

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-R-052

WHEREAS, the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners received a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission in 2005 to conduct a planning study in the Bells Ferry Corridor area; and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners contracted with Sizemore Group, Pond & Co. and Huntley Partners to develop a master plan for the Bells Ferry Corridor in 2005 in accordance with the LCI program guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Bells Ferry LCI Final Report and Plan was developed based on a significant amount of public involvement, both through a series of public meetings and a steering committee made up of local residents and business owners, and

WHEREAS, Cherokee County has accomplished many of the goals and objectives in the Bells Ferry LCI Final Report and Plan, striving to create a live, work, and play community, and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee County Planning and Land Use Department, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, has prepared the Bells Ferry Corridor Five Year Plan Update including goals and objectives for the next five years to continue developing a sustainable LCI district, building on a record of accomplishments, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners certify that the minimum public participation and other procedural requirements, as identified in the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, have been met or exceeded in preparing the Bells Ferry Corridor Five Year Plan Update as an amendment to the Bells Ferry LCI Final Report and Plan and a minor amendment to the Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan; and a Public Hearing was held in the Cherokee County Administrative Building on 6 September 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the Bells Ferry Corridor Five Year Plan Update as an amendment to the Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan. Copies of this resolution will be submitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission, as per the requirements of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989.

Adopted this 20th day of September, 2016.

BY: _____


L. B. Ahrens Jr., Chairman
Cherokee County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST: _____


Christy Black, Cherokee County Clerk





Cherokee County
Planning and Land Use Department

Bells Ferry Corridor

Livable Centers Initiative

Five Year Plan Update

Prepared for

Atlanta Regional Commission

Livable Centers Initiative

31 August 2016

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Executive Summary

In 2005, Cherokee County, in conjunction with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), commissioned the Bells Ferry Corridor Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Study to spur redevelopment along the Bells Ferry Corridor (Georgia State Route 92). The LCI program encourages local governments to create plans which link transportation improvements with land use development strategies in order to create mixed-use communities consistent with regional development guidelines. In an effort to revitalize the Bells Ferry Corridor, Cherokee County was awarded one of the first ARC LCI Corridor Study grants. The study focused on developing comprehensive and creative solutions for future land use issues such as development patterns, transportation and circulation options, alternative mobility and transportation modes, jobs, housing options, and implementation strategies. The goals of the Bells Ferry LCI Corridor are to offer opportunities for citizens to live, work, and play in the area, to promote a better quality of life, and to create a sense of place and identity for the community.

The vision of the Bells Ferry Corridor community is to redevelop commercial properties and under-utilized areas into a ‘community of choice’ that offer diverse choices and activities for the entire community. The goal is to create high quality developments that offer ‘quality of life’ to Cherokee County residents. In recent years, the study area has seen new residential projects and redevelopment of mobile home parks into new residential development. Revitalization of the Bells Ferry corridor continues as growth radiates from metropolitan Atlanta.

As part of the LCI program, recipients are required to provide an Evaluation and Appraisal Report and a new Implementation Plan with an updated five year Action Plan. The 2005 Bells Ferry LCI report included an implementation strategy with a specific five year action plan that outlined activities to be completed while implementing the LCI plan. The 2005 action plan was intended to be just the beginning of the implementation process. The Evaluation and Appraisal Report that follows offers a general discussion of the progress of LCI plan implementation to date. The report indicates completed actions and new developments/ infrastructure upgrades, as well as planned actions that have not been accomplished. There is also a discussion of actions that have occurred contrary to the original LCI plan and why those actions happened.

The Implementation Plan, with an updated five year Action Plan, updates the Implementation section of the original LCI plan, as well as the 2010 update, with strategies for the next five years. The implementation section includes both a strategy narrative and an updated five year action plan. The narrative section describes the organizational structure and process that will be used to ensure that Action Plan items are successfully implemented. This section details collaboration opportunities with other organizations and strategies to ensure continued support from local elected officials, citizens, and businesses. The narrative section also discusses the evaluation process that will be used to monitor future plan implementation. This LCI five year plan update is intended to ensure continued plan implementation. The plan update is also an opportunity to make a detailed assessment of plan implementation progress and offers a chance to identify areas where adjustments need to be made in order to reinvigorate the original 2005 plan and build upon the 2010 update.

Evaluation and Appraisal Report

The Bells Ferry LCI plan identifies a series of tasks, realistic mechanisms, and responsible parties to ensure that the plan's vision becomes a reality. The plan is built around several basic strategies for achieving successful implementation. These strategies include:

- Focusing on proven market strengths.
- Basing a financing structure on multiple funding sources.
- Identifying and securing a major economic incentive – a source of financing controlled by Cherokee County – which can be used to attract private developers and investors.
- Providing an organizational framework for implementing the LCI plan.

Local Development Corporation

As initially conceived, an inter-departmental process for facilitating and coordinating the initial implementation of the Bells Ferry Corridor Action Plan was to be created. This process was to begin within the first three years of adoption of the Bells Ferry Corridor Action Plan and include the initial establishment and administration of the proposed Tax Allocation District (TAD) as allowed under the Georgia Redevelopment Powers Law. At the time of adoption, it was believed to be essential that all available incentives, including a TAD, be offered throughout the corridor in order to fully realize the development potential of the Bells Ferry area. The TAD was intended to encourage and attract private investment in the Bells Ferry Corridor by offering financial incentives that could help improve the conditions contributing to disinvestments and marginal use of property.

It was envisioned at the time of adoption that the Bells Ferry Corridor would require a significant amount of staff time on the part of Cherokee County; at least until a separate economic development entity could be established. As such, a Cherokee County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) was to be created. The corporation was to be capable of assuming responsibility for both TAD administration and facilitation of public/private development initiatives throughout Cherokee County. The CCEDC was to be accountable to the local governing authority while maintaining the efficiency and flexibility of the private sector.

In addition to the CCEDC and the TAD, the original LCI plan called for Cherokee County to prepare and launch a public/private partnership aimed at facilitating LCI compatible private development projects within the Bells Ferry Corridor. The partnership was to utilize redevelopment powers, bond financing, and/or other economic development incentives available to Cherokee County. Various incentives and tools such as Section 108 Guaranteed Loans, Industrial Revenue Bonds, and Community Development Block Grants were recommended in the original LCI plan.

Investing in public facilities and improvements was also called for in the original LCI plan. Based on a coordinated strategy and timetable, public improvements within the Bells Ferry Corridor were intended to maximize the impact of such improvements on potential private development. Public facilities and improvements such as an aquatic center and park, a branch library, a community center, and multiuse paths and trails were recommended in the original LCI plan to facilitate private development.

Current Status

Unfortunately elements in this section of the LCI plan have not been implemented because of the defeat of the Cherokee County TAD ballot initiative. Through the Georgia Redevelopment Powers Law, TADs allow jurisdictions to utilize tax increment financing in various projects. Cherokee County does not have the redevelopment powers necessary to complete many of these initiatives without a TAD. A district like this would allow Cherokee County to issue non-recourse bonds that could be used to provide land, infrastructure, and other essential project requirements within the district.

Because the voters rejected the TAD, Cherokee County has had difficulty creating attractive financial incentives to private developers and investors to develop within the Bells Ferry area. The 2005 LCI study projected that such a TAD could support as much as \$200,000,000 in bond financing for redevelopments in the Bells Ferry area; none of this financing is currently available. Since the TAD was rejected, Cherokee County has not established an Economic Development Corporation to administer TADs in Cherokee County. If a TAD is ever established, such a corporation could facilitate private development and coordinate initiatives, as needed, with other governmental and non-governmental entities. At this time there are no plans to present a new TAD ballot initiative to Cherokee County voters.

Design Guidelines

The Bells Ferry Plan envisioned the need to improve regulatory measures to ensure the best possible outcome in terms of future land use, zoning, and design quality. It was expected that as implementation of the LCI plan began, the success of and demand in the corridor, coupled with the adoption of improved regulatory mechanisms, would encourage developers to design and build products of a higher quality.

In addition to regulatory improvements, the LCI plan recognized the need to ensure access to appropriate housing options for those who work in the Bells Ferry community. The quality of life for those who live and work in the Bells Ferry community would suffer from longer commutes, more congestion, and larger lots dedicated solely to parking if a jobs-to-housing balance was not attempted. The LCI plan provided a range of options that could be adopted to create incentives for workforce housing. These incentives included allowing for higher density housing, expanding opportunities for employer-assisted housing, and promoting partnerships between potential developers and experienced nonprofit housing developers who may be able to obtain additional resources to develop workforce housing. Incentives like these would ensure that a community continues to adhere to the principles of smart growth and promotes a positive quality of life.

Current Status

Implementation of the Bells Ferry LCI Plan began with the adoption of the plan as an amendment to the 1997 Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan in 2006. This provided an immediate change to land use policy in the Bells Ferry Corridor. The plan was subsequently integrated into the 2008 Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan. These new standards have served as a guide for new development proposals to accommodate mixed use and pedestrian-friendly sustainable environments as articulated in the original LCI plan.

To further implement the Bells Ferry LCI Plan, the Cherokee County Planning and Land Use Department received an LCI Supplemental Grant to develop the Bells Ferry Community Design Guidelines in 2006. The Design Guidelines became the basis for a new Overlay Zoning district called the Bells Ferry Community Design District, which was adopted in 2007. The overlay allows development regardless of existing zoning as long as the project is consistent with the LCI Plan. The new regulations aim to make all new development in the area consistent in terms of land use, height, setbacks, parking, interparcel connectivity, streets, signage, and open space to encourage and support the desired character for the LCI area. These design guidelines ensure that the quality and character of development reflects the community vision as expressed in the LCI study.

Efforts to ensure access to appropriate housing options for those who work in the Bells Ferry community have yielded some positive results. Elements of this initiative were planned and partially executed shortly after adoption, including a 2008 Development of Regional Impact (DRI) review for the Mount Pilot project; however, economic conditions prevented further implementation of the project. However, as the economy has rebounded, several noteworthy projects have been proposed and are in various stages of development: a mixed use commercial/residential project on a 38 acre parcel on Wade Green Road, an 87 lot single-family residential development on Bascomb Carmel Road, and an age targeted mixed use project on a 22 acre site on Bells Ferry Road.

Transportation

In addition to TAD revenues, the LCI plan encouraged Cherokee County to apply for and secure all available Federal and State transportation funds, as well as ARC LCI Implementation Grant funds. Part of the Bells Ferry LCI Study Plan relied on transportation-related funding to supplement improvements, particularly in combination with the comprehensive network of improvements recommended in the original LCI plan.

Current Status

Transportation planning and construction initiatives in the Bells Ferry area are in various stages of implementation. Improvements funded through the LCI program include the installation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, safety enhancements, and streetscape improvements. Several construction projects have been completed within the Bells Ferry LCI area. Utilizing Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds, the Wade Green Road streetscape enhancement project (GDOT PI # 0008095) was successfully completed. The Wade Green Road project included improved landscaping elements, pedestrian lighting, and decorative paving. Construction of curb and gutter and a sidewalk along the west side of Robin Road between SR 92 and Bells Ferry Road has been completed. The LCI process helped Cherokee County to make several design upgrades to the SR 92 project, such as crosswalks and wider sidewalks, all of which have been completed.

Cherokee County is fortunate to have a voter-supported Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) program to fund many local projects. SPLOST is a six year, one percent sales tax that is levied on the purchase of goods and services within Cherokee County and requires a voter referendum to be renewed. Cherokee County's SPLOST has

been renewed through 2018. Cherokee County uses SPLOST to fund capital improvements for local projects such as the construction, operation, and maintenance of roadways that are not a part of the Federal or State highway system (e.g., local county roads). Current transportation projects funding by SPLOST include intersection improvements along the Bells Ferry Road. Cherokee County also uses SPLOST revenue to provide the local match as required to receive Federal and State transportation funding. The widening of Bells Ferry Road was funded through ARC's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) using Federal and State transportation funds along with matching funds from SPLOST.

A number of transportation projects are in various stages of planning and implementation. The projects are focused on intersection and safety improvements as well as pedestrian and streetscape improvements. Several intersection improvements are planned in the corridor: Bells Ferry Road/Kellogg Creek/Victory Drive area, a turn lane and signal modification at SR-92 and Robin Road, and a dual turn lane improvement and signal modification at SR-92 and Bells Ferry Road. In addition, a much-needed maintenance project near Sixes Road and Eagle Drive is planned.

Bicycle-pedestrian improvements are planned for the Bells Ferry Corridor, including landscaping improvements on SR-92, Woodland Drive, Santa Fe Trail, and Hartwood Drive. In addition, bicycle-pedestrian improvements are planned on Bells Ferry Road from the Cobb County line to Kellogg Creek Road. Cherokee County recognizes that in order to provide a true multi-modal environment for residents and visitors, a number of improvements need to be made including sidewalks, bike lanes, grade-separated cycle tracks, shared-lane markings, and "Share the Road" signs.

Community Building

Just as physical infrastructure improvements were identified as necessary in the Bells Ferry LCI Corridor, the need to create a sense of place in the area was also acknowledged. The need for creating mixed use centers, pedestrian friendly environments, quality and safe sidewalks, and multi-use trails was explicitly stated in the original LCI plan. Furthermore, the plan encourages Cherokee County to work with social, non-profit, and religious organizations to cater to the needs of those with limited or no access to automobiles. The original LCI plan recognized a need to establish a network and coordination process among social services and non-profit agencies to focus on the large number of seniors within the Bells Ferry area, as well as on the significant number of Hispanic and other recent immigrants to the area.

Creating a sense of place in the Bells Ferry Road area was also to be achieved by designing, funding, and implementing an economic development, marketing, and branding initiative. The program had four components:

1. Attract businesses and offices to the area by promoting the area as suitable for residents and/or workers from diverse social and economic backgrounds as well as creating diverse housing product types. With a diverse labor pool, a variety of businesses can be supported. The proximity to the residential area would provide for smart growth opportunities and continue to enhance the quality of life.
2. Encourage commercial development through mixed use centers. Commercial development would also be supported by a mix of housing types in the area.

3. Create partnerships that can support economic development activities. The ability of the community to compete for the services and economic development opportunities it wants in the Bells Ferry area depends on the proactive involvement of residents and partnerships with other agencies.
4. Marketing and branding. Branding is an important component of attracting new development to the area. Collateral materials, marketing initiatives, and campaigns should be created for the area. These materials should describe the economic opportunities as well as the civic, political, and public support for the LCI plan and the development initiatives. Targeted campaigning to sell the vision to key audiences is important in attracting investment to the Bells Ferry area.

Current Status

Several commercial projects have been developed in the last five years which have helped to create a sense of place and spur improvements within the Bells Ferry corridor:

- American Family Care (6440 Bells Ferry Road). This clinic provides urgent care services for patients requiring immediate medical attention. The clinic is able to treat most illnesses and injuries that would normally require treatment in an emergency health facility. By treating illnesses and injuries at this clinic, patients can obtain the care they need without having to travel to a hospital which may not be as close or convenient as this clinic. In addition, interparcel access and shared parking were accomplished as a result of the clinic's proximity to existing developments. Constructed in 2013, the building is 5,022 square feet in size. The clinic represents a \$534,290.58 investment in the Bells Ferry corridor.
- Aspen Falls Auto Spa (6390 Bells Ferry Road). Built in 2011, this carwash and automotive detailing company built a 7,853 square foot building with an investment of \$544,684.08. Although the property was already zoned for commercial use prior to construction, the site and building were designed in accordance with the Bells Ferry Community Design Guidelines.
- C & T Auto Service (2348 Bascomb Carmel Road). This full service auto repair business has operated in Cherokee County since 1976. The company expanded and opened its current store on Bascomb Carmel Road in 2004. In 2015, the company expanded yet again with the addition of a 2,400 square foot building at its Bascomb Carmel Road location. Working with Cherokee County staff, the owner was able to use the Bells Ferry design guidelines and take advantage of the district's site design flexibility in exchange for a new, aesthetically pleasing masonry building.
- Cherokee County Bells Ferry Fire Station (6276 Bells Ferry Road). Cherokee County is in the process of building a new fire station near the intersection of Bells Ferry Road and Old Bascomb Court. The total cost of the project, including land, design fees, furniture, fixtures, equipment, and construction, is \$3,300,000.00. This project represents a significant investment on the part of Cherokee County in the Bells Ferry area.
- Patriots Park (1485 Kellogg Creek Road).
The park is located west of Bells Ferry Road on a 33 acre tract on Kellogg Creek Road. Patriots Park will feature two natural grass baseball/softball fields, an artificial turf adaptive use baseball/softball field, two fenced off-leash dog areas,

an adaptive use field designed to be accessible for athletes of all abilities, a 0.8 mile paved walking trail, and concession and restroom facilities. 21 acres of the site will be set aside for passive recreation. Adjacent to a natural meadow within the park, Patriots Plaza will be built and feature a monument with granite pavers. The park represents an estimated \$5.9 million investment in the Bells Ferry LCI district.

- Tranquil Gardens Assisted Living and Memory Care (5734 Bells Ferry Road). Currently in the middle of the development review process, this is one of the most significant projects to be proposed within the Bells Ferry Community Design District in recent years. The project is on a 22 acre site that was blighted and underutilized. As the site of a former mobile home sales lot, the property contained several dilapidated and abandoned mobile homes, many of which were illegally occupied by trespassers. The property was frequently vandalized and a constant eyesore. Because of the Bells Ferry overlay, the property owner did not have to undertake a costly and time-consuming rezoning. In addition, the owner was allowed to design a project with more density. As designed, the project will feature a mix of uses including retail, age-targeted housing, and an assisted living facility.
- Wade Green Road, south of SR-92. This 38 acre tract has experienced renewed interest over the past several years as the economy has improved. The tract is sufficiently large enough to allow a site design with a group of uses. As currently envisioned, the project will feature a mixture of housing types, prominently sited civic or community buildings, and commercial or office/institutional workplaces which will provide a balanced mix of activities and public spaces. The property owner intends to create an attractive, efficient, and worthwhile development.

Several business have undertaken major renovations to upgrade the appearance of their establishment:

- Cherokee Corners, LLC Shopping Center (5520 Bells Ferry Road). A commercial development near the intersection of GA-92 and Bells Ferry Road has recently made several signage and exterior façade improvements. The 13 acre tract is anchored by a Food Depot grocery store, Park Avenue Thrift, a regional thrift store selling donated goods, and Woodstock Market, a home furnishings consignment store and outdoor market. Family Dollar, Little Caesars, Cricket Wireless, Rent-A-Center, and a local beauty salon also occupy space in the shopping center.
- KFC/Taco Bell (6760 GA-92). The scope of the renovation included exterior and interior alterations of existing free standing restaurant. Exterior façade upgrades consisted of new exterior skin elements and tower panels. The restaurant's interior was improved for new dining decor, seating package, and new restroom finishes. Kitchen and drive-through areas remained in operation during the remodeling so there was little, if any, negative economic impact during the renovation. The upgrades were completed in August of 2014. The construction cost was estimated to be \$105,000.
- Krystal Restaurant (6261 GA-92). The scope of the renovation, currently underway and nearing completion, includes repainting the exterior, new awnings,

- new wall murals, and improving the accessibility ramp to the restaurant. Interior upgrades will be made to the dining room and restrooms. The renovation represents an investment of approximately \$105,000. The renovation will contribute to the visual appeal of the intersection of GA-92 and Robin Road.
- McDonald's Restaurant (5600 Bells Ferry Road). The scope of the renovation included new façade materials, new exterior wall signage, installation of additional kitchen equipment, and remodeling the lobby and restrooms. A new pedestrian access was created to link the restaurant with the sidewalk on Bells Ferry Road. When the renovations were completed in 2011, it represented a significant reinvestment and enhanced the visual appeal of the area.

As each of the projects listed above demonstrate, businesses are willing to develop new projects or renovate existing ones in the Bells Ferry corridor. This willingness to upgrade a business or start a new one can be attributed, at least in part, to the Bells Ferry Overlay District. The construction of a new building, or the renovation of an existing one, can often have a domino effect on the surrounding area. As one building is renovated, a nearby building often feels compelled to renovate as well. One of the goals of the Bells Ferry Community Design District is to encourage the creation of high-quality development that offers a superior quality of life to residents and business owners. By establishing a set of guidelines that provide site planning, design, and building regulations for development within the corridor, Cherokee County has been able to attract and encourage projects which contribute to the unique identity of the Bells Ferry corridor.

Report of Accomplishments

| Transportation Initiatives | | | | STATUS | | | | Notes |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|-------------------|----------|----------|-------------|--------------|--|
| Project | Description | PE Year | Construction Year | Complete | Underway | Not Started | Not Relevant | |
| SR-92 Widening | Current DOT Project. Roadway capacity. | 2005-2006 | 2008 | X | | | | |
| SR 92 - Current Design Modifications | 20-ft Raised Median. Roadway safety. | 2005-2006 | 2005-2010 | | | | X | A depressed median was installed in lieu of a raised median. |
| SR 92 - Current Design Modifications | Landscaping for raised median. Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2006 | | X | | | | A depressed median was installed in lieu of a raised median. |
| SR 92 - Current Design Modifications | 6-ft Sidewalks on Both Sides. Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2006 | | X | | | | |
| SR 92 - Current Design Modifications | 5-ft Landscaped Planting Strip on Both Sides. Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2006 | | X | | | | Stamped concrete was installed along with a depressed median. |
| SR 92 - Current Design Modifications | Proposed Median Breaks / Intersections. Access Management. | 2005-2006 | | | | | X | No funding available at this time. |
| SR 92 - Current Design Modifications | Pedestrian Refuge Islands. Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2006 | | | | | X | No funding available at this time. |
| SR 92 - Current Design Modifications | Alternate Crosswalk Hardscape Materials. Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2006 | | | | | X | No funding available at this time. |
| Bells Ferry - Current Modifications | Landscape Existing Median. Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2010 | | | | | X | No funding available at this time. |
| Bells Ferry - Current Modifications | Landscape Existing Planting Strip. Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2010 | | | | | X | No funding available at this time. |
| Bells Ferry - Current Modifications | Parallel Linear Park with Shared-Use Path. Pedestrian facilities and Access Management. | 2005-2010 | | | | X | | No funding available at this time. Right-of-way acquisition is a significant obstacle. |
| Additional Current Projects | Gateway Features. Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2010 | | | | X | | No funding available at this time. |
| Additional Current Projects | Robin Road: Curb, gutter, and sidewalks to westside only. Roadway Safety and Pedestrian facilities. | 2005-2006 | | X | | | | |
| Additional Current Projects | Eagle Drive Widening. Roadway capacity. | 2006 | | X | | | | |

| <i>Transportation Planning Initiatives</i> | | | | STATUS | | | | Notes |
|--|---|-----------------------------|----------|----------|-------------|--------------|--|-------|
| Project | Description | Study / Implementation Year | Complete | Underway | Not Started | Not Relevant | | |
| SR 92 Design Changes | Coordination of SR 92 Design Changes and Landscape Maintenance Program. | 2008 2013 | X | | | | | |
| SR 92 Access Management | Implementation of Bells Ferry and SR 92 Access Management Plan (Including an outreach program to business/property owners to involve them in the implementation process through overlay or design guidelines or master plan/s). | 2007 Ongoing | | X | | | Plan elements are implemented as projects are submitted. | |
| Wade Green Access Management Study | Wade Green Access Management Study (Includes Robin Road / Tyson Drive / Wade Green Intersection). | Ongoing | | X | | | Access study is conducted as projects are submitted. | |

| <i>Housing Initiatives</i> | | | STATUS | | | | Notes |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|----------|----------|-------------|--------------|---|
| Project | Description | Study / Implementation Year | Complete | Underway | Not Started | Not Relevant | |
| Bells Ferry Parkway Enclave | Develop large tract of vacant parcels and large single family lots and redevelop existing mobile park home site into a cohesive residential neighborhood with various housing product types that attracts people from diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds integrated with parks and playgrounds and openspace and bike and pedestrian trails. To create a walkable, pedestrian friendly residential community. The sub area includes Bells Ferry Parkway Enclave. | 2016 | | X | | | A mixed use commercial/residential project on a 38 acre parcel on Wade Green Road, an 87 lot single-family residential development on Bascomb Carmel Road, and an age targeted mixed use project on a 22 acre site on Bells Ferry Road are in various stages of planning and development. |

| <i>Other Local Initiatives</i> | | | STATUS | | | | Notes |
|--|---|-----------------------------|----------|----------|-------------|--------------|--|
| Project | Description | Study / Implementation Year | Complete | Underway | Not Started | Not Relevant | |
| Cherokee County Fire Station - Bells Ferry | Construct a new state-of-the-art fire station within the Bells Ferry LCI area. | 2010 2016 | | X | | | Project has been approved for construction. |
| Civic Amenities | To create a parkway with parks, fields integrated into the neighborhood fabric that offers residents with both passive and active recreation opportunities. To create multi-use pathways and an amphitheatre. | 2016 | | X | | | Patriots Park is being built on a 33 acre tract on Kellogg Creek Road, west of Bells Ferry Road. Construction began in November 2015. The project will cost approximately \$5.9 million. |
| Aquatic Center | To build an aquatic center in the Bells Ferry Parkway Enclave that serves the needs of Cherokee County. | | | | | X | Constructed in Cherokee County but outside of the Bells Ferry LCI area. |

| <i>Economic Development Initiatives</i> | | | STATUS | | | | Notes |
|---|--|-----------------------------|----------|----------|-------------|--------------|---|
| Project | Description | Study / Implementation Year | Complete | Underway | Not Started | Not Relevant | |
| Tax Allocation District | Establish TAD for the LCI Study Area. | | | | X | | Voters defeated ballot initiative to give Cherokee County redevelopment powers. |
| TAD Administration and Urban Design Group | Setup TAD Administration and Urban Design Group comprising of a consultant and Cherokee County inter-department. | | | | X | | Voters defeated ballot initiative to give county redevelopment powers. |
| Marketing and Branding Campaign | Develop Marketing and Branding Campaign. | | | | X | | Not developed due to staff time and funding limitations. |
| Economic Development Corporation | Create Cherokee County Economic Development Corporation. | | | | X | | Unable to establish due to TAD rejection by voters. |
| <i>Planning and Zoning Initiatives</i> | | | STATUS | | | | Notes |
| Project | Description | Study / Implementation Year | Complete | Underway | Not Started | Not Relevant | |
| Land Use | Adopt new land use for the LCI study area to accommodate mixed use and pedestrian friendly sustainable environments. | 2008 | X | | | | Adoption of new land uses was part of the 2008 Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan. |
| Zoning Regulations | Develop zoning regulations to implement the LCI Plan: use, height, setbacks, parking, interparcel connectivity, and streets. | 2006 | X | | | | Zoning regulations were adopted as part of the Bells Ferry Community Design District. |
| Design Guidelines | To develop guidelines (including access management) for the LCI study area to ensure the quality and character of development to reflect the community's vision as articulated in LCI study. | 2006 | X | | | | Utilized LCI supplemental funds to develop design guidelines. |

Implementation Plan with updated Five Year Action Plan

One of Cherokee County's long-term planning goals is to promote interconnected development in its activity centers and corridors which feature a mix of uses, pedestrian friendly elements, compact neighborhood layout, and distinctive design features across Cherokee County. Building a sustainable community while balancing growth and development pressure continues to be a goal of the Bells Ferry LCI district. If obstacles can be overcome, redevelopment of the Bells Ferry area has the potential to significantly change the area and the southwestern part of Cherokee County. The goals of the Bells Ferry corridor remain:

- To make the corridor a 'gateway' into Cherokee County.
- To provide diverse choices in retail, housing, entertainment, and recreation that not only serve this community, but is a destination choice for the region.
- To increase job opportunities for residents and improve the jobs-to-housing balance.
- To provide residents with transportation alternatives and modes for traveling within the area.
- To support a diversity of people of all incomes, ages, social, and cultural backgrounds.
- To change the image of the community from an unsafe and declining neighborhood to a thriving and vibrant community.

Challenges

The Bells Ferry LCI plan has encountered significant challenges since its inception and adoption. With the defeat of the TAD by voters, Cherokee County has been unable to utilize tax increment financing options that otherwise would have been available if a TAD had been approved. TAD funding was identified as a vital component of the original LCI plan because it would have allowed Cherokee County to issue non-recourse bonds. These bonds could have been used to provide infrastructure, land, and/or other essential project requirements within the TAD. As a result, attractive incentives to private developers and investors to develop within the LCI district could have been created. In addition, without a TAD Cherokee County has not established an Economic Development Corporation. The corporation was to administer the TAD and facilitate public/private development opportunities in the Bells Ferry LCI district. Without a TAD to administer there has not been a need for this corporation. Lack of a dedicated TAD funding option forced a fundamental, unforeseen shift in planning for the Bells Ferry LCI area.

As initially proposed, an effort focusing on attracting commercial entities to the Bells Ferry area, as well as an effort to create partnerships supporting economic development activities in the area through a marketing and branding initiative was to be carried out. Unfortunately, a nationwide economic downturn stifled the initial implementation of the Bells Ferry LCI plan. A sizable commercial project could set the trend for development in the area, thus dictating the type of marketing and branding

campaign needed. The Bells Ferry area remains in need of an identity to help attract and retain businesses and promote a sense of community.

Opportunities

While some obstacles remain in the way of successful implementation of the Bells Ferry LCI plan, there are a number of opportunities for overcoming these challenges. Cherokee County has a SPLOST program which continues to have a positive impact on the Bells Ferry LCI area. A portion of the SPLOST is used to revive a major component of the LCI plan. Funding from the SPLOST will be used to improve intersections, install pedestrian facilities, and improve streetscape features.

Unfortunately very few funding opportunities, outside of a TAD, are uniquely designed for spurring redevelopment in an area such as the Bells Ferry LCI Corridor. Cherokee County has been and will continue to actively seek other funding sources such as the ARC implementation grant to support eligible transportation improvement projects in the LCI area. In addition, Cherokee County will aggressively pursue opportunities that were not identified in the initial plan. Funding from Cherokee County's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program could be directed to projects in the LCI area. The specific project would need to align with Cherokee County's goals for funding affordable housing and infrastructure development activities through the CDBG program. The potential impact could be significant on the seniors and underserved residents of the Bells Ferry area. With the designation of an "Entitlement Community" a CDBG could be used to acquire real property, rehabilitate residential and non-residential structures, construct public facilities, improve public infrastructure, such as water and sewer facilities, streets, neighborhood centers, and the conversion of school buildings for eligible purposes, and provide incentives to businesses to carry out economic development and job creation/retention activities.

The Bells Ferry LCI area could qualify for DCA Opportunity Zone status. As redevelopment and revitalization efforts in Bells Ferry's older commercial areas continue, Cherokee County could qualify for the Georgia Job Tax Credit of \$3,500 per job created. Cherokee County is fortunate to already have two highly successful Opportunity Zones in the southwestern portion of the county and near the Cherokee County airport near Ball Ground. If the success of Cherokee County's existing Opportunity Zones were replicated in the Bells Ferry area, the program could yield positive results.

In addition to DCA Opportunity Zone status, the Bells Ferry area may qualify for the DCA State Enterprise Zone program. Although no serious studies have been conducted to determine the Bells Ferry area's potential for participation in this program, the area does suffer from underdevelopment and disinvestment in some areas. Some areas of Bells Ferry corridor have suffered from a lack of building permits, licenses, land disturbance permits, and other indicators of underdevelopment. Were the Bells Ferry area to be recognized as an Enterprise Zone, Cherokee County would be in an even stronger position to encourage private businesses to reinvest and rehabilitate the area.

Cherokee County will continue to pursue collaboration opportunities with other organizations, as it has since the LCI plan was initially adopted. Cherokee County has previously participated in the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Urban Marketplace. The ULI Urban Marketplace is a one-day conference organized to promote investment

opportunities and development strategies in urban neighborhoods. Cherokee County has been represented by staff and elected officials at the ULI Urban Marketplace to promote Bells Ferry.

In addition, the Cherokee County Planning and Land Use Department has a strong working relationship with the Cherokee Office of Economic Development (COED). COED promotes economic development in Cherokee County by supporting the expansion of existing industry and by attracting new investment and quality employment opportunities. In addition, COED facilitates project site selection, financing options, industrial engineering services, and many other economic development services. With the help of COED, collaboration opportunities are continuously being pursued with private developers that embrace mixed use development and are interested in working in the Bells Ferry area.

Cherokee County will continue to work with private developers in the Bells Ferry area. As part of formally adopting the Bells Ferry LCI plan, revisions were made to Cherokee County's zoning and development regulations which permit a tremendous amount of freedom, particularly when using Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) zoning. TND zoning encourages developing tracts of land that are sufficiently large to allow a site design for a mixed-use development. In addition, TND zoning maintains compatibility with the surrounding area and creates an attractive, efficient, and stable environment. Unfortunately Cherokee County has had few opportunities to fully utilize the revised regulations due to economic conditions. No further regulatory changes are planned. However, thanks to the momentum generated by the LCI plan, Cherokee County has adopted a set of regulations that will encourage attractive and sustainable development.

The Cherokee County Board of Commissioners (BOC) has been proactive in investing in the future of the area. For example, thanks to SPLOST funding, Cherokee County will be constructing a new Fire Station in the Bells Ferry area. Construction of a new fire station is just the type of community infrastructure improvement identified as vital to the success of the Bells Ferry area. Constructing a much-needed new fire station is a demonstration of the Cherokee County BOC's commitment to the LCI plan and the Bells Ferry area.

The original LCI study recognized the importance of monitoring and evaluating each component of the plan initiatives including design, financing, land use, transportation, and zoning. In the original LCI plan it was recommended that until the CCEDC was set up to supervise LCI implementation, a TAD Administration/Urban Design Group was to take the lead role in monitoring LCI plan implementation. Unfortunately, as a result of the rejection of the TAD by Cherokee County voters and negative economic conditions, such an organization was never established. The need to assess plan implementation remains as development and redevelopment of the Bells Ferry Corridor continues. Monitoring and evaluating on a periodic basis (whether monthly, quarterly, and/or annually) will ensure seamless and successful implementation of the LCI plan. Until the need for a truly independent monitoring organization is demonstrated, the Cherokee County Department of Planning and Land Use will continue to monitor LCI plan implementation.

Although significant challenges remain, the LCI plan can still be successfully implemented if Cherokee County continues to:

1. Build and promote the Bells Ferry area to established market strengths.
2. Base a financing structure on multiple funding sources.
3. Identify and secure a major economic incentive – ideally a source of financing controlled by Cherokee County – that can be used to attract private developers and investors.
4. Provide an organizational framework for implementing the LCI Concept Plan.

Cherokee County is confident that the resurgence of interest experienced in the Bells Ferry area will continue. The success of redevelopment in the Bells Ferry area will not be the result of a single strategy, but rather the result of a number of interconnected elements that must be implemented in tandem. As private development accelerates within the Bells Ferry area in coming years, the LCI plan will allow Cherokee County to take full advantage of private investments to ensure the best possible outcome for residents and businesses in the area. The successful implementation of the Bells Ferry LCI Plan will require not only a commitment of resources on the part of Cherokee County, but a collaborative approach with other entities, such as ARC, Georgia Department of Transportation, corridor property and business owners, and area residents.

Five Year Action Plan

FIVE YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Transportation Projects

| Project ID | Description | Type of Improvement | Engineering Year | Engineering Costs | ROW Year | ROW Costs | Construction Year | Construction Costs | Total Project Costs | Responsible Party | Funding Source | Local Match Amount (if applicable) | Local Source |
|---------------|---|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------|------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| CTP-068 | Bells Ferry Road @ Kellogg Creek Road @ Victory Drive Intersection Improvement | Intersection Improvement | 2016 | \$25,500 | N/A | N/A | 2018 | | \$910,000 | Cherokee County | Cherokee County SPLOST | | |
| CTP-070 | SR-92 @ Robin Road Turn Lane and Signal Modification | Intersection Improvement | 2015 | \$27,250 | N/A | N/A | 2017 | | \$200,000 | Cherokee County/GDOT | Cherokee County SPLOST | | |
| CTP-165 | Safety Improvements on SR 92 between Wade Green Road NW and Bells Ferry Road | Safety Improvement | 2019 | | N/A | N/A | 2024 | | \$290,000 | Cherokee County/GDOT | Federal / State | | |
| CTP-194 | SR 92 Landscaping Improvements Woodland Drive (A) / SR 92 (B) Santa Fe Trail/Hartwood Drive (A)/SR 92 (B) | Bicycle - Pedestrian | 2014 | \$87,000 | N/A | N/A | 2016 | \$410,175 | \$497,175 | Cherokee County/GDOT | Federal / State / Cherokee County | \$80,000 | Cherokee County SPLOST |
| CTP-209 | Bells Ferry LCI Improvements from Cobb County Line to Kellogg Creek Road | Bicycle - Pedestrian | 2015 | | N/A | N/A | 2018 | | \$1,000,000 | Cherokee County/GDOT | Federal / State / Cherokee County | \$200,000 | Cherokee County SPLOST |
| CTP-286 | SR-92 @ Bells Ferry Road Turn Lane and Signal Modification (Dual left turn lanes from NB Bells Ferry to WB SR 92) | Intersection Improvement | 2015 | \$27,250 | N/A | N/A | 2017 | | \$400,000 | Cherokee County | Cherokee County SPLOST | | |
| CTP-299 | Bells Ferry Road from Kellogg Creek Road to Sixes Road | Bicycle - Pedestrian | 2019 | | N/A | N/A | 2040 | | \$7,610,000 | Cherokee County | Cherokee County SPLOST | | |
| Totals | | | | \$167,000 | | \$0 | | \$410,175 | \$10,907,175 | | | | |

Transportation Planning Initiatives

| Description/Action | Cost | Year | Responsible Party | Funding Source |
|--|------|-----------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| SR 92 intersection improvements and safety modifications. | TBD | 2016-2019 | Cherokee County | Cherokee County |
| Bells Ferry Road intersection improvements and safety modifications. | TBD | 2016-2019 | Cherokee County | Cherokee County |
| Implementation of Bells Ferry and SR 92 Access Management Plan (including an outreach program to business/property owners to involve them in the implementation process through overlay or design guidelines or master plans). | TBD | Ongoing | Cherokee County private sector | Cherokee County / private sector |

Economic Development Projects/Initiatives

| Description/Action | Cost | Year | Responsible Party | Funding Source |
|---|------|------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Establish TAD for the LCI Study Area. | TBD | TBD | Cherokee County | Cherokee County |
| Setup TAD Administration and Urban Design Group comprising a consultant and Cherokee County inter-department. | TBD | TBD | Cherokee County | Cherokee County |
| Create Cherokee County Economic Development Corporation. | TBD | TBD | Cherokee County | Cherokee County |
| Develop Marketing and Branding Campaign. | TBD | TBD | Cherokee County | Cherokee County |

Housing Projects/Initiatives

| Description/Action | Cost | Year | Responsible Party | Funding Source |
|--|------|-----------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Develop large tract of vacant parcels and large single family lots, redevelop existing mobile park home site into a cohesive residential/institutional product with various housing product types that attracts people from diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds integrated with parks, playgrounds, open space, and bike and pedestrian trails. The goal is to create a walkable, pedestrian friendly residential community. | TBD | 2017-2026 | Cherokee County private sector | Cherokee County / private sector |

Other Local Initiatives

| Description/Action | Cost | Year | Responsible Party | Funding Source |
|---|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Create a parkway with parks, fields integrated into the neighborhood fabric that offers residents with both passive and active recreation opportunities. To integrate the pond into the park and create multi-use pathways and an amphitheatre. | TBD | 2017-2026 | Cherokee County private sector | Cherokee County / private sector |
| Cherokee County Fire Station #1, Bells Ferry | \$3,300,000 | 2017 | Cherokee County | Cherokee County |

Photographs – Existing Buildings

Cherokee Corners, LLC Shopping Center 5520 Bells Ferry Road



Woodstock Market – façade improvements.



Food Depot and Park Avenue Thrift – façade improvements.

Krystal's Restaurant
6261 GA-92



Façade and site improvements.



Façade and site improvements.

McDonald's Restaurant
5600 Bells Ferry Road



Façade and site improvements.



Façade and site improvements.

Photographs – New Developments

American Family Care

6440 Bells Ferry Road



Designed in accordance with Bells Ferry Community Design Guidelines. The sidewalk connects the building directly to Bells Ferry Road.



Designed in accordance with Bells Ferry Community Design Guidelines.



Site features pervious (grass) overflow parking as well as shared parking with adjoining businesses.

Aspen Falls Auto Spa
6390 Bells Ferry Road



Designed in accordance with Bells Ferry Community Design Guidelines.



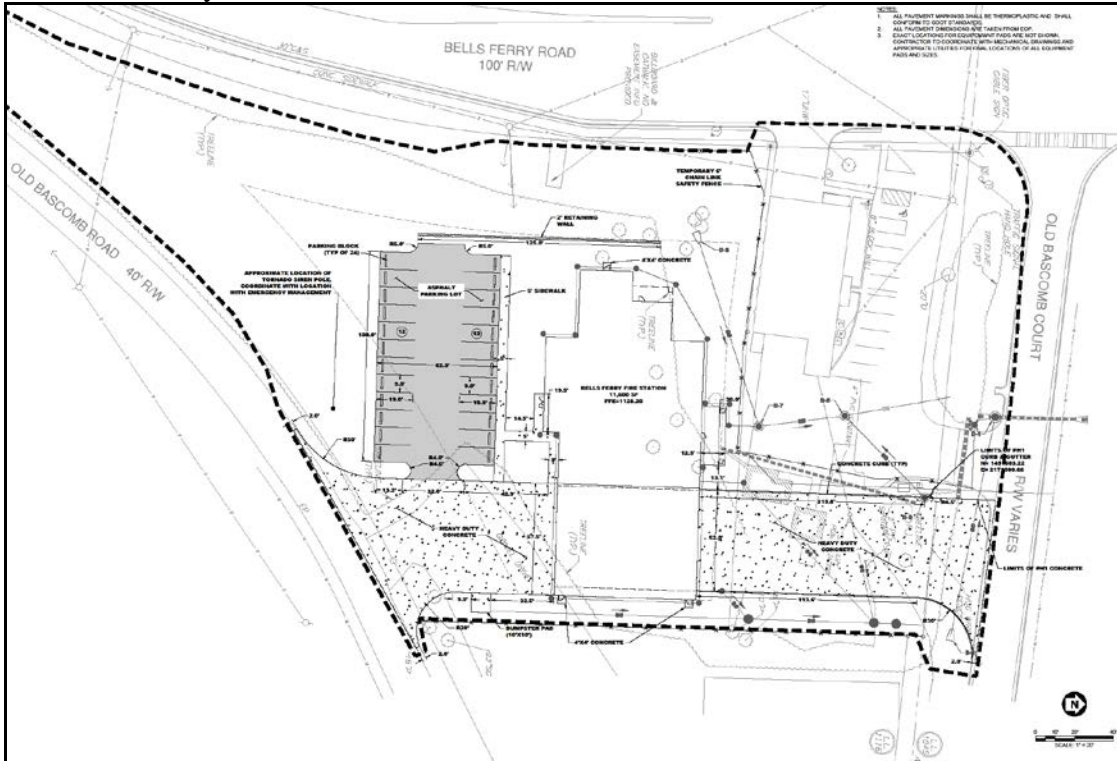
Designed in accordance with Bells Ferry Community Design Guidelines.

C & T Auto Service
2348 Bascomb Carmel Road

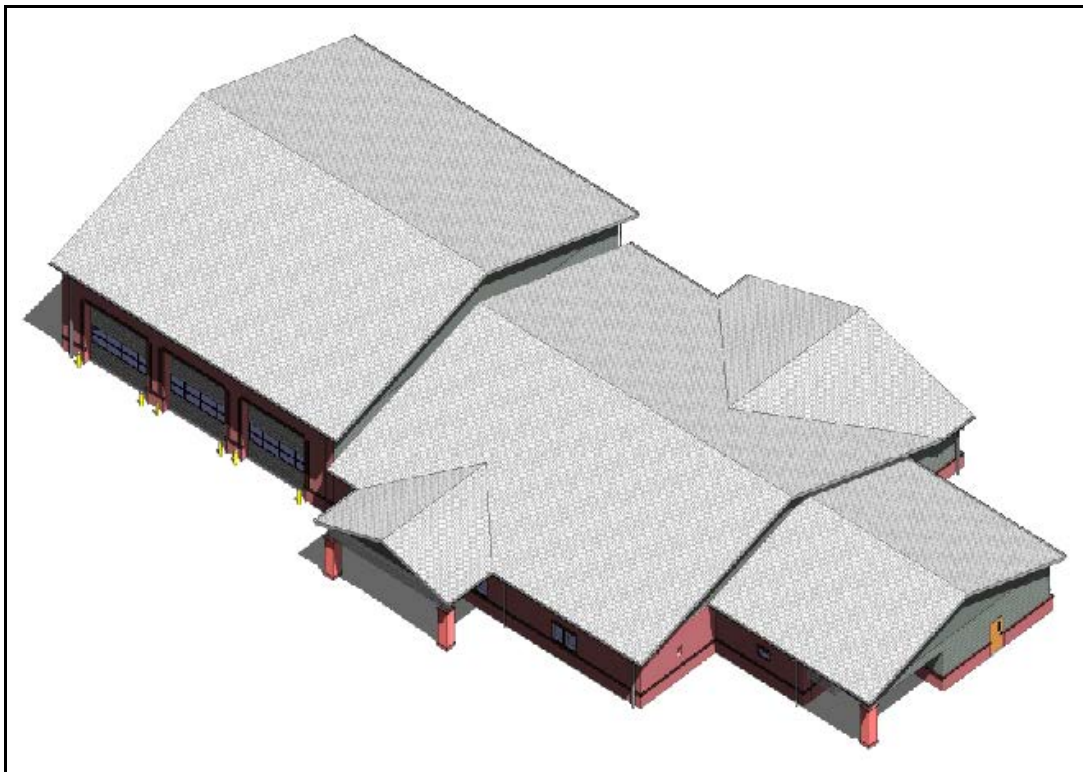


Designed in accordance with Bells Ferry Community Design Guidelines.

Cherokee County Fire Station - Bells Ferry
6276 Bells Ferry Road



Site plan. (Credit: Wiley|Wilson.)



3-D Rendering. (Credit: Wiley|Wilson.)

Patriots Park

1485 Kellogg Creek Road



Site plan. (Credit: Smith Planning Group.)



Park facility. (Credit: Smith Planning Group and Studio.bna architects.)



Adaptive use baseball field. (Credit: Smith Planning Group.)



Patriots Plaza. (Credit: Smith Planning Group.)

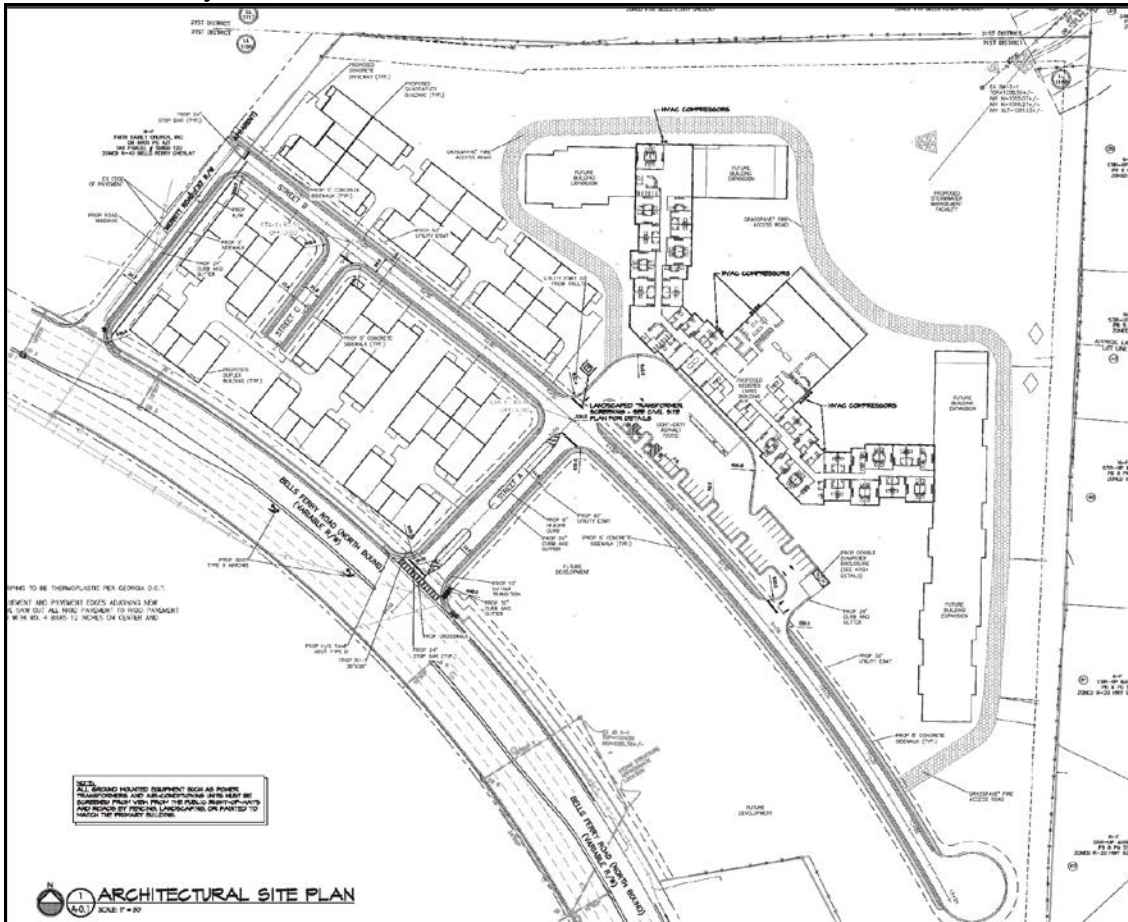


Site work in progress.

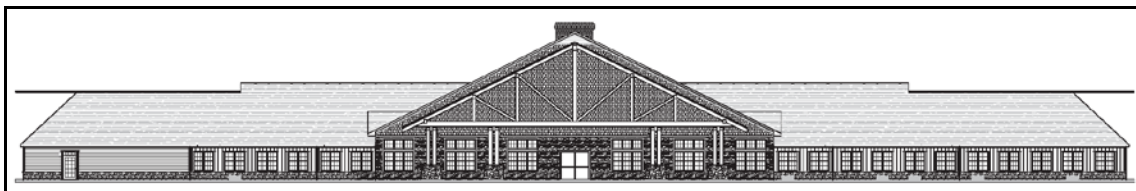


Site work in progress.

Tranquil Gardens Assisted Living and Memory Care
5734 Bells Ferry Road



Site plan. (Credit: Precision Commercial Architects, Inc.)



Elevation. (Credit: Precision Commercial Architects, Inc.)



Site work in progress.



Site work in progress.



Site work in progress.



Wade Green Road streetscape improvements. The tract is located on the left. A curb cut for the tract can be seen in the lower left corner.



A median break on Wade Green Road at Hopgood Road will improve access to the site. A curb cut for the tract is visible at the bottom.



Facing east into the property from Wade Green Road.



Facing northeast into the property from Wade Green Road.

Maps

1. Location of new developments map.
2. Land use map.
3. Transportation project map.



Planning and Land Use

- Legend
- American Family Care
 - Aspen Falls Auto Spa
 - C & T Auto Service
 - Cherokee Corners Shopping Center (Renovation)
 - Cherokee County Fire Station -Bells Ferry
 - KFC/Taco Bell (Renovation)
 - Krystal Restaurant (Renovation)
 - McDonald's Restaurant (Renovation)
 - Tranquil Gardens Assisted Living and Memory Care
 - Wade Green Road Project
 - Churches
 - Schools
 - Park
 - Bells Ferry LCI District
 - Woodstock

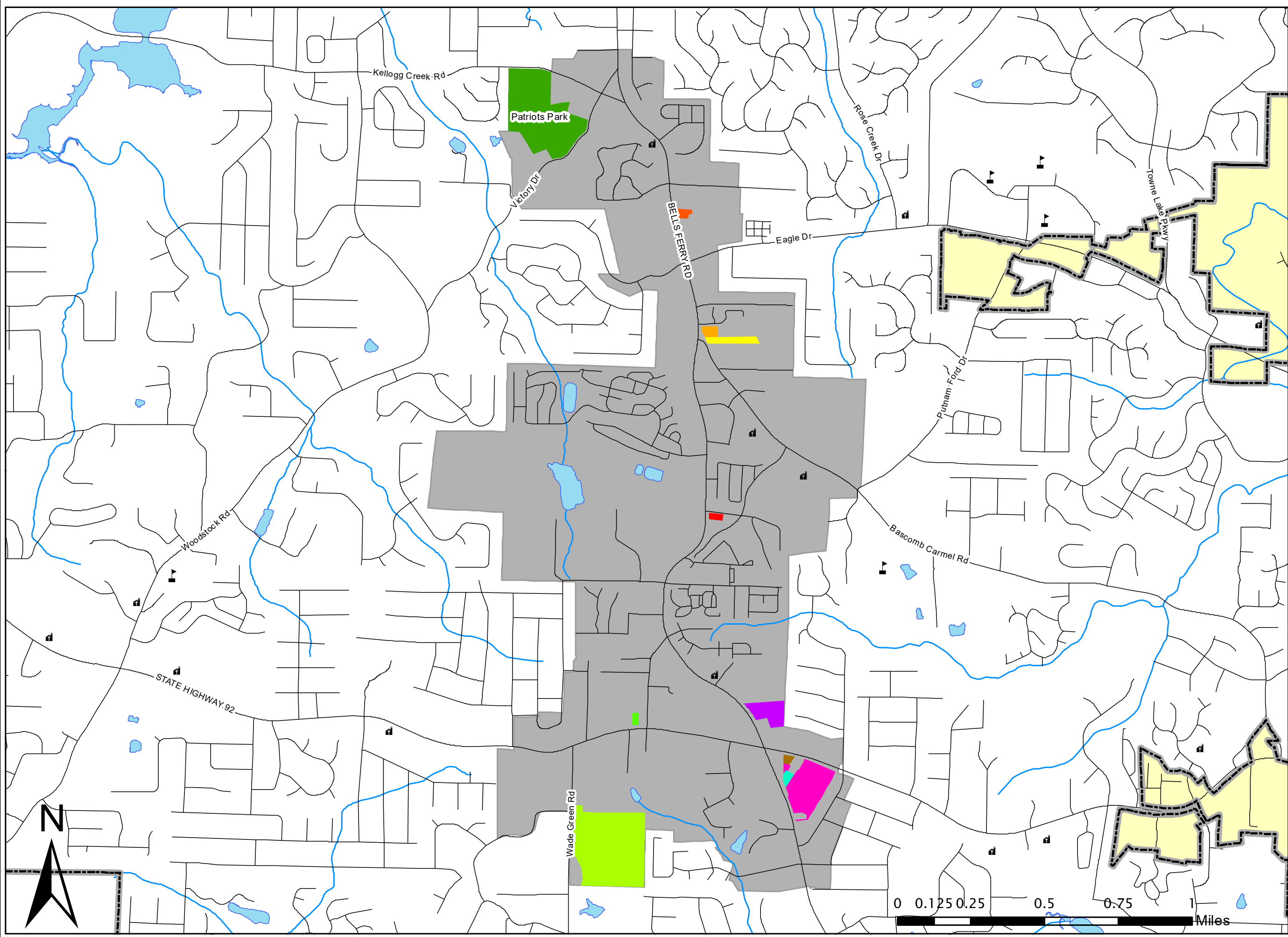
Date of Production:
31 August 2016

Produced by:
Cherokee County
Planning and Land Use
1130 Bluffs Parkway
Canton, Georgia 30114

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ARC 5 Year Update 2016\
Maps\New Developments

New Developments

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No Warranties or Representations Are
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Planning and Land Use

- Legend
- Park
 - Churches
 - Bells Ferry LCI District
 - Schools
 - Neighborhood Zones
 - Civic Space
 - Neighborhood Center
 - Neighborhood Edge
 - Neighborhood General
 - Special District
 - Development Nodes
 - County Crossroads
 - Hamlet
 - Neighborhood Village
 - Community Village
 - Corridors
 - Scenic Corridor
 - Transitional Corridor
 - Development Corridor
 - City
 - Woodstock

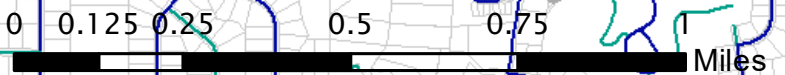
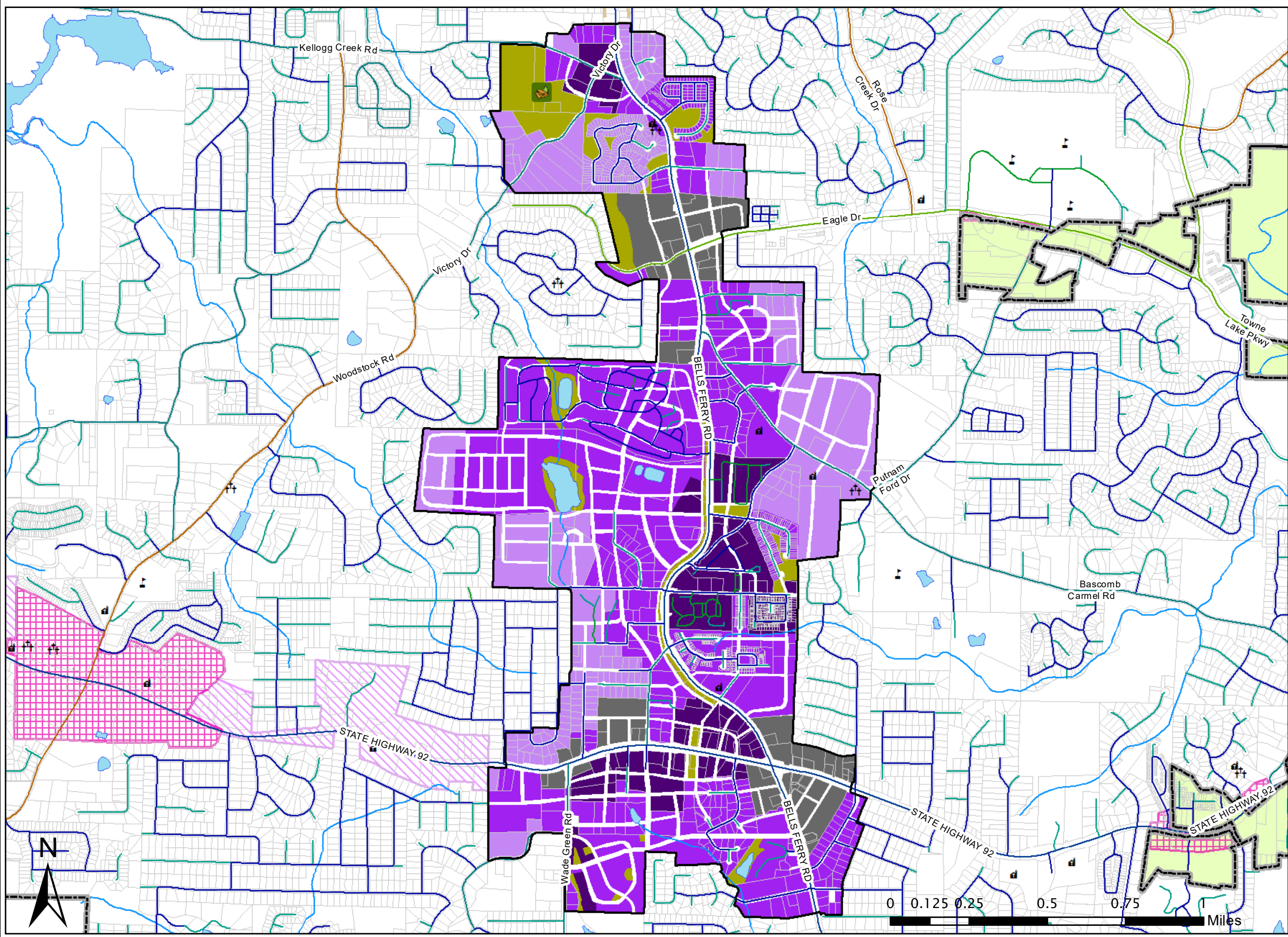
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Land Use

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Planning and Land Use

- Legend
- Bicycle - Pedestrian Improvement
 - Safety Improvement
 - Park
 - Church
 - School
 - Bells Ferry LCI District
 - Woodstock
 - Intersection Improvement

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Transportation Projects

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