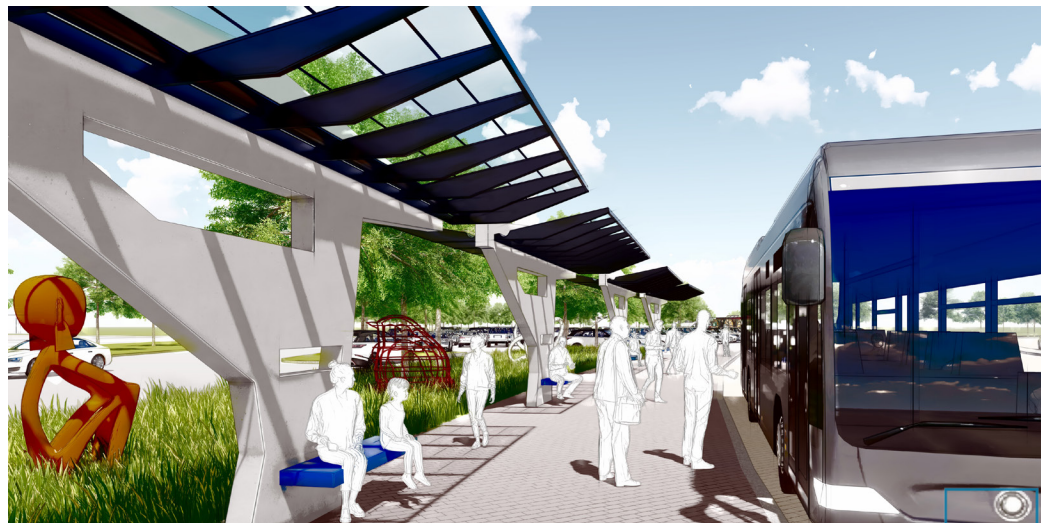


SUGARLOAF LCI

Transit Enhancements and Future Station Planning Study

September 2022





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1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROJECT PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

The Sugarloaf Community Improvement District (CID) and Gwinnett County have worked closely together in recent years to encourage quality development and supportive public infrastructure to make the Sugarloaf area one of the Atlanta region's premier activity centers that is safe, connected, and attractive. The 2018 Sugarloaf LCI Major Plan Update established a vision for the Sugarloaf area as Gwinnett's Downtown with a thriving entertainment and arts focus where residents, employees, and visitors can "arrive early and stay late". Gwinnett County has also continued to advance transit planning and service improvements to support this vision, including future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the Satellite Boulevard corridor.

The Sugarloaf LCI Transit Enhancements and Future Station Planning Study builds off these efforts with the goals of increasing access to existing and future transit, improving transit riders' experience, and ultimately growing transit usage in Gwinnett's Downtown. The study focuses on three key areas:

- Improvements at existing transit stops and future BRT station areas
- Pedestrian and bicycle access and connectivity to transit
- Placemaking around transit to enhance the distinct character of the Sugarloaf area



PLANNING PROCESS

The Sugarloaf LCI Transit Enhancements and Future Station Planning Study process included **four major components**.

- The first was to conduct an **Area and Existing Plan Assessment** to:
 - » Understand the study area's existing conditions related to transit, active transportation, and sense of place.
 - » Review and identify common themes and recommendations from prior plans and studies.
 - » Develop a composite vision for transit enhancements, active transportation, and placemaking in the study area.
 - » Identify key needs and opportunities.
- The second component was **Public Engagement** to inform and engage transit riders, the general public, and stakeholders to understand their needs and seek input into the development of potential strategies.
- The third step focused on **developing Transportation and Placemaking Strategies** to address the identified needs including potential projects and other initiatives for transit enhancements, active transportation, and furthering the sense of place and transit rider experience.
- Lastly, the **Implementation Plan** was developed to prioritize the strategies with costs, responsible parties, and potential funding sources.



Existing facilities at Gwinnett County Park & Ride at Sugarloaf Mills



Gas South Arena at Gas South District



Existing bus stop facility at Gwinnett County Transit Sugarloaf Mills Park & Ride

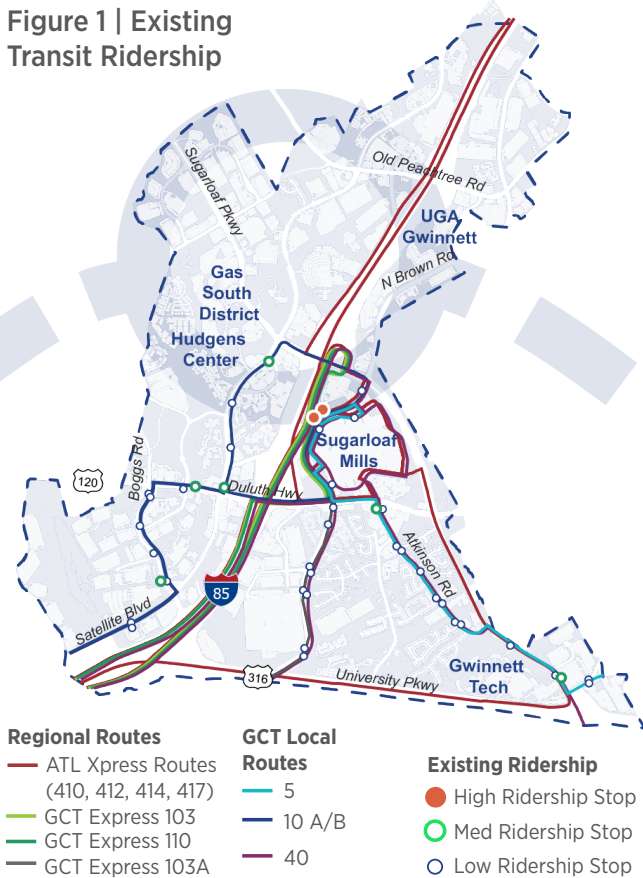


EXISTING CONDITIONS

The review of existing conditions was an important step in understanding the current transit services, transportation infrastructure, and transit user



Figure 1 | Existing Transit Ridership



environment in the Sugarloaf area today. Data collected and reviewed included information related to transit, roadway conditions, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, population and employment, and more. It should also be noted that an extensive review of prior plans was conducted in order to build upon recent, extensive planning efforts. These planning efforts and their recommendations are reviewed on the next page.

This review of previous plans and existing conditions in the Sugarloaf area revealed some key points of strength and areas for improvement (shown in call out box below) which the composite vision, and eventual project recommendations were built upon.

SUGARLOAF TODAY:

3 GCT Local Bus Routes
7 Express Commuter Routes
42 Bus stops
Park & Ride at Sugarloaf Mills



Sidewalk Network

Moderate coverage with gaps along current and planned transit routes

Bike & Trail Network

Significant progress on bike and trail network along Sugarloaf Parkway & North Brown Road



Figure 2 | Existing Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities



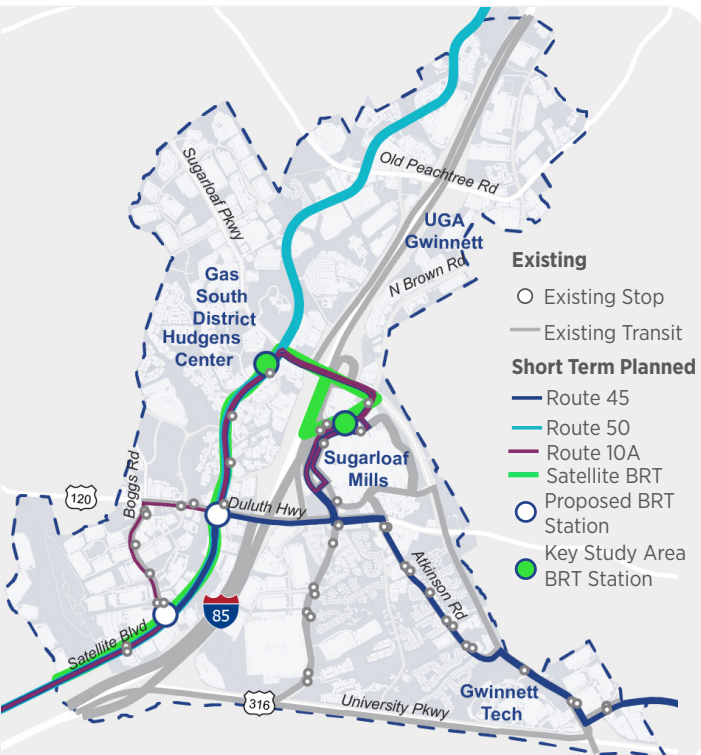
WHAT'S PLANNED

Gwinnett County, and the Sugarloaf area in particular, has benefited from several planning efforts and analysis in recent years including small area community planning, countywide trail and park plans, and transit specific corridor plans that provided a foundation for future investment in transit and transit-supportive infrastructure. The recent major planning efforts reviewed were:

- Connect Gwinnett Transit Plan (2018) Gwinnett Destination 2040 CTP (2017)
- Sugarloaf LCI Plan Update (2018)
- Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan (2018)
- Satellite Boulevard BRT Study (2020)
- Gwinnett Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2020)
- Loop Trail Feasibility Study (2021)

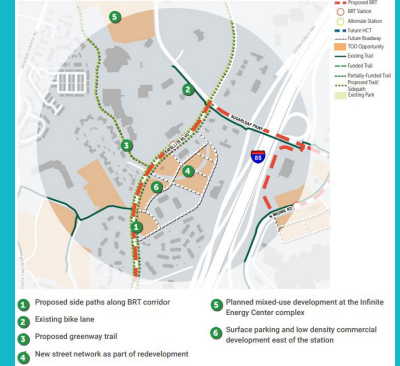
The planning team also reviewed Gwinnett County's ongoing transit service planning efforts to ensure the most current proposed transit route and service modifications were captured.

Figure 3 | Short-Term Planned Transit Improvements

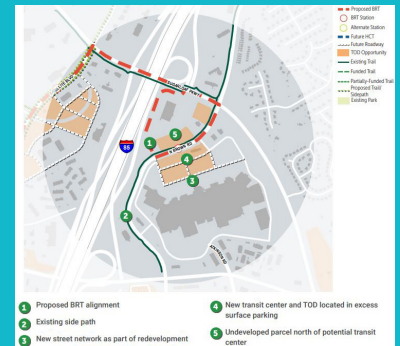


PLANNED PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: SATELLITE BOULEVARD BRT

Gwinnett County, in partnership with Sugarloaf CID, Gwinnett Place CID, and Gateway85 CID, continues to plan for BRT service along the Satellite Blvd corridor from Jimmy Carter Blvd to Sugarloaf Mills. Along this corridor are four potential stations in the Sugarloaf CID area: Boggs Rd, Duluth Hwy, Gas South District, and Sugarloaf Mills.



Gas South District proposed BRT station



Sugarloaf Mills proposed BRT station

KEY PLANNED BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

In addition to short and long-term planned transit improvements, there are a number of planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities that were reviewed.

Some key planned bicycle and pedestrian projects in the Sugarloaf area are:

- LCI Plan
 - » Key trail connections
 - » Identified trailheads
 - » Pedestrian Crossings
- Gwinnett Trails Plan
 - » County Loop Trail
 - » Activity center connections (Gwinnett Tech, Gas South District, and Sugarloaf Mills)



COMPOSITE VISION

TRANSIT

Enhance and strengthen multi-modal connectivity (including trails and transit) and transit rider amenities and placemaking at key stops and stations

- Satellite Blvd BRT
- Potential future multi-modal connections at Gas South District and Sugarloaf Mills
- Short term county-led transit enhancements

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Create a connected, walkable and bikeable network by focusing on pedestrian safety improvements, closing sidewalk gaps, and implementing planned trails and bikeways

- Address key sidewalk gaps, especially along existing/planned transit routes
- Prioritized LCI pedestrian crossings and trailheads at key junctures
- Implementation of Core Trail Network from Gwinnett Trails Plan
- LCI trail recommendations connecting existing trail and bikeway infrastructure and activity centers

PLACEMAKING

Create Gwinnett's Downtown through focused placemaking and public art opportunities at key transit stops and major nodes at Gas South District, Sugarloaf Mills, and Gwinnett Technical College

- Strategic signage and wayfinding plan
- Activated greenspaces along trails system
- Gateway Park
- Civic Center Overlay District revision

Figure 4 | Transit Composite Vision

- Proposed BRT Station
- Key Study Area BRT Station
- Short Term Transit Enhancements
- Satellite BRT
- - - 1/2 mile Key BRT Station Area Buffer
- Existing Transit

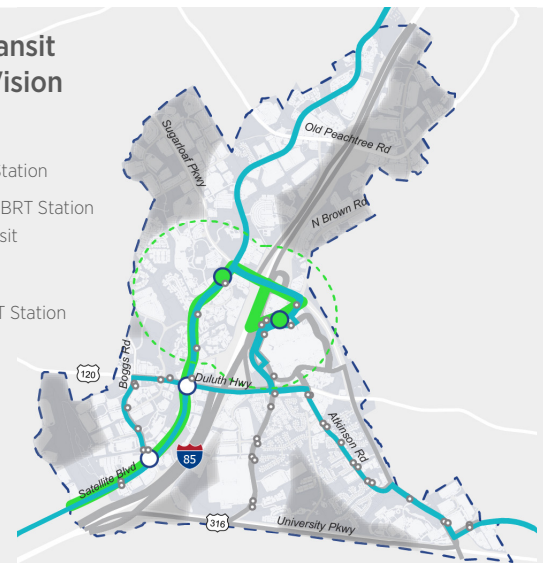


Figure 5 | Active Transportation Composite Vision

- Existing Trails
- - - Existing Bikeway
- Prioritized Ped Crossing
- Prioritized Trail Head
- • • LCI Planned Trails
- Gwinnett Trails
- Plan Core Trail Network

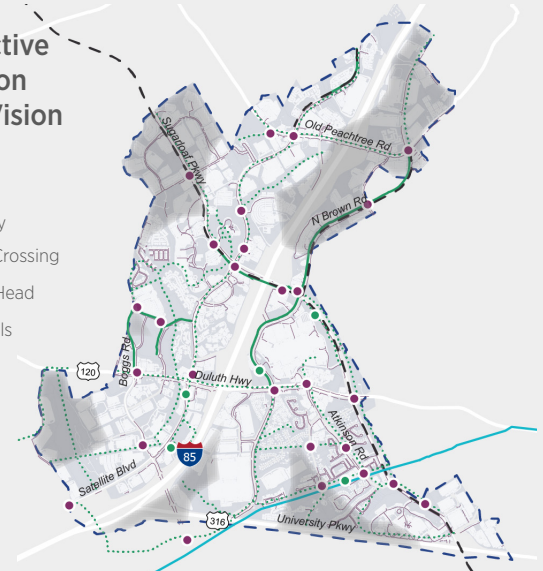
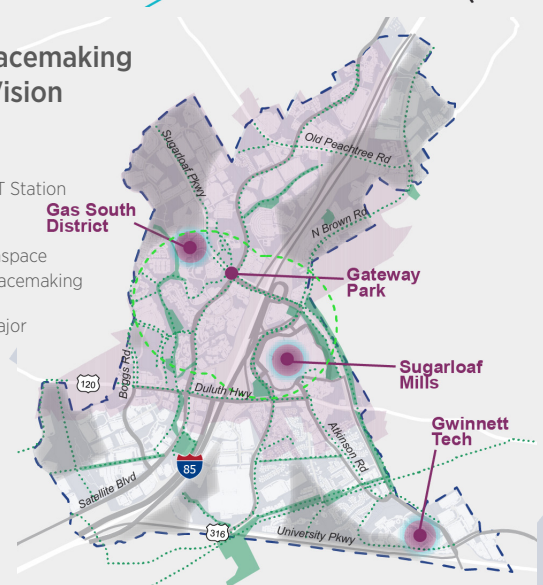


Figure 6 | Placemaking Composite Vision

- Existing Transit
- • • Trail Network
- - - 1/2 mile Key BRT Station Area Buffer
- LCI Planned Activated Greenspace
- LCI Identified Placemaking Opportunity
- LCI Identified Major Activity Center
- Civic Center
- Overlay District



NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

TRANSIT

- **Almost all 42 bus stops in the area are in need of some basic upgrades such as:**
 - » Enhanced signage
 - » Shelters or benches
 - » Sidewalk connections
 - » Pedestrian crossings
- **Higher ridership stops should be prioritized**
- **Stop locations for the new Route 50 have yet to be identified**
- **A bus stop/station typology is needed to define the appropriate transit rider amenities based on the transit service provided and expected usage.**



Existing bus stop on Satellite Blvd

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

- **Prioritization of:**
 - » Closing sidewalk gaps along existing and planned transit routes
 - » Convenient and safe crossings near transit stops
 - » LCI plan trails near existing/planned transit and trails, activated greenspaces, and key activity centers
 - » Gwinnett County Trails Plan Core Trail Network
- **First/last mile connections coordination with area property owners and employers**
- **Loop Trail: Multiple alternative alignments and not yet fully funded**



Sample of existing sidewalk conditions

PLACEMAKING

- **BRT station areas at Gas South District and Sugarloaf Mills and at the Sugarloaf Mills Park & Ride lot**
- **High/medium ridership bus stops and those along Satellite Blvd**
- **Implementation of activated greenspaces at high/medium ridership bus stops, key activity nodes, and trail crossings**
- **Amend Civid Center Overlay to be Sugarloaf CID-specific with TOD standards, signage, trail connections, multimodal streetscape design, density bonuses, and incentives, etc.**



Existing conditions at Sugarloaf Mills



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement was crucial in understanding how to best enhance the current and future transit rider experience. Using various outreach methods, the project team approached engagement in an inclusive, targeted, and intentional manner. These methods included a project webpage and social media posts, online survey, intercept surveys, Project Advisory Group (PAG) meetings, and a public workshop. The goal was to garner feedback from regular transit riders, occasional riders/event attendees, and the general community. The project webpage, hosted on the CID's existing site, served as a virtual hub for general project information, an events calendar, and a detailed online survey.

SURVEYS

Two surveys were conducted as part of the study: an online survey and in-person intercept surveys.

The online survey asked the general public detailed questions about their transit use, features to improve the bus stop experience, frequent destinations in the area, challenges to walking and biking, and priority placemaking elements.

In-person intercept surveys were also conducted at key locations in the Sugarloaf area:

- Sugarloaf Park & Ride
- Sugarloaf Mills Mall Food Court
- Gas South Arena (before an Atlanta Gladiators game)

The project team selected these locations to meet people where they were and target a range of existing transit riders, occasional transit riders, and the general public. The intercept surveys asked similar questions to the online version, but were designed to be quick and high-level. Team members interviewed passersby at each location on their transportation habits, elements that would encourage them to ride transit, potential bus stop experience and bike/pedestrian improvements, and preferred creative placemaking elements.

ONLINE SURVEY

Among the 74 respondents, over half lived or worked in the Sugarloaf area. Regarding transit, almost 75% of respondents did not regularly ride transit and 80% of frequent transit riders took the bus to work. About a third of respondents cited that current bus stop locations were inconvenient making it challenging to choose transit.

Responders indicated that they would take transit to places like Gas South Arena if the transit system was safer and more convenient. They also mentioned that they would enjoy walking or biking to area restaurants like Marlow's Tavern and Uncle Jack's Meat House if safety measures were implemented. Other notable destinations included shopping centers like Sugarloaf Mills, and nearby parks like McDaniel Farm Park and Suwanee Town Center.

The primary challenges to walking and biking included a lack of safe, connected infrastructure like sidewalks,

74

Responses

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Preferred Bus Stop Features



Real-Time Signage



Safer Pedestrian Access



Lighting

Preferred Destinations if Safe & Convenient



Transit - Gas South



Walk/Bike - Restaurants



All - Parks & Shopping

Placemaking Priorities



Real-Time Signage



Greenspace



Creative Bus Shelter

bicycle facilities, and roadway crossings. **Generally, people felt unsafe walking and biking in the district and felt destinations were too far apart to be convenient for active transportation.**

Related to preferred bus stop amenities, respondents identified real-time signage, followed closely by safer pedestrian access, and lighting, respectively. Write-in responses noted weatherproof bus shelter design and restroom facilities as other elements to consider. People opted for small, connected greenspaces at bus stops to create a better sense of place.

INTERCEPT SURVEY

Most survey respondents traveled mostly by car, but of the Park & Ride users, most commuted to work via the Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) express commuter service. **Interviewees suggested that if local transit were more convenient, more interesting like a trolley, or more connected - particularly to MARTA, they would consider using transit.**

Similar to the online survey responses, passersby preferred real-time signage, restroom facilities, and added bus shelters to improve the bus stop experience. They wanted to see more and better places to cross near bus stops as well as connected sidewalks. For placemaking elements, respondents chose greenspace, creative shelter design, and public and crosswalk art.



Discussion on potential transit and placemaking solutions for the study area at the Public Workshop.

INTERCEPT SURVEY RESULTS

Preferred Bus Stop Features

36
Surveys



Real-Time Signage



Restroom Facilities



More Shelters

Preferred Bike/Pedestrian Safety Features



More/Better Crossings



Connected Sidewalks



Lighting/Security

Preferred Creative/Artistic Features



Greenspace



Creative Shelters



Crosswalk Art

PUBLIC WORKSHOP/CHARRETTE

The project team held a workshop on February 22-23, 2022 at the Hudgens Center for the Arts. There, team members collaborated to develop draft concepts for the transit enhancements, bike and pedestrian improvements, and creative placemaking elements. On the first day, the public was invited to pop in during the afternoon during drop-in hours to learn more about the project and give feedback as the team workshopped ideas. The second day, team members presented the draft concepts at a public open house and solicited feedback.

OVERALL FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Overall, engagement efforts highlighted the need for:

- A convenient, connected local transit system
- Safety improvements for walking and biking infrastructure and at bus stops
- More/improved roadway crossings, connected sidewalks, bike facilities, and denser land uses to promote walkability
- Greenspace and public art to help create a sense of place at transit stops



2 TRANSIT ENHANCEMENTS

FOCUS ON EXISTING & FUTURE BUS STOPS & STATIONS

Elevating the transit rider experience in the Sugarloaf area begins with a focus on the places that serve as the front door to transit – the bus stops and stations where riders get on and off of transit, whether it be local bus, express commuter, or future BRT. As identified in the area assessment, there are several key gaps and needs that arose during the planning process.

The majority of the existing bus stops in the study area lack the basic information and amenities that help to make transit visible and comfortable for existing and potential transit riders. These include visible and informative signage, places for riders to sit and take shelter while waiting on their bus, accessible sidewalk connections, and nearby safe pedestrian crossings.

These current needs combined with planned new transit service and some proposed existing local bus route modifications, presented an opportunity to develop an approach to categorizing and prioritizing transit stops and stations for enhancements and upgrades. This section summarizes the transit stop typology framework, identification of potential improvements to upgrade existing bus stops, and recommended features for new bus stops and stations as they come online to create a positive experience for transit riders.

STOP TYPOLOGY FRAMEWORK

From the information gathered on existing bus stop locations and planned transit enhancements in the Sugarloaf area, a stop typology framework was developed to categorize and help prioritize the array of bus stops for recommended improvements.

Characteristics such as stop utilization (boardings and alightings), location and nearby destinations, and existing and planned services for each stop were considered in developing the typologies and categorizing the stops.

Figure 7 | Stop Typology Framework

STOP TYPES

● Park & Ride (P&R) Station

The Sugarloaf Park & Ride lot is currently the only P&R station serving both GCT's local routes 10A/B, 40, and 45 and express bus service routes 103, 103A, and 110 to Downtown and Midtown Atlanta and the Emory/CDC area during peak AM and PM travel periods Monday-Friday. The park & ride lot currently sees the highest ridership in the study area.

● Priority Stop

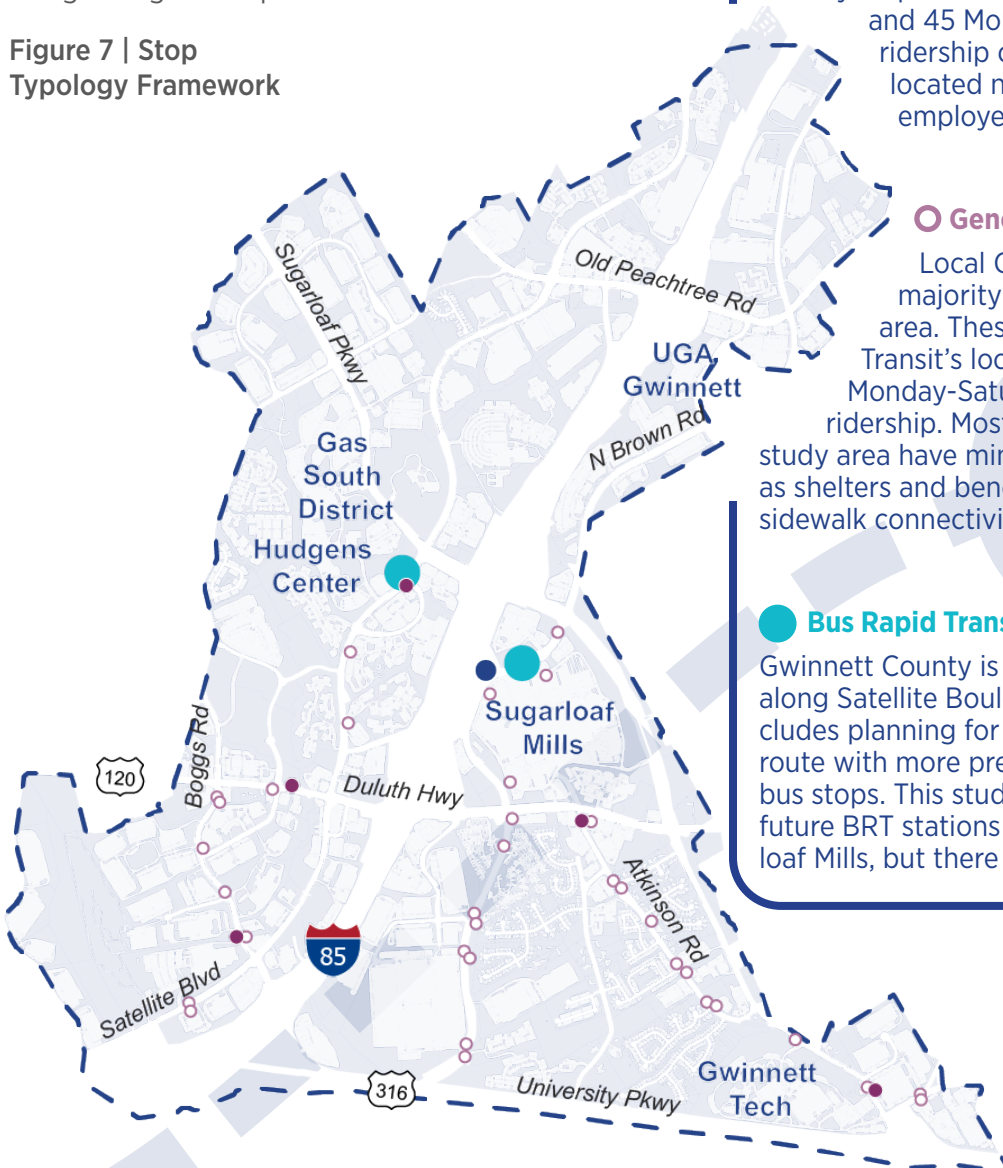
Priority stops serve GCT's local bus routes 10A/B, 40, and 45 Monday-Saturday, but see higher ridership compared to general stops and are located near commercial nodes with larger employers and centers of education.

○ General Stop

Local General bus stops represent the majority of the bus stops in the study area. These stops serve Gwinnett County Transit's local bus routes 10A/B, 40, and 45 Monday-Saturday and generally have lower ridership. Most of the General bus stops in the study area have minimal passenger amenities such as shelters and benches and many are lacking basic sidewalk connectivity.

● Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Station

Gwinnett County is planning for future BRT service along Satellite Boulevard in the study area. This includes planning for future BRT Stations along the BRT route with more premium amenities than typical local bus stops. This study focuses on two of the proposed future BRT stations at Gas South District and Sugarloaf Mills, but there are four total planned in the CID.

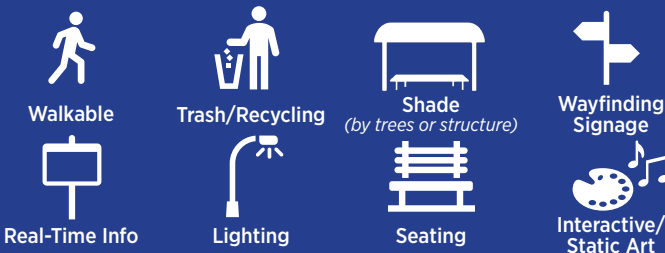




STOP REQUIREMENTS BY TYPOLOGY

For each transit stop type, required transit rider amenities and features have been recommended. These recommended amenities and features are geared towards providing transit riders with the minimum accommodations to support a positive experience using transit. The recommendations also help to improve transit's visibility within the built environment, attract new riders, and signal to drivers that pedestrians and bicyclists may be present.

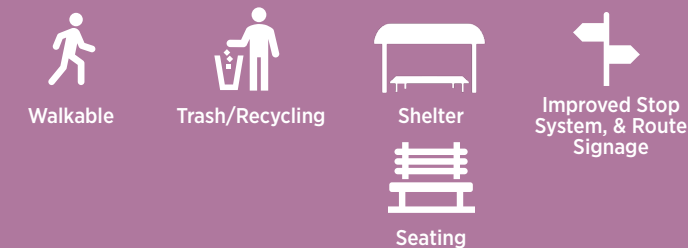
PARK & RIDE STATIONS



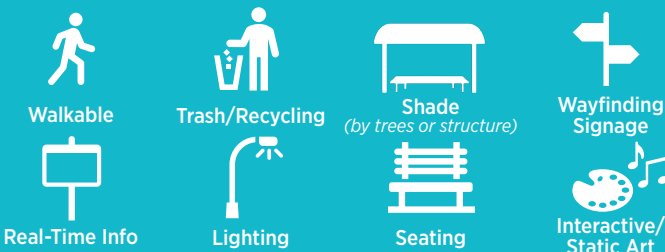
PRIORITY STOPS



GENERAL STOPS



BRT STATIONS



TRANSIT ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

With the required bus stop amenities and features established for each stop/station type, the project team prioritized each stop location for implementation as High, Medium, or Low priority.

High Priority - Stop locations identified as the highest priority for implementation include those categorized under the Park & Ride and Priority Stop typologies located inside the CID boundary, along with their pairs across the street (that may have a General Stop typology). These are the locations serving the greatest number of riders today. Also included are General Bus stops located near the proposed BRT stations at Boggs Rd and Duluth Hwy. All of the high priority stop locations are highly visible, including where the future BRT stations are proposed. Implementing improvements at these locations, such as **transit zones** and **upgraded bus stop signage**, will have the

Transit Zones are recommended on Satellite Blvd at the proposed future Gas South District BRT station area and on N. Brown Rd at the existing Sugarloaf Park & Ride/future Sugarloaf Mills BRT station area. Transit zones would include incorporating the placemaking theming (detailed in Section 4) into customized crosswalk paint/texture treatments and landscaping within the zone to provide visual cue that transit and pedestrian safety is a priority. These zones will set the stage for planned future BRT to serve these areas.

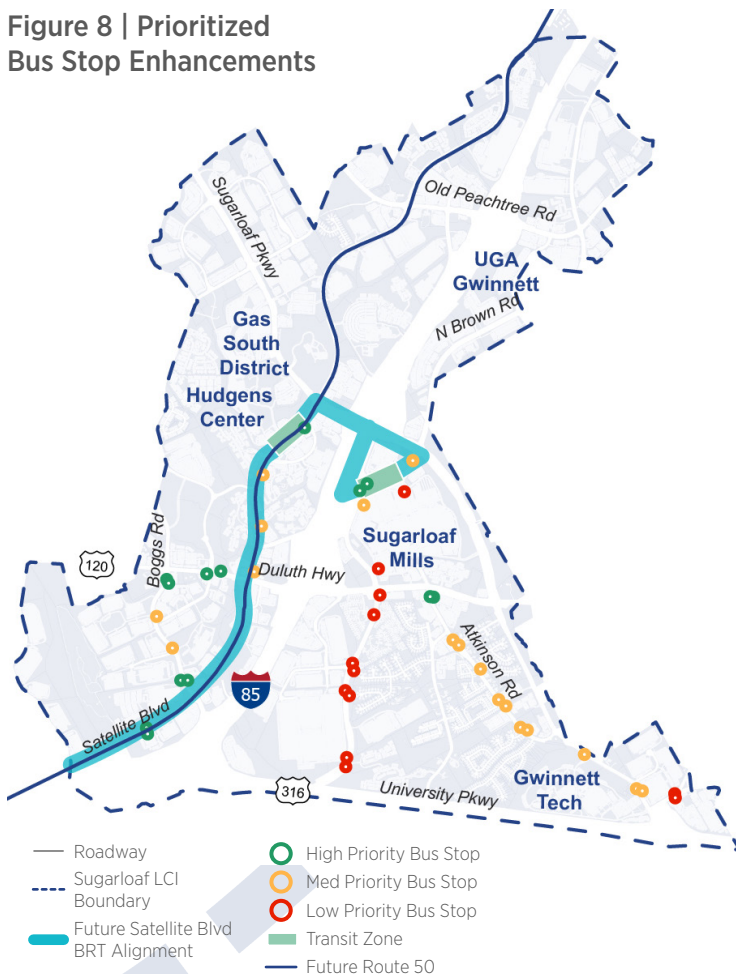
Upgraded Bus Stop Signage is recommended for all existing bus stops within the study area. GCT is currently underway with a rebranding effort. As part of this rebranding, new bus stop signage designs are being developed that will be more vibrant, visible, and provide transit users with additional information than what is currently available. The Sugarloaf CID should work with Gwinnett County to prioritize the rollout and installation of new signage in the CID area.

most significant benefits to existing transit riders and help prepare these areas for future planned transit.

Medium Priority - Stop locations identified as medium priority for implementation generally include the remaining General Stop type locations not included in high priority recommendations and are located within the CID boundary. Also included as medium priority are two Priority Stop locations located outside of the CID boundary. While these two locations have higher ridership numbers, Gwinnett County would have the sole responsibility for implementing the recommended improvements.

Low Priority - Stop locations identified as the lowest priority for implementation include the General Stop locations outside the CID boundary or are assumed will be eliminated once the Route 40 service modifications are put in place.

Figure 8 | Prioritized Bus Stop Enhancements



PROTOTYPE STOP LOCATIONS

In addition to the recommendations for required bus stop improvements in the study area, a subset of stop locations were identified as conceptual prototypes for additional transit, active transportation, and placemaking enhancements. The prototype locations represent each of the stop types and are an aspirational vision for what the future of transit in the Sugarloaf area could be. Renderings of these prototypes are included in Sections 3 and 4 of this document.

The prototype stop locations are:

- ★ Proposed BRT Station Area at Gas South District
- ★ Sugarloaf Park & Ride and Proposed BRT Station Area at Sugarloaf Mills
- ★ Atkinson Rd south of SR 120/Duluth Hwy
- ★ Satellite Blvd at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
- ★ Boggs Rd south of SR 120/Duluth Hwy

Figure 9 | Prototype Stop Locations





3 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

WALKING & BIKING CONNECTIVITY TO TRANSIT

Investment in transit stop level enhancements would not be complete without attention to safe, connected pedestrian and bicycle access to and from those stops. **Every transit trip starts and ends as an active transportation trip - on foot or by bike. Making it easier for people to access transit can improve access to jobs, contribute to healthier lifestyles, reduce personal and household transportation costs, and support vibrant places.**

In the process of assessing the existing active transportation network, in relation to existing and planned transit, the needs to close sidewalk gaps, provide opportunity for safe crossings, and increase trail and bicycle facilities connectivity were identified. The Sugarloaf CID and Gwinnett County have continued to invest in planning for and implementing active transportation projects, however some notable gaps in the sidewalk network remain and much of the planned trails and bikeways has yet to be constructed.

This section details the identification of specific gaps in the current active transportation network near transit and the prioritized recommendations to close those gaps, making it easy and safe for residents, employees, and visitors to access transit in the Sugarloaf area.

TRANSLATING NEEDS INTO PRIORITIES

Building off of the assessment of existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the study area, the project team identified the key gaps in the active transportation network in relation to accessing transit stops. Additional considerations included the major locations where people want to travel from and to (origins and destinations), historical crash data and higher risk corridors for pedestrian and bicyclists, and stakeholder input.

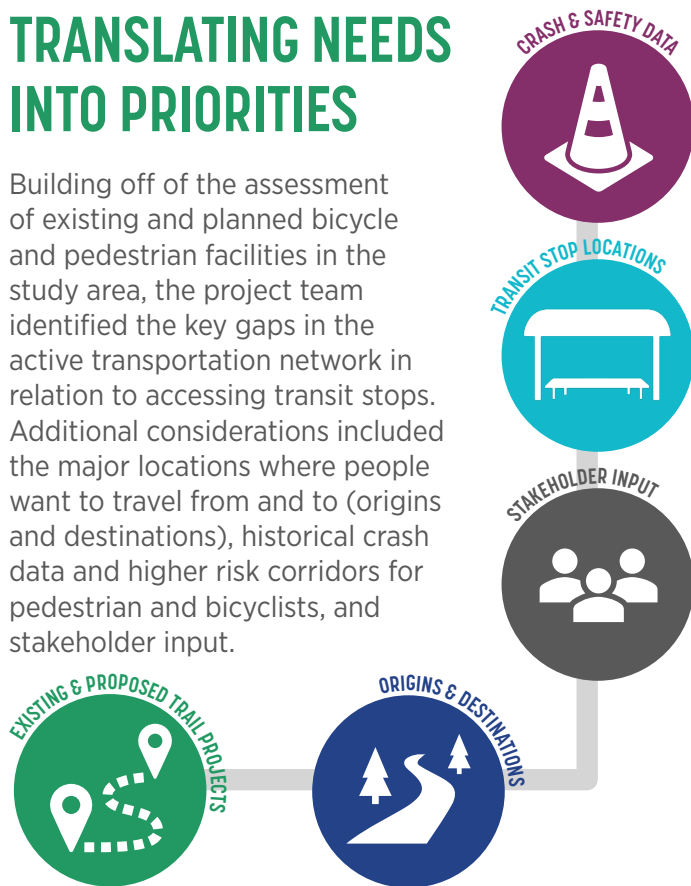
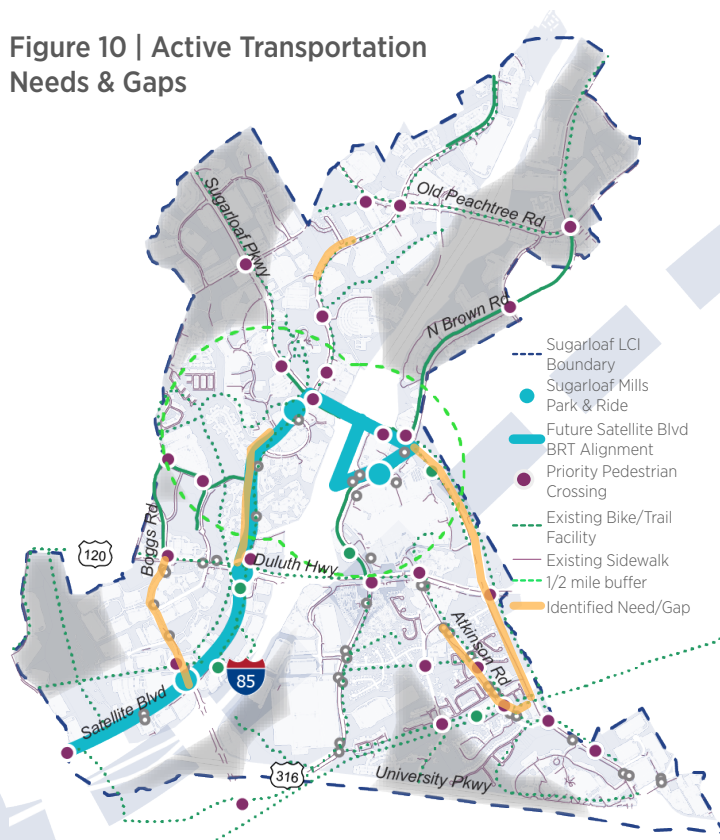
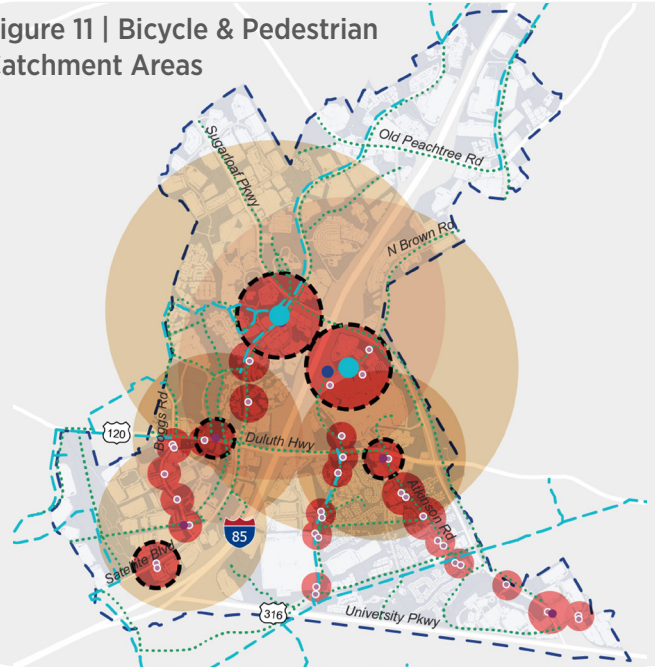


Figure 10 | Active Transportation Needs & Gaps



Catchment areas were identified at each existing stop and future BRT stations to indicate the distances that pedestrians and bicyclists are willing to walk or bike to access a transit stops. A 1.5 minute walk (1/12 mile) or 3 minute bike ride (1/2 mile) to bus stops and a 5 minute walk (1/2 mile) or 6 minute bike ride (1 mile) to BRT stations were established as the catchment areas to assist in identifying priority areas for improvements.

Figure 11 | Bicycle & Pedestrian Catchment Areas



To further provide focus in developing recommendations, **the following potential strategies to fill gaps in the active transportation network and encourage transit usage were established:**

- **Public right-of-way investments** – Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements along county-owned roadways and state routes
- **Private property improvements** – “Last mile” bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure within private development to connect residents, workers, and visitors from public rights-of-way to their destinations conveniently
- **Bicycle & pedestrian related transit enhancements** – Supporting amenities such as benches, bike racks, shade trees, and wayfinding
- **Employer transit incentives** – Transportation demand management (TDM) incentives in partnership with Georgia Commute Options to encourage using transit, walking, and biking instead of driving



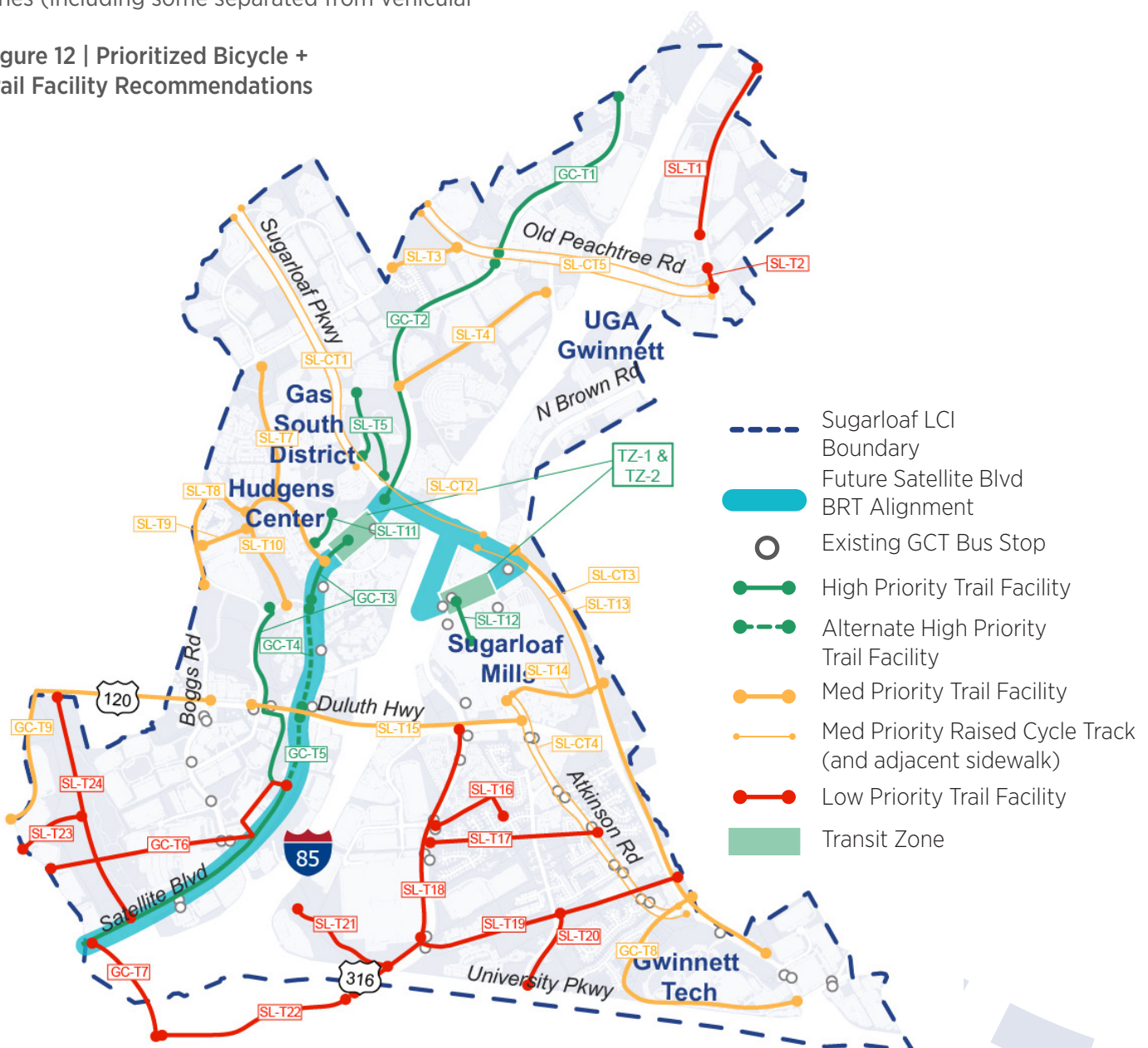
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

BICYCLE RECOMMENDATIONS

From the identified needs and priorities, and reviewing previous plans, bicycle-focused infrastructure improvement recommendations were identified and prioritize for implementation. They include bicycle lanes (including some separated from vehicular

traffic), sidepaths, and multi-use trails. The highest priorities are focused on completing the Loop Trail along the Satellite Blvd corridor, working with the proposed redevelopment of the Georgia Baptist Missions and Ministry Center to include a connected trails to the Sugarloaf Pkwy corridor's bicycle infrastructure, sidepaths/trails within the Gas South District connecting to Satellite Blvd, and a sidepath connection from the Sugarloaf Park & Ride to Sugarloaf Mills.

Figure 12 | Prioritized Bicycle + Trail Facility Recommendations

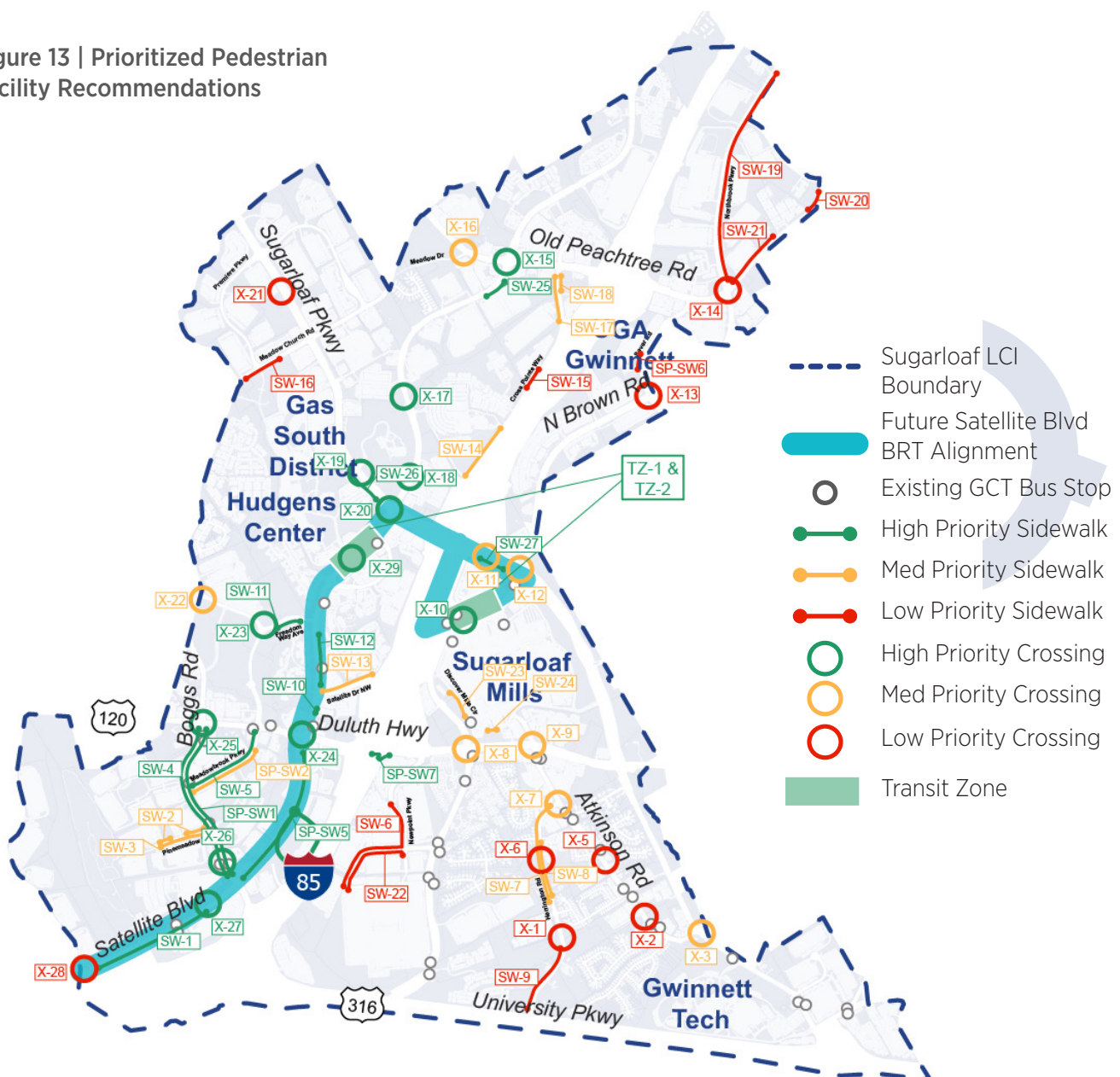


PEDESTRIAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Improvement recommendations to support pedestrian connectivity and access to transit in the Sugarloaf area were also identified and prioritized. They primarily consist of sidewalks and pedestrian crossings. The focus was on closing gaps in the existing sidewalk network along and within 1/4 mile of local bus routes. The highest priorities for closing sidewalk gaps are on Satellite Blvd (including where the new Route 50 local bus service is proposed), Boggs Rd, and SR 120/

Duluth Hwy. And, the highest priorities for pedestrian crossing improvements are focused on multiple locations on Sugarloaf Pkwy and Satellite Blvd at the Gas South District, on 120/Duluth Hwy, N. Brown Rd at the Sugarloaf Park & Ride to Sugarloaf Mills, and on Boggs Rd. These priority locations are in locations near the highest ridership stop locations and key destinations within the study area.

Figure 13 | Prioritized Pedestrian Facility Recommendations

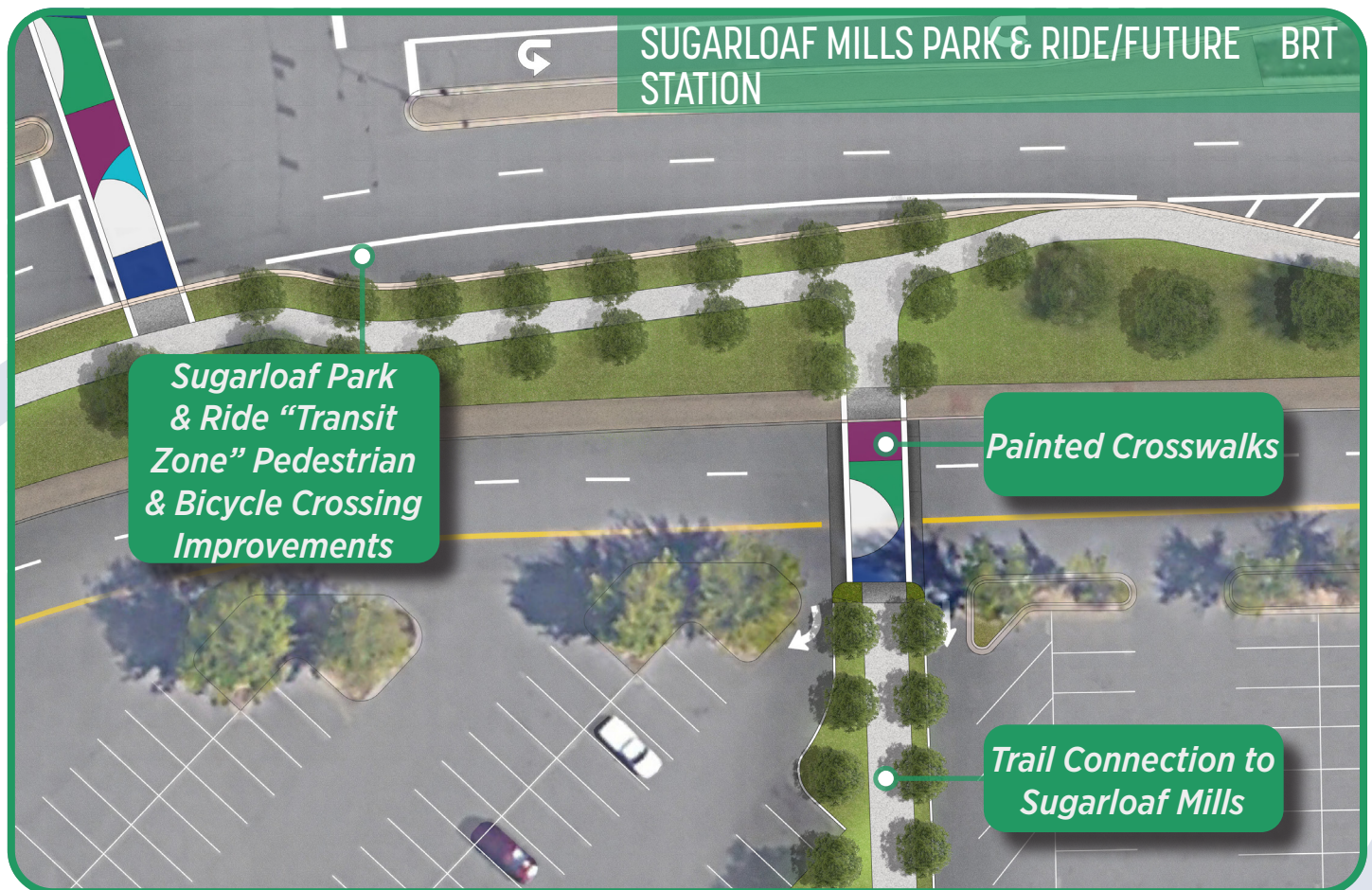




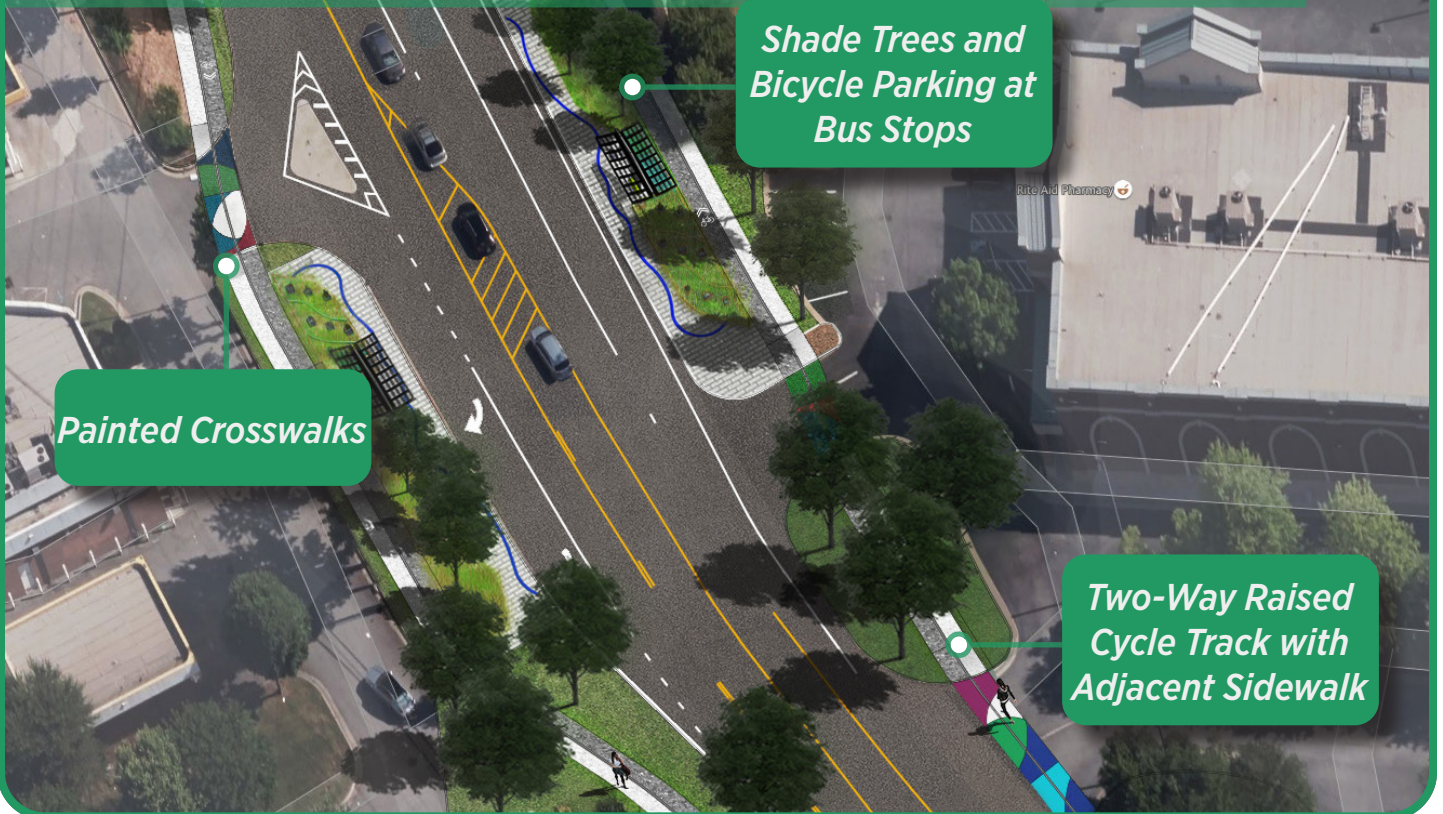
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS: PROTOTYPE STOP CONCEPTS

As noted in Section 2, prototype concepts were developed for select bus stop and future BRT station areas in the study area to illustrate an aspirational vision for bringing together the bus stop enhancement, active transportation, and placemaking in a more robust way. The following renderings illustrate these prototypes at specific locations and help visualize what a greater investment in placemaking could do for improving the transit rider experience, encourage transit usage, and support safe mobility and access to transit.

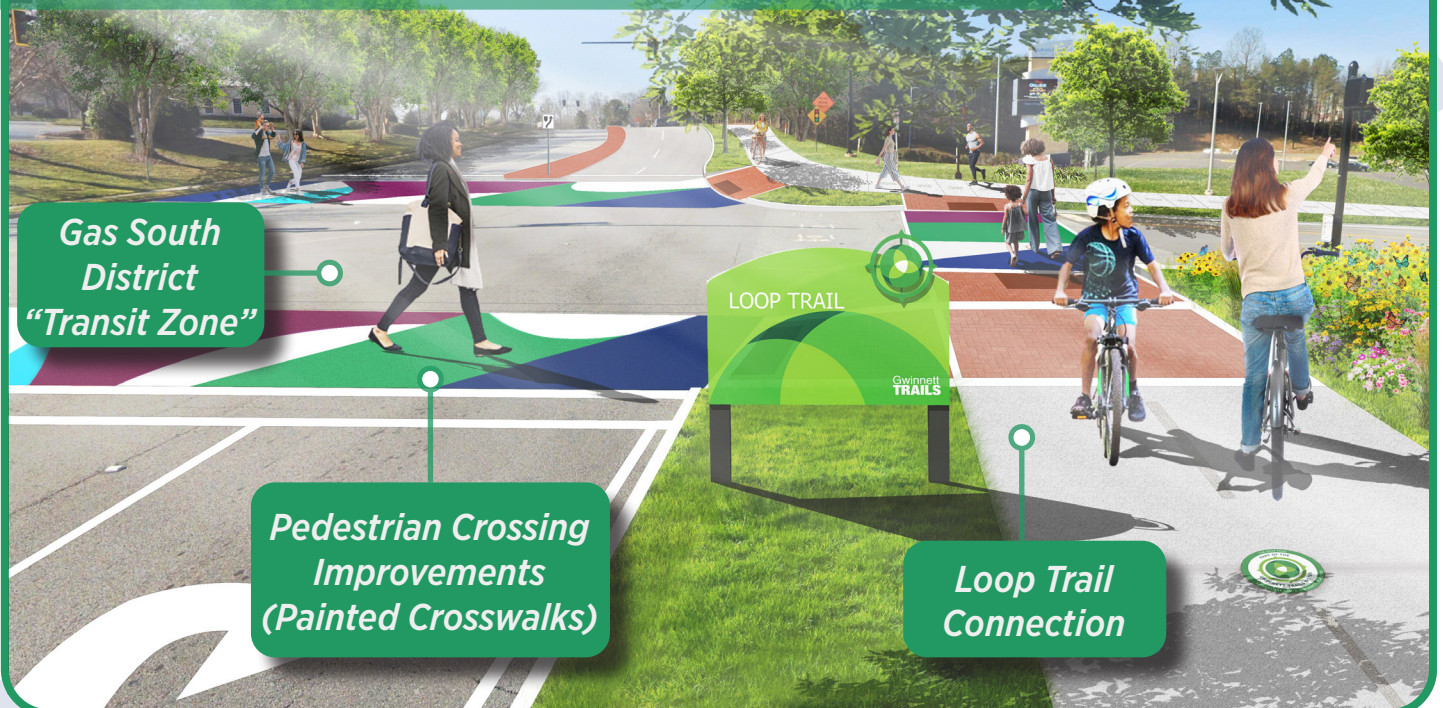
Additional prototype concept renderings are also included in Section 4 of this report.



ATKINSON ROAD PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS & RAISED CYCLETRACK CONCEPT



SATELLITE BLVD AT GAS SOUTH DISTRICT/FUTURE BRT STATION





4 PLACEMAKING STRATEGY

WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

Placemaking is the process of creating quality places that people want to spend their time living, working, playing, and learning in. It capitalizes on a community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's happiness, well-being, and attachment to an area.

The Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a non-profit organization dedicated to educating people on the topics of placemaking, identifies four key qualities needed to create a successful place:

- **Access & Linkages:** Access concerns how well a place is connected to its surroundings both visually and physically. A successful public space is visible and easy to get to and around.
- **Comfort & Image:** Comfort and image are key to whether a place will be used. Perceptions about safety and cleanliness, the context of adjacent buildings, and a place's character or charm are often the first in people's minds.
- **Uses:** Activities that occur in a place—friendly social interactions, public concerts, and community art shows are its basic building blocks. They are the reasons why people come in the first place and why they return.
- **Sociability:** When people see friends, meet and greet their neighbors, and feel comfortable interacting with strangers, they tend to feel a stronger sense of place or attachment to their community and to the place that fosters these types of social activities.

Source // www.pps.org

THEME

The overall theme of placemaking in the Sugarloaf LCI study area is **the arts**. The Sugarloaf area serves as Gwinnett's downtown and is centered around the Gas South District, a 118-acre campus with an arena, theatre, and convention center that hosts sporting events, music performances, festivals, and exhibits. Using the Gas South District as a catalyst and unifier, the arts can be carried throughout the rest of the Sugarloaf area through placemaking using art and small public spaces to reinforce a sense of place.

ELEMENTS

There is a need to create context-specific elements within the CID using branding. The branding selected for the area uses **bold** colors and **contemporary** design elements.

- Colors: bright, grays, black
- Fonts: sans serif
- Art: abstract and colorful
- Art installations: pedestals to install sculptures or interactive features
- Streamlined materials: concrete, glass, steel, turf, or synthetic turf
- Landscape: more formalized and maintained
- Design elements: clean, minimalist lines

PRIMARY COLORS (SUGARLOAF CID)

#10b4c9

#224385

#842f6a

#229963

SECONDARY COLORS

#eeeeee

#595959

#000000

FONTS

Franklin Gothic Demi

Segoe UI Semilight

COLORFUL MATERIALS



SYNTHETIC TURF



CONCRETE PAVERS



COLORFUL GLASS



MINIMALIST DESIGN



ART PEDESTALS





DESIGN & PLACEMAKING GUIDELINES

PLACEMAKING THEME CONSISTENCY - MINIMUM OVERALL APPLICATION

The prototypes on the following pages indicate the most intensive versions of the placemaking features for the different types of bus stops. To continue the arts theme through less expensive means at a greater number of bus stops, the following items can be enhanced with art or replaced with furniture, signage, and shelters consistent with the Sugarloaf CID's preferred branding. For example, creative shelters could include painted walls or interactive digital platforms on a branded shelter, or they could go a step further to a custom-designed sculptural shelter created by a local artist. The other items at the stop could also include simple art applications, or simply use the Sugarloaf CID preferred furniture. This concept can be applied to all of the required bus stop features (lighting, benches, trash receptacles, and system and route signage).

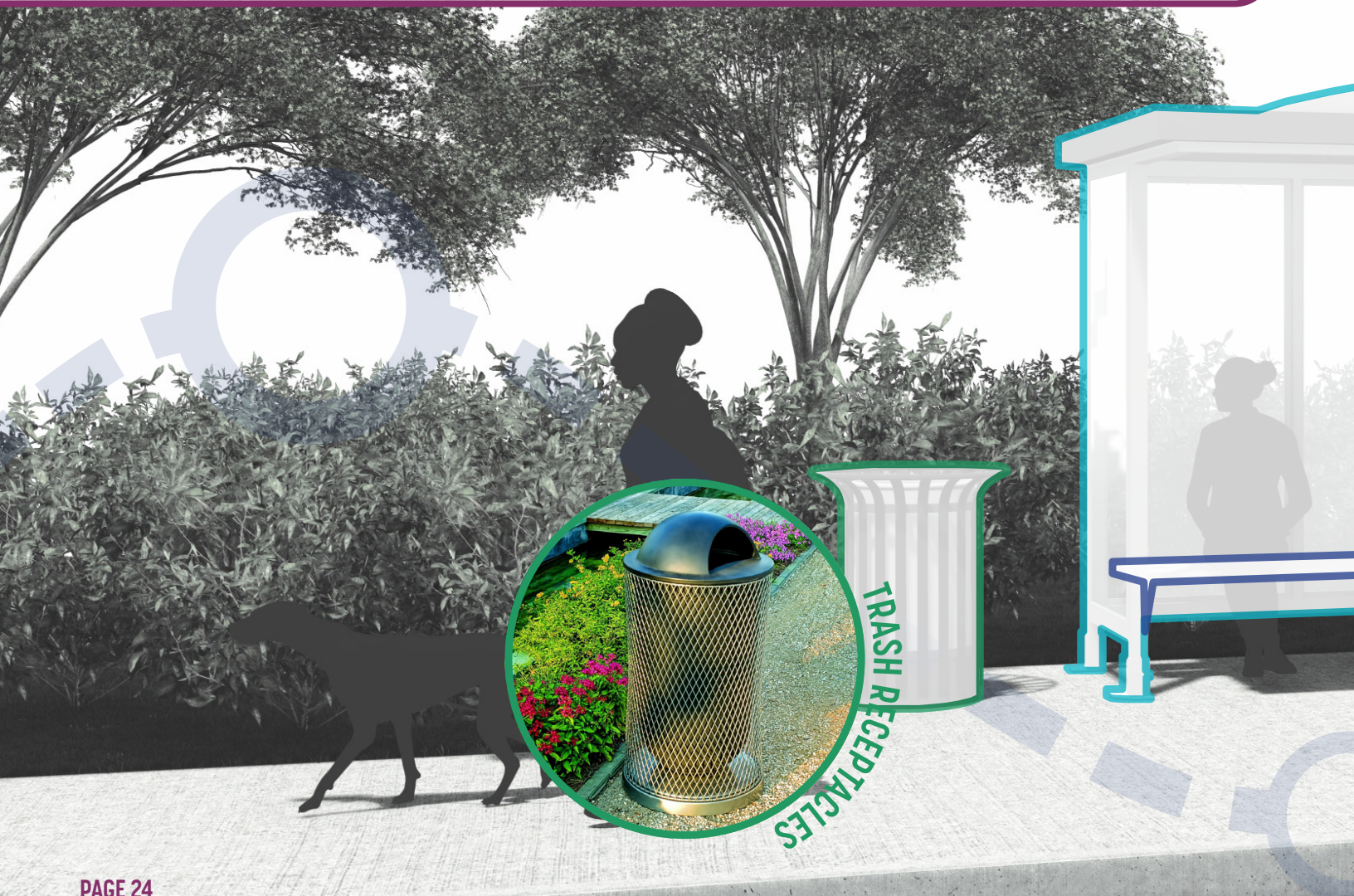
Benches

Shelters

System & route signage

Light poles & utility boxes

Trash receptacles





As defined in the LCI study and other planning efforts, long-term redevelopment needs to provide more built context around the bus stops to create a sense of place and to increase the number of destinations and ridership. The following pages summarize short-term placemaking strategies for the different types of bus stops evaluated in this study. Each stop could be themed according to the population it serves or the surrounding environment while still using the arts theme.

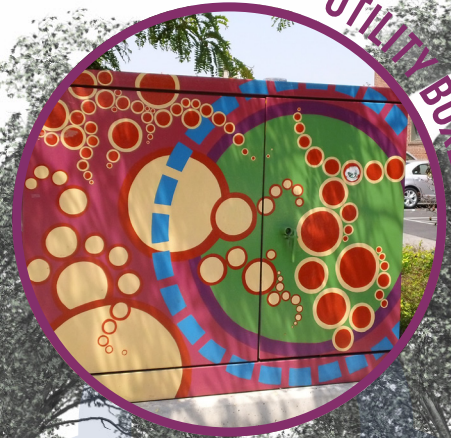
CREATIVE SHELTERS



BRANDED OR ARTISTIC LIGHTING



UTILITY BOXES



CUSTOM OR PAINTED BENCHES



SIGNAGE





BRT STATIONS

Gwinnett is planning for future BRT along Satellite Blvd in the study area which includes future BRT Stations where riders will be able to board and alight BRT service. This study focuses on two proposed future BRT stations at Gas South District and Sugarloaf Mills.

REQUIRED BUS STOP FEATURES

(BASED ON HIGH RIDERSHIP STANDARDS FROM GWINNETT BUS STOP DESIGN GUIDELINES)

- Pole signage to indicate the stop and routes
- Bench(es)
- Shelter(s)
- Trash and recycling receptacle(s)
- Lighting
- System and route information

MINIMUM PLACEMAKING FEATURES

MOBILITY & CONNECTIVITY

- Walkable, safe streetscapes on streets leading to the station within ½ mile
- Prominent wayfinding signage – for the bus system and nearby destinations
- Bike parking if near existing/future trail or bike connection

RIDER COMFORT

- Shade using structures or trees
- Improved, high-quality paving
- Real time data screens
- Security lighting

ARTS THEME

- Static art opportunities, like shelter walls, benches, trash receptacles, and sculptures (see page 10)
- Pedestals for art installations or use the landscape around the station to install art (i.e. lights in trees, sculptures)
- Rotating art installations
- Custom shelters or shelters integrated with surroundings

GAS SOUTH DISTRICT / HUDGENS CENTER

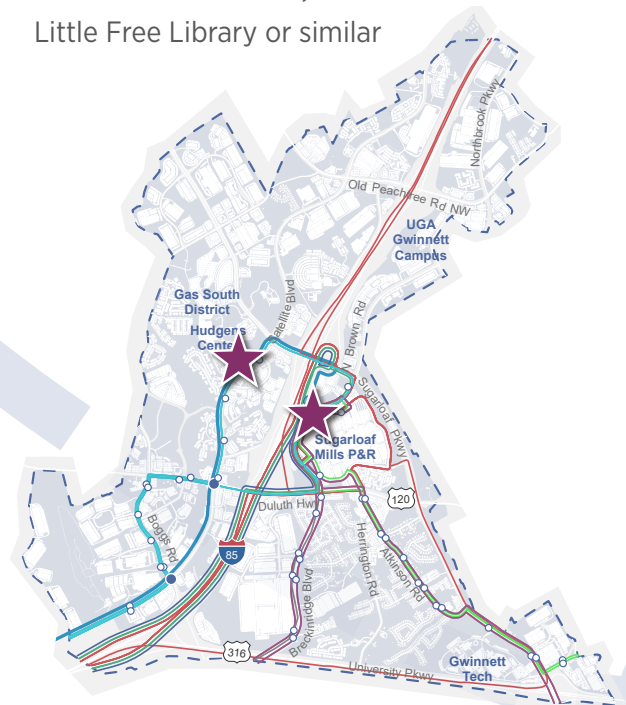
This stop should be focused on the arts and entertainment more so than other BRT stops. There is potential for events programming related to events at the Hudgens Center and Gas South Arena during peak ridership times.

- Art shows / galleries
- Performances
- Multicultural representation
- Kid- and family-friendly events
- Sports

OPTIONAL PLACEMAKING FEATURES

DEPENDING ON TYPICAL WAIT TIMES, SOME ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS COULD INCLUDE:

- Interactive art (seating, lighting, sculpture, musical)
- Games (digital or board)
- Simple exercise stations
- Storytelling (riders could submit their stories through a digital platform, which would display it on the shelter walls)
- Little Free Library or similar





Marie Sims Park in Buckhead: a good example of green space infill between mixed-use near transit

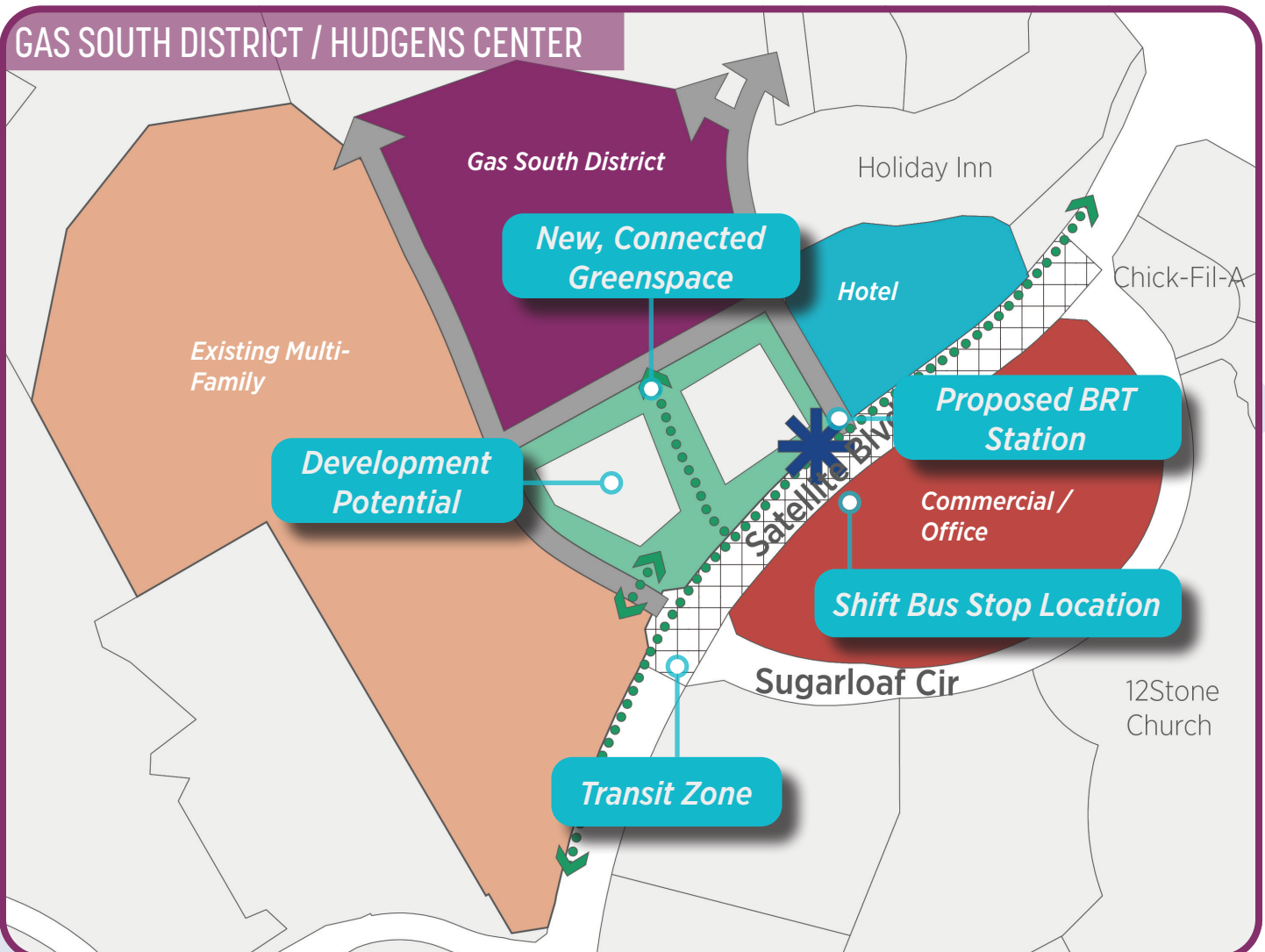


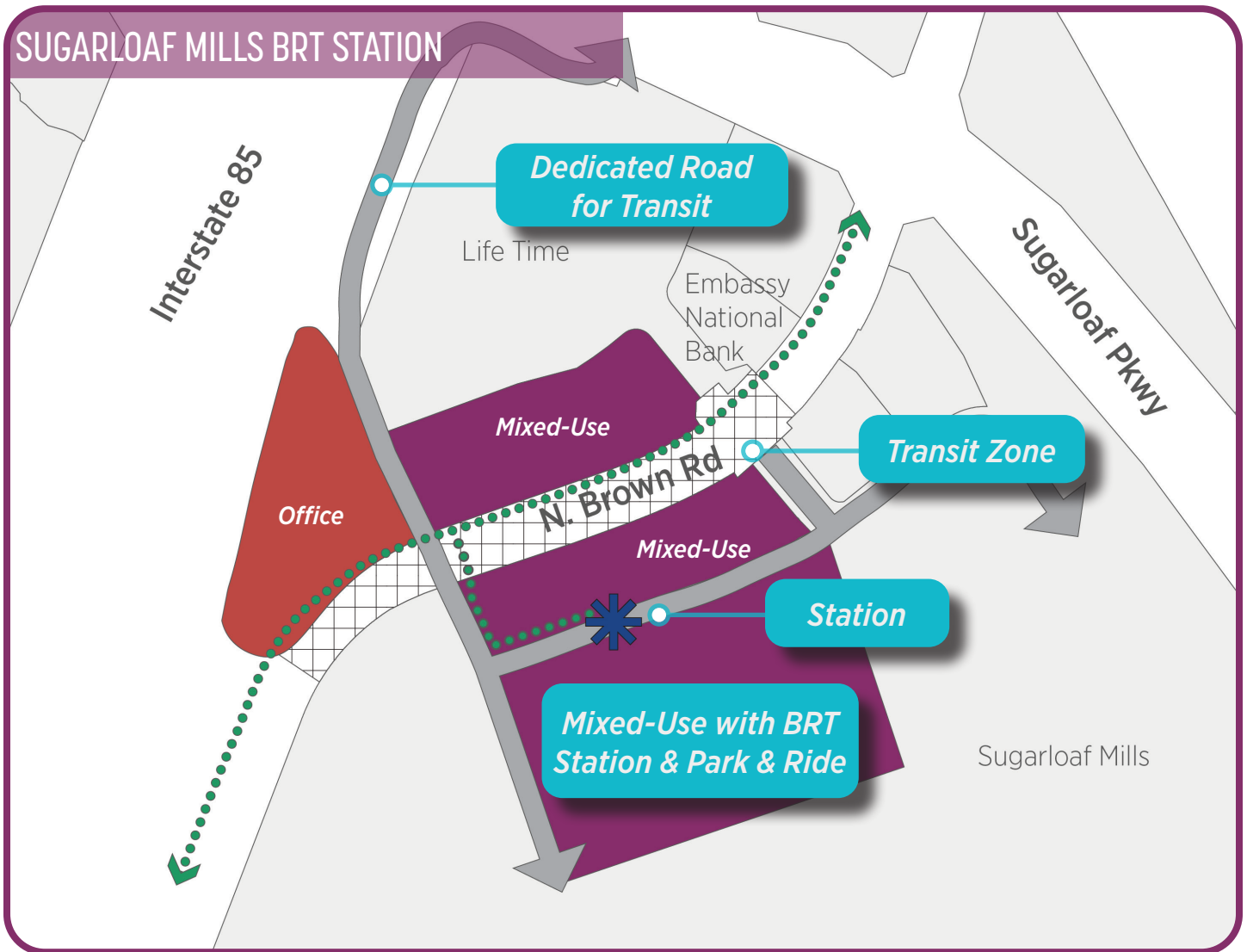
Light art can be stand-alone pieces or projected on buildings



Outdoor performance or art events can be tied to the Gas South BRT Station area

GAS SOUTH DISTRICT / HUDGENS CENTER





SWINGS AT A MONTREAL BUS STOP



Courtesy: Art in the City

LONG-TERM REDEVELOPMENT

Multiple plans consider the long-term redevelopment of this area, which will ultimately:

- Combine the Park & Ride and the BRT into one station.
- Replace underutilized parking lots with mixed-use and offices
- Change the streetscape of N. Brown Road to be more walkable. This plan introduces the idea of a “transit zone,” as described in Section 2 of this report, for this area and the Gas South District BRT station.

PARK & RIDE STATIONS

The Sugarloaf Park & Ride lot serves both Gwinnett County Transit's local routes 10A/B, 40, and 45 and express bus service routes 103, 103A, and 110 to Downtown and Midtown Atlanta and the Emory/CDC area during peak AM and PM travel periods Monday-Friday. The Sugarloaf Park & Ride lot sees the highest number of boardings and alightings in the study area. Because of this, some riders may have long wait times and may need forms of entertainment, something to eat, or more amenities to make the wait comfortable.



REQUIRED BUS STOP FEATURES

(starting from high ridership standards from Gwinnett County Bus Stop Design Guidelines)

- Pole signage to indicate the stop and routes
- Bench(es)
- Shelter(s)
- Trash and recycling receptacle(s)
- Lighting
- System and route information

MINIMUM PLACEMAKING FEATURES

Mobility & Connectivity

- Walkable and safe streetscapes on streets leading to the station within ½ mile
- Prominent wayfinding signage – for the bus system and nearby destinations
- Bike parking if near a future or existing trail or bike connection

Rider Comfort

- Shade using structures or trees
- Improved, high-quality paving
- Real time data screens
- Security lighting

Arts Theme

- Static art opportunities, like shelter walls, benches, trash receptacles, and sculptures (see page 10)
- Pedestals for art installations or use the landscape around the station to install art (i.e. lights in trees, sculptures)
- Rotating art installations
- Custom shelters or shelters integrated with surroundings

OPTIONAL PLACEMAKING FEATURES

Depending on typical wait times, some entertainment options could include:

- Interactive art (seating, lighting, sculpture, musical)
- Games (digital or board)
- Simple exercise stations
- Storytelling (riders could submit their stories through a digital platform, which would display it on the shelter walls)
- Little Free Library or similar

Potential for temporary event programming:

- Coffee cart or food truck on specified days and times (mornings)
- Small market on specified days and times (afternoons)



**MINIMUM ARTS THEME
PLACEMAKING FEATURES
(PAGE 26)**

System & route signage

Benches

Lighting

Shelters

Trash receptacles



New trees and
planters for shade

Re-organized
parking lot for
efficiency

Large pedestal for art
installation, typ.

Expand paving in the
corner for pop-up
markets, food trucks,
etc.

Expanded planting
area with trees for
shade (replaces
one bay of parking)

Colorful
crosswalks, typ.

Additional Park N
Ride Parking

New Shelters

Trash cans

Benches

Lighting

Signage

A

Replace
concrete with
pavers, typ.

B

Replace some
paving with
landscape

Improved
pedestrian
connection to the
mall

N. Brown Road

Sugarloaf Mills
Parking Lot

New Shelters

Trash cans

Benches

Lighting

Signage



PRIORITY BUS STOPS

Priority bus stops serve Gwinnett County Transit's local bus routes 10A/B, 40, and 45 Monday-Saturday. However they see higher ridership than other "General stops" and are located near commercial nodes with larger employers and centers of education.

REQUIRED AMENITIES

(use high ridership standards from Gwinnett County Bus Stop Design Guidelines)

- Pole signage to indicate the stop and routes
- Bench(es)
- Shelter(s)
- Trash and recycling receptacle(s)
- Lighting
- System and route information

MINIMUM PLACEMAKING STANDARDS

Mobility & Connectivity

- Walkable and safe streetscapes on streets leading to the stop within ½-mile
- Sidewalks and crosswalks
- Prominent wayfinding signage – both for the bus network and nearby destinations

Rider Comfort

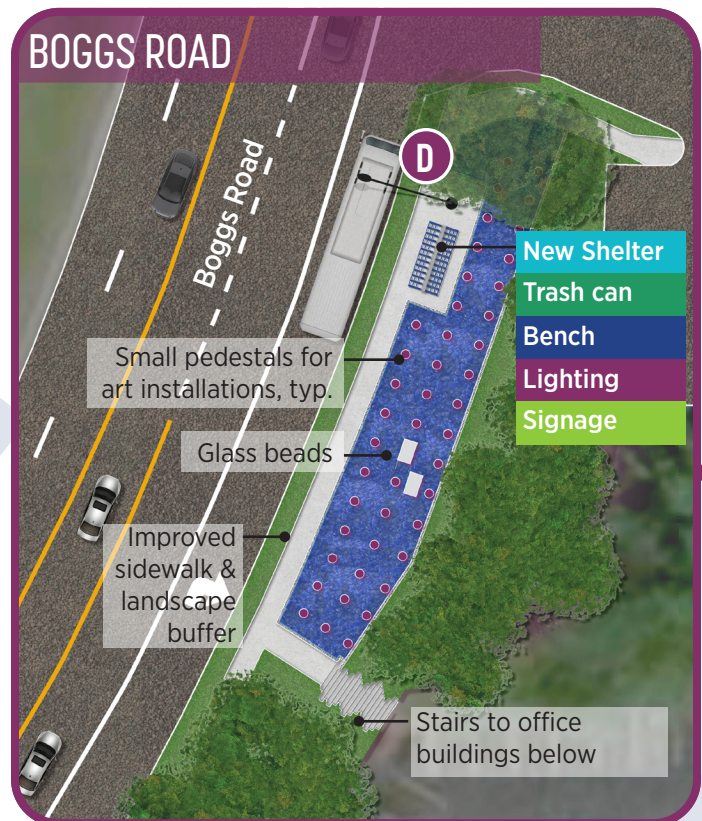
- Security lighting

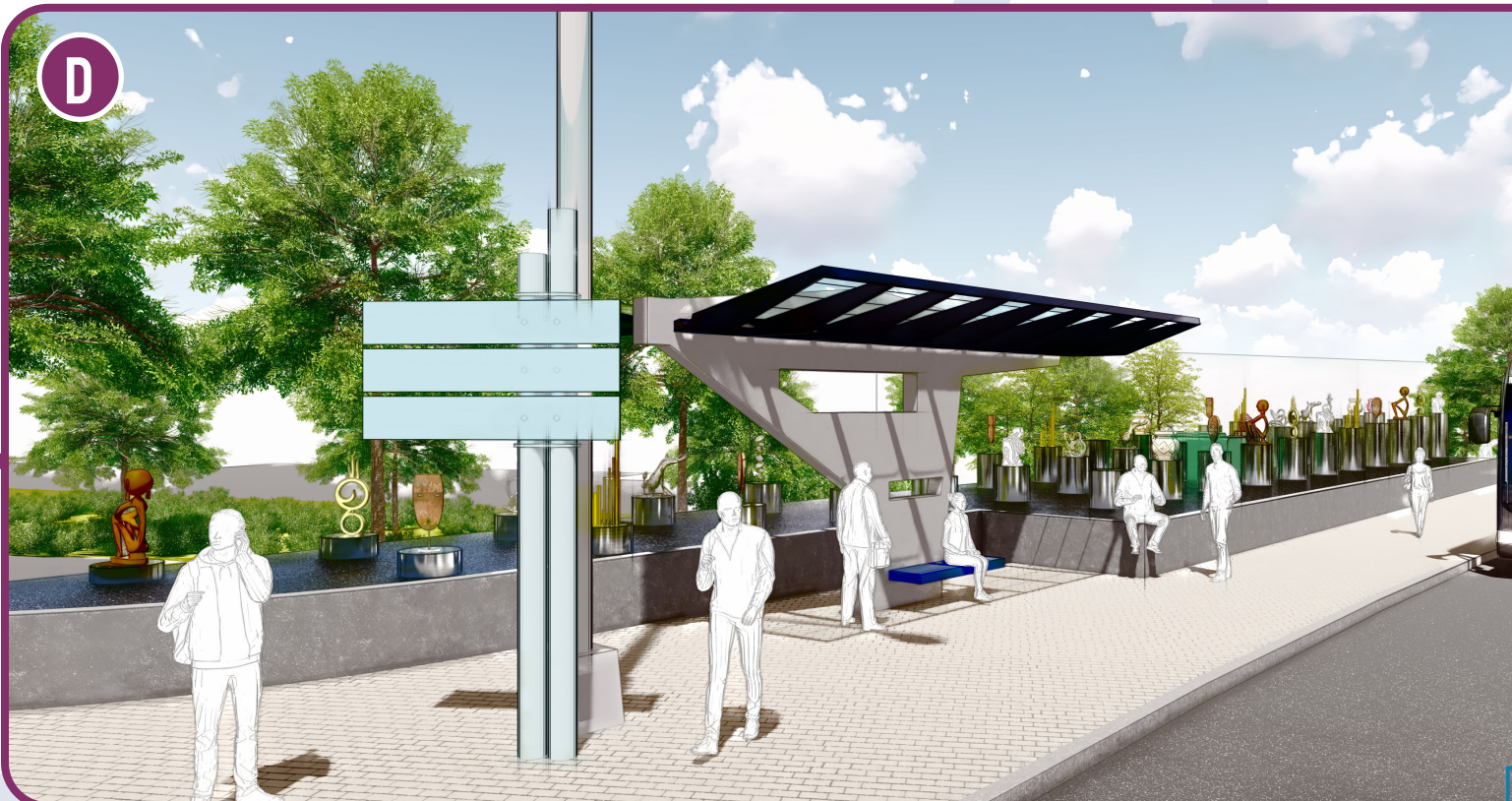
Arts Theme

- Static art opportunities, like shelter walls, benches, trash receptacles, and sculptures (see page 10)

OPTIONAL PLACEMAKING FEATURES

- Pedestals for art installations or use the landscape around the stop (i.e. lights in trees, sculptures)
- Rotating art installations
- Custom shelters or shelters integrated with surroundings
- Improved, high-quality paving







GENERAL BUS STOPS

General bus stops represent the majority of the bus stops in the study area. These stops serve Gwinnett County Transit's local bus routes 10A/B, 40, and 45 Monday-Saturday and generally have lower ridership. Most General stops in the study area have minimal passenger amenities such as shelters and benches and many do not have sidewalk connectivity.

REQUIRED AMENITIES

(use medium ridership standards from Design Guidelines)

- Pole signage to indicate the stop and routes
- Bench(es)
- Trash and recycling receptacle(s)
- Route information

MINIMUM PLACEMAKING STANDARDS

Mobility & Connectivity

- Walkable, safe streetscapes on streets leading to the stop within ½-mile
- Sidewalks and crosswalks
- Prominent wayfinding signage – for bus system and nearby destinations

Rider Comfort

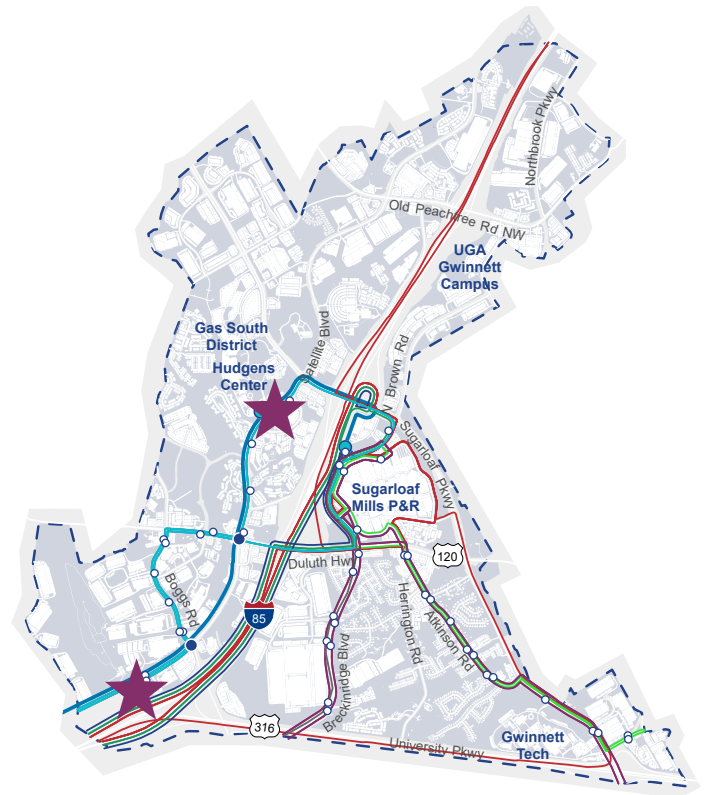
- Shelter(s)
- Security lighting

Arts Theme

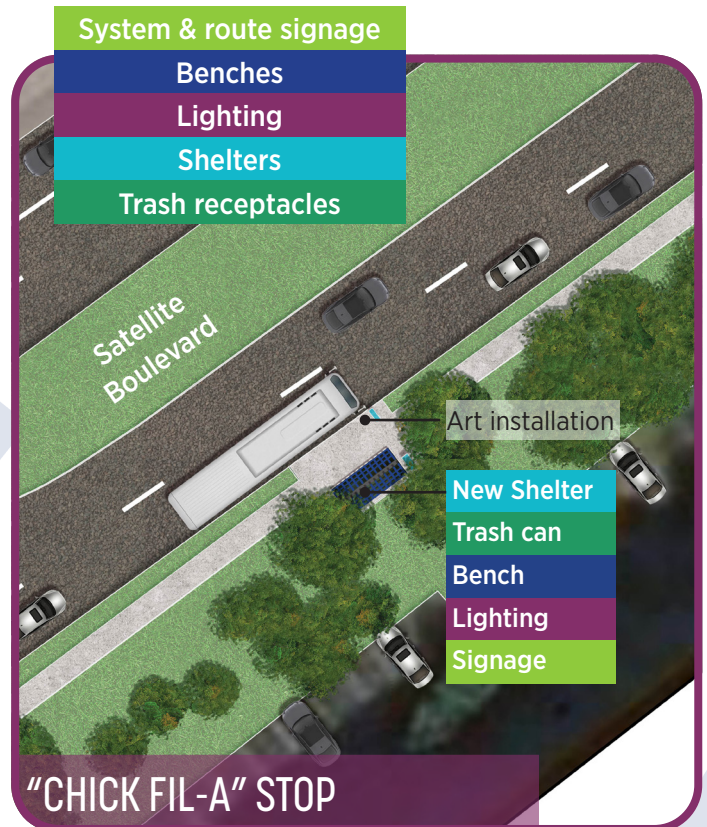
- Static art opportunities, like shelter walls, benches, trash receptacles, and sculptures

OPTIONAL PLACEMAKING FEATURES

- Pedestals for art installations or use the landscape around the stop (i.e. lights in trees, sculptures)
- Rotating art installations
- Custom shelters or shelters integrated with surroundings
- Improved, high-quality paving
- More “playful” features - swings, games, interactive art, etc.

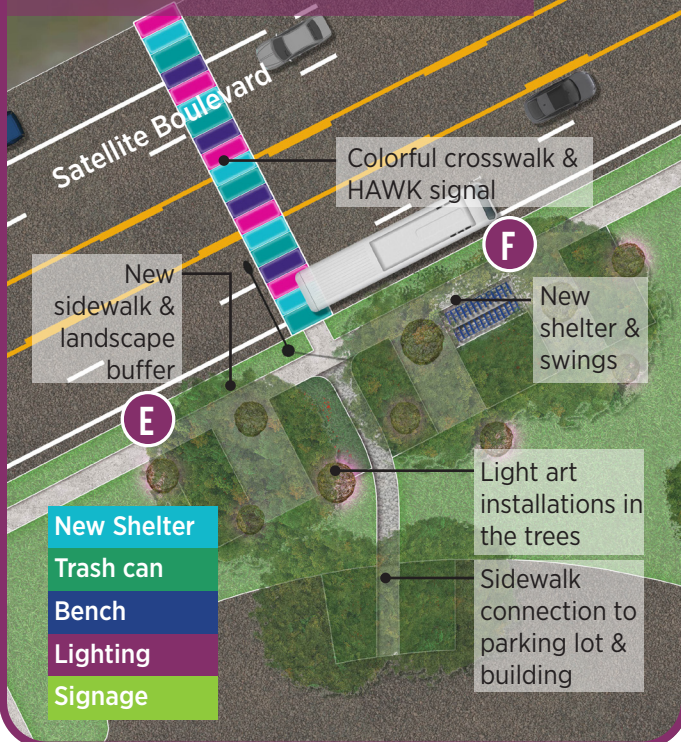


MINIMUM ARTS THEME PLACEMAKING FEATURES (PAGE 26)





CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL (CHOA)



CHOA-SPECIFIC PLACEMAKING FEATURES

- Swings hanging from the shelter to accommodate additional seating in a playful way
- Artistic lights hanging from the trees
- Sidewalk connection through the trees to the parking lot
- Colorful mid-block crosswalk with HAWK signal across Satellite Boulevard



5 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The recommendations for transit stop upgrades, improved bicycle and pedestrian access to those stops, and the placemaking elements that will enhance the transit rider experience and create a unique identity in the Sugarloaf area have been presented in the previous sections of this report. They convey a compelling vision for Gwinnett's Downtown that is **connected, safe, and attractive** for those who ride transit today and will in the future.

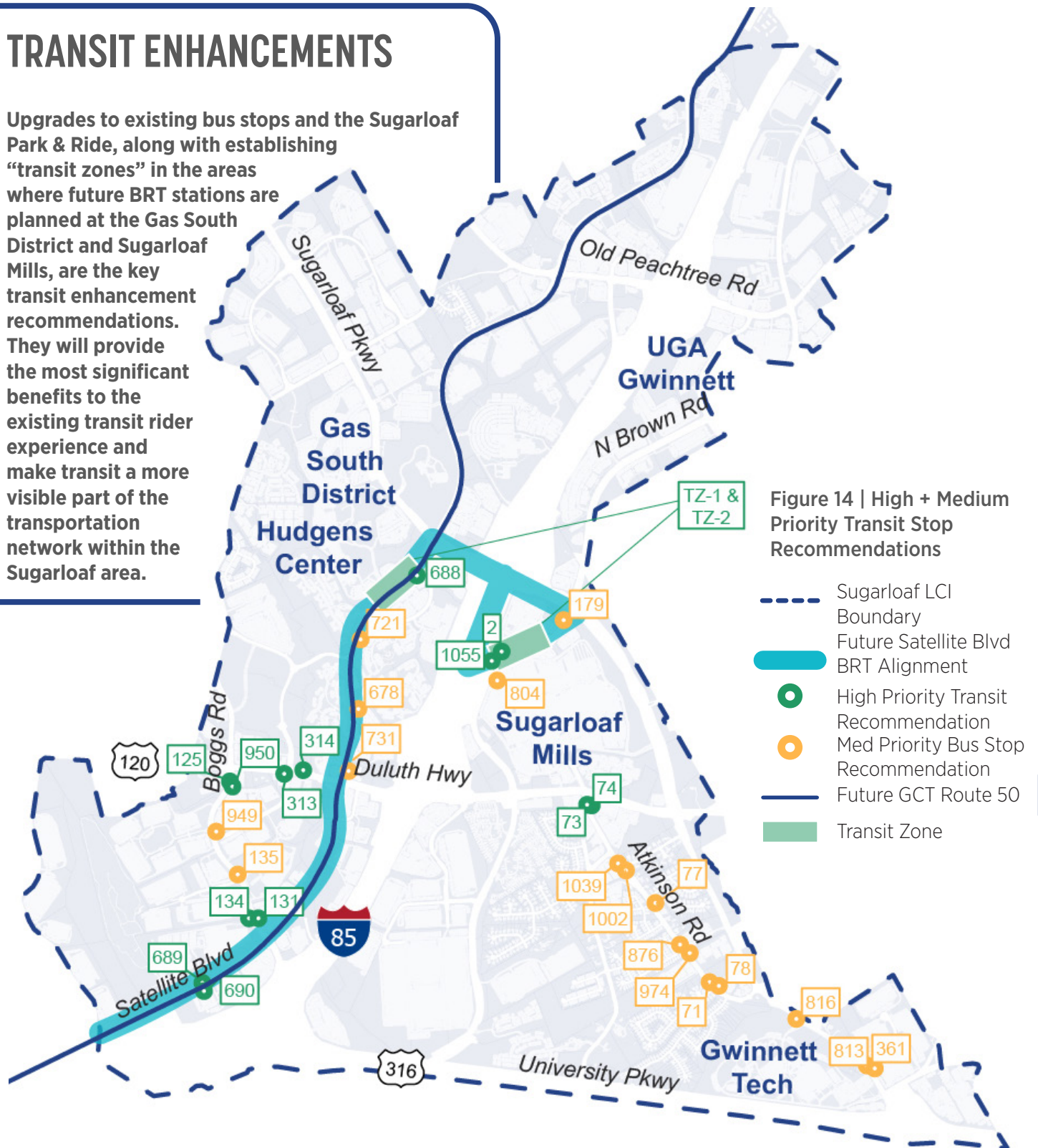
This section brings these recommendations a step closer to reality with an implementation strategy to guide actions and investments for the Sugarloaf CID, Gwinnett County, and other partners. The implementation strategy presented here brings together the study's recommendations and categorizes them into Ongoing, Short-Term, Medium-Term, and Long-Term initiatives. Additional details on the specific recommendations, including, detailed project descriptions, cost estimates, potential funding sources, responsible parties, and more are outlined in the tables and maps in Appendices A-D.





TRANSIT ENHANCEMENTS

Upgrades to existing bus stops and the Sugarloaf Park & Ride, along with establishing “transit zones” in the areas where future BRT stations are planned at the Gas South District and Sugarloaf Mills, are the key transit enhancement recommendations. They will provide the most significant benefits to the existing transit rider experience and make transit a more visible part of the transportation network within the Sugarloaf area.



See Appendix A for additional details on Transit Enhancements recommendations.



ON-GOING INITIATIVES

- Monitor the ongoing Gwinnett County Transit rebranding effort and provide input on the new brand's integration into new bus stop signage and other passenger information.
- Partner with Georgia Commute Options to promote the benefits of transit and the transit enhancements as they are implemented to area workers and employers to educate and encourage trying transit.
- Develop a bus stop sponsorship program for area property and business owners to support the implementation of bus stop upgrades and associated placemaking enhancements.
- Incorporate the study recommendations into Gwinnett County's Transit Development Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Plan efforts that are currently underway.
- Submit transit enhancement projects (or packages of projects) for state and federal funding as part of future Atlanta Regional Commission, ATL Authority, and Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank calls for projects.

SHORT-TERM (0-3 YEARS)

- Install upgraded bus stop signage at all transit stops in the CID area to reflect the GCT rebranding, including new stops served by the new Route 50.
- Implement required transit amenities recommendations at the two Sugarloaf Park & Ride stop locations identified as high priority (stops 2 and 1055)
- Implement required transit amenities recommendations, including the relocation of stop 688, at the four Priority Stop locations identified as high priority (stops 73, 134, 314, and 688)
- Implement required transit amenities recommendations at the seven General Stop locations identified as high priority (stops 74, 125, 131, 313, 689, 690, and 950)
- Include required transit amenities recommendations in the design and

construction of all new bus stops to be served by the new Route 50 (NS-1 - NS-9)

- Design and install "transit zone" pavement markings and signage on Sugarloaf Parkway and N. Brown Road where the future Gas South District and Sugarloaf Mills BRT stations are planned (TZ-1 and TZ-2).

MEDIUM-TERM (3-5 YEARS)

- Implement required transit amenities recommendations at the two Priority Stop locations identified as medium priority (stops 361 and 813)
- Implement required transit amenities recommendations at the 15 General Stop locations identified as medium priority, starting with the stops located inside the CID boundary
- Integrate required transit amenities recommendations into the planning and design of future BRT Stations in the study area.
- Coordinate with the ATL Authority on integrating required park & ride transit amenities at their new Xpress Park & Ride lot to be located at SR 120/Duluth Highway and N. Brown Road that is intended to replace the ATL Xpress existing temporary lot located within the Sugarloaf Mills parking lot.

LONG-TERM (5-10 YEARS)

- Integrate Priority Stop or General Stop required transit amenities recommendations into any new bus stops that will be served by future planned local bus service in the study area.

Appendix A details the specific transit enhancement and amenities recommendations for each bus stop including cost estimates, potential fund sources, and responsible parties. Appendix A also includes proposed placemaking enhancements that could be applied at each of the stop locations.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Closing gaps, new connections, and providing convenient and safe crossings to transit for pedestrians and bicycles are the focus on the active transportation recommendations. They complement the proposed transit enhancement recommendations by getting transit riders to bus stops, and from those stops to their intended destinations. The active transportation recommendations also provide benefits to non-transit riders in the Sugarloaf area by providing more mobility and access options without having to use a car.



See Appendix B for additional details on the Active Transportation recommendations.



Figure 16 | High + Medium Priority
Bike & Trail Recommendations



See Appendix B for additional details on the Active Transportation recommendations.



ON-GOING INITIATIVES

- Incorporate the study recommendations into Gwinnett County's Comprehensive Transportation Plan effort that is currently underway, as well as into the design of roadway projects along corridors where there are recommended active transportation projects.
- Submit active transportation projects (or packages of projects) for state and federal funding as part of future Atlanta Regional Commission, ATL Authority, and Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank calls for projects.
- Coordinate with area property owners and businesses to install bicycle parking, that is consistent with the recommended placemaking theming, as bicycle infrastructure is implemented nearby
- Coordinate the installation of wayfinding signage, that is consistent with Gwinnett County's trails plan signage guidelines, with the implementation of bicycle facility recommendations.

SHORT-TERM (0-3 YEARS)

- Begin design of the Loop Trail Segments 3 and 4 and associated crossings, which will provide connectivity to the new Route 50 service (GC-T1, GC-T2)
- Complete design and construction to close sidewalk gaps along Satellite Boulevard (SW-1, SW10, SW-12, SW-25, SP-SW5) and Sugarloaf Parkway (SW-26, SW-27).
- Design and construct sidewalk on Boggs Road from SR 120/Duluth Highway to Satellite Boulevard and add mid-block crossing just north of S (SW-4, SP-SW1)
- Coordinate with Sugarloaf Mills to design and construct a trail connection and crossing from the Sugarloaf Park & Ride across N. Brown Road and through the Sugarloaf Mills parking lot to the mall site. (SL-T12, X-10)
- Coordinate with the Gas South District to design and construct trails and sidepaths to

connect the convention center and arena to Sugarloaf Parkway and Satellite Boulevard (SL-T6, SL-T11)

- Coordinate with the redevelopment of the Georgia Baptist Missions and Ministry Center to include a connected trails and sidewalks to the Sugarloaf Parkway corridor's bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. (SL-T5, X-19)
- Design and install "transit zone" pavement markings and signage on Sugarloaf Parkway and N. Brown Road where the future Gas South District and Sugarloaf Mills BRT stations are planned. (X-29, TZ-1, TZ-2)

MEDIUM-TERM (3-5 YEARS)

- Begin construction on Loop Trail Segments 3 and 4, and associated crossings (GC-T1, GC-T2)
- Begin design for Loop Trail Segment 2 and associated bike/ped crossings (GC-T3)
- Design and construct sidewalk on Meadowbrook Parkway from 120/Duluth Highway to Boggs Road (SW-5)
- Design and construct sidewalk on Freedom Way Avenue from Satellite Boulevard to Primerica Parkway (SW-11)
- Design and construct sidewalk on SR 120/Duluth Highway from the I-85 bridge to Newpoint Parkway/I-85 NB ramp (SP-SW7)
- Continue coordination with Gas South District and the Georgia Baptist Missions and Ministry Center redevelopment to design and construct trails, sidepaths, and sidewalks connecting to Sugarloaf Parkway and Satellite Boulevard (SL-T5 and X-19)

LONG-TERM (5-10 YEARS)

- Begin construction of Loop Trail Segment 2 (GC-T3)
- Conduct feasibility studies and begin design for the medium priority pedestrian and bicycle facilities and crossings recommendations

Appendix B details the specific active transportation recommendations including project descriptions, cost estimates, potential fund sources, and responsible parties.



PLACEMAKING

The implementation strategy for the placemaking elements at the bus stops is dependent on multiple factors including funding, Sugarloaf CID staff capacity, and coordination with nearby landowners who may be impacted by the installations.

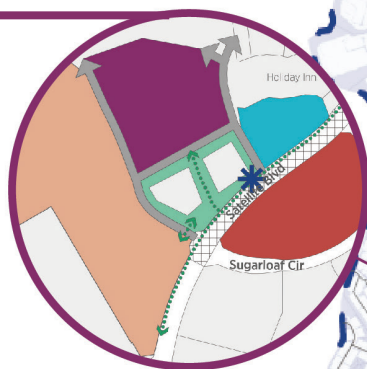


Figure 17 | Placemaking Priorities

- Sugarloaf LCI Boundary
- Future Satellite Blvd BRT Alignment
- Existing GCT Bus Stop
- ★ Proposed Gas South District BRT Station
- ★ Sugarloaf Mills Park & Ride and Proposed BRT Station

See Appendix C for additional details on the Placemaking recommendations.



The Sugarloaf CID may benefit from identifying an on-call curator and arts consultant. The curator can help find installations and artists, paid a roughly 10% commission per installation. The arts consultant can be retained using hourly fees to provide input about specific projects, overall themes, and more. Art pieces could be temporary or permanent installations. If CID funding is not available for art installations and placemaking projects construction, grants and partnerships may be a way to fill the gap. The CID can hire a grant writer or have staff write grant applications as they come available.

Partnerships with the Hudgens Center for the Arts and other organizations in the Atlanta region could help with grant applications, for hosting events, and/or providing performance and/or visual art. In addition, the CID can encourage developers to install the public art and bus stop improvements on their redevelopment sites. They can lead the entire art curation and installation process or provide the funding for the Sugarloaf CID to lead it.

ON-GOING INITIATIVES

- Retain an arts consultant
- Retain a curator on commission
- Continue applying for arts-related grant applications through partnerships with established 501(c)(3) organizations such as the Hudgens Center and ArtWorks Gwinnett.
- Explore potential creation of a 501(c)(3) organization to increase opportunities to apply for and receive grant funding in support of implementing placemaking improvements such as public art, trails, and parks space in the Sugarloaf area.
- Encourage developers to install the public art bus stop improvements

SHORT-TERM (0-3 YEARS)

- Select Sugarloaf CID staff to participate in ARC's ALMA Workshop and/or Cultural Forums
- Prioritize bus stops in this plan for targeted funding in near-term budget cycles
- Create and maintain a list of artists and key partnerships in the Atlanta region

- Design and install "transit zone" pavement markings and signage on Sugarloaf Parkway and N. Brown Road where the future Gas South District and Sugarloaf Mills BRT stations are planned (TZ-1 and TZ-2).

MEDIUM-TERM (3-5 YEARS)

- Design and construct the Park & Ride medium term placemaking interventions recommendations (Stops 2 and 1055)
- Conduct a pilot placemaking demonstration project at one of the prototype stops
- Design and construct the pedestals for rotating art installations at prototype stops

LONG-TERM (5-10 YEARS)

- Create a bus stop or art shelter program either within the CID or as a partnership with Gwinnett County
- Release RFQs for artists to submit designs for bus stop shelters or other art installations
- Release RFQs for artists to submit designs for street furniture (benches, utility boxes, light poles, bus stop signage)
- Release RFQs for artists to submit designs for art installations on pedestals, murals, light art, sculptures, etc.
- Add art installation to public art inventories in the Atlanta region and create a map similar to Midtown Alliance's for public arts

Appendix C provides additional details about these placemaking recommendations including cost estimates, potential fund sources, responsible parties, and implementation notes.



100-DAY ACTION PLAN

To initiate moving forward with the recommendations of this study, the following 100-day action plan outlines the tasks that can start right away related to the three categories of recommendations.



Transit



Placemaking



Active
Transportation

Incorporate Sugarloaf Transit Enhancement Study Recommendations into Ongoing Planning Efforts



Share this study's recommendations with Gwinnett County for consideration and incorporation into the County's upcoming SPLOST renewal referendum in November 2022 and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan update and Transit Development Plan that are both underway. This includes briefings with Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners and Gwinnett County DOT leadership to educate them on the study's findings and recommendations.



Coordinate with Gwinnett County DOT on Rebranding Effort



Work with Gwinnett County DOT on a plan to have new bus stop signage installed in the study area that reflects the Gwinnett County Transit rebranding that is underway. The Sugarloaf area could serve as an initial pilot location for rolling out the new branded bus stop signage.

Coordinate with Gwinnett County DOT on Local Bus Stop Relocation



Work with Gwinnett County DOT to relocate bus stop #688 that is currently located on Satellite Boulevard just south of Sugarloaf Circle to the recommended location approximately 450' south on Satellite Boulevard just north of the signal at the Gas South District entrance. The recommended new location for the bus stop sits within the proposed Gas South District "transit zone".

Begin Coordination on Trail Connections at Sugarloaf Mills



Begin discussions with Sugarloaf Mills property ownership and management on the recommendation for a trail connection and crossing from the Sugarloaf Park & Ride across N. Brown Road and through the Sugarloaf Mills parking lot to the mall site. Early discussions should focus on partnership and coordination opportunities to initiate the design of this trail and crossing recommendation.

Begin coordination with key Public-Private Partners



Share and discuss study recommendations with CID members, property owners, Gwinnett Technical College, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and area arts organizations to develop champions and identify potential public-private partnerships for implementation of active transportation and placemaking recommendations, including opportunities for pilot or temporary installations.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Moving these recommendations into implementation requires identifying potential funding sources and opportunities. There are a number of funding programs and sources available to support the design and construction of transit enhancements, active transportation improvements, and placemaking. These include federal, state, local, and others such as public-private partnerships and non-profits. The following outlines these various fund sources and their potential applicability to the improvement types recommended in this study. Additional details on project-specific funding recommendations is available in Appendix A.

FEDERAL FORMULA



- **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)** emphasizes safety of all roadway users. It is applicable to roadway projects and can have a bike, pedestrian, or transit component. Administered by GDOT, the program requires all projects be identified as prioritized projects in GDOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). It can fund up to 80% of the project cost.
- **National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)** emphasizes physical condition, performance, and resiliency of the National Highway System (NHS). It is applicable to roadway projects on the NHS and can have a bike, pedestrian, or transit component. It is administered by GDOT and can fund up to 80% of the project cost.
- **Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funds** are applicable to transit projects and administered by the Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority (the ATL). Funds can be used for planning, engineering, design, and construction purposes; and can fund up to 80% of the project cost.

- **Surface Transportation Block Grants (STBG)** are applicable to bike, pedestrian, and roadway projects and are administered by GDOT for state-owned roads and by ARC for most other corridors. 10% of this funding is statutorily required to be set aside for Transportation Alternatives like bike and pedestrian projects. STBG Grants can fund up to 80% of the project cost.

FEDERAL DISCRETIONARY



- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Index (CMAQ)** Program applies to projects that significantly reduce emissions and congestion. Transit service expansion projects are eligible, as are roadway projects that demonstrate this reduction requirement. Administered through ARC, CMAQ funding can cover up to 80% of the total project cost.
- **Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)** Grants support implementation of a wide variety of transportation and infrastructure projects including roadway, sidewalks, trails, and transit. Previously known as TIGER and BUILD, RAISE grant funds can be used for planning, design, and construction of eligible projects. By federal law, the maximum combined federal funding share is 80% of the project cost.
- **Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grants** are new federal grants aiming to enhance roadway user safety including bike, pedestrian, and transit users. Projects using SS4A Grants must follow a three-step sequence: the development of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, detailed planning and concept development in support of the Plan, and implementation of specific elements in the Plan. The maximum combined federal funding share is 80% of the project cost.
- **Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Grants** apply to bus transit projects including fleet and facility construction. It can also be used for bus stop upgrade projects. Funding share is capped at 80% of the total project cost.



- **Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program** is a long-established program that supports the implementation of large fixed-guideway transit projects including heavy rail, light rail, commuter rail, and BRT. Within the program are three grant programs: New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity Grants. In Gwinnett County, Satellite Boulevard BRT will likely seek Small Starts funding, with a maximum federal match of either 80% or \$150 million, whichever is smaller. CIG funding cannot be used for local or commuter bus stops, however.
- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** are administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and can be used for various purposes, including improving public facilities.
- **Congressional Appropriations and Earmarks** are a longstanding practice in which funding for specific projects can be appropriated in Congress at the request of Senators and Representatives. It can be used to fund a wide variety of infrastructure projects including bike, pedestrian, and transit. Paused in 2010, the earmark process resumed in 2022.

advance by the ATL's Atlanta Regional Transit Plan (ARTP) and are considered annually by the Georgia General Assembly.

- **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)** is GDOT's four-year transportation capital improvement program. STIP funding applies to specific projects on state-owned roads that have been identified in the STIP.

REGIONAL



- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** is ARC's regional four-year transportation capital improvement program. Similar to STIP, TIP funding can only be applied to specific projects within the TIP.
- **ARC Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)** provides planning and supplemental implementation grants to local jurisdictions in the Atlanta Region for the development of vibrant, walkable communities with enhanced mobility options, higher quality-of-life, and greater access to jobs and services. LCI grants may be used to fund up to 80 percent of study costs and can include transit, bike, and pedestrian improvements.
- **Atlanta Regional Public Art Program** is administered by ARC and provides matching funding through a competitive grant process to help communities install public art that celebrates the community's unique identity.

STATE



- **Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank (GTIB)** provides grants and low-interest loans to transportation projects that improve mobility, encourage innovation, and address critical local and state transportation needs. Funding can generally apply toward roadside pedestrian and bicycle improvements. In 2020, GTIB grant awards covered 12% of the project cost on average.
- **GDOT Safety Program** is an internal GDOT program aimed at reducing crashes and mitigating safety issues along state roads. While mostly geared toward state roads, some discretionary funding has been made available to non-state roads identified by local governments. Once potential projects are identified and studied, a subset are selected to advance into design and construction.
- **General Obligation (GO) Bonds** are state bonds for transit projects recommended to



LOCAL Gwinnett

- **Special-Purpose Local Option Sales Taxes (SPLOSTs)** are voter-approved local funding mechanisms leveraged at the county level to deliver a range of transportation, transit, education, and public works projects. They can generally be levied at a rate of up to one percent. There are three applicable SPLOSTs related to transportation in the state:
 - » **General SPLOSTs** can fund a mix of transportation, transit, trails, public buildings, and parks. Gwinnett County intends to go to referendum in November 2022 for voters to approve a new 1% general SPLOST covering the next 5-6 years.
 - » **Transportation SPLOSTs (TSPLOSTs)** are dedicated to transportation including roadway, traffic, bike, and pedestrian projects. Up to 1% for 5 years.
 - » **HB 930 Transit SPLOSTs** are dedicated solely to transit expansion, enhancement, and state-of-good repair. Up to 1% for up to 30 years. Gwinnett County is considering going to referendum again in 2024 to see if voters will approve a new transit SPLOST.
- **County General Funds** can be used for a wide range of projects and must be set aside in the county budget by the Board of Commissioners.
- **Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)** are value capture funding mechanisms that can fund transportation and transit projects by retroactively setting aside increased property tax revenues that the projects create around it. Five TADs have been created in Gwinnett County to date, though none of them are located within the Sugarloaf area.
- **County Recreation Funding** captures revenues from a countywide 1-cent property sales tax dedicated to recreational uses. It can generally fund multi-use trail projects among others.

OTHER SUGARLOAF COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

- **Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)** are a mechanism for funding certain governmental services, including transportation infrastructure, parks and recreation, public transportation systems, and other services and facilities. CIDs may levy taxes, fees, and assessments within the CID, not to exceed 2.5% of the assessed value of the real property that is used for non-residential purposes and the revenues may only be used within the CID area.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)** can be leveraged in some cases to implement transportation projects of all types. In Sugarloaf CID boundaries, Georgia Power, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and Primerica are some private companies that have engaged in PPPs previously.
- **501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organizations** including American Trails Association, National Recreation and Park Association, Recreational Trail Program, and Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program routinely provide funding to bike and pedestrian projects including multi-use trails. Some have been leveraged previously in Gwinnett County for trail projects. Potential grant funding to support placemaking implementation includes:
 - » **Georgia Council for the Arts**
 - » **National Endowment for the Arts**
 - » **Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta**
 - » **Project for Public Spaces**

SUGARLOAF LCI

Transit Enhancements and Future Station Planning Study

