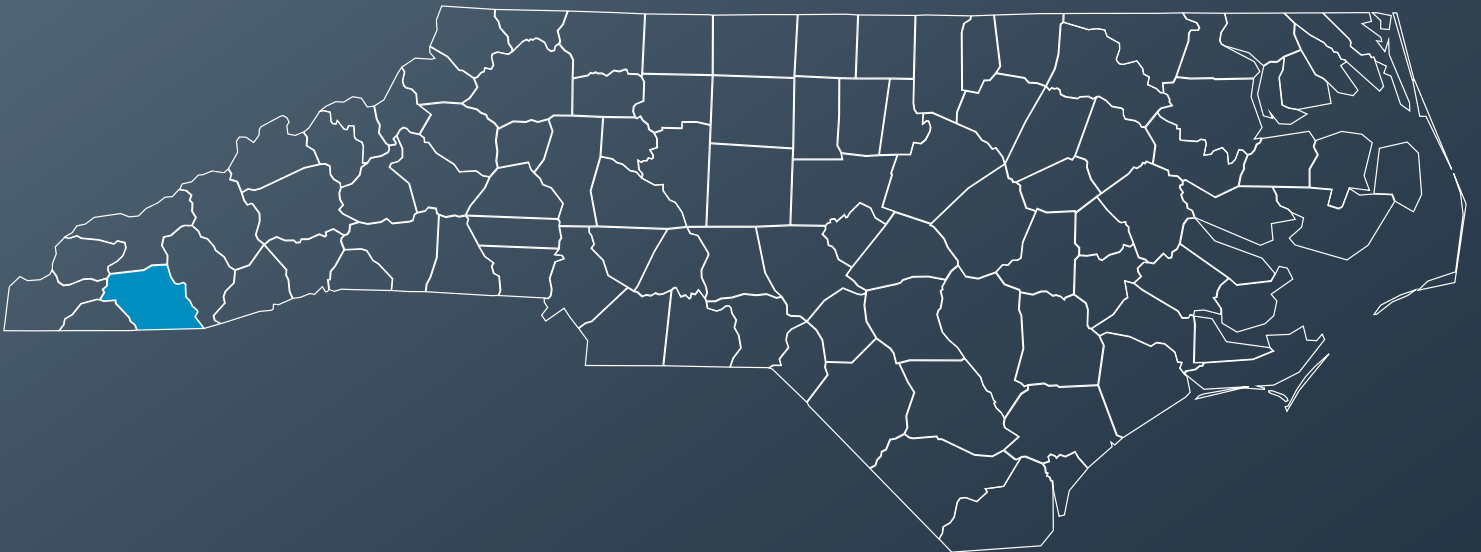


MACON COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



OCTOBER 2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the residents, business owners, community leaders and governmental staff who participated in the development of this plan through meetings, events, comment forms and plan review.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE BY

NCDOT Division 14
Municipal School Transportation Assistance (MSTA)

IN COOPERATION WITH

Macon County
Town of Franklin
Town of Highlands
Southwestern Rural Planning Organization



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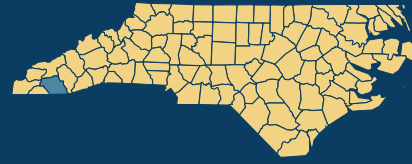
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[Click here to view Appendix](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, the Transportation Planning Division of the N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Macon County, its municipalities, and the Southwestern Rural Planning Organization began a Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) study for Macon County.



The Macon County CTP is a “needs-based” plan that represents a community’s consensus on their future transportation system to support anticipated growth and development over a 25-30-year timeframe. Modes of transportation evaluated as part of this plan included: highway, public transportation and rail, bicycle and pedestrian. The impact of other modes of travel, such as airports, play significant roles in moving people and freight in North Carolina and in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

The Macon County CTP was adopted locally and by the North Carolina Board of Transportation in 2021.

VISION

“Macon County envisions a safe and reliable transportation network that accommodates all users and connects our people with the goods and services they need to thrive”.

-Vision statement from Macon County CTP Steering Committee

GOALS

- 🎯 Provide a **safer** transportation system
- 🎯 Provide a more **reliable** transportation system
- 🎯 Provide a transportation system that **accommodates** all users
- 🎯 Provide a transportation system that **connects** people with destinations
- 🎯 Provide a transportation system that **supports** economic development
- 🎯 Provide a transportation system that **promotes** healthy communities
- 🎯 Provide a transportation system that **adapts** to changing technologies
- 🎯 Provide a transportation system that **preserves** the natural beauty and rural character of Macon County

STUDY APPROACH

1. Development of goal and objectives
2. Public involvement and community understanding
3. Data compilation and collection
4. Data analysis
5. Identification of multimodal transportation deficiencies and CTP project proposals
6. Local and NCDOT adoption

PUBLIC INPUT

Key Types of Meetings and Public Input:

16
Steering committee members

1,000+
Survey comments

7
Presentations to Macon County officials

900+
Total number of survey respondents

663

Survey respondents roughly mirrored the census population of the county, with the exception of residents under 18.

84%

About 84 percent of people surveyed responded that intersections should be improved for easier navigation by large trucks and buses.

77%

About 77 percent of respondents showed interest in the improvement of greenways.

See [Chapter 2](#) for more on this topic and other aspects of existing conditions.

SELECTED PROJECT PROPOSALS

These are some of the major CTP Projects of the Macon County Comprehensive Transportation Plan. They are not listed in any priority order and more information can be found in Chapter 3 and the [Appendix](#).

 <p>US 23/441 (Georgia Road) Improve the section of U.S. 441 between Prentiss Bridge Road (S.R. 1649) and Georgia to a four-lane divided boulevard. (TIP R-5734C)</p> <p>View Project Details</p>	 <p>US 64 (Murphy Road) Modernize to standard two-lane facility with a climbing lane from Clay County to West Old Murphy Road (S.R. 1448).</p> <p>View Project Details</p>	 <p>NC 28 (Highlands Road) Upgrade to a two-lane facility with median with control of access improvements.</p> <p>View Project Details</p>
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PROJECT SHEETS

19 CTP Project Sheets can be found in the [Appendix](#). They feature individual project maps, cost estimates and other details.

APPROVALS

- Local Adoptions: April/May 2021
- Rural Planning Organization endorsement: May 2021
- North Carolina Board of Transportation adoption: Oct. 2021

VISION

Macon County envisions a safe and reliable transportation network that accommodates all users and connects our people with the goods and services they need to thrive.

This transportation system supports economic development opportunities, promotes healthy communities, and adapts to changing technologies while also preserving the natural beauty and rural character of our county.

-Vision statement from the Macon County CTP Steering Committee

Chapter ONE

Introductions and Overview

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan is North Carolina’s long-range transportation plan. The CTP is “needs-based” and represents a community’s consensus on the future transportation system to support anticipated growth and development over a 25-30-year timeframe.

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

This plan is reviewed by a CTP steering committee comprised of NCDOT, the Southwestern Rural Planning Organization (RPO) and local planning partners.

The CTP supports the community’s adopted vision and goals by integrating land use and transportation planning. This should be used by local officials to ensure that planned transportation facilities reflect the needs of the public, while minimizing the disruption to local residents, businesses and environmental resources. The CTP process is designed to provide useful information into the project development process.

VISION

The CTP vision, goals and objectives are developed as part of the public involvement process and help identify how residents in an area would like to develop the transportation system.

When starting a CTP study, officials form a steering committee of individuals who represent the various needs, issues and populations of the community. The committee develops the draft vision, goals, objectives and performance measures. These are further refined with input from residents and then used to guide the development of the CTP.

STUDY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



PROVIDE A SAFER TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

Strive to reduce crashes among all modes and promote safe driving behaviors through speed enforcement, medians and other tools that allow for safe and reliable travel.



PROVIDE A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PROMOTES HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

Provide transportation options that allow people to safely walk or bike to destinations and connect communities.



PROVIDE A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT ADAPTS TO CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES.

Prepare for technological advances that will impact the future of the transportation system, such as providing infrastructure compatible with electric and automated vehicles, and drones.



PROVIDE A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PRESERVES THE NATURAL BEAUTY AND RURAL CHARACTER OF MACON COUNTY.

Acknowledge that some roads in rugged terrain may not be feasible to improve, due to impacts to the human and natural environment.



PROVIDE A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

Support advancements of transportation services that allow people who may not own a personal vehicle to travel. These advancements include expanding greenways, constructing sidewalks to primary destinations and expanding transit operating hours.



PROVIDE A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT ACCOMMODATES ALL USERS.

Provide mobility for young and old travelers without vehicles, as well as visitors and freight providers.



PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE WITH DESTINATIONS.

Preserve travel time reliability on primary routes while improving connections between major destinations, such as employment centers and schools.

STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES AND PLANS

This section outlines some of the important state and federal policies and plans that were considered while developing the Macon County CTP. See the [Appendix](#) for an outline of the CTP requirements. **Please click on any item in the following list for more information:**

[Complete Streets](#)

[Multimodal Statewide Freight Plan](#)

[N.C. Planning Facility Types](#)

[N.C. General Statute 136-66.2](#)

[N.C. Moves 2050 Plan](#)

[Statewide Logistics Plan](#)

[Strategic Transportation Corridors](#)

[Strategic Transportation Investments](#)

[Title VI in Public Involvement](#)

LOCAL POLICIES AND PLANS

This section outlines some of the important local policies and plans that were considered while developing the Macon County CTP. **Please click on any item in the following list for more information:**

[2019 Macon County Comprehensive Plan](#)

[2017 Bike Walk Franklin](#)

[2017 Southern Blue Ridge Bike Plan](#)

THIS PLAN FEATURES:



A thorough analysis of current conditions and public feedback regarding vehicular, walking, and bicycling



A comprehensive, recommended transportation network



A list of recommendations



Supporting documentation of the recommendations

CTP PROCESS SUMMARY

The development of this plan was open and participatory, with area residents providing input through surveys, committee meetings and an online input map. The overall process and timeline are summarized in the list below:

SPRING 2019

Began analyzing existing conditions and initiating committee meetings and public outreach through the public input survey;

SUMMER 2019

Continued public outreach, reviewed existing conditions, and reviewed survey results;

FALL 2019

Looked at future conditions and recommendations of other modes from local plans;

WINTER/SPRING 2020

Developed recommendations for all modes and prepared for public involvement;

SUMMER/FALL 2020

Began public involvement for draft recommendations; Reviewed public comments

WINTER/SUMMER 2021

Developed CTP Documentation. Local and Board of Transportation Adoptions.

Chapter TWO

Existing and Future Conditions

This chapter summarizes the current and future conditions of the transportation system in Macon County.

To meet future travel demand, reliable forecasts of future travel patterns are needed to estimate congestion.

For highways, this is usually accomplished through mainly a capacity deficiency analysis (which is a measure of how the facility is operating) and a traffic crash analysis. For multimodal uses, the distance between destinations, and roadway characteristics, are key components. This information, along with population growth, economic development potential, and land use trends is used to determine the potential impacts on the future transportation system.



Waterfall Byway

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

Public involvement is a key element in the transportation planning process.

Public input was an overarching component of this plan, collected through multiple avenues and outlets. This plan will affect those who live, work, own a business, play and enjoy leisure activities in Macon County. Feedback from the public guided the creation of this plan's CTP project proposals. A full summary of public outreach can be found in the [Appendix](#).

Throughout the course of the study, the NCDOT Transportation Planning Division cooperatively worked with the Macon County CTP Steering Committee. The committee provided information on current local plans, developed a transportation vision and goals, discussed population and employment projections, and put forth [CTP project proposals](#).

COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING

In order to gain a better understanding of the community, a Community Understanding Report (CUR) was completed by the Macon County RPO and NCDOT with input from the steering committee. This report summarized information about Macon County such as population, employment, expected growth areas, schools, and varying transportation methods. For more details, see the CUR in the Community Understanding section of the [Appendix](#).

TYPES OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT USED

The project team set a goal to reach as many residents as possible and hear from diverse communities and stakeholders. Equal opportunities regardless of race, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, income, sex, age or disability were provided during the development of the CTP. For more information on the Title VI Nondiscrimination program, visit: <https://www.ncdot.gov/initiatives-policies/access-for-all/nondiscrimination-program/Pages/default.aspx>

The Macon County outreach included Spanish options of surveys and fliers. Surveys were available Online, through mobile and by paper. Outreach and advertisements for public involvement occurred around the county, in local shops, libraries, newspaper, and other commonly used facilities.

More information is in the [Appendix](#).

These are the ways that were used to reach out to stakeholders and the general public:

Steering Committee

- Committee meetings
- E-mail and phone
- Surveys

General Public

- Study website
- Facebook notices
- Surveys and PowerPoints
- Coverage in local newspapers
- Plan presentations



WHAT WE HEARD



Public Transit

“Expand public transportation options: **times, routes, etc.**”



Bicycle

“Making **Franklin** more bike-friendly would be nice”

The intersection of **U.S. 441 and Hunnicut Lane** is a “very dangerous merge area.”



Highways

“Large trucks and a high volume of traffic make (travel on) **Hwy. 64** through the gorge **between Franklin and Highlands** difficult.”

U.S. 441 (Georgia Road) has “turn lane issues with traffic congestion”

U.S. 441 (Georgia Road) “Holds water, especially in outside lanes; extremely dangerous when raining”



Pedestrian

“Need sidewalks to the Library, SCC, and on to local shopping.” - **Comment discussing Siler Road**

“We need more sidewalks that connect our **schools to the greenway**”

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHIC / LAND USE TRENDS

In developing this plan, the timeframe used to project travel demand was from 2017 to 2045. Growth in Macon County is expected to occur along the U.S. 441 corridor and other major thoroughfares.

Year	Population	Year	Employment
2017	35,596	2017	14,535
2045 <i>Projected</i>	47,556	2045 <i>Projected</i>	19,974

More information can be found in the [Appendix](#) about the methodology that was used to project the population and employment to 2045.

The Angel Medical Center is expected to be built near the intersection of U.S. 441 (Sylva Road) and Hunnicut Lane. The development is proposed to consist of approximately 85,000 square feet of hospital with approximately 30 beds. Approximately 139 parking spaces and two vehicular access points are planned to be provided.

Angel Medical Center to be built near the intersection of

US 441
(Sylva Road) and
Hunnicut Lane

Approximate proposed square footage of hospital

85,000
sq ft

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK SUMMARY

An important stage in the development of a CTP is the analysis of the existing transportation system and its ability to serve the area's travel demand. Roadway deficiencies may result from inadequacies in pavement widths, intersection geometry or intersection controls.

The following table shows a summary of the transportation network. More detail, if applicable, can be found elsewhere in this chapter.

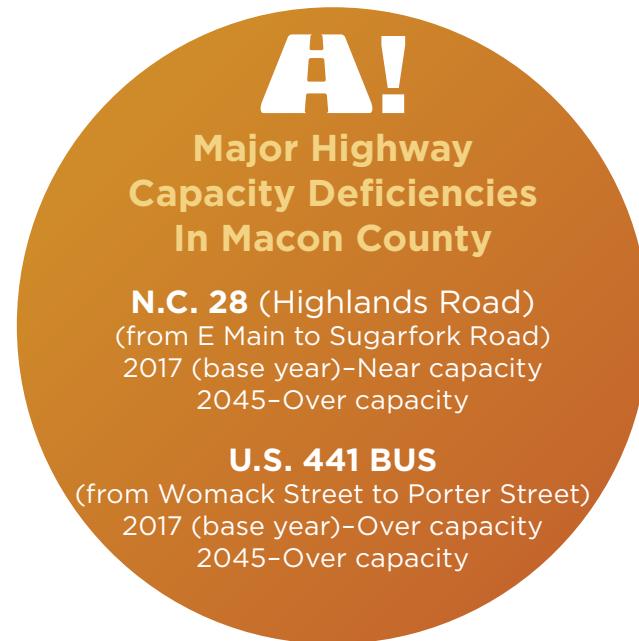
Primary North-South Roadways	📍 U.S. 23/441 📍 N.C. 28
Primary East-West Roadways	📍 U.S. 64
Strategic Transportation Corridors	📍 U.S. 74 📍 U.S. 23/441
Public Transportation Services (Demand Response)	📍 Macon County Transit
Fixed Route Bus	📍 Deviated-fixed route of the Mountain Gem route around Franklin
General Aviation Airports	📍 Macon County Airport
Park and Ride Lots	📍 Near the intersection of Sloan Road and U.S. 64 📍 Near the intersection of U.S. 23 and Sanderstown Road
Freight Railroads	📍 None
Passenger Railroads	📍 None
Primary Freight Movement	📍 Truck is primary mode by U.S. 441 and U.S. 64
Sidewalks	📍 Most located in and near downtown area
Bicycle Lanes	📍 None
Statewide Bicycle Routes	📍 N.C. 2 going from Jackson County to Clay County
Greenways	📍 Little Tennessee Greenway http://www.littletennessee.org/
Ferries	📍 None

HIGHWAY ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Roadway System Capacity Deficiencies

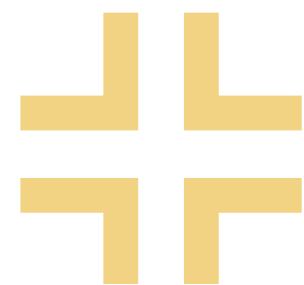
Comparing roadway demand (vehicle volumes) to roadway supply (carrying capacity) is one of the primary measures of roadway performance.

Capacity deficiencies occur when the traffic volume of the roadway approaches or exceeds the road's capacity. The analysis assumes funded 2020-2029 Transportation Improvement Program projects that are open to traffic. For maps on volume and capacity of roadways, see the Highway Analysis section of the [Appendix](#).



Intersection Assessment

Roadway intersections in Macon County were assessed, including consideration to the type using a high level of analysis, including the type of facility and current delay. The proposals are any recommended improvements that establish an "identified need" and project purpose. The improvement types can be an interchange, overpasses, limited movement and all movement intersections. Refer to the [Appendix](#) for definitions of these terms.



The major intersections identified for improvement in the CTP are:

- 📍 **Clarks Chapel and Wells Grove Intersection**
(See study conducted by the Municipal School Transportation Assistance (MSTA))
- 📍 **Cowee Creek Road and N.C. 28 Intersection**
- 📍 **U.S. 441 (Georgia Road) and E Main Street**

Traffic Crash Assessment

A total of fifty-eight intersections and 168 roadway sections were identified as having a high frequency of crashes.

High Frequency Crashes



58 **168**

Intersections Roadways

The locations with the highest number of crashes were along US 441 (Georgia Road) near the interchanges with US 441 and US 64 at Georgia Road and along Main Street in downtown Franklin.

See the [Appendix](#) for more traffic crash assessment information.

To request a more detailed analysis for any of these locations or other intersections of concern, contact the division traffic engineer with the NCDOT. Information is available in the [Appendix](#).

Bridge Deficiency Assessment

Forty-eight structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges were identified on roads evaluated as part of the CTP. Of these, two are scheduled for improvements in the 2020 STIP.

Refer to the [Appendix](#) for more detailed bridge deficiency information.



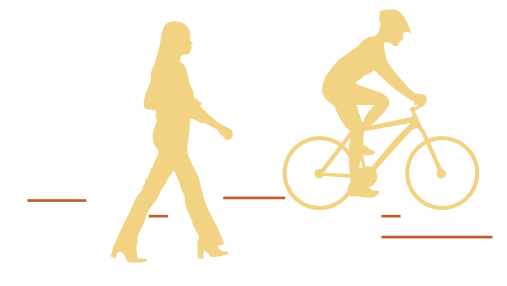
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Bicyclists and pedestrians are a growing part of the transportation system in North Carolina. Many communities are working to improve mobility for cyclists and pedestrians.

The N.C. 2 Bike Route runs through Macon County, Cherokee County and Jackson County. Increased signage would help guide bikers. The Little Tennessee Greenway is an important facility that provides transportation options to the community such as walking and biking.

In Macon County, existing sidewalks are concentrated in the downtown areas. There are a few gaps between sidewalk segments, and other segments do not extend all the way to desired destinations. The 2017 Bike/Walk Franklin plan and 2017 Southern Blue Ridge Bike Plan were considered while developing this element of the CTP and should be reviewed for further information.

For more information, see the Multimodal Analysis section of the [Appendix](#).



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS SUMMARY



Macon County Transit has a deviated-fixed transit route in Franklin called the Mountain Gem Route. Buses arrive at designated stop every 30 minutes. Various stops along this route include: Wal-Mart, Senior Centers, the Macon County Library, Ingles and can deviate up to around a 1/4 mile. The route is a one-hour loop performed by 2 vans on weekdays from 8 am to 4 pm. Macon County transit also provides medical transportation for Medicaid and for 20-30 people to work every day. Demand response services are also available throughout the county and out of county requests need to be made in advance.

The vision for the future of Macon County Transit is to provide services to all transit riders and improving the efficiency of the transit system through emerging technology, seamless transportation, and expansion of services. Long range expansions to the transit system explored include a possible seasonal route for the town of Highlands. For more information, see the Multimodal Analysis section of the [Appendix](#).

Urban Transportation (provide both urban and local transportation)	None
Rural Transportation (provide both urban and local transportation)	Deviated-fixed route around Franklin and Demand-response services
Regional Transportation (Operate in three areas of the state and connect multiple municipalities and counties)	Demand-response service available with advanced coordination
Intercity Transportation (Greyhound and Amtrak)	None

AIRPORTS

The Macon County Airport is a public airport that is located approximately 3 miles from downtown Franklin. It is in the lotla Valley and covers an area of 110 acres with one runway (runway 7/25) and no control tower. It operates from 8am to dusk with after-hours service available upon request. The table below shows airports near Macon County's towns.



Type of Airport Public General Airport Name Macon County Airport Location Franklin, N.C. Distance from Franklin 4 miles	Type of Airport Privately Owned Airport Name Tusquittee Landing Airport Location Hayesville, N.C. Distance from Franklin 35 miles
Type of Airport Public General Airport Name Jackson County Airport Location Sylva, N.C. Distance from Franklin 20 miles	Type of Airport Public General Airport Name Asheville Regional Airport Location Asheville, N.C. Distance from Franklin 72 miles
Type of Airport Privately Owned Airport Name Sossamon Field-57NC Location Bryson City, N.C. Distance from Franklin 35 miles	

GOODS MOVEMENT / FREIGHT

Major generators of goods in Macon County were identified, along with their proximity to nearby major roadways. There are no rail services in Macon County.



Based on the data, most truck freight movement used the following roadways:

- 📍 U.S. 23
- 📍 U.S. 64
- 📍 U.S. 74
- 📍 N.C. 28

Most freight generators and shippers were clustered in the U.S. 441 Business area and downtown Franklin.

U.S. 23 is part of the Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS). These facilities on this system are based on freight tonnage and value, truck traffic, access factors and network connectivity. For more information, see the Multimodal Analysis section of the [Appendix](#).

Chapter THREE

CTP Project Recommendations

Each mode of travel included in the Macon County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (Highway, Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Public Transportation and Rail) have been independently analyzed for current and future conditions.



Projected 2045 needs for each mode of transportation were analyzed and project proposals developed through consideration of benefits and potential impacts through an extensive public engagement process. The results of this analysis are found in [Figure 1](#).



NCDOT PROJECT DELIVERY PROCESS

Years of extensive planning, study and work occur before NCDOT begins building a roadway. The process, known as the Project Delivery Process, begins with the department assisting municipalities and regions developing Comprehensive Transportation Plans, which are long-range plans that identify area transportation needs and priorities.

Once a project is programmed for funding, NCDOT initiates studies and the project enters into the environmental analysis and development phase. The process includes getting feedback from the public and analyzing how a proposed road might affect people living and working in the area, as along with its environmental impact.

Once project development is complete and the final design location has been determined, NCDOT acquires necessary property to accommodate the project and awards a construction contract (“Let”). Then, construction begins.

The typical NCDOT Project Delivery Process is shown in the figure below.

CTP PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS LIST

The following list contains information about Macon County proposals. These proposals represent an agreement of an identified transportation deficiency and a potential solution.

While the CTP does recommend solutions, it may not represent the final location or cross-section associated with the improvement and may change over time. It is the responsibility of local communities to help protect transportation corridors for new location facilities.

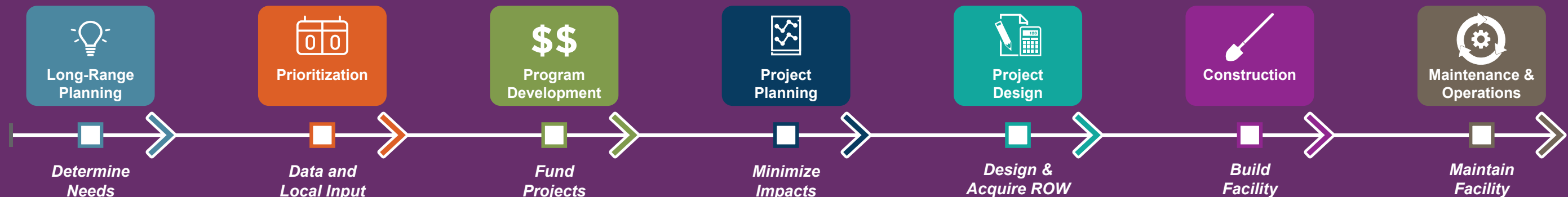
CTP MAPS

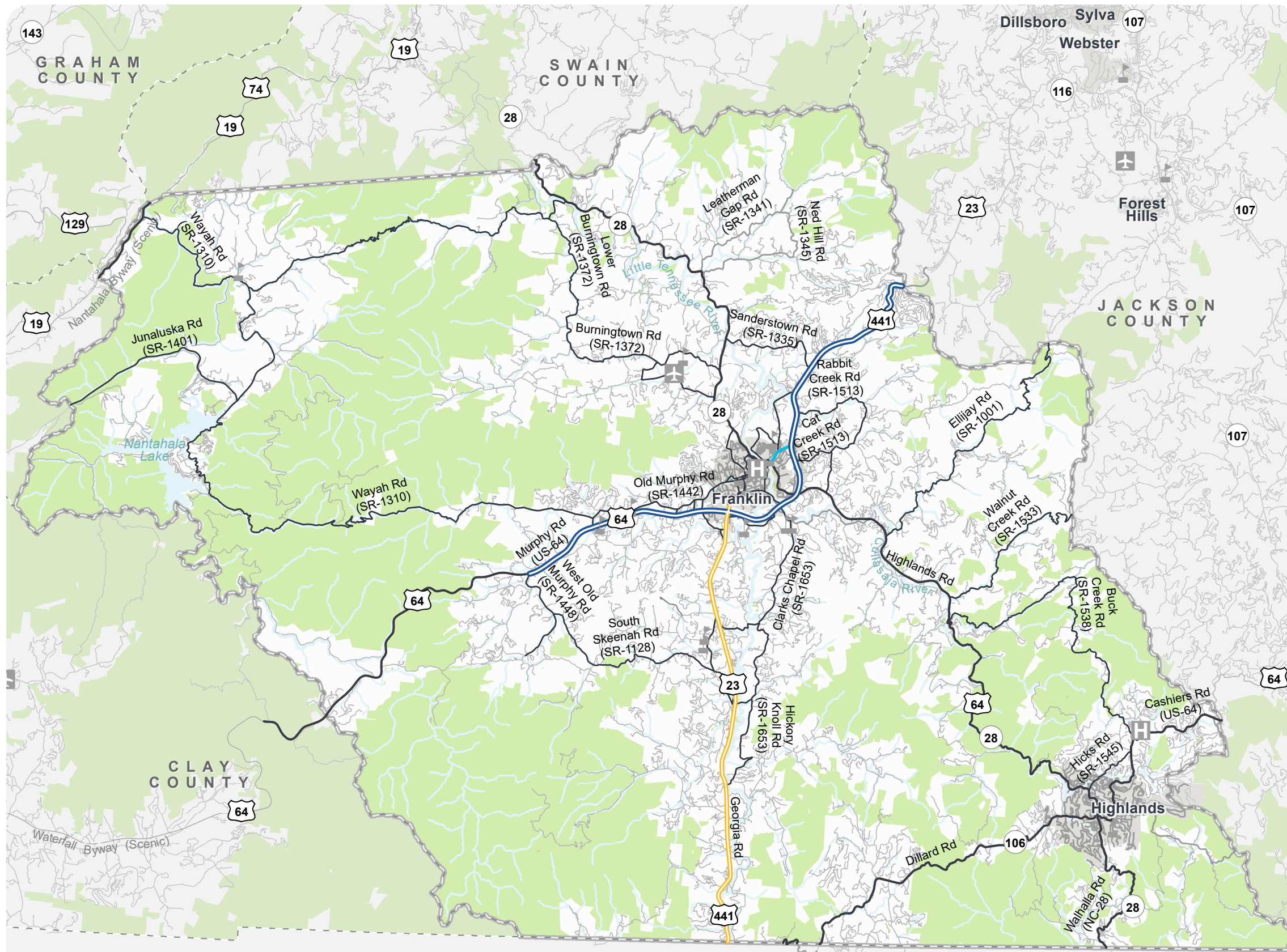


The mutually adopted Macon County CTP Maps are found in Figure 1. Definitions of terms on these maps can be found in the [Appendix](#). The maps included are:

- 1 Facility Types Maps
- 2 Highway Maps
- 3 Public Transportation Maps
- 4 Bicycle and Pedestrian Maps

NCDOT PROJECT DELIVERY PROCESS





GEORGIA

FACILITY TYPES

Facility classifications for mobility and control of access planning through 2045



MACON COUNTY

Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Facility Types and Control of Access
(Listed in Order of Mobility Function)

	Projected	New Location
Freeway		
Expressway (Multilane Divided)		
Boulevard (Multilane Divided)		
Major Thoroughfare (Multilane Undivided)		
Major Thoroughfare (2 Lane)		
Minor Thoroughfare		

Other Features
Studied Roads

Figure 1



Full report at:
<https://tinyurl.com/MaconCTP>



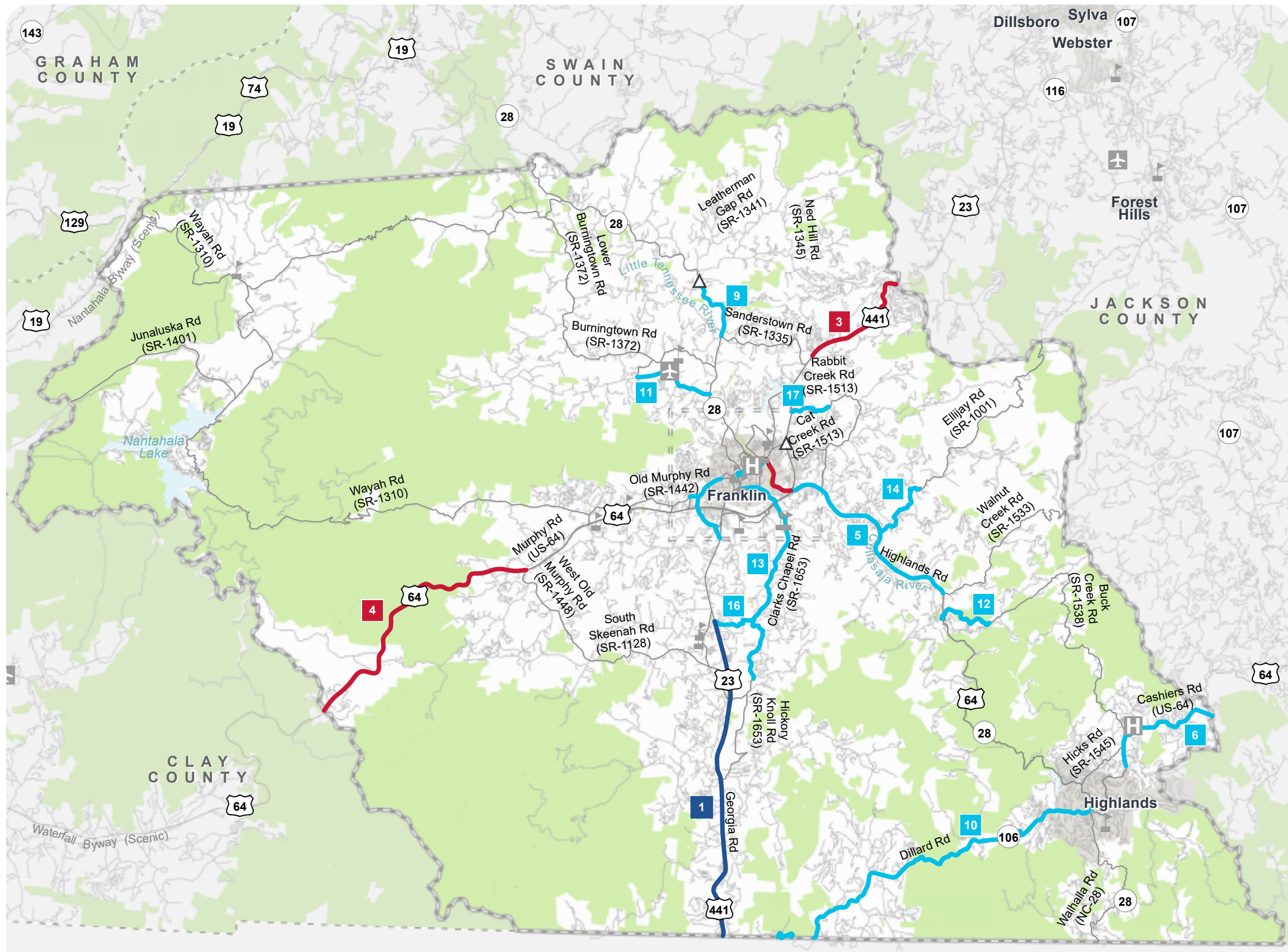
Sheet 1 of 4

Base map date: March 18, 2019

Legal Disclaimer

These concepts will need additional analysis to meet state and federal environmental regulations, to determine final locations and designs, and to be funded for implementation. Local zoning or subdivision ordinances may require the dedication of right of way based on the concepts shown on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and local collector street plans, based on N.C.G.S. § 136-66.2 and § 136-66.10.

ADOPTED
 Plan Date: October 7, 2021



HIGHWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposals that address identified needs through 2045



MACON COUNTY

Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Highway Features

	Proposal ID #	Improve	New Location
Congestion / Mobility (e.g., add lanes)	#	—	- - -
Access Management / Operations (e.g., add median)	#	—	- - -
Modernization (e.g., widen lanes, add turn lanes)	#	—	- - -
Other (e.g., safety, economic development)	#	—	- - -
Interchange	#	□	■
Bridge / Overpass	#	○	●
Intersection	#	△	▲

Other Features

Studied Roads

Figure 1



Full report at:
<https://tinyurl.com/MaconCTP>



Sheet 2 of 4

Base map date: March 18, 2019

Legal Disclaimer

These concepts will need additional analysis to meet state and federal environmental regulations, to determine final locations and designs, and to be funded for implementation. Local zoning or subdivision ordinances may require the dedication of right of way based on the concepts shown on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and local collector street plans, based on N.C.G.S. § 136-66.2 and § 136-66.10.

ADOPTED
Plan Date: October 7, 2021

HIGHWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposals that address identified needs through 2045



MACON COUNTY TOWN OF FRANKLIN INSET Comprehensive Transportation Plan Highway Features

Proposal ID # Improve New Location

Congestion / Mobility (e.g., add lanes)	#	—	---
Access Management / Operations (e.g., add median)	#	—	---
Modernization (e.g., widen lanes, add turn lanes)	#	—	---
Other (e.g., safety, economic development)	#	—	---
Interchange	#	□	■
Bridge / Overpass	#	○	●
Intersection	#	△	▲

Other Features
Studied Roads

Figure 1



Full report at:
<https://tinyurl.com/MaconCTP>



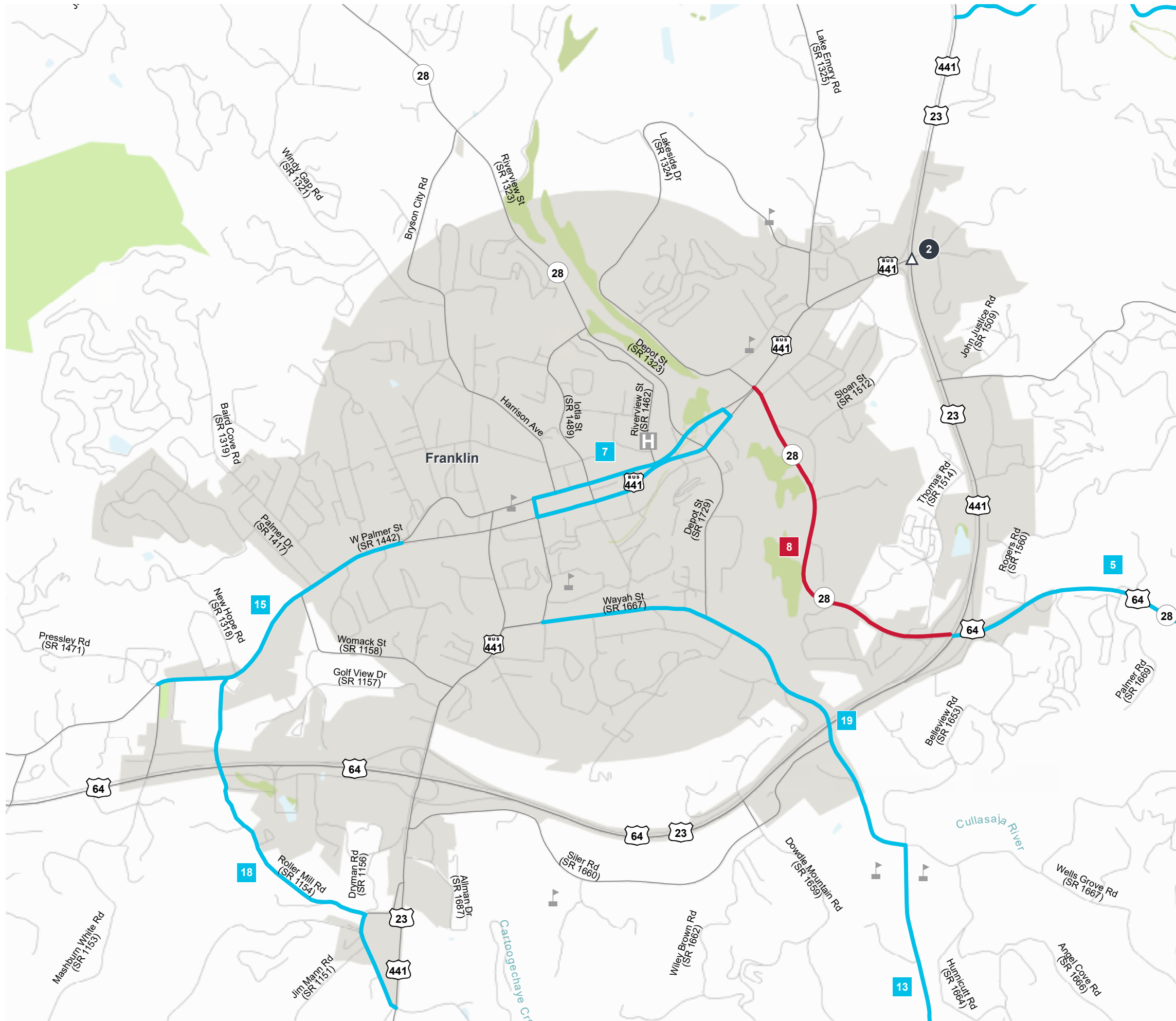
Sheet 2A of 4
INSET A

Base map date: March 18, 2019

Legal Disclaimer

These concepts will need additional analysis to meet state and federal environmental regulations, to determine final locations and designs, and to be funded for implementation. Local zoning or subdivision ordinances may require the dedication of right of way based on the concepts shown on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and local collector street plans, based on N.C.G.S. § 136-66.2 and § 136-66.10.

ADOPTED
Plan Date: October 7, 2021



A Macon County Highway Project Recommendations

- 1

US 23/441, R-5734C:

From the Georgia State Line to Prentiss Bridge Road (SR 1649)

Redesign to a four-lane boulevard by replacing the center turn lane with a median, providing reduced-conflict intersections and bicycle lanes. Add a park-and-ride lot near the intersection at Coweeta Church Road (SR 1115).
- 2

US 23/441 (Sylva Road) and US 441 BUS (E Main Street) Intersection:

Improve intersection for safety, travel-time reliability, and regional mobility on this corridor.
- 3

US 23/441 (Sylva Road):

From the end of the four-lane section near Sanderstown Rd to the Jackson County Line

Convert the five-lane section to a four-lane divided expressway to improve safety and mobility on this corridor.
- 4

US 64 (Murphy Road):

From the Clay County Boundary to W Old Murphy Road (SR 1448)

Construct climbing lanes on steep grades to improve mobility, safety and travel time reliability. Add bicycle lanes (see the Southern Blue Ridge Bike Plan).
- 5

US 64/NC 28 (Highlands Road):

From Rogers Road to Walnut Creek Road (SR 1533)

Modernize the facility to improve mobility and safety. Construct 4-foot paved shoulders throughout, and a park-and-ride lot near the intersection at Ellijay Road (SR 1001).
- 6

US 64 (N 4th Street):

From Highlands Town Limits to the Jackson County Line

Modernize facility to improve mobility and safety, including 4-foot paved shoulders.
- 7

US 441 BUS (Main Street/E Palmer Street):

From Porter Street to Big Bear Lane

Modernize Main Street/East Palmer Street to improve traffic flow, access to businesses, and pedestrian safety. Add curb and gutter, sidewalks and driveways improvements.



- 8

NC 28 (Highlands Road):

From US 441 BUS (E Main Street) to Thomas Road

Redesign to a two-lane divided facility by replacing the center turn lane with a median, providing reduced conflict intersections and improvements to access management. Add bicycle lanes and complete existing sidewalk (see Page 52 of the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan).
- 9

NC 28 (Bryson City Road) :

From Sanderstown Road (SR 1335) to Cowee Creek Road (SR 1340)

Modernize the facility to improve mobility and safety. Construct 11-foot lanes, 5-foot paved shoulders, and add a park-and-ride lot near the intersection at Sanderstown Road (SR 1335). Improve the Y intersection at Cowee Creek Road (SR 1340).
- 10

NC 106 (Dillard Road):

From the Georgia State Line to US 64

Modernize to 12-foot lanes with 4-foot paved shoulders. Add sidewalk from Hummingbird Ln to Highlands Plaza.
- 11

Airport Road (SR 1434):

From Olive Hill Road (SR 1387) to NC 28 (Bryson City Road)

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 4-foot paved shoulders.
- 12

Buck Creek Road (SR 1535):

From US 64 (Highlands Road) to Teague Estates Road

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 4-foot paved shoulders.
- 13

Clarks Chapel Road (SR 1653):

From Wells Grove Road (SR 1667) to Hickory Knoll Road (SR 1643)

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 5-foot paved shoulders.
- 14


Ellijay Road (SR 1001):

From US 64 (Highlands Road) to Grayson Higdon Road

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 4-foot paved shoulders.



15

Old Murphy (SR 1442): 

From Sloan Road (SR 1153) to W Main Street

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 4-foot paved shoulders. Add a multi-use path that runs alongside this facility (see page 48 of the BikeWalk Franklin Plan).

16

Prentiss Bridge Road (SR 1649): 

From US 441-23 (Georgia Road) to Clarks Chapel Road (SR 1653)

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 5-foot paved shoulders.

17

Rabbit Creek Road (SR 1504):

From US 441 (Sylva Road) to the bridge near Ferguson Road (SR 1507)

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 4-foot paved shoulders.


18

Roller Mill Road (SR 1154) /Belden Circle (SR 1152): 

From Belden Circle (SR 1152) to Old Murphy Road (SR 1442)

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 5-foot paved shoulders. Add sidewalk along this facility.

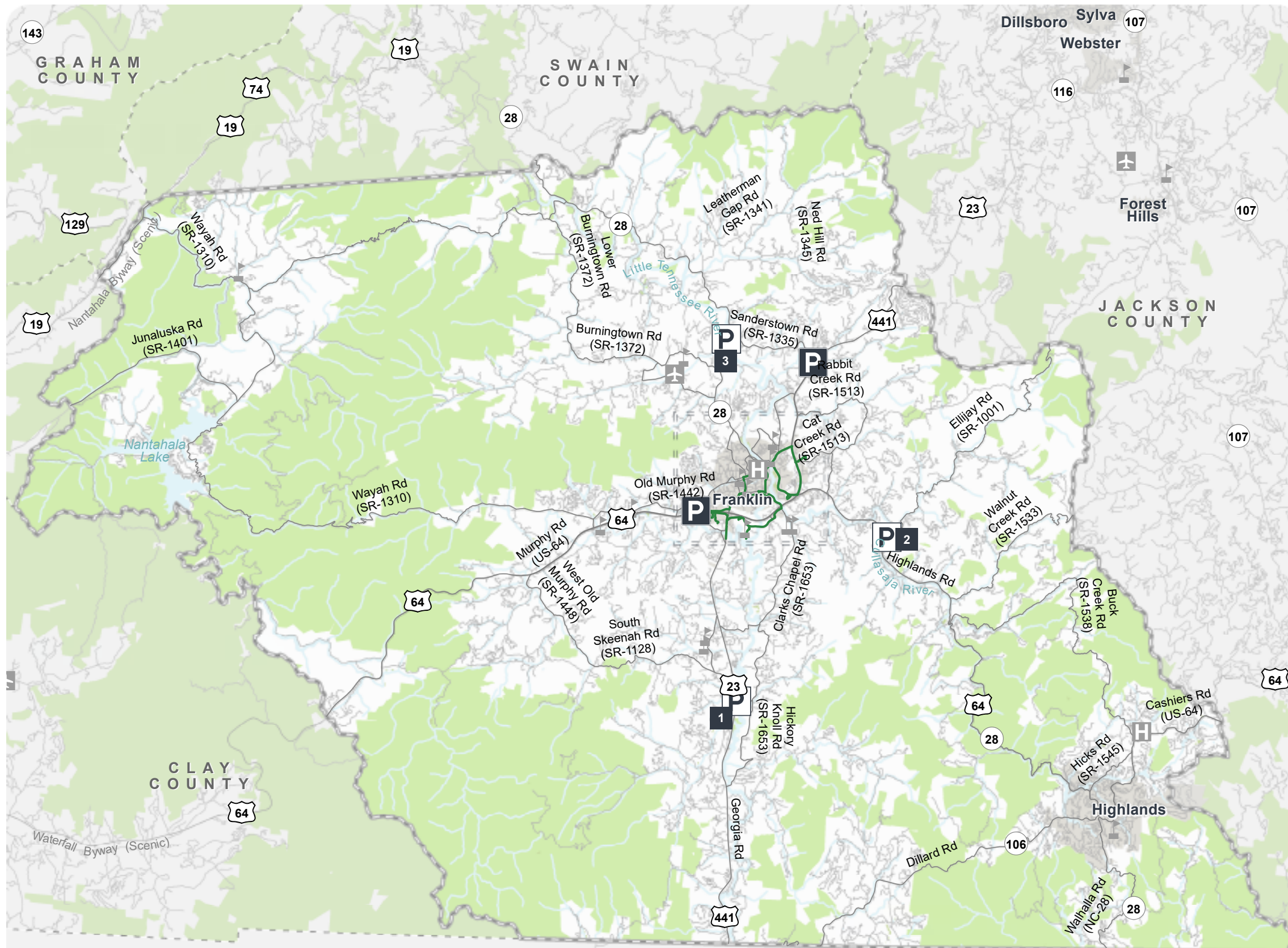
19

Wells Grove (SR 1667): 

From Depot Street (SR 1659) to Clarks Chapel Road (SR 1653)

Modernize to 12-foot lanes and 5-foot paved shoulders where feasible. Intersection improvements at Dowdle Mountain Rd (SR 1659) and Clarks Chapel Rd (SR 1653). Extend the existing sidewalk from Old Phillips Bridge Rd to Clarks Chapel Rd (SR 1653).





PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS
Proposals that address identified needs through 2045



MACON COUNTY

Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Public Transportation and Rail Features

	Proposal ID #	Existing	Proposed
Urban Fixed Bus Corridors	#		
Regional Bus Corridors	#		
Rural Fixed Bus Corridors	#		
Fixed Guideway	#		
Amtrak / Freight Route	#		
Current Railroad	#		
Transit Facility	#		
Park and Ride Lot	#		

Studied Roads

Figure 1



Full report at:
<https://tinyurl.com/MaconCTP>



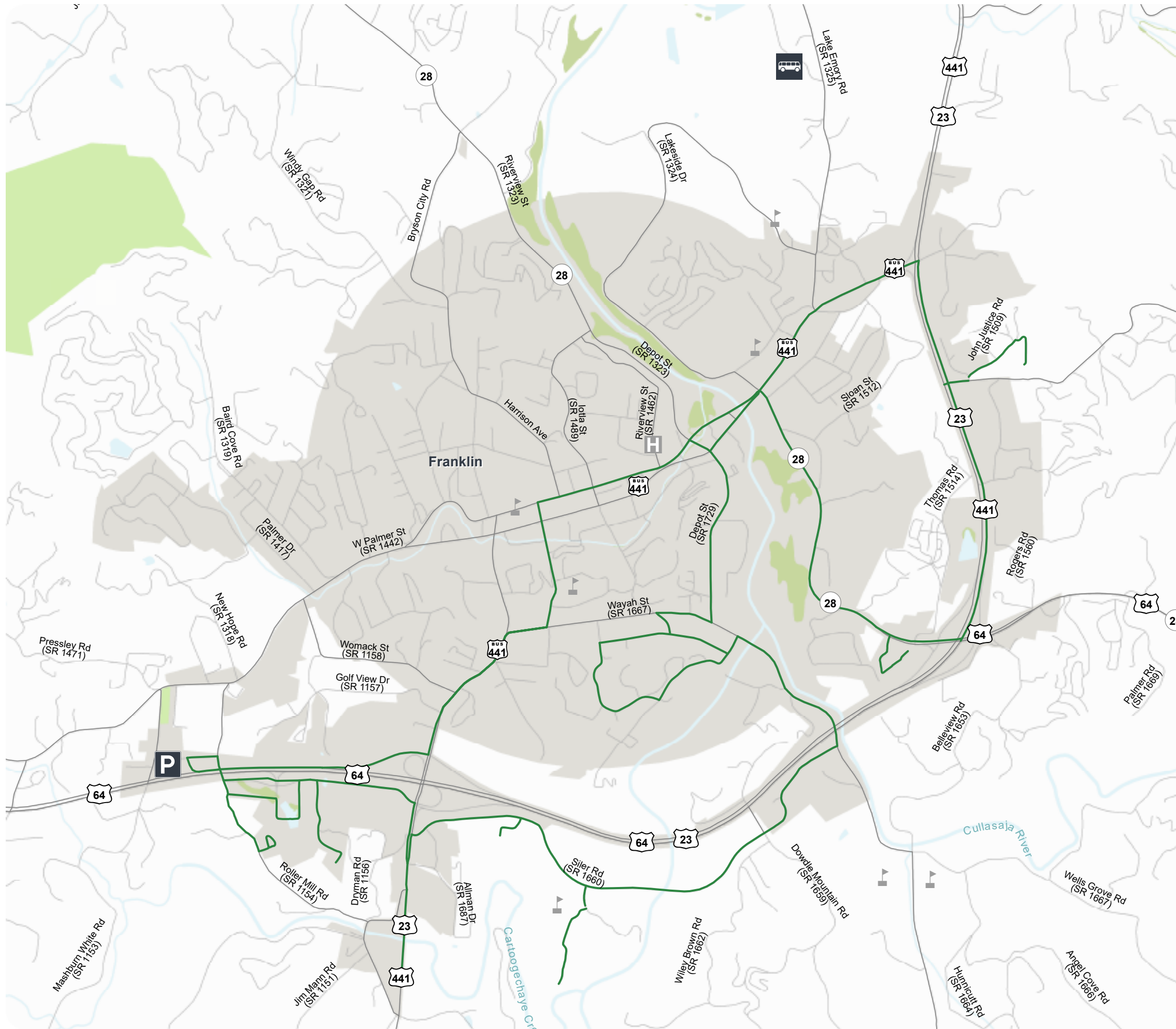
Sheet 3 of 4

Base map date: March 18, 2019

Legal Disclaimer

These concepts will need additional analysis to meet state and federal environmental regulations, to determine final locations and designs, and to be funded for implementation. Local zoning or subdivision ordinances may require the dedication of right of way based on the concepts shown on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and local collector street plans, based on N.C.G.S. § 136-66.2 and § 136-66.10.

ADOPTED
Plan Date: October 7, 2021



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposals that address identified needs through 2045



MACON COUNTY TOWN OF FRANKLIN INSET Comprehensive Transportation Plan Public Transportation and Rail Features

	Proposal ID #	Existing	Proposed
Urban Fixed Bus Corridors	#	—	—
Regional Bus Corridors	#	—	—
Rural Fixed Bus Corridors	#	—	—
Fixed Guideway	#	—	—
Amtrak / Freight Route	#	—	—
Current Railroad	#	—	—
Transit Facility	#		
Park and Ride Lot	#		
Amtrak Station	#		
Intermodal Terminal	#		

Studied Roads

Figure 1

Full report at:
<https://tinyurl.com/MaconCTP>

0
0.425
0.85
Miles

**Sheet 3A of 4
INSET A**
Base map date: March 18, 2019

Legal Disclaimer

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ADOPTED
Plan Date: October 7, 2021



Macon County Public Transportation Project Recommendations

1

US 23/441, R-5734C:

From the Georgia State Line to Prentiss Bridge Road (SR 1649)

Redesign to a four-lane boulevard by replacing the center turn lane with a median, providing reduced-conflict intersections and bicycle lanes. Add a park-and-ride lot near the intersection at Coweeta Church Road (SR 1115).

2

US 64/NC 28 (Highlands Road):

From Rogers Road to Walnut Creek Road (SR 1533)

Modernize the facility to improve mobility and safety. Construct 4-foot paved shoulders throughout, and a park-and-ride lot near the intersection at Ellijay Road (SR 1001).

3

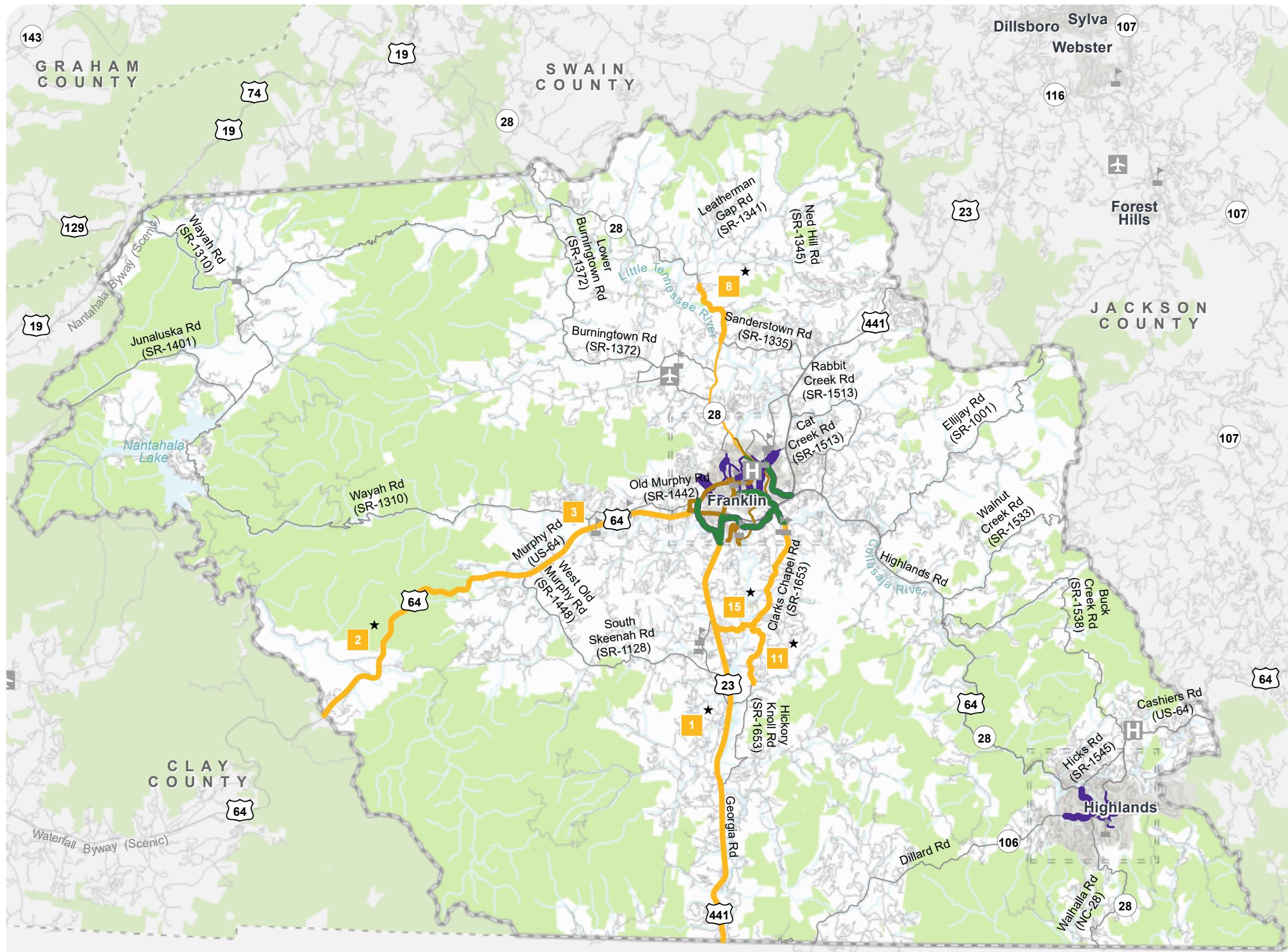
NC 28 (Bryson City Road) :

From Sanderstown Road (SR 1335) to Cowee Creek Road (SR 1340)

Modernize the facility to improve mobility and safety. Construct 11-foot lanes, 5-foot paved shoulders, and add a park-and-ride lot near the intersection at Sanderstown Road (SR 1335). Improve the Y intersection at Cowee Creek Road (SR 1340).

Public Trans/Rail Class: ■ Urban Bus Corridor ■ Regional Bus Corridor ■ Rural Bus Corridor ■ Fixed Guideway
■ Amtrak/Freight Route ■ Park and Ride or Multimodal ■ Amtrak/Light Rail Station or Intermodal Terminal
 ★ Denotes Highway Incidental





GEORGIA

BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposals that address identified needs through 2045



MACON COUNTY

Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Bicycle and Pedestrian Features

	Proposal ID #	Existing	Proposed
Bicycle	#		
Pedestrian	#		
Bicycle and Pedestrian	#		
Multiuse Path	#		
Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge	#		
Denotes Highway Incidental	★		
Other Features			
			Studied Roads

Figure 1



Full report at:
<https://tinyurl.com/MaconCTP>



Sheet 4 of 4

Base map date: March 18, 2019

Legal Disclaimer

These concepts will need additional analysis to meet state and federal environmental regulations, to determine final locations and designs, and to be funded for implementation. Local zoning or subdivision ordinances may require the dedication of right of way based on the concepts shown on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and local collector street plans, based on N.C.G.S. § 136-66.2 and § 136-66.10.

ADOPTED
 Plan Date: October 7, 2021

BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposals that address identified needs through 2045



MACON COUNTY TOWN OF FRANKLIN INSET Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Bicycle and Pedestrian Features

	Proposal ID #	Existing	Proposed
Bicycle	#		
Pedestrian	#		
Bicycle and Pedestrian	#		
Multiuse Path	#		
Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge	#		
Denotes Highway Incidental	★		
Other Features			
			Studied Roads

Figure 1



Full report at:
<https://tinyurl.com/MaconCTP>



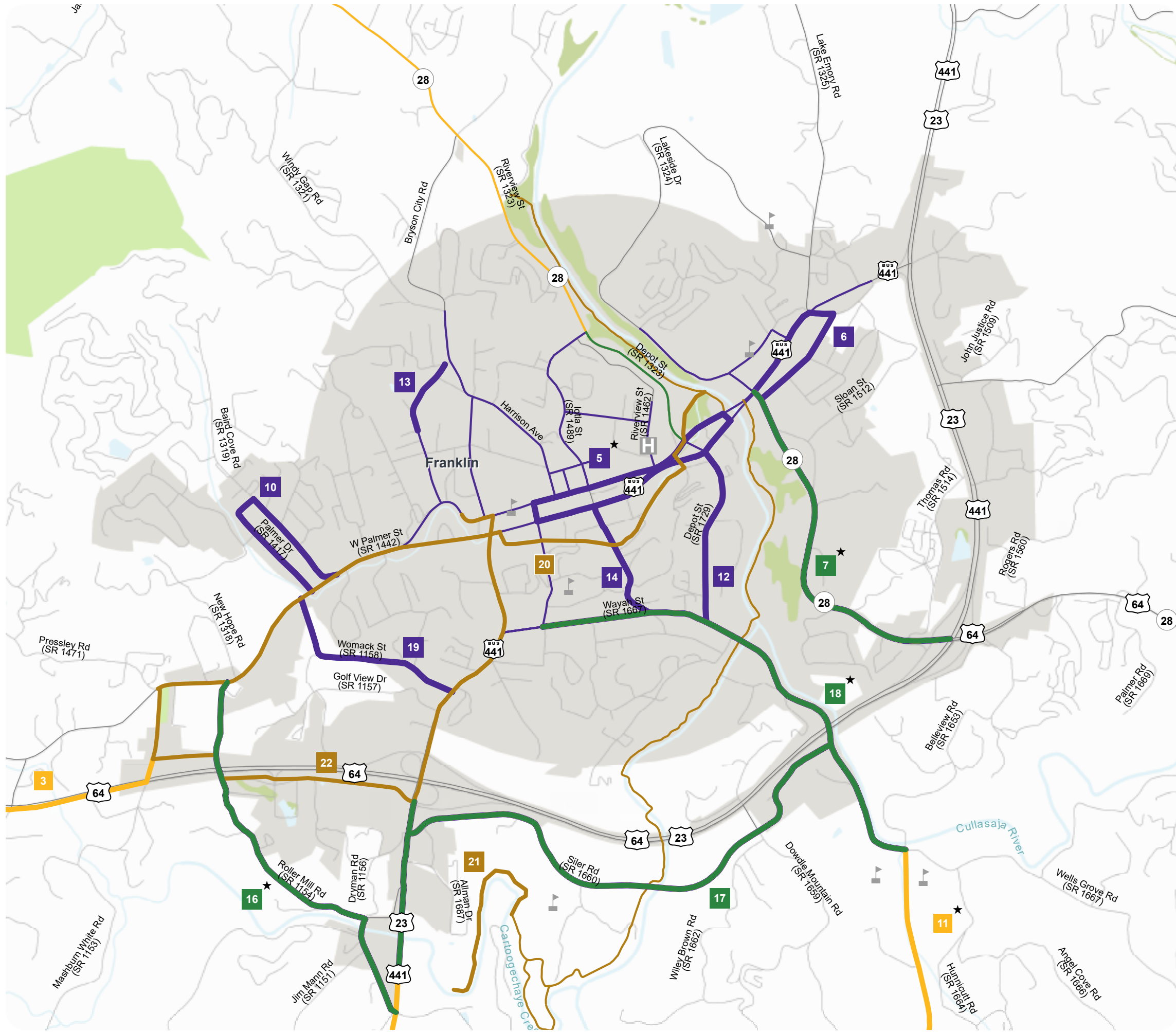
Sheet 4A of 4

Base map date: March 18, 2019

Legal Disclaimer

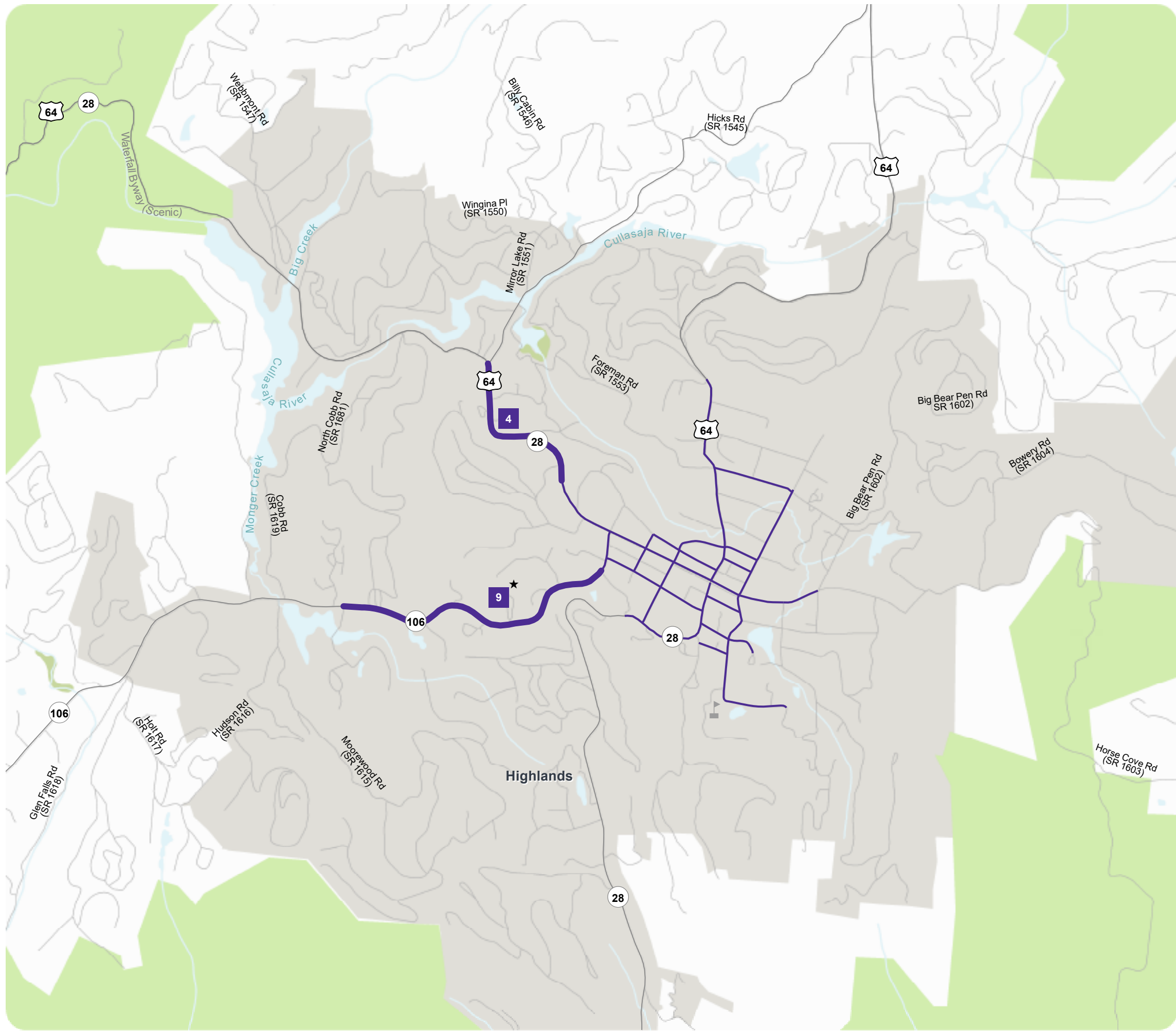
These concepts will need additional analysis to meet state and federal environmental regulations, to determine final locations and designs, and to be funded for implementation. Local zoning or subdivision ordinances may require the dedication of right of way based on the concepts shown on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and local collector street plans, based on N.C.G.S. § 136-66.2 and § 136-66.10.

ADOPTED
Plan Date: October 7, 2021



BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposals that address identified needs through 2045



MACON COUNTY TOWN OF HIGHLANDS INSET Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Bicycle and Pedestrian Features

	Proposal ID #	Existing	Proposed
Bicycle	#		
Pedestrian	#		
Bicycle and Pedestrian	#		
Multiuse Path	#		
Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge	#		
Denotes Highway Incidental	★		
Other Features			
			Studied Roads

Figure 1



Full report at:
<https://tinyurl.com/MaconCTP>



Sheet 4B of 4

Base map date: March 18, 2019

Legal Disclaimer

These concepts will need additional analysis to meet state and federal environmental regulations, to determine final locations and designs, and to be funded for implementation. Local zoning or subdivision ordinances may require the dedication of right of way based on the concepts shown on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and local collector street plans, based on N.C.G.S. § 136-66.2 and § 136-66.10.

ADOPTED
Plan Date: October 7, 2021

Macon County Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Recommendations

- 1

★ **US 23/441, R-5734C:** *From the Georgia State Line to Prentiss Bridge Road (SR 1649) | 9.0 miles*
Redesign to a four-lane boulevard by replacing the center turn lane with a median, providing reduced-conflict intersections and bicycle lanes. Add a park-and-ride lot near the intersection at Coweeta Church Road (SR 1115).
- 2

★ **US 64 (Murphy Road):** *From the Clay County Boundary to W Old Murphy Road (SR 1448) | 8.11 miles*
Construct climbing lanes on steep grades to improve mobility, safety and travel time reliability. Add bicycle lanes (see the Southern Blue Ridge Bike Plan).
- 3

US 64/Sloan Road: *From W Old Murphy Road (SR 1448) to Carolina Drive | 5.14 miles*
Add 5-foot paved shoulder improvements from W Old Murphy Road (SR 1448) to Sloan Rd (SR 1175). Add 5-foot paved shoulder improvements on Sloan Road (SR 1448) to Carolina Drive. See the Southern Blue Ridge Bike Plan.
- 4

US 64/NC 28: *From Mirror Lake Road (SR 1551) to Will Henry Steven's Bridge | 0.51 miles*
Add sidewalk to continue existing sidewalk to connect the west side of Highlands to the downtown area.
- 5

★ **US 441 BUS (Main Street/E Palmer Street):** *From Porter Street to Big Bear Lane | 1.67 miles*
Modernize Main Street/East Palmer Street to improve traffic flow, access to businesses, and pedestrian safety. Add curb and gutter, sidewalks and driveways improvements.
- 6

US 441 BUS (E Main St)/ 1st Street/Old Cat Creek Road: *From Lakeside Drive (SR 1324) to Lake Emory Road (SR 1325) | 0.83 miles*
Add an East Franklin sidewalk loop connecting nearby neighborhoods with the downtown area. See page 60 of the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan.



- 7

★ **NC 28 (Highlands Road):** *From US 441 BUS (E Main Street) to Thomas Road | 1.33 miles*
Redesign to a two-lane divided facility by replacing the center turn lane with a median, providing reduced conflict intersections and improvements to access management. Add bicycle lanes and complete existing sidewalk (see Page 52 of the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan).
- 8

★ **NC 28 (Bryson City Road) :** *From Sanderstown Road (SR 1335) to Cowee Creek Road (SR 1340) | 2.03 miles*
Modernize the facility to improve mobility and safety. Construct 11-foot lanes, 5-foot paved shoulders, and add a park-and-ride lot near the intersection at Sanderstown Road (SR 1335). Improve the Y intersection at Cowee Creek Road (SR 1340).
- 9

★ **NC 106 (Dillard Road):** *From the Georgia State Line to US 64 | 0.9 miles*
Modernize to 12-foot lanes with 4-foot paved shoulders. Add sidewalk from Hummingbird Ln to Highlands Plaza.
- 10

Baird Cove Road (SR 1319)/Palmer Drive (SR 1417): *From W Palmer Street (SR 1442) to W Palmer Street (SR 1442) | 0.87 miles*
Add sidewalk connecting a town neighborhood with the downtown area. See the 2017 Bike/Walk Franklin Plan.
- 11

★ **Clarks Chapel Road (SR 1653):** *From Wells Grove Road (SR 1667) to Hickory Knoll Road (SR 1643) | 5.31 miles*
Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 5-foot paved shoulders.
- 12

Depot Street (SR 1729): *From Wells Grove Road (SR 1667) to US 441 BUS (E Main Street) | 0.64 miles*
Improve existing sidewalk to accomodate pedestrians. See the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan.
- 13

Green Street: *From Wild Mint Road to Harrison Avenue | 0.27 miles*
Add sidewalk to connect existing sidewalk from Green Street to Harrison Avenue. This is a Non-NCDOT road. See the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan.



14

Phillips Street (SR 1718): 

From US 441 BUS (E Palmer Street) to Wayah Street (SR 1667) | 0.45 miles

Add sidewalk to improve connections to the Franklin High School. See page 78 of the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan.


15

★ **Prentiss Bridge Road (SR 1649):** 

From US 441-23 (Georgia Road) to Clarks Chapel Road (SR 1653) | 1.3 miles

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 5-foot paved shoulders.

16

★ **Roller Mill Road (SR 1154) /Belden Circle (SR 1152):** 

From Belden Circle (SR 1152) to Old Murphy Road (SR 1442) | 1.49 miles

Modernize to 11-foot lanes with 5-foot paved shoulders. Add sidewalk along this facility.

17

Siler Road (SR 1660)/Dowdle Mountain Road (SR 1659): 

From US 23/441 Georgia Road to Wells Grove Road (SR 1667) | 3.8 miles

Add sidewalk and bike accomodations for pedestrians and cyclists traveling between the public library, apartments, and business centers. (See the BikeWalk Franklin Plan)

18

★ **Wells Grove (SR 1667):** 

From Porter Street to Clarks Chapel Road (SR 1653) | 1.74 miles

Modernize to 12-foot lanes and 5-foot paved shoulders where feasible. Intersection improvements at Dowdle Mountain Rd (SR 1659) and Clarks Chapel Rd (SR 1653). Extend the existing sidewalk from Old Phillips Bridge Rd to Clarks Chapel Rd (SR 1653).

19

Womack Street (SR 1158): 

From Old Murphy Road (SR 1442) to US 441 BUS (Georgia Road) | 0.71 miles

Add sidewalk to improve connections throughout Franklin. See the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan.

20

The Crawford Branch Greenway: 

From Maple Street to the Little Tennessee Greenway | 1.48 miles

Construct a multiuse path that criss-crosses between many facilities, connecting multiple destinations. It connects to the Little Tennessee Greenway and travels along E Main, E Rogers, Carolina Mountain Dr and Palmer St. See Page 64 of 2017 Bike/Walk Franklin Plan.



21

The Little Tennessee Greenway: 

Extension towards the Macon County Recreational Park | 2.72 miles

Extend the Little Tennessee Greenway to the south, connecting the Cartoogechaye Creek loop to the County Recreation Park. See Page 84 of the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan.

22

The Southwest Loop Trail: 

A loop around southwest Franklin | 7.98 miles

Construct a multiuse path to multiple destinations in southwest Franklin along portions of Old Murphy Rd, Maple St, Georgia Rd, Franklin Plaza, Roller Mill Rd, Carolina Dr, and Sloan Rd. See page 48 of the 2017 BikeWalk Franklin Plan.



CTP APPROVALS

Based on state statute, comprehensive transportation plans must be adopted locally and by the North Carolina Board of Transportation.

Area	Dates	Type
Town of Franklin	May 3, 2021	Adoption
Town of Highlands	May 27, 2021	Adoption
Macon County	April 14, 2021	Adoption
Southwestern RPO	May 24, 2021	Endorsement
N.C. Board of Transportation	Oct. 7, 2021	Adoption

Digital copies of the adoption and endorsement resolutions are available in the [Appendix](#).

UNADDRESSED DEFICIENCIES

Occasionally, a transportation plan cannot satisfy the many varied needs of a community. There are various reasons some identified deficiencies or needs may not be addressed in a CTP by a project proposal. For example, some proposals may be outside the scope of the plan, or some identified deficiencies may not have a reasonable recommendation that can be proposed.

While developing the plan, some initiatives were identified that are not included in the plan. They are:

- ⇒ **U.S. 64 from Franklin to Highlands**
- ⇒ **Wayah Road, Walnut Creek Road, Tellico Road, and Otter Creek Road**
- ⇒ **Hickory Knoll Road and Tessentee Road**

None of these proposals were included in the Macon County CTP. More detail can be found in the [Appendix](#).

DISCLAIMER

This report documents the work of the Macon County Comprehensive Transportation Plan study.

The N.C. Department of Transportation and any of the adopting/endorsing organizations of Macon County Comprehensive Transportation Plan:

- 1 Shall not be held liable for any errors in the data in this report or any accompanying documentation. This includes errors of omission, commission, errors concerning the content of the data, and relative and positional accuracy of the data.
- 2 Do not represent, warrant or guarantee that the guidance in this report will lead to any particular outcome or result.
- 3 Will not be held liable in respect to any losses, including without limitation: loss of profits or income, revenue, use, production, anticipated savings, business, contracts, commercial opportunities, or goodwill based on the information in this report or other supporting documentation.

Primary sources from which this data was compiled must be consulted for verification of information contained in this report.

