing for the regional movement of freight.

Consistent with the vision for the Rural Reserve area, the Mobility Plan includes the vision of establishing a traditional grid network to ensure well-connected, multi-modal streets.

To help mitigate the impacts of regional traffic on quality of life and economic development initiatives in the study area, a concept for a bypass road that loops around Zephyrhills is shown on Figure 5. The bypass road concept could include the following roadways (in clockwise order):

- Chancey Road
- Morris Bridge Road
- Eiland Boulevard
- CR 54

The bypass road would divert through-traffic away from the city center, thereby reducing congestion and improving mobility. By redirecting regional traffic away from the Downtown and in-town neighborhoods, the bypass loop road would help to preserve the character of these areas for residential and commercial infill and redevelopment and make it easier for customers to access downtown and in-town shopping, restaurants, parks, and services.

Figure 5: Bypass Loop Road Concept

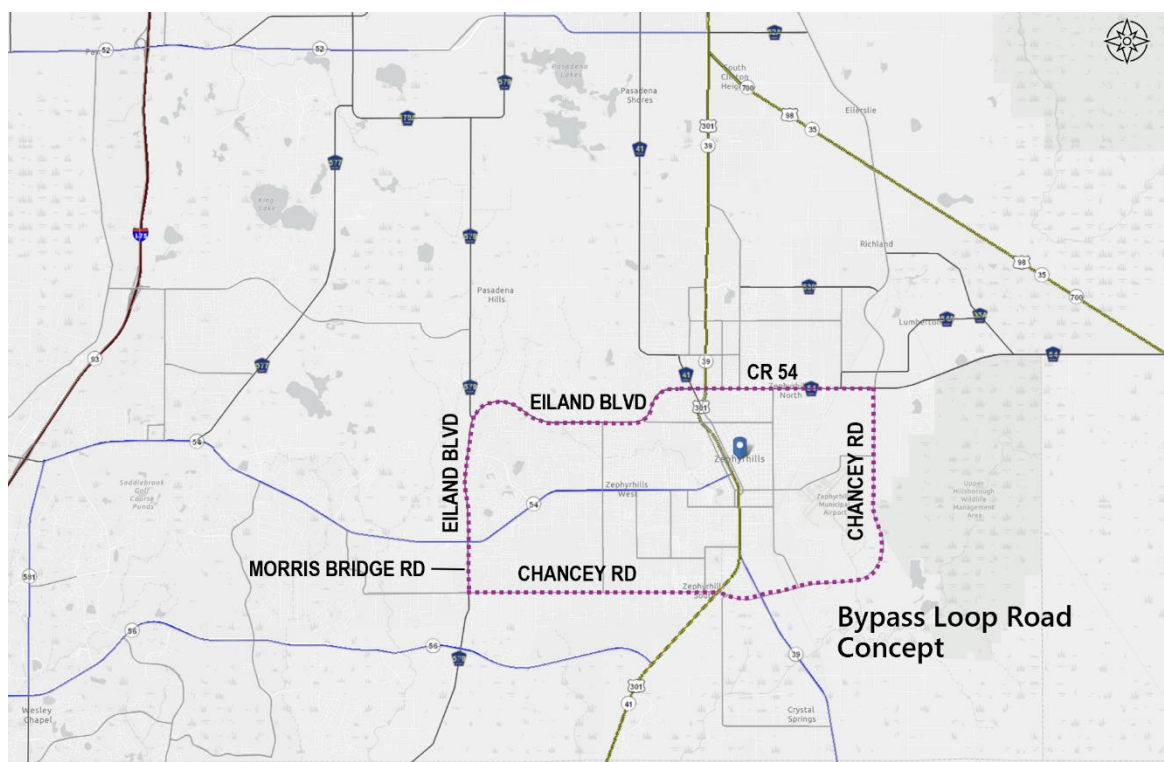
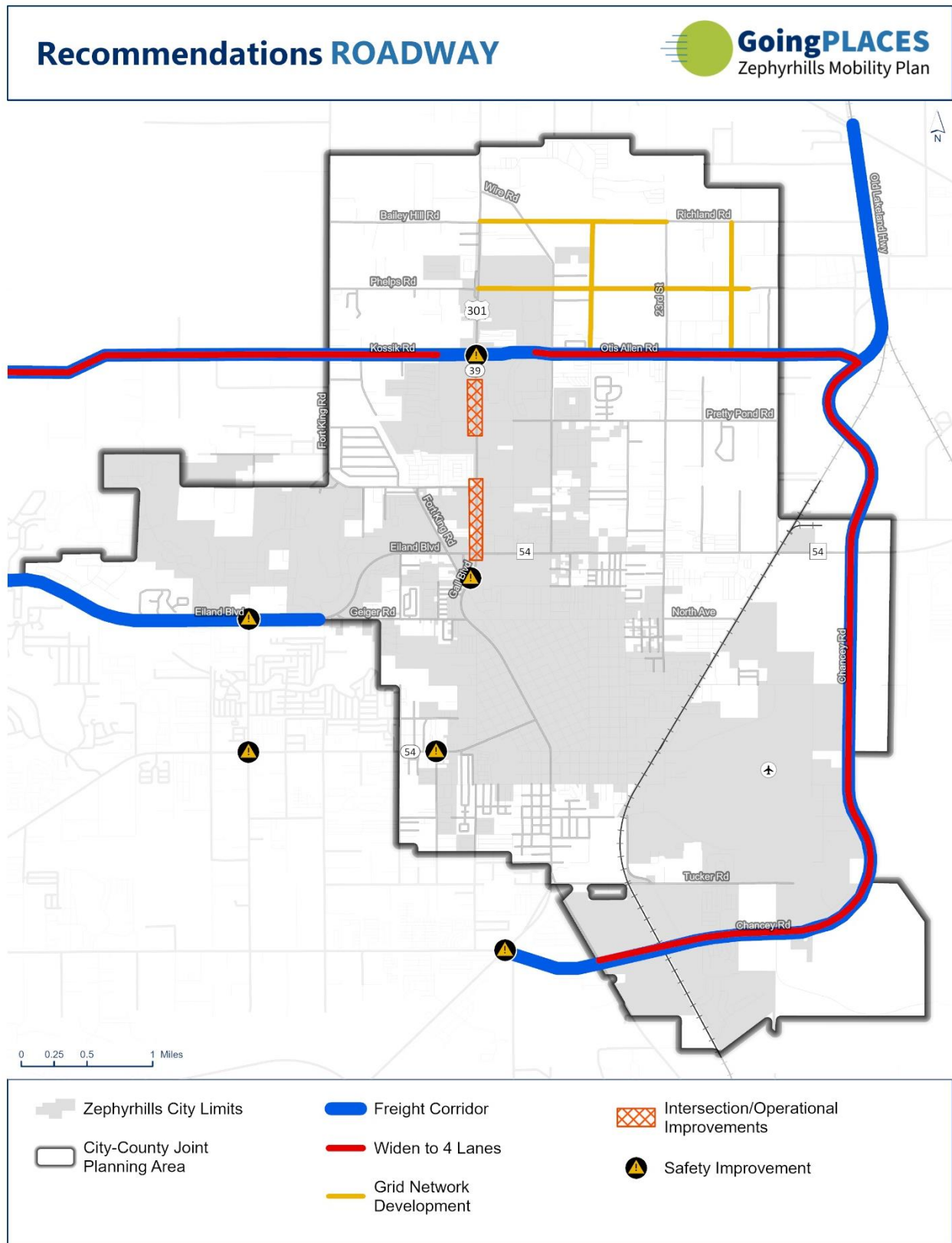


Figure 6: Roadway Recommendations



Overall Mobility Concept

Figure 7 combines all the recommendations into one map and shows the integrated need for developing a multimodal transportation system.

Figure 7: Mobility Plan Recommendations

