



CITY OF LAGRANGE, GEORGIA | NOVEMBER 2016

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# LaGrange GATEWAY CORRIDORS PLAN

NOVEMBER 2016

Office of Planning  
City of LaGrange, Georgia



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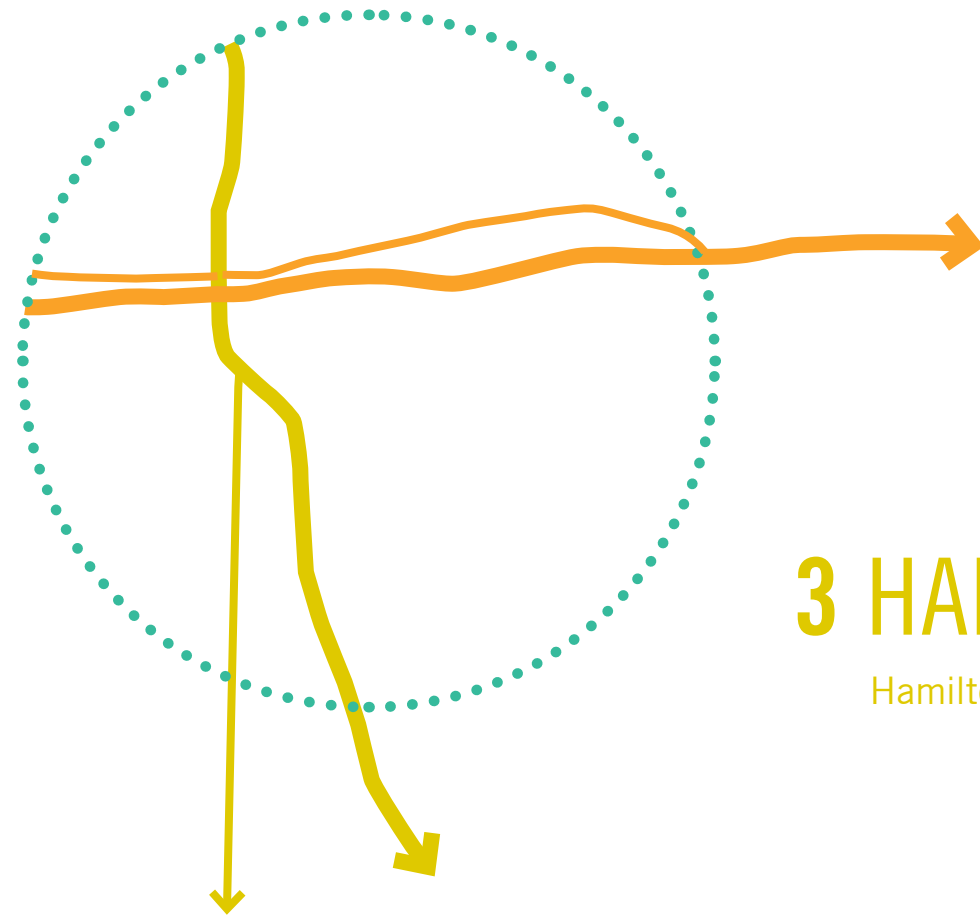
PERKINS+WILL





# 1 THE GATEWAY CORRIDORS

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Hamilton Road | Whitesville Road | Development Opportunities

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Existing Conditions | Enhanced Mobility Opportunities | Development Opportunities

LaGrange is likely to continue its growth both in economy and population and it is trying to do so in a way that preserves but also expands its many great qualities particularly its compact, walkable, and highly active downtown area. The Gateway Corridors Plan presents an opportunity not only to enhance the access corridors into LaGrange, but also to strategically and sustainably plan for the city's future growth.



# 1

## THE GATEWAY CORRIDORS

- Project Overview
- Context and History
- Current and Previous Planning
- Building Competitive Communities
- Design Opportunities

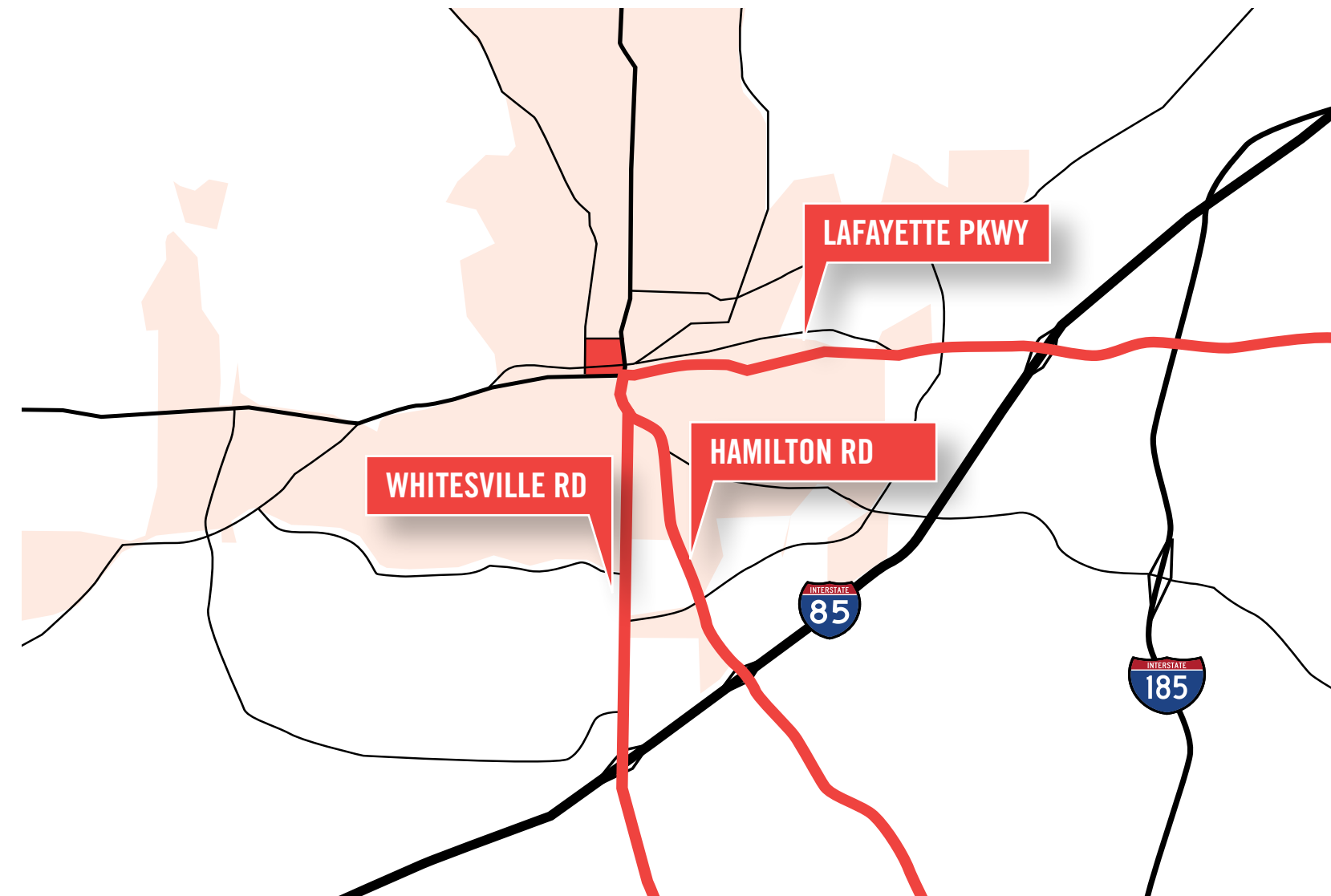
## What is the Gateway Corridors Plan?

### Project Overview

Lafayette Parkway, Hamilton Road, and Whitesville Road are the City of LaGrange's major corridors to downtown and key connections to Interstate 85. This project analyzes the existing conditions and develops a vision plan for three corridors. The impetus for the project is a desire to enhance these as gateways into LaGrange's resurgent downtown and to strategically and sustainably organize growth of the city for the future. This project is a logical extension of previous work on the Mission Zero Corridor and potentially would also have farther reaching influence on how we consider development along similar corridors throughout the rest of Georgia.

#### What Should The Gateway Corridors Provide?

- + A safe experience for all users
- + A sense of arrival to LaGrange
- + Access to community amenities and services
- + Support and connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and downtown
- + Economic development opportunities



## Why look at these corridors now?

### Context and History

The City of LaGrange is one of Georgia's most welcoming and vibrant cities and a key piece of the state's economic engine. The growth and prosperity of the City, particularly its historic downtown, is rooted in the boom of the textile industry during the 19th-20th century. Situated near the intersection of Interstates 85 and 185 and along a major CSX rail line, LaGrange's position as a transportation hub has allowed it to diversify its industrial base which today is buoyed by Interface, the world's largest manufacturer of carpet tile, as well as Caterpillar's Forestry Division's North American headquarters, a Wal-Mart Distribution Center, and a KIA Motors assembly plant in nearby West Point. As a result, LaGrange has experienced steady population and economic growth. The most recent population estimate released by the U.S. Census Bureau showed that between 2010 and 2013, LaGrange added almost 1,000 new residents: a population growth of 3%.

**LaGrange is at a crossroads.** As the City is likely to continue its growth both in economy and population, it is trying to do so in a way that preserves but also expands its many great qualities particularly its compact, walkable, and highly active downtown area. These intact qualities position LaGrange as a more competitive community than those with solely suburban character. Given the City's role as a transportation hub, there is specific interest in how this is done relative to its connections to Interstate 85. Three major corridors connect LaGrange with I-85: Whitesville Road, Hamilton Road, and Lafayette Parkway. Beyond providing key connections for freight and visitors into and out of the City, they also serve as gateways to Downtown LaGrange. However, development along these corridors has happened in a manner that is anything but consistent with the qualities that make LaGrange a great place to live. Constructed around 1967, the Lafayette Corridor has become a model of suburban, auto-oriented growth with low density, low quality development while the Whitesville and Hamilton Corridors engage areas and neighborhoods of the City that are underserved and underinvested. For the two corridors issues of socio-economic equality are of critical importance.

LaGrange, 1930s showing Greenville Street before construction of Lafayette Parkway



The preliminary vision is to transform all three into gateway corridors that are generally more integrated with the City they serve. This transformation would potentially include reconsideration of development, opportunities for potential parks and green spaces, and connectivity throughout each corridor. New developments, including the Great Wolf Lodge and other imminent projects, make it imperative the character reflected in this vision is adhered to in the consideration of new projects. Clearly articulating the opportunities, translating them into a, common vision, and defining a set of actionable goals for future planning and implementation are key initial steps in accomplishing this.



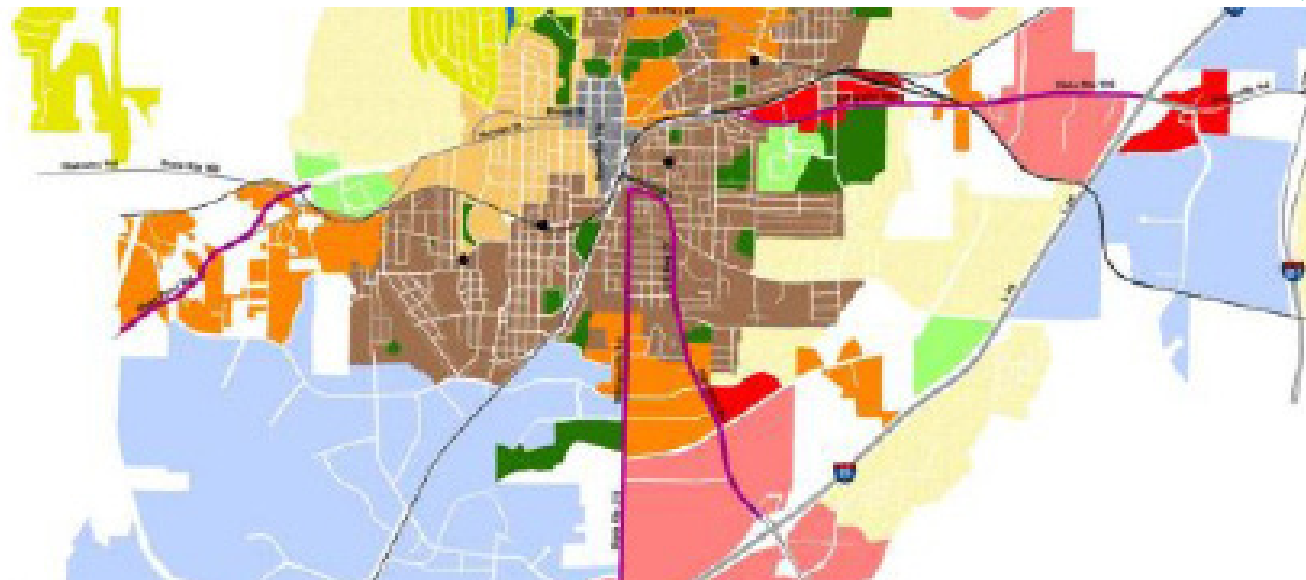
## What is the LaGrange Comprehensive Plan?

### LaGrange Comprehensive Plan 2015 - 2035

The Comprehensive Plan update details needs and opportunities for the City of LaGrange, as voiced through that project’s stakeholder engagement plan. This includes for the City to encourage greater “live, work, and play” areas to continue to attract and retain younger populations. Along with attracting millennials and baby boomers who want to age in place is the need to increase mixed use development and housing downtown. Much of the plan also highlights the necessity to continue building up the downtown historic core of LaGrange to be thriving through new retail establishments and businesses, growing the potential tourism and tax revenue while providing residents a higher quality of life not just downtown but city-wide. Existing educational opportunities with LaGrange College, West Georgia Technical College and the Thinc Academy foster workforce development skills in millennials – a demographic the City is seeking to capture and retain as citizens of LaGrange.

Additionally, the plan mentions the need for a greenspace assessment so that parks are provided within proximity to existing and future residents. It also notes the desire for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity as well as related infrastructure between these and other public facilities.

Character Areas Map



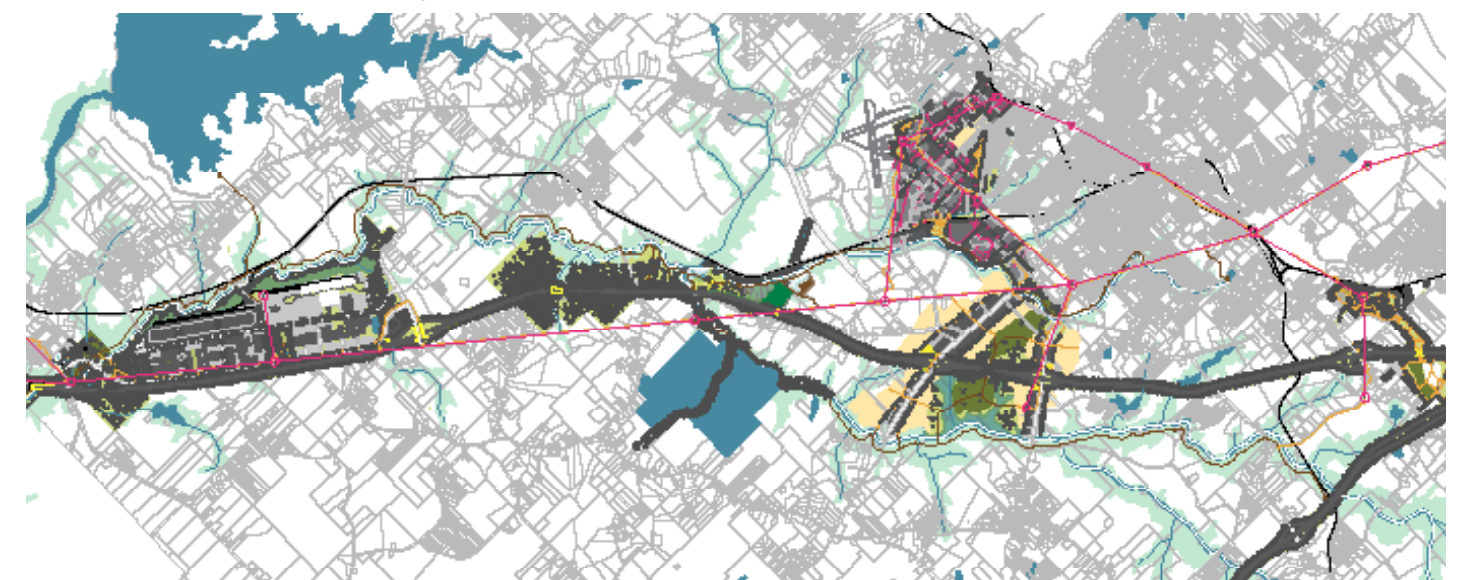
## What is Mission Zero?

### Mission Zero Corridor (MZC)

MZC offers a powerful lens through which the potential of the Gateway Corridors could be re-imagined.

In the fall of 2014, Perkins+Will, in partnership with the Georgia Conservancy and the Ray C. Anderson Foundation, led a design and research studio at Georgia Tech that focused on a segment of the I-85 Corridor in Troup County dedicated to the memory of Ray Anderson: founder and chairman of Interface. The goal of the studio was to reconsider the interstate corridor with the same environmental and sustainable focus with which Anderson re-shaped Interface through the early part of this century: to eliminate any negative impact on the environment through the re-design of the company’s process and products. Similar to Interface’s “Mission Zero,” the Mission Zero Corridor proposes a model interstate corridor design that seeks to eliminate the negative impacts of the interstate, regenerate the communities and natural systems that surround it, and catalyze change by creating new, sustainable land use patterns. The specific design strategies focus on issues such as pollution remediation, resource efficiency, wildlife conservation, life safety, and cultural exchange. MZC goes beyond addressing indicators in an effort to create new outcomes that have positive social, economic, and environmental impact.

I-85: Mission Zero Corridor Vision Map



## What is the LaGrange Thread?

### Parks and Trails Plan

At the beginning of 2016, explorations into the possibility of adding multi use trails to LaGrange were initiated. The City of LaGrange contracted with the PATH Foundation to create a master plan and design a multi-mile trail system that would reach many parts of the city and provide access to various locations. Through public voting and a steering committee, the path has been named “The Thread” and a completed master plan was adopted in September of 2016. The “model mile” will be the first portion of The Thread, beginning at Granger Park. The city has been awarded \$100,000 in grant funding towards the cost of construction. The Thread is planned to cut across both Hamilton Road and Whitesville Road near the southern end of the Troup Soccer complex, and will cut across both Greenville Street and Lafayette Parkway, heading south to the Mike Davis Recreation Center. Additionally, it will cut through much of the Calumet Village neighborhood, including the new Calumet Park.

LaGrange PATH - The Thread



## Where is Hamilton Road being widened?

### Hamilton Road Widening

Over the next several years, GDOT plans to purchase 37 residence and 27 business locations as part of a project to add three lanes to Hamilton Road from its intersection at Morgan Street to Auburn Avenue near Lukken Industrial Drive. The project has been in the making for 26 years and is anticipated to begin soon. The cost to purchase the properties is expected to be about \$19 million, with an additional \$9.5 million in construction costs to widen the road. The construction will begin after the acquisition of the properties and would likely take an additional two years, though the funding source for the project is yet to be determined. Hamilton Road is just south of the Calumet Village neighborhood.

Existing and Proposed Hamilton Widening





## Where is Calumet Village?

### Calumet Village Blueprints

Calumet Village is located within walking and sight distance of LaGrange's thriving downtown square. This neighborhood is linked to LaGrange's mill economy history, as a community of workers serving the former Calumet Mill. Several neighborhood streets were disconnected when Lafayette Parkway was constructed. The neighborhood and its residents will experience further dislocation once the Georgia Department of Transportation completes the widening of Hamilton Road to its south. The Georgia Conservancy is working with neighborhood leadership this year to develop an implementable future vision for this community.

The Calumet Village northern boundary encompasses both sides of Greenville Street between Morgan Street and Render Street. Greenville Street originally served as the primary east/west connection from the downtown area to the Interstate with Lafayette Parkway built in the late 1960s. The parkway formed a new divider within the neighborhood boundary, though the neighborhood association still includes the northern portion up to Greenville Street as part of the community.

Vine Street, 1940s

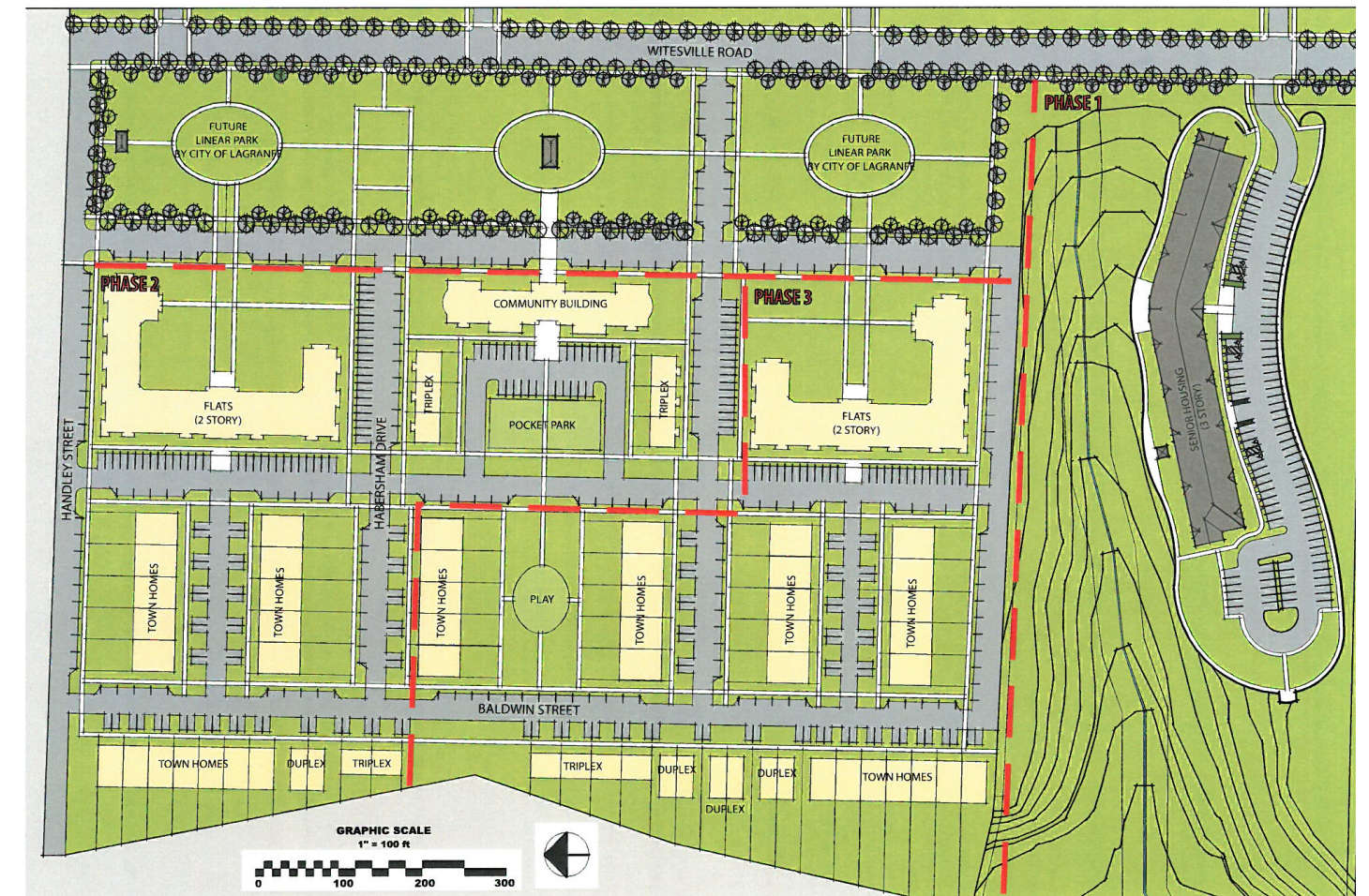


## What is happening with Housing Authority properties?

### Benjamin Harvey Hill Apartments Redevelopment

Benjamin Harvey Hill Apartments along Whitesville Street is scheduled to be demolished within 3 years, opening up that land for alternative development. The Comprehensive Plan mentions that much of the current housing supply is in need of redevelopment, and the need to address degraded neighborhoods, housing disrepair and blight. Affordable housing should be retained, and the plan notes existing opportunities to increase the mix of housing sizes, types, and price ranges within the city to provide for a diversity of citizenship. The Plan also highlights the importance of creating and retaining quality housing near employment centers and other community services.

Concept Redevelopment Plan





## Veterans Village Tax Allocation District (TAD)

### Veterans Village TAD Redevelopment Plan

The Veterans Village site is located off exit 14 off Interstate 85, at 1705 Hamilton Road. This is the site of former American Legion Baxter L. Schaub Post #75, and includes a golf course on the 107 total acres. In order to spur redevelopment on this southern side of the City, a Tax Allocation District (TAD) and Redevelopment Plan has been recommended at this site and renamed “Veterans Village”. The TAD will gather property tax monies from future development for a specific period of time to help fund future capital improvements within the boundaries of the district. These public improvements will include basic water, sewer and transportation infrastructure; roadway improvements and enhancements; sidewalk and pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements; landscape and hardscape features.

The Redevelopment Plan suggests for Veterans Village to include multifamily rental, senior rental, multifamily and single family for-sale or lease-to-purchase, civic buildings, and retail. There are four planned phases of redevelopment, and more information can be found in the City of LaGrange Redevelopment Authority Plan (2012).

Veterans Village TAD Redevelopment Plan



## LaGrange Mall Tax Allocation District (TAD)

### LaGrange Mall TAD Redevelopment Plan

As Troup County’s largest shopping center and only enclosed mall, LaGrange Mall is a major retail and commercial anchor for LaGrange and the county as a whole. While the complex has recently lost some tenants, including a major department store anchor, it still houses a large number of successful tenants, and it provides a definitive role for the city that shows no sign of faltering. With a number of undeveloped out-parcels surrounding the complex– most of which are owned by the mall’s developer– great potential exists to expand the mall’s leasable area in order to create a more diversified and desirable shopping environment for local consumers.

In 2015, the City of LaGrange worked with owner/ developer of the property in order to craft a long-term plan that determined means to use the mall’s strength in order to capture the untapped capacity of the site. The Redevelopment Plan proposes a tax allocation district that will support the redevelopment and expansion of LaGrange Mall. The opportunity for the City of LaGrange is to use the TAD to leverage private reinvestment through targeted incentives that will support the mall’s future growth. Re-tenanting and expanding the LaGrange Mall will generate benefits to the City, County, and School system in the form of increased sales taxes and new employment opportunities for local residents. The mall’s expansion will also help attract new residents.



LaGrange Mall Tax Allocation District Boundaries



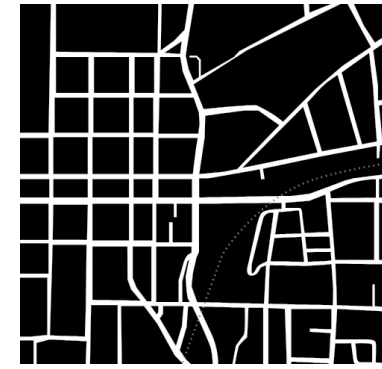
## What makes a competitive community?

### Building Competitive Communities

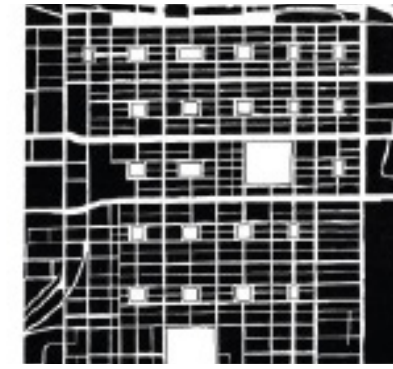
The value of the historic development pattern of the historic downtown influenced the team for a vision for the rest of the corridor. The reasons for that are because it's walkable, sustainable, allows change over time more easily, but most importantly, the historic character of LaGrange is best reflected here, which many stakeholders and city leadership mentioned as being critical to the identity of the community and for the gateway corridors.

Many pieces of the past history and built environment can help suggest future visions and goals. This can be seen in the block and street dimensions original to the downtown – these build the historic framework of our towns that have been used for decades, if not centuries. The width of our blocks and our streets have weathered market changes over time, and inherently create a sense of place in our cities. This character, like that of the City of LaGrange that stakeholders consistently voiced the need to retain, becomes the selling point – the product – of the area. People want to live in places they love, and these infrastructure foundations, and future investments in those, contribute directly to the economic success of a town. These small, incremental decisions about our physical environment, where our street trees, multi-use paths, and sidewalks go, for example, have a big impact on our experience of a place. Our streets are particularly important, as they are not one-size-fits-all – the existing condition of the three corridors is much more suburban in scale than that of the streets surrounding Lafayette Square. One of these examples feels more like it was designed for cars, the other designed for people.

During Workshop One, Georgia Conservancy presented to workshop attendees that priorities for redevelopment and revitalization efforts that compliment LaGrange's existing character would be the most successful. An emphasis on enhancing LaGrange's historical street grid, block size and building scale through the corridors project would best position LaGrange's competitiveness to attract and retain residents and businesses. Several aspects of the presentation highlighted the importance of authenticity of place and reinvesting in assets already reflective of LaGrange's history. The example of the successful, and still ongoing, reinvestment in and around Lafayette Square was cited as an example.



~500' x 275'



Savannah  
200' x 300'



Atlanta  
(Downtown)  
500' x 500'

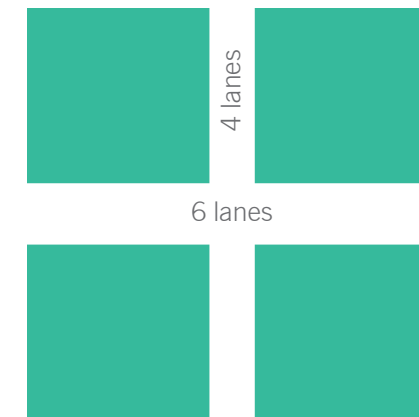


Atlanta  
(North Point)  
5,000'+ x 2,000'

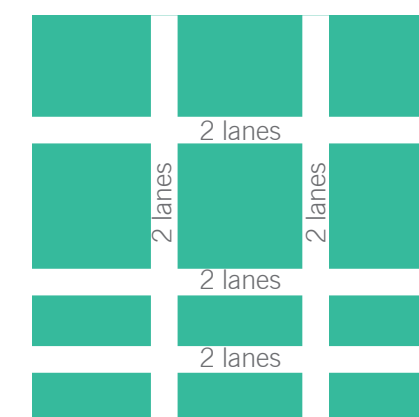


A walk around Lafayette Square is the same distance as walking across the parking lot at LaGrange Plaza. (975'). Where would you rather walk?

### Benefits of a Network



Less Capacity



More Capacity

Streets, blocks and lots make up the framework of our towns and greatly influence their character.

## What are the design opportunities for the Gateway Corridors?

The Gateway Corridors occupy a unique position in LaGrange because they serve as a means to get into downtown rapidly from the interstate, while they also run through existing neighborhoods and support local businesses with vehicular access directly connected to high-capacity travel lanes. This creates a potential conflict between regional mobility needs and the needs of local economic and community development, but also underscores the importance of these corridors in both the transportation network of the city and its basic urban form.

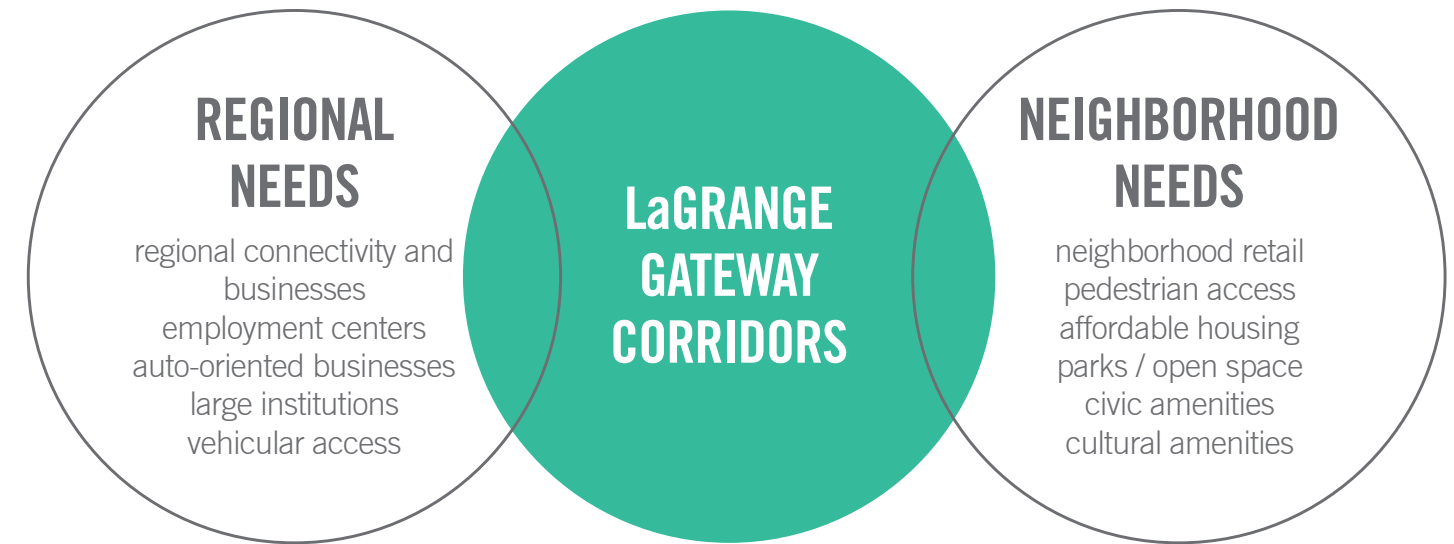
While the opposing objectives of serving regional versus local needs would seem to complicate planning for functional and aesthetic improvements, there is also an opportunity to rethink the corridors using urban design as a transformative bridge. This means that the starting point for planning cannot be the road segment around which the city must conform, but the city dictating the role of the roads in how it functions on a daily basis and over time.

There are lessons to learn from history which can put the Gateway Corridors into a continuum of changing attitudes toward public infrastructure – from an emphasis on human experience, to efficiency and engineering as a primary driver, and now to a more blended and balanced union of art and technology. Opening the problem up to the question of “what makes great urban form in LaGrange” is the first step toward identifying solutions to enhancing the Gateway Corridors that will withstand the test of time.

“The park should, as far as possible, complement the town. Openness is the one thing you cannot get in buildings. Picturesqueness you can get. Let your buildings be as picturesque as your artists can make them. This is the beauty of the town.”

Frederick Law Olmsted, “Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns”, 1870

### Balancing Needs



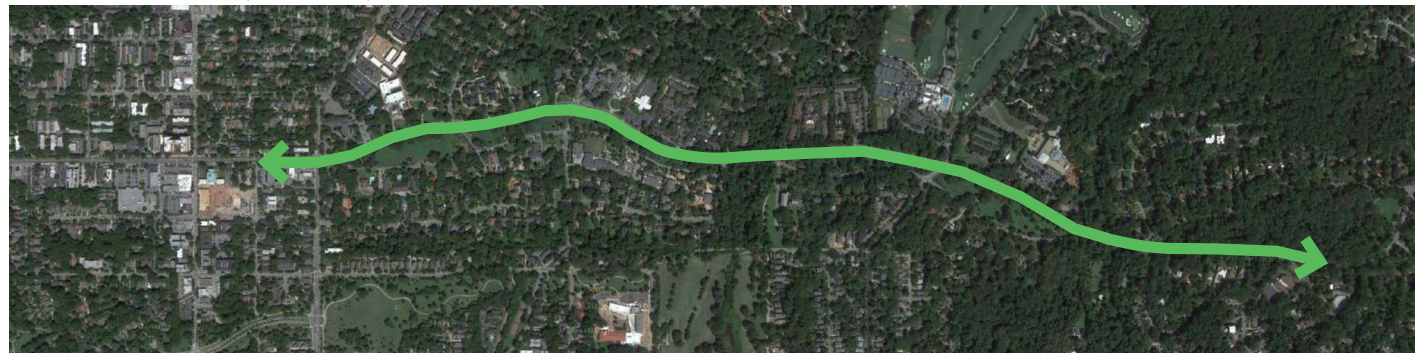


## What is a parkway?

Parkways are wide, landscaped roads, often distinguished from other street types by their scenic qualities and natural settings that are normally set apart from other development. Devised and advanced by the renowned 19th Century landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, parkways were originally proposed as a form of “**pleasure road**” that would serve as a link between various parks within a city. With this in mind, this new form of corridor had attributes of typical streets, but it also embraced many of the aesthetic and recreational characteristics of parks. Early parkways often took the form of boulevards with broad medians in which wide paths, sidewalks, and promenades could be placed. In this way, the parkway provided segregated thoroughfares for the carriages, equestrians, streetcars, and pedestrians of the day. All of these amenities were housed in a lush, landscaped environment that existed in sharp contrast to the utilitarian streets of that time period.

In the time since, the parkway concept has been used in numerous contexts with various arrangements. In the 20th Century, the parkway became a key feature of many early suburban developments to provide efficient access for the new automobile technology as well as wide sidewalks for strolling neighborhood residents. An example of this scheme is Atlanta’s Druid Hills neighborhood, which is organized around park-lined stretches of Ponce De Leon Avenue. In more recent years, the parkway has been utilized as a type of road that can host multimodal transportation options like dedicated bike lanes and urban light rail lines in addition to automobile travel lanes. Despite these different forms across time, the parkway has almost always been identifiable by its key characteristics: a park-like landscaped travel corridor in which various uses and users are provided a scenic environment in which to enjoy their mobility experience.

Ponce De Leon Avenue, Druid Hills, Atlanta

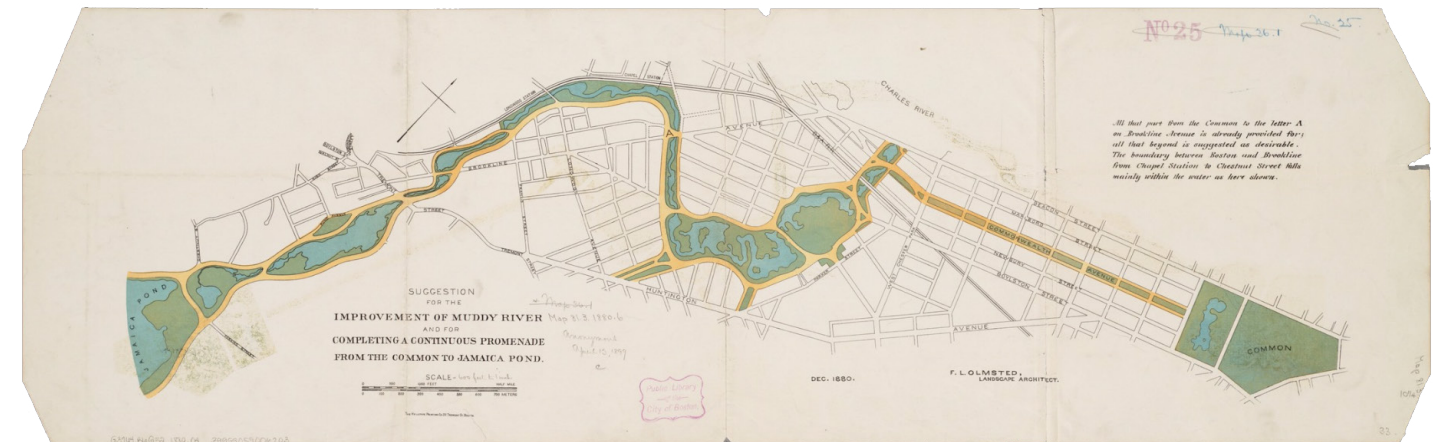


Parkways were lush, landscaped environments that existed in sharp contrast to the utilitarian streets of that time period.

foot  
carriage  
horse  
trolley

100 years

ped  
car  
bike  
transit



Parkways key characteristics:  
a park-like landscaped travel corridor in which various uses and users are provided a scenic environment in which to enjoy their mobility experience



## What is a neighborhood street?

The concept of the parkway has not existed in isolation. In many settings, a parkway road has been paired with a secondary street that ran in parallel. As the parkway relied upon a natural setting, one that was often far removed from other neighborhood uses, it was common to cluster those nearby commercial functions on an adjacent street or “freightway”. As a result, these paired streets worked together to accomplish neighborhood goals of both beauty and function - much as a couplet does in literature, where two lines having different words are woven together in a single harmonious composition.

This idea of a street “couplet” can be seen in Druid Hills, where Ponce De Leon Avenue travels through the park system with very few local interruptions for drivers, while South Ponce De Leon Avenue runs in parallel and provides access to many of the homes’ driveways and other slow-moving local functions. This division of uses within the couplet is prevalent. In many cases, when one thoroughfare is given over to nature as a parkway, the secondary street becomes a neighborhood commercial street, where various amenities and services take place.

The couplet offers residents two invaluable assets: a natural park setting that can be home to repose and recreation as well as a commercial district that can serve their shopping and service needs. The parkway becomes a means of getting from point A to point B within a beautiful setting, while the neighborhood street serves a host of local functions in a charming and lively environment.

It is the strategic coupling of these two streets types and the deliberate segregation of functions into differing yet balanced corridors that ultimately creates iconic streets that stand out from other more traditional transportation thoroughfares.

Ponce De Leon Avenue and South Ponce De Leon, Druid Hills, Atlanta



“A couplet is a literary device which can be defined as having two successive rhyming lines in a verse and has the same meter to form a complete thought.”

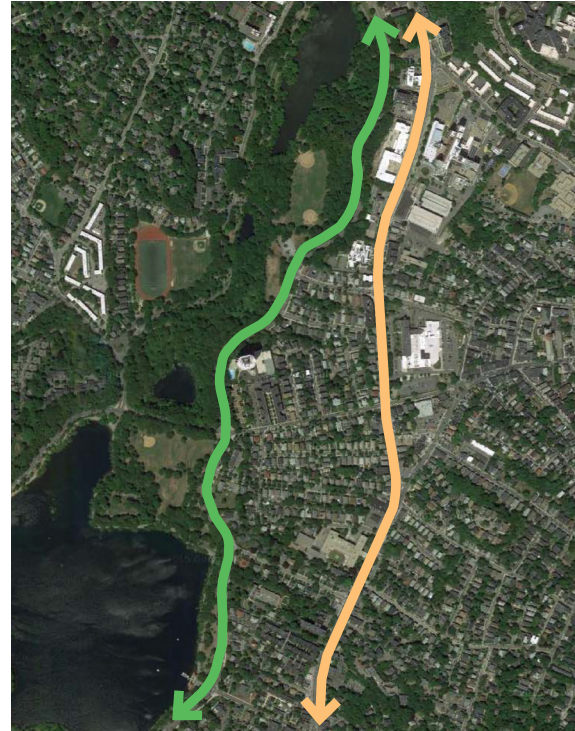




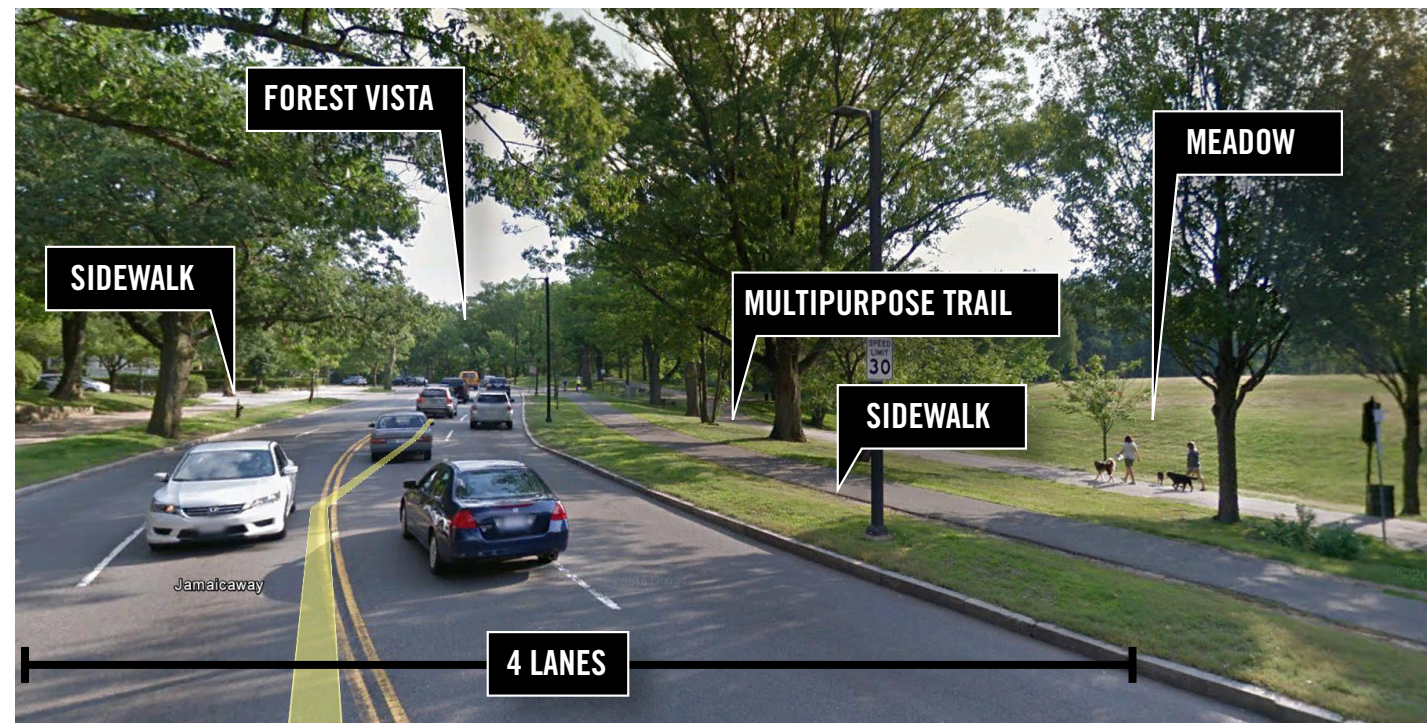
## Where do street couplets exist?

### Jamaicaway, Boston, MA. 1882

Jamaicaway is a famous parkway developed by Frederick Law Olmsted as part of his “Emerald Necklace” plan for Boston. The 1860’s scheme hoped to connect all of the city’s existing parks and several proposed parks into a chain of greenways that enveloped the city. Jamaicaway forms the eastern portion of the park system. The parkway helps structure the numerous parks and ponds that run adjacent to it. The four lane street at its core is flanked with not only pedestrian sidewalks but also with wide multi-use trails that traverse the park grounds. The broad curves of the road provide pleasant forest vistas for drivers.

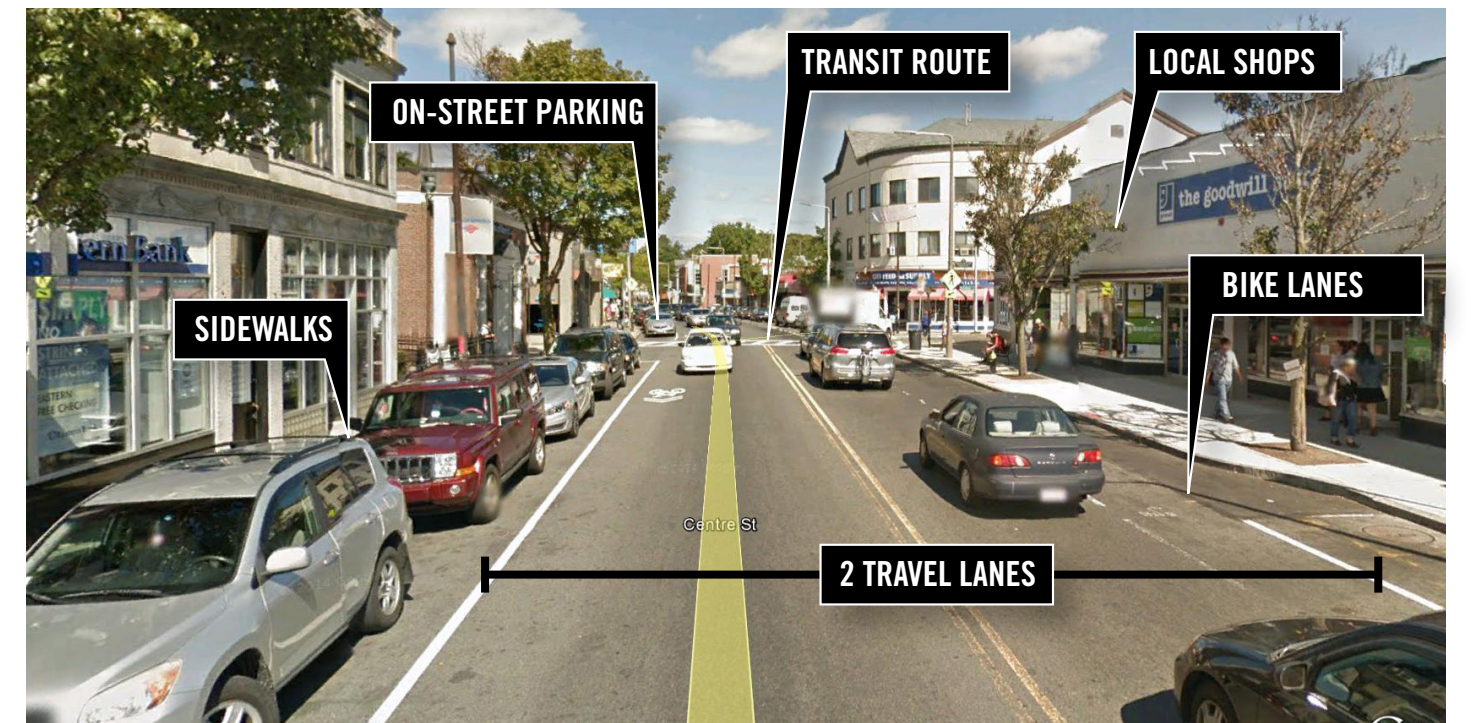


Jamaicaway



Much of Jamaicaway’s success comes with the role it plays in the community as a grand boulevard organizing a green retreat away from the rest of the city. In the places where the corridor is fronted by development, the projects most often take the form of rowhouse residential structures, a trend which frames and focuses the parkway’s natural setting. Within the walkable neighborhoods of Mission Hill and Jamaica Plain, the couplet form is completed by commercial assets grouped together on Centre Street and by the small number of secondary streets that run parallel with portions of Jamaicaway. Like the others, Centre Street serves as a vibrant neighborhood street that compliments the parkway by providing for the commercial needs of those living in the area. Centre Street may only be a small, two lane road, but beyond those travel lanes, the street also provides on-street parking, bike lanes, and wide sidewalks. The road is also a significant transit route for those moving about the city. The street is flanked by shops of various sizes, but the primary type is a small, single story building that is perfectly suited to the many local shops that line the thoroughfare.

Centre Street





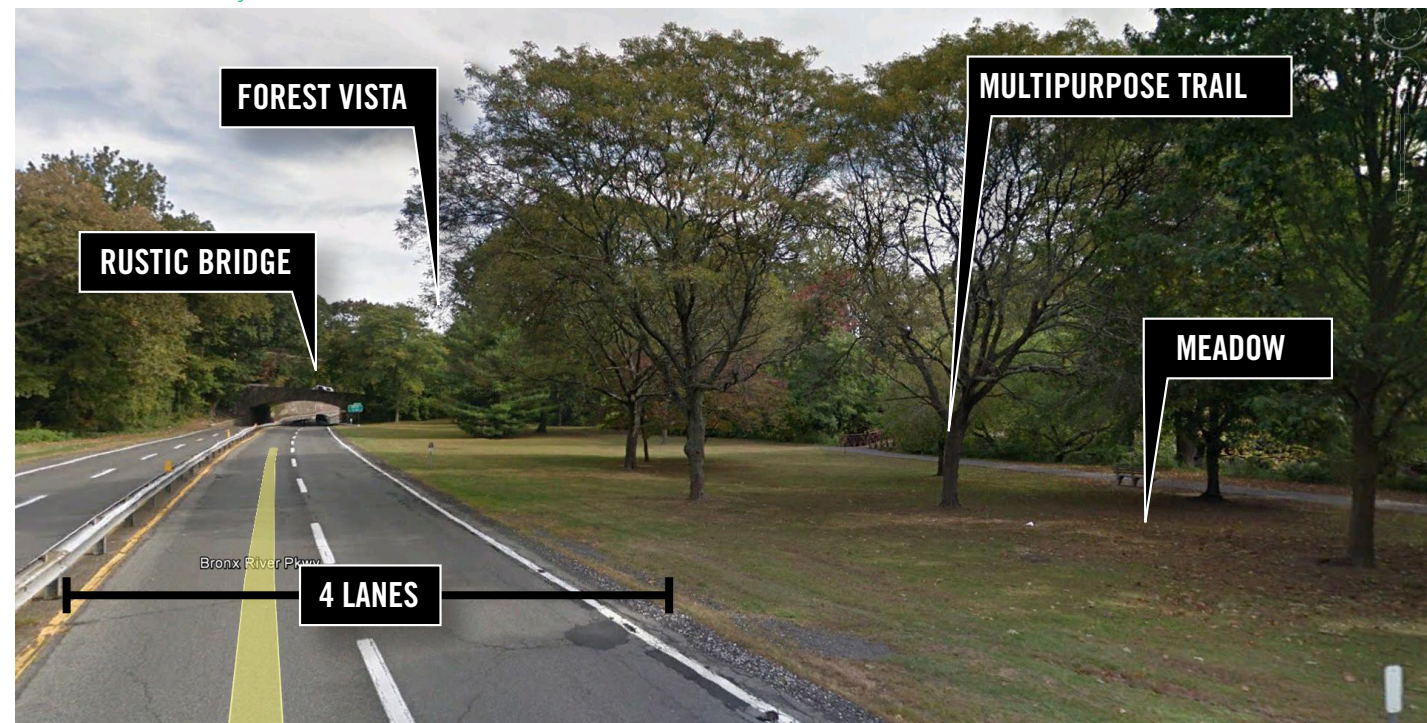
## Where do street couplets exist?

### Bronx River Parkway, Westchester County, NY. 1908

The Bronx River Parkway was built primarily as a reclamation project to restore areas of Westchester County and the Bronx that had been affected by the construction of the New York Central Railroad and the resultant industrial development that surrounded it. The parkway was constructed along the Bronx River as a means to conserve the waterway. These steps were taken in conjunction with the building of Bronx Park and a few other smaller parks, with the hopes that this linear greenway would serve as a buffer that would prevent



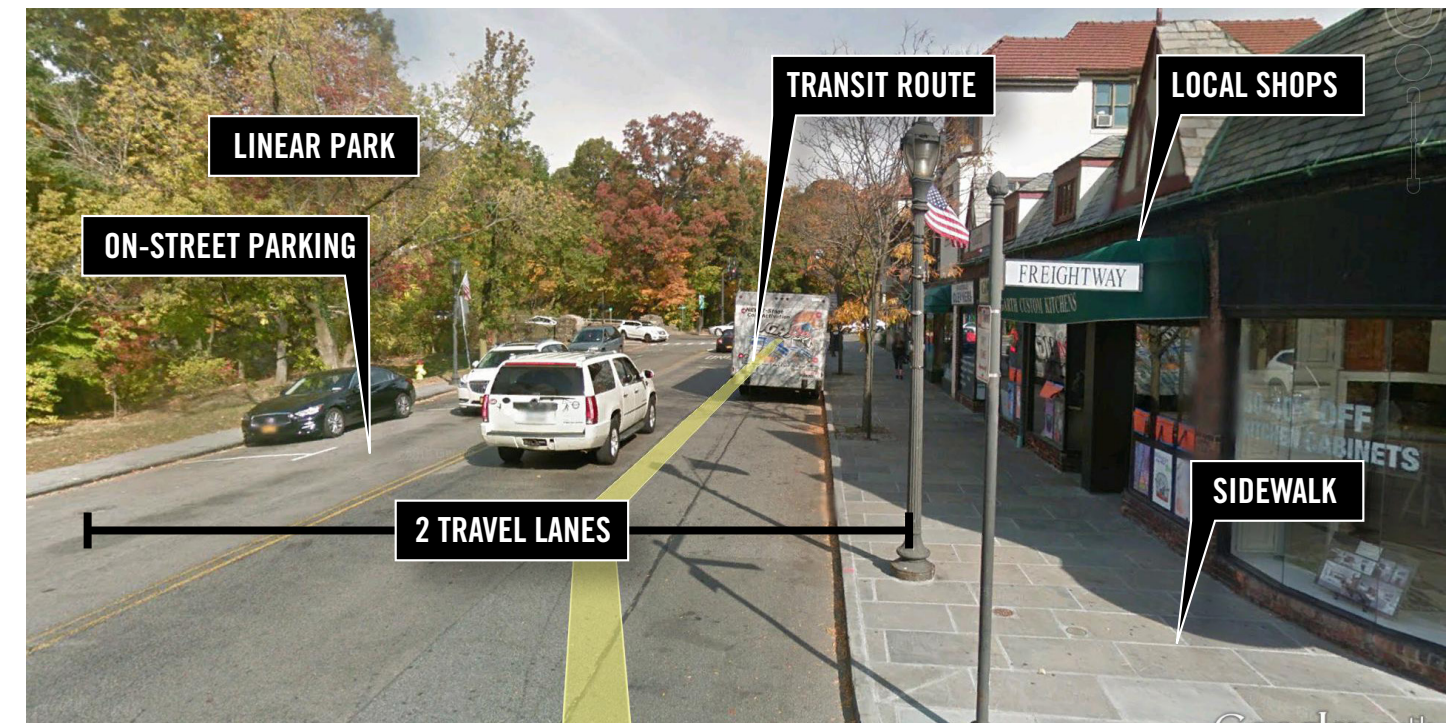
Bronx River Parkway



further industrial development. As one of the first parkways dedicated to auto travel, it has served continuously as the primary mobility corridor through the various greenspaces in this part of Westchester County. It is a four lane road that is sometimes divided by large medians. The rolling landscapes through which the road runs provide a tranquil park setting and offer stunning forest vistas for drivers and pedestrians alike. In many places, extensive tree canopies present an intimate driving experience. Multi-use trails crisscross the landscape, and bridges and gateways are constructed from stone and other rustic materials to enhance the naturalistic landscape design.

The Bronx River Parkway runs through several suburban communities and in Scarsdale it is complemented by nearby Garth Road, a neighborhood street that supports a small but vibrant commercial district. The street has a similar cross-section dimension to the parkway, but because it is a different type of thoroughfare only half is given over to travel lanes, while half serves as on-street parking. Both sides feature wide sidewalks and the east side of the street hosts a wide variety of local retail and services. Given its significance to the community, Garth Road also provides access to regional transit

Garth Road





## What does this mean for LaGrange?

As LaGrange considers ways to enhance its gateway thoroughfares, the notion of the parkway couplet offers great potential for the city's eastern and southern entrances. Both corridors contain existing parallel street pairs whose forms could facilitate the construction of parkways and associated neighborhood streets.

To the city's east, Lafayette Parkway plays a major role in connecting downtown to Interstate 85. Many long portions of the road close to downtown have wide shoulders where there is no adjacent development. From this perspective the road could be adapted and merged with undeveloped land to create a lush, landscaped parkway with amenities serving more than just automobile users. Nearby Greenville Street parallels Lafayette Parkway, and because of its strong commercial origin, it could very easily take on the role of the neighborhood street that would complete the parkway couplet.

To the south, the rudiments of another couplet system exists. Whitesville Road and Hamilton Road both stretch from downtown to I-85 almost in parallel. With large segments that are underdeveloped, Hamilton Road has the potential to be transformed into a beautiful parkway into the city. And running through a number of existing neighborhoods and connecting several commercial activity nodes, Whitesville Road also has the potential to become a neighborhood street that would support the southern parkway couplet.

Two parkway couplets in LaGrange







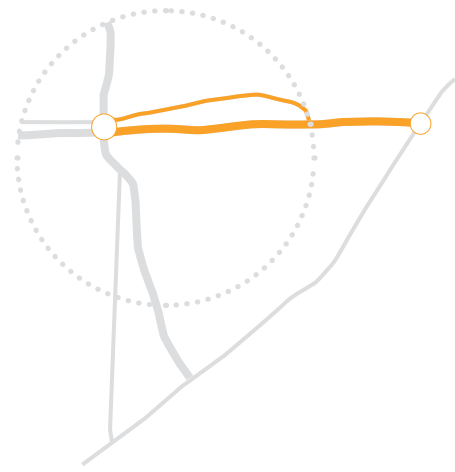
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## LAFAYETTE PARKWAY / GREENVILLE STREET

Lafayette Parkway  
Greenville Street



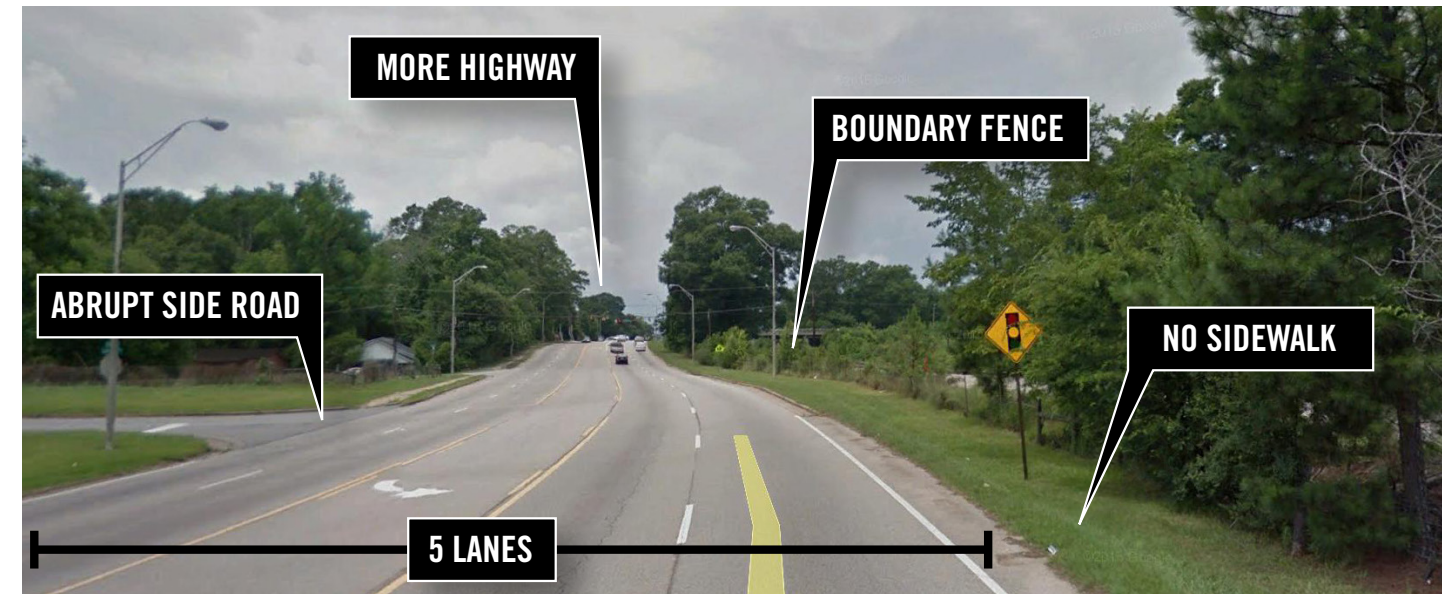
# What do Lafayette Parkway and Greenville Street look like today?



Lafayette Parkway serves as the primary entrance into LaGrange from the east. The road is home to numerous important entities for the city, including civic, commercial, and residential functions. When paired with Greenville Street as a couplet, the corridor also hosts the railway and a pair of historic textile mills that formed the foundations of LaGrange. The two streets feel underdeveloped and unpleasant at times, but future enhancements could create a welcoming parkway and neighborhood street to serve the community.

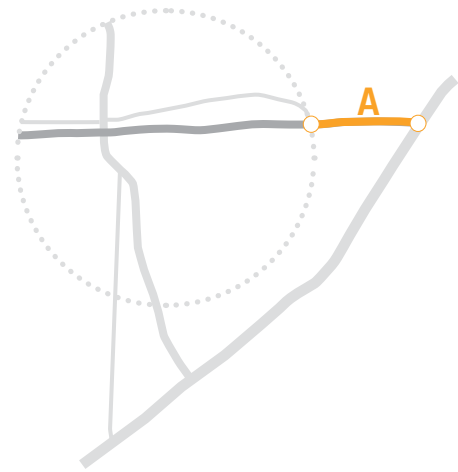
Lafayette Parkway was designated as a parkway street type many years ago, but the roadway has never fully taken on that specific character. The expansive five lane road offers almost no pleasant amenities to drivers or pedestrians. At the east end, suburban-style commercial development dominates the environment with its assertive advertising, resulting in a setting that feels brash, unapproachable, and sometimes inhumane. In areas to the west, most development faces away from the street, meaning that the edges are more often defined by fences and the backs of buildings than by positive attributes. Along the entire corridor, there are almost no sidewalks, and the flat, straight road with minimal vegetation on the shoulders makes for a less than interesting experience for drivers.

As its counterpart, Greenville Street offers some assets, but very few are suitable for future development. The two lane road has no curbs, and the adjacent sidewalks are narrow and in need of repair or maintenance. Adjacent uses- like small neighborhood stores and single family homes- do create a positive sense of enclosure around portions of the street, but large gaps in development mean these incidents are sparse.



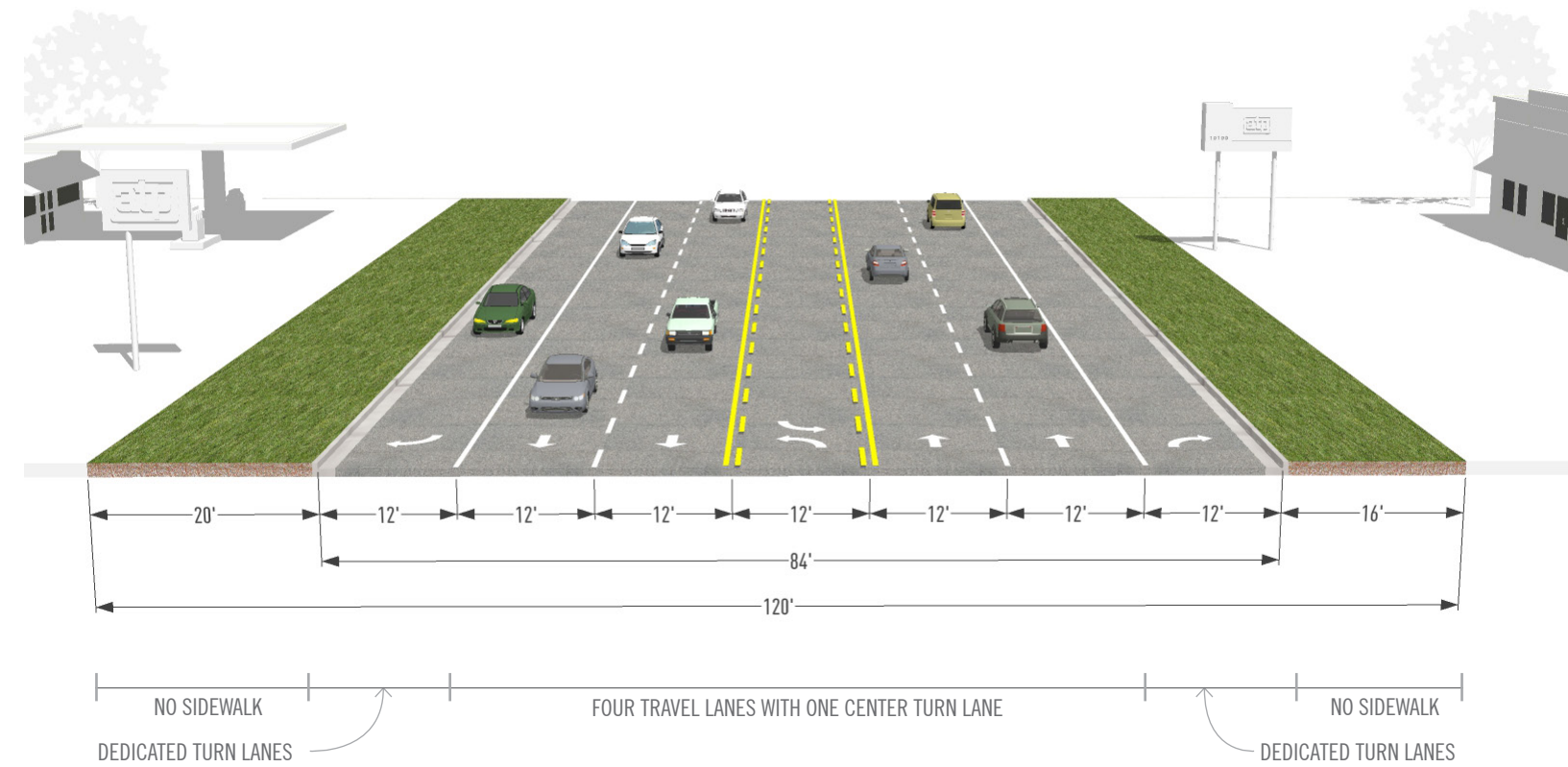
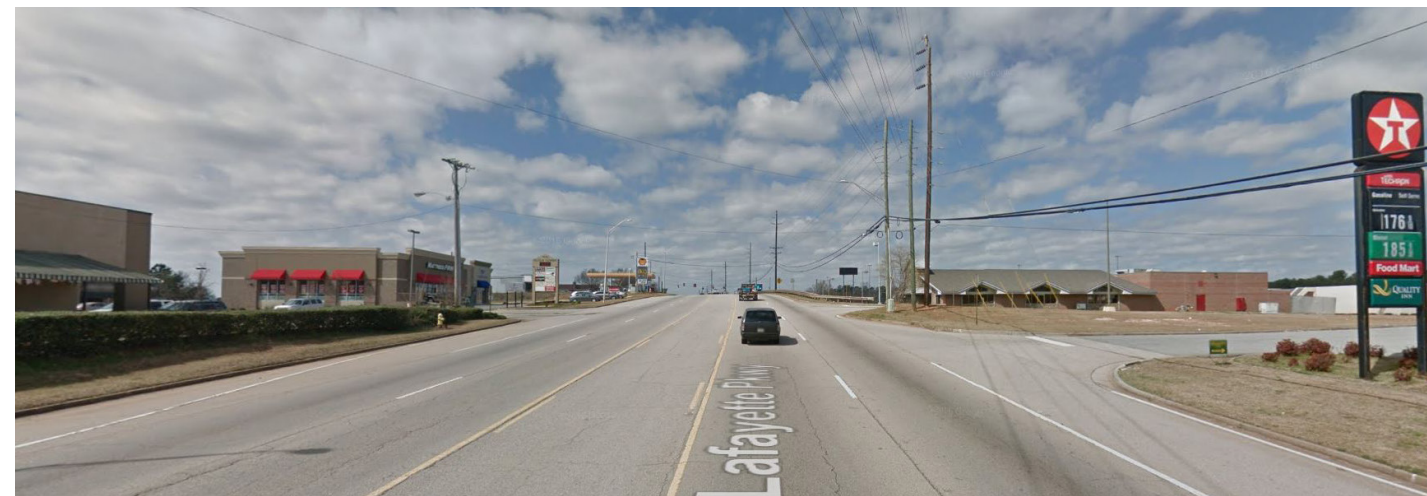


# What does Lafayette Parkway look like today?



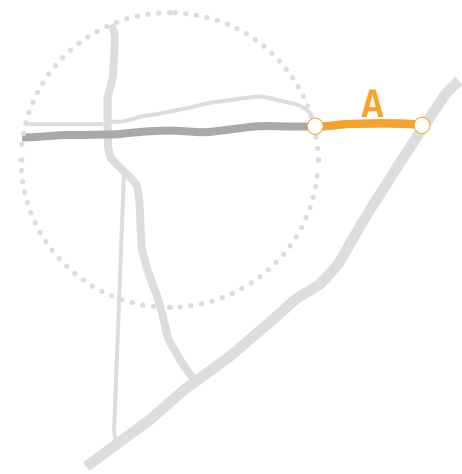
## Condition A: From I-85 to South Davis Road

The eastern portion of Lafayette Parkway typifies suburban development. The expansive roadway is designed only for automobiles and does not account for other uses. The street houses seven lanes for most of its length: two travel lanes in each direction, a center turn lane, and large shoulders that serve as dedicated turn lanes for the majority of this stretch. All lanes are 12' wide, enabling automobiles to travel at high speeds. The road is flanked by large-scale commercial development, which primarily takes the form of "big box" stores, set far back from the road with vast parking lots in between. With little pedestrian amenities, human-scale elements, or vegetation, the area feels harsh and dissuades users from walking.



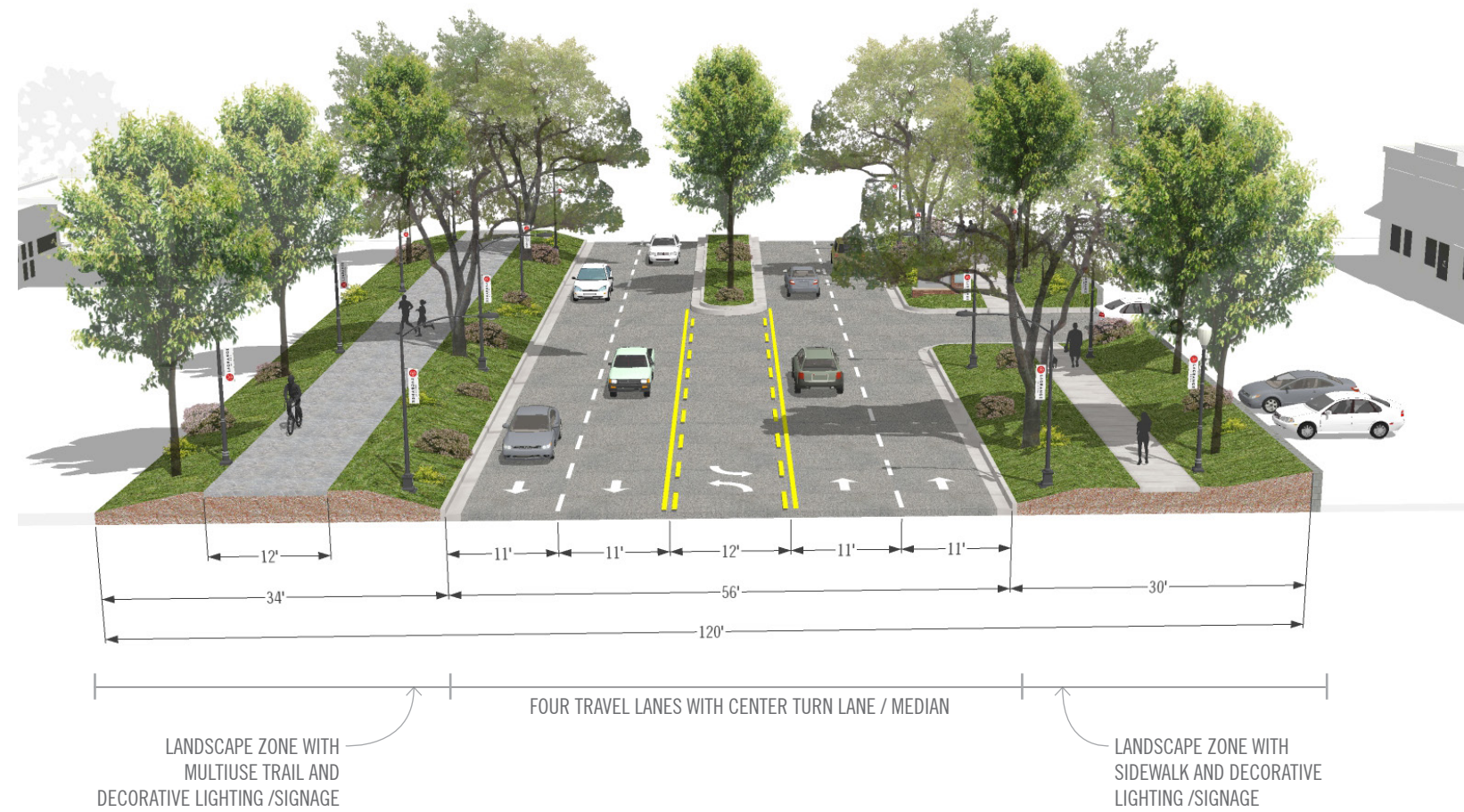


# What could Lafayette Parkway look like in the future?

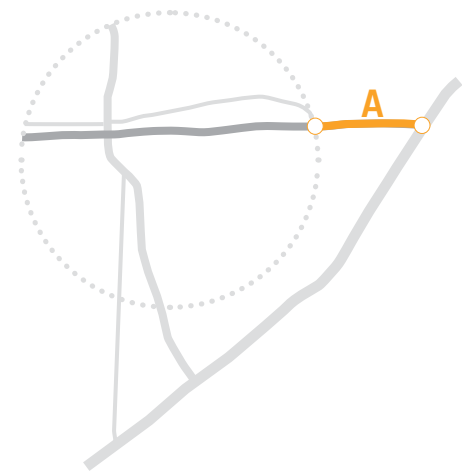


## Condition A: From I-85 to South Davis Road

Recommendations for this section of Lafayette Parkway largely focus on reclaiming portions of the roadway in order to facilitate new uses and users as well as improve its aesthetic appearance. The dedicated turn lanes are removed to create a five lane road with two travel lanes in each direction and a center turn lane. When driveways are not present, a center median is also added. Travel lanes are reduced in width to slow automobile traffic, creating the perception of safety for adjacent activities. Lush parkway landscaping is introduced in the form of street trees and understated berms that enclose the road and create a sense of intimacy. Both a typical sidewalk and a 12' multiuse path are introduced. The paths and street receive a uniform lighting treatment, featuring ornamental lampposts. Light poles provide brackets for mounting custom banners to showcase and celebrate LaGrange's rich history and culture. Decorative pylon signs, situated closer to the street, are recommended to improve business' visibility without compromising the parkway's beautification.

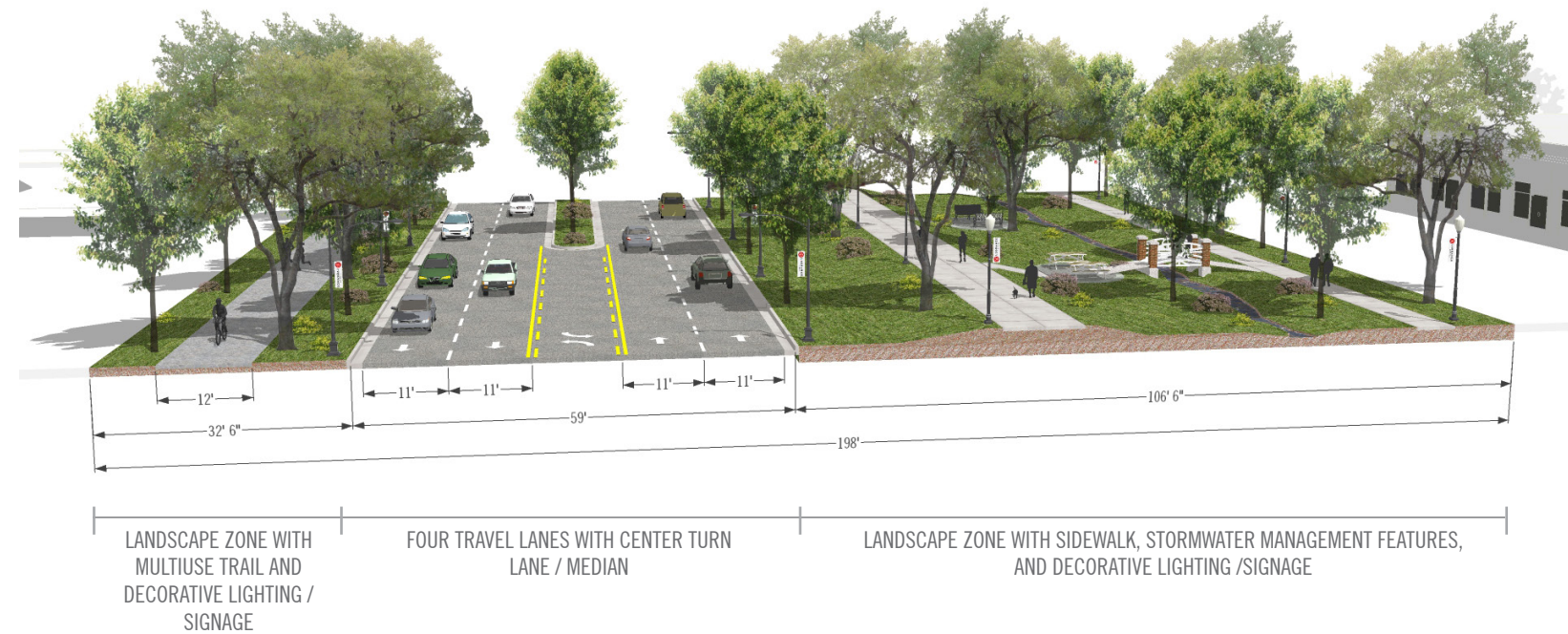


# What could Lafayette Parkway look like in the future?



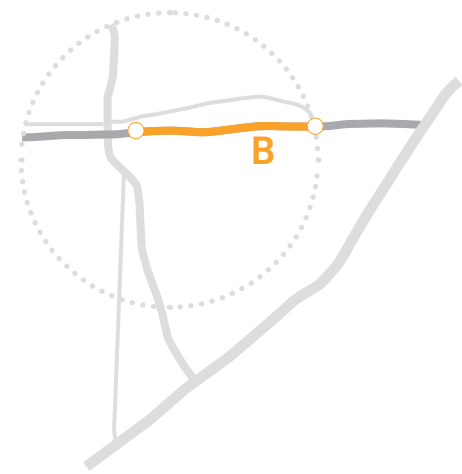
## Condition A Alternative: From I-85 to Cotton Road

The easternmost portion of this section has similar qualities, but it also features a small creek on the south side of the road on a narrow slice of public right-of-way. The waterway provides important stormwater functions in an area that is otherwise dominated by impervious surfaces. Recommendations for this portion of the road treat the roadbed in the same manner as before, but they also embrace the unique character of the creek, enveloping it in parkway landscaping. Future plans should consider additional stormwater retention functions, which could be outwardly treated as park landscaping offering civic amenities for all. Areas for seating, eating, and walking would invite people out of adjacent businesses and would largely offset the feeling that the area is designed by private realm developers around automobile functions.



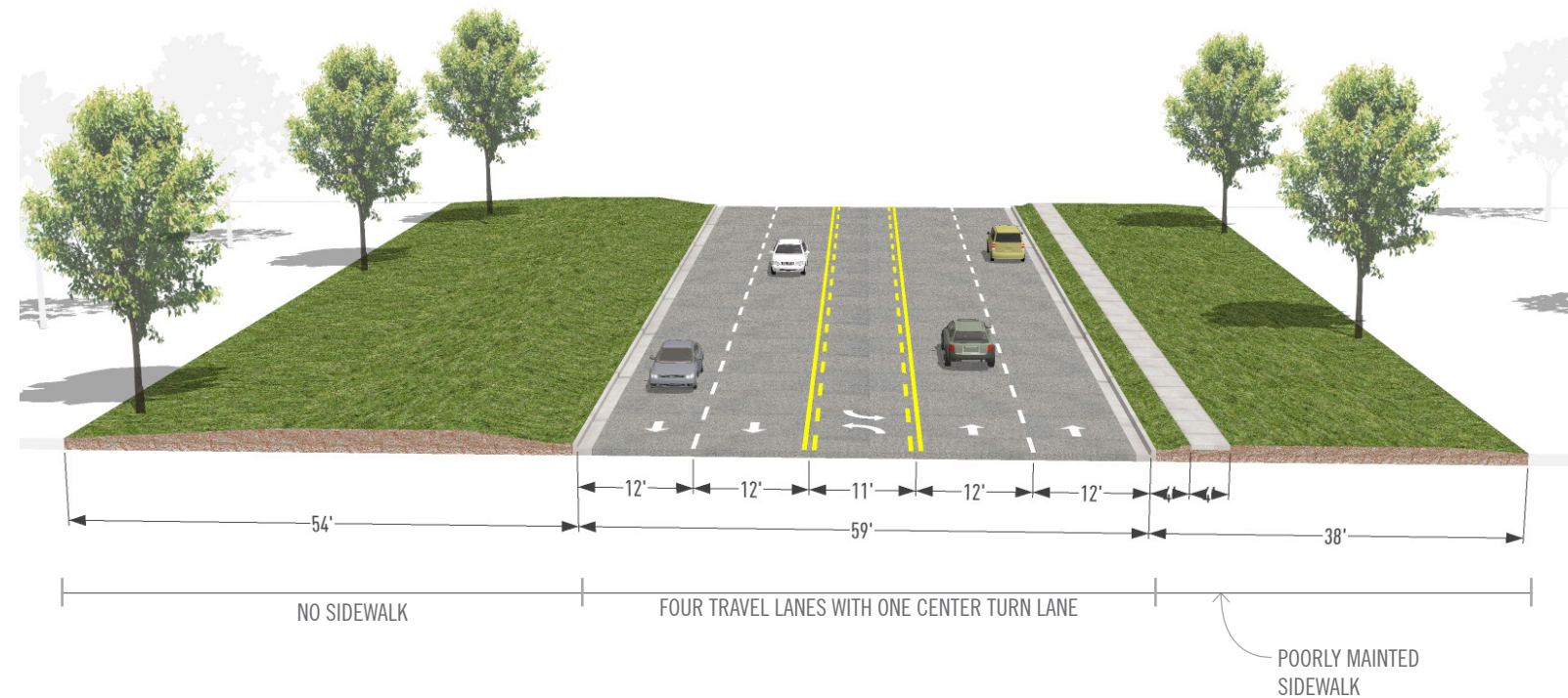


# What does Lafayette Parkway look like today?



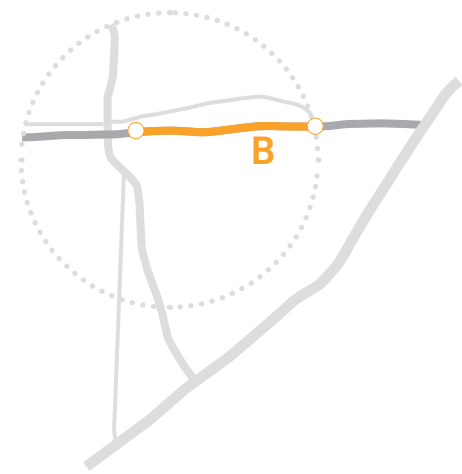
## Condition B: From South Davis Road to Downtown

The middle portion of Lafayette Parkway has the greatest potential for transformation. The section is primarily a mobility corridor with relatively few adjacent uses. The north side of the road is mostly defined by the rail line, while many properties on the south side are oriented towards other streets and do not directly interface with Lafayette Parkway. The road contains four wide travel lanes and a center turn lane, despite the fact that many lengthy sections offer no turn-offs. The shoulders are untreated and contain only a narrow sidewalk, that is in need of repair. At a number of places, the north side of the road contains large grade changes in response to the neighboring trackbed.



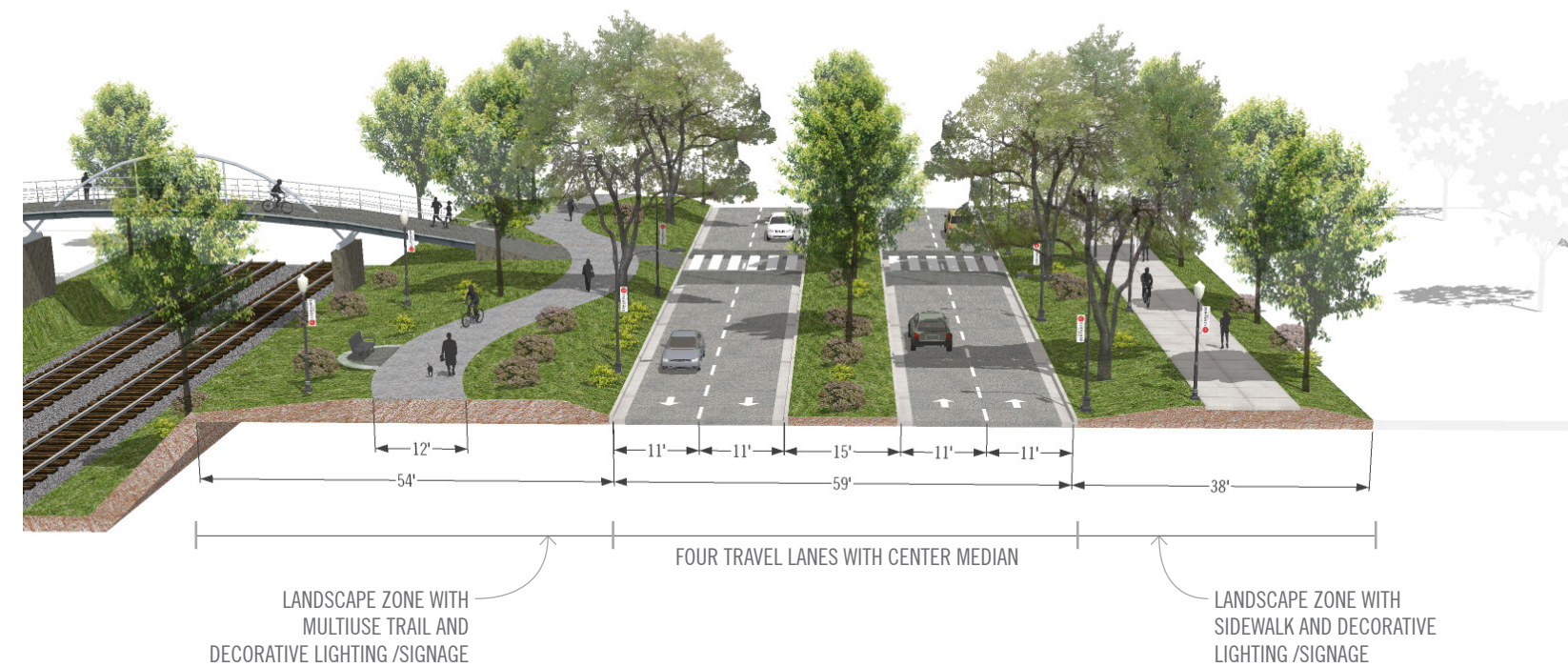


# What could Lafayette Parkway look like in the future?



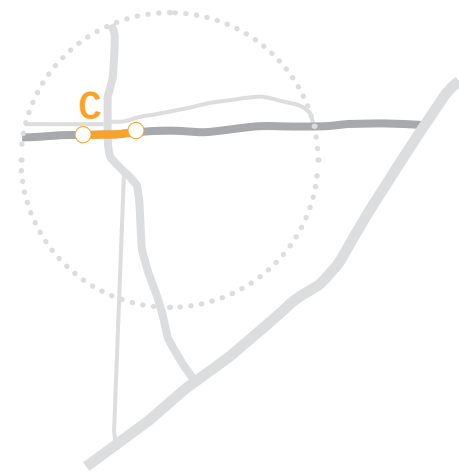
## Condition B: From South Davis Road to Downtown

The recommendations for this portion of the road showcase the rich beauty of a landscaped parkway. The turn lane is removed and the four travel lanes are reduced in width, slowing travel speeds but also providing space for the creation of a large median. The natural forms of the land are articulated with lavish landscaping that not only creates a sense of enclosure for automobile drivers, but which also provides sheltered and secluded areas through which a new 12' multiuse path and a meandering pastoral path may run. Uniform lighting and lamppost banners dot both the road and pedestrian paths, providing a consistent motif that ties together the whole corridor. Pedestrian bridges to Greenville Street activity centers make the parkway more connected and accessible, while also allowing for dynamic viewing of the rail activity that has shaped much of the life of the city.





# What does Lafayette Parkway look like today?



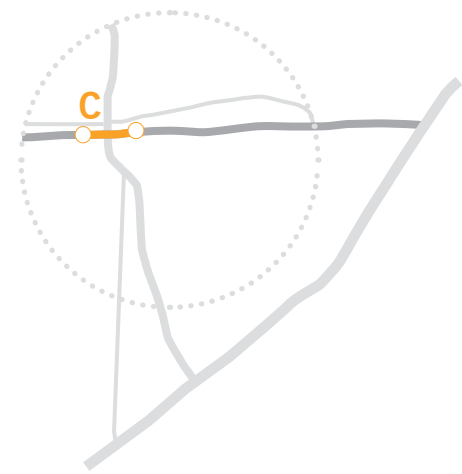
## Condition C: Downtown

In creating a connected parkway system, the road's entrance to downtown is a vital link between the city's social and cultural heart and other existing and future activity nodes. At current, the downtown portion of Lafayette Parkway is home to a broad five lane road and minimal streetscape elements. The roadway contains three travel lanes and two lanes of on-street parking. The existence of 6' sidewalks is valuable, but these paths run adjacent to an underutilized planting strip that offers little value to either drivers or pedestrians. The properties facing the street do not always serve to activate the street, and there are some undeveloped parcels that present opportunities for future development.





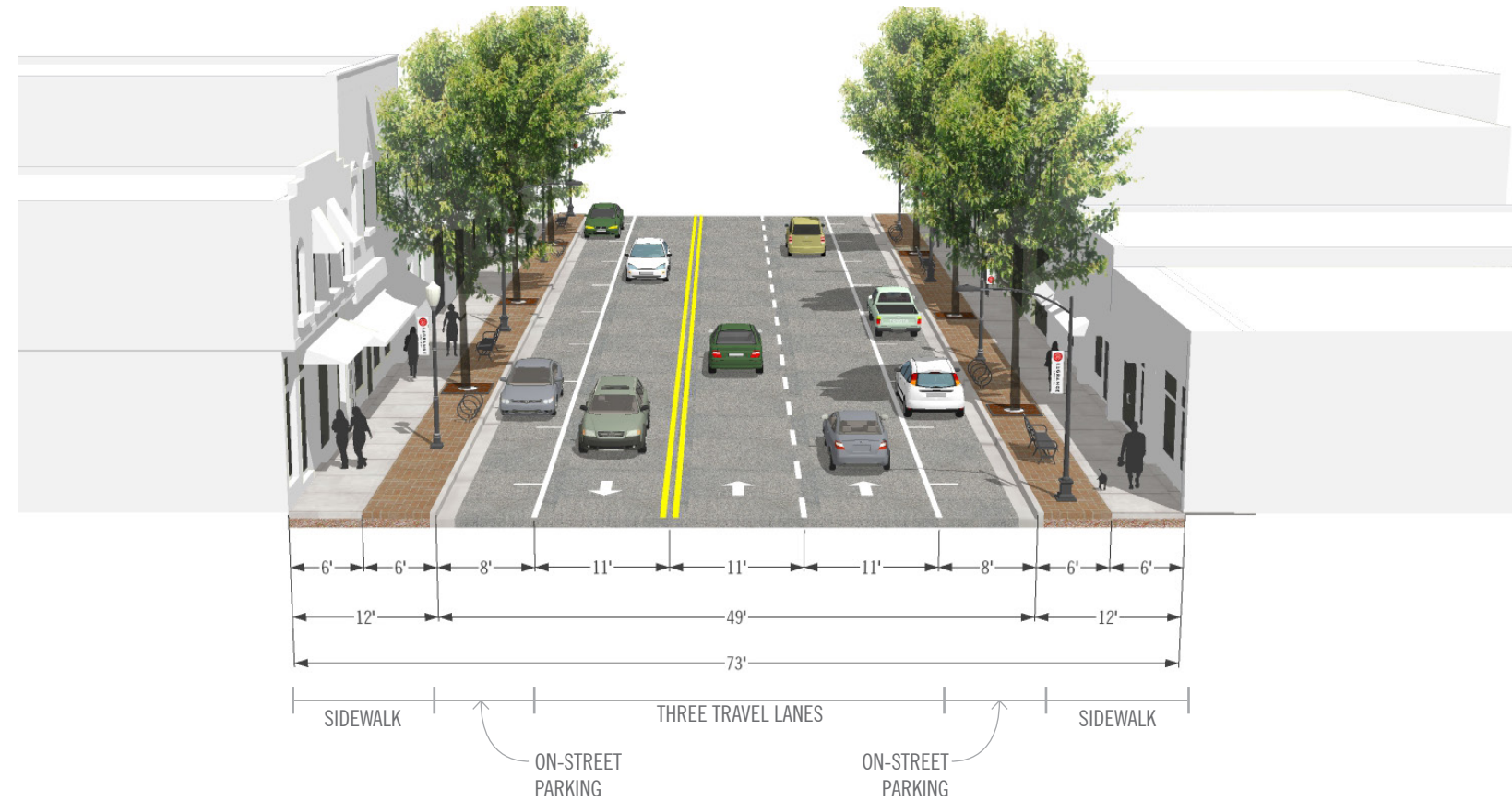
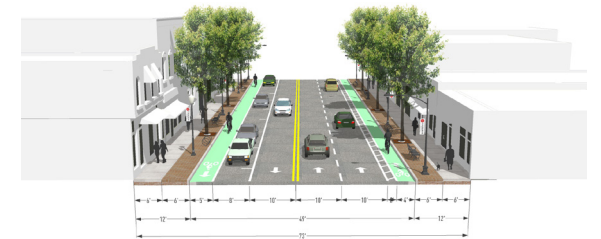
# What could Lafayette Parkway look like in the future?



## Condition C: Downtown

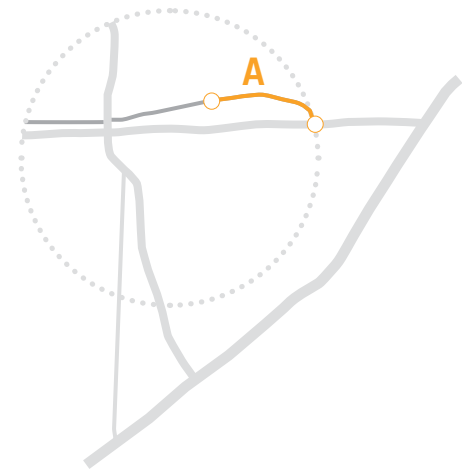
The recommendations for the downtown portion of Lafayette Parkway serve to create a more dynamic and connected main street urban experience. The existing planting strip is transformed into a vibrant furniture zone that features a number of amenities for various users. The area is treated with lush street trees, ornamental lampposts that include banner mounts, and benches that create small areas of rest and relaxation. Bike racks in this zone also provide vital amenities for cyclists. The furniture zone is fundamentally an expansion of the sidewalk, providing a robust pedestrian experience and enabling adjacent businesses to open their shops to the public realm in a more dynamic manner. The interactions between these two forces serve as the foundation of the valuable civic and social exchanges that exist in the city. Long term options utilize the removal of one lane of on-street parking for the introduction of two dedicated bike lanes, whose connection to parkway trails provides a means for both recreational and commuter cyclists to access many important nodes in the city.

LONG TERM OPTION



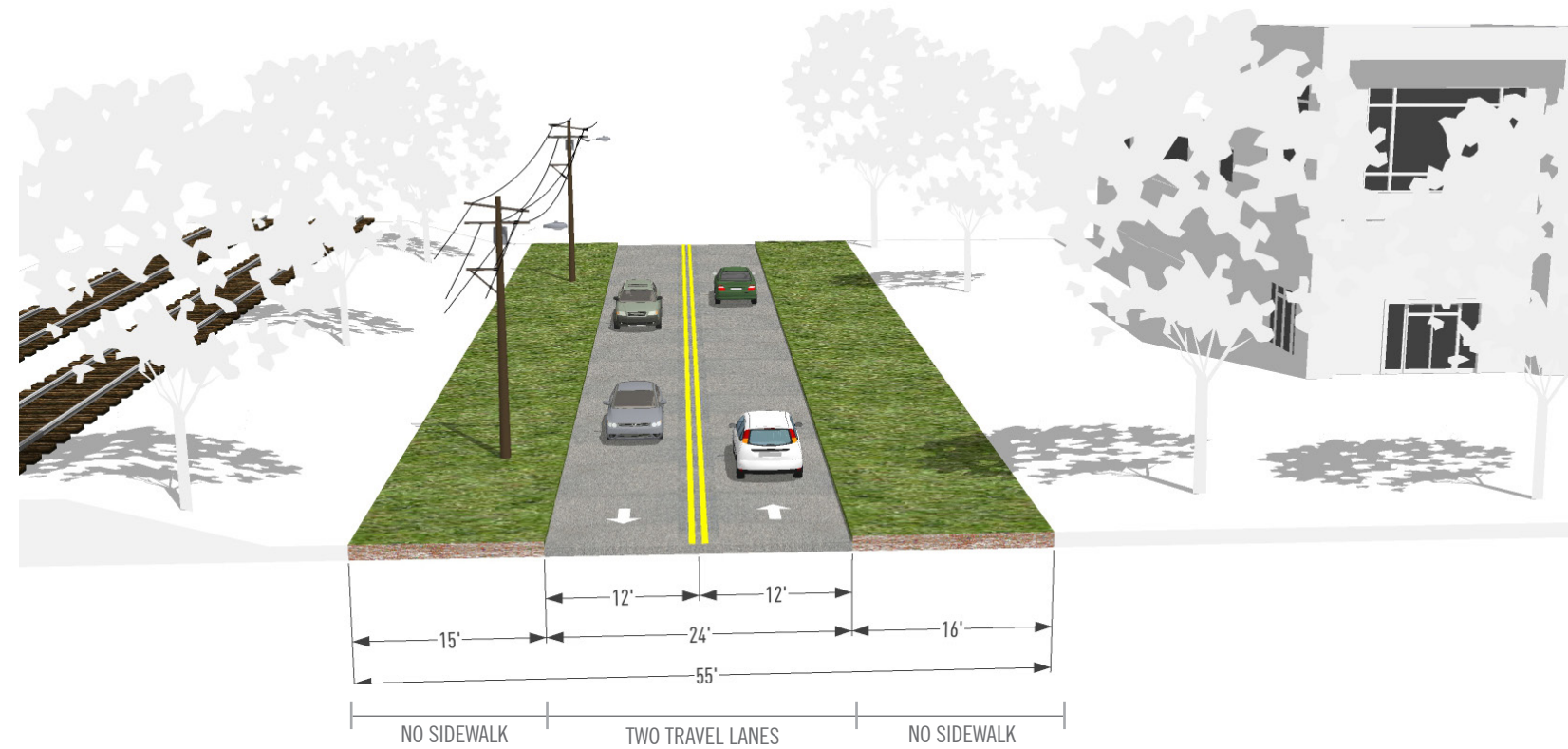
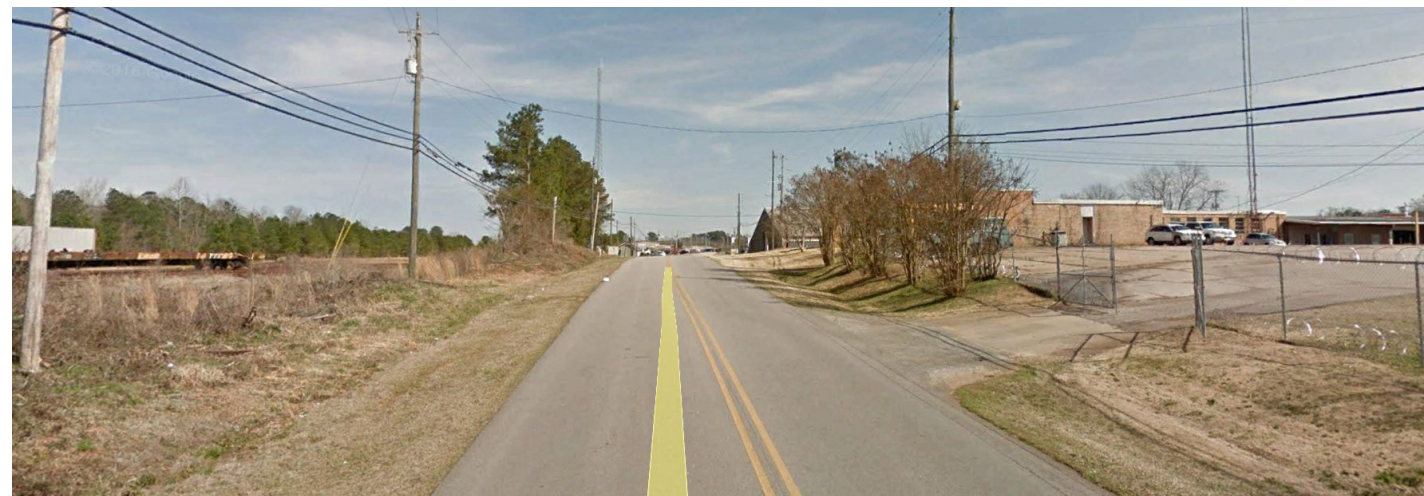
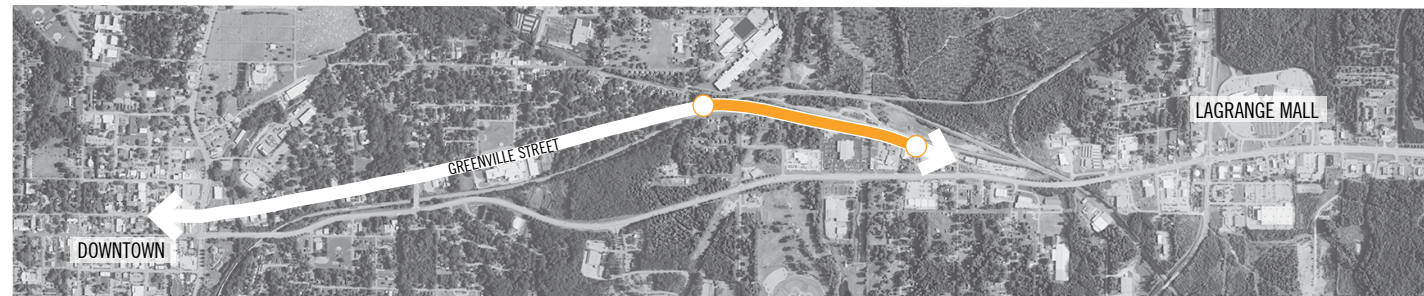


# What does Greenville Street look like today?



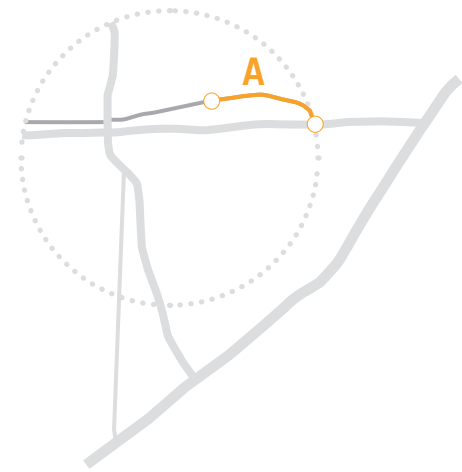
## Condition A: From Lafayette Parkway to Barnard Avenue

The eastern portion of Greenville Street is home to a number of industrial and utilitarian functions. The street in this eastern section contains two travel lanes and an informal edge without curbs or drainage systems. Within the public right-of-way, planting strips exist on both side of the road, but there appears to have been no effort to add greenery. There are no sidewalks within the street's shoulders, and utility lines are a dominant feature. The north side of the road is shaped by the parallel rail line, while the developed properties on the south side are home to light industrial functions in the form of bland warehouse complexes, set far back from the road. No buildings address the street in a pleasant manner.



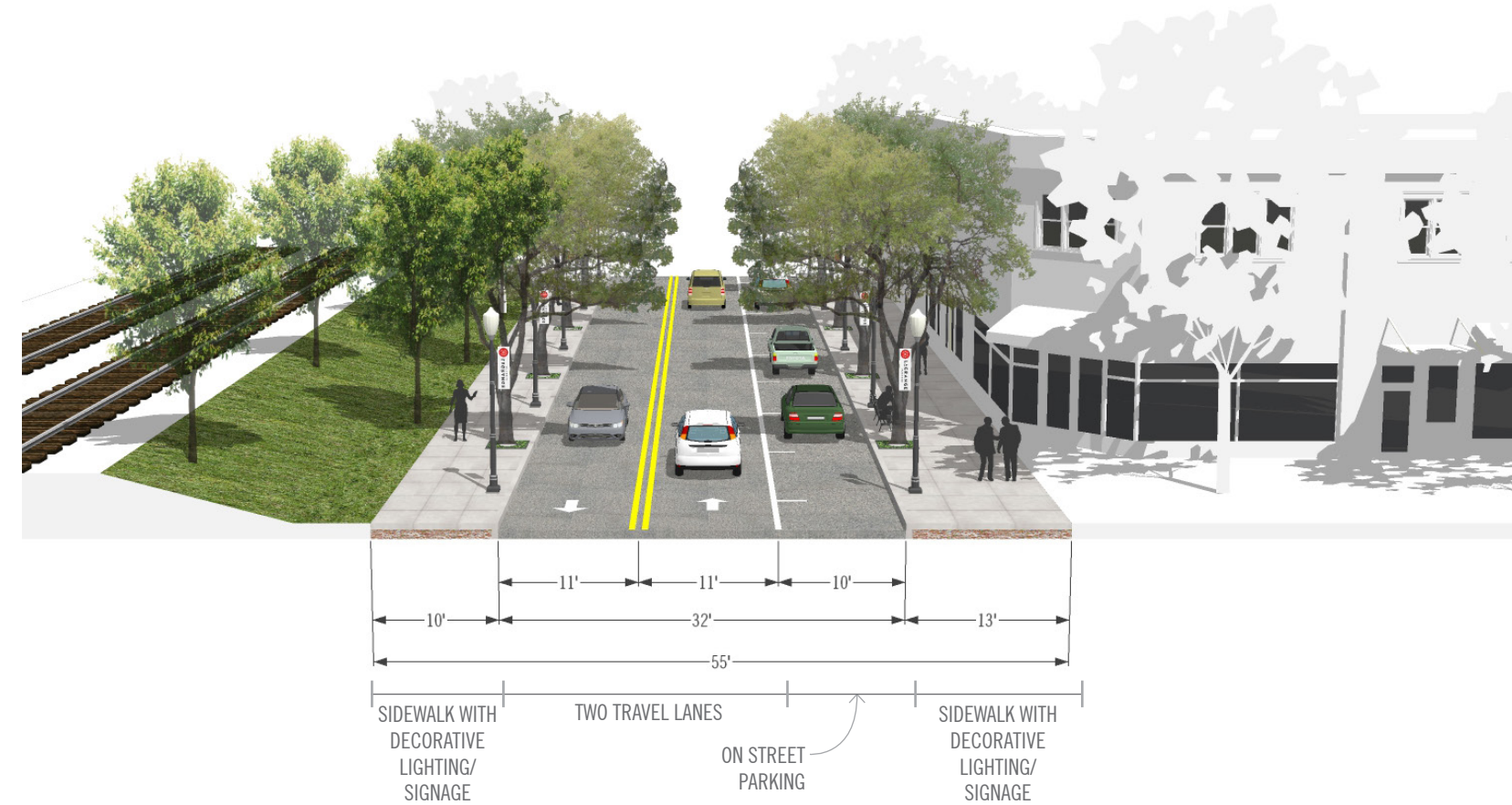
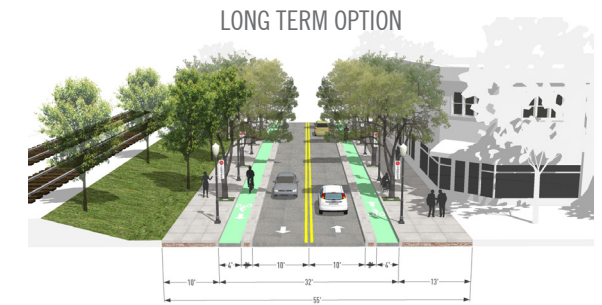


# What could Greenville Street look like in the future?



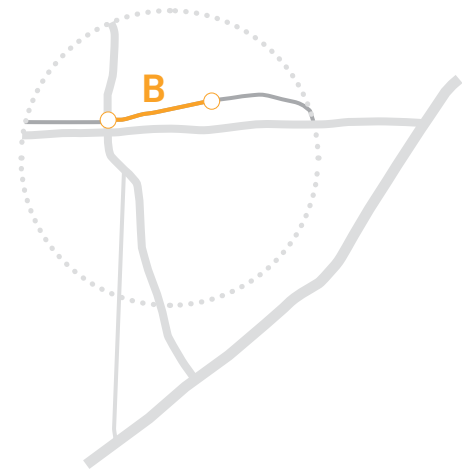
## Condition A: From Lafayette Parkway to Barnard Avenue

A great number of recommendations for this stretch of Greenville Street imagine ways to turn the industrial road into more of an inviting commercial corridor. To achieve this goal, the width of the two travel lanes is reduced to allow for the addition of one lane of on-street parking. Utilities are buried, and the remaining right-of-way is transformed into wide sidewalks. Commercial development is supported on the south side of the road, and buildings are brought up to the property line. The sidewalk on the north side of the street exists in a more natural setting and can host recreational uses, while the sidewalk on the south side allows for dynamic commercial foot traffic. Both sidewalks contain furniture zones with large street trees, benches, and ornamental lampposts. Added landscaping on the north side of the road is not intended to completely buffer out the rail line, but it does offer a more natural, park-like area through which the train can pass. Long term options for the street consider removing the parking in order to add two dedicated and buffered bike lanes.



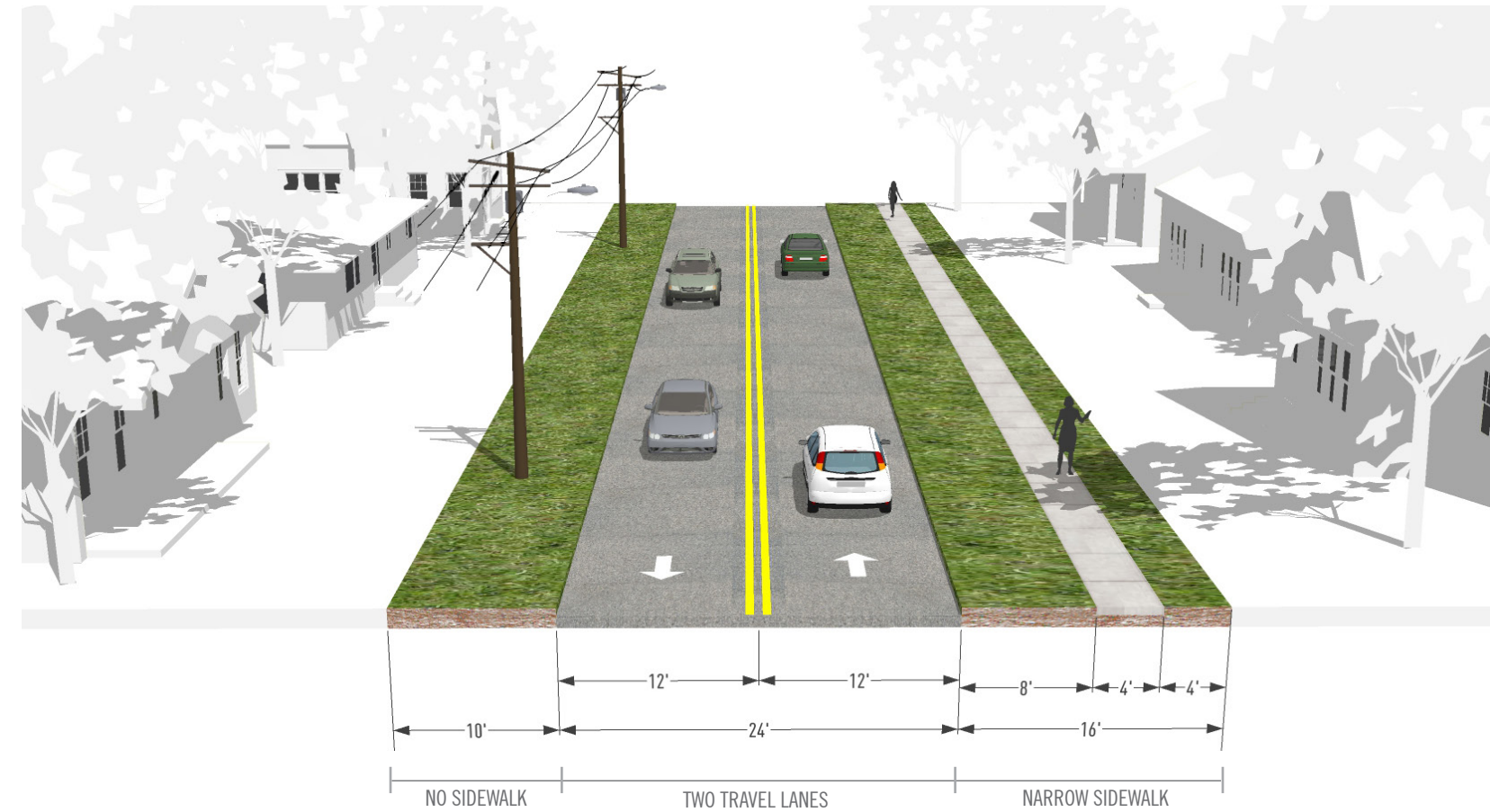
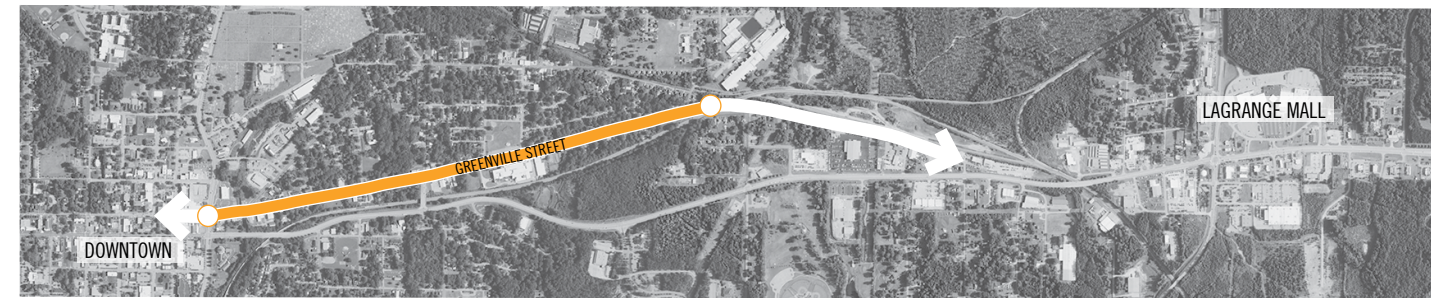


# What does Greenville Street look like today?



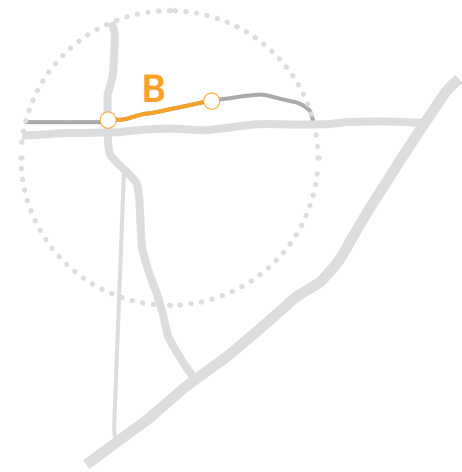
## Condition B: From Barnard Avenue to Morgan Street

Greenville Street showcases a wide variety of uses and functions amidst the long stretch of road, but the physical character of the street and streetscape is rather consistent throughout. The roadway houses two travel lanes and an informal edge without curbs or drainage infrastructure. Both sides of the street contain planting strips, while sidewalks can only be seen on one side for the large majority of the road's length. The adjacent properties have large, full-bodied trees that offer some sense of enclosure and pleasant canopies for portions of the road, but for the most part, utility poles located near the street define its edge.



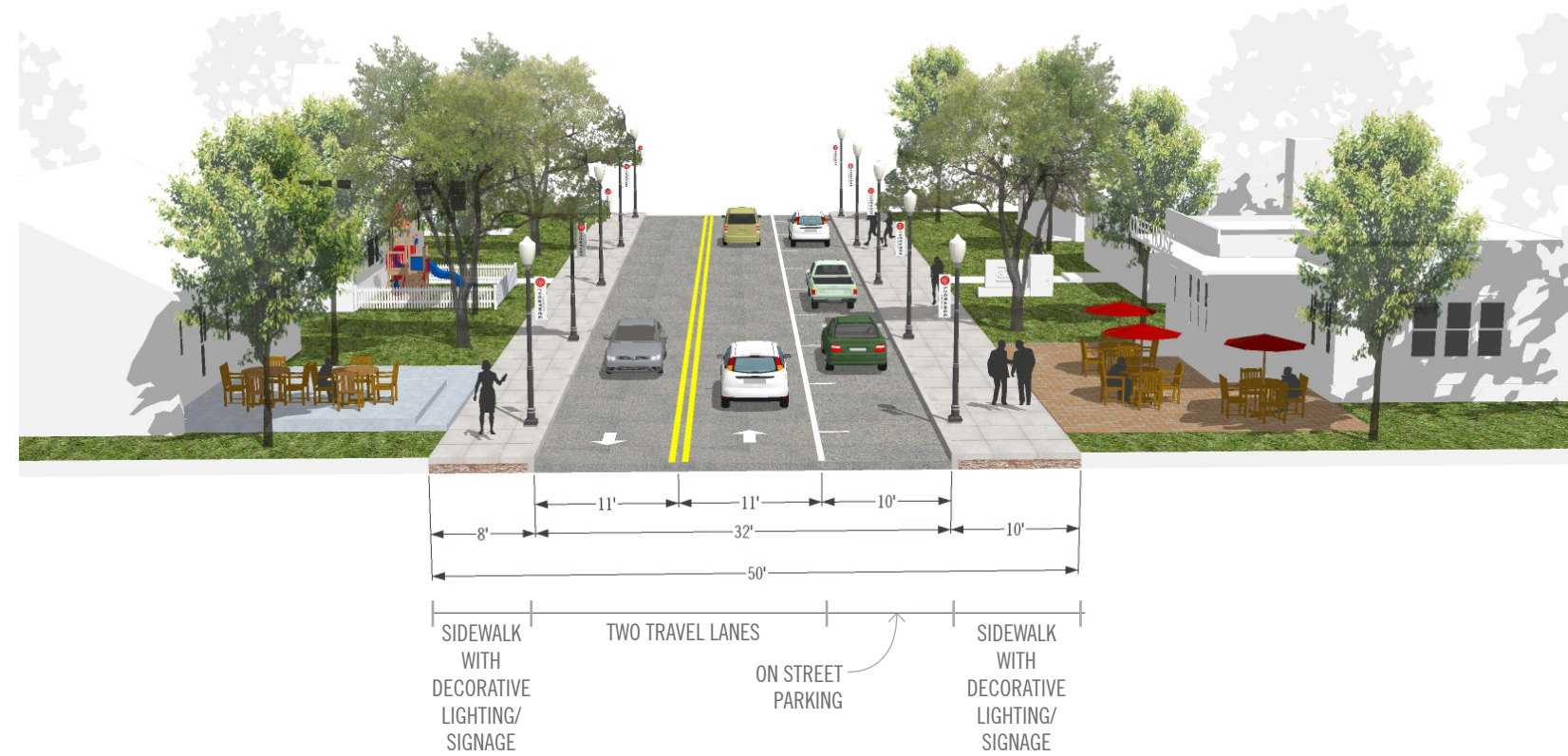
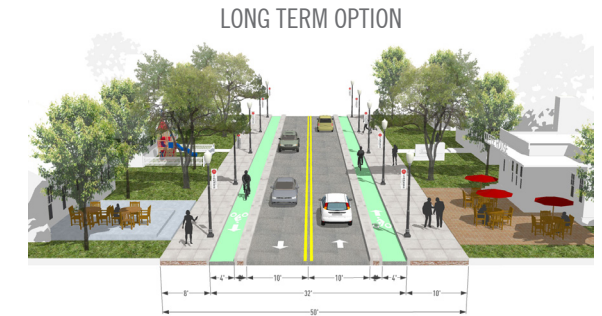


# What could Greenville Street look like in the future?



## Condition B: From Barnard Avenue to Morgan Street

Recommendations for Greenville Street consider the street as a neighborhood commercial corridor. The width of the travel lanes is reduced, underground utilities are proposed where possible, and a lane of on-street parking is added. The remaining public right-of-way is rethought as wide sidewalks that are capable of supporting additional foot traffic and commercial activities that provide important goods and services to the surrounding neighborhoods. The sidewalks are also home to a furniture zones that provide space for large street trees and ornamental lampposts. These wide sidewalks provide a unique form of civic space that does not exist in these neighborhoods at the moment; facilitating commercial, social, and cultural activities. Long term options for the street remove the lane of parking to easily accommodate two dedicated and buffered bike lanes.







# 3

## HAMILTON ROAD / WHITESVILLE ROAD

Hamilton Road  
Whitesville Road



## What does Hamilton Road / Whitesville Road look like today?

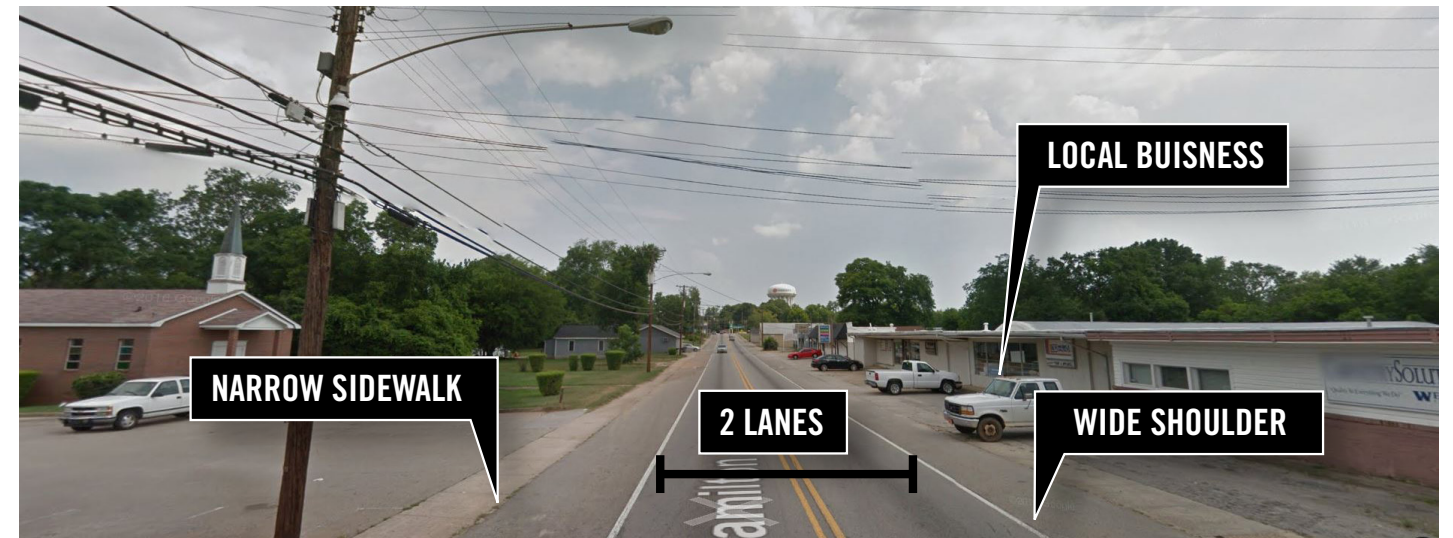
Serving as the primary entrance into LaGrange from the south, Whitesville Road is an important thoroughfare in and out of the city. The street currently passes through a number of different neighborhoods that include small commercial districts. Running in parallel, Hamilton Road exhibits a similar land use pattern on its northern end, but its southern portions are largely intervals of auto-oriented businesses or absent of development. In combination, the couplet is the primary access to a number of the city's educational institutions as well as some important civic functions, making future enhancements of vital importance. Hamilton Road's condition as a blank canvas makes it well suited as a parkway, to which Whitesville Road could serve as the companion neighborhood street.

In its current form, Hamilton Road is a street with wide, open shoulders. It has two travel lanes for the majority of its stretch (from downtown to Auburn Ave.) and five lanes in the stretch closest to the interstate. Sidewalks are limited, and the street enclosure is defined by nothing more than the repetitive pattern of utility poles. There is also a healthy variety of businesses that front the street, but very few contribute to the pedestrian's street experience.

The Hamilton Road widening project includes a five-lane cross section from the I-85 to downtown.

In contrast, Whitesville Road has a much stronger sense of local character. Passing through several single-family neighborhoods, the three lane road contains commercial uses that take the form of local businesses in former single-family homes. The street has sidewalks but they are rather narrow and need repair in spots. Like Hamilton, utility poles are an ever-present distraction.

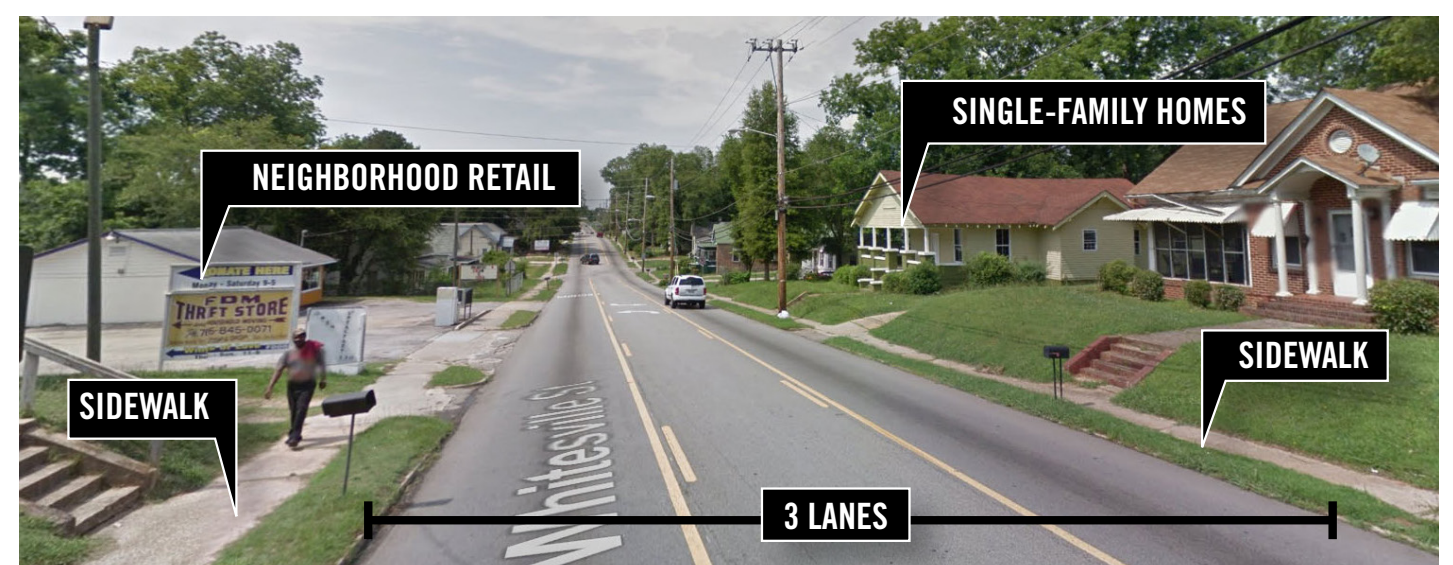
HAMILTON ROAD TYPICAL CONDITION (DOWNTOWN TO AUBURN AVENUE)



HAMILTON ROAD TYPICAL CONDITION (AUBURN AVENUE TO I-85)

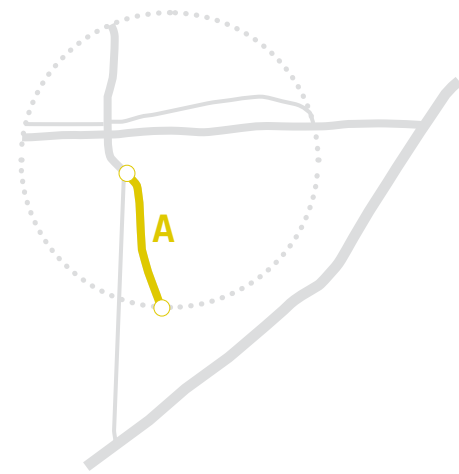


WHITESVILLE ROAD TYPICAL CONDITION



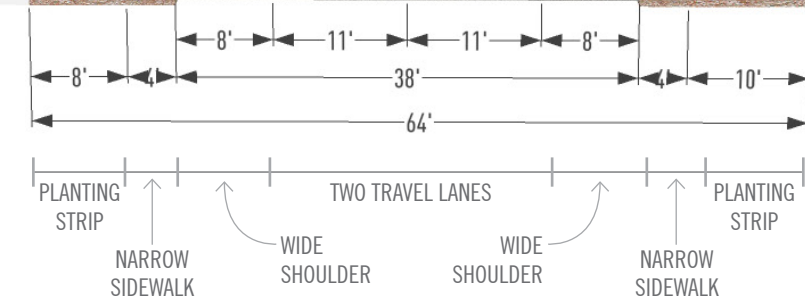
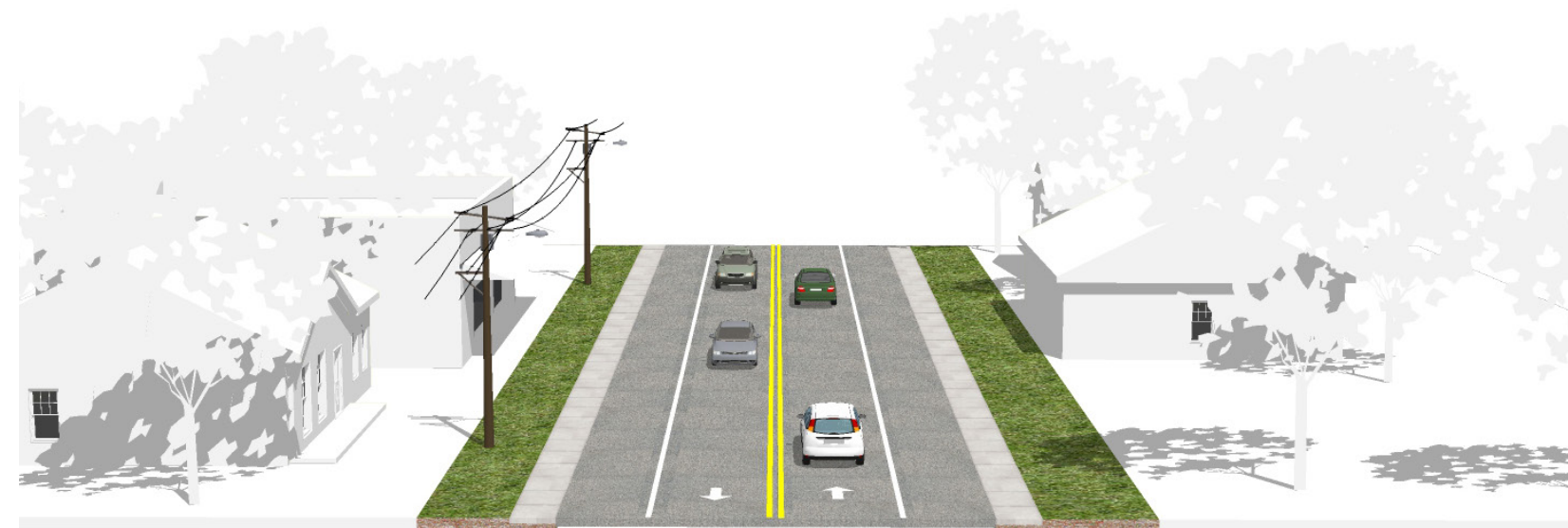
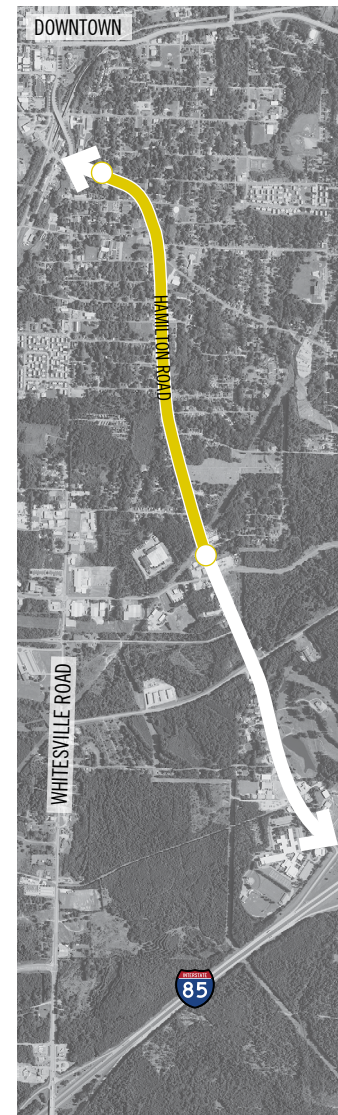


# What does Hamilton Road look like today?



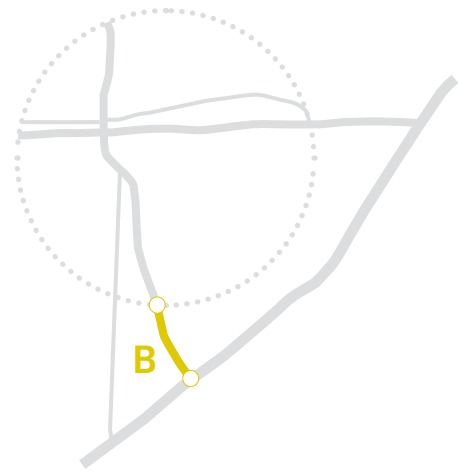
## Condition A: From Whitesville Road to Auburn Avenue

As it exists today, Hamilton Road is a fairly wide and open road. It has two travel lanes from downtown to Auburn Avenue, one in each direction, but it also hosts large shoulders outside those lanes that create a much wider roadbed than is necessary and blur the edges of the street, as there is not a hard line between the street and the shoulder or the shoulder and the sidewalk. Two small sidewalks exist on both sides of the road, but they are not well kept. Numerous buildings and shops have street frontage and create areas with comfortable intimacy, but on the whole, the most noticeable element that shapes the street form is the obtrusive utility line that sits over the road.





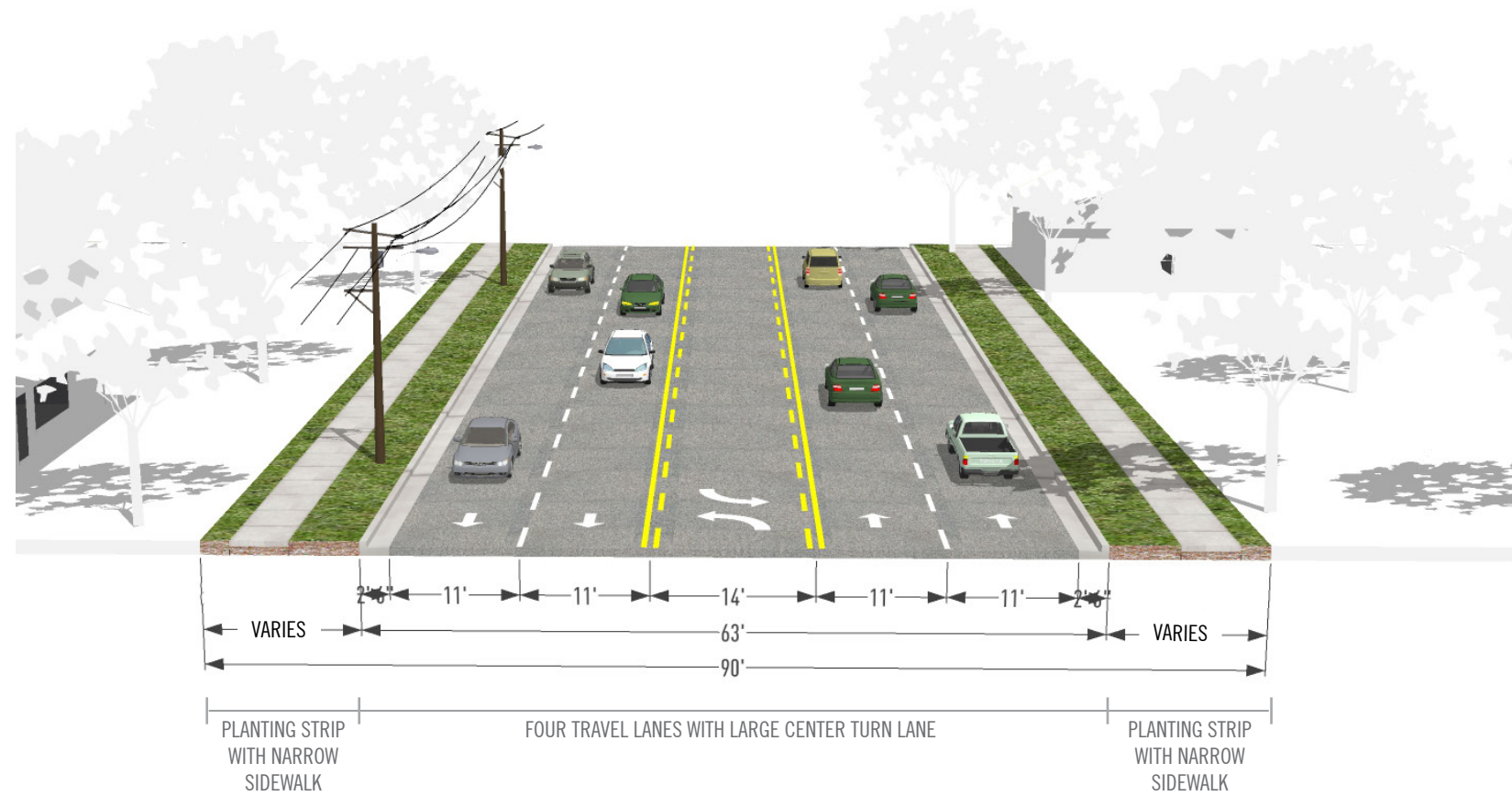
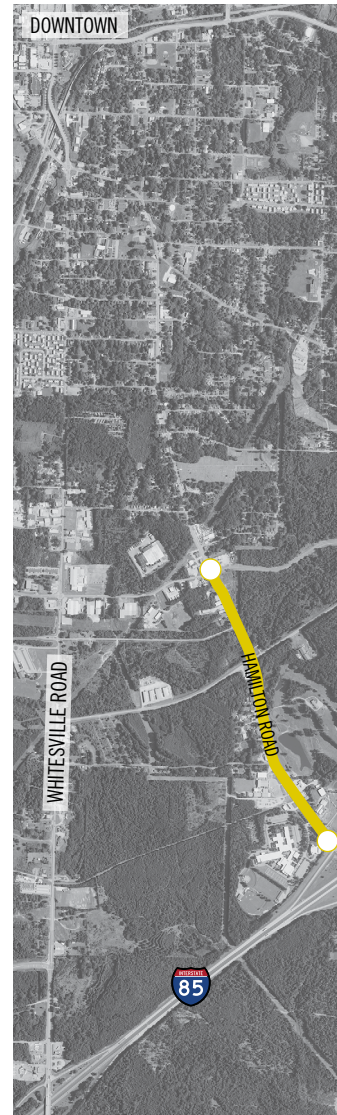
# What does Hamilton Road look like today?



## Condition B: From I-85 to Auburn Avenue

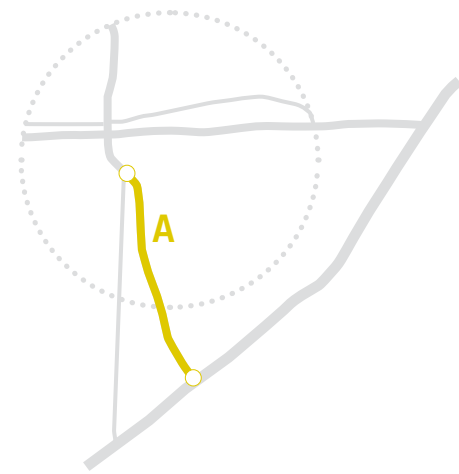
Hamilton Road from I-85 to Auburn Avenue has five lanes, including a center turn lane. It has narrow planting strips with narrow, unkept sidewalks in certain sections.

It has a similar look and feel as the section from Auburn Avenue to downtown.



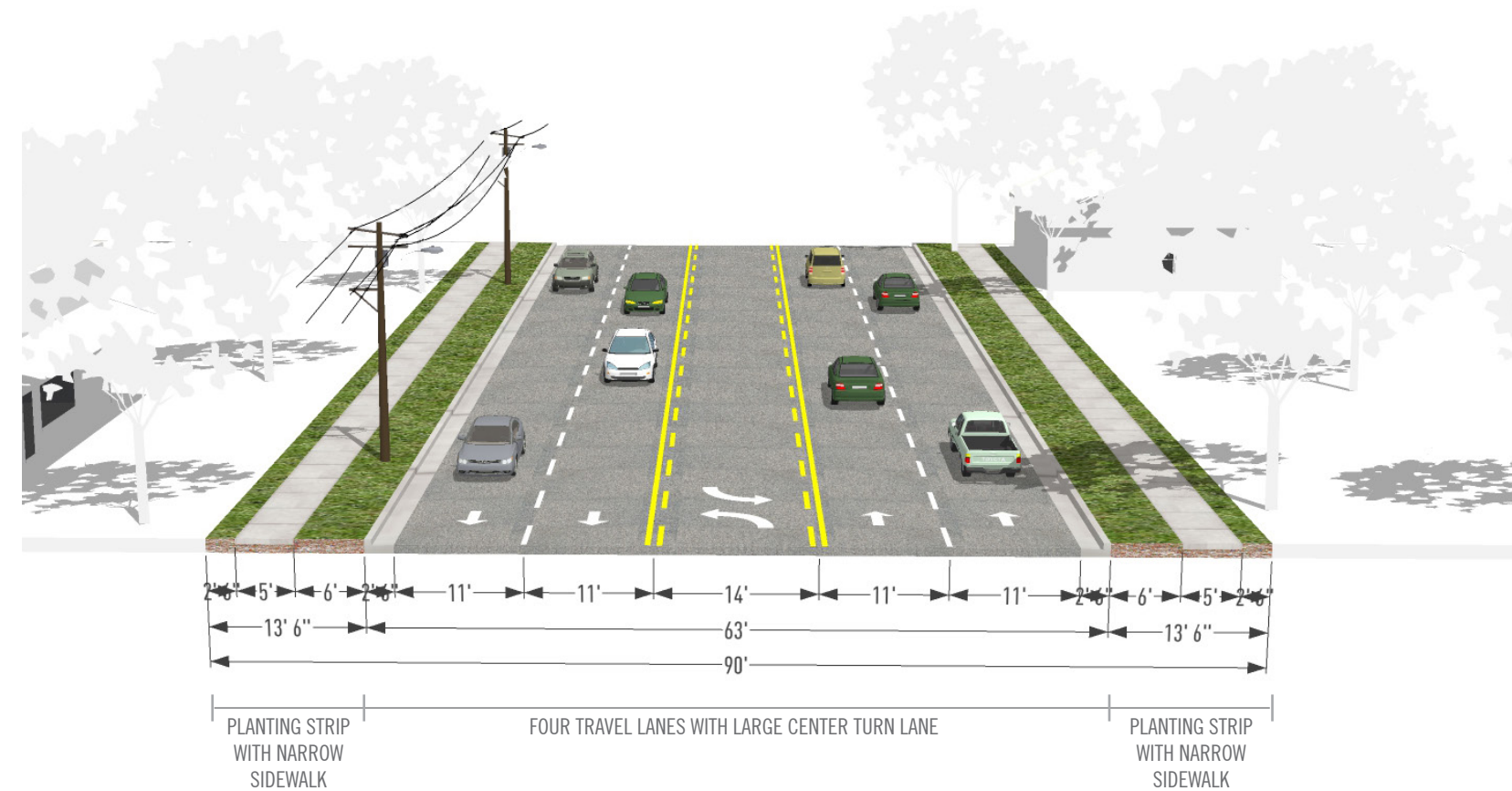


## What is the current design for the Hamilton Road Improvement Project?



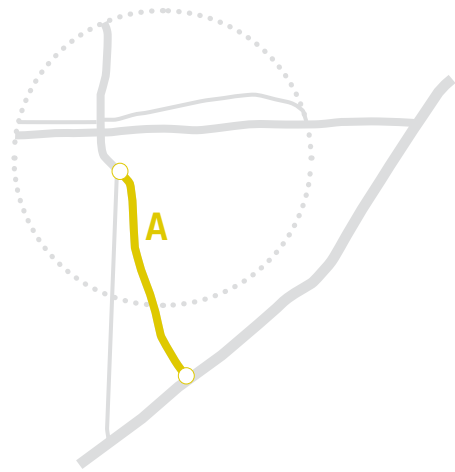
### Condition A and B: From I-85 to Whitesville Road

Existing plans from the Georgia Department of Transportation seek to widen Hamilton Road in order to increase road capacity. That project will transform the now two-lane road into a five lane road. The endeavor calls for the potential destruction and/or displacement of almost sixty buildings that exist adjacent to the road, and it proposes the closing of four streets that currently meet Hamilton Road. As a result, the overall form of the road will be drastically altered. The new composition will include four travel lanes and a large center turn lane. This street type will allow cars to travel at much higher speeds. The buildings and structures that currently frame the road at a few locations will be completely removed. The narrow sidewalks will be retained, but they will be shifted outside of narrow planting strips on both sides of the road. The plan does not specifically call for any type of landscape improvements, so while that may be a possibility, it is not typical of GDOT projects.



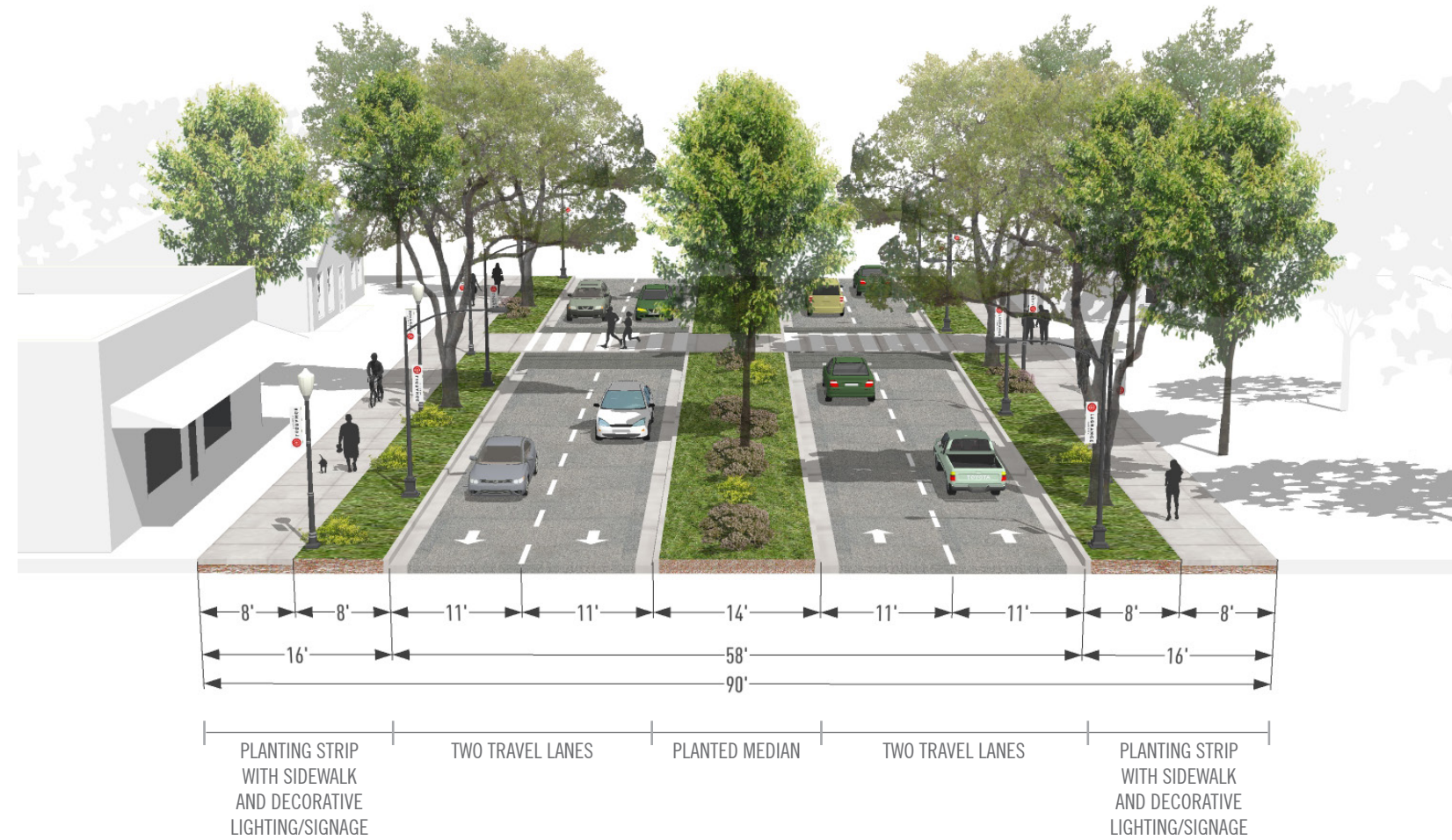


# What could Hamilton Road look like in the future?



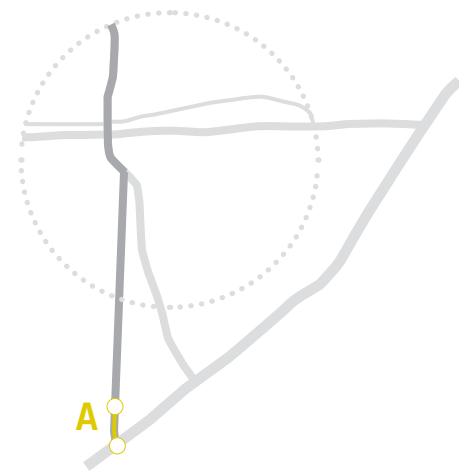
## Condition A: From I-85 to Whitesville Road

Recommendations for Hamilton Road improvements build upon the transformational nature of the existing GDOT proposal, while also proposing parkway conditions for the thoroughfare. As vehicle capacity is called for in the plans, these recommendations retain the four travel lanes. In order to add valuable landscaping, the center turn lane is exchanged for a beautiful planted median. To compliment these natural features, wide planting strips are added on the shoulder of both sides of the road. Trees and greenery planted in these areas not only begin to create a tree canopy over the road, but they also provide a sense of intimacy and beauty for drivers. The outside of the public right-of-way is home to wide sidewalks. Ornamental lampposts light both the streets and sidewalks, providing a sense of safety for all.



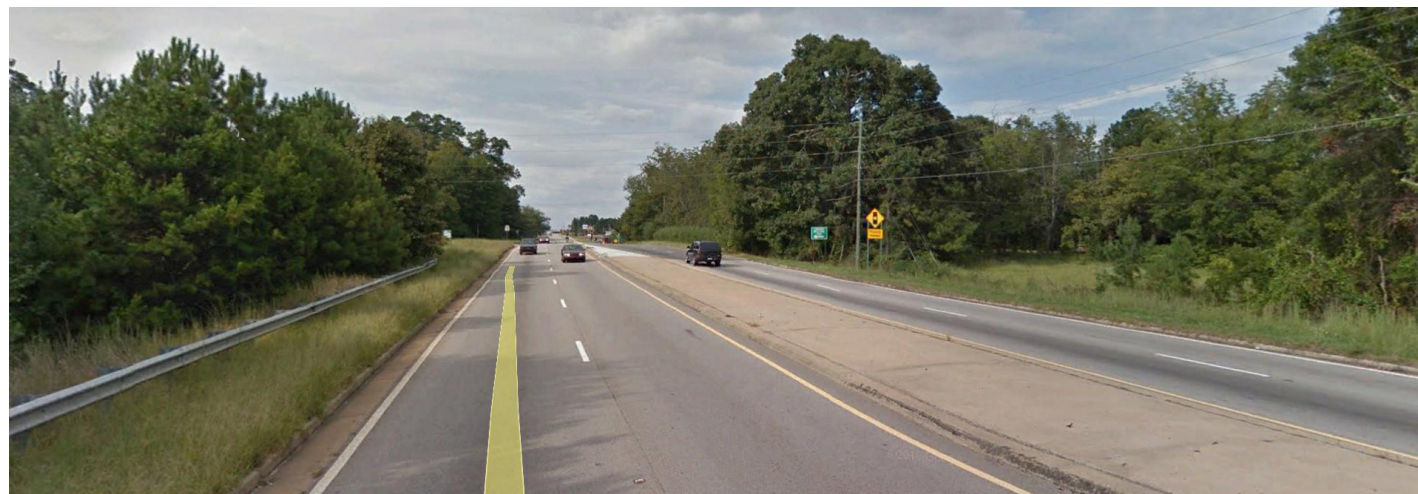
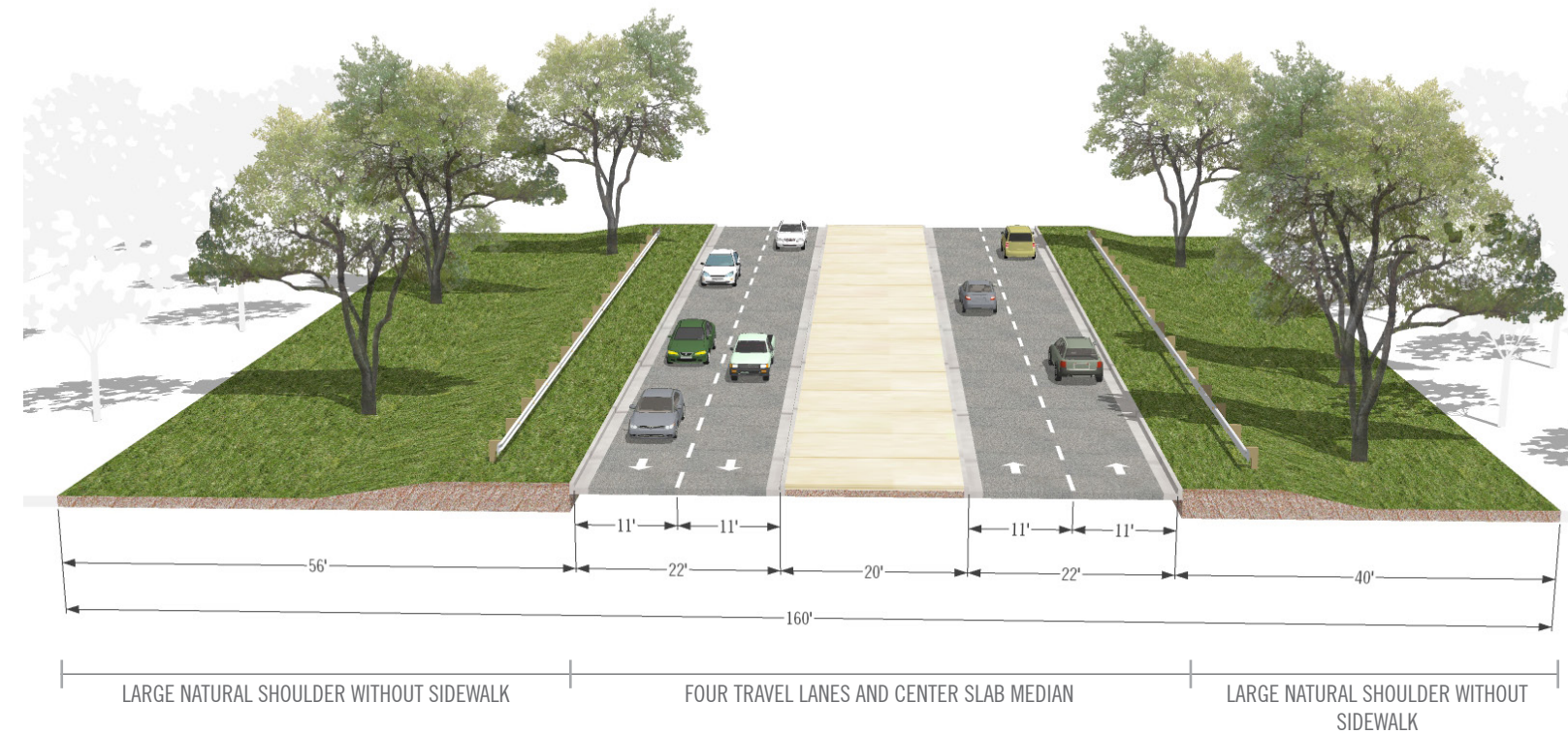


# What does Whitesville Road look like today?



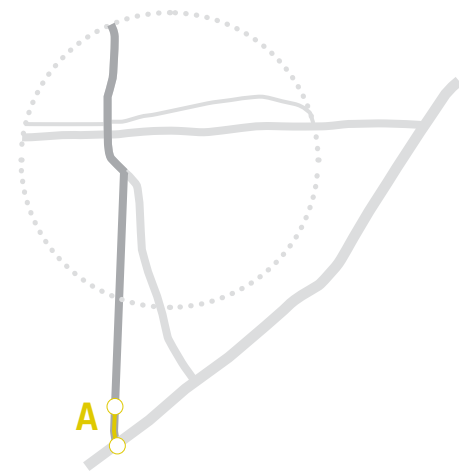
## Condition A: From I-85 to Pegasus Parkway

The southernmost strip of Whitesville Road varies greatly in its conditions from Pegasus Parkway to its intersection with I-85. While the number of lanes and street arrangements are not consistent, one thing that is constant is the feeling that this segment of the road was built for cars with no attention to the possibility of pedestrian life. The entire strip contains four travel lanes, but with turn lanes included, some portions are as wide as seven lanes. The stretch includes some kind of raised curb median for entirety. No segment contains sidewalks in any form, and the highway guardrails give the shoulder an uninviting interstate feeling. Most of the shoulders are simply planted with high grasses that are left to grow and occasionally mowed.



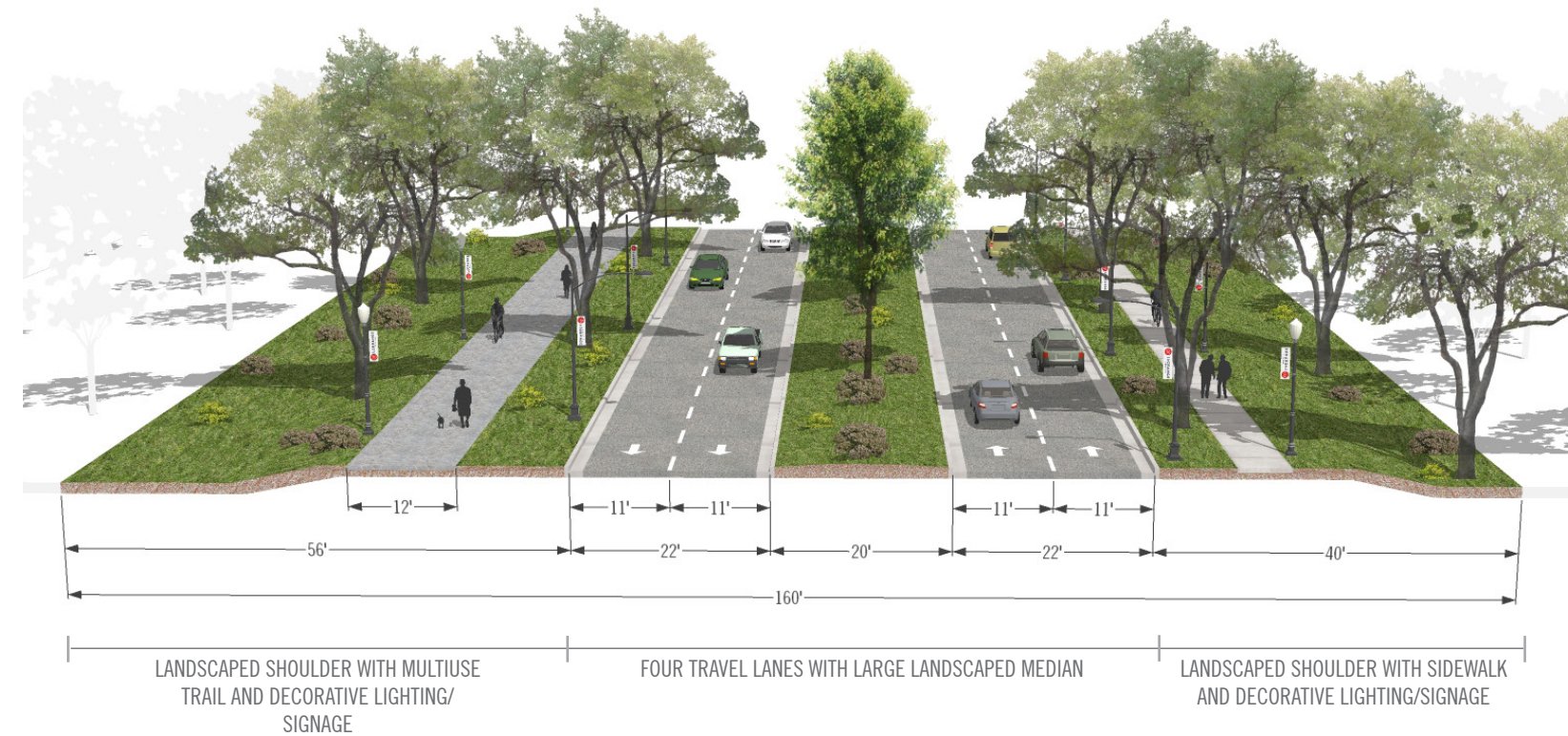


# What could Whitesville Road look like in the future?



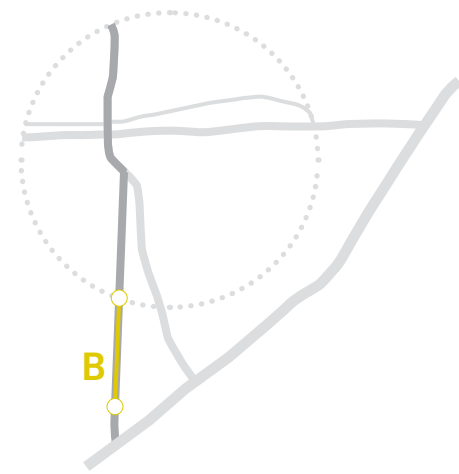
## Condition A: From I-85 to Pegasus Parkway

Recommendations for the southern portion of Whitesville Road consider ways to transform this segment of the thoroughfare-- with its abnormally large right-of-way and natural shoulders-- into an inviting parkway that escorts drivers from I-85 into the more developed portions of the neighborhoods to the north and eventually to downtown. Plans keep the four travel lanes in place. The large slab median is planted and transformed into a lovely landscaped area. With the guardrails removed, the wide shoulders can become home to additional lush landscaping, a sidewalk, a multiuse path, and ornamental lampposts. This section of the proposed parkway can be somewhat special, as it can embrace the more untamed and natural setting of trees and plants that currently exist at the edges of the public right-of-way, as opposed to other areas of these corridors that may feel more curated and strategically planted.



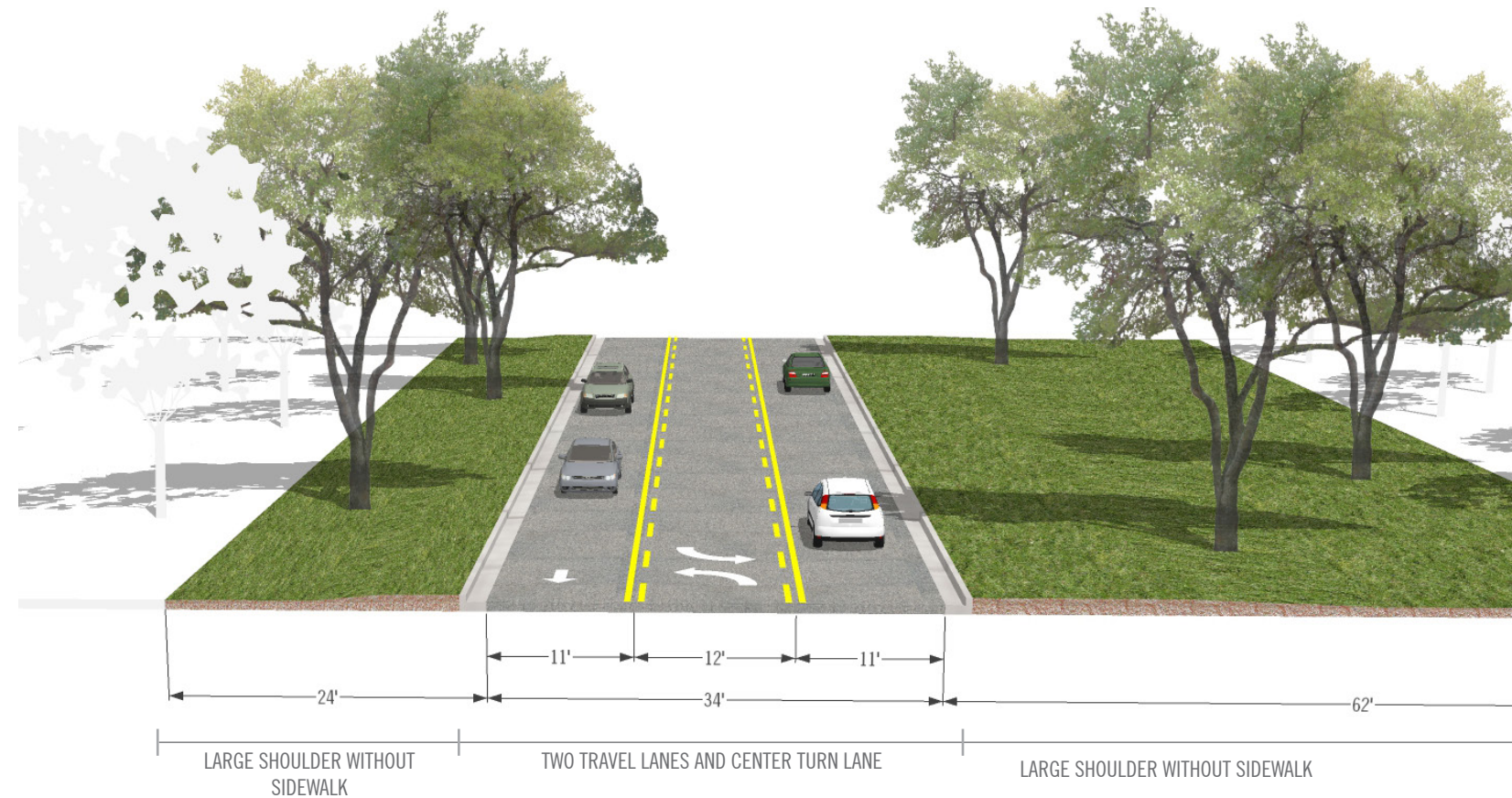
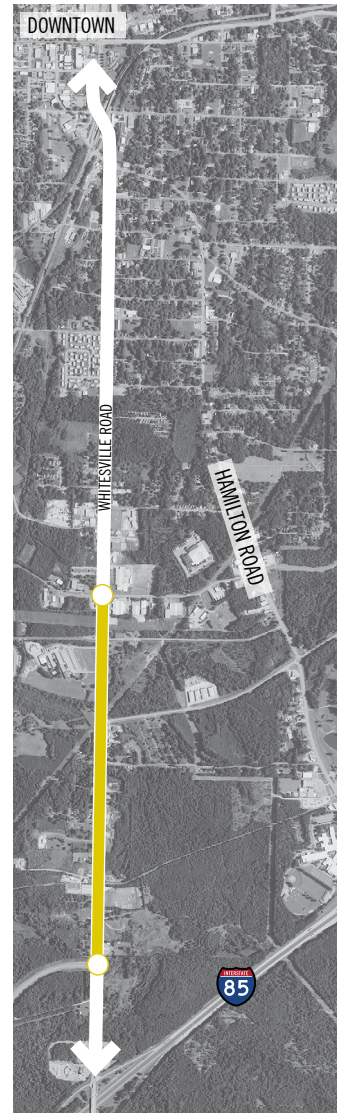


# What does Whitesville Road look like today?



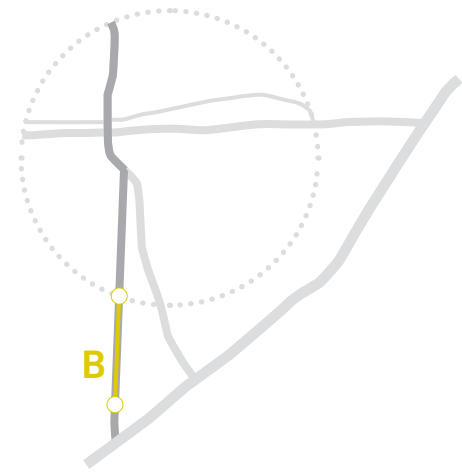
## Condition B: From Pegasus Parkway to Lukken Industrial Drive

This area of Whitesville Road is consistent in regards to its three lanes and lack of adjacent development. The long strip contains two travel lanes for its length as well as a center turn lane. The road has very little shoulder area, and at most places, the adjacent land drops down to enable drainage. There is no hint of a sidewalk to be found. Most development sits far back from the road with large open land separating uses from the road's edge. Very little landscaping exists in front of such uses, and in the large vacant areas between active uses, most landscaping is simply the natural and raw form of existing local woodlands.



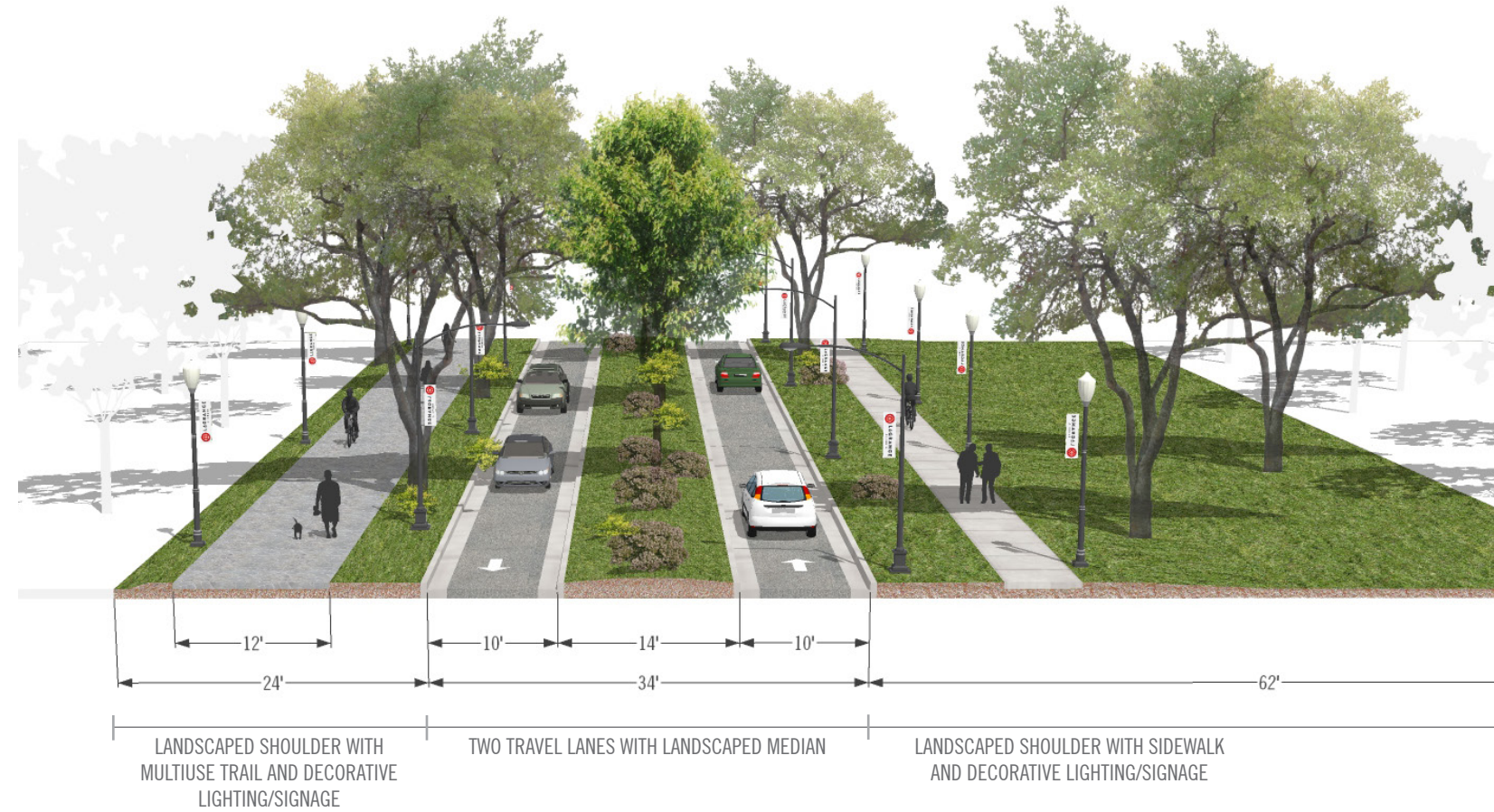


# What could Whitesville Road look like in the future?



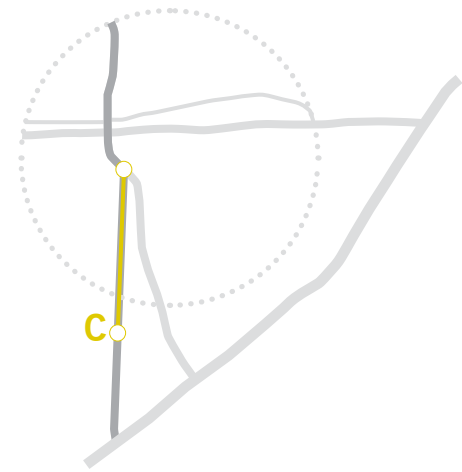
## Condition B: From Pegasus Parkway to Lukken Industrial Drive

The included recommendations for this portion of Whitesville Road imagine a parkway setting that is a happy middle ground between the natural woodland conditions that currently dominate the area and the more formal streetscapes that will be added in other areas of these corridors. The current turn lane is removed, and the parkway environment is enhanced through the creation of a planted median in its place. The lush greenlife in this area— as well as the additional landscaping on the shoulders— hugs the road and creates a feeling of intimacy for drivers. A large multiuse trail and a sidewalk are added to the large swaths of vacant land on both sides of the road. Ornamental lampposts and streetlights provide a sense of safety for pedestrians and drivers alike.



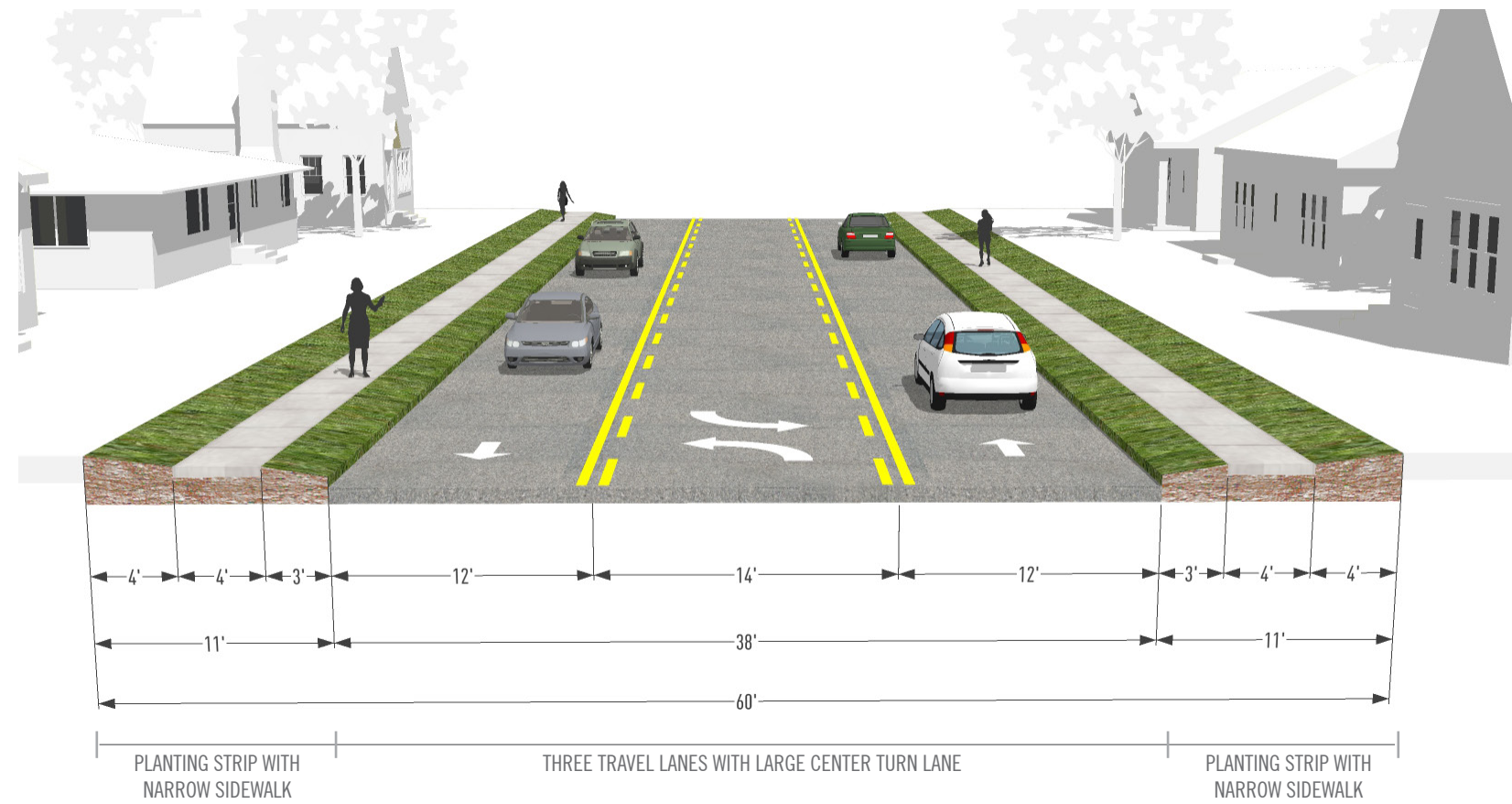
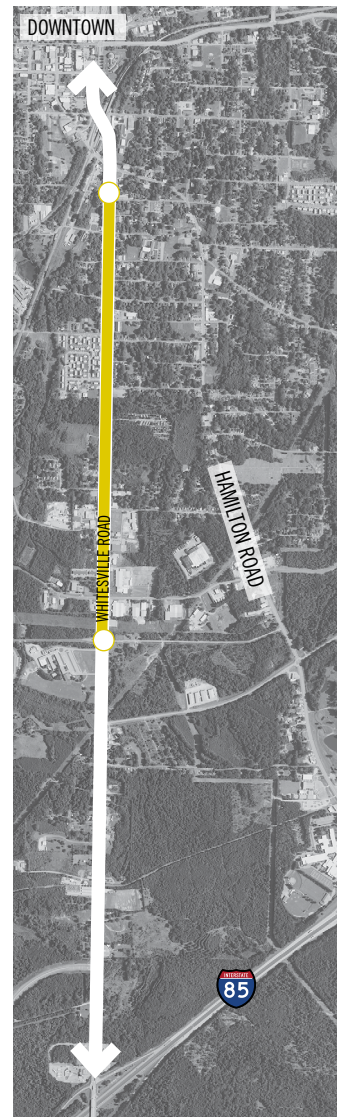


# What does Whitesville Road look like today?



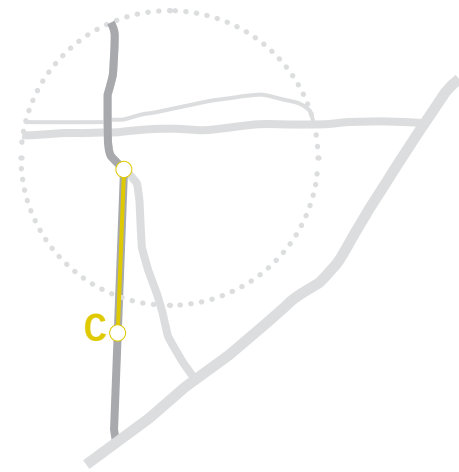
## Condition C: From Lukken Industrial Drive to Bridge

The great majority of Whitesville Road between downtown LaGrange and I-85 is of a similar condition. With the exception of a few unique intersections, most of the road is a three-lane corridor made up of two travel lanes and a large turn lane in the center. The roadbed lacks curbs or formal edges at a number of locations. The street is flanked by extremely narrow sidewalks that are often overgrown and in poor condition. At many locations, sidewalks exist on only one side of the street.





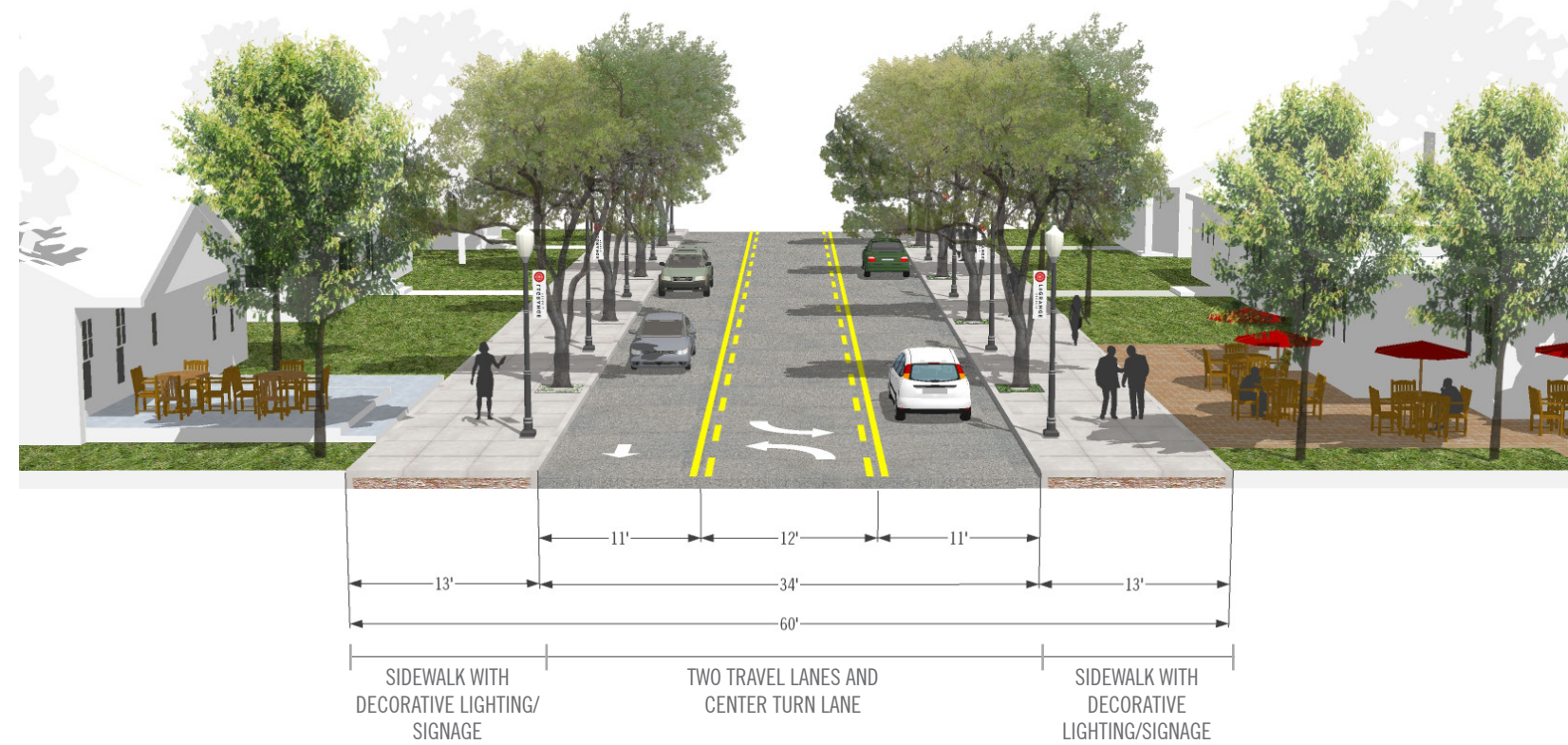
# What could Whitesville Road look like in the future?



## Condition C: From Lukken Industrial Drive to Bridge

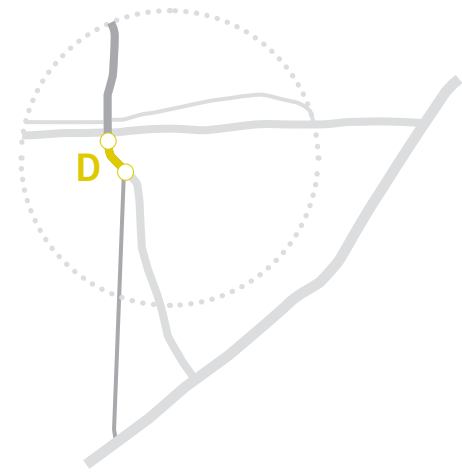
Recommendations for this portion of Whitesville Road envision the street as a neighborhood commercial corridor that offers a home for many of the foundational functions that exist in connected communities. Widened sidewalks not only provide connectivity and access for residents, but they also compliment commercial activities. In addition, the sidewalks house lush street trees and ornamental lampposts that frame the street for drivers and cyclists. Long term options suggest the removal of the wide turn lane to allow for the introduction of two dedicated bike lanes, connecting many neighborhoods to downtown and more common daily services via bike.

LONG TERM OPTION



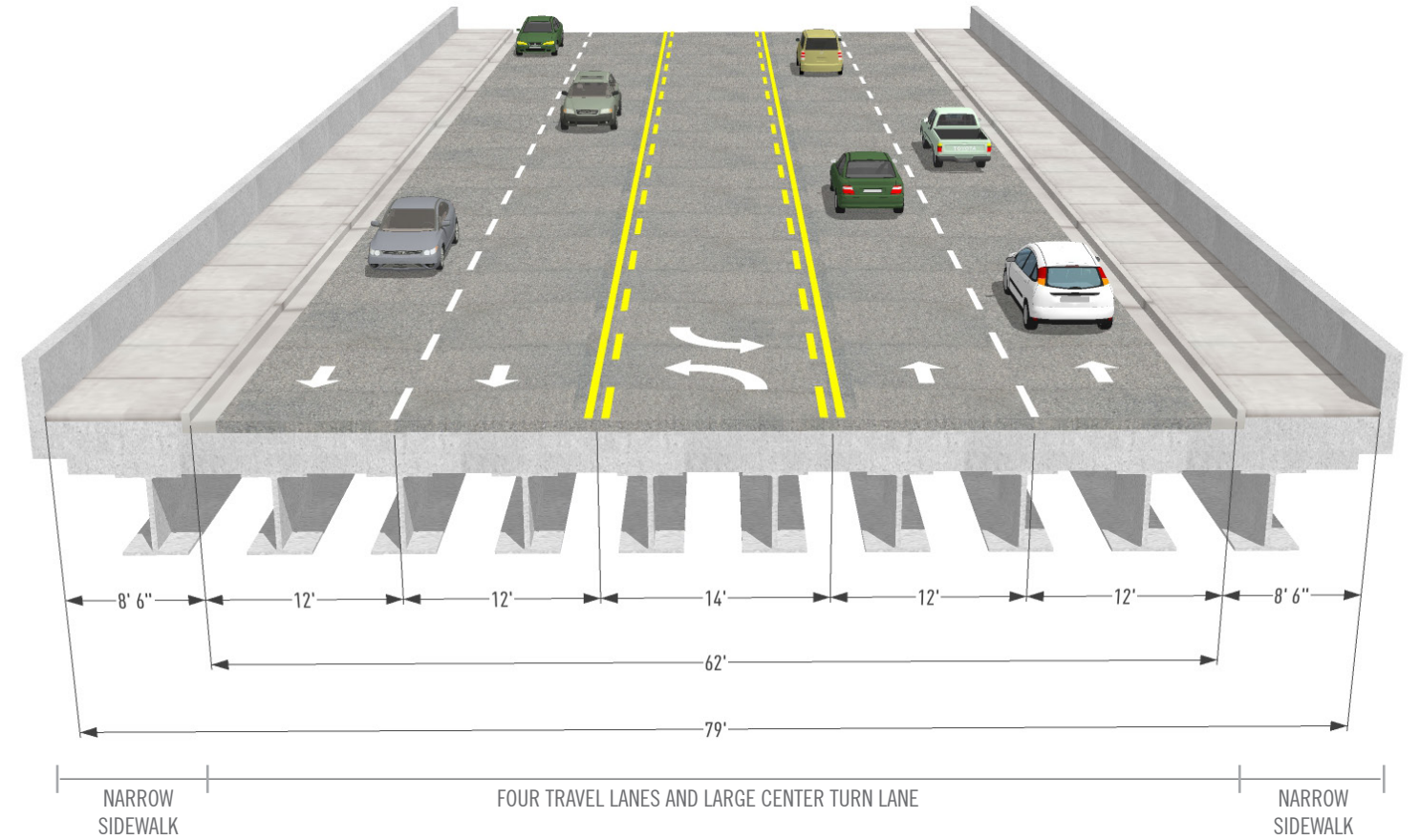
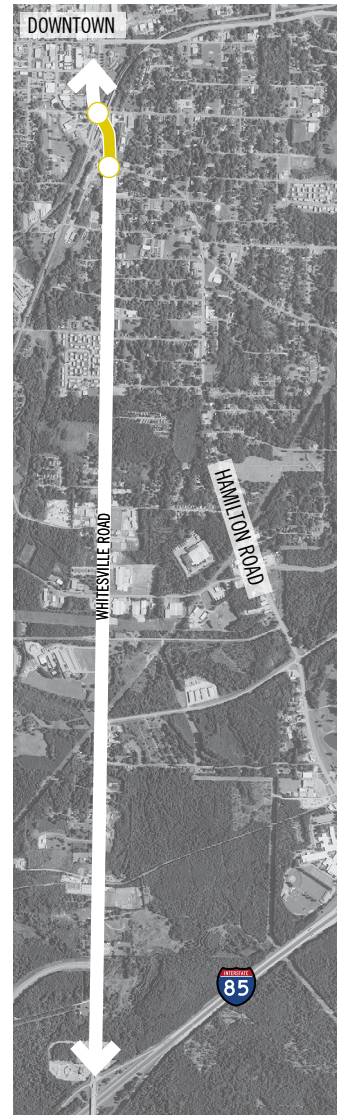


# What does Whitesville Road look like today?



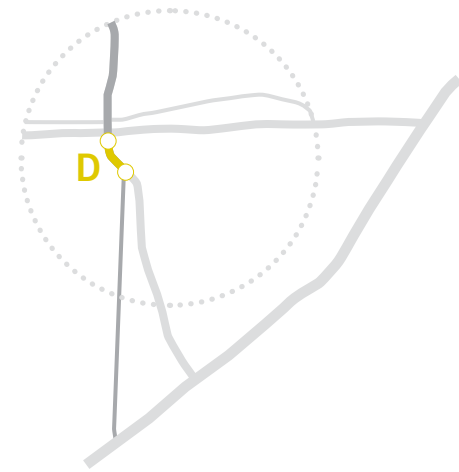
## Condition D: At Bridge

The lengthy stretch of Whitesville Road that serves as an overpass across the historic rail lines is a pivotal connection between southern neighborhoods and downtown. The existing bridge yields a crude and harsh environment that serves little more than automobile functions. The bridge is composed of five lanes: four large travel lanes and one very large turn lane, despite the fact that there are no opportunities for turning on the bridge. The structure does feature one sidewalk, with some portions having two. Unfortunately, their narrow width and bleak conditions do not invite regular use. Extending more than a third of a mile with no activities on it, the bridge currently serves as only a path that connects other uses north and south of it. The unwelcoming environment and lack of uses mean that the bridge exists in sharp contrast to the more friendly stretches of Whitesville Road.



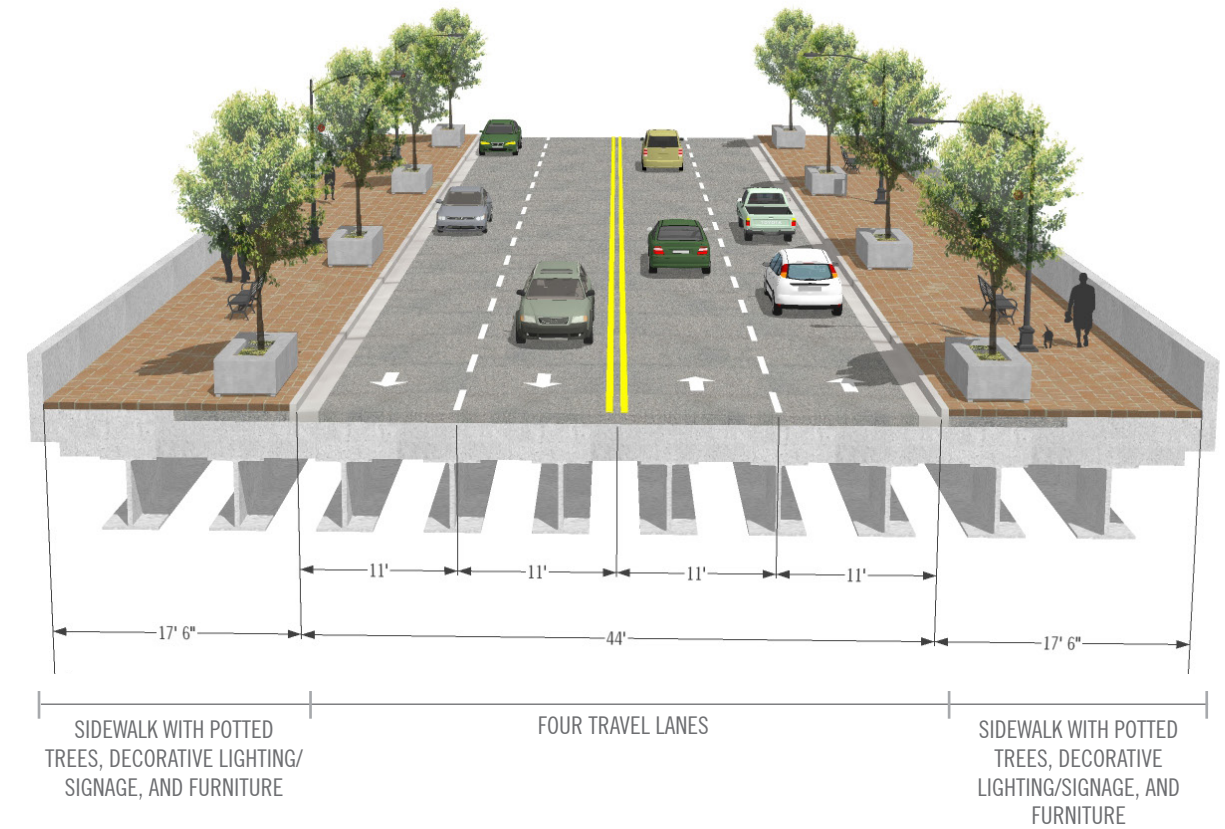


# What could Whitesville Road look like in the future?



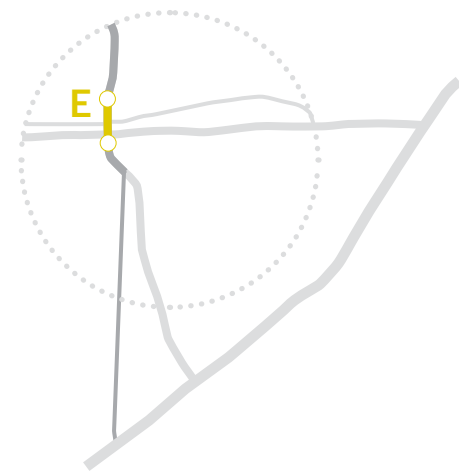
## Condition D: At Bridge

In order to connect a great deal of neighborhoods with downtown LaGrange, the recommendations for this portion of the road imagine the bridge as an extension of the more inviting character of both the surrounding neighborhoods and downtown. The use of elements recommended for other portions of the road creates a consistency that will knit together all sections of the thoroughfare. The travel lanes are slightly narrowed to slow traffic speeds. The turn lane is removed for most of its extent and allows for the expansion of the sidewalk on both sides of the street. The improved sidewalks are given a more urban treatment that includes potted street trees, benches, ornamental lampposts, and paving materials similar to those seen in downtown LaGrange.



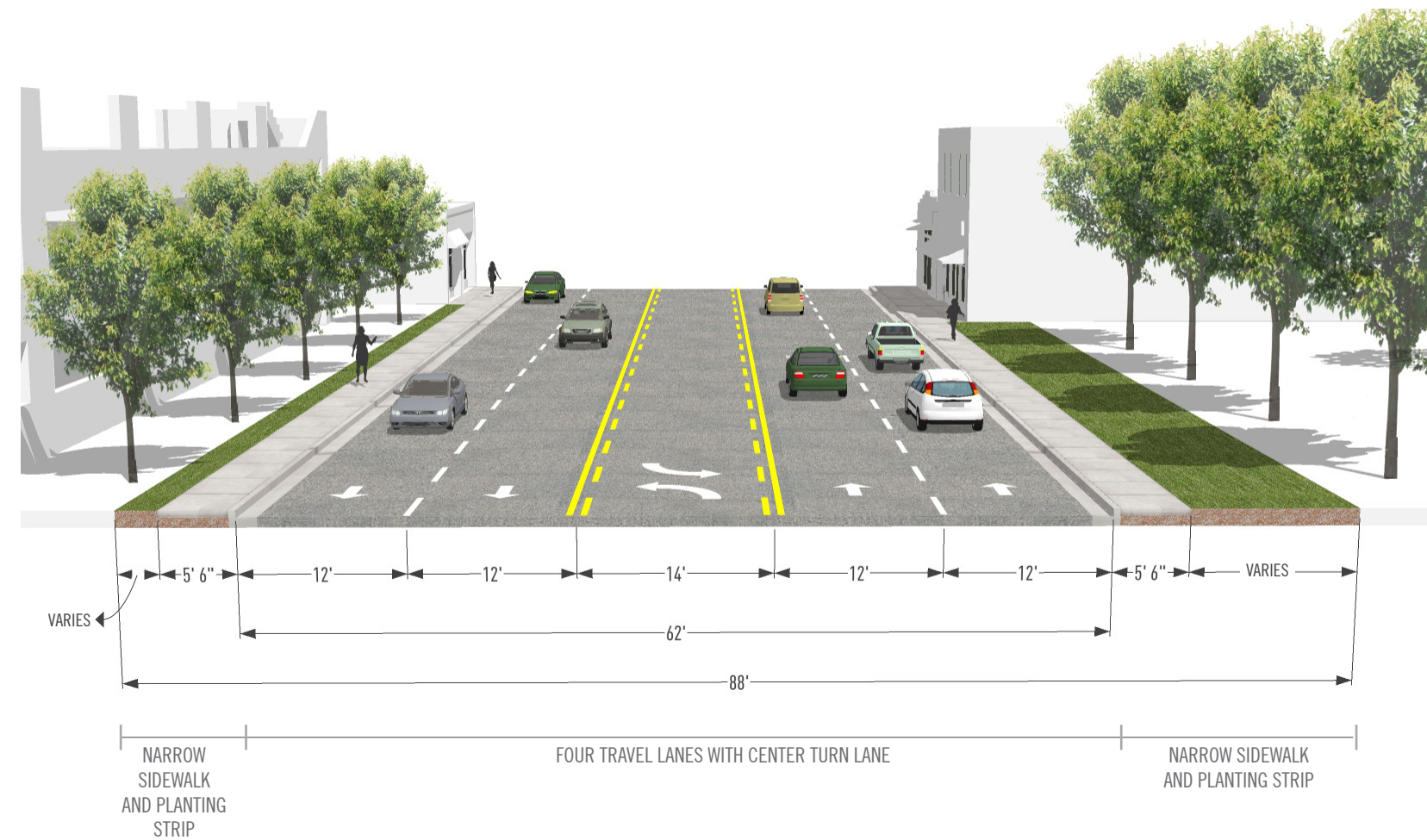
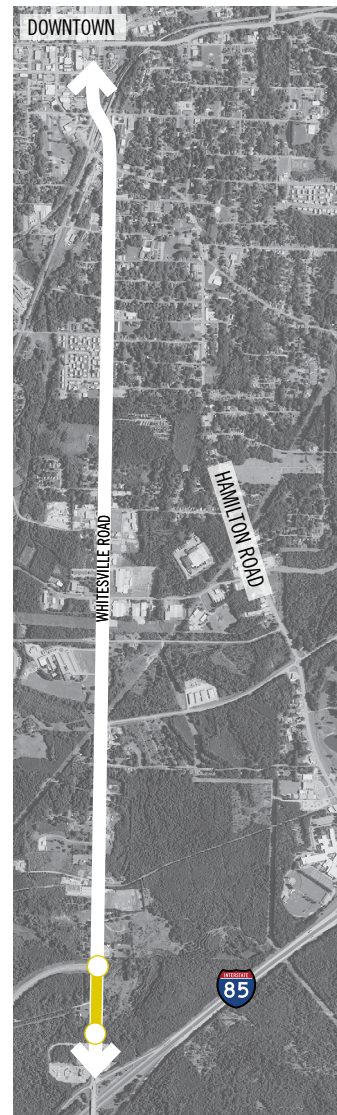


# What does Whitesville Road (Morgan Street) look like today?



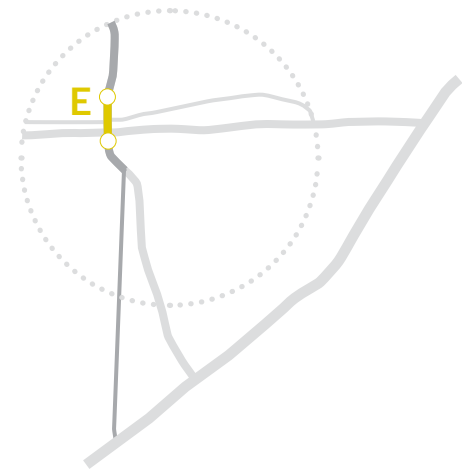
## Condition E: Downtown

The northernmost portion of Whitesville Road (Morgan Street) before it enters downtown is a vital gateway that connects the core of the city with the neighborhoods to the south. While the street is immediately connected to other active and walkable areas of downtown, it never takes on comparable conditions that spur similar dynamics. The street is currently five lanes, including four travel lanes and a wide center turn lane. The street is framed with two narrow sidewalks and small planting strips, which exist in sharp contrast to the large setbacks of some surrounding structures. Few buildings engage the street on a pedestrian level, which reinforces its car-driven design.



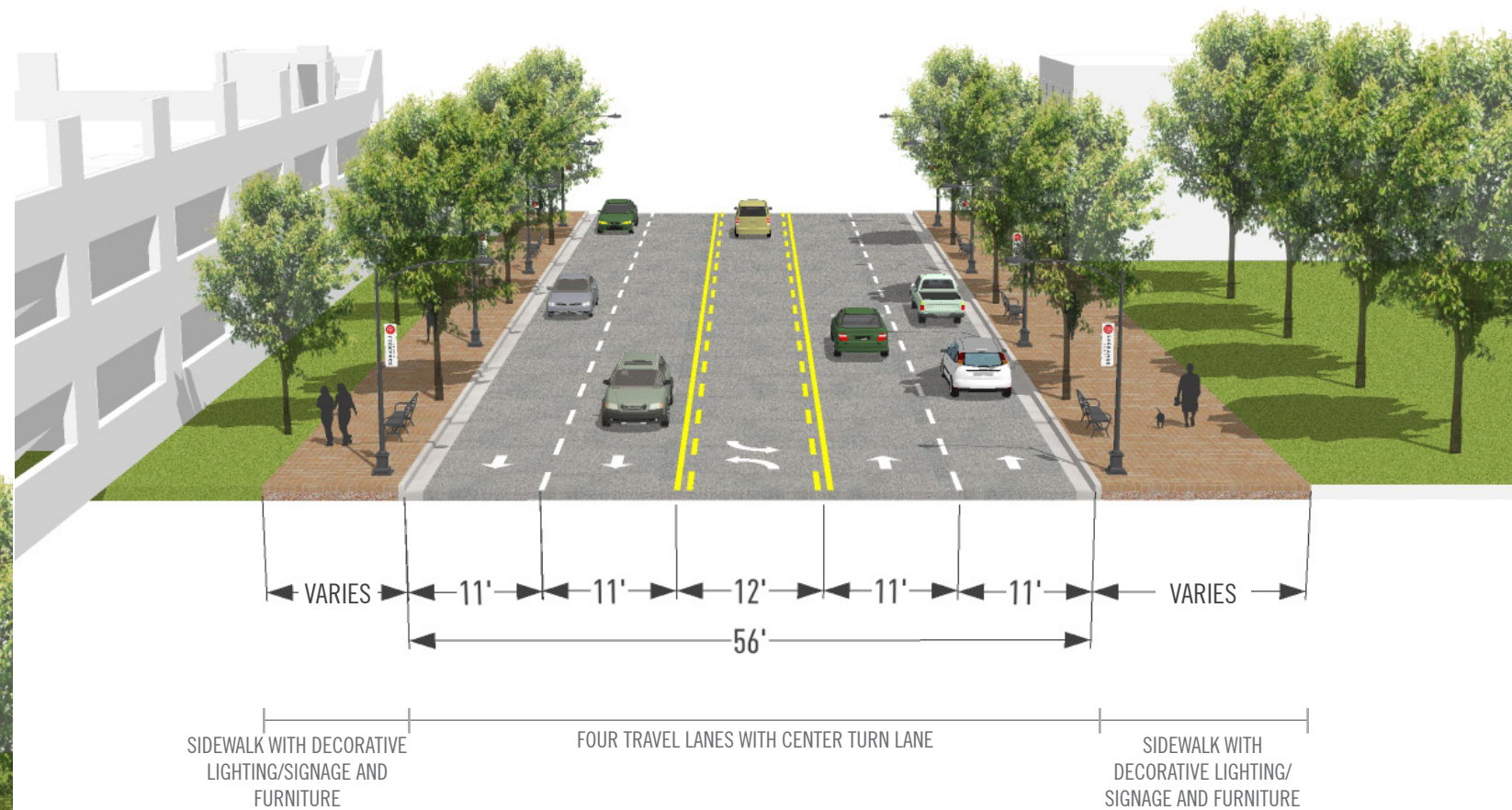
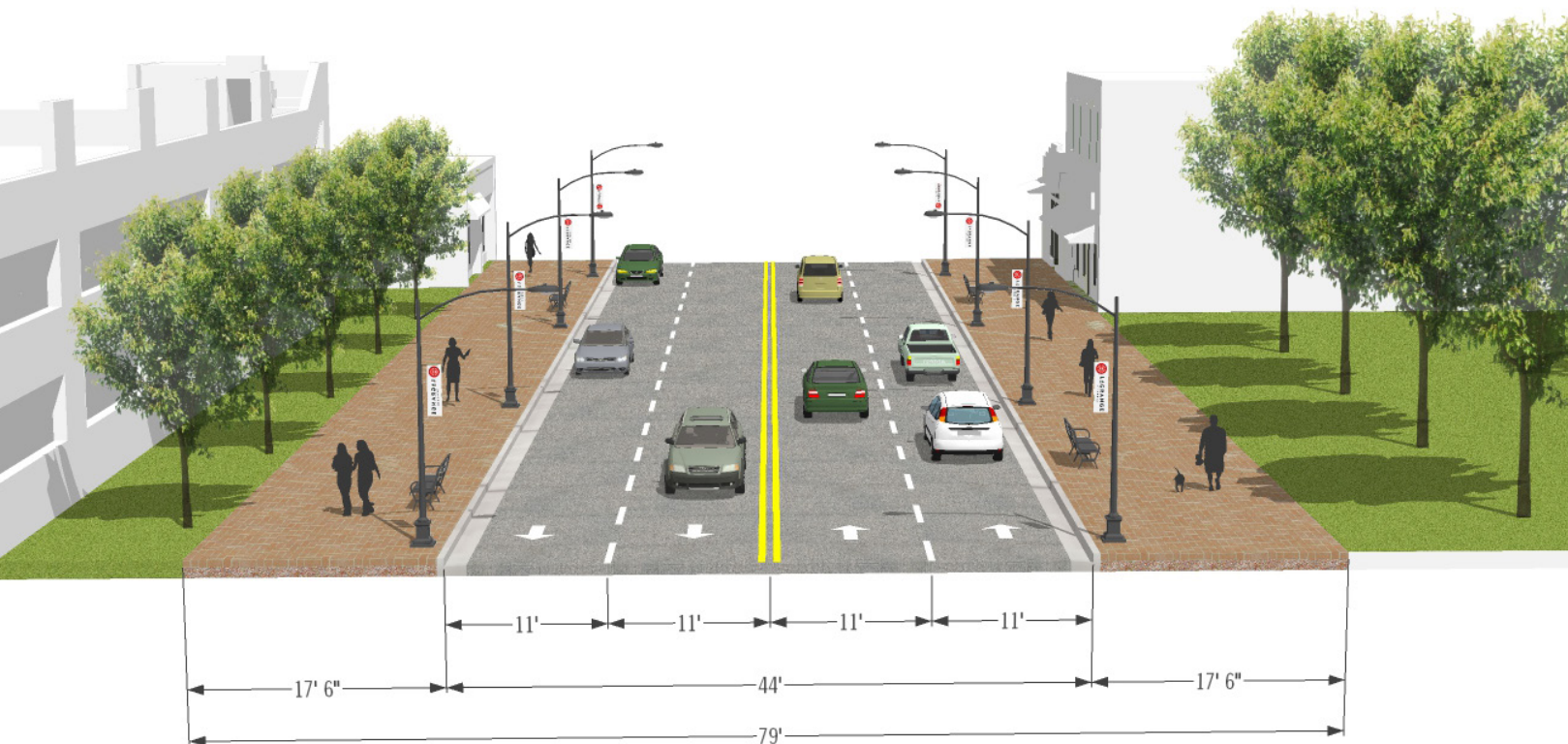


# What could Whitesville Road (Morgan Street) look like in the future?

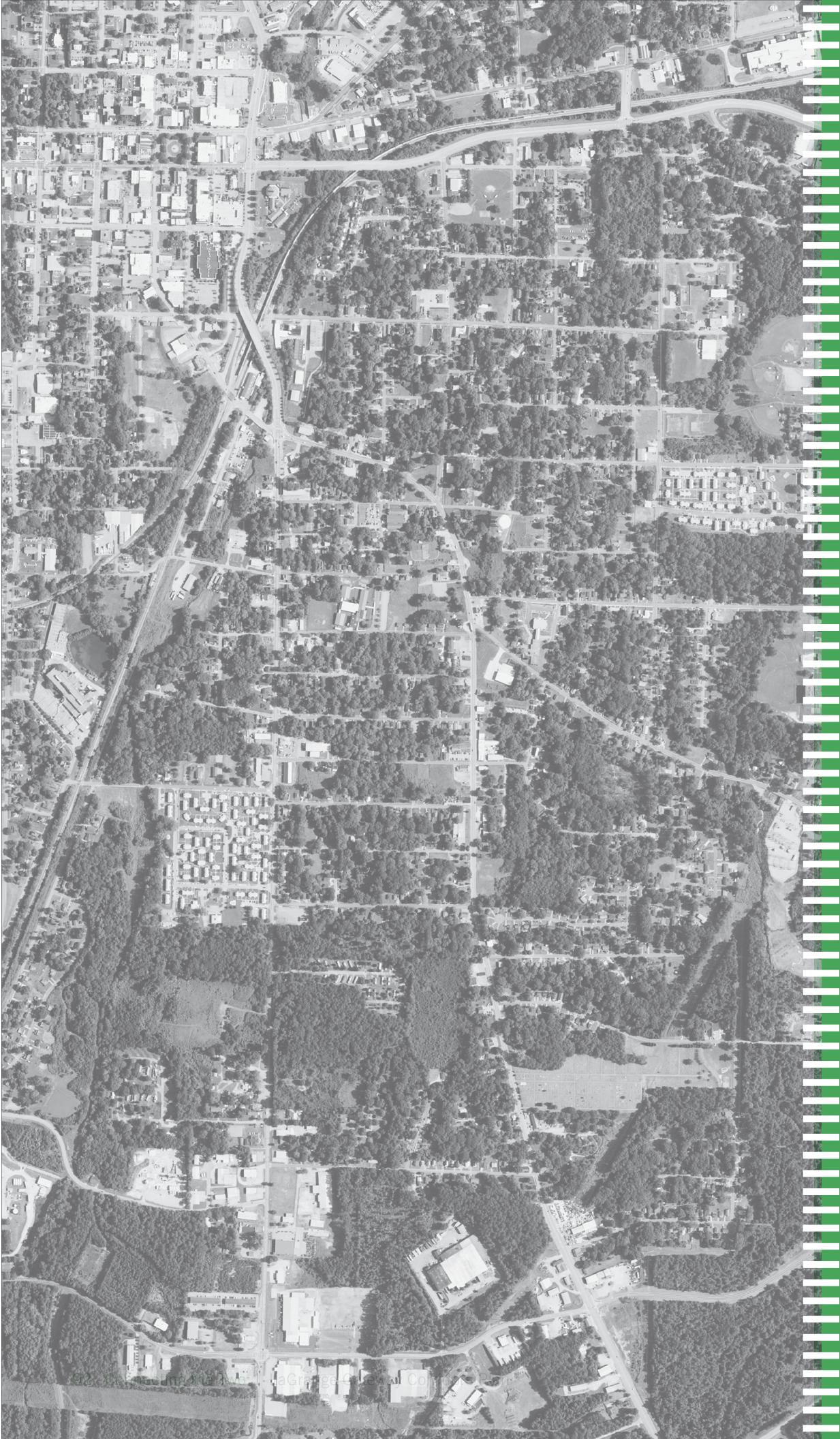


## Condition E: Downtown

The recommendations for this portion of Whitesville Road (Morgan Street) serve to connect it to other uses and users in the city. The size of travel lanes and the center turn lane is slightly reduced to support the expansion of the sidewalks, whose wider character will encourage walkability. The sidewalks also include a furniture zone, which provides a setting in which benches and ornamental lampposts can be strategically added.







# 4

## CONNECTING THE TWO

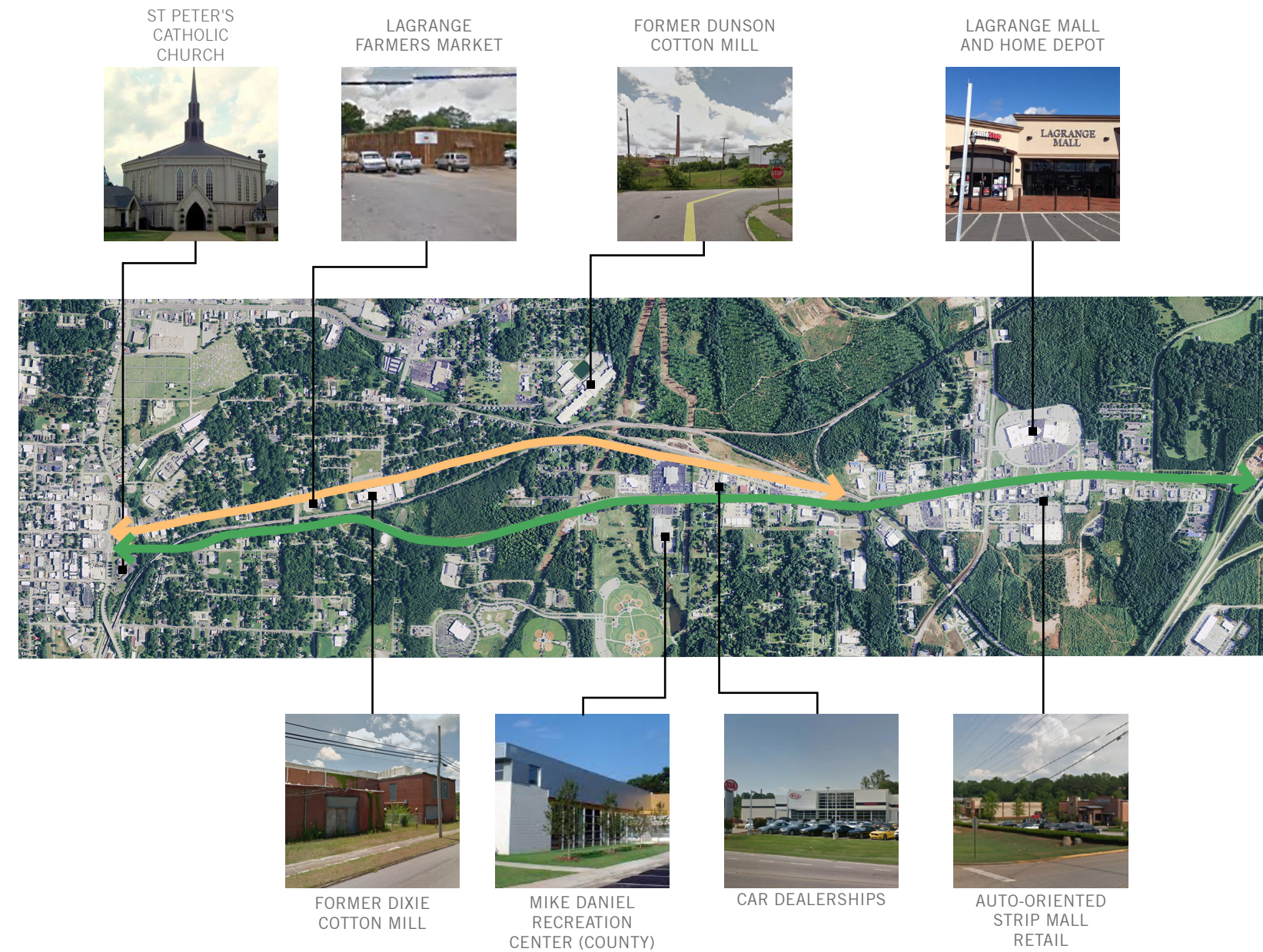
- Existing Conditions
- Enhanced Mobility Opportunities
- Development Opportunities



# What does development around Lafayette Parkway and Greenville Street look like today?

Lafayette Parkway has a split personality between its eastern and western halves, marked by the highway overpass at the CSX rail line. On the east it is a typical exurban commercial strip highway, lined by single-use / outparcel buildings surrounded by surface parking with multiple curb cuts. Large commercial uses include the LaGrange Mall, big-box retail and auto dealerships, and self-storage. Access management and stormwater control are critical issues for the long-term sustainability of this area.

On the west beyond the overpass, Lafayette is joined by Greenville Street to form the northern parkway couplet. Existing development is a blend of small residential or commercial properties remaining from the days when Greenville Street was the primary entry; blended with more classic suburban uses such as the Calumet Center office park and the First Tee golf course. Only recently has development more at home in the eastern half begun to appear here, like the WalMart and the new Nissan of LaGrange. Yet there are still distinctive buildings that provide local character to the couplet such as the Dixie and Dunson mills, the farmer's market, St. Peters Catholic Church, and many historic homes and small commercial buildings along Greenville Street.





## What does development around Hamilton Road and Whitesville Road look like?

Existing development around Hamilton and Whitesville is quite different from the existing conditions of the Lafayette / Greenville couplet. While there is some similarity in the exurban character of Hamilton at the I-85 interchange, for the most part these roads are rural highways with rural uses until they enter the urbanized portion of the city, where they then traverse small-scale, somewhat distressed neighborhoods with a scattering of local businesses like Jabaley's Paint & Appliance. Significant properties include the former American Legion golf course, Southview Cemetery, Benjamin Hill Homes, and a number of schools.

Another major difference between the two couplets is that the Hamilton / Whitesville pair intersect just south of downtown, while the Lafayette / Greenville pair run parallel to the courthouse square. This intersection area is where many of the old railroad facilities were concentrated; and though most have been demolished there is still a railroad presence that is quite unique to this part of the city. Activating the rail corridor at this point would help transition the southern parkway couplet into downtown while remaining true to the city's roots.





### Enhanced Mobility

People are changing the way they move around their cities. City officials understand that and are increasingly encouraging developments and infrastructure projects that provide its residents and visitors the opportunity to use multiple modes of transportation as opposed to those that depend on cars alone in order to thrive.

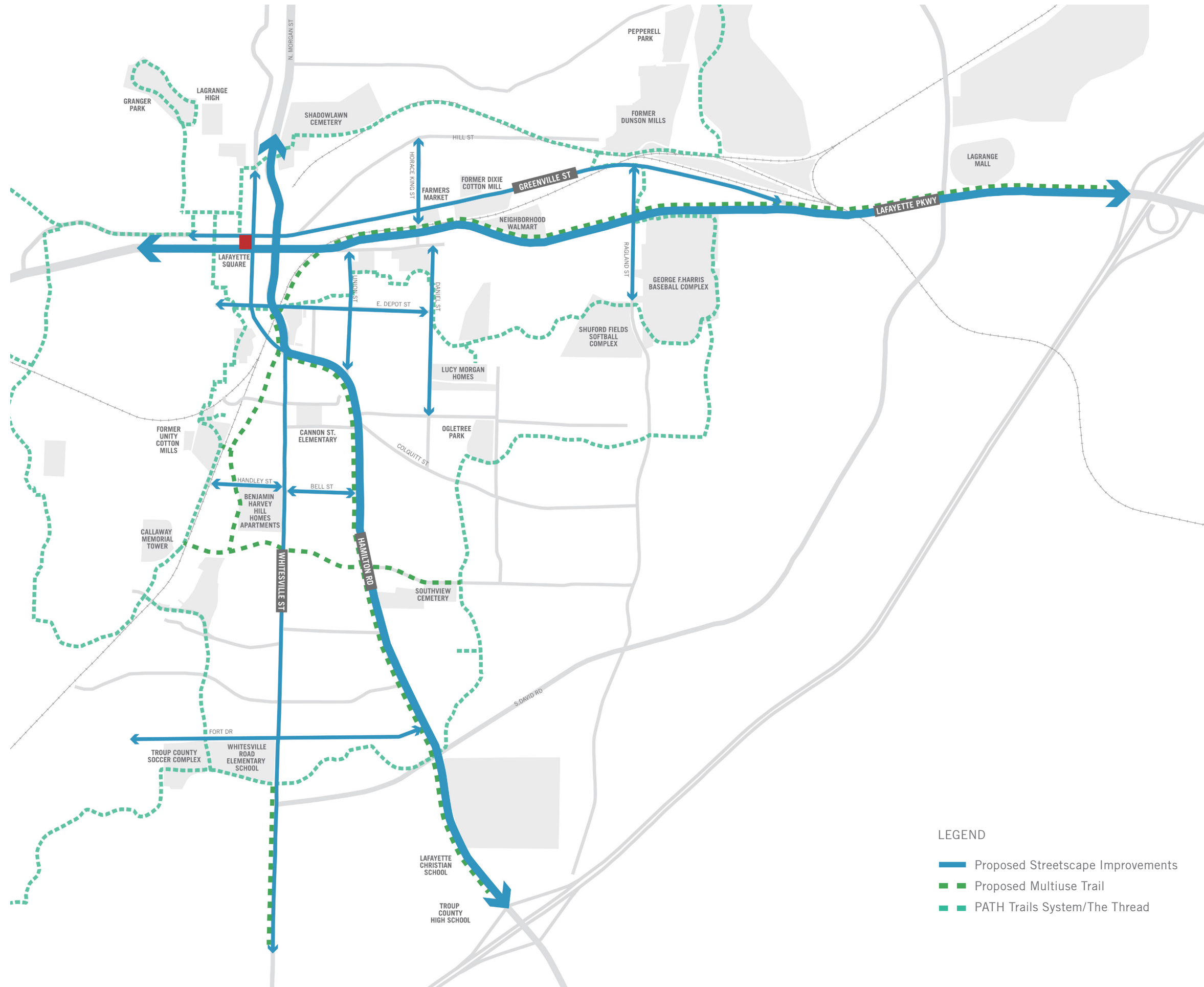
A multimodal city is not only inclusive, but also healthier. While some cities around the country are playing catch-up with the rapid growth of their population and the alternative transportation options its inhabitants are choosing, others are being proactive and beginning to plan for such shift.

LaGrange belongs to the latter category. An early proof of that is the Thread project which will create a multiuse path connecting important destinations such as neighborhoods, parks, schools and downtown.

The Gateway Corridors plan seeks to build upon the layer of mobility provided by The Thread. The multi use trails proposed along Hamilton Road and Lafayette Parkway will make use of existing right-of-way and provide another level of connectivity within the trails system that will serve as companions to the parkways and eventually be integrated into linear parks systems.

The Gateway Corridors also proposes long-term implementation of bike lanes along Whitesville Road and Greenville Street that will provide linkage between services and amenities at a neighborhood scale.

Along with these improvements, this plan also identifies secondary streets that should be considered for streetscape improvements in order to provide a more complete network between the couplets and the neighborhoods around them.



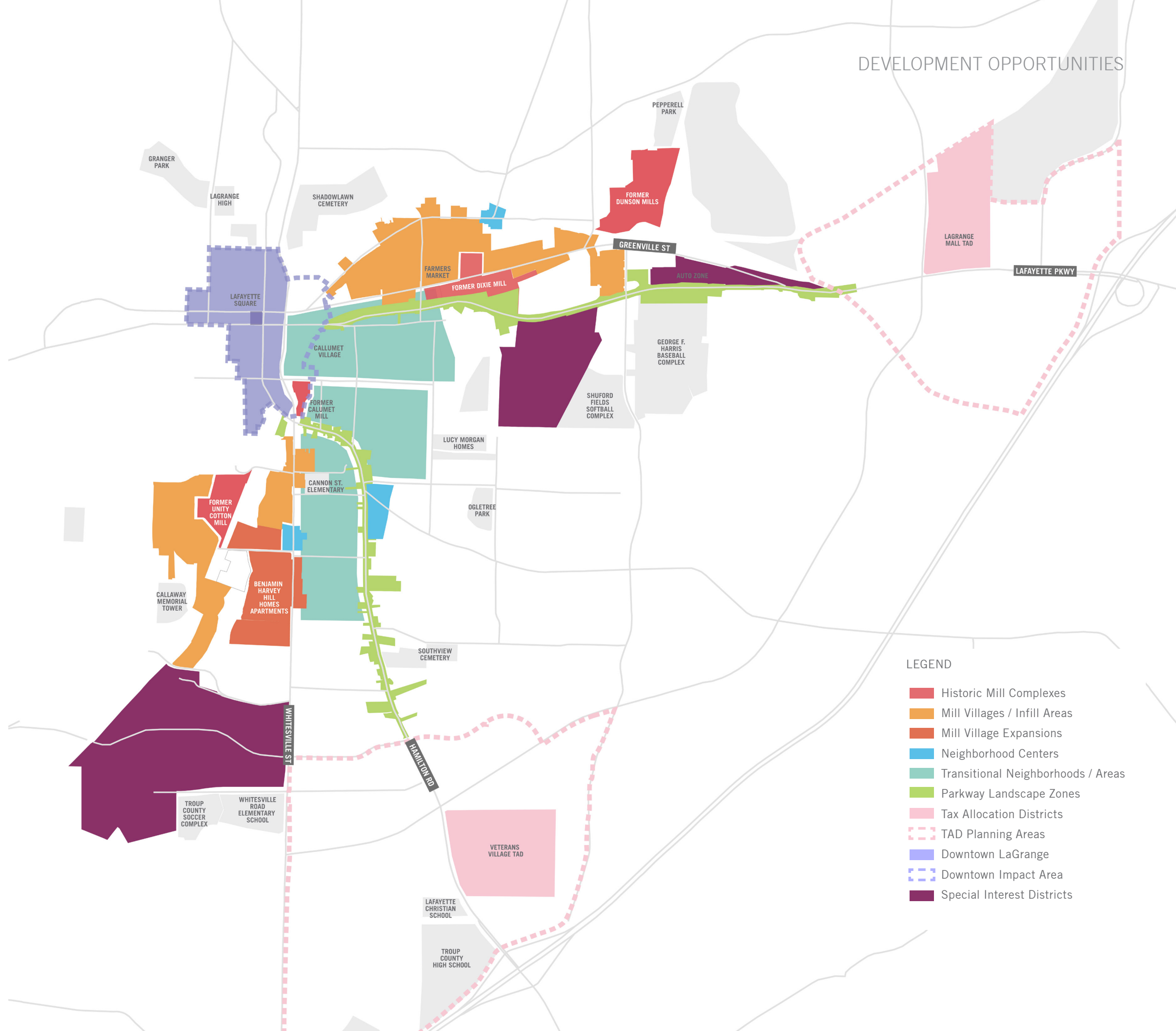


# What future development opportunities are there?

## Development Opportunities:

The invention of the parkway was never simply about a road in a park, but merged landscape architecture, transportation innovations, and economic development in a harmonious ensemble. With such a strong foundation for new economic development leveraged by the structure of the parkway couplets in LaGrange, it is essential to begin to plan for investment in the southeast quadrant by identifying areas where distinct next steps can be taken to realize the area's potential. There are three action categories and geographies that relate to these next steps: places where capital projects and public space improvements can be accelerated to stimulate investment; places where additional planning is needed to fully take advantage of pending transportation projects; and places where organizational structures need to be created to change, enhance or refocus existing land uses.

The existing historic mills and their villages are places where immediate action can be taken. This could include adaptively reusing the mill structures; undertaking a program of residential renovations or new construction; redeveloping key parcels like Benjamin Hill Homes; building new parks and public amenities; and improving the Gateway Corridor cross-sections. Conversely, additional area planning needs to take place in transitional neighborhoods affected by parkway construction, and in the larger commercial nodes anchored by the existing TADs. Finally, to maximize the design impact of the parkway landscape zones, special districts could be created in several places to rally property and business owners around long-term improvements to better link their investments to the pastoral parkway environment.



**LEGEND**

- Historic Mill Complexes
- Mill Villages / Infill Areas
- Mill Village Expansions
- Neighborhood Centers
- Transitional Neighborhoods / Areas
- Parkway Landscape Zones
- Tax Allocation Districts
- TAD Planning Areas
- Downtown LaGrange
- Downtown Impact Area
- Special Interest Districts



From left to right: Schmidt's Artist Lofts; Rocky Mount NC mill village; Little Five Points, Atlanta; Guthrie Park, Riverside IL; East Lake Commons



**HISTORIC MILL COMPLEXES**

LaGrange is fortunate to have at least six historic mill complexes that are relatively intact, some of which are still involved in production. Most of these could be considered cultural landscapes complete with front office structures, rail spurs, ponds, and park-like grounds. Three mills fall within the Gateway Corridors area, and all could be considered part of either the Greenville or Whitesville street environments.

Because they occupy such key positions along or near these streets, the mill complexes should be preserved and converted to active uses such as residential lofts / senior housing, restaurants, or creative office space. Dixie Mill in particular is an ideal candidate for conversion because of its Greenville frontage, proximity to downtown and current use as storage.

**MILL VILLAGE INFILL / EXPANSION**

Much of the traditional housing stock in the southeastern quadrant of the city are products of mill development and company housing practices. These mill villages are similar in style and clustered around their industrial cores on tight networks of streets and blocks.

While in generally good condition, these villages could be strengthened through sensitive renovations, infill construction on vacant lots, selective new development at increased densities, and infrastructure upgrades working with local partners such as DASH and the LaGrange Housing Authority.

In addition, the redevelopment of Ben Hill Homes and surroundings should reflect the design language of Unity Mill and its village, and maximize the opportunity to connect back to the mill complex through street improvements and new public spaces.

**NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS**

Neighborhood centers are small, locally-oriented districts that reflect the patterns of the community that they serve. They are dominated by one- and two-story storefront buildings and emphasize historic preservation and compatible new construction.

Most of LaGrange's neighborhood centers are associated with mill villages and company stores such as the small commercial nodes on Miller Street and Lincoln Street. While some of these have active commercial uses, others are vacant with buildings in need of repair. These areas should be targeted for streetscape improvements, facade grants, and other economic development supports.

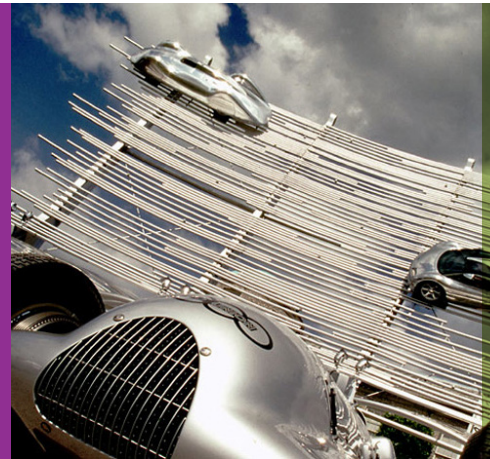
**TRANSITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS / AREAS**

Single-family and two-family housing continued to be developed in the city after the early start provided by the mill villages. These neighborhoods tend to be more dispersed; although many of them still exhibit the rectangular street and block system common around the mills. With the upgrading of Hamilton Road into a parkway, these neighborhoods – some already showing signs of blight – may be negatively impacted.

Because of the physical changes associated with right-of-way acquisition and street closures, focused redevelopment planning should be conducted in these areas to examine how the parkway construction might be leveraged to yield new street connections, expanded public spaces and denser development on key parcels.



From left to right: Berkeley Global Campus; Gerry Judah Audi sculpture; Nachez Trace Parkway; Target Corporation courtyard; Air Castles



**SPECIAL DISTRICTS**

There are at least two locations where large single-owner properties or common land uses or development types lie adjacent to the parkway corridors. Because they have a significant presence on the character of the parkways, they deserve special consideration as to how the public-private edge is designed. In some cases a vegetative buffer can provide the necessary separation and enclosure; in other cases an easement might be required to visually continue the parkway landscape into the distance. Still other places might need a more structural boundary tending toward public art.

One such “special district” is the Calumet Center office park. Because the park’s land planning is compatible with the aesthetics of a parkway, the edge between public and private can be designed to blend the two environments together. Like the Berkeley example shown above, the area between roadway

and building should be considered as one unified landscape where plant materials and topography are located to enhance the qualities of both spaces.

A different district lies just to the east where Greenville merges with Lafayette. This area is dominated by auto dealerships which utilize Lafayette’s visibility and vehicular traffic to promote business. This is also one of the parkway segments that provokes complaints about appearance. Creating a common-interest entity such as a BID could help address the negative edge condition. One possible solution would be to create an installation that would foreground each dealer’s vehicles as sculptural objects, much like the large-scale art of Gerry Judah.

A third district could be formed over time around the Milliken plant and Callaway Conference Center south on Whitesville Road.

**PARKWAY LANDSCAPE ZONE**

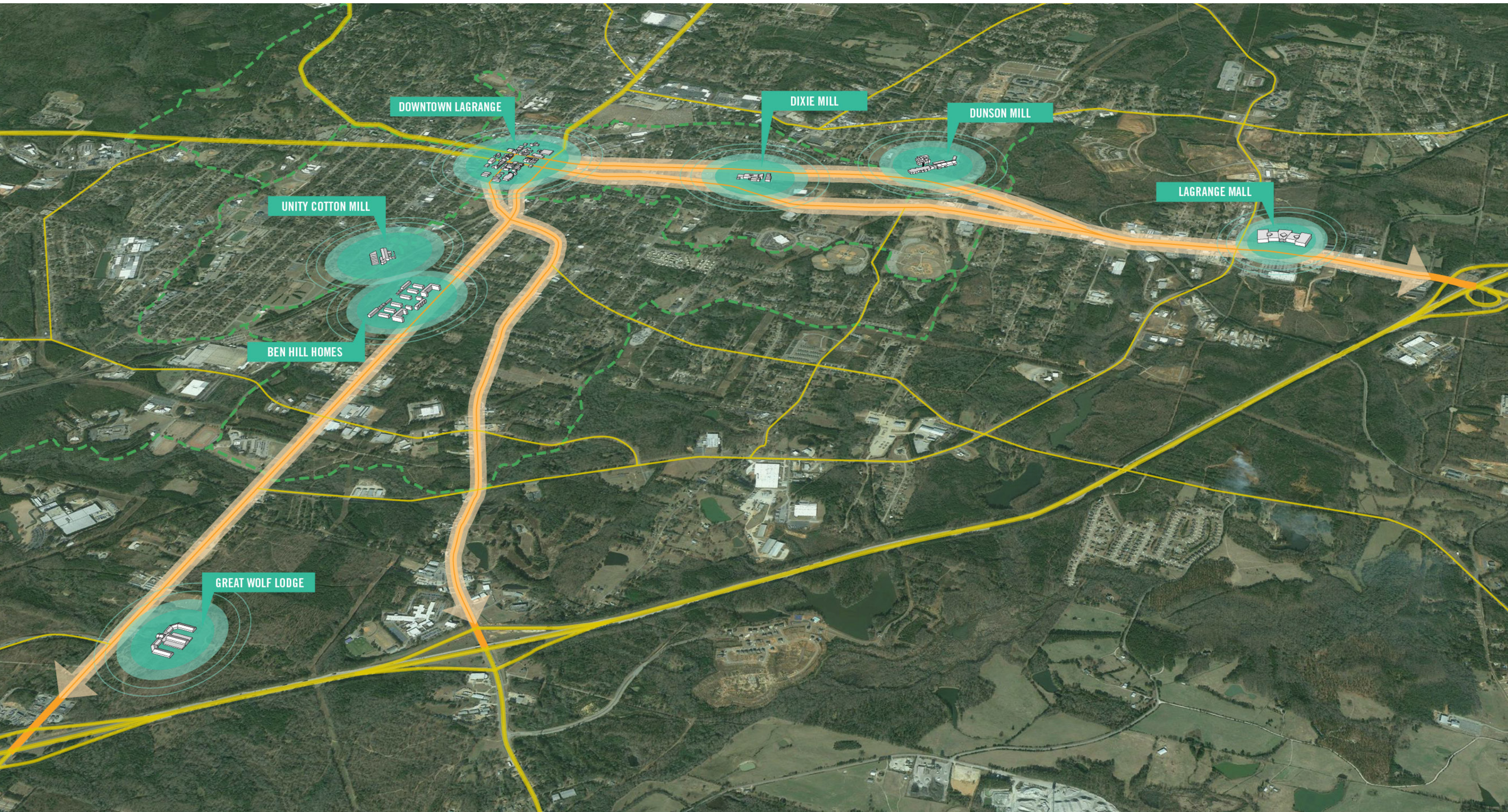
As the preceding chapters on parkway design indicate, there is the potential for distinctive new public landscapes in the LaGrange Gateway Corridors – either through enhancement of the existing Lafayette Parkway or through the expanded design of the new Hamilton Road. It is critical to reconceive of these places as liner park systems and not simply vehicular thoroughfares. To that end, it may be beneficial to expand the right-of-way in strategic places to allow the parkway design to flow into its surroundings.

Because the Georgia Department of Transportation has identified impacted properties that need partial or complete acquisition to allow the construction of the Hamilton Road project to proceed, there is a unique window in time to look at where these properties – and others – may be combined to “thicken” the parkway section so that there is room for legitimate park improvements that could benefit the surrounding

neighborhoods. Page 105 illustrates the Hamilton Road parkway landscape zone that results from an aggregation of impacted and vacant parcels and publicly-owned land. Lafayette Parkway might be similarly thickened at spots through selective easements and land acquisition.

It is important to be intentional about the design future of Hamilton Road as the widening project moves forward. A special effort should be undertaken to look in detail at the open space potential of Hamilton Road’s margins to determine where design features like those shown above might be implemented to give this new parkway a character that is distinctively LaGrange.









**Phasing:**

This diagram shows where each unique corridor section described in the preceding chapters starts and ends. While the corridor segments reflect the unique contexts they bisect, they should be thought of as continuous public spaces that subtly change along their extents. That said, it is unlikely that all the improvements can be made at once given the physical magnitude and the need to work with a GDOT process.

There are two phases that can be undertaken in the near term that reflect the development framework on pages 104-105. First, the segments of Greenville and Whitesville that bisect the mill villages and expansion areas should be prioritized to support the redevelopment of Benjamin Hill Homes and the adaptive reuse planning of Dixie Mill (Greenville Sections A&B and Whitesville Section C). Second, a detailed landscape design study should be undertaken along Hamilton Section A to determine where additional property might be secured to upgrade the GDOT roadway plan into a true parkway environment. This does not necessarily mean that the GDOT plan should be modified, but instead the right-of-way expanded where needed to create open space linkages that connect the parkway into the city's park and greenway system.



