GoingPLACES
Zephyrhills Mobility Plan

Strategies and Recommendations Report

May 30, 2024

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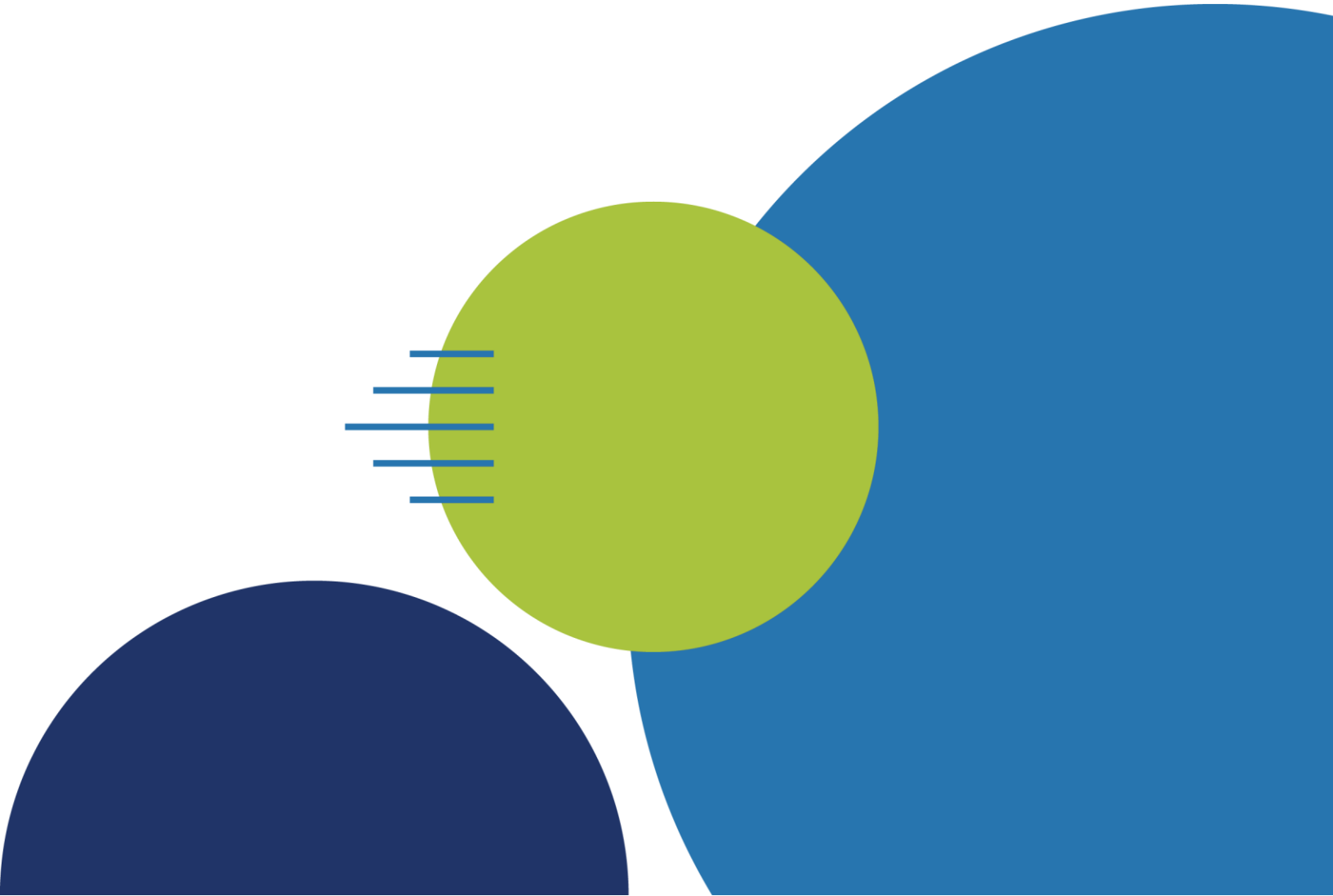

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Introduction

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.

Mobility Plan Context

Visualizing the impact of the mobility plan strategies is conveyed through a series of concepts for growth and development within the Joint Planning Area as well as series of specific recommendations, aimed at addressing the mobility needs of the community. Understanding the community character and context better reveals areas of need and potential strategies for enhancing mobility throughout the city.

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.

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 are 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.

Commercial Nodes

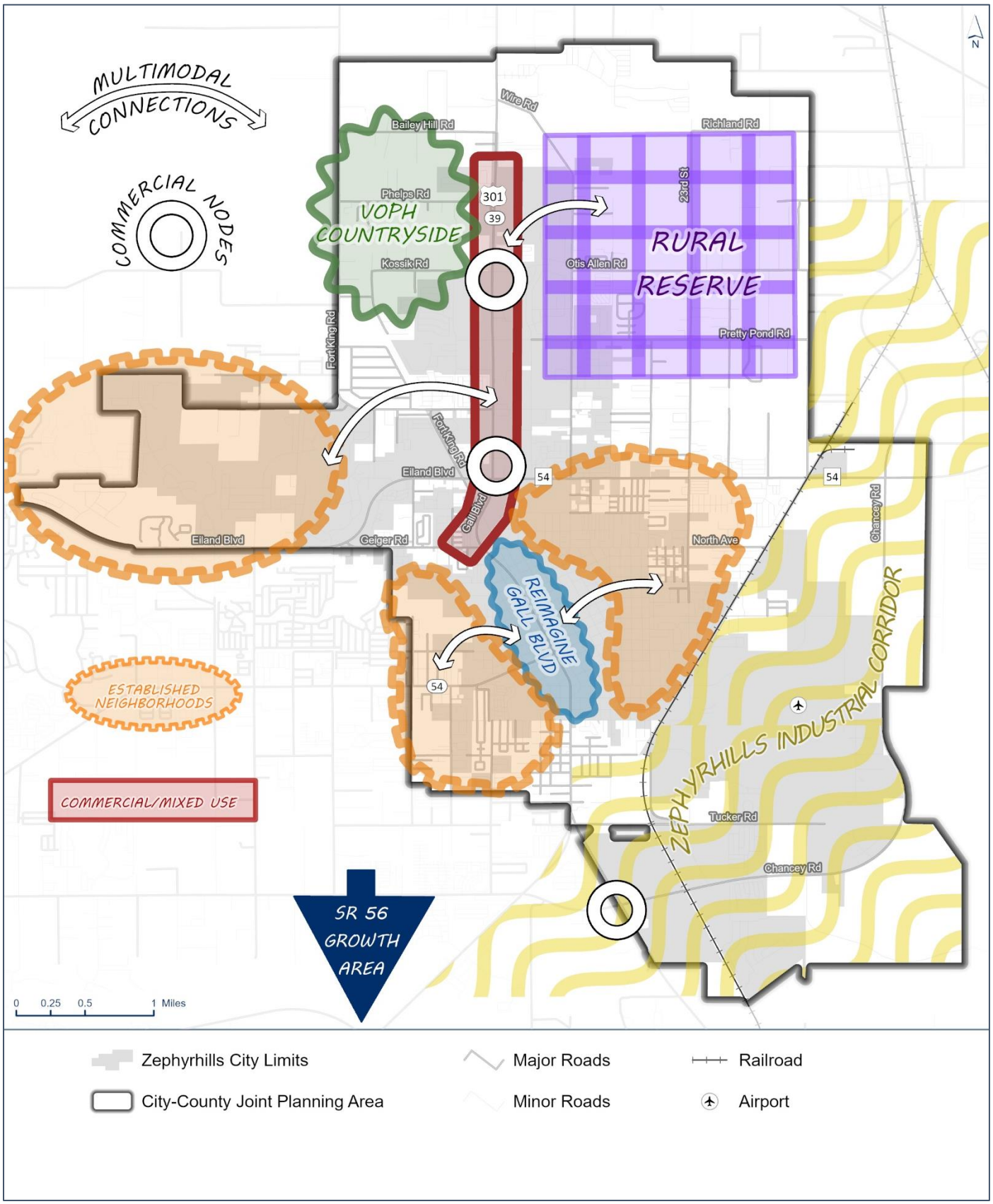
Commercial Nodes typically consist of stores, restaurants, services, and other commercial establishments at intersections of major thoroughfares and public transit hubs to maximize visibility and accessibility. Areas with high pedestrian traffic, such as Downtown Zephyrhills, are also considered to be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

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 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.

Figure 1: Mobility Plan Context



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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Strategies and Recommended Actions

The City of Zephyrhills Planning Department has developed a set of strategies and recommended actions to respond to the issues and needs identified through data analysis and community input. 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, sustainable future.

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

Recommended City Actions

1.1. 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 to connect with public transit stops.

1.2. Prioritize transportation projects that improve multimodal connectivity and accessibility within and between key destinations. Such projects may include pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, bike lanes, side-path trails, transit stops, and safe crossings to enhance mobility for all users.

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 underserved neighborhoods.

1.6. Explore opportunities for micro-mobility and micro-transit technologies. For example, Freebie (https://ridefreebee.com/).

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/).

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 (https://www.fdot.gov/projects/mobilityweek/ mobilityweek2023.shtm).

1.9. Explore the feasibility of trolley service between Zephyrhills and Dade City.

1.10. Coordinate land use and transportation planning to ensure that urban-scale residential development is located within one-half-mile of existing or planned transit service. integrating land uses.

1.11. Encourage mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, and recreational amenities 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 employment, services, and other opportunities; reduce household transportation costs; reduce 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 Action

2.1. Develop active transportation infrastructure:

- Construct and maintain sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use trails, and greenway trails in strategic locations to facilitate safe walking and cycling.
- Implement traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossings to improve safety for all street users. For example, mid-block crossings with driver awareness beacons.
- Install bike racks in convenient locations at community destinations to encourage cycling.

2.2. Explore opportunities for use of transportation rights-of-way and infrastructure for active transportation facilities. For example, “rail with trail” corridors.

2.3. Incorporate green infrastructure into transportation projects, such as street trees, rain gardens, bioswales, and green space, to enhance visual appeal, ecological sustainability, and flood resilience and create inviting environments for pedestrians and cyclists.

2.4. Explore opportunities to expand the use of low speed, nonmotorized, and electric vehicles.

2.5. 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 actions may include:

- Shared parking programs that allow multiple businesses, institutions, and residential developments to share parking facilities based on varying peak demand times.
- Flexible parking policies that accommodate changing mobility trends, such as curbside management to accommodate ridesharing and micromobility options.
- Park-and-ride facilities located at key transportation corridors to encourage commuters to park their vehicles in designated lots and utilize public transit for the remainder of their journey.
- Sustainable parking design principles that prioritize environmental stewardship, energy efficiency, and green infrastructure such as stormwater permeable pavement, solar panels, bicycle storage, and electric vehicle charging stations.
- Smart parking solutions that utilize sensors, mobile apps, and data analytics to provide real-time information on parking availability.
- Parking benefit districts where revenue generated from parking fees or permits is reinvested in local transportation improvements, infrastructure upgrades, and neighborhood enhancements.

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

Recommended City Action

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. Implement people-focused "complete street" improvements within the Zephyrhills Community Redevelopment Area.

3.3. Partner with Pasco County and FDOT on transportation enhancements for the "Bypass" around Zephyrhills. Such actions may include:

- Investing in improvements to Chancey Rd (around the Airport / Industrial Corridor) to maximize efficiency/safety in accommodating the movement of freight.
- Advocating for funding to prioritize segments of the "Bypass Road" as four lanes with multiuse side-path trails.
- Collaborating with city transportation partners to achieve funding priority for roadway segments comprising a four-lane loop road with a side-path trail to serve Zephyrhills and southeast Pasco County.
- Continuing to prioritize the construction of the "Bypass" corridor segments through policy initiatives and actions.

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 respective place 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 context.

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.

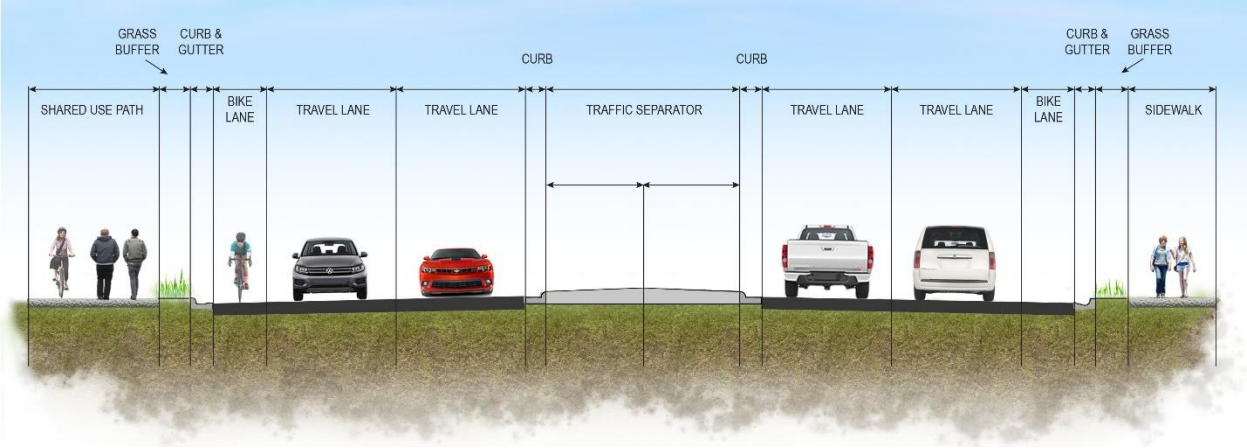
Mobility Plan Concepts

The following mobility concepts have been identified as a means of illustrating the proposed strategies. These concepts identify the safety and mobility treatments for all users of the transportation system in Zephyrhills. Application of these concepts throughout the study area is illustrated in the recommendations section.

Complete Streets

While not all roadway facilities should look the same, all roadways should address the needs of every user. This is the concept behind a complete streets approach. **Figure 2** provides one example of the diverse types of treatments that can be considered for addressing the needs of all users.

Figure 2: Complete Street Concept (Multi-Lane Divided Roadway)



While current design standards continually respond to safety and mobility concerns, the elements included in this example provide guidance and direction for selecting appropriate facilities.

Bike/Ped Safety

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 3 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: Pedestrian and Bicyclist Crashes on SR 54 near Court Street

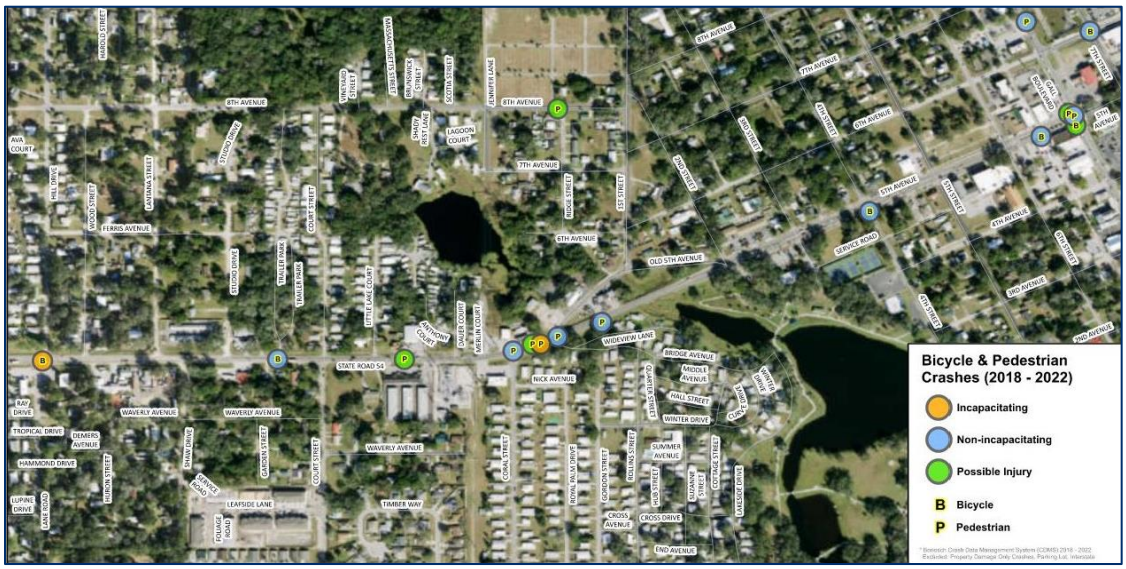


Figure 4 illustrates the following countermeasures and standard infrastructure improvements:

- 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 4: Recommended Safety Countermeasures

Freight Design Considerations

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. Addressing the needs of freight shippers and expected growth in the Zephyrhills Industrial Corridor, the Mobility Plan includes the design concepts listed in the FDOT District 7 Strategic Freight Plan for freight oriented areas, shown in **Figure 5**.

Figure 5: Freight Oriented Area Design Concept

Source: FDOT District 7 Strategic Freight Plan – Freight Design Guidelines

1. **Truck channels** facilitate right turn movements for trucks while providing space for pedestrian refuge and signal poles and equipment. They give the truck storage space that is outside the departing through lane for the yield condition, creating better operating and safety conditions for through traffic.
2. **Median nosing** can be designed to allow additional space for trucks making left turns on or off the mainline facility. They assist trucks in departing left turn lanes and entering receiving lanes. They can be set back from the crosswalk further than normal or striped, depending on the width of the median and the need to guide vehicles into a particular turning pattern.
3. **Left turn lanes** should be designed as single lanes where volumes and the intersection signal phasing and timing strategy support it. Dual lefts can be problematic for traffic in adjacent lanes and opposing traffic in the middle of the intersection where the truck wheel tracking distance is the greatest. Dual lefts can also make it difficult for trucks to enter the receiving lane.

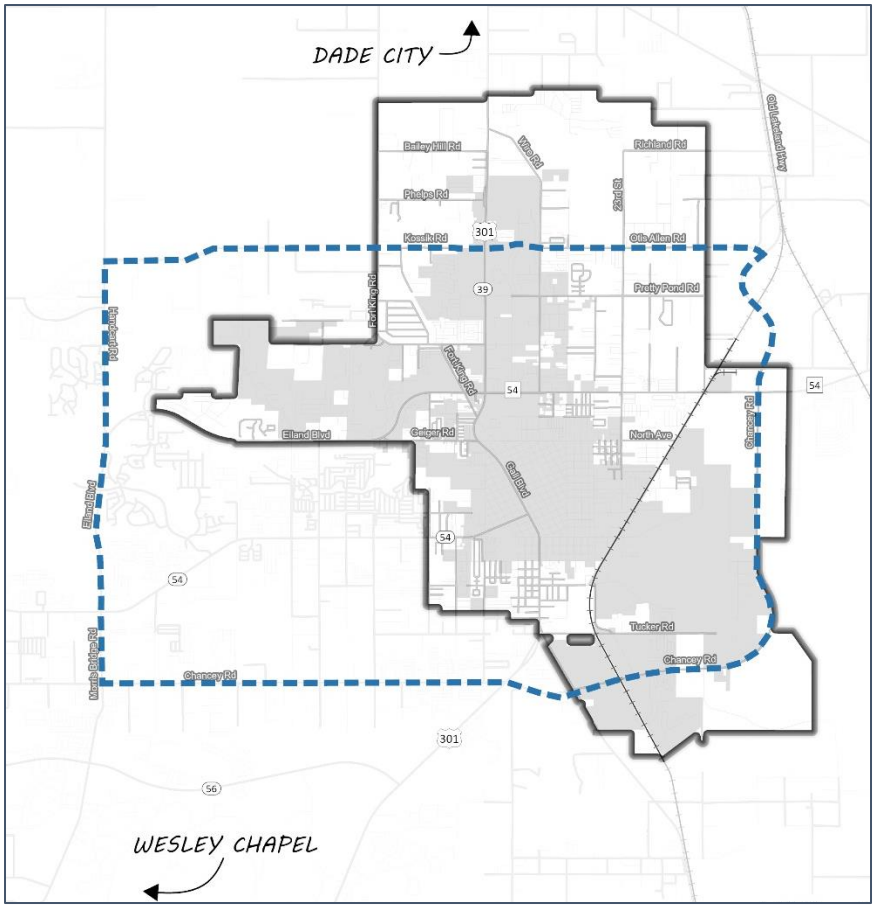
4. **Extended left turn lanes** provide additional storage for trucks and other vehicles. Signal timing and phasing should be designed to allow for processing slower-moving trucks.
5. **Corner radii** should be designed to accommodate trucks turning on and off the mainline facility. In most cases, trucks will use two receiving lanes to complete the turn and each intersection radius can be sized accordingly.

Regional Bypass Loop

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 6**. The bypass road concept could include the following roadways (in clockwise order):

- Chancey Road
- Morris Bridge Road / Eiland Boulevard
- (future) Overpass Road / Kossik Road / Otis Allen Road
- Old Lakeland Hwy / Chancey Road

Figure 6: Bypass Loop Road Concept



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.

Mobility Plan Recommendations

Recommendations for the Mobility Plan consist of a series of roadway capacity, intersection operations and safety measures, accommodations for freight, and developing an integrated and connected system of sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails.

For the Mobility Plan, prioritized areas and recommendations for bike lanes and sidewalks, represent the city's plan to establish a comprehensive multimodal network across the study area. this netowrk serves to connect existing areas of residential, commerical, and recreational uses. A complete bicycle and trail network on all major roads, while addressing sidewalk gaps to provide sufficient routes for active transportation is also incorporated into the recommendations.

Proposed roadway improvements include 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 in the northeast portion of the study area.

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

In addition to carrying forward with these infrastructure recommendations, the City of Zephyrhills will also need to take several policy related actions in order to see the vision of the Mobility Plan come to reality. The following recommendations are included for consideration as the city moves forward with update of the Comprehensive Plan and other related efforts.

- Continue to address alternative intersection design concepts, such as the roundabout at Pretty Pond Road and Wire Road.
- Continue to coordinate with GoPasco with assessment of current bus stop conditions and identify location-specific enhancements and upgrades.
- Consider developing a wayfinding plan that addresses the needs of visitors as well as freight shippers in the area that is consistent with the city's branding.
- Develop standards and plans for mitigating the mobility challenges that arise from new developments, especially in areas identified as congestion hot spots.
- Continue to coordinate with FDOT for the redesign of US 301/Gall Boulevard through downtown.
- Develop context classifications for roadways in the city consistent with the FDOT methodology in order to identify proper facility standards and level of service metrics.

Figure 7: Mobility Plan Recommendations